



Editor's Letter

It is already the start of March and 2026 is gathering momentum. I did not want to issue the first SABF Newsletter for the New Year too early as I wanted the various regions to get started up and the different clubs open their doors. From getting in contact with the various bridge organisers I can see a recurrent theme is to attract more players to the game of bridge, and younger players if possible. However I can see for myself by just talking to my son that today's younger generation are busy! The learners at school are busy chasing good Matric results and to this end they are busy studying more subjects and doing more hours at school with some Government schools opening on Saturday mornings already to devote more time to the more difficult subjects like Mathematics and Science. Some schools even run classes before school opens for certain subjects. The older folk with small children are busy earning money and keeping their children going with school and extra curricular activities. Then those folk in their 40's and 50's are still gathering enough finances to get the children through school and university and themselves through the retirement years. However not all women are working fulltime and maybe clubs should be targeting those folk. Covid has changed the face of many things in life, bridge being one of them. Evening activities have ground to a halt in all face to face clubs I know about as older folk (at present very much the majority of bridge players are in this category), are not travelling out at night as before. Online bridge, which garnered a lot of interest during Covid times, remains popular and this is not going to alter. The convenience of being able to play competitive bridge at home, not to mention social pairs and teams, is very attractive and alluring. This form of bridge, especially bbo, remains appealing.

Next just a friendly reminder that SABF fees are now overdue! At R250 for a whole year of pleasure it is extremely good value. Some provinces also charge a fee but all are extremely reasonable. Please remember even if you are only playing organised bbo events, e.g. any of The Links events, SABF fees are still payable. The fees are applicable to both face to face and online bridge. If you have friends who are doing either of these things and may not have paid up yet, please gently remind them!

Lastly, I have included articles from as many regions as I could. If you know of an interesting bridge topic you would like me to research, or better still will write an article yourself, please

contact me on cellphone 082 430 4140 or via email dingersent51@gmail.com. My grateful thanks to all my regular contributors.

Please don't forget to consult the SABF website which is very user friendly to see what is happening and don't forget to enter the SABF National Congress!

Sunday 12th April until Sunday 19th April in Cape Town. There are Pairs events catering for everyone and Teams. Overseas players have entered but local entries are rather tardy.

Yours in bridge,

Deirdre Ingersent



**The National SABF Congress will be held
in Cape Town at the Kelvin Grove
from 12th till 19th April.**

The following events are on the calendar

- 1. Teams** 12th till 16th April
- 2. Pairs** 17th till 19th April
- 3. Mixed Pairs** 16th April
- 4. No Fear Pairs** 16th April - This is for all the newer players as an introduction to Congress and takes place for one morning from 9.00am till 1.00pm

While we are expecting a number of international players and we are hoping to encourage all players of all levels around the country to join us for this incredible event in Cape Town.

It is an opportunity to play against all levels of bridge including International players and our top local players .

For Accommodation:

here are some suggestions in proximity to the Venue:

Wild Olive Guesthouse

Hedge House Gueshouse

Fernwood Manor

Riversong Guesthouse

Victorian Goose Guesthouse

Protea Hotel Mowbray

Newlands Peak Apartments

Oak Manor Guesthouse

Southern Sun Newlands

Submitted by Diana Balkin (083 377 4192)

Tournament Director's Corner

Submitted by Bernard Donde

With the advent of the Covid epidemic and the subsequent return to face-to-face bridge, players have forgotten some of the rules related to alerting and announcing conventions at the table. The following article is designed to remind players of their obligations to alert and to clarify when they should announce. The idea behind announcements is to speed up the play when common conventions such as transfers, NT bids and jump bids are made. Announcements are made by the partner of the bidder. Alertable bids should not be announced.

The rules given below are unique to the South Africa Bridge Federation. If you play overseas, the rules may differ.

When playing online bridge, all conventional bids are alertable and there are no announcements.

ALERTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

ALERTS AND EXPLANATIONS

1. Alerts must be given for any call that contains information of which the opponents might not be aware, whether the call is natural or conventional. The alert must be given by the partner of the player who made the alertable call by using the 'Alert' card and a full explanation must be given only if an opponent asks (at his turn to call) for one.
2. Explanations of alertable calls given before the start of play do not absolve players from alerting such calls at the appropriate time during the bidding.
3. Explanations of play conventions must be disclosed at the start of a round and must not be alerted during the play of the hand.
4. It is incumbent upon both pairs to inform their opponents of the basics of their system before the commencement of bidding on the first board. Subsequent to this, if a bid is not alerted it may be assumed to be natural, unless the previous calls in the auction make it obvious that the call could be artificial or the call has been previously described as artificial. Failure to alert is, however, still an infraction.

5. Openings of minor suits promising at least 3 cards in that suit do not need to be alerted. Openings of Major suits promising at least 5 cards do not need to be alerted. (if you play 4 card majors, you must alert the opening of a major).

6. Conventional bids above 3NT made after 2 rounds of bidding are not alertable. However, at the end of the auction it is incumbent on declarer and dummy to explain all bids made above 3NT before the opening lead is faced. Similarly, declarer and dummy must inform their opponents if any bids made were incorrectly explained at this time. Defenders do not correct any mis-explanations until the end of play.

7. Never explain conventional bids using named conventions. For example, do not use terminology such as Drury, Jacoby, Bergen, Ghestem, Michaels. Rather explain exactly what the bid shows.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Alert card need not be displayed when making the following announcements. No further explanation must be given unless requested by the opponent next to call.

1. The point range after a natural 1NT or 2NT opening is announced by partner, e.g. 12-14, 13-15, 20-22, etc. This also applies to a natural NT rebid after a suit opening. Players who overcall NT with a small singleton need to alert this as well as the range.

2. Transfer bids to a major or a minor after an uncontested 1 or 2 NT opening bid, partner announces it as a transfer to the agreed higher denomination.

3. When a player opens a Multi 2 Diamond, partner announces 'Multi'.

4. When a player opens two of a suit, partner announces it as 'weak', 'intermediate' or 'strong' according to the partnership agreement. If it can be 2 suited, this must be alerted rather than announced.

5. If a response of 1NT after his partner's major suit opening is forcing it must be announced so as well as the point range.

6. After a jump overcall or bid, partner announces 'weak', 'intermediate' or 'strong' according to the partnership agreement. He ALERTS if it does not show the suit bid.

7. After a jump response partner announces 'weak', 'intermediate' or 'strong' according to the partnership agreement.

Western Cape Bridge Union

Festival of Bridge – December 2025

The Cape Festival of Bridge, our premier Red Point event of the year, was held at the Bridge Centre in Green Point, Cape Town on 14-16 December 2025. It is a very cosmopolitan event with bridge players from all over South Africa as well as a number of players from neighbouring countries and from overseas.

There were 16 teams and 52 pairs who participated. The Festival caters for a range of abilities and we were delighted that 34 of the participants - from South Africa and from overseas countries - also had international playing experience. There were also two sessions on the side of the main event to include learner bridge players and to offer them the opportunity to be participants in a large tournament.

There were delicious morning and afternoon teas on all days and we are most grateful to Bags of Bites for their contribution and sponsorship. The tournament ended on a high with the prize-giving and with a delicious braai organised by Colin and Mabelle Shapiro who partially sponsored the lunch and also stood in the heat of the day with volunteers to prepare the food for us. And a sincere appreciation to Kanonkop who sponsored the wine for the event.

The Festival is the cherry on the top of a year of many tournaments in South Africa as well as being the premier event of the year in Cape Town. Our sincere “thank you” to Jocelyn Ashberg for organising such a successful tournament once again and to Neil Hayward for preparing for the event and for being the main Tournament Director, ably assisted by Jan van Dijken. And, of course, the many members of the committee and other volunteers who assisted.



Neil Hayward, Shirley Phillips, Jan van Dijken

Tribute to Tim Cope - January 2026



The WCBU organised a cocktail party at the Bridge Centre on Sunday January 18th to honour Tim Cope - world bridge player, bridge teacher, and bridge coach to international players from South Africa as well as other countries. There were about 80 bridge players present who were fascinated with the grand master being in conversation with Glen Holman, WCBU President and former international bridge partner of Tim's.

Tim learned the game of bridge from his grandmother when he was just "a wee little one" (as they say in Scotland) and never looked back. Despite having a law degree from Cambridge and being involved with the world of work in the legal/financial areas, he sustained his passion for bridge up to world class status and beyond. Tim entertained the audience with a wide range of anecdotes that were highly entertaining and thoroughly enjoyed by the participants.

Tim, you have touched so many in a positive way and we are so grateful to have you in our lives. Thank you for all your energy and input into the game of bridge over many decades, not only for Capetonians but for all South Africans.

Submitted by Shirley Kaminer

Western Cape Valentine Pairs



The Western Cape Valentine Pairs, organised by Jocelyn Ashberg, took place on the weekend of the 14/15 February - and what a wonderful tournament it was with 28 entries creating a perfect bridge movement capably managed by Neil Hayward, our TD. Even though the competition was tight, it was played in a friendly atmosphere and was thoroughly enjoyed by all - especially the delicious teas organised by Shirley Phillips!

Congratulations to the winners:

A Section: Katherine Herz and Eckhard Boelke

B Section: Vivienne Croucher and Anita Croucher

C Section: Nadine Pincus and Rayleen Ovsiowitz

A special congrats to the **C Section** winners who are relatively new to the game of bridge and who fared very well against a field of stronger opponents!

The full list of the Championship and Plate results can be found on our website - www.wcbridge.co.za.

Glen Holman, WCBU President, congratulating the winners below:



A Section Winners:
Eckhard Boelke & Katherine Herz



B Section Winners:
Vivienne Croucher & Anita Croucher



C Section Winners:
Rayleen Ovsiowitz & Nadine Pincus

Submitted by Shirley Kaminer

Southern Cape Bridge Union - Knysna



Peter Ward is one of the most active bridge organisers involved in bridge in South Africa today. He is one of the few people able to obtain generous sponsorship for his events. Sadly he wrote an article advertising his All Day Red Point Fun Pairs Event at Knysna which we were not able to publish in time for him to get more entries. We will publish the results in a future Newsletter.

Keep up your enthusiasm Peter!

Outeniqua Pairs 2025

What an incredible finish to both sections in the final. The lead changed hands multiple times, and in the end it was the Ward team who came from behind to defeat the Pincus team, and the Leigh team who beat out the Rabie team (but also 4 other teams who were in contention).

Congratulations to **Peter Ward, Merle Modlin, Andre van Niekerk & Rose Duff** for winning the *Outeniqua Open Teams 2025!*

Congratulations to **Mignon Leigh, Johan Boucher, Nanette Clouston & Sandy Candotti** for winning the *B section!*

Submitted by Peter Ward



Informal Report on Bridge Activities in KwaZulu-Natal

Face-to-face bridge in KZN continues to feel the effects of declining numbers and changing geography. We have, very sadly, lost a number of our long-standing players over the past few years, which has naturally impacted attendance and club strength.

Residential shifts have also played a role. Many players have moved out of central Durban. A large group is now based north of Durban, where several active clubs operate, although many remain unaffiliated. Others have relocated to Hillcrest, where the club at Le Domaine is thriving and regularly runs three sections each week.

On the tournament front, this year we are introducing the inaugural **Adrain Hulett Pairs** on 22 March, in honour of KZN's most successful ladies' partnership, **Di Adrain** and **Margie Hulett**. We are hoping this will become a regular fixture on the calendar. In the **Adrain Hulett Pairs** we are incorporating a **No Fear** section to encourage more of the newer players and beginners to compete.

Our premier event remains the **Petra Mansell Pairs**, scheduled for 10–11 October. This competition traditionally attracts players from outside the province and continues to be our strongest drawcard event.

We are also continuing discussions around attracting pupils, students and younger players to the game. Various initiatives have been attempted in the past with limited success. We are watching

developments in other provinces with interest to see whether there are workable models that could be adapted locally.

Overall, numbers remain under pressure, but core activities and key events continue to run, and planning for the year is well underway.

Submitted by Linda Campbell



Re-building “The Links’ after Covid

Back in the ‘90s a group of us, despite opposition, believed Johannesburg needed a Club of its own. A lease was secured for an old disused bowling club & The Links was born.

Originally a small clubhouse, ever increasing membership necessitated expansion over the years.

- Tournaments were held weekly Saturday afternoon being the most popular. We were ‘bursting at the seams’ the standing joke being the lower sections felt they were almost playing in the kitchen!
- Acknowledgement to Pierre Du Toit for his exceptional managerial skills & supervising the building operations over many years.

Then came Covid & the death knell of our beloved Club. BBO was a blessing we could play in the confines of our homes an added bonus being in our pj s! After the pandemic ended the latter was symbolic of trying to rebuild the Club. People had become lazy & oft anti-social. Our first attempt at hosting a Saturday tournament attracted four tables. Slowly however, & with the perseverance of the Committee, players trickled back & now we are proud to host four Sections. Plus games are held Tuesday morning (gentle), Wednesday Afternoon, some Sundays, designated weekend events including those under the GBU & National events (trials & Congress 2025). Proving once again we have the largest & most popular Club in South Africa.

A special mention of our Thursday morning supervised classes which have proved to be a winner. Players enjoying & greatly benefitting from the guidance & tuition of Neville Eber & a group of dedicated volunteers.

The Committee advocates the Club encourage a spirit of camaraderie & enjoyment. Hence Special Saturdays were introduced eg Springbok & Valentines Days. These have proved to be most popular & we welcome suggestions from our players for future events.

Of course none of the above would be possible without the tremendous skills of our beloved Rob Stephens.

In the words of the great American player, Bob Hamman, who visited our shores back in the early days of The Links. "You South Africans should be proud to have such an amazing venue".

Submitted by Val Bloom

Member of the Links Committee/Chairlady of the ex JBC for 25 years



The Links





Pretoria ♠♥♣♦

Sadly we have nothing exciting happening with bridge in Pretoria. We do have 2 clubs: Tuesday Ladies and Friday Club. Unfortunately we have lost quite a lot of their older members which results in few interested in playing any of the tournaments.

Submitted by Delene Spence

Organiser who keeps things running in Pretoria (and is on the SABF Committee)

MYSTERY OF MASTERPOINTS EXPLAINED!

The SABF's Masterpoints Scheme provides a means of measuring and recording the achievements of players of organised duplicate bridge. Two different colour points - RED and BLUE - are awarded in different types of event. RED are only awarded in certain special events, e.g. the SABF National Congress or a particular region's special competition, while BLUE points are awarded to the top finishers in regular club events, e.g. your face to face weekly event. Some open events also can be blue point events.

There is movement between the various rankings and the scheme has 11 classifications from Member, as you start out, to Grandmaster, the highest one. It is very easy to check one's own ranking, or indeed that of anyone else. Just log into the SABF website and go to Masterpoints. Then type in the SABF number or the name in the space provided.

Our highest ranked player at the moment is CRAIG GOWER from GAUTENG with 3749.82 blue points and 5769.15 red points and he is a GRANDMASTER.

Below follows a list of those players whose rankings have changed lately! Congratulations to all!

Ranking Changes April 2025 – February 2026

Gold life masters

3357 Mary Mutch
0552 Andre Van Niekerk (WP)

Premier Life Masters

1172 Bryan Strydom
0816 Dawn Palmer

National Life Masters

7618 Joan Van Vught
8943 Mabelle Shapiro

Life Masters

3730 Louise Berman
2895 Anne Visser
2921 Shaun Danin
4446 Allan Berman
9028 Tom Collinge
3817 Ice Peenz

National Masters

6052 Myron Elias
5524 Hilary Margolius
0562 Ian Katz
6786 Howard Strauss
3766 Saul Burman
7350 Gavin Kreuiter
3594 Joel Harris
8343 Lana Soutar

Regional Masters

4051 Janine Liefbrig
3687 Anne Cook
5120 Della Yutar
7985 Reinette Simenson
7286 Galena Mouton
5037 Karen Gillanders
1417 Russ Parkinson
4637 Robyn Myburgh
5909 Christine Stock
5817 Danie Malan
6903 Hugh Herman
8717 Lianne Shaw
6096 Mike Chancellor
8792 Monica Pickering
6972 Theonie Kirton
8758 Aletta Jacobs
6881 Geraldine Wilton
5108 Graeme Williams
4499 Denise Lord
7494 Lisa Harrison
6348 Olga Van Loggerenberg

Regional Masters continued

9212 Diane Pegg
5210 Alison Berrange
8315 Kobie Joubert
1749 Priscilla Provis
5856 Hazel Scalabrino
8054 Larnay Thwaites
5120 Della Yutar
7689 June Katzwinkel

Masters

8178 Mary Connock
8442 Hilary Baak
5967 Janis Kockott
3181 Lorenzo Libera
5123 Jonathan Reece
8704 Andre Fourie
7119 Mariette Smith
6665 Jane Fitchet
6822 Gael Ridge
2415 Anne Allen
3910 Chris Fortuin
4319 Stan Horwell
5025 Nicole Shur
4530 Mike Bellis
7962 Fiona Heany
5511 Di Stokoe
1540 Jenny Borchardt
6954 Bertha Spies
9163 Ginty Tagg
1257 Liz Potgieter
4952 Paddy McAllister
5410 Stuart Kellaway
6606 Carol Grobbelaar
3866 Brenda Hadley-Grave
6417 Andrew Smythe
2228 Arauna Viljoen
6737 Corrice Holmes
8181 Sue Ray
4343 Alistair Davidson
6346 Elaine Guinsberg
6581 Kim Vincent
8079 Annatjie Malan
7452 Hilde Kucera
9237 Kaja Brekke
1587 Pat Betterton
7327 Margie Pienaar
8103 Welma Van Wyk
6602 Shirley Nurick
8656 Maureen Mortleman
8353 Hendre Van der Walt
6443 Elmaré Maurin
8705 Jeanette Fourie

Local Masters

6553 Harry Millson
 1124 Rayleen Ovsowitz
 5392 Jack Dommissie
 2711 Kenneth McKenzie
 2564 Carl Malcomess
 5431 Fiona Baxter
 4249 Sue Judd
 4985 Alison Hughes
 1748 Ken Strickland
 4054 Rita Heckroodt
 7862 Erna Lervik
 1397 John Grosskopf
 4245 Jen Walker
 9532 Diana Bowling
 3688 Avril Kadey
 6414 Peter Ridge
 5971 Dana Lieberman
 3826 Jill Paice
 1459 Barbara McCubbin
 9003 Rose Nourse
 9237 Kaja Brekke
 1920 Sandra Lever
 6674 Lindi Grant
 5971 Dana Lieberman
 7526 Rona Holmes
 9282 Brenda Van Vuuren
 5418 Jean-Michel Arrignon
 5414 Annick Arrignon
 2437 Vicky Rex
 8558 Walter Focke
 5510 Jackie Crawford
 3396 Lorraine Wilson Jones
 3041 Pam McBride
 4519 John Greenland
 6179 Debbie Bagg
 4908 Anna Holliday
 2107 Pat Norton
 4181 Gavin O'Connell-Jones
 6329 Nadine Pincus
 7092 Tricia Border
 3380 Natalie Hoff
 7081 Piet Strauss
 3985 Lyn Geldenhuys
 5907 Laura-Jean van Aardt
 5415 Margaret Hanhardt
 2906 Asli Acar
 3428 Berrak Erkan
 7526 Rona Holmes
 7144 Maxwell Locketz
 2405 Wendy Barrow
 5233 Wendy Jupp
 3826 Jill Paice
 1459 Barbara McCubbin
 1072 Di Bresser
 7363 Peter Osborne

Local Masters continued

2167 Pam Beaumont
 5676 Annatjie Gerber
 2618 Mike Magrath
 3328 Peter de Wet
 2572 Sheik Ebrahim
 3478 Jenny Nel
 8485 Gail Paterson
 3580 Patricia Feldman
 7526 Rona Holmes
 7805 Stephen Swann
 3332 Julie Coulson
 6678 Len Bracher
 4371 Janine Candido
 5823 Rosemary Graham
 2731 Berel Berman
 6414 Peter Ridge
 6979 John Gibbs
 3639 Richard West
 4015 Jeanette West
 6938 Dot Masterson
 5535 Caryl Haupt
 8076 Carol Marriner

Club Masters

1343 Colleen Camp
 5582 Jetje Japhet
 3281 Elinor Stein
 3120 Ursula Bulbring
 8074 June Arderne
 2023 Jane Boehmke
 5377 Rhona Kestan
 8404 Angus Kennedy
 3583 Bruce Leslie
 7175 Jane Davies
 3735 Caryn Querido
 3510 Debbie Anstey
 8042 Karen Watkins
 2270 Charlie Malan
 1986 Louanne Proudfoot
 4223 Barbara Ehrmann
 4938 Angela Edy
 2393 Mike Hellmann
 6329 Nadine Pincus
 5898 Steven Isacowitz
 2564 Carl Malcomess
 7529 Mary-Anne Jeffrey
 9237 Kaja Brekke
 7815 Jeanne Williams
 6886 Per Klethagen
 7523 Caroline Heimann
 7524 Grant Heimann
 7842 Judy Lincey
 1772 Jenny Vago
 7675 Fran Teagle
 7200 Rick Teagle

Club Masters continued

3121 Diane Heyns
 1823 Robyn Eidelman
 3885 Pat Salkinder
 8163 Hayley Cohen
 3989 Dave Wickens
 6305 Salma Buch
 8944 Ed Oldfield
 8192 Mike Cohn
 6146 Greg Beech
 4260 Mike Wiggins
 1330 Petra Spaun
 5030 Derek Kreuger
 1124 Rayleen Ovsowitz
 3370 Helma van Eenennaam
 1872 Kees van Eenennaam
 8407 Renee Watts
 5256 Robert Winfield
 2279 Peter Wentworth
 8134 Elizabeth Woodcock
 3333 Caryn Gootkin
 3827 Clare Collinge
 5961 Pam Richards
 3756 Allan Kelly
 3021 Mandy Donninger
 8625 Gill Crisp
 1229 Ian Clough
 3545 Desmond Hughes
 7818 Angelika Wolf
 6631 Lisa Kantor
 4005 Tanya Lanser
 7413 Mo Dilks
 8119 Lola Marcus
 5841 Lindsay Stern
 5285 Dianne Nyenes
 7091 Kathy Hodgson
 2147 George Roberts
 4143 Gillian Roberts
 2684 Tania Grove
 3458 Leishia Hines
 6101 Ian Hines

Club Masters continued

3557 Pauline Gelrubin
 3558 Gilbert Collins
 4512 Caroline Marx
 4132 Ginette Flockton
 3198 Marilyn Lewis
 4082 Simone Scherzer
 7060 Sally le Roux
 2688 Michele Wild
 4175 Bev Tuttle
 6861 Belinda Hargreaves
 6059 Meryl Kreuger
 2969 Ronell Swanepoel
 1641 Shaun Savy
 6947 Stig Braaten
 1348 Helen De Beer
 4908 Anna Holliday
 4180 Martin Smit
 5813 Rachel Stewart
 2752 Barbara Cook
 4638 Wendy Vickery
 8084 Alan Ritchie
 3022 Isobel Neethling
 2949 Jenny Ketley
 4128 Margie Paterson
 6861 Belinda Hargreaves
 1069 Jackie Meyer
 6018 George Dreyer
 5961 Pam Richards
 2578 Jeanette Baker
 4390 Boo Janisch
 7078 Anita Dixon
 7944 Jayne Forbes
 4016 Leora Hessen
 7265 Ellen Corrigan
 8187 Anton Crouse
 7003 Denzil Gouws
 7130 Diana Page
 3330 Karen Miller
 7526 Rona Holmes

BRIDGE UNLEASHED

**GOLDWATER'S
RULE**

noun. The satirical suggestion by Tournament Director Harry Goldwater that an opening lead out of turn should generally be accepted. The rationale is that a player who does not know whose turn it is to lead probably does not know the right lead either.

Submitted by Craig Gower, a well known bridge tutor in Joburg

THE BRIDGE LOUNGE

by Jeff Sapire

Taking a quick discard to throw a loser is generally a good idea, but not always.

Would you have fallen into the same trap as did declarer below?

Teams, neither vul

NORTH

S A9643

H A4

D A1094

C J2

WEST

S 7

H KQJ53

D QJ852

C A3

EAST

S J85

H 10976

D K763

C K5

SOUTH

S KQ102

H 82

D -

C Q1098764

Contract: 4S by South Opening lead: HK

South ended up in 4S, which looks like a good contract. Bear in mind that this was Team-of-Four bridge, where ensuring the contract is paramount; unlike (Matchpoint) Pairs, where overtricks count for so much.

Declarer won the opening lead on the table and immediately cashed the ace of diamonds, discarding his losing heart. He then played a spade to the king followed by a club. East won and continued a heart, which south ruffed. The next club was taken by west, who now led a diamond, again ruffed by declarer. Now he had only one trump left whereas east still had two. Declarer crossed his fingers and drew another trump, hoping that the remaining two would fall, but when they didn't, the hand collapsed. When he continued clubs east ruffed, and declarer's hand was now dead. Declarer lost one trump, two clubs and a late diamond.

So what went wrong? Strangely enough, the winning line is not to discard a heart at the second trick. The correct line of play is; Draw trumps and then play a club to east. They cash a heart and switch to a diamond, taken in dummy. Another club is taken by west. Hand over – the south hand is now high, and there's a vital trump to reach it.

The ace of diamonds was used for the wrong purpose. It must be used to PREVENT the defence from

weakening declarer's trumps, not for discarding the losing heart. By releasing the diamond ace, declarer allowed the defence to shorten the trump suit in the hand that contained the winning source of tricks – the long club suit. Of course had the trumps have been 2-2 then declarer's line would have made the contract with an overtrick. But a 3-1 break is more likely than 2-2, and as it only involves an overtrick, it must be correct to go for the safer line.

DARLING DAISY'S TIPS FOR BEGINNERS!

The following two tips discuss errors commonly made by beginners.

1. DON'T DRAW WINNING TRUMPS

As a beginner one is always told draw trumps quickly! However if you get to the point (when dutifully drawing the trumps!) that the defensive trumps are winners, it is usually best not to play any more trumps. It is not advisable to play two of your trumps, one from your hand and one from dummy to take out one opposing trump. Another reason to leave the master trump out is that if you give up the lead you give a tempo, allowing the defenders to cash or set up a winner.

Example

S K954

H AK7

D K7

C Q875

S Q8632

H 108

D 106

C J1092

S 107

H QJ6

D A932

C AK43

S AJ

H 95432

D QJ854

C 6

South is declarer in 4 Hearts. West leads J Clubs followed by 10 Clubs. Declarer ruffs, knocks out the Ace Diamonds and ruffs the next club. It is correct to cash 2 top trumps to stop West from ruffing a diamond, but then leave the master trump out. You need to keep a trump in dummy for ruffing a diamond and one in hand for dealing with any more clubs. In hands with a layout like above, it is important not to lose control as declarer.

2. RISKY RUFF AND DISCARD

As a defender, it is usually a mistake to lead a suit when you know that both declarer and dummy are void. If you lead the suit, declarer can ruff in one hand (normally the short trump hand) and throw a loser from the other.

Example	S K9432	
	H K64	
	D KQ4	
	C A8	
S 7		S 86
H 1093		H AJ75
D 109732		D A8
C K962	S AQJ105	C J10743
	H Q82	
	D J65	
	C Q5	

South plays in 4 Spades. You, West, lead 10D. Partner takes the KD with the AD and switches to the JC. The QC and the KC cover this, the Ace winning. Declarer takes two trumps and two diamonds before exiting with a club to your 9. If you now lead a diamond you give a ruff and discard. While the club position is less clear, the opponents could both be void. You do not want declarer to ruff in one hand and throw a heart from the other. Accordingly switch to 10 Hearts.

The absolute minimum of bidding to reach a Grand Slam!

My partner held S -
H KQJ852
D AKJ104
C 65

I had S AKQ8
H A
D Q96
C AQ932

He opened with 14 points (and a void) 2 Clubs which was explained to the opposition might not be 23+ points. I had 21 points and reasoning that he probably would be holding 19 or 20 points I bid 7NT. It was correct and one of the rare times I have ever bid and made a grand slam! (At my level of play we get nervous of 7 of anything and often chicken out at 6!)

Submitted by Deirdre Ingersent