

SAWBA Pairs Final Bulletin Number 2

The qualifying rounds played yesterday separated the sheep from the goats and the field was divided into 3 equal sections of 12 pairs in each section. A complete Howel would be played with 11 rounds of 5 boards each. Different boards were played in each section.

The Final Results

Very well done to Kit Gilmour and Maureen Holroyd who are crowned as the SAWBA champions for 2026. Second were Val Bloom and Nicola Bateman.

Well done to Lauren Harris and Leora Finz who won the B section and Karen Barnes and Anne-Marie Waterman who won the C section.

Thank you to Carol Stanton who ably directed the tournament.

The full results follow:

A Section

Pos	No	Pair	Average	Adj	MP	Bds
1	1	Maureen Holroyd & Kit Gilmour	57.45%		316 / 550	55
2	10	Nicola Bateman & Val Bloom	56.55%		311 / 550	55
3	6	Patricia Jane Crosse & Bev Hewitt	56.40%		310.2 / 550	55
4	11	Lotte Sorensen & Tas Nestoridis	55.96%		307.8 / 550	55
5	2	Diana Rosslee & Irene Sundelson	54.00%		297 / 550	55
6	7	Jenny Foaden & Renee Kenny	50.98%		280.4 / 550	55
7	12	Peta Balderson & Vanessa Armstrong	48.22%		265.2 / 550	55
8	5	Janice East & Sue Botha	47.09%		259 / 550	55
9	8	Delys Shepard & Helene Roberts	45.71%		251.4 / 550	55
10	9	Janne Masojada & Tanya Rawson	45.02%		247.6 / 550	55
11	3	Jackie Solovei & Linda Kaufmann	42.69%		234.8 / 550	55
12	4	Glynis Dornon & Dawn Palmer	40.47%		222.6 / 550	55

B Section

Pos	No	Pair	Average	Adj	MP	Bds
1	5	Laureen Harris & Leora Fintz	56.65%		311.6 / 550	55
2	4	Linda Campbell & Di Knowler	56.29%		309.6 / 550	55
3	7	Frances Harrison & Roxy Kelly	53.35%		293.4 / 550	55
4	8	Erica Zimet & Sandy Wentzel	52.44%		288.4 / 550	55
5	6	Gill Wansell & Kathy Botha	51.20%		281.6 / 550	55
6	9	Carol Grunder & Jill Rabie	51.16%		281.4 / 550	55
7	10	Wendy Tee & Alison Puggia	48.98%		269.4 / 550	55
8	11	Glenda Macleod & Rosemary Gowans	48.65%		267.6 / 550	55
9	1	Jennifer Adams & Sheila Francis	47.09%		259 / 550	55
10	3	Yvonne Blaine & Margie Du Toit	46.62%		256.4 / 550	55
11	12	Liezel Hutton & Kathy Light	44.73%		246 / 550	55
12	2	Jenny Ten-Bokum & Christine Jeffrey	43.02%		236.6 / 550	55

C Section

Pos	No	Pair	Average	Adj	MP	Bds
1	6	Karen Barnes & Anne-Marie Waterman	60.74%		328 / 540	54
2	8	June Pryce & Jane Bodin	54.63%		295 / 540	54
3	1	Jacqueline Gien & Sharon Sopher	54.26%		293 / 540	54
4	2	Ester Goosen & Dianne Penlington	53.15%		287 / 540	54
5	9	Caryn Querido & Dana Lieberman	52.04%		281 / 540	54
6	4	Barbara Crosby & Shirley Pollock	50.93%		275 / 540	54
7	5	Karen Rothbart & Lauren Dove	49.63%		268 / 540	54
8	7	Mignon Leigh & Bridie Bullen-Smith	47.59%		257 / 540	54
9	10	Arauna Viljoen & Julie Pfister	46.30%		250 / 540	54
10	3	Anne Cook & Madeleine Willsher	45.00%		243 / 540	54
11	12	Cynthia Cohen & Sandra Jacobs	44.44%		240 / 540	54
12	11	Patsy Els & Marilyn Nel	41.30%		223 / 540	54

Partscore Battles

Board 1 Dealer N None Vul	♠ Q94 ♥ Q10632 ♦ KJ54 ♣ 2
♠ J6 ♥ J4 ♦ A86 ♣ AQ10853	♠ A532 ♥ K75 ♦ 732 ♣ 974
	♠ K1087 ♥ A98 ♦ Q109 ♣ KJ6

Part-score contracts are as important as the slam and game contracts when playing pairs. An equal number of matchpoints are available on each board.

W	N	E	S
	P	P	1♣
P	1♥	P	1NT
P	2♥	P	P
P			

This was the auction at quite a few tables in the A section on the first board of the pairs final. West was remis when she failed to bid 2C over 1NT. I have a simple rule that when opponents bid 2 suits, a bid of either of their suits is natural and typically shows a 6-card suit. A 2C bid would have attracted a raise by the East hand and now on a heart lead, which costs a trick, it is possible to make 3C. The double finesse in clubs is the percentage play

when the opening of 1C promises 3 or more. Even going 1 down in 3C was worth an 80% score. One pair who did bid clubs at the 3 level were rewarded when opponents competed to 3H and did not guess the location of the JS and went 1 down. This was worth 100% score for East/West.

Board 3 was another part-score battle and again the West players had an opportunity to get into the action

Board 3	♠ 765	
Dealer S	♥ A873	
EW Vul	♦ A93	
	♣ J63	
	♠ Q	♠ 109432
	♥ KJ10952	♥ 64
	♦ 85	♦ J72
	♣ AQ109	♣ K72
	♠ AKJ8	
	♥ Q	
	♦ KQ1064	
	♣ 854	

At most tables the auction started off as follows

W	N	E	S
			1♦
1♥	1NT	P	P
P			

West's pass of the 1NT bid showed a lack of appreciation of the internal solidity of her heart suit and club suit. As little as the JC in partner's hand would make 7 tricks an easy goal and West knows that partner will have between 5-10 points given that N/S made no attempt to get to game. Bidding 2H or 2C had the effect of getting N/S out of their best spot of 1NT which made 9 tricks easily. The pair who was left to play in 2H, made 9 tricks easily.

The Scorecard

Contract	Lead	Score	MP	
2NT+2 N	♥ 6	180	10	0
1NT+2 N	♥ 6	150	8	2
3♦ = S	♠ Q	110	4	6
2♦ +1 S	♠ Q	110	4	6
2♦ +1 S	♥ 10	110	4	6
2♥ +1 W	♦ A	140	0	10

Pairs vs Teams

♠ 876				
♥ A97				
♦ AK9				
♣ AQJ7				
<hr/>				
♠ K105				
♥ K8				
♦ QJ32				
♣ K1043				
	W	N	E	S
			P	1♦
	P	2♣	P	2NT
	P	3NT	P	P
	P			

Playing teams, this would be a boring hand as on the QH lead against 3NT, you would cash your top 10 tricks and hope to make another with the KS.

In pairs, there are other considerations. Even my mum would make 10 tricks but how can we make 11 tricks? The only possibility is to try make the King of spades but this may be dangerous. Should one take the risk?

One option may be to cash your club and diamond tricks and maybe opponents will be kind enough to signal who holds the spade Ace. This seems a reasonable

option but what about the alternative of winning the AH and playing a low spade to the King. It will be very difficult for opponents to know that this is your weak suit. An expert West may even consider ducking with the Ace assuming that you would have the KQ for this early play. Bridge is a fascinating game.

None of the ladies made that risky play. Only 2 pairs made 11 tricks but their opponents had discarded poorly. The full hand

Board 30	♠ 876		
Dealer E	♥ A97		
None Vul	♦ AK9		
	♣ AQJ7		
♠ J92		♠ AQ43	NT
♥ QJ1043		♥ 652	N 11 9 8 11 12
♦ 106		♦ 8754	S 11 9 8 11 12
♣ 652		♣ 98	E 2 4 5 2 1
	♠ K105		W 2 4 5 2 1
	♥ K8		Par +920 6♣= NS
	♦ QJ32		NS: 18+12=30HCP
	♣ K1043		EW: 6 + 4 =10HCP

Contract	Lead	Score	MP
3NT+2 S	♥ Q	460	9 1
3NT+2 S	♥ Q	460	9 1
3NT+1 N	♥ 2	430	5 5
4NT= S	♥ Q	430	5 5
5♣+1 N	♣ 9	420	2 8
6NT-1 N	♦ 4	50	0 10

Making the 11th trick was worth a lot of matchpoints.

Jacoby 2NT

I think most SAWBA players play that a 2NT response to partner's major suit opening shows support and game forcing values. However, it is not clear to me how many have discussed the follow up auctions.

	♠ KQJ3 ♥ 7 ♦ J972 ♣ 9752	
♠ A105 ♥ J862 ♦ Q65 ♣ AJ4		♠ 42 ♥ AQ10943 ♦ A4 ♣ K108
	♠ 9876 ♥ K5 ♦ K1083 ♣ Q63	

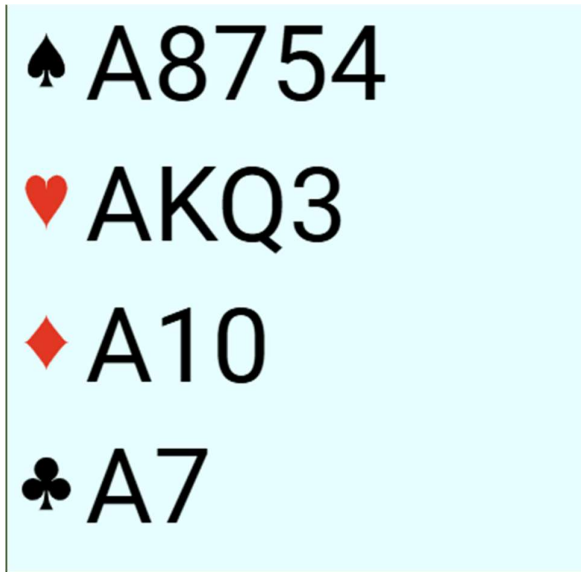
W	N	E	S
	P	1♥	P
2NT*	P	4♥	P
P	P		

This was a auction at most tables. Note that at only one table did East alert the 4H rebid. At that table, it showed a minimum with 6 hearts and no shortage and reasonable slam cards. What it meant at all the other tables I have no idea because there was no alert. Most people play it as showing a minimum hand, typically a weak NT hand such as

XX KQXXX AXX QJX. I'm sure you can all see that this East hand is much weaker than the

actual holding which included a 6th heart and sharp cards (aces and kings) outside the main suit. It is actually rather a good hand compared to the example I gave. Fortunately for those Easts who bid 4H meaning it as a weak hand, the West hand was dead minimum and slam was impossible to make.

Preempts and Optional Keycard Blackwood



Both vulnerable, your partner opens 3C. What would you do playing pairs?

The requirements for 3 level preempts have dropped considerably over the past 20 years. In the past, you would expect partner to have KQJXXXX as a minimum type of preempt and therefore it would be easy to bid 6NT. However, modern day preemptors frequently do it with 6 card suits and with irregular hands. At pairs you would like to be able to make an enquiry in case partner has a reasonable preempt. Some play a 4-level bid in the other minor would be optional keycard blackwood. How does this work?

3C – 4D* = optional keycard

Responses

4H = my hand is below expectations, I don't want to answer

4S = 1 key card

4NT = 1Keycard plus the queen of trumps

5C = 2 key cards

5D = 2 key cards with the queen of trumps

After a 4H response, the key carder can always sign off in 4NT which may be an attractive pairs option. The next step would ask for keycards again. After major suit or diamond preempts, you can play that 4C is always optional keycard blackwood.

Another Blackwood Hand



Despite having played bridge for more than 50 years, I still do not have a clear idea of how 6-6 shapes should be bid. Here is 1 auction with the above hand in the East seat

W	N	E	S
		1♥	X
1♠	2♣	2♦	3♣
3♦	P	5♦	P
P	P		

You might be scornful of East's 2D rebid with a 3 loser hand, but the chances of that being passed out is almost zero. When the bid attracted a raise by partner, you just have to visualize 2 aces outside of spades (an 8 count) to make slam. If you play exclusion keycard blackwood, you could bid 4S now which is keycard excluding the spade suit. Partner would show you 2 aces outside spades and it would be easy to bid 6D.

Many pairs rebid 3D with this hand and now there was just guessing. One pair opened 1D to create a reverse situation which I do not approve of and was also unable to find out anything about partner's hand. One East player rebid 4H after partner's diamond raise. This was an enterprising pair's bid and was lucky to find

B Section

Slams

Board 4 Dealer W All Vul	♠ 87 ♥ J986432 ♦ QJ9 ♣ Q	♠ 54 ♥ KQ107 ♦ K72 ♣ AKJ3
	♠ AKQJ932 ♥ A ♦ 43 ♣ 764	
	♠ 106 ♥ 5 ♦ A10865 ♣ 109852	

In the B section, 4 pairs bid to 6S on the above hand. Their auctions were all reasonable but at the final hurdle, the East players who took control by going blackwood, may have considered bidding 6NT to protect the KD. The spade slam is good as only a diamond lead with the Ace lying over the K will beat 6S. One of pairs was a bit unlucky when North chose to lead a diamond rather than their singleton club and beat 6S by 1 trick.

As an aside, I have noticed that many pairs play Keycard blackwood which is a significant improvement over standard blackwood. However, many do not know the various continuations that are possible after hearing partner's response to 4NT. Bidding the next step asks for the queen of trumps which would have been useful on the above hand as if missing a keycard and the trump queen, it would have been against the odds to bid the slam.

Contract	Lead	Score	MP	
6♠-1 W	♦ Q	100	10	0
4♠+3 W	♣ Q	710	7	3
4♣+3 W	♣ Q	710	7	3
6♠+1 W	♣ Q	1460	2	8
6♠+1 W	♥ 6	1460	2	8
6♠+1 W	♣ Q	1460	2	8

Listen to the Bidding, Combine your Chances

♠ Q6	<table border="1"> <tr><td>W</td><td>N</td><td>E</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>P</td><td>1♦</td></tr> <tr><td>P</td><td>2♦*</td><td>P</td><td>2♠*</td></tr> <tr><td>P</td><td>5♦</td><td>P</td><td>P</td></tr> <tr><td>P</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>				W	N	E	S			P	1♦	P	2♦*	P	2♠*	P	5♦	P	P	P			
W					N	E	S																	
						P	1♦																	
P					2♦*	P	2♠*																	
P					5♦	P	P																	
P																								
♥ J1063																								
♦ J																								
♣ K87543																								

What would you lead? 2D was invitational plus with diamond support and 2S showed a stopper.

The bidding strongly suggests that opponents do not have a heart stopper. Pairs players are reluctant to play in 5 of a minor if 3NT is possible. This makes a heart lead very attractive. On a heart lead, declarer will lose the first 2 tricks and now has to guess whether to take the spade or the club finesse.

Board 10	♠ J85	
Dealer E	♥ 92	
All Vul	♦ AKQ10542	
	♣ J	
♠ Q6		♠ 9732
♥ J1063		♥ AKQ85
♦ J		♦ 8
♣ K87543		♣ 962
	♠ AK104	
	♥ 74	
	♦ 9763	
	♣ AQ10	

Note that declarer can improve her chances by playing the AK of spades and if the queen does not drop, she can then guess how to play the club suit to avoid a spade loser. Playing the AK of

spades will be rewarded on this hand as the queen drops. Two pairs failed to find this combination chance and went down in 5D.

Contract	Lead	Score	MP	
5♦+2 S	♠Q	640	10	0
5♦= S	♣3	600	8	2
3♦+1 S	♥J	130	6	4
5♦-1 N	♥A	100	3	7
5♦-1 S	♥J	100	3	7
6♦-2 S	♦J	200	0	10

The Multi Stikes Again – but this time, it's proponents

Board 33	♠ QJ9765	
Dealer N	♥ 10742	
None Vul	♦ 5	
	♣ KJ	
	♠ –	♠ 842
	♥ Q96	♥ KJ53
	♦ AK76	♦ QJ1092
	♣ A76542	♣ Q
	♠ AK103	
	♥ A8	
	♦ 843	
	♣ 10983	

W	N	E	S
	2♦*	P	2♥*
3♣	P	P	P

The auction shown occurred at 2 tables. 2D was multi, 2H was relay or pass/correct and when West bid 3C, the spade fit was lost. This reflected poorly in the scorecard

Contract	Lead	Score	MP	
4♠ X= N	♣Q	590	10	0
3♠ +1 N	♣Q	170	7	3
3♠ +1 N	♣Q	170	7	3
3♣ = W	♦5	110	3	7
3♣ = W	♠Q	110	3	7
3♦ +1 E	♠A	130	0	10

Slam Bidding and 2 over 1 systems

Hand details:

- North (Jennifer Adams):** ♠ K, ♥ Q98, ♦ AK3, ♣ KJ9632
- South (Sheila Francis):** ♠ 8543, ♥ KJ3, ♦ J10872, ♣ 4
- West (Margie Du Toit):** ♠ AQ10962, ♥ A542, ♦ —, ♣ A108
- East (Yvonne Blaine):** ♠ J7, ♥ 1076, ♦ Q9654, ♣ Q75

Bidding Log:

W	N	E	S
		P	1♠
P	2♣*	P	2♥
P	3♣	P	3♠
P	3NT	P	4♣*
P	4NT*	P	6♣
P	P	P	

Contract: 6♣ = N

Score: 0-0

Sheila Francis and Jennifer Adams were the only pair to reach this excellent slam on the auction shown. I think the key bid was 4C by South as a slam try in clubs appreciating the value of 3 aces and void opposite a game forcing 2C bid. Well done! This hand demonstrates the value of playing 2 over 1 as game forcing. My suggested auction on the hand would be

1S – 2C

2H – 2NT

3C

North would now be very interested in slam. South does not have to rush to repeat her spade suit as North can bid 3S with a doubleton spade if that looks appropriate. Supporting partner's clubs should take precedence. The forcing 2NT bid by North is key as it allows partner to describe her hand further.

Defense to 1NT Openings

Board 42 Dealer E All Vul	♠ AK10 ♥ Q63 ♦ AQ98 ♣ Q82	♠ 42 ♥ 92 ♦ K1073 ♣ 109654
	♠ Q97 ♥ AK7 ♦ J542 ♣ AK3	
	♠ J8653 ♥ J10854 ♦ 6 ♣ J7	

After West opens 1NT (15-17) in third seat, most players have a problem with the North hand. The majority play that double of a strong NT is conventional showing either a single suited hand or for some it shows a longer minor and a 4 card major. With this agreement, East has to pass. When 1NT is passed round to South, it looks intuitive to pass however South knows that partner has at least 12-13 high card points and might have much more. This makes it clear for the South hand to take action. North needs to be aware that partner is bidding his hand and should not do more than invite game after hearing partner's suits.

Contract	Lead	Score	MP	
2♥ = S	♦ 2	110	10	0
1NT+1 W	♠ A	120	7	3
1NT+1 W	♠ A	120	7	3
1NT+2 W	♦ 8	150	4	6
2NT-3 N	♥ 9	300	2	8
3NT = W	♠ A	600	0	10

The pair who got to 2H were playing an unusual convention. North doubled 1NT and alerted it as "Capelletti 16+". Not sure what that means or how it works but they knew to pass partner's 2H response to the double. This was an outright top on the hand.

Please remember never to name a convention in your alert. Rather say exactly what it shows.

C Section

Partscore Battles

Board 9 Dealer N EW Vul	♠ K96 ♥ 1082 ♦ 86 ♣ A10952	♠ A7 ♥ 97643 ♦ J1094 ♣ Q3	<table style="font-size: small; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">NT</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">♠</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">♥</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">♦</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">♣</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">N</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">7</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">7</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">4</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">4</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">S</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">7</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">7</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">4</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">4</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">E</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">5</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">5</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">8</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">8</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">W</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">5</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">5</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">8</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">8</td> </tr> </table>	NT	♠	♥	♦	♣	N	7	7	4	4	S	7	7	4	4	E	5	5	8	8	W	5	5	8	8
NT	♠	♥	♦	♣																								
N	7	7	4	4																								
S	7	7	4	4																								
E	5	5	8	8																								
W	5	5	8	8																								
	♠ QJ85 ♥ KJ5 ♦ KQ32 ♣ 87	♠ 10432 ♥ AQ ♦ A75 ♣ KJ64	Par +110 3♣= NS NS: 7+14=21HCP EW: 7+12=19HCP																									

Many West players in the C section missed the boat then they failed to make a takeout double of South's third seat 1C opening. 8 tricks are available for E/W in both hearts and diamonds and 9 tricks are available for N/S in clubs

Contract	Lead	Score	MP	
3♣+2 S	♠ 5	150	10	0
2NT= S	♠ Q	120	8	2
3♣= S	♥ K	110	5	5
2♣+1 S	♦ K	110	5	5
1NT= N	♦ J	90	2	8
2♥+1 E	♣ 4	140	0	10

At no fewer than 4/6 tables, E/W did not enter the auction.

Partner Bids your Shortest Suit

Board 2 Dealer E NS Vul	♠ 103		
	♥ K953		
	♦ 4		
	♣ AK10742		
	♠ KQ652	♠ J97	
	♥ J76	♥ Q842	
	♦ Q2	♦ KJ5	
	♣ Q93	♣ J85	
	♠ A84		
	♥ A10		
	♦ A1098763		
	♣ 6		

	NT	♠	♥	♦	♣
N	8	9	9	10	10
S	8	9	9	10	10
E	4	4	4	2	1
W	4	4	4	2	1

Par +140	1♠+2 NS
NS: 10+12=22HCP	
EW: 8 +10=18HCP	

Well done to all those North players who realized that their nice looking 10 count was not so good when partner rebid diamonds, their shortest suit. Passing 2 or 3 diamonds earned them excellent scores. When there is no fit, you need significant extra values to make game

Contract	Lead	Score	MP
2♦+2 S	♠K	130	7 3
3♦+1 S	♠K	130	7 3
3♦+1 S	♠K	130	7 3
3♦+1 S	♠K	130	7 3
5♦-1 S	♠K	100	2 8
4♣-2 N	♠7	200	0 10

As a curiosity, note that **North/South** can make 9 tricks in their 3-2 fit in spades – the power of trumps. None of the C section players managed to get to this magnificent pairs contract.

PARTNER PREEMPTS IN MY SHORTEST SUIT AGAIN

Your partner opens a weak 2 in spades not vulnerable vs vulnerable and you have the following hand

♠ J
♥ AK102
♦ KQ109
♣ AQ73

What do you bid?

Very well done to Laura Barnes who took a brave view and PASSED!!. This provoked an indiscretion by their opponents who got involved in the auction and she ultimately doubled them in 4D and notched up +1100 and a top.

If you look at the whole hand it is easy to see that you can only make a lot of trick if you play in spades despite the fact that partner does not have a great spade suit. 3NT is very difficult to make whereas 4S is a breeze.

Board 44
Dealer W
NS Vul

♠ K43
♥ J
♦ J65432
♣ 854

♠ Q109765
♥ 873
♦ 7
♣ K96

♠ J
♥ AK102
♦ KQ109
♣ AQ73

♠ A82
♥ Q9654
♦ A8
♣ J102

NT	♠	♥	♦	♣
N	4	4	4	5
S	4	4	4	5
E	9	9	9	8
W	9	9	9	8

Par -400 3NT= EW
NS: 5 +11=16HCP
EW: 19+ 5 =24HCP

Contract	Lead	Score	MP	
3NT-2 E	♥4	100	10	0
3NT-1 E	♥5	50	7	3
3NT-1 E	♥5	50	7	3
3NT= E	♥5	400	4	6
3NT+2 E	♥4	460	2	8
4♦ X-4 N	♠J	1100	0	10

The 2 pairs who managed to make 3NT got a lot of help from their friends.

Board 43
Dealer S
None Vul

	♠ K1098	
	♥ QJ853	
	♦ Q10	
	♣ 32	
♠ A543		♠ QJ62
♥ 62		♥ 10
♦ 762		♦ 853
♣ K975		♣ QJ1064
	♠ 7	
	♥ AK974	
	♦ AKJ94	
	♣ A8	

None of the C section players got to grips with this hand. Most failed to get to slam when partner jumped to 4H over their 1H opening. This shows a weak hand with lots of hearts but I think the North hand is just too strong for that action. Some showed an invitational hand with hearts which is closer to the mark. The South Players now did not appreciate that as little as the QD and QH might be enough for slam (a 4 count). Blackwood was of no help on this hand.

For Improving Players
Submitted by Janne Masojada

Board 37 Dealer N NS Vul		♠ A103 ♥ AQ10872 ♦ 92 ♣ A5	
	♠ K752 ♥ J93 ♦ K4 ♣ KJ108	♠ QJ986 ♥ K6 ♦ J83 ♣ 973	♠ 4 ♥ 54 ♦ AQ10765 ♣ Q642

The above hand has a number of lessons for advancing players.

- a. After North opens 1H, should East overcall 2D or maybe even 3D? The advantages of bidding are that it takes up space, it may indicate to partner a good lead if South buys the contract or it might push the opponents higher than their safety level. The unbalanced distributional nature of the hand and shortage in the opened suit makes the overcall more attractive. Those who did overcall generally received a good matchpoint score on the hand.

- b. Quite a few pairs allowed their opponents to play in 2H after the following auction

W	N	E	S
	1♥	P	1♠
P	2♥	P	P
P			

The East hand led the 4 of spades. Declarer put up the queen in dummy and the West players, reflexively, covered an honour with an honour. This was a disaster because now declarer has 6 heart tricks and 5 spade tricks and 1 club trick – making 2H +4. Covering an honour with an honour should only be considered when doing so will promote cards for your side. The first step West should ask is “what is my partner’s lead?”. We advise against leading opponents suits and therefore when partner does lead one of the opponent’s suits, your first instinct should be that she has led a singleton. You can then see that covering is pointless as it cannot promote any cards in spades. The only time putting up the King could be right is if partner has underlead her ace of spades. Underleading an ace is very poor lead and should not be considered. If you do not cover the spade Queen declarer will make at most 3 spade tricks and often will only make 2 spade tricks – what a difference!!

The Scorecard

Contract	Lead	Score	MP	
2♥+4 N	♠4	230	9	1
3♥+3 N	♠4	230	9	1
3♥+1 N	♠4	170	6	4
3♠= S	♦K	140	4	6
4♦-2 E	♥K	100	2	8
3♦= E	♥K		0	10
		110		

In the B section, 2 pairs covered the queen of spades. The third pair did not and declarer actually played very well to make 10 tricks by drawing two rounds of trumps ending in dummy (disobeying the rule of playing the high cards from the short suit first) and repeated the spade finesse.

The 3 remaining scores at the bottom of the log were for pairs who interfered over the 1H opening earning them all above average scores.