

# SABF Women's Trials 2026

## Bulletin # 2

After the 1<sup>st</sup> match of the 3<sup>rd</sup> day, the first Round Robin is complete, and some pairs are looking a lot more comfortable than others. Nicola Bateman & Val Bloom averaged 14.25 VPs/match, to lead by a sizeable margin over Jenny Foaden & Renee Kenny. Vanessa Armstrong & Peta Balderson are also looking solid, with a margin of over 10 VPs over 4<sup>th</sup>.

With half of the event under these ladies' belts, there's still a lot of bridge to be played, and these positions can easily change.

At the halfway point, the leaderboard looks like this:

Pair	Total VPs	Round 1			Round 2			Round 3			Round 4			Round 5			Round 6			Round 7		
		Opp	IMPs	VP	Opp	IMPs	VP	Opp	IMPs	VP	Opp	IMPs	VP	Opp	IMPs	VP	Opp	IMPs	VP	Opp	IMPs	VP
7 - Nicola Bateman & Val Bloom	99.75	8	-5	8.52	3	23	15.56	2	47	18.87	4	47	18.87	5	33	17.17	6	-19	5.20	1	23	15.56
6 - Jenny Foaden & Renee Kenny	85.20	5	17	14.39	1	7	12.03	4	24	15.74	2	32	17.03	8	-32	2.97	7	19	14.80	3	-6	8.24
3 - Vanessa Armstrong & Peta Balderson	84.65	4	13	13.52	7	-23	4.44	5	2	10.61	8	34	17.31	2	11	13.04	1	15	13.97	6	6	11.76
8 - Diana Balkin & Sharon IzereI	73.92	7	5	11.48	4	3	10.91	1	-22	4.62	3	-34	2.69	6	32	17.03	5	10	12.80	2	17	14.39
5 - Tas Nestoridis & Lotte Sorensen	67.21	6	-17	5.61	2	13	13.52	3	-2	9.39	1	45	18.66	7	-33	2.83	8	-10	7.20	4	0	10.00
1 - Trish Crosse & Bev Hewitt	61.48	2	10	12.80	6	-7	7.97	8	22	15.38	5	-45	1.34	4	13	13.52	3	-15	6.03	7	-23	4.44
4 - Jennifer Adams & Peta Feinstein	49.20	3	-13	6.48	8	-3	9.09	6	-24	4.26	7	-47	1.13	1	-13	6.48	2	6	11.76	5	0	10.00
2 - Carol Grunder & Jill Rabie	38.59	1	-10	7.20	5	-13	6.48	7	-47	1.13	6	-32	2.97	3	-11	6.96	4	-6	8.24	8	-17	5.61

All the results and the contracts on every board can be found here:

<https://sabf.co.za/open-and-womens-trials-2026/>





## Match 4

1	<p>♠ AK</p> <p>♥ K8</p> <p>♦ AQJ102</p> <p>♣ KJ102</p>	<p><i>Dir: N</i></p> <p><i>Vul: None</i></p>																														
<p>♠ 654</p> <p>♥ J753</p> <p>♦ K876</p> <p>♣ A9</p>	<p>♠ Q7</p> <p>♥ AQ6</p> <p>♦ 95</p> <p>♣ Q87654</p>																															
<p>21</p> <p>8    10</p> <p>1</p>	<p>♠ J109832</p> <p>♥ 10942</p> <p>♦ 43</p> <p>♣ 3</p>	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td></td> <td>♣</td> <td>♦</td> <td>♥</td> <td>♠</td> <td>NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>N</td> <td>-</td> <td>2</td> <td>1</td> <td>3</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>S</td> <td>-</td> <td>2</td> <td>1</td> <td>3</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>E</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>W</td> <td>2</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> </tr> </table>		♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	2	1	3	1	S	-	2	1	3	1	E	1	-	-	-	-	W	2	-	-	-	-
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																											
N	-	2	1	3	1																											
S	-	2	1	3	1																											
E	1	-	-	-	-																											
W	2	-	-	-	-																											

2 pairs found the correct defense to beat 4♠. After a club lead to the Ace and a heart switch, E/W played 3 rounds of hearts which promoted the ♠Q for the 4th defensive trick. This defense was more important at Tas and Lotte's table where the contract was 4♠. Beating 4♠ earned them 8.7 IMPs.

The traveller:

<i>Board No 1 None Vul Dealer North</i>									
NS	EW	Bid	By	Ld	Tks	+Sc	-Sc	+	-
1	5	4♠	N	♣7	9		50	-8.70	+8.70
6	2	4♠	S	♣6	10	420		+5.30	-5.30
7	4	5♠	S	♠6	11	450		+6.30	-6.30
8	3	3♠	N	♣A	9	140		-3.00	+3.00

# Partscores

Slam hands are always exciting but sometimes the partscore battles can earn your side a lot of points. Here are 2 examples:

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
Pass	1 ♠	Pass	1 ♥
Pass	Pass	Dbl	2 ♠
3 ♦	3 ♠	Pass	Pass
All pass			4 ♠

When 2♠ was passed around to East, she knew that partner was short in spades and therefore it was likely that there was a fit in a minor and she made a takeout double. After 3♦ by West, South took the push to 3♠ because of her diamond shortage. North then fell from grace. If your hand

wasn't worth a game try the first time, it is clearly wrong to go onto game when partner competes further at the 3 level. 4 spades was not a terrible contract but went down quickly when the singleton ♥Q was lead and with the continuation East ruffed. There were still 2 aces to cash for +50 to E/W. The balancing double by East earned her side 5 imps as this bid was not found at any of the other tables.

3

*Dlr: S*

*Vul: E-W*

♠ 2

♥ A10875

♦ K10653

♣ 93

♠ A653

♥ Q

♦ AQ92

♣ 6542

9 ♠ KQ74

7 12 ♥ KJ643

12 ♦ 4

♣ K108

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	1	-	-	3	-
S	1	-	-	3	-
E	-	4	-	-	1
W	-	4	-	-	1

The traveller:

Board No 3 E/W Vul Dealer South									
NS	EW	Bid	By	Ld	Tks	+Sc	-Sc	+	-
1	5	4♠	N	♥Q	9		50	-5.00	+5.00
6	2	2♠	N	♣6	9	140		+1.70	-1.70
7	4	2♠	N	♥Q	9	140		+1.70	-1.70
8	3	2♠	N	♣4	9	140		+1.70	-1.70

West	North	East	South
Pass	2♥	Pass	1NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	2♠
2NT <sup>1</sup>	Pass	Dbl	Pass
3♦	Pass	3♣	Pass
		3♥	All pass

1. 2 Places to play

When 2♠ got passed around to Lotte, she knew that partner has some points and if a fit can be found, which is quite likely, a 3 level contract might be making. She therefore made a takeout double and her partner, Tas, bid 2NT to show 2 places to play. This is an interesting concept as it is

important on these auctions to maximize the chances that you get to the correct contract. East bid her suits up the line and when West converted 3♣ to 3♦, East knew she had hearts and reasoned that it might be better to play in hearts as she could ruff spades with low trumps. 3♥ was an easy make and earned E/W 6.7 imps when all of the other Easts in a similar position, passed out 2♠.

6

♠ A10653

♥ J

♦ 764

♣ J842

*Dlr: E*

*Vul: E-W*

♠ Q982

♥ K1063

♦ A932

♣ 7

♠ 4

♥ A985

♦ KJ108

♣ Q1065

6

9 10

15

♠ KJ7

♥ Q742

♦ Q5

♣ AK93

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	2	-	-	1	-
S	2	-	-	1	-
E	-	3	3	-	1
W	-	3	3	-	1

The traveller:

<b>Board No 6 E/W Vul Dealer East</b>									
NS	EW	Bid	By	Ld	Tks	+Sc	-Sc	+	-
1	5	3♥	E	♣A	9		140	-6.70	+6.70
6	2	2♠	S	♣7	8	110		+1.30	-1.30
7	4	2♠	S	♣7	9	140		+2.70	-2.70
8	3	2♠	S	♣7	9	140		+2.70	-2.70

# A Grand Slam

<b>8</b>	♠ 9842	<i>Dir: W</i>
	♥ 107	<i>Vul: None</i>
	♦ Q93	
	♣ Q752	
♠ KQJ765	♠ A10	
♥ KQ94	♥ AJ85	
♦ AK4	♦ 76	
♣	♣ A10864	
4	♠ 3	
18	♥ 632	
13	♦ J10852	
5	♣ KJ93	
		♣ ♦ ♥ ♠ NT
		N - - - - -
		S - - - - -
		E 3 2 7 7 7
		W 3 1 7 7 7

Only 2 of the 4 pairs holding the E/W cards managed to bid the excellent grand slam. Usually it is difficult to bid grand slams especially when there is a void in 1 hand but this hand was not particularly difficult as a Keycard ask by the hand with the void will reveal that we have all the Keycards.

Suggested auction might be:

<i>Board No 8 None Vul Dealer West</i>									
NS	EW	Bid	By	Ld	Tks	+Sc	-Sc	+	-
1	5	7♥	W	♥10	13		1510	-7.30	+7.30
6	2	6♥	W	♥10	13		1010	+7.30	-7.30
7	4	6♥	W	♥7	13		1010	+7.30	-7.30
8	3	7♥	W	♥7	13		1510	-7.30	+7.30

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
1 ♠	Pass	2 ♣	Pass
2 ♥	Pass	3 ♥ <sup>1</sup>	Pass
5 ♣ <sup>2</sup>	Pass	5 ♠ <sup>3</sup>	Pass
7 ♥	All pass		

1. Forcing
2. Exclusion Keycard Blackwood
3. 2 Keycards without the Queen

c



# 1NT Openings

♠ K Q  
 ♥ Q 9 4  
 ♦ 9 5  
 ♣ A K J 10 9 2

You hold the above hand in first position not vulnerable against vulnerable. What do you open?

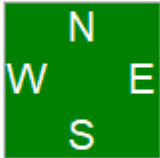
Opening 1NT showing 15-17 gets the hand off your chest but I do not recommend it as if you open 1♣ and rebid 3♣ this describes your hand perfectly. It shows a good club suit and 15-17 HCP's. I approve of 1NT openings with 6 card minors when the suit is poor and you are reluctant to jump to the 3 level in a poor suit. In terms of NT bidding, the value of the above hand is difficult to assess as each extra club is almost like an extra trick.

♠ J 8 3  
 ♥ A J 3 2  
 ♦ 10 6 4 2  
 ♣ Q 3

If your partner opens 1NT what do you do with this hand?

I strongly believe that when you hold an indifferent 8 count without a 5-card suit and few intermediate cards like 10's and 9's, it is clear to pass.

The full hand was:

<p>           ♠ 9 7 2            ♥ K 10 7 5            ♦ A K Q 8            ♣ 7 4         </p>	<p>           ♠ K Q            ♥ Q 9 4            ♦ 9 5            ♣ A K J 10 9 2         </p>		<p>           ♠ A 10 6 5 4            ♥ 8 6            ♦ J 7 3            ♣ 8 6 5         </p>
<p>           ♠ J 8 3            ♥ A J 3 2            ♦ 10 6 4 2            ♣ Q 3         </p>			

As you can see, 3NT should be beaten by losing 4 diamond tricks and 1 spade.

At 1 table the bidding went as follows

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	1 NT	Pass	2 ♣
Pass	2 ♥	Pass	2 NT
Pass	3 ♣	Pass	3 NT
All pass			
3 NT by North			

The 3♣ bid was a fancy bid saying if you have some help for me in clubs we might be able to make 3NT. I do not approve of this bid as North does not need help in clubs as if the worst comes to the worst 3NT may depend on the club finesse being onside. Bidding 3♣ might give the opponents too much information on defense.

When East led 4<sup>th</sup> highest spade, declarer won with the Queen and immediately played a spade back. It should now have been clear to East that it was likely that declarer could make 6 club tricks, 2 spades and 1 heart. It was therefore imperative for East to win the ♠A and switch to diamonds where they can take the next 4 tricks. Note that when the second spade is played, West has an option to either play the 7 or the 2. Playing the 2 suggests that a diamond switch is required. You may argue that West may have had only the 9 and 2 of spades to start with, but with this holding and playing upside down signaling, there is no point in putting in the 9 on the first trick and the 2 should be played to show partner that you have an even number of spades. This defense was not found at the 2 tables that declared 3NT.

<b>Board No 9 E/W Vul Dealer North</b>									
<b>NS</b>	<b>EW</b>	<b>Bid</b>	<b>By</b>	<b>Ld</b>	<b>Tks</b>	<b>+Sc</b>	<b>-Sc</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>-</b>
1	5	1NT	N	♠4	8	120		-5.00	+5.00
6	2	3NT	N	♠5	10	430		+5.00	-5.00
7	4	3NT	N	♠5	9	400		+4.00	-4.00
8	3	1NT	N	♠5	9	150		-4.00	+4.00



<b>14</b>	♠ A4	<i>Dir: E</i>				
	♥ 108653	<i>Vul: None</i>				
	♦ J8					
	♣ Q975					
♠ Q863	♠ KJ1095					
♥ A7	♥ QJ					
♦ KQ972	♦ 106					
♣ K3	♣ J862					
	♠ 72					
7	♥ K942					
14	♦ A543					
11	♣ A104					
		♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
		N	-	-	2	-
		S	-	-	2	-
		E	1	4	-	4
		W	1	4	-	4

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		Pass	1 ♦
Pass	1 ♥	1 ♠	2 ♥
4 ♠	All pass		

A cheeky 1♠ overall by East who was a passed hand got her side quickly to the making 4♠ contract. 4♠ needed the ♣A and ♥K to be onside which came to pass and 10 tricks rolled in for +7.7 imps. One pair who sold out to 2♥ found they could not beat that and lost 8.3 IMPs. Competing for the partscore can be rewarding but it was difficult for West to find a suitable bid once her opponent had opened her best suit (diamonds).

<b>Board No 14 None Vul Dealer East</b>									
NS	EW	Bid	By	Ld	Tks	+Sc	-Sc	+	-
1	5	2♠	E	♠7	10		170	+0.00	+0.00
6	2	3♠	W	♦J	11		200	-0.70	+0.70
7	4	2♥	N	♠10	8	110		+8.30	-8.30
8	3	4♠	E	♥4	10		420	-7.70	+7.70

# Match 5

2	♠ 75 ♥ QJ4 ♦ J109 ♣ AK642	Dlr: E Vul: N-S																														
♠ A832 ♥ 976 ♦ Q4 ♣ J1093	♠ J64 ♥ 108 ♦ 7653 ♣ Q875																															
11 7     3 19	♠ KQ109 ♥ AK532 ♦ AK82 ♣	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">♣</td> <td style="text-align: center;">♦</td> <td style="text-align: center;">♥</td> <td style="text-align: center;">♠</td> <td style="text-align: center;">NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">N</td> <td style="text-align: center;">4</td> <td style="text-align: center;">6</td> <td style="text-align: center;">6</td> <td style="text-align: center;">6</td> <td style="text-align: center;">6</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> <td style="text-align: center;">4</td> <td style="text-align: center;">6</td> <td style="text-align: center;">6</td> <td style="text-align: center;">6</td> <td style="text-align: center;">6</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">E</td> <td style="text-align: center;">-</td> <td style="text-align: center;">-</td> <td style="text-align: center;">-</td> <td style="text-align: center;">-</td> <td style="text-align: center;">-</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">W</td> <td style="text-align: center;">-</td> <td style="text-align: center;">-</td> <td style="text-align: center;">-</td> <td style="text-align: center;">-</td> <td style="text-align: center;">-</td> </tr> </table>		♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	4	6	6	6	6	S	4	6	6	6	6	E	-	-	-	-	-	W	-	-	-	-	-
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																											
N	4	6	6	6	6																											
S	4	6	6	6	6																											
E	-	-	-	-	-																											
W	-	-	-	-	-																											

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
Pass	3 ♦ <sup>1</sup>	Pass	1 ♥
All pass			6 ♥

## 1. 3 Card Raise & 10-12 HCPs

Sharon Izerel made a very practical bid of 6♠ when her partner showed a 3 card invitational heart raise.

After the ♣J Lead, she pitched 2 diamonds on the Ace and King and played a spade to the King. West won and continued clubs. Declarer cashed the ♠Q and ruffed a spade and when the Jack came down and hearts broke, she could claim. This was worth a whopping 13 imps when no one else bid the slam.

<b>Board No 2 N/S Vul Dealer East</b>									
NS	EW	Bid	By	Ld	Tks	+Sc	-Sc	+	-
1	4	4♥	S	♣J	12	680		-4.00	+4.00
2	3	4♥	S	♣J	11	650		-5.00	+5.00
5	7	4♥	S	♣J	12	680		-4.00	+4.00
8	6	6♥	S	♣J	12	1430		+13.00	-13.00

<b>7</b>	♠ KJ74	<i>Dlr: S</i>
	♥ 1062	<i>Vul: Both</i>
	♦ K7	
	♣ K1076	
♠ 109	♠ Q86532	
♥ J7	♥ AQ9	
♦ Q5	♦ J4	
♣ AQJ8543	♣ 92	
10	♠ A	
10	♥ K8543	
11	♦ A1098632	
	♣	

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	5	5	-	4
S	-	5	5	-	4
E	1	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	-	-

No books have been written on how to bid hands with 7-5-1-0 shape. It is especially difficult when the shorter suit is higher ranking suit and it is a major. None of the women's pairs had a problem getting to 4♥ on the above combination and I suspect that they may have opened 1♥ with this shape.

If you open 1♦ the bidding may go:

	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
				1♦
	3♣	Dbl	Pass	4♥
	All pass			

If you open 1♥ the bidding may go:

	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
				1♥
	3♣	3♥	Pass	4♥
	All pass			

<b>Board No 7 Both Vul Dealer South</b>									
NS	EW	Bid	By	Ld	Tks	+Sc	-Sc	+	-
1	4	4♥	S	♣A	11	650		-1.30	+1.30
2	3	4♠*	E	♦A	7	800		+4.00	-4.00
5	7	4♥	S	♠10	11	650		-1.30	+1.30
8	6	4♥	S	♠10	11	650		-1.30	+1.30

<b>8</b>	♠ K10862	<i>Dir: W</i>
	♥ 9	<i>Vul: None</i>
	♦ AK	
	♣ AKQ94	
♠ A5	♠ Q3	
♥ QJ1065432	♥ K7	
♦ 97	♦ QJ1085	
♣ 3	♣ J1052	
	♠ J974	
19	♥ A8	
7	♦ 6432	
5	♣ 876	
		♣♦♥♠NT
		N 5 2 - 6 -
		S 5 2 - 6 -
		E - - 2 - -
		W - - 2 - -

6♠ is a reasonable contract on the above hand as it is almost a 50% proposition to hold your spade losers to only 1. Of course, there may be a club ruff lurking even if you get the spades right and this makes the contract suboptimal especially after there has been a preempt.

Diana Balkin and Sharon Izerel bid as follows to get to 6♠:

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
4♥	Dbl	Pass	4♠
Pass	4NT	Pass	5♣
Pass	6♠	All pass	

Diana did not bother asking for the queen of trumps as she knew Sharon had never failed to locate the critical Queen in the past. She was right! After winning the ♥A, Sharon played the ♠J and when West followed low, she guessed to play the King. After spades broke 2-2, declarer could claim 12 tricks

At another table the pre-empt worked well. The bidding went:

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
4♥	Dbl	All pass	

The defense to 4♥ was imperfect and it went only 1 down for +100.

Similarly, the players in 5♥ also somehow managed to escape for only 2 down.

<b>Board No 8 None Vul Dealer West</b>									
NS	EW	Bid	By	Ld	Tks	+Sc	-Sc	+	-
1	4	5♠	N	♥K	11	450		+0.30	-0.30
2	3	4♥*	W	♣K	9	100		-8.70	+8.70
5	7	5♥*	W	♦A	9	300		-3.70	+3.70
8	6	6♠	S	♥Q	12	980		+12.00	-12.00

## A Fascinating Hand (in a boring sort of way)

10	♠ 1076	<i>Dlr: E</i> <i>Vul: Both</i>																															
	♥ A86																																
	♦ AK3																																
	♣ AK93																																
♠ K94	♠ A32	<table border="1" style="font-size: 0.8em;"> <tr> <td></td> <td>♣</td> <td>♦</td> <td>♥</td> <td>♠</td> <td>NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>N</td> <td>3</td> <td>2</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>S</td> <td>3</td> <td>2</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>E</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>W</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> </tr> </table>			♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	3	2	2	3	2	S	3	2	2	3	2	E	-	-	-	-	-	W	-	-	-	-	-
	♣			♦	♥	♠	NT																										
N	3			2	2	3	2																										
S	3			2	2	3	2																										
E	-	-	-	-	-																												
W	-	-	-	-	-																												
♥ QJ94	♥ K73																																
♦ Q86	♦ 9742																																
♣ 865	♣ J107																																
18	♠ QJ85																																
8	♥ 1052																																
6	♦ J105																																
	♣ Q42																																

Unlike online bridge, when reporting face-to-face bridge it is often very difficult to know exactly what happened and many hidden interesting aspects of the hands come up in the postmortem. This hand looks most uninteresting with every suit breaking 4333 but there were hidden gems.

In the postmortem, when we look at the travelling scorecard below, only one declarer failed

to make at least 9 tricks in a NT contract and she was berating herself. We asked for a detailed account of what happened so that we could try to assess if she really did anything wrong.

The bidding went as follows:

	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			Pass	Pass
	Pass	1 ♣	Pass	1 ♠
	Pass	2 NT	Pass	3 NT
	All pass			

4♦ lead (3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> leads)

Let's look at each suit in turn

- A. Diamonds – Declarer went up with the ♦J and West covered with the Queen. Was this correct? The lead may have been from a 5 card suit headed by the Ace. If that was the case, playing the Queen is a losing play as it gives declarer 2 tricks when holding KX opposite J10X. Playing the Queen is correct when partner has led low from AKXXX and it makes no difference if partner has led a 3 or 4 card suit.
- B. Spades – what is the optimal way for declarer to play spades? She won the diamond with the Ace and played a spade up to the Queen which lost to the King. Later in the hand she played a LOW spade from hand to the Jack which has the advantage of picking up a doubleton spade honour on her left.  
Should East have hopped with the Ace of spades on the first round? This was a difficult but not an impossible play to find. It is unlikely to cost but East was not sure what to play next if she won the first spade. She knew too little about the hand at that stage. Maybe she had struck gold with the diamond lead and partner had KQ8 or maybe it was essential to switch to a heart (the winning play).
- C. Hearts: When West won the first spade with the King, it was obvious to switch to the hearts. The presence of the ♥10 in dummy made this interesting. She switched to the

Queen and received an encouraging signal from partner. With this holding, the only option was to continue with a low heart but imagine if West held ♥QJx. It is now still correct to continue with a low heart. This will give declarer a losing option when she holds ♥Kxx. An expert defender would not hesitate to switch to the ♥Q from a holding of ♥AQxx and then continue low. Now declarer must play the king whereas if the defender has ♥QJx, she must play low.

- D. Declarer won the 3<sup>rd</sup> heart and now decided to play a low spade as discussed previously. When the spade trick held in dummy, a disadvantage of trying for Ax in East's hand arose. It was now unsafe to try a third round of spades in case the defenders could cash 2 further spades leading to 1 down (2 hearts and 3 spade losers). Had she played the ♠10, East would have to win her Ace and now declarer can safely play a third round of spades to see if the suit is breaking.
- E. Clubs: With AK9X opposite QXX, if nothing happens the 3-3 club break will yield 4 tricks and the contract at this stage (1♠, 1♥, 3♦ and 4♣). But when declarer played the ♣A and low to the Queen, East played the 10 on the second round. Suddenly another option arose. Declarer can play for the 3-3 break or take finesse the 9 of clubs. Which is correct? Restricted choice principles indicate that East must play the 10 from 10x but from J10x, she has the option to play the 10 or J. It's therefore twice as likely that she has 10x rather than J10x. Declarer finessed the 9 and went 1 down.

Did our declarer do anything wrong?

I don't think so. Her only error was that maybe she guessed a couple of situations incorrectly. I would be happy to have this declarer on my team as she demonstrated an advanced knowledge of suit combinations and played out a complex hand competently.

Next time you watch bridge online or face-to-face and an expert declarer goes into the tank for no apparent reason, always try to understand what he is thinking about as even the most benign looking situations are often more complex than what is immediately apparent.

- F. The bidding: At one table, South passed the 2NT bid whereas at the other 3 tables, South bid onto 3NT. Who was correct? Looking at all 4 hands, it should be clear that 3NT is a very poor contract requiring quite a few miracles. Firstly, the ♦Q was onside, secondly it was maybe difficult for East to find a heart lead from Kxx (that would have been my preference rather than an anaemic 4 card diamond suit but sometimes on this bidding, a passive defense is best. The 4333 shape suggests that suits are breaking well for declarer and so maybe a more active defense is indicated). Even without the initial heart lead, expert defenders will sometimes find the correct defense of hopping with the ♠A and switching to a heart (this would have been an easier defense to find if West did not cover the ♦J with the Queen). Overall, 3NT is a terrible contract and most of the time, it would have been a winning action to pass 2NT.

This simple hand demonstrates many aspects of bidding, declarer play and defense that could easily be missed without detailed analysis.

**11**

♠ 10853  
♥ 4  
♦ A863  
♣ KJ105

*Dlr: S*  
*Vul: None*

♠ 42  
♥ 10986  
♦ J4  
♣ A7432

♠ KJ7532  
♥ K975  
♦ K975  
♣ Q86

♠ AKQJ976  
♥ AQ  
♦ Q102  
♣ 9

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	1	3	-	6	5
S	-	3	-	5	5
E	1	-	3	-	-
W	-	-	3	-	-

8  
5 9  
18

Vanessa Armstrong found the best lead of the ♦J. Declarer ducked to the King and East had to find a very difficult switch of a club. When she failed to do so, declarer had 12 tricks. Note that on any lead other than the ♦J, declarer just needs to guess clubs to make the contract. The 2♣ opening was very aggressive but worked well on the above hand.

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			2 ♣
Pass	2 ♦	Pass	3 ♠
Pass	4 ♣	Pass	4 ♥
Pass	4 NT	Pass	5 ♦
Pass	6 ♠	All pass	

All the other pairs reached 6♠ and the West players lead the ♣A. Declarer was now able to locate the ♣Q and get 2 diamond pitches.

Remarkably this was a flat board and bidding and making

6♠ earned you 0 imps. This was one of the few flat boards of the tournament thus far!

<b>Board No 11 None Vul Dealer South</b>									
NS	EW	Bid	By	Ld	Tks	+Sc	-Sc	+	-
1	4	6 ♠	S	♣A	12	980		+0.00	+0.00
2	3	6 ♠	S	♦J	12	980		+0.00	+0.00
5	7	6 ♠	S	♣A	12	980		+0.00	+0.00
8	6	6 ♠	S	♣A	12	980		+0.00	+0.00

**14**      ♠ 83      *Dlr: E*  
              ♥ A8652      *Vul: None*  
              ♦ A752  
              ♣ 107

♠ AKQ96      ♠ J4  
 ♥ J104      ♥ Q93  
 ♦ 864      ♦ Q  
 ♣ 43      ♣ AK98652

8      ♠ 10752  
 10      ♥ K7  
       12      ♦ KJ1093  
 10      ♣ QJ

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	3	1	-	-
S	-	3	1	-	-
E	2	-	-	3	-
W	2	-	-	3	-

North led the ♦A. Many pairs now play suit preference when there is singleton in the dummy but is this really required when it is clear not to switch to clubs? If South simply discourages diamonds, it must mean that a heart switch is ok. There is no value in switching to the ♥A but a low heart switch wins all the marbles when South can ruff a third round of hearts beating 4S. This neat defense was not found at the table and declarer notched up + 420 and 10.7 imps.

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		1 ♣	1 ♦
1 ♠	3 ♦	Pass	Pass
3 ♠	Pass	4 ♠	All pass

Tas and Lotte, defending 3♠, found an excellent defense of the ♦A lead and low heart switch and heart ruff. A third round of diamonds locked declarer in dummy and another trick was lost beating 3♠. This only earned them 2 IMPs but they would have lost 6 or 7 imps had they allowed 3♠ to make.

<i>Board No 14 None Vul Dealer East</i>									
NS	EW	Bid	By	Ld	Tks	+Sc	-Sc	+	-
1	4	3♦	S	♠A	9	110		+4.30	-4.30
2	3	4♠	W	♦A	10		420	-10.70	+10.70
5	7	3♠	W	♦A	8	50		+2.00	-2.00
8	6	3♦	S	♠A	9	110		+4.30	-4.30

# Match 6

**8**      ♠ 984  
              ♥ AJ762  
              ♦ 96543  
 ♠ A1096      ♠ KQ3  
 ♥ K107653    ♥ AQ2  
 ♦ Q             ♦ 983  
 ♣ A10          ♣ K872

5      ♠ J87542  
 13 14   ♥ J  
 8       ♦ K1054  
           ♣ QJ

*Dir: W*  
*Vul: None*

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	2	-	-	-
S	-	2	-	-	-
E	1	-	4	2	2
W	1	-	5	2	2

None of our trialists got to the excellent 6♥ on this hand. The hands fit perfectly and that is difficult to diagnose. Those who play that a fit showing Jacoby 2NT bid can be made with only 3 card support would have had a chance when they discover that partner has a singleton diamond.

**Board No 8 None Vul Dealer West**

NS	EW	Bid	By	Ld	Tks	+Sc	-Sc	+	-
1	3	4♥	W	♣5	12	480		+0.00	+0.00
4	2	4♥	W	♥4	12	480		+0.00	+0.00
5	8	4♥	W	♣3	12	480		+0.00	+0.00
6	7	5♥	W	♦A	12	480		+0.00	+0.00



**10**

**Dir: E**  
**Vul: Both**

♠ AK109  
 ♥ J63  
 ♦ J987  
 ♣ 85

♠ AKQ84  
 ♦ K105  
 ♣ Q9432

♠ J75  
 ♥ 109752  
 ♦ 643  
 ♣ J6

♠ Q86432  
 ♥ AQ2  
 ♣ AK107

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	7	4	4	3	3
S	7	4	4	3	5
E	-	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	-	-

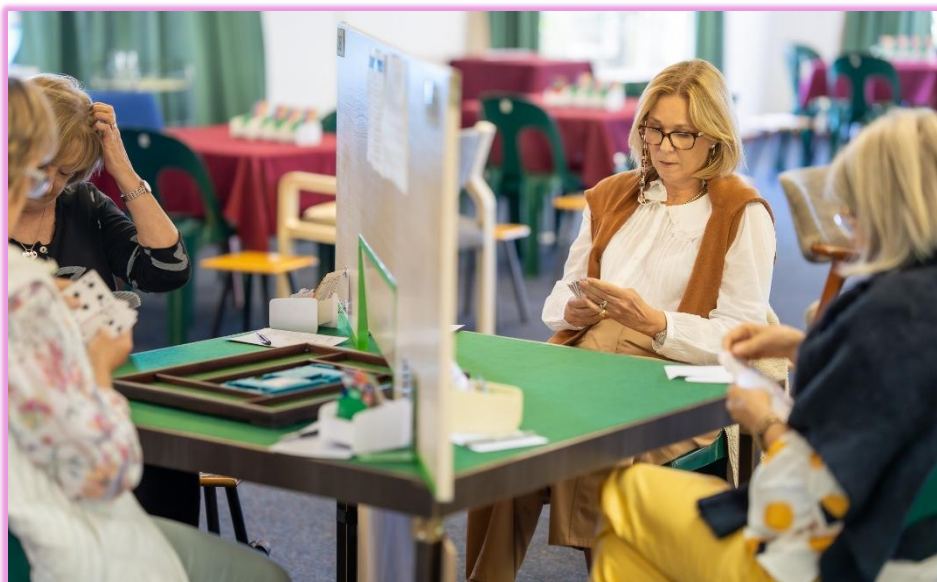
7♣ is an excellent contract on the above layout but only 1 pair, Jenny Foaden and Renee Kenny got as high as 6♣.

West	North	East	South
Pass	2♥	Pass	1♠
Pass	3♣	Pass	2♠
Pass	4♦ <sup>1</sup>	Pass	4♣
Pass	6♣	All pass	4♠ <sup>2</sup>

I am not a fan of going Blackwood with a void and it was perhaps not inconceivable that partner had no Keycards (KQJxx Jx Kx J10xx) but this is a difficult hand to bid when you have a void in partner's primary suit (spades). It is difficult to construct a reasonable and safe auction to get to 7♣.

1. Kickback
2. 0/3 Keycards

Board No 10 Both Vul Dealer East									
NS	EW	Bid	By	Ld	Tks	+Sc	-Sc	+	-
1	3	3NT	N	♦4	11	660		-3.70	+3.70
4	2	3NT	S	♦7	11	660		-3.70	+3.70
5	8	5♣	S	♦7	13	640		-5.00	+5.00
6	7	6♣	N	♠5	13	1390		+12.30	-12.30



**13**

♠ 103  
♥ Q975  
♦ 65432  
♣ 92

*Dlr: N*  
*Vul: Both*

♠ AQ987  
♥ KJ64  
♦ J8  
♣ 43

♠ 54  
♥ A32  
♦ K  
♣ AKJ10765

2 ♠ KJ62  
11 15 ♥ 108  
12 ♦ AQ1097  
♣ Q8

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	-	-	-	-
S	-	-	-	-	-
E	5	-	3	3	2
W	5	-	3	4	2

Another hand where only 1 pair got to the making 5♣. 5♣ is a marginal game but is certainly a lot better than the 4♠ contract reached at 2 tables. It requires the ♣Q to come down (50% chance) and then either the spade finesse or spade break or the heart finesse to be on. I think it is just odds on for a vulnerable game. Diana Balkin and Sharon Izerel bid as follows:

**Board No 13 Both Vul Dealer North**

NS	EW	Bid	By	Ld	Tks	+Sc	-Sc	+	-
1	3	4♣	W	♦5	9	100		+4.30	-4.30
4	2	3♣	E	♥10	11		150	-2.00	+2.00
5	8	5♣	E	♦A	11		600	-12.00	+12.00
6	7	4♠	W	♦2	7	300		+9.70	-9.70

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	Pass	1♣	1♦
1♠	3♦	4♣	Pass
5♣	All pass		



# Match 7

♠ A 9  
 ♥ J 9 8 7 6  
 ♦ 7  
 ♣ A 8 6 4 2

With both sides vulnerable sitting West, you hold the following hand and the bidding proceeds as follows:

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
Pass	Pass	2 ♥	Dbl
4 ♥	4 ♠	Pass	Pass
?			

Do you take the push to 5♥?

The winning action is to pass as if you lead your singleton diamond, 4♠ can be beaten. 5♥ should go 2 down but at one table there was an accident when South split her club honors. Now declarer could endplay North into giving a ruff and a discard.

4

*Dlr: W*

*Vul: Both*

<p>♠ A9</p> <p>♥ J9876</p> <p>♦ 7</p> <p>♣ A8642</p>	<p>♠ Q542</p> <p>♥ A</p> <p>♦ Q105432</p> <p>♣ J10</p>	<p>♠ KJ</p> <p>♥ KQ5432</p> <p>♦ 98</p> <p>♣ 975</p>
--	--	--

9	<p>♠ 108763</p> <p>♥ 10</p> <p>♦ AKJ6</p> <p>♣ KQ3</p>	
9		
13		

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	- 4	- 3	1		
S	- 4	- 3	1		
E	3	- 3	-	-	
W	3	- 3	-	-	

<i>Board No 4 Both Vul Dealer West</i>									
<i>NS</i>	<i>EW</i>	<i>Bid</i>	<i>By</i>	<i>Ld</i>	<i>Tks</i>	<i>+Sc</i>	<i>-Sc</i>	<i>+</i>	<i>-</i>
1	7	5♥*	E	♦A	10	200		-4.30	+4.30
3	6	4♥	W	♠4	9	100		-7.70	+7.70
4	5	5♥*	E	♦A	9	500		+4.30	-4.30
8	2	4♠	N	♥K	10	620		+7.70	-7.70

# Balancing

Both vulnerable you are sitting East and hold:

♠ Q 9 3 2  
 ♥ K 4  
 ♦ K Q 9 5  
 ♣ J 8 6

With North dealer, it goes:

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	Pass	Pass	1 ♠
Pass	Pass	?	

Do you balance?

The full hand:

*Dir: N*  
*Vul: Both*

13

♠ J74 ♥ 5 ♦ A8762 ♣ Q1092	♠ 10 ♥ 1098762 ♦ 104 ♣ K754	♠ Q932 ♥ K4 ♦ KQ95 ♣ J86
3 7    11 19	♠ AK865 ♥ AQJ3 ♦ J3 ♣ A3	

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	1	-	5	3	2
S	1	-	5	3	2
E	-	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	-	-

2 players who did protect with 1NT showing 11-14 (10-11 as a passed hand?) soon found themselves defending 4♥ which made easily.

Was it wrong to protect? Against protecting was having only a doubleton heart and having four spades made it less likely that partner was sitting with a significant number of high card points as she had taken no action over 1♠ when it was likely that she was short in spades. However, I think if you pass in this position, you may sometimes find that you miss a good part-score or even a game when partner had no suitable action with 13-14 high card points.

I'm a bidder (Bernard Donde).

<i>Board No 13 Both Vul Dealer North</i>									
NS	EW	Bid	By	Ld	Tks	+Sc	-Sc	+	-
1	7	2♥	S	♣9	13	260		-4.70	+4.70
3	6	4♥	N	♦K	10	620		+5.30	-5.30
4	5	4♥	S	♣9	12	680		+7.30	-7.30
8	2	1♠	S	♥5	9	140		-8.00	+8.00

## Tournament Director's Report

As president of the SABF, I used my executive powers to appoint myself as the tournament director for the Women's and Open Trials. I was confident to do this even though I have little experience in running a face-to-face tournaments. This was because I knew I had the support of Rob Stephens who is currently our most experienced tournament organizer. I just had to say to him that I needed help in organizing this event and the next thing I knew he did the following:

1. He assembled the tables and screens and organized the room. This included labelling each table with seating positions and printing movement cards for each table.
2. He found a suitable movement for 4 tables where everyone played each other and had every other pair as 'opponents' and 'teammates' an equal number of times as far as could be possible.
3. He printed personalized scoring cards for each player.
4. He printed personal movement cards for each player that indicated who their 'opponents' and who their 'teammates' were for each round.
5. He did extensive testing of the ScoreBridge program to ensure that it would be able to score a cross-imping event.
6. He arranged that Grant Ewels, another gem in our mist, did the dealing of all the boards, the scoring of the event, design of the trial's webpage and posting of all results.
7. He arranged coffee, tea and biscuits for the players.
8. He has assisted me with the bulletins by checking for typographical and analytic errors and has given each bulletin a professional look.

He did all the above and his only motivation for doing so was his desire to improve the running of organized bridge in South Africa. He cannot be thanked enough for his contribution.

- Bernard Donde