

At the end of 5 grueling days of bridge, the women's team who will represent South Africa in the upcoming African Zonal Championships in September has been decided.

Congratulations to:

Vanessa Armstrong & Peta Balderson

Nicola Bateman & Val Bloom

Renee Kenny & Jenny Foaden



Special mention must be made to Jenny Foaden. This will be her debut playing for South Africa. All the best to this team for the African Zonals. Let's hope they'll qualify through to the Venice Cup, expected to take place in Barbados in 2027!

The Open Teams trials took place over just two days, as only five pairs entered. Those five pairs were formed into two teams and played a head-to-head "Final" over 96 boards.

After many interesting boards, and a lot of IMPs being exchanged between the two teams, the Apteker team emerged victorious with a score of 287 – 135.

Congratulations to:

Alon Apteker & Craig Gower

Neville Eber & Hennie Fick

Jude Apteker & Rob Stephens



As with Jenny, this will also be Jude Apteker's first time representing SA. Jude's brother, Noah, played with Rob last year in the Bermuda Bowl, but was unavailable this year. Aras, their younger brother (now 18!) will be next in line, and then Alon will be able to form a full "Apteker" team!

On another note, there were 3 younger players (Less than 50 years is considered very young in the bridge world) playing in the Open event: Jude Apteker, Opi Moedi and Rob Stephens.

The SABF hopes more youngsters will start getting developed, and good work is being done by various provinces around the country. As a duty to this wonderful game, all our members should be introducing Bridge to younger family members. This is easily the quickest way to grow the base of players, and in time the quality of play throughout the country.

Do your part and get recruiting!

Now onto the details of the results...

Vanessa Armstrong and Peta Balderson had an amazing campaign. After losing their 2nd match on the first day of the trials (4 days ago!), they went on a rampage and won every one of their remaining 12 matches. They ended up averaging 13 VPs/match. Considering a draw in a match awards 10 VPs, this shows that consistency goes a long way. Nicola Bateman & Val Bloom finished just 0.44 VPs behind Van & Peta. After leading by 14 VPs at the half way point, the main difference came in their rematch of each other. Vanessa & Peta's only loss was against Nicola & Val, by a margin of 23 IMPs. Revenge was had on the final morning, when Van and Peta beat them by 21 IMPs.

Jenny & Renee had a nervous 2nd half of the tournament. After lying a comfortable 2nd at the half way point, they had some tough matches which they navigated well. They had to achieve one big result on the final morning, and they achieved this with a 17,97 VP win in the 13th match. This virtually guaranteed their 3rd place spot, beating out Tas & Lotte, and Diana & Sharon.

The final 2nd Round Robin and total results were as follows:

Pair	Total VPs	Carry Over	Match 8			Match 9			Match 10			Match 11			Match 12			Match 13			Match 14		
			Opp	IMPs	VP	Opp	IMPs	VP	Opp	IMPs	VP	Opp	IMPs	VP	Opp	IMPs	VP	Opp	IMPs	VP	Opp	IMPs	VP
3 - Vanessa Armstrong & Peta Balderson	182.88	84.65	5	42	18.33	6	27	16.26	7	9	12.55	8	17	14.39	2	4	11.20	1	21	15.19	4	1	10.31
1 - Nicola Bateman & Val Bloom	182.44	99.75	8	-4	8.80	7	3	10.91	6	45	18.66	5	7	12.03	4	8	12.29	3	-21	4.81	2	21	15.19
2 - Jenny Foaden & Renee Kenny	155.33	85.20	7	-4	8.80	8	20	15.00	5	-23	4.44	6	1	10.31	3	-4	8.80	4	39	17.97	1	-21	4.81
5 - Tas Nestoridis & Lotte Sorensen	139.95	67.21	3	-42	1.67	4	11	13.04	2	23	15.56	1	-7	7.97	7	7	12.03	8	38	17.85	6	-22	4.62
4 - Diana Balkin & Sharon Izerel	131.47	73.92	6	37	17.72	5	-11	6.96	8	-13	6.48	7	-11	6.96	1	-8	7.71	2	-39	2.03	3	-1	9.69
6 - Trish Crosse & Bev Hewitt	122.09	61.48	4	-37	2.28	3	-27	3.74	1	-45	1.34	2	-1	9.69	8	10	12.80	7	22	15.38	5	22	15.38
7 - Jennifer Adams & Peta Feinstein	111.07	49.20	2	-2	9.39	1	-3	9.09	3	-9	7.45	4	11	13.04	5	-7	7.97	6	-22	4.62	8	1	10.31
8 - Carol Grunder & Jill Rabie	92.96	38.59	1	4	11.20	2	-20	5.00	4	13	13.52	3	-17	5.61	6	-10	7.20	5	-38	2.15	7	-1	9.69

In the Open, the opposing team of James Grant, Larry Chemaly, Diniar Minwalla and Omphemetse "Opi" Moedi put up a valiant fight, bringing in 135 IMPs over 96 boards. This is a healthy amount of IMPs, but unfortunately many more IMPs were leaked out in the process, 287 to be exact. Many of these were arguably unnecessary, and no doubt a lot of discussions will be had by both teams regarding some of these unanswered IMPs. Hopefully a few lessons were learnt, and some system misunderstandings were ironed out in the process.

	Wednesday 6 May			Total	Thursday 7 May			Penalty	Total
	Segment 1	Segment 2	Segment 3		Segment 4	Segment 5	Segment 6		
Alon Apteker - Craig Gower Neville Eber - Hennie Fick Jude Apteker - Rob Stephens	<u>31</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>18</u>	116	<u>71</u>	<u>53</u>	<u>47</u>	0	287
vs									
James Grant - Larry Chemaly Diniar Minwalla - Omphemetse Moedi	<u>13</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>34</u>	69	<u>19</u>	<u>43</u>	<u>7</u>	-3	135

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

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

Match 8 (Women)

8	♠ AKQ8732	<i>Dlr: W</i>
	♥ K5	<i>Vul: None</i>
	♦ A6	
	♣ K9	
♠ J96	♠ 54	
♥ Q862	♥ 10743	
♦ 43	♦ QJ75	
♣ 7652	♣ 1043	
19	♠ 10	
3 3	♥ AJ9	
15	♦ K10982	
	♣ AQJ8	

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	7	6	5	7	7
S	7	6	5	7	7
E	-	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	-	-

Only two of the four pairs reached 7♠ or 7NT. After a 1♠ or 2♣ opening by North, it seems like a formality to set Spades at some stage, look for the missing Keycards, discover the ♦K, and hope the spades split with a 7-0 or 7-1 fit.

<i>Board No 8 None Vul Dealer West</i>									
NS	EW	Bid	By	Ld	Tks	+Sc	-Sc	+	-
1	8	6NT	S	♣6	13	1020		-6.70	+6.70
2	7	7NT	S	♥2	13	1520		+7.30	-7.30
3	5	7♠	N	♠5	13	1510		+7.00	-7.00
6	4	6♠	N	♠4	12	980		-7.70	+7.70



With nobody vulnerable and you sitting East, the bidding goes:

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
Pass	1 ♥	2 ♦	Pass
Pass	Pass	?	4 ♥

♠	A J 5
♥	5
♦	A K Q 10 9 6
♣	K 4 3

What action would you take now?

At another table the bidding went:

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
Pass	1 ♥	Dbl	Pass
4 ♠	Pass	4 NT	4 ♥
5 ♣	Pass	6 ♠	Pass
			All pass

11

♠ K83
♥ AJ976
♦ J7
♣ Q109

♠ Q97642
♥ KQ
♦ 842
♣ 85

♠ AJ5
♥ 5
♦ AKQ1096
♣ K43

Dlr: S
Vul: None

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

11 ♠ 10
7 17 ♥ 108432
5 ♦ 53
 ♣ AJ762

On North's side of the screen, 5♣ was explained as 1 or 4 Aces but on South's side it was explained as 0 or 3 Aces.

The ♦J was led and declarer played a heart to North's ace. North assumed West had the ♣A and therefore the only hope of beating the contract was that partner had a singleton diamond. She continued diamonds which declarer ducked to the 8 and

then played the ♠Q making the contract.

How would you rule?

Do you prefer double or 2♦ with the East hand as an initial action?

The tournament director examined E/W's convention card and this stated that they played RKCB but did not specify whether it was 1430 or 3014.

Clearly N/S have been prejudiced, and West cannot claim that it was a mistaken bid rather than a mis-explanation. The director therefore awarded a score of 6♠ down 2 as North, with the correct explanation, would switch to a club (potentially the Q) and they would collect the next 2 tricks. This shows why it is important to fill in your convention cards as fully as possible. Had the convention card specified that they play 1430, North would have the correct information and West has misbid. There is no redress for a misbid.

Match 9 (Women)

A Difficult Slam

10	♠ 5	<i>Dir: E</i>	
	♥ AKJ73	<i>Vul: Both</i>	
	♦ J1083		
	♣ J108		
♠ J108		♠ AQ963	
♥ Q85		♥ 765	
♦ AKQ		♦ 765	
♣ Q632		♣ AK975	
	♠ K742		
10	♥ 109642		
14 13	♦ 942		
3	♣ 4		

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	-	2	-	-
S	-	-	2	-	-
E	6	2	-	5	2
W	6	2	-	5	3

It's not easy to get to the excellent 6♣ contract.

None of the women managed this but the pair who got to 6♠ can consider themselves a little unlucky. 6♠ is a good contract but is beaten by a heart lead when spades do not break 3-2 and the King is offside

The play in 4♠ is interesting on a heart lead. It is ok for East to ruff the first heart but when South continues with hearts after winning the ♠K, it is imperative that East throws two losers away allowing the dummy to control the force. If declarer gets greedy and ruffs the second heart, she may go down. For both

<i>Board No 10 Both Vul Dealer East</i>									
NS	EW	Bid	By	Ld	Tks	+Sc	-Sc	+	-
1	7	4♠	E	♥10	11		650	-4.30	+4.30
3	6	6♠	E	♥10	9	300		+14.00	-14.00
4	5	4♠	E	♣4	12		680	-5.30	+5.30
8	2	4♠	E	♥10	11		650	-4.30	+4.30

declarers in 4♠ to make 11 tricks on a heart lead, indicates that South did not defend correctly by continuing hearts.



Points Schmoints

16 ♠ K107642 *Dlr: W*
 ♥ J10632 *Vul: E-W*
 ♦ 42

♠ 98 ♠ ♠
 ♥ Q1097543 ♥ AJ862
 ♦ AK9 ♦ 875
 ♣ 10 ♣ QJ863

4 ♠ AQJ53
 9 ♥ K
 8 ♦ Q4
 19 ♣ AK975

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	2	2	-	5	-
S	2	2	-	5	-
E	-	-	6	-	-
W	-	-	6	-	-

If you look at this hand, N/S have a total of 23 points and E/W have the balance of 17 points. Yet, N/S can make 11 tricks in spades and E/W can make 12 tricks in hearts! This is the power of distribution and fit. None of the Women trialists found the 6♥ slam in highly competitive auctions. It is very difficult to bid 6♥ especially when vulnerable versus not. Anyone who does bid 6♥ over 5S probably has the idea that they are saving and surprise, surprise they will find that the contract is making. This is the best kind of 'save' to find.

Board No 16 E/W Vul Dealer West									
NS	EW	Bid	By	Ld	Tks	+Sc	-Sc	+	-
1	7	5♠*	N	♣Q	11	650		+3.30	-3.30
3	6	5♠*	S	♦K	11	650		+3.30	-3.30
4	5	5♠	N	♥A	11	450		-3.30	+3.30
8	2	4♠	S	♦A	11	450		-3.30	+3.30



Match 10 (Women) & Segment 1 (Open)

The Open teams joined the women to start their head-to-head "final" with this set of boards.

Dir: East
Vul: N/S

♠ 5
♥ A K 6 5
♦ 6 5
♣ K J 10 8 6 2

♠ J 9 8 4
♥ 3 2
♦ A 9 2
♣ Q 7 4 3

WEST NORTH EAST
2 EAST
SOUTH WEST

♠ K 3 2
♥ J 10 9 8 7 4
♦ 10 7 3
♣ 9

♠ A Q 10 7 6
♥ Q
♦ K Q J 8 4
♣ A 5

11
7 4
18

♣	♦	♥	♠	N	
N	12	10	9	10	12
S	12	10	9	10	12
E	1	1	1	1	1
W	1	1	1	1	1

Bidding to slam on these hands has a less than 50% chance of making. If the club suit is good for six tricks (needing a finesse for the queen and a 3-2 break) the contract is cold but if clubs do not break, you need the diamonds 3-3.

One pair in the women's could consider themselves very lucky when they only managed to bid up to 2♠ making 8 tricks with these cards. They only lost 0.3 IMPs. Sometimes less is more! Two pairs, 1 in the women's and 1 in the open, got

to the subpar 6NT but neither player made it. The lack of entries to the North hand makes it very difficult on a single dummy basis to make 12 tricks. It looks correct to play on diamonds before clubs because you need at least 1 diamond trick to make six. West can make life difficult for declarer if he resists winning the 1st or second round of diamonds.

Open:

Board No 2 N/S Vul Dealer East									
NS	EW	Bid	By	Ld	Tks	+Sc	-Sc	+	-
1	2	5♦	S	♥2	8		300	-5	+5
2	1	6NT	N	♥J	11		100	+5	-5

Women:

Board No 2 N/S Vul Dealer East									
NS	EW	Bid	By	Ld	Tks	+Sc	-Sc	+	-
1	6	4NT	N	♥J	11	660		+12.30	-12.30
2	5	4♠	S	♠4	9		100	-6.00	+6.00
4	8	6NT	N	♥J	11		100	-6.00	+6.00
7	3	2♠	S	♥3	8	110		-0.30	+0.30

Overcalling

You are sitting North and West opens 1♣. What do you bid?

- A. pass
- B. 1D
- C. double
- D. 1NT

♠ J 9
 ♥ A K 9 5
 ♦ A 9 8 6 3
 ♣ Q 7

In an expert bidding competition, I think you would get support for any of these actions. Pass may be ok if you get another chance and you may be able to show both red suits. 1♦ may lose the heart suit and get you to an inelegant diamond contract albeit at the 1 level when partner has nothing. Double may lead to partner bidding too many spades. 1NT does not have a club stopper and has only 14 HCP.

The full hand:

Dir: West
 Vul: E/W

♠ J 9
 ♥ A K 9 5
 ♦ A 9 8 6 3
 ♣ Q 7

♠ K Q
 ♥ 10 8
 ♦ K J 10 4
 ♣ A 10 9 3 2

NORTH
16
SOUTH

♠ 8 6 4 3 2
 ♥ 7 6 3
 ♦ 7 5 2
 ♣ K 8

	14	
13		3
	10	

♠ A 10 7 5
 ♥ Q J 4 2
 ♦ Q
 ♣ J 6 5 4

	♣	♦	♥	♠	N
N	1	7	9	7	8
S	1	7	9	7	8
E	1	1	1	1	1
W	1	1	1	1	1

Sitting West Vulnerable vs not, your partner passes and RHO bids 1♣. What do you bid?

♠ K 4
 ♥ A Q 10 6
 ♦ K Q 7 3 2
 ♣ Q 3

A similar problem to the previous hand and again your options are:

- A. pass
- B. 1♦
- C. double
- D. 1NT

I think there will be more consensus on this hand and I suspect that 1NT will win the day. 1♦ has more going for it than on the previous hand. Double carries the same dangers as on the previous hand. Pass with a good 16 count doesn't seem like winning bridge.

At one of the women's tables, N/S bought the contract in 2♠ which went 1 down for -50. With 2NT and 3♦ making by E/W this would lead to a 2 IMP swing to N/S.

In the Open, one room bid and made 3♦ (-110), while the other room went -2 in 3♠ (-100). Flat board.



Match 13 (Women) & Segment 4 (Open)

Dir: North
Vul: None

♠ A K
♥ K 9 8 6
♦ A K 9 7 6
♣ K 3

♠ 10 9 5
♥ 4 3
♦ 10 5
♣ J 10 8 7 6 5

NORTH
WEST 1 EAST
SOUTH

♠ Q 7 4
♥ J 2
♦ J 8 4 2
♣ A Q 9 2

♠ J 8 6 3 2
♥ A Q 10 7 5
♦ Q 3
♣ 4

20
1 10
9

♣	♦	♥	♠	N	
N	7	11	12	11	11
S	1	11	12	11	7
E	1	1	1	1	1
W	1	1	1	1	1

The match opened with a bang with a good 6♥ contract.

The first decision comes from the North hand but it seems reasonable to open the hand 2NT (20-21HCP balanced). Pairs might have difficulty showing 5-5 in the majors with the South hand. If you decide to transfer into hearts and bid spades, showing 4♠ and 5♥ you should get to slam.

Most pairs play Puppet Stayman (that asks partner to bid a 5 card major) in this situation and the downside of this

approach may be seen on this hand. Here is an idea if you give up on Puppet:

2NT – 3C (Stayman)

Obviously if partner bids a major, you are well on your way but let's say he bids 3♦ denying a major. Now you can make use of a familiar convention known as Smolen and bid either 3♥ or 3♠ which says I have at least 5 cards in the opposite major. If partner then denies 3 card support for the major you have shown, you can then show 5 cards in the other major and more sophisticated methods allow you to show a slam invitational hand or not.

Let us see how our Open and Women's teams did on this hand.

Women's traveller:

Board No 1 None Vul Dealer North									
NS	EW	Bid	By	Ld	Tks	+Sc	-Sc	+	-
1	3	4♥	S	♣J	12	480		-3.30	+3.30
4	2	4NT	N	♥J	12	490		-3.30	+3.30
5	8	6♥	N	♥J	13	1010		+11.00	-11.00
6	7	4♠	N	♦2	11	450		-4.30	+4.30

Only 1 pair in the Women's managed to get to 6♥.

Open traveller:

Board No 1 None Vul Dealer North									
NS	EW	Bid	By	Ld	Tks	+Sc	-Sc	+	-
1	2	6♥	S	♣J	12	980		-1	+1
2	1	6♥	N	♦4	13	1010		+1	-1

Both pairs in the open bid and made 6♥.

Bidding after a Preempt

♠ A
♥ Q 10 7 3
♦ K Q 8 3 2
♣ A J 5

You are Not Vul versus Vul and you hear pass on your left and partner opens 3♠. Do you bid or pass?

Players have become increasingly aggressive with their preempts especially when Not Vul against Vul. However, I believe that when in 2nd position, you should be fairly disciplined as you are preempting 1 opponent and 1 partner (the worst position to make a preempt). You can expect partner to have KQJXXXX or similar for a 3 level preempt. Opposite that holding we might be able to come to 10 tricks and it becomes a close decision whether to bid it or not. Today, bidding 4♠ was a winning action when East made the reasonable lead of the ♣K. This set up a club trick for a diamond pitch and 10 tricks.

Hand diagram showing cards for both sides, a score of 16, and a trick count grid.

Dir: West
Vul: E/W

♠ K Q J 9 8 4 2
♥ 2
♦ 9 5 4
♣ 10 3

♠ 10 6 5 3
♥ K J 9
♦ A J 10
♣ 7 6 2

NORTH
16
SOUTH

♠ 7
♥ A 8 6 5 4
♦ 7 6
♣ K Q 9 8 4

♠ A
♥ Q 10 7 3
♦ K Q 8 3 2
♣ A J 5

6
9 9
16

	♣	♦	♥	♠	N
N	1	7	1	9	1
S	1	7	1	9	1
E	9	1	8	1	7
W	9	1	8	1	7

In one Open table, declarer misplayed the contract on the ♣K lead and went 1 down. Similarly, 1 pair in the Women's only made 9 tricks in 3♠.

Again, we will look at how our players did on this hand:

Women:

Board No 16 E/W Vul Dealer West									
NS	EW	Bid	By	Ld	Tks	+Sc	-Sc	+	-
1	3	4♠	N	♣K	10	420		+2.30	-2.30
4	2	4♠	N	♣K	10	420		+2.30	-2.30
5	8	3♠	N	♣K	9	140		-7.00	+7.00
6	7	4♠	N	♣K	10	420		+2.30	-2.30

Open:

Board No 16 E/W Vul Dealer West									
NS	EW	Bid	By	Ld	Tks	+Sc	-Sc	+	-
1	2	4♠	N	♣K	9		50	-10	+10
2	1	4♠	N	♣4	10	420		+10	-10

Dlr: East
 Vul: E/W

♠ K J 9 3
 ♥ 8 7 5 3
 ♦ 7 4
 ♣ 8 4 2

♠ A 6
 ♥ A 9 6 2
 ♦ K J 10 6 3
 ♣ K 7

WEST NORTH EAST SOUTH
 6

♠ Q 7 5 2
 ♥ J 4
 ♦ A Q 8 5 2
 ♣ A J

4
 15 14
 7

♠ 10 8 4
 ♥ K Q 10
 ♦ 9
 ♣ Q 10 9 6 5 3

♣	♦	♥	♠	N
N	1	1	1	1
S	1	1	1	1
E	1	11	9	9
W	1	11	9	9

Women:

Board No 6 E/W Vul Dealer East									
NS	EW	Bid	By	Ld	Tks	+Sc	-Sc	+	-
1	3	3NT	E	♣9	10		630	-8.70	+8.70
4	2	6♦	E	♥K	11	100		+7.00	-7.00
5	8	7♦	E	♥K	11	200		+9.70	-9.70
6	7	5♦	E	♣5	11		600	-8.00	+8.00

Open:

Board No 6 E/W Vul Dealer East									
NS	EW	Bid	By	Ld	Tks	+Sc	-Sc	+	-
1	2	6♦	E	♥K	11	100		-5	+5
2	1	6NT	W	♣2	9	300		+5	-5

The women showed the men how to achieve a good result on this board with 2 of them stopping in makeable games.



Match 14 (Women) & Segment 5 (Open)

Dlr: East
Vul: All

♠ 10 5
♥ K J 10 5 3
♦ 9 7 6
♣ J 6 5

♠ K Q 4
♥ A Q
♦ K J 5 4 2
♣ K 8 3

NORTH
WEST **10** EAST
SOUTH

♠ A 9 8 6 3
♥ 9 4
♦ A Q 10 8
♣ A 10

♠ J 7 2
♥ 8 7 6 2
♦ 3
♣ Q 9 7 4 2

5
18 14
3

	♣	♦	♥	♠	N
N	1	1	1	1	1
S	1	1	1	1	1
E	7	13	7	13	13
W	7	13	7	13	13

A grand slam can be made in 3 denominations: 7NT, 7♠ and 7♦. Which is the best grand?

7 diamonds. A 4-1 spade break will beat 7♠ and 7NT. Craig and Alon in the open got to the optimal contract of 7♦ with the following auction:

West	North	East	South
		1♠	Pass
2♦	Pass	3♦	Pass
4♦ ¹	Pass	4NT ²	Pass
5♣ ³	Pass	5NT ⁴	Pass
7♦	All pass		

1. Optional Keycard Blackwood
2. Better than minimum, 3 Keycards
3. Queen ask
4. DQ, no Kings

Note that there was no desire to play in the spade fit, regardless of the potentially better score. In IMPs / Teams scoring, safer contracts are always preferred over the better scoring contract.

Only Alon Apteker and Craig Gower got to the optimal contract of 7♦.

Women:

Board No 10 Both Vul Dealer East									
NS	EW	Bid	By	Ld	Tks	+Sc	-Sc	+	-
1	2	6♠	E	♦3	12		1430	-3.30	+3.30
3	4	6♠	E	♦3	13		1460	-4.70	+4.70
5	6	6♠	E	♦3	13		1460	-4.70	+4.70
7	8	5♠	E	♥8	13		710	+12.70	-12.70

Open:

Board No 10 Both Vul Dealer East									
NS	EW	Bid	By	Ld	Tks	+Sc	-Sc	+	-
1	2	6♠	W	♥10	13		1460	+12	-12
2	1	7♦	W	♠10	13		2140	-12	+12

♠ Q J 7 3
 ♥ K 9 5
 ♦ 7 3 2
 ♣ 7 4 3

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

Do you bid 3NT with this hand?

There is more of a case for doing so than on a previous hand I presented in the 1st bulletin. You have a side King and ♠QJ is a good holding in your longest suit. You are also vulnerable which should tempt you to bid 3NT.

Dir: North
Vul: All

♠ 10 4

♥ A 10 8

♦ A K 4

♣ A Q J 6 5

♠ A K 2

♥ Q 7 4

♦ Q J 9 8 5

♣ 10 8

W

E

13

S

T

♠ 9 8 6 5

♥ J 6 3 2

♦ 10 6

♣ K 9 2

18		4
12		
	6	

♠ Q J 7 3

♥ K 9 5

♦ 7 3 2

♣ 7 4 3

N	9	7	7	8	8
S	9	7	7	8	8
E	1	1	1	1	1
W	1	1	1	1	1

3NT can be beaten on a diamond lead but East is on lead and has to choose between a diamond and a heart. Leading 4 card suits (hearts) against No-trump contracts is extremely overrated but I'm not fond of leading doubleton ♦10x. Count yourself a bit unlucky if you passed 2NT and East did not lead the ♦10.

Women:

Board No 13 Both Vul Dealer North									
NS	EW	Bid	By	Ld	Tks	+Sc	-Sc	+	-
1	2	3NT	N	♥2	9	600		+10.00	-10.00
3	4	2NT	N	♥2	9	150		-3.00	+3.00
5	6	2NT	N	♠9	9	150		-3.00	+3.00
7	8	2NT	N	♦10	8	120		-4.00	+4.00

Open:

Board No 13 Both Vul Dealer North										
NS	EW	Bid	By	Ld	Tks	+Sc	-Sc	+	-	
1	2	2NT	N	♦10	7			100	-7	+7
2	1	2NT	N	♥3	10	180		+7	-7	

In contrast to a previous board I discussed, here only one Women's pair bid to 3NT and made it on the classic 4th highest lead. One pair led the ♦10 and held 2NT to 8 tricks.

In the open, neither pair bid to 3NT. In 2NT on the ♦10 lead, declarer had to play on the club suit to get 8 tricks.

Segment 6 (Open)

Dlr: East
Vul: All

♠ 10 9
♥ A K Q 9 4
♦ A Q J 6
♣ 5 4

♠ Q 6
♥ 7 2
♦ K 10 5 4 3
♣ K 7 6 3

WEST	NORTH	EAST
	10	
	SOUTH	

♠ 8 7 4 2
♥ 10 8 6 5 3
♦ 9 8 7 2
♣ - -

♠ A K J 5 3
♥ J
♦ - -
♣ A Q J 10 9 8 2

	♣	♦	♥	♠	N
N	12	9	11	11	12
S	12	8	11	11	12
E	1	1	1	1	1
W	1	1	1	1	1

16
8 0
16

Neither team did well on this board when they both went overboard to the seven level. I don't know how their auctions went but perhaps a reasonable auction might be:

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♣
Pass	2NT	Pass	2♠
Pass	4♣	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♥	Pass	4♦
Pass	6♣	All pass	4♠

North may get quite excited when partner shows a game force with clubs and spades but when he shows 5-6 shape, he knows he may not have the right cards for partner. He knows there are no red suit losers but he needs partner to have solid clubs and AK of spades to give play for 7. Even with that holding there will be a spade loser to deal with. Partner rarely has the perfect cards and therefore it would be prudent to settle for 6.

