

The Mixed Teams Trials were completed today. I am going to deviate from the norm and only publish the final results at the end of this bulletin. This is because there was an exciting fight for the all important third place in the last round.

## Quick Quiz from Round Robin 1

Your partner opens 1♠ and the next hand bids 3♣. You elect to bid 4♣ as a cue bid raise agreeing spades and surprisingly partner bids 6♦. What now?

♠ K Q 7 6  
♥ A 7 4 3  
♦ 5  
♣ A 9 8 4

Maureen Narunsky reasoned that her partner, Michael Alexander, has lots of spades and diamonds and must have both pointed suits' Aces. It was likely that he also had a club shortage. Her accurate visualization of partner's hand led her to the correct conclusion and she bid 7♠. Partner's hand was:

♠ A J 5 3 2  
♥ K J 2  
♦ A K J 10 8  
♣ —

# Match 8

## A Partscore Battle

Dlr: East  
 Vul: None

♠ J 10 8 7 2  
 ♥ K 9 3  
 ♦ K Q J 9  
 ♣ 8

♠ 9 5  
 ♥ A Q 2  
 ♦ A 10 8 5  
 ♣ A K 7 4

NORTH  
 WEST EAST  
 14  
 SOUTH

♠ 6 4 3  
 ♥ J 8 7 6 4  
 ♦ 3  
 ♣ Q J 9 6

10  
 17 4  
 9

♠ A K Q  
 ♥ 10 5  
 ♦ 7 6 4 2  
 ♣ 10 5 3 2

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

**Board No 14 None Vul Dealer East**

NS	EW	Bid	By	Ld	Tks	+Sc	-Sc	+	-
1	8	4♣	W	♦K	10		130	-6.70	+6.70
2	7	2♠	N	♦3	9	140		+2.70	-2.70
3	5	2♠	N	♦3	8	110		+1.30	-1.30
6	4	2♠	N	♥4	9	140		+2.70	-2.70

Rona and Stephen did well on this hand when they competed to 4♣ as E/W and made it. Their bidding went as follows:

West	North	East	South
		Pass	Pass
1 ♣ <sup>1</sup>	1 NT <sup>2</sup>	Pass	3 ♦
Pass	Pass	Dbl	Pass
4 ♣	All pass		
	1. Precision (16+)		
	2. Spades & Diamonds		

The defense to beat 4♣ is difficult as a diamond switch is required after cashing 2 spades. North must duck the ♥Q to cut communication in that suit and a diamond continuation will cut declarer off from the winning heart tricks. 3♥ is much easier but none of the other pairs found that contract when opponents got to 2♠. Getting the partscore situations right can often be worth quite a lot of IMPs and here it earned them 6.7 IMPs. Even if they went 1 down they would have won 2.7 IMPs.

# 1NT or 1 Major Opening?

The jury is out as to whether it is reasonable to open 1NT with balanced hands and 15-17 HCPs and a 5-card major. Sometimes opening the major will get you to a close game when you have a fit and sometimes it will get you overboard. You do need to have sophisticated methods to help you describe your hand if partner does not show support. Opening 1NT has the advantage that you get the hand off your chest immediately. I suspect that for the pairs who got to 4♥, their 1♥ opening attracted a raise from South and they then bid 4♥. The 2 pairs who allowed their opponents to play in 2♦ or 2♠ obviously opened 1NT. Double dummy both 2♠ and 2♦ should go down but somehow 2♦ made in practice. Given the choice, I would prefer to defend against 2♦ or 2♠ on this hand rather than bid 4♥ if I knew partner's hand.

Dlr: South  
Vul: E/W

♠ 5 4  
♥ A J 9 7 6  
♦ A Q 4  
♣ A Q 4

♠ J 6  
♥ - -  
♦ K J 9 6 3 2  
♣ K 10 8 7 2

NORTH  
WEST 3 EAST  
SOUTH

♠ A 10 9 8 7 3  
♥ K Q 10 2  
♦ 5  
♣ 6 3

17  
8      9  
6

♠ K Q 2  
♥ 8 5 4 3  
♦ 10 8 7  
♣ J 9 5

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

**Board No 3 E/W Vul Dealer South**

NS	EW	Bid	By	Ld	Tks	+Sc	-Sc	+	-
1	8	2♠	W	♠5	7	100		+4.70	-4.70
2	7	4♥	N	♠A	8		100	-2.30	+2.30
3	5	4♥	N	♠A	9		50	-0.30	+0.30
6	4	2♦	E	♣5	8		90	-2.00	+2.00

2 N/S pairs did well on this hand when they pushed their opponents to 5♠. 5♥ can go 2 down for a good result against a vulnerable 4♠ contract and the result became even better when E/W, not unreasonably with their 12-card fit, took the push to 5♠ and went down when the defense found their club ruff.

Dlr: South  
Vul: All

♠ 9  
♥ 10 9 8 7  
♦ J 10 9 8 7 6  
♣ 10 3

♠ A K 7 6 5 3 2  
♥ 4  
♦ K 5  
♣ Q 8 6

NORTH  
WEST 7 EAST  
SOUTH

♠ Q J 10 8 4  
♥ A Q 2  
♦ A 3  
♣ J 9 7

1  
12      14  
13

♠ - -  
♥ K J 6 5 3  
♦ Q 4 2  
♣ A K 5 4 2

♣♦♥♠ N				
N	7	9	9	1 1
S	7	9	9	1 1
E	1	1	1	10 11
W	1	1	1	10 10

**Board No 7 Both Vul Dealer South**

NS	EW	Bid	By	Ld	Tks	+Sc	-Sc	+	-
1	8	5♠	W	♣10	10	100		+8.30	-8.30
2	7	4♠	W	♥10	10		620	-7.70	+7.70
3	5	5♠	W	♣10	10	100		+8.30	-8.30
6	4	4♠	W	♦J	11		650	-9.00	+9.00

## 4-4 or 5-3 Fit?

Dir: North  
Vul: E/W

♠ J 10 7 6  
♥ A Q J 10 5  
♦ 4 3  
♣ A J

♠ A K 9 3  
♥ 8 4 3  
♦ 10 9 8 2  
♣ 7 3

WEST NORTH EAST SOUTH  
9

♠ 8  
♥ 7 6  
♦ Q J 7 5  
♣ K 10 6 5 4 2

13  
7 6  
14

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

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

Board No 9 E/W Vul Dealer North									
NS	EW	Bid	By	Ld	Tks	+Sc	-Sc	+	-
1	8	4♣	S	♣7	10	420		+3.30	-3.30
2	7	4♣	S	♣7	10	420		+3.30	-3.30
3	5	4♥	N	♠8	9		50	-10.00	+10.00
6	4	4♣	S	♦10	10	420		+3.30	-3.30

N/S have two 8 card fits on this hand. Sometimes the 4-4 fit does better when you need discards from the 5 card suit. As a general principle, it is often better to choose the weaker suit as trumps and this hand shows why. In 4♥, the defenders can get a spade ruff which is fatal but in 4♣ there is no ruff available and declarer can cope with the bad break as declarer cannot be forced in any suit. The singleton ♠8 was critical in allowing 4♣ to make. However, the best contract on this combination is 3NT as 9 tricks cannot be stopped whatever the distribution. This is maybe a good hand for a bidding competition but I somehow doubt that any pair will manage to get to the optimal contract. For NT contracts to be better than the majors you generally need a minimum of 27/28

high card points between the 2 hands and no side suit weaknesses.

## Opening Lead Problem

You hear the following bidding:

West	North	East	South
	Pass	Pass	Pass
1 NT	Pass	2 NT	Pass
3 NT	All pass		

♠ A K J 4 2  
♥ 9 7 3  
♦ Q 3  
♣ 10 9 3

What would you lead?

The only winning lead is a low spade hoping that your partner can win a trick and continue spades. The lack of entries to your hand make this lead attractive but at the same time you don't want to give declarer a spade trick if he has Qxx. I suspect it is just a guess but leading a low spade earned Michael and Maureen 13 IMPs.

Another pair lead a spade from the South hand, and depending on the bidding, North would have to abstain from winning the 1<sup>st</sup> trick with the ♠J in order to keep communication with South.

Dir: North  
Vul: All

♠ A K J 4 2  
♥ 9 7 3  
♦ Q 3  
♣ 10 9 3

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

WEST NORTH EAST SOUTH  
13

♠ 10 8 7 6  
♥ 8 6 2  
♦ K 10 9  
♣ A Q 8

10  
16 9  
5

♠ 5 3  
♥ A 10 5  
♦ 7 6 5 4  
♣ J 7 6 4

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

Board No 13 Both Vul Dealer North									
NS	EW	Bid	By	Ld	Tks	+Sc	-Sc	+	-
1	8	3NT	E	♥10	9	600		-3.70	+3.70
2	7	3NT	W	♠K	10	630		-4.70	+4.70
3	5	3NT	E	♠5	10	630		-4.70	+4.70
6	4	3NT	W	♠4	7	200		+13.00	-13.00

# Match 9

Dir: East  
Vul: N/S

♠ A J 7 6 5  
♥ Q 8 5 3  
♦ Q 10  
♣ K 5

♠ 4 3 2  
♥ K  
♦ K J 9 6  
♣ J 10 7 6 3

NORTH  
WEST 2 EAST  
SOUTH

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

12  
8 7  
13

♠ K Q 10 9  
♥ A 10 2  
♦ A 5 3  
♣ 8 4 2

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

Board No 2 N/S Vul Dealer East									
NS	EW	Bid	By	Ld	Tks	+Sc	-Sc	+	-
1	7	4♠	N	♦7	9		100	-4	+4
3	6	4♠	N	♥4	9		100	-4	+4
4	5	4♠	N	♥6	9		100	-4	+4
8	2	5♦*	W	♠A	8	500		+12	-12

I cannot begin to imagine how E/W got to the dizzy heights of 5♦x with their cards, 'saving' against opponent's vulnerable 4♠. It was a very expensive mistake when 4♠ by their opponents was unmakeable. I'm reminded of a quip by Petra Mansell, one of our greatest women players, who said 'Saving is for Jesus'.

## Another Wild Distributional Hand

With the points fairly evenly distributed, N/S can make 13 tricks in hearts and E/W can make 11 tricks in clubs. Andre van Niekerk and Rose Duff did well to buy the contract in 6♣. Glen Holman and Michelle Alexander did very well to get to 6♥ and there was a bonus when they were doubled in that contract and won 13.7 IMPs. I guess it is difficult for West not to double holding 2 Aces and a King but distribution is everything. It was not a very costly double as even without the double they would have lost 10 IMPs

Dir: West  
Vul: None

♠ A Q J 10 9 4  
♥ A 9 8 6 2  
♦ --  
♣ 4 3

♠ K 7  
♥ J  
♦ A 6  
♣ A Q J 10 9 8 7 6

NORTH  
WEST 8 EAST  
SOUTH

♠ 6 5 3  
♥ --  
♦ Q J 10 9 7 4 3  
♣ K 5 2

11  
15 6  
8

♠ 8 2  
♥ K Q 10 7 5 4 3  
♦ K 8 5 2  
♣ --

♣♦♥♠ N  
N 1 1 13 13 1  
S 1 1 13 12 1  
E 10 8 1 1 1  
W 11 8 1 1 1

Board No 8 None Vul Dealer West									
NS	EW	Bid	By	Ld	Tks	+Sc	-Sc	+	-
1	7	5♥	S	♣A	13	510		-1.30	+1.30
3	6	6♥*	S	♦A	13	1310		+13.70	-13.70
4	5	5♥	S	♣A	13	510		-1.30	+1.30
8	2	6♣	W	♥A	10	100		-11.00	+11.00

Only 2 pairs managed to get to this excellent 6♠ and almost as good 6♥ contract. This was surprising as with 31 HCP's between them and 2 eight card fits, I would have expected the whole field to get to slam. I suspect that an aggressive preempt of 3♣ vul vs not by the North hand made it difficult to bid the slam.

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

One pair bid as above. I think East bought an excellent dummy.

A Lightner double by North might have beaten the 6♠ contract by East if South finds the unusual heart lead. A Lightner double typically asks for dummy's first suit

(Diamonds) but I would expect partner to use their judgement. On this hand, South may have found the killing heart lead as it was unlikely that partner would have a void in diamonds. Take note that 6NT by West is the best contract. Again despite 2 eight card major suit fits, NT wins the day. Have another look at hand 9 from the previous match where NT was also the best contract under similar circumstances.

Dir: West  
Vul: N/S

♠ 10 7 2  
♥ - -  
♦ 8 6 4 3  
♣ A Q J 6 5 3

♠ Q 3  
♥ A Q 10 2  
♦ K 10 7 5  
♣ K 10 4

W	NORTH	E
E	12	A
S	SOUTH	T

♠ A K J 9 8 4  
♥ K 9 7 3  
♦ A Q  
♣ 9

7	
14	17
2	

♠ 6 5  
♥ J 8 6 5 4  
♦ J 9 2  
♣ 8 7 2

	♣	♦	♥	♠	N
N	1	1	1	1	1
S	1	1	1	1	1
E	7	1	1	1	1
W	8	1	2	1	1

Board No 12 N/S Vul Dealer West									
NS	EW	Bid	By	Ld	Tks	+Sc	-Sc	+	-
1	7	6♠	E	♣7	12	980	-7.30	+7.30	
3	6	5♥	W	♠4	11	450	+7.70	-7.70	
4	5	4♠	E	♣2	12	480	+7.00	-7.00	
8	2	6♥	W	♠2	12	980	-7.30	+7.30	



# Match 10

## Too much Information can be Fatal

Dlr: North  
Vul: All

♠ 10 8 4 2  
♥ K 8 5 3  
♦ A 8 2  
♣ K 6

♠ K Q J 5  
♥ - -  
♦ 9 7 6 4 3  
♣ 9 7 4 2

	NORTH	
W	13	E
S		A
T		S
	SOUTH	

♠ 3  
♥ J 10 7 4 2  
♦ Q J 5  
♣ Q J 8 3

	10	
6		7
	17	

♠ A 9 7 6  
♥ A Q 9 6  
♦ K 10  
♣ A 10 5

	♣	♦	♥	♠	N
N	1	1	10	10	9
S	7	1	10	10	9
E	1	1	1	1	1
W	1	1	1	1	1

**Board No 13 Both Vul Dealer North**

NS	EW	Bid	By	Ld	Tks	+Sc	-Sc	+	-
1	6	4♥	S	♠K	10	620		+8.00	-8.00
2	5	3NT	S	♠K	10	630		+8.00	-8.00
4	8	4♥	S	♦3	9		100	-8.00	+8.00
7	3	4♥	S	♦7	9		100	-8.00	+8.00

It's remarkable that 2 pairs did not lead a fatal ♠K from the West hand against 4♥. I suspect that new-fangled ideas about Stayman were responsible. Some pairs play that 2♣ Stayman is puppet and partner bids 2NT to show both majors and minimum and 3♣ shows both majors and maximum. This convention gives gratuitous information to their opponents. Once you know South has both majors, this makes a spade lead less appealing. If ordinary Stayman is used, defenders will not know about the spade suit in declarer's hand and the spade lead will be automatic. This is an instance of less is more as the less information you give your opponents, the higher the likelihood that you will make your contract. Why should you tell opponents that you have both majors and whether you are minimum or maximum when this information is likely to be of no interest to your partner?

If anyone can tell me what the advantages are of playing this method, I would be very interested to hear from them.

# Match 12

Dir: South  
Vul: All

♠ 5 2  
♥ Q J 10 6  
♦ 3 2  
♣ K Q J 9 8

♠ Q J 3  
♥ A 9 8 7  
♦ A K Q 10 5  
♣ A

NORTH  
WEST 7 EAST  
SOUTH

♠ A 9 7 4  
♥ 5 4 3 2  
♦ 6 4  
♣ 4 3 2

♠ K 10 8 6  
♥ K  
♦ J 9 8 7  
♣ 10 7 6 5

9  
20 4  
7

♣	♦	♥	♠	N
8	1	1	1	1
8	1	1	1	1
1	9	9	9	8
1	9	9	9	8

**Board No 7 Both Vul Dealer South**

NS	EW	Bid	By	Ld	Tks	+Sc	-Sc	+	-
1	4	1♦	W	♣K	9		110	-4.70	+4.70
2	3	4♥	W	♣K	9	100		+2.00	-2.00
5	7	4♥	E	♣5	7	300		+7.70	-7.70
8	6	2NT	W	♣K	8		120	-5.00	+5.00

The 2 pairs who got to 4♥ on this hand were a bit unlucky when a bad break in hearts led to 1 down. The chances of hearts breaking 3-2 is 68% and therefore this vulnerable game will often make. I believe that East should definitely respond to partner's 1♦ opening as it is generally a good idea to keep the bidding open with 1 Ace. West opened 2NT at one table, and after winning the ♣K lead, likely finessed the ♠K. South won and continued clubs, but on the 5<sup>th</sup> club, South was pseudo squeezed and unguarded either spades or diamonds (♥K was best). Although declarer would've also been a bit squeezed on the clubs, 8 tricks was wrapped up in the end.



# Match 13

## A Guess?

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



♠ 5 2  
 ♥ A J 10 9 7 6 5 4  
 ♦ J 10  
 ♣ 7

Let's say you get to 4♥ after opening 3♥ with the North hand and partner raises you to 4. You get the ♠K lead. If you decide to duck that, it's inevitable that East will switch to a low diamond. If you win the spade and take the heart finesse, East will win and again switch to a low diamond. What do you play to this trick?

I think this is a complete guess. If ♦AQ are both offside there is nothing you can do. Therefore, you must guess which honour East has to make your contract.

One pair mis guessed and this cost 10 IMPs. I don't think there are any clues as to whether East has the ♦A or the ♦Q but I do think East is more likely to play low from the Ace rather than the queen as low from queen may give declarer the contract when he has ♦Jx and must lose 2 diamond tricks if left to his own devices. This may be a bluff, bluff situation as it will look like East has to switch to diamonds whatever his holding is. Count yourself unlucky if you got it wrong and congratulate your opponents for putting you to the test...

Dir: North  
 Vul: None

♠ 5 2  
 ♥ A J 10 9 7 6 5 4  
 ♦ J 10  
 ♣ 7

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

W	NORTH	E
E	1	S
S	SOUTH	T

♠ K Q 7  
 ♥ K 8 3  
 ♦ Q 9 5 4  
 ♣ K J 10

6	
4	14
16	

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

♣	♦	♥	♠	N	
N	9	1	11	1	1
S	9	1	11	1	1
E	1	7	1	7	1
W	1	7	1	7	1

**Board No 1 None Vul Dealer North**

NS	EW	Bid	By	Ld	Tks	+Sc	-Sc	+	-
1	3	4♥	N	♠K	9		50	-10.00	+10.00
4	2	4♥	N	♥3	10	420		+3.30	-3.30
5	8	4♥	N	♠K	10	420		+3.30	-3.30
6	7	4♥	N	♠K	10	420		+3.30	-3.30

♠ A 10 8 6  
 ♥ A Q 7 6 4  
 ♦ —  
 ♣ K 9 8 4

♠ Q 2  
 ♥ K 10 8  
 ♦ A K 7 5 3  
 ♣ A 10 6

You get to an ambitious 6♥ from the South Seat and are treated to the ♠4 lead. What is your plan?

You have 5 heart tricks (provided they break), 1 spade, 2 diamonds and 2 clubs. Clearly you need to make the ♠Q to bring your total to 11 and then maybe a spade ruff in your hand will bring it up to 12. I cannot see any better line. Therefore, duck the spade and let's say East wins the ♠K and returns a spade. We can play one round of hearts to dummy and ruff a spade with the ♥10. Cash the ♥K and get back to dummy with the ♣K to draw the remaining trumps and now claim. You might be nervous to try this line when West follows his opening lead with the ♠3 that might suggest a doubleton but even if so, if he has a doubleton spade, if the ♥J is with East you will still be ok.

Kevin Smith, who was the lone declarer in 6♥, got the ♠3 lead (1,3,5 leads) and at the critical point decided to play the ♥K and then ♥A. When he tried to ruff the spade, East was able to ruff with the ♥J to bring the contract 1 down. I think once West follows up the line in spades, the risk of an overruff is removed and it is better to only cash the ♥A. This will only cost if a defender has the singleton ♥J (or a very devious defender drops the J from length). If that happens, declarer will have to change tack and draw trumps and play for some sort of squeeze. The simplest squeeze would be to find one player guarding both spades and clubs for your 12<sup>th</sup> trick.

Dlr: South  
Vul: None

♠ A 10 8 6  
 ♥ A Q 7 6 4  
 ♦ —  
 ♣ K 9 8 4

♠ J 7 5 4 3  
 ♥ 5 3  
 ♦ Q 9 2  
 ♣ Q J 7

		NORTH		
W	E	11	A	S
		SOUTH		

♠ K 9  
 ♥ J 9 2  
 ♦ J 10 8 6 4  
 ♣ 5 3 2

13

6      5

16

♠ Q 2  
♥ K 10 8  
♦ A K 7 5 3  
♣ A 10 6

					♣	♦	♥	♠	N
N	12	10	12	10	11				
S	11	9	12	10	12				
E	1	1	1	1	1				
W	1	1	1	1	1				

Board No 11 None Vul Dealer South

NS	EW	Bid	By	Ld	Tks	+Sc	-Sc	+	-
1	3	6♥	S	♠4	11		50	-10.70	+10.70
4	2	4♥	S	♣Q	12	480		+4.70	-4.70
5	8	3NT	S	♥5	11	460		+3.70	-3.70
6	7	4♥	S	♥3	10	420		+2.30	-2.30

## Preempts can be Double Edged Swords

Dlr: East  
 Vul: All

♠ Q 9 6 5 2  
 ♥ A 9 8 6 3  
 ♦ A 6  
 ♣ 10

♠ J 10 4  
 ♥ 10 5  
 ♦ K J 10 8 7 3 2  
 ♣ 4

NORTH  
 WEST 10 EAST  
 SOUTH

♠ A K 8  
 ♥ K 7 4  
 ♦ Q 9 5  
 ♣ A J 7 5

♠ 7 3  
 ♥ Q J 2  
 ♦ 4  
 ♣ K Q 9 8 6 3 2

10  
 5 17  
 8

N	8	1	8	7	1
S	8	1	8	7	1
E	1	11	1	1	8
W	1	11	1	1	8

**Board No 10 Both Vul Dealer East**

NS	EW	Bid	By	Ld	Tks	+Sc	-Sc	+	-
1	3	3NT	E	♣K	9	600	-3.00	+3.00	
4	2	3NT	E	♣K	10	630	-4.30	+4.30	
5	8	5♦	W	♣10	11	600	-3.00	+3.00	
6	7	3♦	W	♣10	10	130	+10.30	-10.30	

3NT is probably the best game to get to once partner opens 1NT(15-17) but it is not intuitive to get there as unless partner has 3+ diamonds or the Ace the chances of bringing in 7 diamond tricks is poor. 5♦ needs the ♥A onside and the spade finesse to be right to land 11 tricks. I was therefore surprised to see that 3 pairs got to game on the hand. I suspect that a club preempt by South over 1NT propelled all these pairs into either 3NT or 5♦. Sometimes, preempts work against you and gets opponents to their optimal contract. In 3NT, South needs to find the ♥Q lead to keep it to 8 tricks.

## Match 14

With 1 match to go, 1<sup>st</sup> (Carol and Kevin) and 2<sup>nd</sup> (Michelle and Glen) were uncatchable and the fight was for the all-important 3<sup>rd</sup> position. 4 pairs were in with a shot.

- Lorraine Weers and Imtiaz Kaprey had a 6 VP cushion but they were playing the strong pair of Michelle Alexander and Glen Holman who were lying a comfortable second.
- Erica Zimet and Paul Reynolds were playing Rona Holmes and Stephen McBride who were not doing well but were capable of beating any pair.
- Rose Duff and Andre van Niekerk were playing Carol Stanton and Kevin Smith who had lead the pack from the start.
- Maureen Narunsky and Michael Alexander clearly needed a very big win to have any chance as they were 13 VPs below third position and were playing Di Rosslee and Greg Hingle who were struggling.

It will be an exciting finish....

4	Lorraine Weers & Imtiaz Kaprey	130.09
7	Erica Zimet & Paul Reynolds	124.77
2	Rose Duff & Andre van Niekerk	124.70
5	Maureen Narunsky & Michael Alexander	116.91

♠ A K 10 9 8 2  
 ♥ A K 5  
 ♦ A 4  
 ♣ K J

Surprisingly, your right-hand opponent opens 1♦. What do you bid with this hand when you are vulnerable versus not.

There is no science when you need so little to make game. 3 small spades may be enough. Even a singleton spade and the ♥Q will give good play for 4♠. You should probably start with a Double but when partner bids 2♥, you need to take a view and probably bid 4♠. This would have been the winning action on this hand when partner turns up with this useful Yarborough:

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

11 tricks were easy.

It looks like 2 pairs only invited game, which may work out ok occasionally. The West hand with a singleton diamond and 3 trumps should have accepted the invite.

Dir: North  
 Vul: N/S

♠ Q  
 ♥ Q 10 3  
 ♦ K Q J 9 8  
 ♣ A 10 7 3

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

NORTH  
 WEST 5 EAST  
 SOUTH

♠ A K 10 9 8 2  
 ♥ A K 5  
 ♦ A 4  
 ♣ K J

14	
0	22
4	

♠ J 7 5  
 ♥ J 8  
 ♦ 10 7 5 3 2  
 ♣ Q 9 6

		♣	♦	♥	♠	N
N	1	8	1	1	1	
S	1	8	1	1	1	
E	7	1	10	10	1	
W	7	1	10	10	1	

Board No 5 N/S Vul Dealer North

NS	EW	Bid	By	Ld	Tks	+Sc	-Sc	+	-
1	2	3♠	E	♣9	11		200	+4.00	-4.00
3	4	4♠	E	♦2	12		480	-5.00	+5.00
5	6	4♠	E	♦3	11		450	-4.00	+4.00
7	8	3♠	E	♥J	10		170	+5.00	-5.00

Dir: South  
Vul: All

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

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

NORTH  
7  
SOUTH

♠ 7 2  
♥ A K J  
♦ K Q 8  
♣ A K Q J 9

0	
13	23
4	

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

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

Board No 7 Both Vul Dealer South

NS	EW	Bid	By	Ld	Tks	+Sc	-Sc	+	-
1	2	7♣	W	♠10	12	100		+11.30	-11.30
3	4	6NT	W	♥10	12		1440	-11.30	+11.30
5	6	7NT	W	♥10	12	100		+11.30	-11.30
7	8	6NT	W	♠10	12		1440	-11.30	+11.30

This hand produced the biggest swings of the match. It was unlucky for E/W to have a combined 36 count to find they were missing an Ace but this is one of the reasons why you need 37 points for a Grand Slam when both hands are balanced. This is particularly true when one hand is 4333 shape and if East shows 23-24 balanced hand, West should probably settle for 6NT only. Playing an outdated convention, Gerber (4C Ace asking), would have helped to identify the problem that our side may be missing 1 Ace. You might believe that East should invite the grand slam by bidding 5NT. After 50 years of playing bridge, I recently learnt that it just does not pay to invite 7NT. It doesn't depend on whether you have 36 or 37 points. It does matter whether you are missing an Ace or a King which will make the grand slam against the odds. If you are missing a Queen and a couple of Jacks, it is likely that the grand slam will roll home.

Lorraine and Imtiaz did well to stop in 6NT and were rewarded with a big 11.3 IMPs.



Most of the other swings in this set were small exchanges of IMPs all resulting from small differences in results at each of the tables.

Lorraine and Imtiaz played good solid bridge in the last round, winning their match comfortably to easily qualify for the important 3<sup>rd</sup> position. The other 3 close contenders all lost their last matches.

The final results were:

#	Pair	Total VPs
1	Carol Stanton & Kevin Smith	195.67
3	Michele Alexander & Glen Holman	172.63
4	Lorraine Weers & Imtiaz Kaprey	146.01
7	Erica Zimet & Paul Reynolds	128.85
2	Rose Duff & Andre van Niekerk	124.70
5	Maureen Narunsky & Michael Alexander	124.11
6	Di Rosslee & Greg Hingle	121.57
8	Rona Holmes & Stephen McBride	102.38

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

<https://sabf.co.za/mixed-seniors-trials-2026/>



Congratulation to Carol Stanton & Kevin Smith (winning with more than 1 match in hand), Michelle Alexander & Glen Holman and Lorraine Weers & Imtiaz Kaprey who will be representing South Africa in the upcoming African Zonal Championships in September. Good luck to all of them and we hope that they will qualify for the World Championships in 2027.

Thank you to Robert Stephens who worked hard in the background to ensure that the tournament ran smoothly. He also meticulously and professionally edited these bulletins to produce a professional product. He did this time-consuming task voluntarily.

Thank you to Neil Hayward who efficiently ran this tournament and ensured that the competition was fair and enjoyable.

Thank you to Grant Ewels who ably handled the scoring and IT issues and general organization of this tournament.

Thanks to all the participants who made this a successful event.

- Bernard Donde

SABF President