

January 28, 2017  
 Courier-Mail Bridge Column by Tony Jackman

The major event of the second week of the Summer Festival of Bridge, which concluded last Sunday in Canberra, was the 2017 National Open Teams. 126 teams entered with the qualifying rounds starting last Monday. The leading 8 teams from the South West Pacific advance to enter the knockout National Open Teams. The field was very powerful indeed, with the top seeds being last year's winner, Lavazza, and the Milner team. In this instance, the seeding was also accurate.

Lavazza's (D Bilde, A Madala, A Bianchedi, N Bocchi, A Sementa, G Duboin) path through the finals involved defeating Thomson in the quarter final and Cornell in the semi final. Whereas Milner (R Milner, H Lall, J Lall, J Pszczola, J Kalita, M Nowosadzki) defeated Courtney in the quarter final and Milne in the semi final. The first two stanzas of the final were extremely close, followed by nail biting swings to both teams in the last two stanzas, with Lavazza eventually presiding 120-115.1.

Closer to home, 40 teams entered the Northern Suburbs Bridge Club's Teams event last Sunday, which was won by Evans (P Evans, T Treloar, A Dawson, M Jakes), followed by Kempthorne (A&B Kempthorne, C Howard, K Wood) and Bedi (K Bedi, G Malinas, L Moses, J Gough) in third place. B division was taken out by the Roberts team and the Rogers team won the C division.

<b>W Dealer, All Vul</b>		<b>NORTH</b>	
		♠762	
		♥JT5	
		♦Q4	
		♣JT953	
<b>WEST</b>			<b>EAST</b>
♠A			♠KQ943
♥AQ98			♥764
♦AJ876			♦T52
♣AQ8			♣42
		<b>SOUTH</b>	
		♠JT85	
		♥K32	
		♦K93	
		♣K76	
<b>WEST</b>	<b>NORTH</b>	<b>EAST</b>	<b>SOUTH</b>
2NT	PASS	3H	PASS
3NT	ALL PASS		

Today's hand, from the TBIB Pairs had Joan Butts at West. As often, when your opening NT is off shape, partner transfers into your short suit. CJ is led and Joan's prospects looked poor. To access extra spade tricks, Joan needed unusual entries. She ducked the first club, then won the second with CQ and unblocked SA. With D7 as the only faint chance of an entry, she now played D6 towards D10 hoping that North with a doubleton honour, would rise. North obliged and continued a club, won by CA. Joan then played DJ. North had to win DQ or they would not have made it at all. So, suddenly the D10 became her only entry to the spades. When HK was onside, Joan made 10 tricks. Entries are really important.