

April 08, 2017

Courier-Mail Bridge Column by Tony Jackman

Trials for the Queensland Open Team for the National Championships in Canberra concluded last Saturday at the QCBC. The top three pairs who will make up the team are Pele Rankin/Therese Tully, Jill Magee/Terry Strong and Paul Hooykaas/Ralph Parker and the fourth placed pair, Nikolas Moore/Larry Moses, become reserves.

Last week Cyclone Debbie rampaged its way along the east coast. Fortunately, most of our bridge clubs came through unscathed with little damage though Brisbane's QCBC needed a few days closed to recover from some water damage and Rockhampton is not yet clear. Perhaps the most amazing escape was in Mackay where much of the population had to be evacuated. The bridge club was undamaged and their annual Open Congress was played last Sunday without major problems. Overall winners were D Ryan/K Poole ahead of T Sheedy/N Bugeia and J Hansen/D Morgan taking out the B Grade.

Meanwhile, safe from major downpours, the Toowoomba Bridge Club held its 58th Open Congress – the start of such events in Australia – at its lovely new club house. The field was slightly down due to the threat of rain and road closures, but still quite strong. Victory in a very tight finish went to Toowong Bridge Club's Barbara Kent/Ross Murtagh, a great win to them from B Grade, ahead of top seeds Richard Ward/Tony Hutton, followed by Neville and Pip Francis. Winners of B Grade were D Hartwig/M Simpson with R Clarke/C Stone in second place. C Grade was won by D J Edwards/C Edwards followed by D Roberts/P Matthews.

N Dealer Nil Vul

North

♠ 32
♥ Q62
♦ K8
♣ AQ10875

West

♠ K9864
♥ AK1054
♦ 6
♣ 96

East

♠ A1075
♥ 9873
♦ Q1094
♣ K

South

♠ QJ
♥ J
♦ AJ7532
♣ J432

West

1S
Pass
Pass
All Pass

North

1C
2C
Pass
Pass

East

Pass
2S
3S
4S

South

1D
3C
4C
5C

Today's hand from late in the Toowoomba Pairs saw a huge variety of results. Ranging from 3D to 5H, the higher level contracts tended to fail. 4H and 4S can and did make at some tables, so the critical problem is in the bidding auction. In the one shown, South's first major choice was to pass over 3S or bid 4C. He chose 4C, but when East went on to 4S, he rethought, decided 4S was making (correct) and went on to 5C which, when his partner made 10 tricks, brought them in a fine result. Particularly when E/W neglected to double and declarer escaped for 1 down having dropped East's CK.