

June 03, 2017

Courier-Mail Bridge Column by Tony Jackman

The main local action last weekend was Sunday's Graded Imp Pairs hosted by the Brisbane Bridge Centre and played in three grades. Overall winners were N. Francis/ M. Perrin, closely followed by C. Qin/ C. Lu with P. Schoen/P. Hale taking third. In B Grade, top spot went to A. Boyce/ I. Barfoot ahead of J. Price/ R. Spelman and R. Murtagh/ A. Hyland. C Grade was won by P. and P. Burke with U. Suliman/ S. Parkes in second then N. Hinsch/ J. O'Malley-Jones.

Somewhat further away, six Australian teams began competing in the 51st Asia Pacific Bridge Federation Championships in Seoul, South Korea – let's hope that there are no rockets flying overhead, at least for another week! As the event's halfway point nears, only our Women's team looks to be a strong chance of a major placing.

This weekend, Arana Bridge Club is hosting an Open Pairs today and Teams tomorrow. Many of us will see this as the last opportunity for good practice before heading off to the national level event, the Victor Champion Cup in Melbourne or staying home for the Queensland Graded Teams at the QCBC.

N Dealer N/S Vul

North

<sup>a</sup> Q85

©108752

.. AQ9

§K4

West

<sup>a</sup> J632

©64

.. 852

§QJ109

East

<sup>a</sup> 1097

©J3

.. KJ7

§A8653

South

<sup>a</sup> AK4

©AKQ9

.. 10642

§72

West

Pass

Pass

Pass

North

Pass

2D

4H

East

Pass

Pass

All Pass

South

1NT

3H

In today's bidding North's 2D response was a transfer to hearts and could be weak or strong. South's 3H jump response showed a maximum or near maximum 1NT opening containing 4 hearts. West's opening lead was CQ. How would you play? Let's think. Given East has CA we have 2 club losers, and we will fail if there's an unlikely trump to lose. This leaves diamonds where we are missing the KJ. Many players took the double finesse: that is finessing against the J then the K. This is normally the best line. It is at least 75% that 1 (or both) honours will be with West. Not bad, but this time fails.

Better is an elimination. After we've lost 2 clubs, win the likely spade return, draw trumps and cash the remaining spade winners ending in hand. Now our black suits have been removed we turn to diamonds. We finesse the D9 and East wins DJ but now is endplayed and can only return a club (giving us a ruff and discard) or a diamond back into dummy's D AQ. Either way our 4H is home. If we don't cover CQ at trick one West should switch to diamonds. Here we win DA, draw trumps and spades and exit CK. Both lines should get applause from partner.