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Courier-Mail Bridge Column by Tony Jackman

Most new players coming to bridge either learn at home or in their workplace or at their local club usually using a basic text. Given modest effort and continued interest, by the end of an introductory course the student should have a fair grip on basic bidding, a moderate grasp of simple play but usually only a small idea of defence principles. Lately I've been sent some books for review including two by top Canadian expert player Bill Treble, published by Master Point Press. The first, 'Defending At Bridge' is an excellent, well formatted text for beginners to help them in the defence area. As the new player progresses, he will find that not everyone plays basic Standard and that many of his opponents have moved to an enhanced variation described as Two Over One which is also the name of the other new text by Treble. Both are subtitled 'A First Course' and are concise and readily understandable.

Meanwhile the Australian National Championships (ANC) are well underway in Canberra. Sadly, with not too far to go in the qualifying rounds, none of the Queensland teams seem to have a chance of making the finals. Back at home, the Northern Suburbs Bridge Club hosted an Open Swiss Pairs last Sunday. The Championship was won by P Evans/ J Kelly who just edged out C Lu/ C Qin then N Moore/ A Wanigaratne. B Grade went to C Stone/ R Clark ahead of A Loh/ J Wilkinson and A Hyland/ F Jeppesen. C Grade winners were D Benes/ L Pescatore.

<b>N Dealer Nil Vul</b>	<b>North</b>		
	♠KQJ542		
	♥84		
	♦52		
	♣1086		
<b>West</b>		<b>East</b>	
♠76		♠A103	
♥752		♥AQ	
♦KQ108		♦J743	
♣A754		♣KQ92	
	<b>South</b>		
	♠98		
	♥KJ10963		
	♦A96		
	♣J3		
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
	2S	2NT	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

Today's is a tutorial hand from the first Treble book. South leads S9, top card from his doubleton in partner's suit. North plays SJ and declarer has to duck, otherwise South will be able to get to his partner's established suit when he takes the DA. North has a count on the spades and should see it's futile to keep playing the suit as he has no entry to take his winners. He can see that dummy has sources of tricks in both minors so it looks as though hearts is the only suit where N/S might be able to make headway. North has to make the most of his sole opportunity to be on lead and must fire back a heart at trick two. Declarer puts up HQ hopefully but South wins and plays back the HJ to drive out the HA. East now only has six tricks and when he plays on diamonds, to set that suit up, South wins DA and now takes the rest of the tricks for down three. Note that if North had continued spades at trick two, Declarer wins and plays on diamonds to bring home nine tricks.