

March 25, 2017
 Courier-Mail Bridge Column by Tony Jackman

It is now fifty plus years since a system of ranking was devised for Australia's bridge players. 'Master points' were allocated for good performances, green for lesser events, red for more important contests. Initially the highest rank was 'life master' with, at the time, an almost unimaginable total of at least 300mps. Things changed rapidly. Events and player numbers proliferated and soon there were hundreds of life masters. What to do? The ABF created new ranking levels starting at Grand Master (1000 mp) and new gold master points that could only be won in major events. Now each state hosts at least one event with gold mps and players flock to them – as illustrated by last month's record entry for our Gold Coast Congress and again by the numbers last week at Tasmania's Festival of Bridge in Hobart. Here the first big event was the Roger Penny Swiss Pairs (Seniors) won by P. Gumby/ W. Lazer ahead of T.Brown/ J. Reitzer then B.Neill/ K.Morrison. Then came the Australian Swiss Pairs with victory going to ABF president Bruce Neill with Avi Kanetkar ahead of H.Grosvenor/ A Paton and G Johnson/K French in third position.

Trials for the Queensland Open Team are approaching the midway mark, with R Ward/L Vincent leading, followed by H McAlister/D McAlister and P Hooykaas/R Parker in third position.

E Dealer, All Vul		NORTH		
		♠ A10752		
		♥ QJ10543		
		♦ K3		
		♣ -		
WEST			EAST	
♠ 964			♠ KQJ83	
♥ A82			♥ K	
♦ J106			♦ A72	
♣ Q542			♣ AK83	
		SOUTH		
		♠ -		
		♥ 976		
		♦ Q9854		
		♣ J10976		
WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	
		1S	Pass	
2S	Pass	3C	Pass	
3H	Pass	4D	Pass	
4S	All Pass			

Today's hand featured US star Linda Lewis at the Gold Coast Pairs. D4 was led to DJ, DK and DA. Linda cashed HK and played SK, observing the bad break as North won SA. A diamond went to South's queen, and the diamond return allowed North to score a low trump. North continued with HQ to dummy's HA, Linda pitching a club. The S9 was covered by North with the S10 and Linda was able to pick up the rest of North's trumps with the SJ and S8. Plus 620 was good for an 88% score.