

June 17, 2017
 Courier-Mail Bridge Column by Tony Jackman

The state graded teams championship was played last Sunday at the Queensland Contract Bridge Club. Grading is determined by the combined masterpoint holding of the team members. Top grade featured a running clash between the Carter (M Carter/ T Hutton, C Lu/ C Qin) and Ward (R Ward/ L Vincent, K & R Ellaway) teams. Into the afternoon, Carter was leading but lost the clash with Ward to narrow the margin. In the end, Carter hung on to take the title with Ward in second and Rankin (P Rankin/ T Tully, J Mills/ R Parker) third. B Grade winners were the Goodwin team while Finigan won the C Grade.

Perhaps because of the clash, not many Queenslanders made their way to Melbourne for the Victor Champion Cup played over their long weekend. Those that did had to settle for a variety of lesser placings. First major event was the Wally Scott Open Swiss Pairs won by Stephen & Danny Sharp while Queenslanders Terry Strong and Jill Magee took fourth. The Women's Pairs was won by M Wu/ S Coleman while the Seniors went to R Nixon/ N Van Vucht with Queenslanders N Francis/ K Steffensen bringing back bronze. The headline event, the Victor Champion Cup, went to Henbest (M Henbest/ D Wiltshire, S Harrison/ J Thompson) ahead of Townsville's N Van Jole, with J Williams, P Gosney/ J Newman.

S Dealer N/S Vul		North	
		♠6	
		♥72	
		♦J1097542	
		♣A93	
West		East	
♠A74		♠KQJ932	
♥AQJ98		♥K3	
♦AK8		♦Q6	
♣Q6		♣874	
	South		
	♠1085		
	♥10654		
	♦3		
	♣KJ1052		
West	North	East	South
			Pass
2NT	Pass	3H(transfer)	Pass
3S	Pass	4NT	Pass
5S	Pass	6S	All Pass

There are many axioms/adages in our game designed to help us. Sometimes they don't – only provide a substitute for thought. Try 'Always cover an honour with an honour'. Declarer leads a Queen towards Ax in dummy. You hold Kxx. Cover? Wrong if declarer has length eg QJ10xx but what if he has Qx only and must make two tricks. Another such axiom is 'Always (or never) lead an Ace against a slam' Graded Teams winner Tony Hutton gave me today's hand. It was one of two from their late match against Ward. On this one the Ward declarer received the DJ lead – 13 tricks. At the other table CA was led and continued – a slam swing against Carter. Hutton moaned 'a couple of hands back we did lead an ace against their slam – only lead to let them make – there's no justice!'