



Monthly Newsletter

January 2026 | Editor: Russell Spear

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CLUB NOTICES

Happy New Year from all NSBC Staff and Committee.
Let's make 2026 even better than our great 2025.

Membership Renewals

Thank you to all of you who have topped - up and made payments to cover Memberships for 2026.
If you have ignored the reminder emails and have not made the payment your Membership will be canceled.
If you have not paid and wish to continue your membership please make payment ASAP.

MyAccount

This system gives you a view of your charges and deposits on our PrePay System - we have put you in charge. If you are one of the 350 members on Auto Top-up - we love you, this makes our lives so much simpler. To access go to www.myaccountnsbc.com - don't know your password. Click "forgot my password" and follow prompts. This system is Step 1 in automation and the only place we know of left to trim costs. So if you have not logged in, please do so and familiarise yourself with it all.

Customise your notifications or even better set up an Auto Top Up.

If technology is not your thing? Call Sue on 0416 290 867 and she will set you up in less than a minute.

Share the love of Bridge -

Next beginner class starts soon. Our beginner bridge programs get rave reviews, please encourage your friends to take up the game or at least give it a go. Please pick up a flyer at The Willis or East Lindfield or forward on these details.

Our next Class with **Garry Viner** starts on Saturday 14th February - East Lindfield
Starts 9:30am - Finishes around 11:30am.
[Contact here for more details](#)

Our next Class with **Liz Wilkinson** starts on Tuesday 27th January - East Lindfield
Starts 10am - Finishes around 12pm
[Contact here for more details](#)

FROM THE PRESIDENT

President's End-of-Year Reflections

As another year of bridge draws to a close, I want to pause and say a very big **thank you** to the people who make North Shore Bridge Club the special place it is.

First up, to **Mike, Gary, Sue and Josh** — thank you for everything you do, day in and day out. Your commitment, professionalism and care for our members is the engine room of NSBC. We simply could not do what we do without you, and we are incredibly lucky to have you.

To our **Directors** — you are all superstars. Your guidance, experience and willingness to roll up your sleeves makes a real difference, and we are very fortunate to have such a strong and thoughtful group supporting the club.

To our **amazing teaching crew** — we love learning, and we truly appreciate the effort you put into helping us become better bridge players (and occasionally better behaved at the table 😊). Your patience, passion and generosity with your knowledge does not go unnoticed.

To our **volunteers** — you know who you are. Thank you from all of us. The club simply doesn't function without you, and we are enormously grateful for everything you do behind the scenes.

To **my Committee** — you are absolute gems. Each and every one of you has contributed to the great things we've achieved this year. I have genuinely loved working alongside you, and I'm proud of what we've accomplished together.

As I write this, I'm riding a personal high — today I stepped onto my **seventh continent**. Antarctica is every bit as extraordinary as you'd imagine (cold, white, and full of attitude... a bit like some bridge hands). It's a good place to reflect, and it's filled me with excitement for what lies ahead.

I'm really looking forward to **2026** and all it will bring — great bridge, continued growth, and the next chapter of our journey with the **Lindfield Bowling Club merger**. There's a lot to be excited about.

And finally, to **all of our members** — thank you. You are the heart of this club, and you are what makes NSBC such a welcoming, friendly and vibrant community.

I wish you and your families good health, excellent bridge, and many wonderful memories in 2026



OUR MEMBERS OUR CLUB

Due to time constraint, there is no conversation with an NSBC Member this month but that section will return next month

However, the following contribution was made by John Ackerman

**Chasing The Grand
Or "Desperately Seeking Seven"**

How often do we make all thirteen tricks as declarer, and wonder if we should have bid a grand slam?

Based on an analysis extending back over my last twenty-eight Open sessions at East Lindfield, an admittedly small sample in the history of human bridge endeavours, I am going to attempt to answer that question.

My method was to look at the travelers for each board of those 28 sessions, as provided by Pianola. To be included as a biddable grand slam, a board had to meet three criteria: at least 25% of the pairs in the room had to make all 13 tricks in whatever contract they were playing; Pianola's predictor had to list grand slam as makeable in either NT or a suit contract (often both); and there needed to be no missing ace that the defence could play at trick one to defeat the contract.

Over those twenty-eight sessions, there were 17 boards that met those criteria i.e. seventeen times that a grand slam was a good contract to reach. So a good grand slam contract comes up slightly more often than every second session, though half that time it will be available to our opponents, not to us. If we play four sessions without bidding a grand slam, we have probably missed an opportunity.

A total of 316 pairs played those boards. How many times do you think the grand slam was bid?

EIGHT.

Eight times, spread over four boards. On thirteen of those seventeen boards, no-one at all bid seven. 97.5% of the opportunities to bid and make a grand slam were missed - actually, almost 98%, because one of the eight went down. In fact, on a significant proportion of those boards most pairs didn't reach a small slam, either, but that's an analysis for another day.

That seems a shame. I'm far too wet behind the ears to be offering worthwhile analysis, even less a solution, but I know my own pulse starts to tick up as our bidding passes the four level, and there's a sense of "job done" upon bidding small slam. I have learnt that upon reaching six in a suit, you should always consider whether 6NT is a better scoring contract; it seems I

should also be taking a look at seven (and there's less reason to convert to no trump at that level, because you'll be the only one bidding the grand and you'll get your top anyway!).

While the above covers a relatively short period of time in search of a Grand Slam, it is inciteful to the possibilities being missed

The following probabilities have been calculated (according to the Internet) for other contracts in Bridge.

Probability that either partnership will have enough to bid game, assuming a 26+ point game = **25.29%** (1 in 3.95 deals)

Probability that either partnership will have enough to bid slam, assuming a 33+ point slam = **.70%** (1 in 143.5 deals)

Probability that either partnership will have enough to bid Grand slam, assuming a 37+ point Grand slam = **.02%** (about 1 in 5,848 deals)

Odds against a hand with no card higher than 10 = **274 to 1**

Odds against a hand with no card higher than Jack = **52 to 1**

Odds against a hand with no card higher than Queen = **11 to 1**

Odds against a hand with no Aces = **2 to 1**

Odds against being dealt four Aces = **378 to 1**

Odds against being dealt at least one singleton = **2 to 1**

Odds against having at least one void = **19 to 1**

MAJOR RESULTS

Club Champions

As a result of all major events having been concluded for the year, the Club Champions in each section have been identified. Our congratulations go to each for having a fabulous year and playing at the highest level in their respective areas.

Congratulations to

Peter Gill for being the
2025 John Brownie OPEN
Club Champion,



Felix Shteyman for being
the 2025 Leo Goorevich
INTERMEDIATE Club
Champion



Sharon Thompson, our
very own, much loved
President, for being the
2025 John Mottram
RESTRICTED Club
Champion.



Their names will now be inscribed for posterity on the Championship trophies.

Online Christmas Teams Event

This was the last event for the accumulation of Points for the Club Championships

And the winners were:

First Team Mundell: Giselle Mundell, Andrew Peake, Tania Lloyd, Hugh Grosvenor

Second Team Goorevich: Leo Goorevich, Gary Lane, Elli Urbach, Steven Boch

Third Team Jefferey: Peter Jefferey, Yumin Li, Colin Clifford (sub), Cevat Emul, Bob Sebesfi

Festive Season Swiss Teams

And the winners were:

Open:

First: Team Jefferey - Peter Jefferey, Yumin Li, Wei Zhang, William Zhang

Second: Team Speiser - Ron Speiser, George Bilski, Paul Lavings, Peter Cox

Third: Team Hutton - Tony Hutton, Malcolm Carter, Jennifer Carter, Lyn Carter

Intermediate

First: Team Shteyman - Felix Shteyman, Susan Feeney, Preter Robinson, Esther Lee

Festive Season Online Congress

And the winners were:

Open

Winners: Jane Dawson and Peter Gill

Second: David Osie and Steven Bock

Third: Anthony Burke and Phil Gue

Intermediate

Winners: Dell Macneil and Adrian Beaumont

Second: Felix Shteyman and Susan Feeney

Restricted

Winners: Anne Lancaster and Debbie Irwin

Christmas Pairs Online Competition Result

And the Winners were:

Open

Winners: Wei Zhang and William Zhang

Second: Giselle Mundel and Andrew Peake

Third: Witold Chylewski and Wieslaw Prezewozniak

Intermediate

Winners: Kit Meyers and Kerry Rymer

Second: Craig Mietzke and Christine Hanley

Restricted

Winners: Sharon Thompson and Terry Dunne

Second: Bricet Kloren and Craig Becconsall

UPCOMING EVENTS

Summer Open Pairs Competition

Thursday Nights, 1st and 8th January 2026 at 1900

NSBC Thursday | Pairs | Online | **Red Masterpoints**
[Click here to enter via MyABF](#)

Summer Pairs Rookie, Restricted, Intermediate Competition

Thursday, Nights 1st and 8th January 2026

NSBC Thursday | Pairs | Online | **Red Masterpoints**
[Click here to enter via MyABF](#)

Summer Teams Open Competition

Sunday, All Day, 4th January 2026

NSBC Sunday | Teams | Online | **Red Masterpoints**
[Click here to enter via MyABF](#)

Australia Day Swiss Pairs Open Congress

Sunday 25th January 2026

NSBC Sunday, All Day | Pairs | Online | **Red Masterpoints**
[Click here to enter via MyABF](#)

Australia Day Swiss Pairs, Intermediate, Restricted, Rookie Congress

Sunday, 25th January 2026

NSBC Sunday, All Day | Pairs | Online | **Red Masterpoints**
[Click here to enter via MyABF](#)

Summer Teams Congress

Thursday Evenings, 29th January, 5th February & 12th February

NSBC Thursday Nights at 1900 | Teams | Online | **Red**

Masterpoints

[Click here to enter via MyABF](#)

Summer Swiss Pairs Congress - Rookie, Restricted, Intermediate

Sunday, 15th February 2026

NSBC Sunday, All Day | Pairs | Online | **Red Masterpoints**

[Click here to enter via MyABF](#)

Swiss Pairs Congress - Open

Sunday, 15th February 2026

NSBC Sunday, All Day | Pairs | Online | **Red Masterpoints**

[Click here to enter via MyABF](#)

NSBC GNOT Direct Qualifier (Metro)

Thursday, 19th February, 26th February, 5th March, 12th March & 26th March 2026

NSBC Thursday Nights at 1900 | Pairs | Online | **Red Masterpoints**

[Click here to enter via MyABF](#)

LESSONS

Friday 6th March from 1000

Commonly Misunderstood Auctions and how to get them right

All of the hands have opportunities for good play or defence to have an effect on the outcome.

Defining Which Jumps Are Strong and Weak
 How Many Cards and How Many Points
 Identifying When Conventions Apply, And Don't

[Click Here to Enter](#)

DEAR DIRECTOR

It has been such a fun year seeing all of you enjoy your bridge. Moving forward if I can give you one piece of advice. I think I often say it. It's much easier to treat people with kindness at the bridge table. Sometimes people make a mistake (remember your partner does not play better when you give them a hard time!) The best way to improve your bridge is after the game is over go over with your partner the boards you may not have done so well on. There will be a theme. Bidding too high, not bidding enough. Maybe your defence needs work, remember you defend 50% of the time.

On this hand East will open 1 Heart. Now as South depending on how frisky you are you may overcall 4 Spades to put maximum pressure on the opps or you may overcall 3 Spades. With a 3 Spades bid, West will just bid 4 Hearts and if they overcall 4 Spades, I would still bid 5 Hearts. At this point, North, if opps were able to bid 4 Hearts, should call 4 Spades. Now if E/W bid to 5 Hearts as South you have one bid - don't bid 5 Spades!

D	N North	W	N	E	S
1	♠ 765 ♥ 72 ♦ QJ982 ♣ A96				
		W West		E East	
		♠ ♥ AQJ ♦ K74 ♣ KJ108752		♠ KQ2 ♥ K10865 ♦ A10653 ♣	
			S South		
			♠ AJ109843 ♥ 943 ♦ ♣ Q43		

This happened at our table (I rarely X but sitting West with an opening hand and my partner opened, I decided to X, I am always nervous when I Double! We managed to take them off 3 for a great score. What is very interesting is that 6 Hearts is supposed to make

but a lot of pairs didn't make 12 tricks. A lot of players decided to play the Ace of Spades, not a good lead. This would have got trumped. Now once you have trumped the Ace of Spades. Your plan is to set up the clubs. Play the King of Clubs -opps will play their Ace and you trump. Cross over to your Ace of hearts and play another club the queen wins but now the opps can hurt you and you can draw trumps and make 12 tricks.

On this hand only half the field got to game. If partner opens the bidding and you have an opening hand you want to get to game. Yes on this hand 6 Clubs does make, everything works out well. And if you got there that is excellent. If you didn't get to 6 Clubs at least you should be in 3NT. Note 5 Clubs will not be as good as being in 3NT. You will take 5 Clubs tricks, 1 Diamond trick, 2 Spade tricks and 2 Heart tricks

11		N undefined		W N E S	
D		♠ J75		P 1♦ 1♠ 2♥	
		♥ K4		P 2♣ P 2NT	
		♦ A10765		P 3NT P P	
		♣ KJ7		P	
W undefined		E undefined			
♠ 82		♠ A9643			
♥ J93		♥ Q862			
♦ QJ8432		♦ K			
♣ 82		♣ 653			
		S undefined			
		♠ KQ10			
		♥ A1075			
		♦ 9			
		♣ AQ1094		3NT S NS: 0 EW: 0	

ASK GARY

Masterpoint Allocations

There has been a longstanding concern regarding the method of awarding masterpoints for events in Australia. Specifically, when organising special events with masterpoint-restricted categories—such as red point sessions—a master factor must be applied to these restricted fields to account for differing experience levels. For instance, open categories are assigned a master factor of 1.0, whereas restricted and rookie categories generally receive a factor of 0.65. Consequently, rookies and restricted players receive fewer red masterpoints for an equivalent number of tables in red point sessions.

An additional issue currently benefits intermediate-level players, as under certain circumstances, stronger-than-average intermediate fields may be awarded higher master factors. For example, at the recent Festive Season Congress, the Intermediate field received a master factor of 1.25 instead of less than 1.0. However, regulations stipulate that the open field's master factor cannot exceed 1.0, regardless of player experience level. As a result, during the Festive Season Intermediate Pairs, less experienced players in a smaller field were awarded more red masterpoints than participants in larger open fields featuring many high-level Australian representatives. While this outcome appears inequitable, it is mandated by current policies.

Several years ago, I brought this matter to the attention of the ABF Committee but did not receive a resolution or an explanation. Further investigation revealed this is a long ongoing recognised issue, yet some resistance persists among state masterpoint secretaries to pursue a solution. I have raised the matter again in the hope that the ABF Committee will address it on this occasion.

Notably, other states apply different practices, permitting master factoring to the open fields (it all comes down to how you interpret instructions in the ABF Masterpointing Manual). This inconsistency in awarding masterpoints results in discrepancies across Australia, with NSW players potentially receiving fewer masterpoints than their counterparts in other states for comparable events. Such discrepancies influence the National McCutcheon awards, possibly resulting in an unfair disadvantage for NSW participants.

I have taken all possible steps to advocate for change. It is my hope that the ABF will this time promote consistency across states, allowing masterpoints to be awarded equitably and appropriately, thereby ensuring the recognition of experience levels in all masterpoint events.

What this means for players participating in Intermediate competitions for now is that if the field contains a lot of intermediate level players, you should get almost as many red points as the open players and not have to play against any grand masters (and as it turns out sometimes more red points!).

So, take advantage of this and play in all our red point intermediate events. We have two great ones in January. Our Intermediates have a section in the Summer Pairs on Thursday nights and they also have their own section in the Australia Day Weekend Pairs congress.

MONTHLY WINNERS

Congratulations to the following players who were the overall Monthly Winners for their session.

East Lindfield Monday 10.00 AM Rookie - GEOFFREY
LYONS / LES OWEN

East Lindfield Monday 1.00 PM Open - MARLAINE
GAHAN / COLIN THOMAS

East Lindfield Monday 7.00 PM Rookie - MANDY
MACDONALD / VIBEKE FAURBY

East Lindfield Tuesday 1.30 PM Rookie - MARLAINE
GAHAN / COLIN THOMAS

East Lindfield Wednesday 10.00 AM Open - PETER
TAYLOR / ANNE TAYLOR

East Lindfield Thursday 9.45 AM Rookie - JEANETTE CAO/
JASON SEARLE

East Lindfield Thursday 9.45 AM Supervised - CRAIG
DULY / ANTHONY DODDS

East Lindfield Thursday 1.00 PM Open - MARLAINE
GAHAN / COLIN THOMAS

East Lindfield Saturday 9.30am Supervised - ROBYN
CHAPMAN / KAREN MURPHY

East Lindfield Saturday 1.00 PM Open - MARIKA

LORSCHY / PETER LORSCHY

The Willis Monday 1.30 PM Rookie - JAN FREEMANTLE /
MOYA BARNETT

The Willis Tuesday 12.30 PM Open - GRAHAM
MCMAHON / YU-SHIUN CHEN

The Willis Wednesday 9.30 AM Supervised - Suzanne
Steingold / GAYE BANNAN

The Willis Wednesday 12.30 PM Open - DEIRDRE JAMES /
SALLIE QUARLES

Online Mon 10.00 am Open - PETER ROBINSON / DEREK
MALTZ

Online Mon 1.30 pm Open - FELIX SHTEYMAN / TONY
HALSE

Online Mon 2.00 pm Rookie - PETA MCELHONE /
MARINA CLARK

Online Tue 1.30 pm Open - ANDREW PEAKE / GISELLE
MUNDELL

Online Tue 2.00 pm Rookie - ROSEMARY CHRISTIE /
ANNE MAREE GLEESON

Online Tue 7.00 pm Restricted - ALISON PICK / JOHN
PICK

Online Wed 1.30 pm Open - ANTHONY BURKE / PHIL
GUE

Online Wed 2.00 pm Rookie - TRICIA HIGGINS / ROSE
BRAUDE

Online Wed 7.00pm Open - JUDY OSIE / DAVID OSIE

Online Thu 1.30 pm Open - WALTER CELLICH / JOHN
ALLCOCK

Online Thu 1.30 pm Restricted - OWEN AUBREY / LORNA

DAVIES

Online Fri 1.30 pm Open - TOM KISS / ALASDAIR BECK

Online Sat 1.30 pm Open - GISELLE MUNDELL / RENA
KAPLAN

MASTERPOINT PROMOTIONS

Congratulations to the following members on their promotions.

Jean Hydleman to Silver Life Master

Sue Scotford to Silver Life Master

Mary Poynten to Silver Life Master

Robbie Feyder to Silver Life Master

Susan Feeney to Life Master

Pravin Nahar to Life Master

Denise McTaggart to National Master

Rosalind Hayden to National Master

Sharon Thompson to National Master

Stephen Sharp to Silver Local Master

Harley McHutchison to Silver Local Master

Shirley Rutter to Silver Local Master

David Hanson to Local Master

Andrea Frankel to Local Master

Ajaya Jayarao to Club Master

Frederick Kruger to Club Master

Rita Pachauri to Club Master

Ruth Browne to Club Master
Verney Diamantes to Club Master
Ewen Crouch to Graduate Master
Jacqueline Kaye to Graduate Master
Katrina Swiderska to Graduate Master
Jeffrey Reinhardt to Graduate Master
Janet Crocker to Life Master
Barbara Wood to National Master
Meera Kudva to Bronze State Master
Joan Sleeman to Bronze State Master
Robyn Lawrence to State Master
Tony Halse to State Master
Rosemary Christie to Bronze Local Master
Elizabeth Laforest to Bronze Local Master
Jeanette Cao to Local Master
Yen Heng to Local Master
John Farrar to Local Master
Geraldine Hardman to Local Master
Amanda Lee to Club Master
Jason Searle to Graduate Master
Catherine Crouch to Graduate Master
Karen Murphy to Graduate Master
Margot Gladman to Graduate Master
Andi Rae to Graduate Master

NEW MEMBERS

A warm welcome to our new members this month.

Jane Bisco – Ryde
Clare Jackin – South Perth
Kathryn Cordier – Pymble
Derk Dammers - Middle Cove
Dianne Dwyer – Northam
Jean Fazzolare – Hunters Hill
Joyce Gordon – St Ives
Michael Green – Newport
Dianna James – Normanhurst
Kate Loxton – Elizabeth Beach
Murray Talman – Crows Nest

