

July 15, 2017

Courier-Mail Bridge Column by Tony Jackman

This year's Australian National Championships – the event rotates through the capitals – will be played at Canberra's Thoroughbred Park. Let's hope it's not too cold! First events get underway today and Queensland has teams in all four categories: Open, Senior's, Women's and Youth. Unfortunately, at the last minute, one of our Women's Pairs had to pull out due to ill health, so M Jakes/ A Dawson have been replaced by reserve pair S Strickland/ G Tucker. Our Women will be defending the title won last year in Brisbane. Each of our teams is in with a chance, this time possibly the Seniors will be the best finals prospect. We wish them all the best of luck. Last Sunday was the final chance for good practice with QCBC hosting the Qld Butler Pairs. The Open title went to new arrivals from Sydney G. Belonogov/ E Kowalczyk. C Miller/ K Steffensen who had led most of the way had to settle for second place ahead of V Holbrook/ B MacLeod who's result here also gave them the Women's Pairs title for this year. Second there, were T Tully/ P Rankin followed by E Zeller/ A Dawson. Also incorporated in the overall event was the Men's Pairs Championship which went to M Carter/ T Hutton ahead of P Evans/ T Treloar and N Francis/ M Moren in third position.

The Bundaberg Club held its annual Congress last weekend also, with its Open Pairs Championship title going to D Jones/ R Nolan and Sunday's Teams event taken out by D Harris/ T Ridley and T Townend/ P Hawkins.

S Dealer Nil Vul

North

♠A
♥KQ4
♦AKQ10853
♣QJ

West

♠98753
♥87
♦92
♣10842

East

♠J642
♥1095
♦64
♣9763

South

♠KQ10
♥AJ632
♦J7
♣AK5

West

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Pass

Pass

North

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2D

7NT

East

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Pass

All Pass

South

1H

3NT

Today's hand was a highlight of the Butler Pairs. In many years, it has the most combined points and tricks that I have ever seen. We won't tax the readers with an attempt to play the hand, but they might try their bidding. Curiously, in the state championship, there were still 3 of the 18 pairs who stayed out of any slam, one pair who stopped in 6H and some others who bid only to 7D or 7H. In ordinary club pair scoring, anything other than 7NT would have got a poor result. However, in Butler scoring, 7H (only 10 imp difference) did tie with 7NT. How would you have gone?