

May 26, 2018
 Courier-Mail Bridge Column by Tony Jackman

There was plenty of nervousness earlier this year after the timing for the Barrier Reef Congress – last week in the Townsville Stadium – had to be changed to mid-week and the venue was untried. Happy faces now – the 60 team capacity was reached easily, and, even better, the event ran smoothly (except for the strong Victorian contingent finishing ahead in both majors)

Back in town the Toowong Club last weekend hosted the Queensland Mixed Pairs Championship. After a slow start on Saturday Lyn and Malcolm Carter moved into top gear, charged through the field on Sunday to take the title well ahead of Sue Spurway/ Richard Wallis and Eileen Li/ Charlie Lu.

Also, last Saturday, some who found the North too hot, wended their way South-West for Stanthorpe's annual open Swiss Pairs. Here the title went to S. Ziegenfuss/ T. Runting ahead of J. Power G. Dawson then J. Buckley/J. Wood.

N Dealer, E/W Vul

	NORTH		
	a J732		
	© KJ10753		
	.. 92		
	§ 7		
WEST		EAST	
a 10864		a K9	
© 86		© 942	
.. 87653		.. Q104	
§ 93		§ K10842	
	SOUTH		
	a AQ5		
	© AQ		
	.. AKJ		
	§ AQJ65		
WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	2H	**	4NT
Pass	5D	Pass	5NT
Pass	6C	Pass	???

The South hand, from a recent club pairs, was one of the biggest (27 HCP) that I have ever held – certainly when partner had opened the bidding. 2H was a weak two – a decent six card suit – and, in theory 6-9 points, but at the favourable vulnerability a little leeway was allowed. What to do? The Roman Blackwood responses showed first the missing Keycard (HK) then no other king. In any case, as it was pairs, 6NT was my decision – that way the lead would be around into my tenaces. But no! Our cunning West led H8, through dummy's strength. Ignoring E/W how would you play it? You have 10 top tricks (given hearts run) but only one entry, by overtaking HQ. One solution, after three heart rounds, is to play SQ. If ducked – unlikely – but a suspicious defender might – switch back to clubs. Play CA then CQ. That loses to CK, but there are now 12 tricks. If SQ is taken, SJ will give entry to dummy. If that suit was 3:3 the fourth spade brings you home, otherwise you need a minor suit finesse. My line depended on a defensive error. Six heart rounds were played and I threw C6 early. West felt it safe to pitch two clubs - but no, Down to SA, D AK and C AQJ5 a top club could be conceded to CK and the remaining cards were all high – 12 tricks.