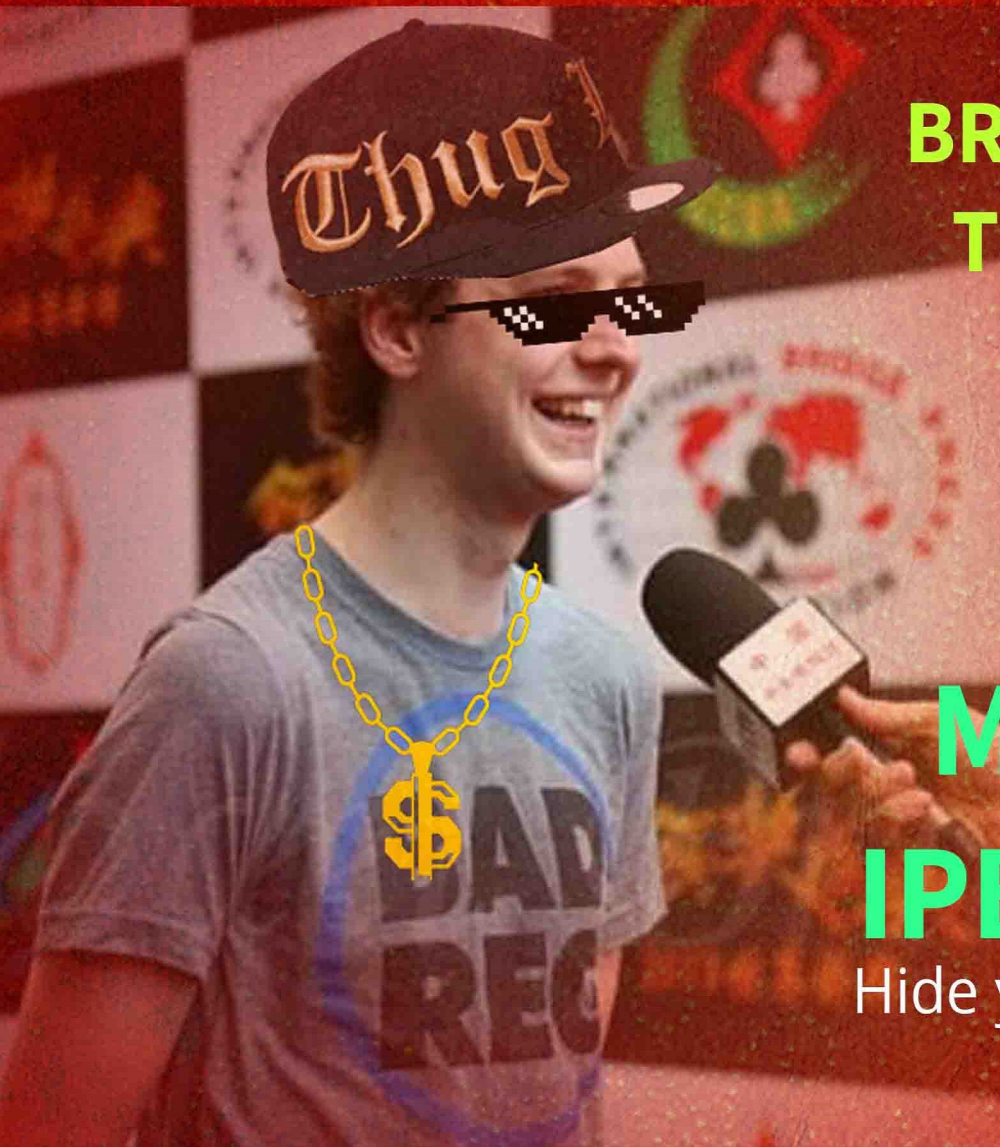


AUSSIE YOUTH BRIDGE BULLETIN



BAD BIDDING FOR IMPS

Cesca explains why you should fear beginners



BRIDGE PLAYERS THEN AND NOW

Such promise.
What happened?

MATT WINS IPBA AWARD

Hide yo wife, hide yo kids.

OUR BARINA, WHO ART IN HEAVEN

Chrispy shatters the glass ceiling

RANK SLAMS ARCHIVE
YOU'LL REW THE DAY
BAD BRIDGE BINGO

3NT.



You'll Rew the day by Nico Ranson

This is the true story of a hand I played at a time when an Australian expert, Fraser Rew™ (pty ltd), was foolish enough to let me play with him at a day long teams event. The day turned out to be an educational experience for both of us. For me, I learned some new and useful simple bidding techniques that I had somehow missed in my long, troublesome years at the table. Fraser instead discovered that there are a bunch of "obvious bidding conventions" (a real quote to my withering sense of self-esteem on the day) which every expert knows but are entirely un-obvious to beginners and/or the resolutely hopeless like myself. This is the hand I faced; let's put you in the hot seat and see just how much you sweat.

You're sitting across from Fraser Rew, an Aussie expert of certified pedigree. He's asked you to fill in for a much better player who couldn't make it. This hand occurred during round 5 of 6. By now Fraser has become well accustomed to your crimes against humanity at the table. You've never played with him before this day so you have a basic 2 over 1 system (effectively standard American but with a fancy dress on) with what you've decided are "the normal agreements". You're keen to prove that Australian youth bridge has some sort of future, be it a murky, forgotten in the back of the college fridge looking one. Then this hand turns up. What do you bid now as west?

Board 23
South dealer
Both vul

♠ J43
♥ K8765
♦ 7
♣ KJ105

W

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♦	Double	2♥	Pass
?			

North's double is showing a good diamond suit, and at this vulnerability, they better have the goods. You don't have a diamond stopper yourself, but there is still a good chance that East might have one for you. After all, Fraser is supposed to be an expert, so you can usually expect them to miraculously hold all the necessary cards. You know your partner has at least 2 hearts, but do you want to go to 4♥ with possibly a 5-2 fit? The fact that you have the shortness in diamonds means that you will have to trump in the long hand. With 6 cards missing, a 3-3 split amongst the opponents is only a 36% chance. Therefore, you're likely to quickly lose control of the trumps and go down. Don't expect any help by looking up at Fraser's face; he's sporting a steely, professionally closed expression in which you're more likely to discover a fatal attraction than what cards he's holding. What now?



Fraser Rew (The)

What I did

Since I'd shown Fraser 5 hearts already by transferring, I elected to bid 3NT, which was passed out. My reasoning was that partner is likely to hold a diamond stop, and can always bid 4♥ if he has 3 or more hearts himself. Let's look at the hands.

Board 23
South dealer
Both vul

♠ J43
♥ K8765
♦ 7
♣ KJ105

N
W E
S

♠ 1082
♥ 4
♦ AK1032
♣ Q873

♠ AQ
♥ AQ9
♦ J86
♣ A9642

♠ K9765
♥ J1032
♦ Q954
♣ —

I went down 2 swiftly and with a well practiced grace. But why had Fraser not bid 3NT himself with his 3 heart support?

The solution

You'll not be surprised to know that I was in the wrong here. By doubling my transfer bid of 2♦, North has now given East multiple options. East can pass, accept the transfer (2♥), or super-accept the transfer (3♥). The bridge experts have divined that there isn't much point in having two different bids with exactly the same meaning; that kind of redundancy is best left to the government. Instead, why not leave 'Pass' as showing no fit in hearts (so 2 hearts) and the bid of '2♥' shows a fit (3 or 4 hearts). This convention is a common one amongst experts, so Fraser's only mistake was assuming that I knew about it.

Fraser's reasoning was thus: "I've already shown Nico that I have heart support, so why is he offering 3NT? He must have a diamond stopper, which means that South might be short and able to ruff the likely diamond lead! It seems likely now that 3NT is a better contract since we can't get trumped". And thus, in my special way, I had given Fraser a valuable gift. For the first time in his life, Fraser got to know what it felt like to get something wrong.

Bad Bidding for IMPs by Francesca McGrath

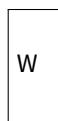
4 years ago I played in my first Australian National Championship. I'd been playing bridge for 7 months, and through dubious WA methods (that year was individual trials) I had made the youth team. Possibly more excited to visit Sydney than play bridge, my goal was to follow suit and not screw up too badly. It was questionable whether I succeeded.



The 2014 WA youth team. L to R: Ailsa Peacock, Francesca McGrath, Renee Cooper, Allison Stralow (NPC), Tim Munro, Rhys Cooper, Matt Smith

One of the things I love about bridge is how often you can make poor bidding (and play) decisions and end up with a good score. For example, one might think a 2♣ opening is natural, pass, and luck out when magically no game makes. The most memorable cards to me from the 2014 ANC were along these lines. In the third set I picked up this hand:

Board 2
East dealer
NS vul
♠5
♥AKQJ1043
♦A10643
♣—



West	North	East	South
-	-	Pass	1♠
?			

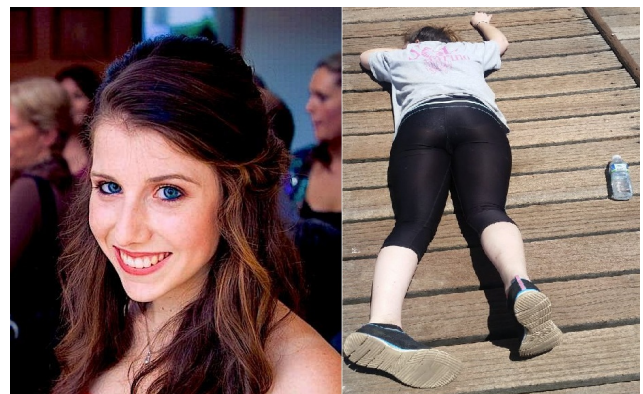
What would you bid? Are you itching for a juicy 4♥ contract? Would seem reasonable... if you wanted a flat board. I beat all you 4♥ bidders by deciding 2♥ was enough (I believe I tried to justify my action post mortem by pleading I was looking for slam opposite a passed hand). Maybe I even hoped my poor attempt at bidding would stop me having to declare (it did not). Regardless, this piece of bad bidding really spiced things up:

West	North	East	South
-	-	Pass	1♠
2♥	Double	Rdbl	Pass
?			

While I'm currently a big fan of 'get 'em' redoubles, back in 2014 I was strictly a redouble for rescue kind of gal. So basically my partner was saying bid something else or I will end you. Noting this I looked at my hand again and started counting 1, 2, 3... I had 8 tricks! Yippee. Content my 2♥ contract was safe I passed. Lefty, probably a little suspicious of the auction, asked me what the redouble was. I answered and a minute later they passed. This was the full deal:

♠5	♠KJ	♠A9876									
♥AKQJ1043	♥98752	♥6									
♦A10643	♦J7	♦52									
♣—	♣Q964	♣A8753									
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	N										
W		E									
	S										
	♠Q10432										
	♥—										
	♦KQ98										
	♣KJT2										

♠K was led and I racked up 10 tricks after meticulously drawing all the trumps, and saw the score of +1040 for the first time. At the other table West had made a normal 4♥ overcall (what a chump) for +420. +12 IMPs later I don't think anyone really knew what had happened, but I was feeling pretty chuffed. Maybe 2♥ wasn't the "right" bid, maybe a hand with 2 aces shouldn't be running, and maybe 5 small trumps doesn't equal a penalty pass. But what fun would bridge be if you could always rely on people having their bids? That was also the day I learned one of bridge's biggest lessons: only trust a new player's final bid.



The author, Francesca McGrath, before and after becoming a bridge player

¹ 7 people tried out for a 6 person team. Rhys Cooper almost didn't make it.

Bad Bridge Bingo/Never Have I Ever

Passed a 2♣ opening	Gone down trying to get the beer card	Didn't open a 12+ point hand	Revoked	Insta doubled on shape with a <10 point hand
Forgotten the contract	Led into AQ when you have the K	Told Matt Smith he's taking too long	Gotten the sniff	Admired the shortness of John Newman's shorts
Ridden the Chrispysteed	Incorrectly claimed your way from making to down 1	Had to leave the table because too much alcohol the night before	Had a beer at the table	Lost to NSW at an ANC
Got -1100	Said "But I have an Ace" when declarer has only trumps	Led from K and stiff Q held on table	Got +580	Bid simply 'coz you were bored
Psyched so hard that partner had to leave the table in disgust	Been to Moose Heads	Blamed partner for something that was definitely your fault	Got -1600	Intentionally relied on an opponent's tard card to make

Bridge is a hard game...

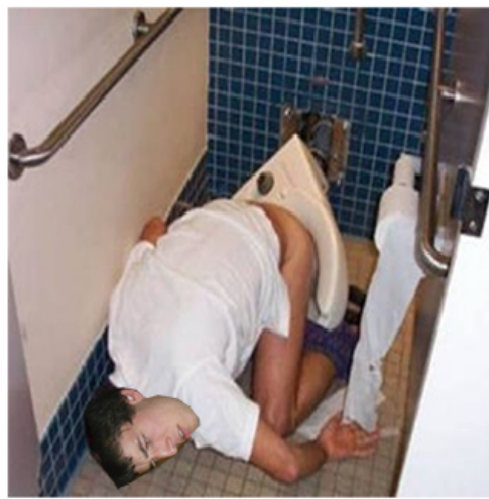
THEN:



NOW:



Jamie Thompson (above), Charles McMahon (below)



Our Barina, who art in heaven By Nico Ranson

This is a tale of love, loss, more love, survival, and the immutable youth desire to make it to bridge tournaments at the last possible moment. The characters are the somehow-alive youth bridge players Chrispy Rhodes, Ramanananan Rajkumar, Dr Andrew, and myself. We begin with an old Holden Barina that my relatives deemed too unroadworthy to drive themselves, and so was passed on to me. True to my Wollongong roots, it was not long before I knocked the exhaust manifold off of the engine whilst driving Bazza the Barina down a 4 wheel drive only off-road hiking route. Being such a tight-ass that my flatulence is only audible to dogs, I hired Chrispy and his professionally exposed plumber's crack to tie the exhaust manifold back on using fencing wire; a fix up job worthy of permanent employment at the NSW light rail department.

The unexpected benefit of Chrispy's handiwork was that Bazza - a registered washing basket on wheels, directly exposed to the elements - now sounded like a Ferrari. The only small drawback was that toxic fumes were leaking into the driver's compartment.



Baz getting tuned by Chrispy

The time came for the annual Australian Youth Championships held in Canberra, and we gathered to form a mighty fellowship capable of surviving a late night trip in the Baz-mobile from Sydney to Canberra. Teary goodbyes were said to fearful partners as we crammed ourselves in, Bazza packed with 18-24 year old males, her windows fully down and her engine scaring dogs 5 kilometers away. We set off onto the M31 highway to Canberra, the perfect storm of crash and road casualty statistics.

If you ever happen upon Peter Gill in a bridge tournament (you should try to happen upon Peter as much as possible, he'll give you excellent bridge advice), he'll let you know that the Australian government has a difficult time with road users atomising themselves upon belligerent Wombats on our highways. And so we obliged, travelling at a law-abiding 110 km/h (honest), when I received a yell from the back seat that (what looked like) a haystack was on the road in-front of us. I swerved (a big mistake), and we careened off the road, luckily into some small trees that broke upon impact and absorbed most of the force. To the continued annoyance of many, we managed to avoid death or serious injury. Take that Australian road

authority statistics database! I also successfully hit the passenger's side of the car, allowing Chrispy to make his professional debut as an airbag.



In my effortless skill, I had managed to crash within 200 meters of a McDonalds. However, we were still 50 km north of Goulburn, it was 11:30 pm, and if we didn't make it to Canberra by 9:30 am the next day we were going to be ineligible for the youth team. So we shook off what glass we could, pried our luggage out of the corpse of the once beloved death trap, and got to hitch-hiking. No matter how much cleavage I was showing, we could not find someone willing to take us to Goulburn for the night. With a taxi threatening to cost \$250, we eventually convinced a lady to drive us to Goulburn for the eye-watering sum of \$150 (that's around 300 Mi Goreng packets, in terms of a metric that university students will understand). Our adrenaline rush was not yet over. It turned out that the lady we hired had been through a break up that very night. She proceeded to sob and text the whole time she drove us (for the uninitiated, this manoeuvre will earn you a solid fail on your L's test).

Despite romantic troubles, we arrived safely at Goulburn at 2 am and checked ourselves into a hotel. We found a bus from 7 am that could get us to Canberra by 9. Our night then reached a high point as Chrispy began to take a shower to wash the glass out of his body and somehow did not notice the 2 by 4 m display window between the bathroom and the bedrooms. Ramanan can still be heard screaming in his sleep from miles away.

At 6:30 I woke up and noticed that Chrispy was nowhere to be seen. In the adrenaline of the crash, he had not noticed his injuries. After we had all fallen asleep and the pain became too great, he decided to *walk* himself to the hospital. He did not wake any of us up, thinking that we deserved some sleep at this point, and so we had no idea where he was. Just as I began to call the ABF to let them know we would have to pull out of the competition, Chrispy rings me: he's just been discharged from the hospital and will be able to make it to our bus! It was only some bruised organs and potentially cracked ribs, after all; what Goulburnites call a Wednesday night out.

We arrived just in time to the event, where Chrispy, spurred on by painkillers and an absolute lack of sleep, proceeded to play some of his best bridge to date. Chrispy and I made the youth team that year, and Bazza has become a mascot in memorandum for NSW youth bridge.



rank slam
/rɑŋk slam/
noun

A bid and made slam, where a bridge player's overconfidence is rewarded with exceedingly unjust success.
Perp: "Does the club hook work, and are trumps three-three with the queen onside?"
Victim: "You lucky, lucky bastard"
Perp: "Proofs in the pudding, mate."

The Rank Slams Archive has been established to document spectacular atrocities. Our first of two rank slams for this month is a historical entry, featuring Tom Jacob and Denis Humphries in the New Zealand Trials. Tom recounted their heinous doings:

"Unfavourable, Denis opens 2♥ - which we were playing as any-long-suit, weak. Pass to me:

- ♠865
- ♥J8643
- ♦—
- ♣A9654

'Denis probably has diamonds' I thought, so I bid 3♦ (for Denis to "pass or correct"). When Denis rebid 4NT, I just about fell off my chair! Clearly he'd forgotten our system, having opened weak. I decided to tell him I had no aces:

West	North	East	South
-	2♥?	Pass	3♦ ¹
Pass	4NT!	Pass	5♣ ²
Pass	6♦!	Pass	Pass
Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass

¹ = pass or correct
² = zero Keycards with diamonds as trumps

As Denis put down the dummy he said: 'Tom's forgotten Keycard'. Somehow I bite my tongue, but I'm thinking: 'I'VE forgotten? What the f**k was 2♥?'

- ♠A
 - ♥AK952
 - ♦AK10864
 - ♣3
- | |
|---|
| N |
| S |
- ♠865
 - ♥J8643
 - ♦—
 - ♣A9654

I won the club lead, crossed to the ♠A, and played ♦A, ♦K and another trump. Lo and behold, one opponent held ♦QJx. I was able to win their next lead, draw the nine of trumps with the ♦T, and claim. This only won seven IMPs, because our teamies sacrificed over seven hearts (which makes) in seven spades!"

Our second slam, deliciously rank, features Matt Smith and Andrew Spooner in the last round of the NZ Teams qualifying:

West	North	East	South
	Matt S.		Spoooner
2♦ ¹	Double	2♥	?

¹ = Weak 2 in a major

What on Earth would you bid in response to partner's double, holding this 7-5 monster?

- ♠Q10432
- ♥—
- ♦KJT9842
- ♣7

I have no idea what the right answer is. Andrew Spooner tried 4♠, which his partner Matt raised to 6NT. 6NT was doubled, and poor Andrew still hadn't mentioned his 7-card suit! What would you do?

West	North	East	South
	<i>Matt</i>		<i>Spoooner</i>
2♦	Double	2♥	4♠
Pass	6NT	Pass	Pass
Double!	Pass	Pass	?

Andrew Spoooner ran to a granny, like any youth player would. He bid 7♦. West didn't double for some reason, and that was just as well, because they didn't lead the ♠A:

	♠8				
	♥AKQJ103				
	♦AQ				
	♣AQJ5				
♠AJ9765		♠K			
♥642		♥9875			
♦6		♦753			
♣984		♣K10632			
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N					
W E					
S					
	♠Q10432				
	♥—				
	♦KJ109842				
	♣7				

West led a heart, and Spoooner made the first fourteen tricks. Strangely enough, 6NTX is untouchable, even though East-West hold the ♠A and ♠K!

Send your hands and stories here: youth@nswba.com.au



Lest We Forget

Before we take him to "the big farm upstate", we should give Andy Hung the great thanks that he deserves. Andy has crafted beautiful bulletins for years, giving an absurd amount of time to make us think and laugh on the regular. Andy: you're awesome but you're crazy.

We are taking over the youth bulletin as of this month, and our standards will be lower. We will be producing a shorter edition, aimed at entertaining new players as well as ourselves. Add (all of your friends') email addresses [here](#) to subscribe to future issues. But why stop there? Pitch bridge to people who like 500 when they've been drinking. Hand decks of cards to stray children. Or not.

New players and friends can email us (youth@nswba.com.au) if they are interested in bridge and want to know the next step.

Nico Ranson, Cesca McGrath, John Newman.

Coming up:

Feb 18-23: Gold Coast Congress ([huge discounts for youth players](#))

Mar 8-10: Batemans Bay youth bridge weekend, [details here](#).