

63RD INTERNATIONAL
Gold Coast Bridge Congress
Saturday 1 - 8 February 2025

YOUR
DAILY
BULLETIN



Theme: Farewell to the GCC



Sunday 9th February 2025

Barbara Travis, Lauren Travis and Barry Rigal

FINAL BULLETIN

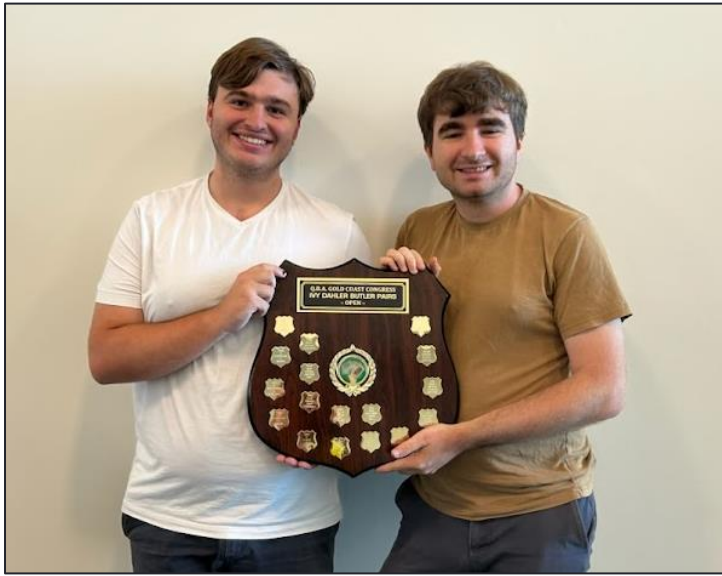
Congratulations to the Brake team!



Andy Hung, Matt Brown, Jessica Brake, Adam Kaplan, Shane Harrison

BRAKE (Andy Hung, Matt Brown, Jessica Brake, Adam Kaplan and Shane Harrison) triumphed in the final 125-100.1 over APPLETON (David Appleton, Stephen Castellino, Phil Markey and Joe Haffer).

This is the first GCC Teams title for Jessica and Adam, while Matt previously won in 2020, Shane won in 2019, and Andy has 3 previous wins (2019, 2017 and 2012).



**Ivy Dahler Butler Swiss Pairs (Open) Winners – EW
& Winners of the Ivy Dahler Trophy**

Alex Goss and Andrew Spooner



Ivy Dahler Butler Swiss Pairs (Open) Winners – NS

Pauline Gumby and Warren Lazer



Ivy Dahler Butler Swiss Pairs (Novice) Winners

Bridget O'Brien and Jessie Pelenato



Ivy Dahler Butler Swiss Pairs (Restricted) Winners

Magdeline Wong and Terry Davies



Ivy Dahler Butler Swiss Pairs (Restricted) 2nd

Mike Morrissey and David Cumming



Ivy Dahler Butler Swiss Pairs (Intermediate) Winners

Peter Farley and Graham Cheater



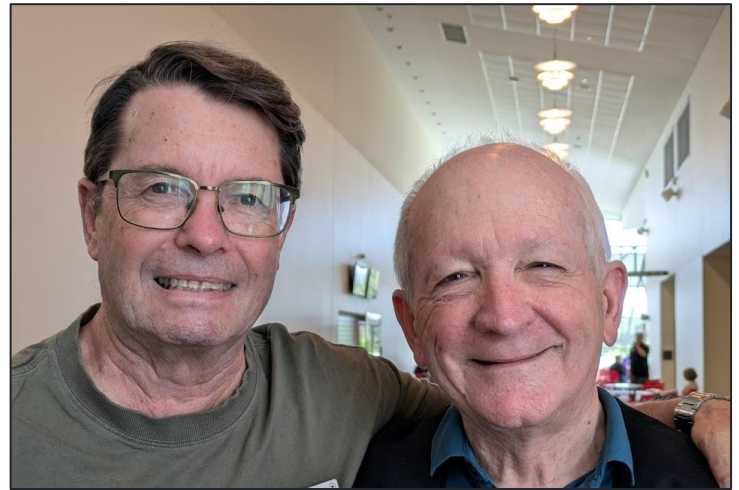
Under 1500 Teams Same Sex Category Winners

Peter Farley, Graham Cheater, Bob Ure and Pryor Rowland



Ivy Dahler Butler Swiss Pairs (Open) 2nd – NS

Alan Watson and Richard Popper



Tim Runting and Richard Ward



Jacqui, Sue and Elizabeth



Ray and Kim Ellaway

GOLD COAST OPEN TEAMS FINAL

Barry Rigal

Sets 1 and 2

The finals would feature four essentially natural partnerships, but with Markey-Haffer playing a lot of wildness including mini no-trump and specific two-suiter openings, flimsy openings and overcalls and a host besides. Everyone present had signed a contract never to pass an 11-count and 9- and 10-counts non-vulnerable would not be off-limits.

Slam on a finesse isn't always worth writing about – but this one had a point that eluded me.

Board 2, Dealer East, NS vulnerable

♠ A Q 8		♠ 10 2
♥ A K 9 3 2		♥ 8 6 5 4
♦ 10 8		♦ Q 7 5 4
♣ A 7 4		♣ Q J 6
♠ 9 6 4		
♥ 7		
♦ A 9 6		
♣ K 10 8 5 3 2		
♠ K J 7 5 3		
♥ Q J 10		
♦ K J 3 2		
♣ 9		

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Appleton	Hung	Castellino	Brake
		Pass	1♠
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♦
Pass	2♠	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♣	Pass	4♦
Pass	4♥	Pass	4♠
Pass	4NT	Pass	5♣
Pass	6♠	All Pass	

TABLES

Total tables: 8,465
 2024 comparison: 7,200 tables
 2020 comparison: 9,007 tables

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Kaplan	Markey	Brown	Haffer
		Pass	1♠
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♠
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♦
Pass	3♠	Pass	3NT
Pass	4♣	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

Technically slam here is worse than 50% (no one ever mentions that spades might be 5-0, hearts 5-0 or diamonds 6-1) but, in practice, it comes down to finding the diamond honours. Brake had a normal opening and bid out her shape, then co-operated once, and that was enough for Hung. Appleton led a trump, declarer drew trumps, Castellino encouraging in diamonds at his first turn. Then she ran the hearts on which Castellino pitched another diamond. That persuaded her (following Terence Reese's dictum) that the discards were more likely to be from the ace than queen so she misguessed the suit and Appleton had 13 IMPs. Nicely defended.

Barry Goren wrote to me and said that declarer SHOULD have got diamonds right. Why? Because the hand on lead had a singleton heart and didn't lead it (remember here Hung had not responded 2♥ so hearts were an off-suit not a bid suit). Why would you avoid the heart lead – because you know partner does not have the ace – therefore you have the ♦A, not partner.

Appleton picked up a second 12 IMP swing when Brake-Hung got too high on an auction where it is arguable who did too much.



Phil Markey, Matt Brown, Joe Haffer and Adam Kaplan

The N/S hands were:

♠ A K 10 9 5 2
 ♥ A Q 8 2
 ♦ 2
 ♣ 5 3
 ♠ J
 ♥ J 10 9 6 4 3
 ♦ A Q J 9
 ♣ J 2

After:

West	North	East	South
	Hung		Brake
1♣	1♠	2♣	2♥
3♣	...		

Hung bid 4♣ – yes 4♦ might have simplified his partner's life but is it natural or splinter? Over 4♣ Brake bid 4♦ (slam might be cold facing a 6-4-1-2 with the right A-AK-K combination after all. Now Hung jumped to 5♥ and though Brake passed she now needed to find ♥K and didn't do so – and yes, to maximize irritation, it was singleton offside.

It was Castellino's turn to have to guess an honour in a high-level contract a board later.

Board 6, Dealer East, EW vulnerable

	♠ K 6 3	
	♥ A Q 10 7 6 2	
	♦ 7	
	♣ Q 6 3	
♠ A J 7 2		♠ 4
♥ 3		♥ J 8 5 4
♦ A 10 5 4 2		♦ K Q J
♣ K 5 2		♣ A J 10 9 7
	♠ Q 10 9 8 5	
	♥ K 9	
	♦ 9 8 6 3	
	♣ 8 4	

***Congratulations to Di Coats and Jan Clarke
 who won the Friday Butler Swiss Pairs.***

***The Reg and Joan Trophy was won by
 Usher Zeng and Herman Yuan.***

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Appleton	Hung	Castellino	Brake
		1♣	Pass
1♦	1♥	Double	Pass
1♠	2♥	3♣	Pass
4♣	Pass	5♣	Pass
6♣	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Kaplan	Markey	Brown	Haffer
		1♣	1♠
2♥(♦)	3♠	4♦	Pass
4♠	Pass	5♣	Pass
5♦	All Pass		

Castellino's 3♣ call looks like a considerable overbid to me, but maybe I'm missing something. Appleton was obviously expecting more but slam isn't terrible for E/W – though curiously a diamond lead prevents you from ruffing a heart. Brake led ♥K of course and shifted to a spade. Since the auction had suggested North had the long hearts declarer's line of crossing to a diamond to take the club finesse looks eminently reasonable, but unlucky. The Closed Room looked at the diamond slam but stayed safely low. That made it 25-15 to Appleton.

OK: turnabout is fair play. it was Appleton's turn to get too high, when Castellino was encouraged to take a phantom sacrifice on an auction where perhaps he should not have been encouraged to participate, and perhaps he should not have taken the plunge anyway.

Castellino held a 2-4-4-3 7-count with ♥J, ♦A, and ♣Q. Both vulnerable, he saw his partner open 1♥ and when doubled he raised to 2♥. Brake bid 2♠, Appleton 4♣ (hearts and clubs) and Hung 4♠. What now? He chose to bid 5♥ – which might have been right if he had been facing a singleton spade, but wasn't today when partner had ♠KJ.

Appleton only went one down in his contract but the other room was defending and collecting 500 against his teammates in 4♠X.

The lead lasted one board, when a triumph for Markey's methods saw him overcall on a piece of manure, and then

know not to lead that suit against the opponents' confidently bid 3NT. In the other room Hung had no such warning and led his long suit, conceding the ninth trick in 3NT at once. The match score was 36-27 now after eight deals.

Finally someone bid to a good slam – but you'd have to say that the auction involved a bow and arrow rather than heat-seeking guided missiles.

Board 11, Dealer S, Nil vulnerable

	♠ K 8 2	
	♥ 9 5 4	
	♦ 6 5	
	♣ 9 8 6 5 2	
♠ A Q 9 6 5 4		♠ 10
♥ K		♥ A J 10 7 6 2
♦ A J 3		♦ K 10 9 8 7 2
♣ K J 3		♣ --
	♠ J 7 3	
	♥ Q 8 3	
	♦ Q 4	
	♣ A Q 10 7 4	

In one room Hung heard Brake open 1♣ and Appleton double. He improvised with 1♠ and when Castellino jumped to 4♥ Appleton could think of nothing to say. 4♥ made 480, while in the other room a mini no-trump from Haffer saw Kaplan show one major. Then he removed

2♥ to 2NT to show extras; Brown jumped to 4♥, and when Kaplan corrected to 4♠ he tried 6♦, completing an elegant sequence to the correct spot. Those 10 IMPs saw an eventful set conclude at 38-36 to Brake.

The first deal of the second set saw Matthew Brown and Stephen Castellino each faced with the problem of whether to act over RHO's 1♠ opener. They held an unremarkable 3-4-4-2 13-count with the doubleton ♣AK and (critically) not just king-third of spades but K-8-x. Brown doubled and heard partner cuebid so tried 2NT raised to game. Partner had ♠J-9-x and the opening lead to 3NT was the doubleton spade ten, turning a decent contract into a laydown one. Castellino passed 1♠, as I would have done too I must admit, and collected +200 on defence, facing a balanced hand that might have reopened with 1NT. 10 IMPs to Brake.

Brake picked up a further 11 IMPs a deal or two later in rather similar fashion when Hung drove to a playable 3NT game facing one of Brake's opening bids while Markey-Haffer appeared to face confusion about whether they were having a strong, weak or invitational sequence to play a part-score. It was 61-36 now for Brake, who had scored the last 36 IMPs.

But the tide turned when Brown and Kaplan's light opening bid style saw Kaplan respond 1NT to a 1♣ opener with a balanced 12-count. Brown simply drove to 3NT, missing a laydown club slam, duly reached by Castellino-Appleton on an inverted minor sequence.

One of the disadvantages of playing two-suited opening bids is that it sometimes seems you are obliged to make the call whenever you have a hand that qualifies by virtue of its shape, even if the high cards do not support that view. On the next deal Appleton opened 2♠ vulnerable with a decent nine-count, but ♠9-x-x-x-x and ♦A-Q-x-x-x as well as ♥K-x. that didn't have to be bad for his side, but Castellino had to guess whether to play 5-2 spades (holding the doubleton king in support) or look for a 5-3 or 5-4 minor suit fit, and guessed wrong. 2♠ went quietly down, while 3♦ was relatively straightforward in the other room. It was 69-50 now for Brake, but the action wasn't over.

Castellino picked up:

♠ A Q 8 3 2
♥ A Q J 8 5 3
♦ 3
♣ A

and doubled a club opener, heard a 1♥ response then basically Blackwooded his way to slam facing one keycard. Right he was. Partner had a doubleton spade with the king onside, and 12 tricks were easy. That left it with Brake leading 72-63 at the halfway mark.

Saturday Walk-In Pairs Winners

NS: Michelle Gan – Stuart Grant

EW: Sue Reilly – John Toogood

Set 3

An adjustment to the score had given Brake 4 IMPs on a deal where they had lost 2 IMPs in the second set. That will be shown now in the running scores.

The set started out with Appleton on a tear – the match has been going in phases where one team scores three or four big swings in a row...

Deal 1, Dealer North, Nil vulnerable

♠ K 10 2
♥ 10 9 7 4 2
♦ 6 4 3
♣ A 3

♠ Q J 3	♠ A 9 8 7 6 4
♥ void	♥ A K J 8 6
♦ K J 10 9 7	♦ A
♣ 10 7 5 4 2	♣ J
♠ 5	
♥ Q 5 3	
♦ Q 8 5 2	
♣ K Q 9 8 6	

The set started off with a bang when Castellino-Appleton bid a slam off a cashing ace and king-ten fourth of trumps. The unopposed auction was a confusing one:

West	East
	1♠
2♠	3♣
4♠	4NT
5♦	5♠
6♣	6♠
Pass	

Trumps did not behave but the club ace could be discarded if it wasn't cashed – and Harrison was not going to lead a club from KQ986 on this auction. When he led a trump it not only allowed the discard it also simplified the trump position. Castellino's 3♣ call with a 6-5-1-1 shape earned the swing. Appleton trailed 68-72.

Four boards later Hung and Markey faced an opening lead problem against 4♥ on essentially identical auctions, knowing declarer was strong and unbalanced.



Andy Hung, Stephen Castellino, Jess Brake and David Appleton

Which minor would you lead from:

♠ K J 8
♥ 6
♦ J 10 6 5
♣ Q 8 6 4 2

Hung led a club and declarer shook a spade loser on dummy's ace-king, Markey led the diamond jack and Haffer won his ace and the defence then cashed three spades. Appleton led 84-72. They added a part-score swing when all four members of the Brake team could be argued to have done too much bidding on the same hand. That made it 84-73.

Suddenly, the momentum shifted to Brake, for no discernible reason except that was just how the match had been going!

Board 7 produced a fascinating problem for declarer and defence:

	♠ A 3	
	♥ J 10 6	
	♦ Q 9 8 2	
	♣ J 10 7 5	
♠ 10 7 6 5 4 2		♠ K 9 8
♥ A 9 3		♥ 8 5
♦ J 7		♦ A K 10 6 4
♣ 8 4		♣ 6 3 2
	♠ Q J	
	♥ K Q 7 4 2	
	♦ 5 3	
	♣ A K Q 9	

Each West led a heart after hearing 1♥-2♥-4♥ on a club lead.

Declarer led a trump to dummy and a second trump as East followed up the line (maybe it is right to call for spades if playing suit preference). Appleton continued clubs. Harrison won in hand and drew the last trump, stripped off the clubs and led a diamond to the eight. Castellino, down to ♠K-9-8 and ♦A-10 was helpless. Had he kept one more diamond and pitched a spade he could at least have given declarer a guess in the ending.

Kaplan led a club and shifted to the diamond jack, covered all round. Back came a club and Haffer drew the last trump but did not take the last club before playing a second diamond. Brown could win and exit with a club, leaving declarer no recourse but the spade finesse. Down one and 12 IMPs back to Brake.

They regained the lead on a strange deal where it seemed that Markey's discretion would pay dividends.

Deal 11, Dealer South, Nil vulnerable

♠ A Q J 5 3

♥ J 7 2

♦ 8 4

♣ A Q 4

♠ 10 9

♥ A 9 5

♦ K Q 9 7 6 3

♣ J 10

♠ K 7 6 2

♥ K 10 6 4

♦ J

♣ 8 6 5 2

♠ 8 4

♥ Q 8 3

♦ A 10 5 2

♣ K 9 7 3

3NT looks nearly hopeless with the spade break so unfavourable. When Haffer opened a mini 1NT, Markey invited game via the transfer, stopping in 2NT, and Kaplan led a top diamond. Haffer won and took the spade finesse, crossed to hand with a top club (blocking the suit) then repeated the finesse. Back came a spade and now, if declarer cleared spades, the defence would return a club and lock him in dummy. Haffer took his spade winner, unblocked the clubs but could only come to seven tricks.

In the other room Hung opened a strong no-trump and Harrison chose to drive to game via Puppet Stayman. Castellino guessed to lead the ♦J – not a bad choice today. Hung won and took a winning spade finesse, ran four club tricks and repeated the spade finesse. Appleton had pitched an encouraging heart so Castellino shifted to one. His choice of the ♥10 was disastrous though, when Appleton ducked. Hung had one heart, two spades, four clubs and a diamond in the bank and, when he exited in hearts, all Appleton could do was win his now bare ace and give dummy the ninth trick in diamonds.

The final deal of the set saw Haffer let through a doubled game when he misread the count while cashing out on defence, and suddenly Brake led 111-90, having trailed by double digits. 12 boards to go. When would the music stop?

There were several interesting boards in the final set, though the scoreline shows as 14-10 to Brake, and Brake won the GCC Open Teams 125 to 100.1 IMPs.

Congratulations to Jessica Brake, Shane Harrison, Andy Hung, Matt Brown and Adam Kaplan and commiserations to David Appleton, Phil Markey, Stephen Castellino and Joe Haffer (*pictured below*).



YOUTH BRIDGE FUN NIGHT

Paul and Darren Brake

The 9th annual Youth Bridge Fun Night was held on Wed, with 34 youths and young(ish) adults attending.

The bridge was played with a difference – each round had special rules. Some examples:

- the hierarchy of bids was reversed, e.g. you could overcall 1 ♠ with 1 ♣!
- at the end of the board, a lost trick transferred into a winning trick and vice versa.
- before sorting your cards and auctioning, you faced up one random card (e.g. the 4 ♦). As you turned up a four, you can only look at 4 of your cards during the auction.

You get the drift – much frivolity and laughter all up in getting your head round the mind games.

At the end of the Mitchell movement, the players were divided into two groups, and each group played “Bridge Pictionary”.

Thanks to the Gold Coast Bridge Club who put on free pizzas and prize money and Laura Ginnan, director of the bedlam.

