

State Vet Online Pairs

24—26 JULY (FRIDAY-SUNDAY)



The NSW State Vet Pairs Went Online

In a popular new move the NSWBA shifted the Veteran pairs online in 2020. Organiser Rob Ward and director John McIlrath did an excellent job and the three day event was a great success. Placings were:

- 1st Robert Krochmalik - Paul Lavings (*Sydney Bridge Centre and Illawarra Bridge Association*)
- 2nd Dennis Watkins - Roger Conway (*North Shore Bridge Club*)
- 3rd Susie Berger - Tony Bond (*Harbourview Bridge Club*)

Event Program:

Round 1:

Fri 24 July at 2.00pm

Round 2:

Sat 25 July at 10.00am

Round 3:

Sun 26 July at 10.00am

[...More results can be found HERE](#)

Paul Lavings from the winning pair has agreed to write up some of the hands:

Pairs is Match-pointed Pairs, the game that your local club hosts between one to 5 or 6 sessions a week. In Teams or rubber bridge some hands are more important than others, not so in Pairs. In this event there were 20 boards in each of three sessions and each board in each session was worth 5% of the 100% on offer.



Partscores are as important as slams, in fact they are much more important since slams are often luck and guesswork while partscores require judgement, courage and good technique.

This is what I mean about technique:

Session 3 Board 2 Robert and I were North-South.

Session 3 Board 2

Dealer E | Vul N-S

<p>♠ K987 ♥ JT ♦ 53 ♣ KJT75</p>	<p>♠ J3 ♥ Q83 ♦ AKT984 ♣ A8</p> <table style="border: 1px solid black; width: 60px; height: 60px; margin: 0 auto;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S	<p>♠ AQ62 ♥ 9654 ♦ Q ♣ 9643</p>
N					
W E					
S					
<p>♠ T54 ♥ AK72 ♦ J762 ♣ Q2</p>					

W	N Krochmalik	E	S Lavings
		P	P
P	1NT	P	3C
P	3NT	//	

What would you open the North hand after three passes? You could open 1♦ and rebid 2♦ but you are really better than a minimum opening. The top 50 players in Australia would all open 1NT (15-17) and get their strength across in one value bid. At our table 3NT was quickly reached and East led a spade to take the first four tricks so we took only 9 tricks. The lead was not a preferred lead since leading from an ace often gives away a trick and when you have only a four-card suit there is not so much to gain for the risk.

The lead was a bit unlucky but +600 still scored us 92.59% on the board. Over the 28 tables there was a 660 and a 630 but all other tables languished in partscore except one 4♥ and one 5♦ contract both failing.

When you pre-empt you sometimes find a terrible break and you end up going down two, three or four tricks doubled. When the shoe is on the other foot and it's the opponents who are in trouble be sure to double them.



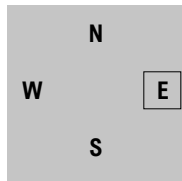
Session 1 Board 14
Dealer E | Vul None



The Winners Paul Lavings and Robert Krochmalik. Paul lives in Wollongong and Robert in Sydney.

- ♠ AKT63
- ♥ Q72
- ♦ A9643
- ♣

- ♠ Q854
- ♥ AT96
- ♦ KQJT
- ♣ A



- ♠ J7
- ♥ KJ854
- ♦ 5
- ♣ T9843

- ♠ 92
- ♥ 3
- ♦ 872
- ♣ KQJ7652

W	N Krochmalik	E	S Lavings
		P	3C
3S	X	P	P
4D	X	4S	P
P	X	//	

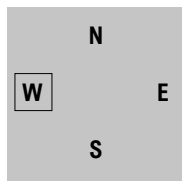
I love the double of 3♠ (doubles are penalty after your side pre-empts) and as an added bonus West quite reasonably tried 4♦ and ended up in 4♠ doubled. The defence was less than perfect but +500 was a shared top for 98.21%. Five times East-West played 3♠ or 4♠ undoubled.

A Pairs no-no is to play 5♣ or 5♦ when 3NT is a viable option:

Session 1 Board 8
Dealer W | Vul None

- ♠ J5
- ♥ T53
- ♦ KJ653
- ♣ QJ3

- ♠ QT876
- ♥ Q72
- ♦ T4
- ♣ 762



- ♠ AK
- ♥ A84
- ♦ AQ982
- ♣ AK5

- ♠ 9432
- ♥ KJ96
- ♦ 7
- ♣ T984

W	N Krochmalik	E	S Lavings
P	P	2D	P
3D	P	4C	P
5D	//		

I don't know what went wrong with the opponent's bidding but it cost them dearly. With 24 HCP opposite 8 HCP and mirrored balanced hands 3NT or 4NT sounds just right. In pairs you should bid games and slams that are a 50% or better chance to make.

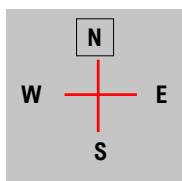
Six pairs failed in slam for 8.9% while 5♦ was played only at our table for 21.4%. 18 pairs played 3NT making 11 tricks for 57.1% while one pair somehow made 12 tricks in 3NT for 92.9% and two pairs brought home the impossible 6♦ for 98.2%.

In Pairs you need to fight tooth and nail for the partscore:

Session 3 Board 13
Dealer N | Vul All

- ♠ KJ7
- ♥ Q9
- ♦ QT83
- ♣ JT75

- ♠ A86
- ♥ T753
- ♦ 764
- ♣ KQ6



- ♠ T943
- ♥ J6
- ♦ AJ9
- ♣ A942

- ♠ Q52
- ♥ AK842
- ♦ K52
- ♣ 83

W	N Krochmalik	E	S Lavings
	P	P	1H
P	2H	//	



2nd place—Dennis Watkins and Roger Conway from NSBC.

East can't open but when South opens 1♥ in third seat there is a duty of care to get in with a takeout double of 2♥. 3♣ by E-W fails by one trick but you are likely to push N-S to 3♥ which should also fail by one trick. 7 pairs were allowed to play 2♥ making 9 tricks for +140, a whopping 89.9%, while 2♥ making 8 tricks for +110 (10 times) scored 57.4%. 3♥ failing by one trick, also 10 times, scored only 20.4%.

Defence is a major part of the Pairs game. This hand was a tough lesson:

Session 3 Board 5
Dealer N | Vul N-S

<p>♠ J654 ♥ T73 ♦ 642 ♣ 964</p>	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> </table>	N	W	S	E	<p>♠ 32 ♥ KQJ6 ♦ J93 ♣ J753</p>
N						
W						
S						
E						

<p>♠ K87 ♥ 9852 ♦ Q75 ♣ AT2</p>	<p>♠ AQT9 ♥ A4 ♦ AKT8 ♣ KQ8</p>
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W	N Krochmalik	E	S Lavings
	P	P	2C
P	2S	P	2NT
P	4NT	//	

A good idea is to play 4NT over any natural notrump as invitational. With a solid 22 HCP which had already been upgraded 4NT seemed high enough. The fit was good and the diamond lead ensured 11 tricks. How should the play proceed? Clearly run off the diamond suit and put the opposition to a discard or two.

On the fourth diamond East had a problem and parted with a spade! Such a discard would never be from jack doubleton, tripleton or fourbleton so declarer played ♠A and ♠10 intending to run the 10. West covered but it was all over anyway.

12 pairs notched up 12 tricks +690 for a chunky 79.6% while 11 pairs scored +660 for 37%. Two pairs failed in 6NT for 3.7%. One of these pairs managed to wrong-side the contract so that the weak hand was declarer and the ♥K lead gave declarer no chance to manoeuvre.



3rd place—Tony Bond and Susie Berger from Harbourview Bridge Club.

Participating in the Online State Event

by Ian MacLaren

Recently the great contributor Rakesh Kumar wrote an article for the NSWBA Newsletter about having fun with Bridge on line. Well many over 70's, 'Veterans', took his advice and entered the NSWBA State Veterans Pairs Championship which was on line for the first time. The event was a great success even though not all of us were experts at communicating on line during play and various messages were sent to everyone not just to the intended receivers, this managed to keep the Director busy and the rest of us entertained.



There were a number of interesting hands, for example in each session there was a hand where almost everyone made 12 tricks but only one or two pairs bid the slam. Even more amazing was that the same pair suffered against this on each round! The same pair, and I will not name myself in order to protect my partner, on 1 peculiar hand were the only pair to bid a slam, with a combined 34 High Card Points. The sophisticated bidding went, Dealer opened 3NT, showing a balanced hand of 24+ points, pass from East, responder with 9 points bid 6NT. Both players held a semisolid 5 card suit, Dealer held Ace, Queen, 9,3,2, Responder King, Jack, 10, 7, 6. The problem was that the Distribution of both hands was identical, both hands had 5 diamonds and Dealer held 3 hearts to the Ace with the King, Queen and Jack held by East. Almost every other Dealer / Declarer safely bid and made 3NT with 2 overtricks.

Towards the end a number of messages were sent around thanking the great Director, John Mcilrath and the Convenor Rob Ward who had worked tirelessly before the event to ensure it was a success. One player pointed out that although Bowral, where the event had previously been played, is a lovely place, in the middle of winter their study was a much warmer place to play.