



West Coast Bridge Club Newsletter - December 2025

West Coast Club Congress

50 pairs participated in the Club's Congress on September 6th. Three West Coast pairs qualified for the final with Yulia Koh and Jamie Luxton being the top qualifier. In the final Sally Brittliffe and Peach Partis were the highest placed West Coast pair and were winners of the Constable Trophy for the third year in a row!

Special thanks are due to those who worked in the kitchen, Annabelle C, Linda M, Ying G, Judy G, Adele P, Colleen H and Julie F, preparing lunch for over a hundred people. and to Doreen and Malcolm who ran the bar after play. The Club received a great deal of praise and thanks for a great event.



Winners of the 2025 Elizabeth Constable Trophy Peach Partis and Sally Brittliffe.

Quiz Night

A highly successful quiz night was held at the Club on Friday evening 17 October. Eleven teams and 64 players participated and worked their way through ten categories of questions developed by Colleen Stone. Other helpers included Paul Marsh (quiz master), Maureen Marsh (scoring), Ying Goodlet (kitchen), Annabelle Capstick (raffle ticket seller), Chris Ruffle (bar) and Sue Vincent. A highly enjoyable evening of intellectual endeavour, fun and laughter.

The winning team comprised Alison Weller, Ian Ferguson, Sam Ferguson, Janice Baker, Barry Clarke and Chris Ruffle.



Quiz winners are grinners: Alison, Ian, Sam, Janice, Barry and Chris.

BAWA Women's Swiss Pairs

West Coast pairs featured strongly in the BAWA Women's Swiss Pairs competition held on October 12. In a field of 36 pairs, including several state representatives, Colleen Stone and Christina Wu finished fourth; Nerilyn Mack and Marion Bogue seventh; and Peach Partis and Sally Brittliffe eighth.

2025 Thursday Swiss Pairs (*John Utting trophy*)

The Thursday Swiss Pairs held in September was won by Marleen Medhat, Ray Wood and Wence Vahala. Shirley Bloch and Baboo Bhagat were second followed by Harold McKnight, Christina Wu and Patrick Garnett in third place.



2025 Thursday Swiss Pairs winners Marleen Medhat, Ray Wood and Wence Vahala.

2025 Spring Teams (*Sylvia Pollastri Memorial Trophy*)

The 2025 Spring Teams competition was won by Nerilyn Mack, Robin Rose, Rick and Maura Rhodes. Joy Jones, Pat Scotford, Ying Goodlet and Colleen Stone were second with Peach Partis, Maureen Phillips, Cathy Slaughter, Shirley Bloch, Ted Brereton and Adele Philpot in third place.



Winners of the 2025 Spring Teams - Nerilyn Mack, Rick and Maura Rhodes, and Robin Rose.

2025 Swiss Pairs (*Eileen and Ernest Nickel trophy*)

The 2025 Swiss Pairs was won by Nerilyn Mack and Marion Bogue. Peach Partis and Baboo Bhagat were second followed by Betty Anderson and Ann Andrews in third place. The Phil Appleyard Trophy for the best performing pair with combined masterpoints of less than 300 was won by Julie Feeney and Kayoko Bredemeyer who finished fifth overall.



2025 Swiss Pairs winners Marion Bogue and Nerilyn Mack.



Kayoko Bredemeyer and Julie Feeney - winners of the Appleyard Trophy for 2025.

BAWA Teams of Four

West Coast entered two teams into BAWA's Teams of Four competition in 2025. The Novice Team (<100 masterpoints), led by Adele Philpot and Chris Ruffle finished a very creditable third out of 15 and the Intermediate Team (<750 masterpoints) finished sixth out of ten.

Melbourne Cup lunch

The Club held another highly successful Melbourne Cup lunch (with bridge) on November 4. Director, Richard van Proctor set the standard for snappy dressers at the event.



Director Richard van Proctor.

New rankings

Congratulations to the following members who received rank promotions during the last three months:

Gold life: Maureen Phillips

Silver Life: Patrick Garnett, Peach Partis, Ray Wood

Bronze Life: Wence Vahala

Bronze Regional: Ted Brereton, Ian Ferguson

Local: Doreen Jolly

Club: Virgil Calcan, Malcolm Jolly

Need a partner?

West Coast Bridge Club has set up a WhatsApp chat group “Partner at West Coast” to help members find a partner, either for a once-off session or longer. Details are provided on the Club’s website.

Coming events and competitions

- WCBC Christmas Party – Wednesday December 3.
- Monday Pairs – Mondays January 12 & 19.
- Club Championship Pairs – Mondays February 9, 16 & 23.

Play for the drop or finesse? Hand from recent Swiss Pairs competition.

With nine trumps across both hands, but missing the queen, declarer has a decision to make. In the absence of any other information the experts recommend playing for the drop. However, in some circumstances it’s better to finesse. The following hand is an example of when it might be better to finesse.

BD: 20	♠ AJT642	Dir: W	
	♥ 76	Vul: ALL	
	♦ Q5		
	♣ K76		
♠ 7		♠ Q53	
♥ T52		♥ AK984	
♦ JT		♦ 963	
♣ AQJT953		♣ 42	
	♠ K98		
	♥ QJ3		
	♦ AK8742		
	♣ 8		
	♣ ♦ ♥ ♠ NT		
N		4 4 4	10
S		4 4 4	8 9
E	2		13
W	2		

The bidding went 3C (W); 3S (N); 4S (S). The defence took the first three tricks, AC, AH and KH. When declarer gets in they can’t afford to lose a spade trick – where is the QS? The critical clue here is west’s opening bid of 3C, suggesting seven clubs and a highly distributional hand. So declarer should anticipate that east may have three spades. Take the AS and run the JS. East will duck but the best bet is to play low in dummy and hope! Here, it works.

Don't underlead the ace on the first lead against a suit contract

BD: 14		♠ Q96	Dir: E		
		♥ 3	Vul: None		
		♦ AQ85			
		♣ A6532			
♠ KT32			♠ A875		
♥ J9854			♥ K		
♦ T4			♦ KJ9763		
♣ K9			♣ Q4		
		♠ J4			
		♥ AQT762			
		♦ 2			
		♣ JT87			
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	4		1	1	12
S	4		1	1	7 13
E		2		2	8
W		2		2	

East errs by not opening this hand and North wins the contract in 2H following a 2D opening by south. The hand is a good illustration of why you should **never underlead the ace on the first trick against a suit contract**. If east leads, say, the 5S dummy will play the 4S and west has a decision to make. West thinks “my partner has led a low spade and probably has an honour – I have the KS and the JS is in dummy so I think declarer must have the AS and my partner probably has the QS”. So, west cleverly plays the TS to force declarer’s ace only to watch in horror as north takes the trick with the QS! As a result the defence makes only one spade trick instead of two and gets 0%, as it should, for the board. Later in a hand it is sometimes OK to underlead an ace when you think partner has the K and you have the A sitting over the Q in dummy but never, never on the first lead.

Do you have a bidding system for this minor suit grand slam?

BD: 15		♠ KQ52	Dir: S			
		♥ 64	Vul: NS			
		♦ AQ965				
		♣ KT				
♠ JT873			♠ 6			
♥ J8			♥ Q97532			
♦ J83			♦			
♣ 842			♣ QJ9753			
		♠ A94				
		♥ AKT				
		♦ KT742				
		♣ A6				
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	
N		7	2	5	6	14
S		7	2	4	6	3 5
E	1					18
W	1					

Bidding minor suit slams are sometimes difficult. Here the bidding goes: 1D (S); north is already thinking slam and bids 1S (N); 1NT (S – 15-18 points – if east enters the bidding south bids 2NT); 4D (N – RKCBW for diamonds); 4H (S – 1 or 4, must be 4 given the points shown by the bidding); north is now interested in a grand slam if south holds the KH. In our system after south’s previous 4H bid 5C is a king ask, so 5C (N); 5H (S – one outside king, has to be the KH); 7D (N).

