

Parramatta Foundation Day Teams Congress

The Parramatta Congress had an excellent turnout, with 35 teams filling the Ermington Community Centre. There were lots of good teams in the hall, but quality will tell. HANS (Sartaj HANS, Peter GILL, Sophie ASHTON, Helena DAWSON) were in second place after the first round and thereafter were either first or second after every round, so had a very well-earned win. GUMBY (Pauline GUMBY, Warren LAZER, Avinash KANETKAR, Ranjit LIMAYE) got off to a much less inspiring start, but eventually the cream rose to the top: they scored 24, 25, 21 and 25 VPs in their last four rounds, to finish second.

Meanwhile, down in the boondocks, the rest of us were making the usual errors. Sometimes, it all gets a bit too much when one goes down hand after hand. At least it seemed to get a bit too much for Marlene Watts, who was heard to remark "God it's terrible! It feels like I'm in Afghanistan" to which her partner responded "If you keep this up, you will be!!"

There were lots of quite wild distributional hands through the day and bad trump breaks were the norm. Handling trumps became a key issue on several hands. Here's the one that provoked Marlene's comment – as North, she was declarer in 4S on a club lead. What do you play at trick 2?

♠AT852

♥6

♦KT52

♣K92




♠J43

♥AQ842

♦AJ94

♣A

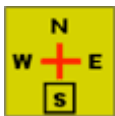
If you play ♠J, West covers with the ♠K. The hand now becomes very tricky because spades break 4-1 with Q976 over you. There are thus 3 losers in the trump suit and you have find the ♦Q, but that didn't work out for Marlene, who lost a trick to a most annoying doubleton queen in the East hand:

	♠AT852	
	♥6	
	♦KT52	
	♣K92	
♠K		♠Q976
♥T97		♥KJ53
♦873		♦Q6
♣Q86543		♣JT7
	♠J43	
	♥AQ842	
	♦AJ94	
	♣A	

The correct play at the second trick is a low spade to the ace, because if there is a diamond loser you can afford to lose 2 trumps tricks, but not 3.

Handling trumps was also an issue on this hand, where NS sometimes went slam-hunting but stopped in 5H:

♠AJ87
♥K43
♦T32
♣A65




♠
♥AQ982
♦KQ8
♣KJT73

There's a sure diamond loser and a possible club loser, so in the slightly-too-high-for comfort contract reached at 6 tables, the key issue was to avoid a trump loser. The usual lead was the ♣2 to East's 9 and declarer's 10. This lead seems to threaten a ruff, so what will you play at trick 2?

Coping with a 4-1 break will be difficult, but it's not impossible if East holds the 4-card suit and West has a singleton ♥10 or ♥J. The 3 declarers who got this right in 5H played the ace, dropping the ten, followed by a low heart to the king, and finessed on the way back. The 3 declarers who found their way into 6H must have played trumps

correctly as well because each of them only went one off, but that was likely to have been little consolation

	♠AJ87	
	♥K43	
	♦T32	
	♣A65	
♠KT52		♠Q9643
♥T		♥J765
♦A964		♦J75
♣Q842		♣9
	♠	
	♥AQ982	
	♦KQ8	
	♣KJT73	