

## Ishmael Del'Monte



Ishmael Del'Monte, 34, was born in Auckland, New Zealand. His father was a New Zealand Grand Master and one of the true characters of his era. Ishmael ("Ish"), who learned the game in New Zealand, enjoyed considerable early success playing for his native land. These days ish runs his new bridge club (Kings and Queens) and is a bridge professional and sports gambler in Australia, his adopted country, where he lives (in Sydney) with his wife, Kim, and two children, Julia, 5, and Ben, 3. Away from the bridge table, Ish is a keen fan of both Cricket and Rugby; he also plays squash and poker.



Ish's most notable bridge partnership was with Lionel Wright before Lionel relocated to the UK. Together, they won the New Zealand Open Teams twice in the early 1990s. When Ish was just 22, they finished 29th in the finals of the 1994 World Open Pairs. In 1997, they were invited to the Cavendish, where they finished a creditable 12th in the Pairs.

Ish's other serious partnership was with Ashley Bach, with whom he played as a Junior. They earned Silver medals at the 1995 World Junior Teams, losing to a very strong Great Britain team in the final. Ish represented New Zealand at two World Junior Teams Championships (1993 and 1995) and then played for Australia in his last year of eligibility (1997).

Perhaps Ish's greatest bridge success to date was his second-place finish in the World Junior Teams Championship in 1995 in Bali. He's won numerous titles in both his native New Zealand and in Australia, represented Australia in World competition, and currently plays on the Rita Shugart team (USA) where he partners Norwegian expert, Boye Brogeland.

**What do you like about the game:** The people I have met and friends I have made.

**What in your bridge career were you most proud of:** 2nd in World Youth Teams Championships in Bali 1995

**What is your main strength/weakness:** I am a good [ed: read - great] declarer but a bad [ed: read very tough] partner

Who are you playing with at the moment: Paul Gosney

If you could play with anyone in the world, who would it be: Alfredo Versace of Italy

Players who have had a strong influence: Boye Brogeland most recently and Mike Cornell and Andy Braithwaite when I first started

**What are your bridge plans for the future:** To get better

Tips for the improving bridge player: Remember to ruff losers in dummy before you draw trumps, do not bid 5 over 5 or 3 over 3, do not worry about a bad board and get onto the next hand.

Most memorable hand: against Eric Rodwell playing with Marty Fleischer in the Cavendish about five years ago.

- I held 10 5 4 3 of spade amongst other values
- my left hand opponent opened 3S
- partner doubled and I chose to bid 3NT.

The lead was the Ace of spades and partner had a void in spades. My right hand opponent unblocked the Jack and then my LHO switched. As I had to take a finesse into RHO I knew they were going to return a spade and I would down a lot. Instead I played a spade back hoping the player on my left would think I was trying to cut communications and fly. Marty Fleischer thought exactly that and after a lot of thought flew with the Queen playing his partner for JT doubleton. Making 3NT!!!

See also The article " In the Well"

<http://bridgewinners.com/article/view/in-the-well-ishmael-delmonte/>

This week in the Well we feature Ishmael Del'monte, who last month became the first player from Down Under to win the Vanderbilt. Ish, as he is commonly known, has won 34 Australian National Titles and another 9 in New Zealand (his original homeland). He has represented Australia several times in international competition (1999, 2002, 2003, and 2011). When not playing professionally, Ish and his wife Kim spend time with their two kids and run two [bridge clubs in Sydney](#).

Ish also serves on the WBF Masterpoint committee as well as the High Level Players Committee. He was also part of the epic 2011 Vanderbilt final where both tables bid [a grand slam off the ace of trumps](#) in the final quarter.