A NEW BRIDGE MAGAZINE

Ladies Day
Kit's Corner
Kit's Corner
From The Archives

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ANEW BRIDGE MAGAZINE

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Ahead of The Times

Writing in The Times, Matt Dickinson, Sports Columnist of the Year, delivered an article entitled Time for men and women to share the same stage. In it he claimed, while covering the Winter Olympics, to have seen the future, a world where men's sport, women's sport....it's all just sport.

No doubt his decision to address this issue was in part due to the appearance of Mixed Curling, which has graduated from a spectator sport to a full medal competition. He is right, but perhaps someone should inform him that in bridge we have had mixed partnerships since the dawn of time.

The Right Path

One of the best ways to encourage interest in bridge is to show that it is an equal opportunity sport.

On Sunday January 14th 2018, something very unusual happened in England. A chess tournament took place with upwards of 260 players, all of whom were female. The southern semi-final of the ECF National Schools Girls' Championships was made up of eighty seven separate teams of three. Thirty two schools took part. This may be commonplace in countries such as Turkey, India, the USA and others, but in the UK it is almost unique.

If Chess can do it, why not Bridge?

Lions in Winter

There was a record breaking entry for the second edition of the European Winter Games in Monaco. A full report in the April issue.

VuBridge Leads the Way

We are delighted to welcome VuBridge to the magazine with the first of a regular series of articles.



David Bird, one of the outstanding authors who contributes regularly to their web site has this to say:

"A good way to improve your opening leads is with the VuBridge opening leads quizzes. You are given 5 problems, each with the bidding. You choose your lead and then look to see what the writer thinks is the best lead. He will give his reasoning for the choice.

"Of course, there is some luck involved (as always in bridge). Do not think 'I got that one wrong.' Maybe at the table your choice would have been a winner. The idea is to improve the number of times that you hit the best lead. Often the opponents' bidding will help you.

"Terence Reese used to say 'Blind leads are for deaf players'. The more you practice, the 'luckier' you will be!"

Take the time to visit their site at: http://www.vubridge.fr/FR/USHome.php

In the Forum

You can address your queries and comments about any aspect of bridge by contacting us at forum@newbridgemag.com

We hope we will receive so many it will become a regular feature in the magazine.

Worldpay

Following a number of requests by readers who want to send donations we are setting up a credit card facility. Later this month an appropriate page will be added to the web site.

No Appeal

The European Bridge League has decided not to appeal the CAS decision announced on 0 January in the case involving Fantoni & Nunes. The grounds for appeal are extremely limited and even in the event of a successful appeal the case is then referred back to the original CAS panel, with more or less the certainty of them reinstating their original decision.

Opportunity Knocks

The 2018 Women's Online Spring Bridge Festival will take on Bridge Base Online place 9th -15th April.

It is organised by the World Bridge Federation and the overall winner will receive free entry and accommodation for themselves and the partner of their choice at the Women's Pairs Championship in Orlando, in September 2018.

For more information go to: http://www.wbfwomensbridgeclub.org/

Masters of Points

The English Bridge Union awards the Sunday Telegraph Salver to the player winning the most master points in the calendar year. By collecting 21,251 points John Holland secured the trophy for the sixth time. These were the top ten:

1	John Holland	21,251
2	Mike Bell	20,604
3	Michael Byrne	18,929
4	Aleksandar Lishkov	18,051
5	Frank Springett	17,718
6	Gary Hyett	17,510
7	Jason Hackett	17,239
8	Rhona Goldenfield	16,538
9	Norman Selway	16,447
10	Jeremy Willans	16,268

John is third on the all-time list, which is still headed by the late John Durden with 844,176. John has 806,910, but is well behind second placed Derek Oram's total of 826,912.

Were the list to be based on Green Point alone John's total of 521,428 would leave him well clear of Tim Rees's 456,538 and Jeremy Dhondy's 453,329.

The Gold Point ranking list which is an indicator of current form at a high level is headed by Andrew Robson:

1	Andrew Robson	80.57
2	David Gold	79.85
3	Alexander Allfrey	77.67
4	John Holland	76.59
5	Mike Bell	75.58
6	Tony Forrester	72.61
7	Michael Byrne	68.61
8	Jason Hackett	67.76
9	David Bakhshi	65.05
10	Graham Osborne	62.90

The leading woman on the list is Sally Brock, who's total of 62.79 puts her in 11th place.

The Next Generations

The Junior Camrose, for players under 26 was launched in 1971 in Glasgow. Scotland won and team members Sandy Duncan, Barnet Shenkin, George Cuthbertson and Derek Diamond all went to represent Scotland in the Camrose. England has generally dominated the contest and many of their representatives have gone on to achieve great things as you can see by looking at: http://www.ebu.co.uk/node/462

England's winning team this year was:

Yvonne Wiseman, Alex Birchall, Kyle Lam, Toby Nonnenmacher, Shahzaad Natt & Ben Norton. NPC Paul Barden.

The Peggy Bayer was launched in 1990 in with a trophy donated by the late Palmer Bayer (the founder of the Educational Trust for British Bridge).

This year England won with a tremendous total of 170.55 VP out of 180, finishing 89.15 VP ahead of second placed Ireland.

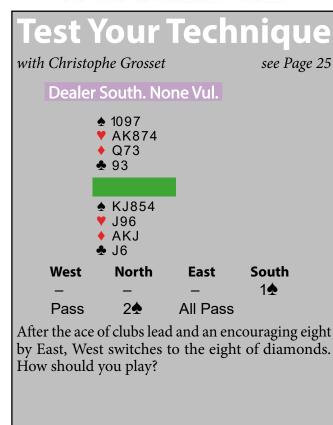
The winning team was:

Kripa Panchagnula, Harry Madden, Sam Anoyrkatis, Theo Anoyrkatis, Jack Ronayne & Theo Gillis. NPC Michael Byrne.

In This Issue

- **4 FUNBRIDGE** Test Your Technique
- **5 Ladies Day** The editor reports on the 2018 Lady Milne Trophy
- **18 FUNBRIDGE** Misplay These Hands With Me
- **20 Deals That Caught My Eye** David Bird reports on the English Senior Trials
- 25 Defend With Julian Pottage
- **25 FUNBRIDGE** Test Your Technique solution
- **26 Easy Riders** Alex Adamson & Harry Smith with another tale from the Over The Rainbow Bridge Club
- **32 Defend With Julian Pottage** The Answers
- 33 Vu-Bridge Play Like a Champion
- 35 Bridge With Larry Cohen
- **39 From The Archives** Brian Senior
- **43 Kit's Corner** Kit Woolsey
- **47 The Surprising Winners** David Bird
- **52 The Auction Room** Mark Horton
- **58 Master Point Press Bidding Battle** Moderated by Alan Mould
- 75 Master Point Press Bidding Battle Competition—Set 3
- 78 Hands for This Month's Auction Room





Ladies Day

The Editor reports on England's trial for the 2018 Lady Milne Trophy.

he women's equivalent of the Camrose, the Lady Milne Trophy was presented in 1934 by—you guessed it, Lady Milne—for a knock-out team event. However, the entries were disappointing and in 1950 it became a challenge trophy for a competition between England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland. (Northern Ireland took part in the first year, but then withdrew, only rejoining the fold in 1990.) I discovered an interesting article about the event by Liz McGowan on the Neapolitan Bridge Club web site—in it she mentions that England broadcast its women's trials on BBO—none of the other countries dare. In 2009 it was decided to add a sixth team, representing the host NBO.

Liz was a member of the team that won the Scottish Trials for this year's Lady Milne -and if my calculations are correct she will be making her 32nd appearance in the event, which will be contested at the Holiday Inn in Edinburgh (the one next to the Zoo) over the weekend of 13-15 April. The SBU have booked The Academy to provide excellent facilities for both players and spectators. There will be no VuGraph, but all the matches will be shown on BBO (and WiFi is available throughout the hotel).

16 Pairs entered the lists—this is how they lined up in the order of the draw:

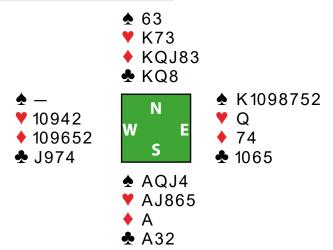
	and entered the new time is now they miled up in the order of the draw.
1	Catherine Curtis and Christine Jepson
2	Marusa Basa and Susanna Gross
3	Nevena Senior and Brigid Battiscombe
4	Carole Kelly and Sandy Davies
5	Heather Dhondy and Abbey Smith
6	Alexandra Birchall and Oian Li
7	Fiona Brown and Helen Erichsen
8	Emily Middleton and Diana Nettleton
9	Lizzie Godfrey and Lyn Fry
10	Heather Bakhshi and Claire Robinson
11	Anne Rosen and Catherine Seale
12	Laura Covill and Sivu Ren
13	Yvonne Wiseman and Ewa Wieczorek
14	Pauline Cohen and Gail Hoffman
15	Nicola Smith and Allison Green
16	Kath Stynes and Debbie Sandford

A smattering of World Champions, familiar faces and some new ones. The most interesting partnership was that of Heather Dhondy and Abbey Smith, who, as Abbey Walker, played with Sandra Landy in the 1995 Venice Cup. the winners and the runners-up were guaranteed a place on the team.

The opening round consisted of a quiet set of deals.

Round 2

Board 16. Dealer West. E/W Vul.



West	North	East	South
Seale	Middleton	Rosen	Nettleton
Pass	1♦	2♠	3♥
Pass	4♥	Pass	4NT*
Pass	5◆*	Pass	5 ♠ *
Pass	6♥	All Pass	

When North denied the ♥Q South settled for 6♥. With the spade king certain to be onside she must have been tempted to go all in by bidding 7NT.

West led the two of diamonds and declarer won, played a heart to the king followed by three more rounds of the suit, claiming after West had taken her trump trick, +980.

West	North	East	South
Battiscombe	Curtis	Senior	Jepson
Pass	1♦	2♠	Pass
Pass	Double	Pass	Pass
Redouble	All Pass		

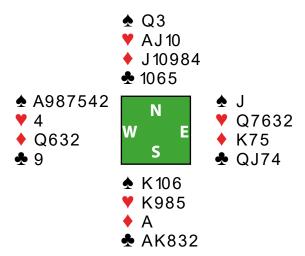
West's attempt to improve matters was misguided.

Declarer took four tricks, -2200.

Bidding 6♥ resulted in a loss of 0.86 of an IMP (6NT meant 0-0) while -2200 cost 15.29 IMPs. One pair stopped in game and dropped 11.86 IMPs. You can replay this deal https://tinyurl.com/ya3ukf63

Round 3

Board 20. Dealer West. All Vul.



West	North	East	South
Davies	Gross	Kelly	Basa
3♠	Pass	Pass	Double
Pass	4	Pass	4NT
Pass	5♣	All Pass	

I recall a comment by Terence Reese to the effect that 'one cannot have it all ways when the opponents open 3\(\dag{\psi}\)'. Here South might have given up on the possible heart fit and bid 3NT.

South intended her 4NT to be natural – it was interpreted as RKCB by

her partner.

East led the jack of spades and West won and had only to return a spade to ensure the defeat of the contract. Instead she found the helpful return of a heart, covered in turn by the ten, queen and king and declarer cashed the ace of clubs and continued with the two for the ten and jack. She won the diamond return, crossed to dummy with a heart and could collect East's trumps, +600.

You can make 3NT, but not four if West leads a diamond and East withholds the king.

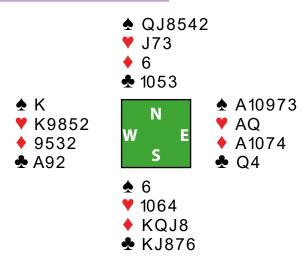
	West	North	East	South
	Ren	Godfrey	Covill	Fry
	2♦*	Pass	2♠*	3♣
	All Pass			
2♦	Multi			
2♠	Pass or correct			

With a stopper in both majors and decent values South might have preferred 2NT to 3♣, when 3NT is sure to be reached.

3♣ was in no danger, declarer finishing with eleven tricks, +150.

5 pairs reached 3NT so +600 was worth 3.14 IMPs. If E/W had defeated 5♣ they would have picked up 11.14 IMPs.

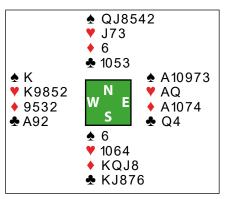
Board 22. Dealer East. E/W Vul.



West	North	East	South
Davies	Gross	Kelly	Basa
_	_	1NT	Pass
2♦*	Pass	2	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

Opening the East hand 1NT is a matter for the individual conscience.

South led the queen of diamonds and declarer won with the ace, crossed to the king of spades and played a diamond to



the ten and jack, North discarding the eight of spades. Back came the six of hearts and declarer won with the ace as North followed with the three. Declarer's next move was to try the ten of spades and North won and switched to the three of clubs for the four, jack and two. It looks clear to play the king of clubs now, but South exited with a heart and declarer won with the queen and continued the game of 'ping-pong' by playing a diamond. South won and exited with a diamond and declarer, stuck in dummy, had to go one down.

Entry considerations aside, the chance of taking four tricks in spades is a modest 13.24%, while hearts will deliver five tricks 38.75% of the time and four tricks 88.81% of the time.

Suppose declarer unblocks the hearts and then plays a diamond, South winning and exiting with a spade? Declarer wins in dummy and plays hearts and is still in the game even if the suit breaks 4-2. However, the strongest line must be to play back a diamond at trick two. South can win and exit in a major, but declarer wins and plays a third diamond. Even if the hearts are 4-2 declarer has various other chances—and as the cards lie there are ten tricks.

West	North	East	South
Ren	Godfrey	Covill	Fry
_	_	1♠	Pass
1NT	Pass	2♣*	Double
2♦	Pass	2♥	Pass
3♥	Pass	4♥	All Pass

2♣ was perhaps a transfer to diamonds.

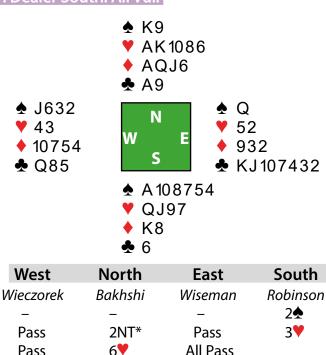
South led the king of diamonds and declarer won and should have followed a simple line—unblock the hearts, cross to the king of spades, cash the king of hearts and then play a diamond to the ten. However, she preferred to cross to the king of spades immediately, then unblock the hearts and attempt to cash the ace of spades. South ruffed, cashed the queen of diamonds and then inexplicably switched to a club, handing declarer the doomed contract on a plate, +620.

Going down in 3NT cost 6 IMPs (making a game was worth 7.29 IMPs). Three pairs played in diamonds—one of them in slam—but were doomed by the trump position.

You can replay these deals here or https://tinyurl.com/ydehcpkz

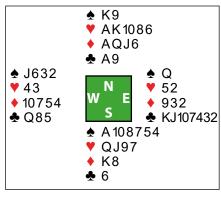
Round 4

Board 7. Dealer South. All Vul.



Whatever the meaning of the bidding it was precipitate.

West	North	East	South
Erichsen	Curtis	Brown	Jepson
_	_	_	1♠
Pass	2	Pass	4
Pass	4NT*	Pass	5♣*
Pass	5♦*	Pass	6♦*
Pass	7♥	All Pass	
	4NT RK	КСВ	
	5 ♣ 1 k	key card	
	5♦ ♥(Q?	
	6♦ Yes	s, and the \rightarrow K	

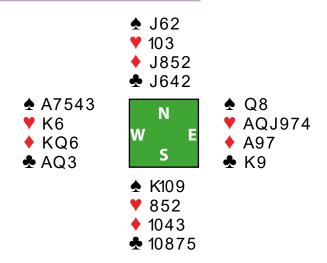


+2210 and 7.43 IMPs for the four pairs who bid it.

You can replay this deal here or https://tinyurl.com/ybcauyym

Round 5

Board 11. Dealer South. None Vul.



West	North	East	South
Robinson	Smith	Bakhshi	Green
_	_	_	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♥	Pass
3NT	Pass	6♥	All Pass

An undistinguished+1010.

West	North	East	South
Nettleton	Gross	Middleton	Basa
_	_	_	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♥*	Pass
2NT	Pass	3♥	Pass
4♣*	Pass	4◆*	Pass
5♥	All Pass		

2♥ Game forcing

4♣ Cue-bid

4♦ Cue-bid

No doubt West intended her 5♥ to be asking about the quality of East's trumps. From East's reluctance to bid on it appears she interpreted it as asking for a spade control.

If West had preferred 4♠ the exchange of cue-bids could have continued with 5♠ when West would like to be able to use 5NT as a grand slam force. (The current fashion for using 5NT as 'pick-a-slam' has never impressed me.)

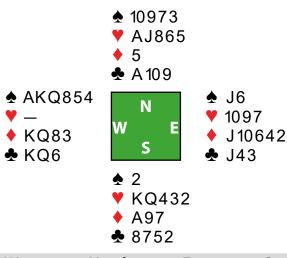
However, there must be a case for West to ask for key cards over $4 \diamondsuit$. When East bids $5 \diamondsuit$ West can ask for kings and confidently bid a grand slam when East delivers the \diamondsuit K. (It would only be a mild speculation to bid $7 \heartsuit$ if East shows the \diamondsuit K instead.)

4 pairs bid a grand slam to earn 6.71 IMPs and 6.43 IMPs. Bidding only 6♥/6NT lost only 4.43 IMPs while stopping in 5♥ cost 12.71 IMPs.

You can replay this deal here or https://tinyurl.com/ycyow5cy

Round 6

Board 17. Dealer North. None Vul.



West	North	East	South
Gross	Bakhshi	Basa	Robinson
_	Pass	Pass	1♥
Double	4◆*	Pass	4♥
4♠	Double	All Pass	
Splinter			

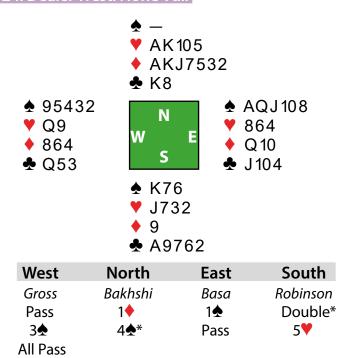
North led her diamond and ruffed the return of the nine, but there was no way to give South the lead for a second ruff, -590.

West	North	East	South
Fry	Senior	Godfrey	Battiscombe
_	Pass	Pass	1♥
Double	2NT*	Pass	3♥
3♠	4♥	Pass	Pass
Double	All Pass		

Declarer ruffed the second round of spades, cashed a top heart and the ace of diamonds and then cross-ruffed diamonds and spades before drawing the outstanding trumps to collect +590.

That was the only plus score achieved by N/S – worth 13.71 IMPs. The +590 recorded at the other table collected 7.57 IMPs.

Board 24. Dealer West. None Vul.



Clearly North's $4 \spadesuit$ promised a very good hand. Although South's $\spadesuit K$ was of little value she did have four hearts (admittedly poor ones) and the $\clubsuit A$. One option would have been to bid 4NT to show some interest in a slam. When North then bids $5 \spadesuit$ South can then either bid $5 \heartsuit$ leaving the final decision to North, or simply bid $6 \heartsuit$.

Declarer ruffed the spade lead in dummy, cashed the ace of diamonds, ruffed a diamond and played a heart to the ten, +510.

West	North	East	South
Fry	Senior	Godfrey	Battiscombe
Pass	1♦	1♠	Double*
4♠	5 ♠ *	Pass	6♣
Pass	6♦	All Pass	

Clearly South was not sure that North held a heart suit.

East led the ace of spades and declarer ruffed and cashed the top diamonds, eventually taking all the tricks, +940.

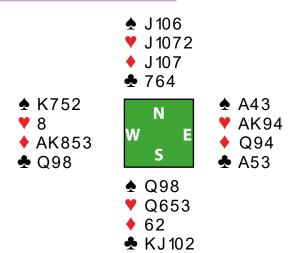
Missing the slam cost 9.14 IMPs, but 6♦ was worth only 0.71 IMPs.

One pair reached 7♥ for a fortuitous 11.86 IMP pick up.
You can replay these deals here or https://tinyurl.com/yb8lpkhh
At this stage the scoreboard looked like this:

Rank		Bds	IMPs
1	Nicola Smith & Allison Green	24	67.14
2	Marusa Basa & Susanna Gross	24	60.00
3	Heather Dhondy & Abbey Smith	24	25.29
4	Nevena Senior & Brigid Battiscombe	24	19.86
5	Fiona Brown & Helen Erichsen	24	15.00
6	Lizzie Godfrey & Lyn Fry	24	7.00
7	Yvonne Wiseman & Ewa Wieczorek	24	3.86
8	Alexandra Birchall & Qian Li	24	3.00
9	Carole Kelly & Sandy Davies	24	-1.86
10	Anne Rosen & Catherine Seale	24	-6.57
11	Catherine Curtis & Christine Jepson	24	-12.43
12	Heather Bakhshi & Claire Robinson	24	-12.86
13	Pauline Cohen & Gail Hoffman	24	-17.29
14	Kath Stynes & Debbie Sandford	24	-37.71
15	Laura Covill & Siyu Ren	24	-51.14
16	Emily Middleton & Diana Nettleton	24	-66.86

Round 7

Board 3. Dealer South. E/W Vul.



	West	North	East	South
	Ren	Gross	Covill	Basa
	_	_	_	Pass
	1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass
	1♠	Pass	2♦*	Pass
	3♣	Pass	3♦	Pass
	3♠	Pass	4NT*	Pass
	5 ∀ *	Pass	5NT*	Pass
	6♦	All Pass		
4NT 5 ♥	RKCB 2 key cards			

It looks as if $2 \spadesuit$ was game forcing. Given that West had not indicated anything other than a minimum 4-1-5-3 East's bidding was optimistic—but if the $\clubsuit Q$ had been metamorphosed into the $\spadesuit Q$ she would have had a play for $6 \spadesuit$.

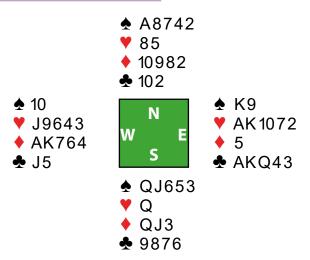
West	North	East	South
Green	Cohen	Smith	Hoffman
_	_	_	Pass
1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♣*	Pass
2NT	Pass	3♦	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

2♣ Fourth suit forcing

Well judged by East, West taking the obvious eleven tricks, +660.

Three pairs attempted the hopeless slam, losing 9.14~IMPs, while +660 was worth 5.57~IMPs.

Board 7. Dealer South. All Vul.



West	North	East	South
Ren	Gross	Covill	Basa
_	_	_	Pass
Pass	Pass	1♥	Pass
4Y	Pass	6♥	All Pass

Commentating on BBO David Burn remarked 'that's how they'd bid in the 1957 Lady Milne Trials'. Perhaps, but it was extremely effective. South led the queen of spades so the defenders scored a trick, +1430.

West	North	East	South
Green	Cohen	Smith	Hofffman
_	_	_	Pass
Pass	Pass	1♥	Pass
2NT*	Pass	4NT*	Pass
5♣*	Pass	5♦*	Pass
5 ∀ *	All Pass		

2NT Heart support

4NT RKCB

5♣ 1 key card

5**♦ ∀**Q?

5♥ No

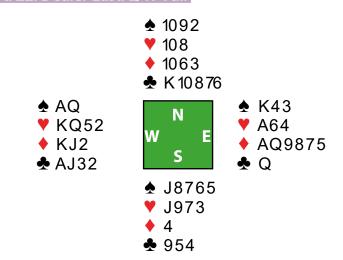
Facing a known five-card suit West, with a fifth heart should have pretended she had the queen.

This was the only table where the slam was not bid, resulting in a loss of 12.14 IMPs.

You can replay these deals here or https://tinyurl.com/y7ggxchj

Round 9

Board 22. Dealer East. E/W Vul.



West	North	East	South
Battiscombe	Smith	Senior	Green
_	_	1♦	Pass
1♥	Pass	3♦	Pass
4NT*	Pass	5 ♠ *	Pass
5NT*	Pass	6♦	Pass
7♦	All Pass		
4NT RKCB			
5♠ 2 key cards +	♦ Q		

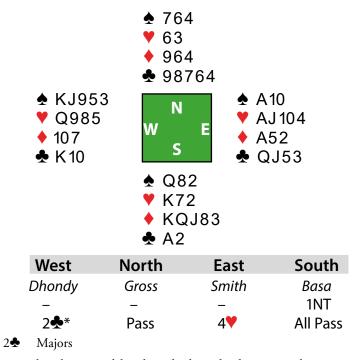
West could count 12 tricks and East's rebid made it just about a racing certainty there would be enough for all thirteen.

West	North	East	South
Gross	Curtis	Basa	Jepson
_	_	1♦	Pass
1♥	Pass	3♦	Pass
4♦	Pass	4♥	Pass
4NT*	Pass	5 ♠ *	Pass
7NT	All Pass		

Only three pairs reached this grand slam, +2220 being worth 10.14 IMPs and +2140 8.86 IMPs. One pair languished in 5♦ which cost 14.71 IMPs. You can replay this deal here or https://tinyurl.com/ycnxjydj

Round 11

Board 3. Dealer South. E/W Vul.



Declarer won the diamond lead and played a heart to the nine. When that held she ducked a diamond and South won and played a third round of the suit. Declarer ruffed in dummy, played a heart to the ace, cashed the ace of spades and played a spade to the jack. Had she left out the diamond duck

she would have taken eleven tricks.

The VuGraph operator intimated that North revoked at some point, but its not clear what happened – in any event declarer was home.

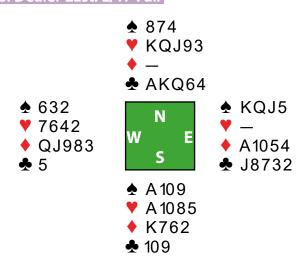
West	North	East	South
Curtis	Birchall	Jepson	Li
_	_	_	1NT
All Pass			

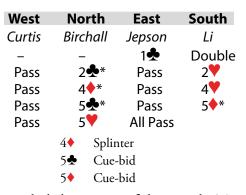
West was unwilling to enter the fray and when East could find nothing to contribute N/S were on to a winner (perhaps a double by East would not have been for penalties).

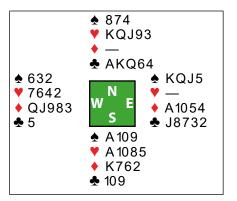
West led a spade and the defenders took the first five tricks in the suit, East parting with two diamonds and a heart. When West exited with a diamond declarer (who had pitched a diamond and club) escaped for three down.

-150 delivered 8.86 IMPs, the six pairs who bid a game on the E/W cards collecting 2.71 IMPs.

Board 6. Dealer East. E/W Vul.







West led the queen of diamonds. To my

mind a spade looks obvious given the opponents have stopped out of slam, but it does not help. Declarer can win, ruff a diamond, overtake the king of hearts, ruff a diamond high, cash the queen of hearts, come to hand with the ten of hearts and draw the outstanding trump, squeezing East for an eleventh trick.

What is more, if declarer ducks the opening spade lead and then follows the line indicated above it executes a repeating squeeze against East for twelve tricks.

Declarer pitched a spade on the diamond, took the spade switch and could have played to squeeze East for twelve tricks, but took the simple line of drawing trumps and cashing the king of diamonds, the latter squeezing East in the black suits.

	West	North	East	South
L	Dhondy	Gross	Smith	Basa
	_	_	1♣	Pass
	Pass	2♣*	Pass	2
	Pass	4◆*	Pass	4♥
	Pass	4NT*	Pass	5 ♥*
	Pass	6♥	All Pass	
4 ♦	Splinter			
4NT	RKCB			
5♥	2 key cards			

West found the killing lead of a club.

Declarer won in dummy and cashed the king of hearts, getting the bad news. Hoping East's 1♣ might have been based on a short suit she tried to cash the ♣K, but West ruffed and returned a spade which meant declarer could manage only ten tricks, -100.

The other pair to reach 6♥ were also defeated by a club lead from West – they lost 7.57 and 6.29 IMPs respectively. One E/W pair were lucky enough to be doubled in $2 \diamondsuit$, +380 being worth 11.71 IMPs.

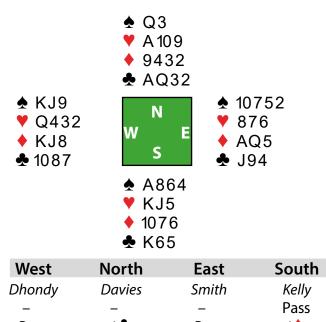
When I asked my au pair how she would have bid the hand she suggested a pass by South over 1♣. Then North bids 1♥ over West's 1♦ and South jumps to 4♥ when East raises to 2♦. Expecting little to be wasted in diamonds North then jumps to 6\(\nabla\).

That means the contract is played the right way up, but as she pointed out, were East to lead the ♣J (!) declarer would not be able to arrive at twelve tricks.

You can replay these deals here or https://tinyurl.com/yb3q9psh

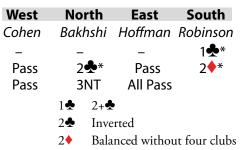
Round 12

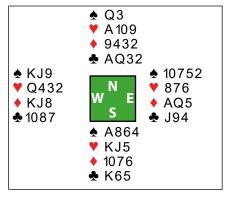
Board 15. Dealer South. N/S Vul.



west	worth	East	South
Dhondy	Davies	Smith	Kelly
_	_	_	Pass
Pass	1♣	Pass	1♦
Pass	1NT	Pass	2NT
All Pass			

East led a spade and West won and returned the suit. When the clubs broke declarer settled for eight tricks,+120.





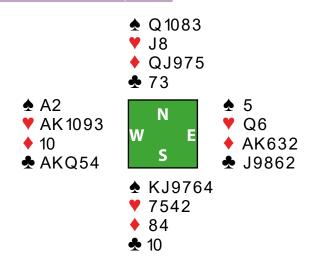
East led the seven of spades and West won and returned the nine. Declarer won, crossed to the king of clubs and ran the jack of hearts for a Meckwellian +600.

With only two pairs bidding game +600 was worth 8.29 IMPs. The other pair were doubled, +750 making it an 11 IMP pick up

You can replay this deal here or https://tinyurl.com/ycw5dofz

Round 13

Board 18. Dealer East. N/S Vul.



	West	North	East	South
	Li	Dhondy	Birchall	Smith
	_	_	1♦	2♠
	3♥	3♠	4♥	Pass
	4NT*	Pass	5♣	Pass
	5 ♦*	Pass	6♥	All Pass
4NT	RKCB			
5♣	1 key card			
5♦	♥ Q?			
6♥	Yes			

It's hard to reach a grand slam in clubs, especially if no-one bids the suit. If East had bid $4\clubsuit$ over $3\spadesuit$ West would have been alive to the possibilities.

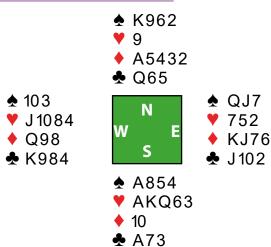
North led the three of spades and declarer won, pitched a spade on the top diamonds, cashed the queen of hearts and played a heart to the ten, +980.

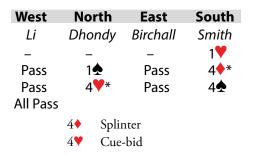
West	North	East	South
Curtis	Bakhshi	Jepson	Robinson
_	_	1♦	2♠
3♥	4♠	Pass	Pass
6♣	All Pass		

Declarer won the spade lead and claimed.

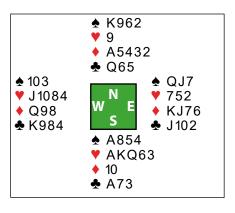
The five pairs who reached $7 \clubsuit$ collected 5 IMPs. The wooden spoon went to the pair who stopped in $5 \clubsuit - a \log of 13.14$ IMPs.

Board 19. Dealer South. E/W Vul.





Cue-bidding a shortage in partner's suit is not everyone's cup of tea, but here it was the only way North could show any



sort of interest – a sort of Last Train effort. East led the jack of clubs and West won and switched to a spade, +450.

	West	North	East	South
	Curtis	Bakhshi	Jepson	Robinson
	_	_	_	1♥
	Pass	1♠	Pass	4◆*
	Pass	4 ♥*	Pass	4NT*
	Pass	5♥*	Pass	5NT*
	Pass	6♠	All Pass	
4NT	RKCB			
5♥	2 key cards			

Here South took a different view.

You can make 6♠ on a heart lead—you pitch two clubs on top hearts and then ruff a heart. East overuffs, but then declarer can ruff two clubs in dummy.

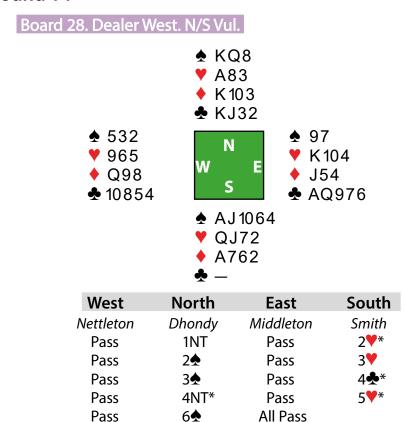
Of course, East led the jack of clubs and with a vital entry removed that line no longer works as declarer discovered when she attempted to follow it.

If you reverse the location of the red suits then $6 \spadesuit$ cannot be defeated. The same is true if you swap the queen of clubs for the queen of spades.

My view is that South is worth an effort over 4♥ – if you bid 5♣ partner will sign off in 5♠ with her actual hand.

Only two pairs ventured beyond 4♠ – they both lost 9.43 IMPs. You can replay these deals here or https://tinyurl.com/ybkktkd6

Round 14



Transfer Cue-bid

4NT RKCB

5♥ 2 key cards

Perhaps 4♥ is a better bid than 4NT. If South then bids 4♠ North might conclude she has done enough.

East led the seven of spades and declarer won, ruffed a club and ran the queen of hearts. East won and exited with a spade, declarer winning and playing four rounds of hearts. West ruffed (as she had to) and declarer overruffed and ruffed a club. Out of ammunition she was one down.

I suspect that to have any chance declarer needed to play on reverse dummy lines, hoping for a layout where the ♣A was coming down in three rounds.

West	North	East	South
Robinson	Senior	Bakhshi	Battiscombe
Pass	1♣	Pass	1♠
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♣*
Pass	2♠	Pass	4♠
All Pass			
Checkback			

It occurred to me that if $1 \clubsuit$ could be based on a short suit South might want to be able to bid $4 \clubsuit$ over $2 \spadesuit$. Were North to have nothing wasted in clubs $6 \spadesuit$ would be a good bet.

There is also the possibility that North might have four hearts to be considered.

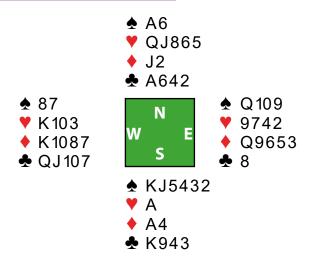
Two pairs attempted $6\clubsuit$. Going down cost 12.71 IMPs, but the other pair made it when East led the ace of clubs, handing over 13.86 IMPs. The mundane $4\spadesuit$ was worth 1.43 IMPs.

You can replay this deal here or https://tinyurl.com/ybs3jarl

Round 15

2

Board 39. Dealer South. All Vul.



West	North	East	South
Fry	Birchall	Godfrey	Li
_	_	_	1♠
Pass	2♥	Pass	2♠
Pass	3♣	Pass	4♣
Pass	5♣	All Pass	

It would have cost North nothing to bid 4♠ over 4♣.

East led the five of diamonds and declarer won with dummy's ace, played a club to the ace, a club to the king and saw East pitch the three of diamonds. Now the indicated line is to play on spades, finessing on the second round, Then the losing diamond goes on the third round of spades and declarer will lose only two trump tricks. Declarer did play on spades, but she rejected the finesse. When she played a third round of spades all West has to do is discard. Declarer ruffs, comes to hand with a heart and plays another spade, but now West ruffs, cashes her remaining club and then cashes a diamond.

When West ruffed the third round of spades declarer pitched dummy's remaining diamond and was home.

West	North	East	South
Dhondy	Bakhshi	Smith	Robinson
_	_	_	1♠
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♣
Pass	3♣	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

Declarer took six spades, a heart, a diamond and two clubs, +620.

4♠ was worth 3.86 IMPs while making 5♣ collected 3 IMPs. Two pairs tried 6♣, which cost 11.57 or 9.86 depending on how many tricks declarer took.

You can replay this deal <u>here</u> or <u>https://tinyurl.com/ybajaqgr</u>

This is how they finished:

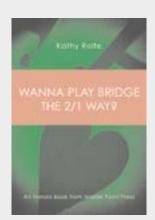
	,	
1	Heather Dhondy and Abbey Smith	93.51
2	Alexandra Birchall and Qian Li	58.93
3	Heather Bakhshi and Claire Robinson	47.11
4	Kath Stynes and Debbie Sandford	40.78
5	Marusa Basa and Susanna Gross	10.85
6	Nicola Smith and Allison Green	7.71
7	Lizzie Godfrey and Lyn Fry	2.71
8	Nevena Senior and Brigid Battiscombe	-0.82
9	Fiona Brown and Helen Erichsen	-7.14
10	Catherine Curtis and Christine Jepson	-13.10
11	Carole Kelly and Sandy Davies	-16.29
12	Yvonne Wiseman and Ewa Wieczorek	-27.07
13	Emily Middleton and Diana Nettleton	-31.89
14	Pauline Cohen and Gail Hoffman	-40.21
15	Anne Rosen and Catherine Seale	-54.99
16	Laura Covill and Siyu Ren	-75.78

The top three will attempt to retain England's hold on the trophy.

NEW FROM

MASTER POINT PRESS

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Wanna Play Bridge the 2/1 Way? An Honors Book

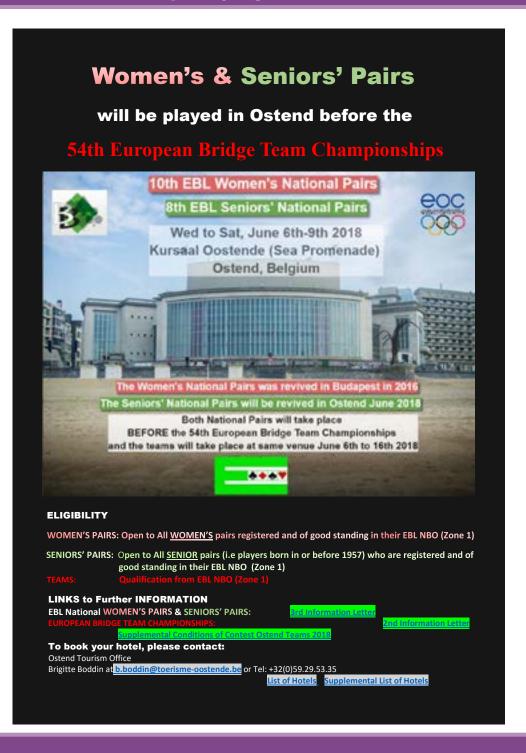
Kathy Rolfe

This book can be used as an absolute beginner book, teaching the 2/1 bridge bidding system from the start. Use just Chapters 1-5 to teach children as young as 6! The book can also be used by a novice player or a player that already knows 2/1.

There are dozens of deals for practicing both bidding and play. Use the book the way that suits you best!

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Misplay These Hands With Me

Promotion Denied

Playing in a large pairs event I pick up the following:

- **♦** J84
- ♥ AKJ1074
- **♦** K4
- **\$** 87

With no one vulnerable I open 1♥ and when West passes my partner jumps to 3NT which promises a balanced hand with 13-15 points. I could show my diamond control by bidding 4♦ but that strikes me as somewhat optimistic so I settle for 4♥, leaving us with this auction:

West	North	East	South
_	_	_	1♥
Pass	3NT*	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

West leads the two of clubs and partner produces:

- **★** 1032
- **♥** 852
- ♦ AQ3
- ♣ AQJ6



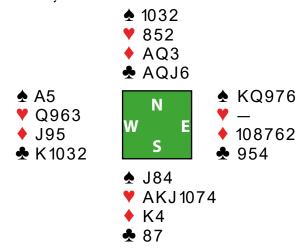
- **♦** J84
- AKJ1074
- **♦** K4
- **\$** 87

I am happy to have escaped a spade lead. I could go up with dummy's ace and try to draw trumps, my losing club going on the third round of diamonds, but as West's lead suggests an honour in clubs I am going to finesse. When the jack holds I play a trump, but East discards the nine of spades.

So much for rising with the ace of clubs!

I take the ace of hearts and repeat the club finesse. I discard a spade on the ace of clubs and then play three rounds of diamonds discarding a second spade.

I now play a heart to the king and the jack of hearts. West wins and returns the five of spades. East wins with the queen and plays a diamond, which promotes a trick for West's nine of hearts, holding me to my contract. This was the layout:



Post Mortem

Declarer missed an easy way to avoid the trump promotion. Having discarded two spades, a third should be thrown on dummy's fourth club. West wins but cannot give the lead to East.

It turned out that ten tricks was a good score. At many tables West led the ace of spades and after four rounds of the suit declarer often went wrong, discarding dummy's small club while ruffing with the jack of hearts. When West discarded declarer could not arrange an endplay to save a trick and finished two down.

Little Fish Are Sweet

Playing in a worldwide simultaneous Pairs event with a scientific partner I pick up a decent hand as dealer:

- ♠ AK2
- **♥** AJ
- ♦ A1094
- ♣ Q862

We are playing Precision so I open $1\clubsuit$. West overcalls $1\spadesuit$ and partner doubles, suggesting 6-9 points or something stronger. When I rebid 1NT partner uses Stayman and bids 2NT over my $2\spadesuit$. No doubt it will be a close run thing, but I decide to go on to game, giving us this auction:

West	North	East	South
_	_	_	1♣
1♠	Double*	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♣*	Pass	2♦
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

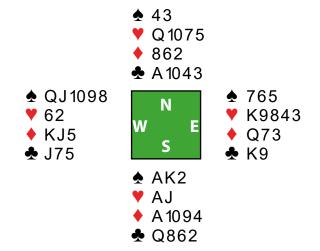
West leads the queen of spades and I get this dummy:

- **★** 43
- **Q**1075
- **♦** 862
- ♣ A1043
- **♦** AK2
- ♥ AJ
- ♦ A1094
- ♣ Q862

I duck the first spade, East following with the five and win the next round with the ace. Short of entries to dummy and needing to develop tricks in both hearts and clubs I continue with a club to the ten and am pleased to see East win with the king. I take the spade return discarding a diamond from dummy, cash the queen of clubs and then play the ace and jack of

hearts. East gives this a look before ducking but I play a club to dummy's ace and force out the king of hearts. I win the diamond return and have only to cross to dummy with a club in order to cash the ten of hearts.

It is only now I recognise the importance of the two of clubs, which I squandered on the first round of the suit. With no entry to dummy I have to concede one down. This was the full deal:



Post Mortem

In isolation the best line in the club suit for three tricks is to play low to the ace (almost 59%) but declarer could not afford that luxury.

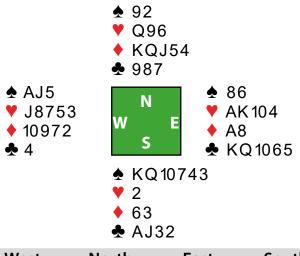
Mismanaging the spot cards is one of the more common mistakes. After winning the second spade declarer was right to play a club to the ten, but it is vital to retain the two of clubs—it is needed so as to be able to enter dummy in order to score a third heart trick.

Deals that Caught My Eye

David Bird looks at some swing boards from the last two rounds of the England Senior Trials

England's top senior players competed in the recent trials. We will look at a match from each of the last two rounds, examining some deals where a fair number of IMPs changed hands. Our purpose will be diagnose how and why these swings arose. In round 4 MOULD faced DAVIES. This was the first sizeable swing:

Board 2. Dealer East. N/S Vul.



West	North	East	South
Solomon	Mould	Robinson	Hyett
_	_	1♣	2♠
Pass	Pass	Double	Pass
3♥	Pass	4♥	All Pass

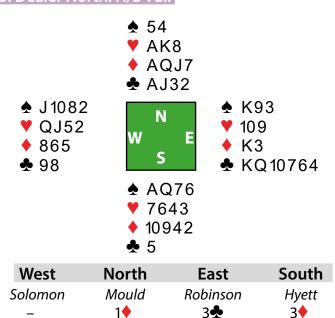
Warren Solomon won the ♦K lead with dummy's ace and played a spade to South's queen and his ace. A club to the king lost to South's ace. Gary Hyett cashed the ♠K and returned a diamond to North's queen. When the ♦5 was continued, declarer would have to ruff with a double-dummy ♥4 to make the contract. (Might he have cashed the ♥A at trick 2?) He ruffed with the ♥10 and that was one down.

West	North	East	South
Sheehan	Gisborne	Myers	Davies
_	_	1♣	1♠
Double	Pass	3♥	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

Sandy Davies' ♠K lead was allowed to win and the spade continuation was won with dummy's jack. A club to the king and ace saw South play a third round of spades, North ruffing dummy's ♠A. Barry Myers discarded the ♠8 on this trick and won the diamond switch. He then drew trumps in two rounds and claimed the contract for a 10 IMP swing to MOULD.

Board 5. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

Pass



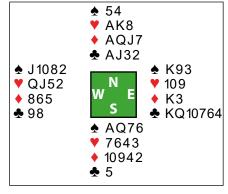
Dave Robinson led the \clubsuit K, drawing the \clubsuit 9 and \clubsuit 2 from the closed hands. Reading declarer for the \clubsuit A-J, he switched to the \spadesuit 9. The \spadesuit K was likely

All Pass

3NT

to be offside and Alan Mould played low from the dummy, the ♠9 winning the trick. When East continued with the ♠3, declarer rose with dummy's ace.

The only route to nine tricks after this start is double-dummy. Declarer must play the ♠7 to the bare ♠K, win the heart return, cash the other top heart and lead the ace and queen of diamonds to endplay East for a second club trick. Not

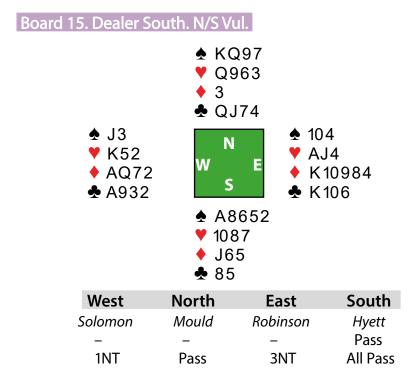


surprisingly, Mould preferred to take the diamond finesse and the game went two down.

West	North	East	South
Sheehan	Gisborne	Myers	Davies
_	1♣	Pass	1♦
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♠
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

The One Diamond response indicated four+ hearts and the 1NT rebid showed 18-19 points. Again the ♣K was led, this time drawing the ♣9 and ♣3. Barry Myers continued with the ♣7 to declarer's jack. A finesse of the ♠Q proved successful and declarer played a diamond to the queen and king, setting up nine tricks. It was 13 IMPs to DAVIES.

Take a look at this lead problem. You hold: ♠KQ97 ♥Q963 ♦3 ♣QJ74 Your partner passes and RHO opens with a 12-14 1NT, raised to 3NT. Which card will you lay on the table?



Mould found a necessary spade lead but chose the ♠7 rather than the king or queen. Hyett had to contribute the ♠A and the suit was then blocked. This was a bit unlucky, as I see it. If the lead of the ♠K would have asked for 'unblock or count', that would have been unattractive. Some might lead the ♠Q, requesting an attitude signal. What would happen at the other table?

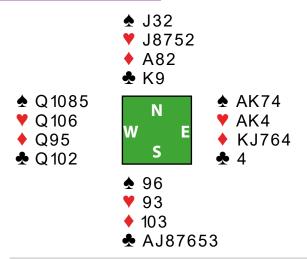
West	North	East	South
Sheehan	Gisborne	Myers	Davies
_	_	_	Pass
1NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

Tom Gisborne did lead the $\triangle K$, South playing the $\triangle 8$. The $\triangle Q$ picked up the 10 and jack and the $\triangle 9$ won the third round. Finally, the $\triangle 7$ was played to the ace and a fifth spade put the game one down for a swing of 10 IMPs. DAVIES beat MOULD by 46-26 (14.76 VPs to 5.24).

We will look next at the fifth-round match between PENFOLD and DAVIES. How do you view this bidding decision? You are vulnerable against not and hold these cards: ♠Q1085 ♥Q106 ♠Q95 ♣Q102

First to speak, your partner opens 1♦. The next player bids a weak 3♣, followed by two passes, and your partner re-opens with a double. What do you say? This was the lay-out:

Board 6. Dealer East. E/W Vul.



West	North	East	South
Davies	Selway	Gisborne	Penfold
-	_	1♦	3♣
Pass	Pass	Double	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♠	All Pass

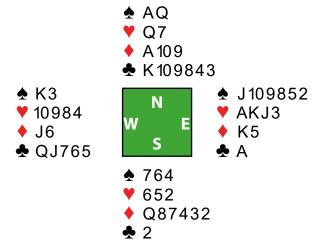
Norman Selway led the ♣K and switched to a heart. Davies soon had 11 tricks before him and that was +650.

West	North	East	South
Forrester	Solomon	Kendrick	Robinson
_	_	1♦	3♣
Pass	Pass	Double	Pass
3♦	All Pass		

Eleven tricks were made after a trump lead and that was 11 IMPs to DAVIES. Which response did you choose on those West cards? A computer simulation could calculate the chance of East holding four spades. As it happens,

5♦ and 3NT would succeed, as well as 4♠. It just seems to be a deal where East and West both held back a bit on the same deal.

Board 13. Dealer North. Both Vul.



West	North	East	South
Davies	Selway	Gisborne	Penfold
_	1♣	1♠	Pass
Pass	2♣	2♥	Pass
3♥	Pass	4♥	All Pass

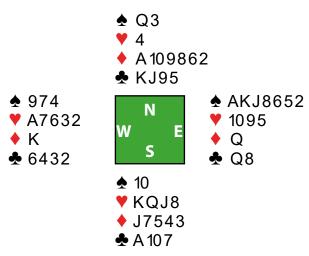
Gisborne won the club lead with the ace and played two top trumps, happy to see the ♥Q fall doubleton from North. After drawing the last trump, he ran the ♠8 to North's queen. Ace and another diamond then allowed him to claim +620.

West	North	East	South
Forrester	Solomon	Kendrick	Robinson
_	1♣	1♠	Pass
Pass	Double	Pass	2♦
Pass	Pass	2♥	All Pass

When North preferred to double rather than rebid his clubs, it was less attractive for Kendrick to bid 2♥. He made this bid later, but Forrester had no reason to consider a raise. After a club to the ace, Kendrick played the ♥K before running the ♠J to North's queen. Solomon cashed the ♠A and continued with the ♣10. Ten tricks were no longer possible. Kendrick discarded a spade and South ruffed with the ♥5. It was +140 and 10 IMPs to DAVIES.

This was another bidding deal, near the end of the match:

Board 18. Dealer East. N/S Vul.



West	North	East	South
Davies	Selway	Gisborne	Penfold
_	_	4♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

No-one had anything to say over the 4♠ opening and the defenders collected +100 for two down. Could North/South do better at the other table?

West	North	East	South
Forrester	Solomon	Kendrick	Robinson
_	-	4♠	Double
Pass	5♦	Pass	Pass
5♥	Pass	Pass	Double
5♠	Double	All Pass	

Robinson ventured a brave double on the first round and his side arrived in 5. With trumps breaking 1-1, this contract would have succeeded. Dummy's hearts would provide two club discards from the North hand. Forrester decided to sacrifice and the resultant 500 penalty would have picked up a few IMPs if his team mates had bid 5. at the other table. As it was, DAVIES collected 9 IMPs and the match ended in a 37-37 tie (10-10 in VPs).

On the three bidding deals we have seen from this match, the IMPs went to the team who bid more boldly. This was the final VP table:

1st PENFOLD	73.44
2nd DAVIES	71.07
3rd SMITH	54.61
4th MOULD	39.55
5th MOSSOP	34.83
6th PRYOR	26.50

Sandra Penfold and Norman Selway headed the cross-IMP ranking with +1.08 IMPs per board. They were followed by their team mates Tony Forrester and David Kendrick on +0.83.

MASTER POINT PRESS the bridge publisher



LAST BOARD EVERYTHING DEPENDS ON IT

Mark Horton

Triumph & Tragedy Agony & Ecstasy

Over 100 years of bridge history, it is not surprising that one can find many matches and events that came down to the last board, or even the last card, played. And of course, there is an added poignancy in these situations that derives from the fact that bridge is a unique sport in one aspect — the players do not know the score. In this book, the author has collected dozens of fascinating deals, each of which is that last board — the one that decided a world title or represented an individual triumph or tragedy.

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Highlights and New Features

What happened on FUNBRIDGE in February?

Earlier this month, the online bridge platform Funbridge announced a historic partnership with the World Bridge Federation.

This collaboration includes new federation tournaments hosted by FUNBRIDGE: **WBF Robot Bridge Points Tournaments**. As their name suggests, "Robot Bridge Points" (i.e. online Masterpoints) are allocated to the participants who can thus increase their WBF ranking.

These new tournaments consisting of 20 deals are open to all and take place every day:

- IMP tournaments: 00:00-12:00 (GMT+01)
- MP tournaments: 12:00-24:00 (GMT+01)

A recent updated version of the FUN**BRIDGE** app is also available. Among the new features are the FUN**BRIDGE** Points tournaments and the new rankings developed by the FUN**BRIDGE** team.

How do you get FUNBRIDGE Points?

- **Take part in federation tournaments** (including the new WBF tournaments mentioned above): you will be awarded FUN**BRIDGE** Points in addition to the official points allocated by FUN**BRIDGE** partner federations.
- Take part in the new FUNBRIDGE Points tournaments: FUNBRIDGE Points only are allocated here.

FUNBRIDGE Points give you access to 5 new types of rankings:

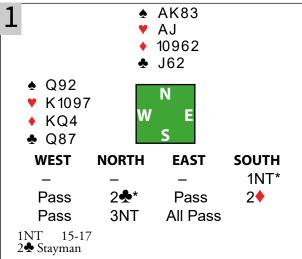
- Players who are awarded FUNBRIDGE Points
- Players participating in series tournaments
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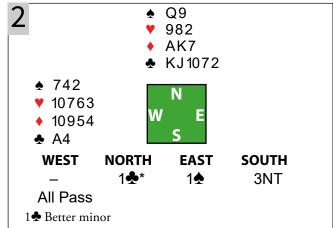
DEFEND WITH JULIAN POTAGE

The Questions



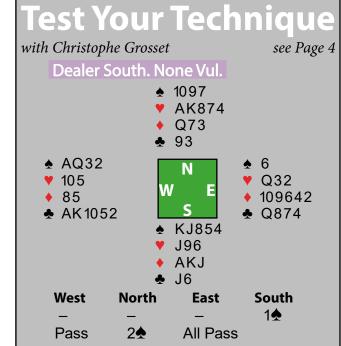
You lead the ten of hearts, partner playing the six under the jack. After the ten of diamonds runs to your queen, what are your plans?

Solutions on page 32



You lead the lead of two of spades (third and fifth in partner's suit), covered by the nine, ten and jack. Declarer now leads the nine of clubs. What is your plan?





After the ace of clubs lead and an encouraging eight by East, West switches to the eight of diamonds. How should you play? Here there is a risk of losing two spades, two clubs, one heart and a diamond ruff. The defence's communications in order to make this ruff happen are either in spades or in clubs. There is not much declarer can do about spades since if East has the ace, he will duck it and when West wins with the queen he will play a second round of diamonds, after which East might be able to give South his ruff. (If you are thinking of winning the diamond switch in dummy and playing a spade to the king, imagine the result if West has \triangle Axx.)

On the other hand, you can destroy the defenders communication in clubs by playing a club at trick 3. This will ruin the defence's plan as long as East doesn't hold the ace of spades. You will win the second diamond in dummy and run the ten of spades.

Easy Riders

Alex Adamson & Harry Smith give us More Tales from the Over The Rainbow Bridge Club

The Tin Man was not happy. 'I only entered this event to get some good bridge, facing opposition of my own standard.' He thought for a moment. 'Well at least close to that, but good enough to give me a challenge.'

Dorothy was used to her partner's short fuse. 'You'll still get some good bridge, probably even better than we might have had, as our next match will be in the round of sixteen, where you would expect to meet a reasonable team. You did tell me before we entered that you only anticipated playing in one match, the presence of the Scarecrow in the team making a second round unlikely. And besides, every match we win takes you closer to catching Almira Gulch in the master point rankings.' She knew that this was a big factor in the Tin Man's sudden interest in national events, though she wasn't sure if she was allowed to mention it.

'The next match may well be against worthwhile opposition,' the Tin Man grated, 'but that will only happen if we can win this match carrying our man of straw.'

'Wait a minute,' interrupted Dorothy, 'you can't have it both ways. After our social match against Poppyfield last year, you wrote that article for the district magazine. Only one of the four pages you submitted was printed as in the other three you expressed some strong views on the abilities of our opposition, which were considered rather too inflammatory to publish.

'It's the Poppyfield team we'll be playing in this round. If a fraction of what you wrote is correct, we would win even if we had Hank in the team. The Scarecrow may not be the best technical player in the club.' Dorothy voice faltered. 'However, the Lion has a good understanding of his ...'. She struggled for the right word. 'Well anyway, he's often quite lucky.'

It had been the Scarecrow's idea to enter and it had taken Dorothy quite some time convincing the Tin Man to join them. The revelation that Almira Gulch had become the first player in the club to achieve the rank of National Master had spurred a number of the better players to broaden their horizons. It was a horrifying thought that the world might think that they were in any way inferior to her. This was the first year that any team from the Club had entered the country's main knockout teams event, the Ozian Cup. As well as

Dorothy's team, both Aunty Em and the witches had decided also to enter.

However, after the first round they were the only surviving team of the three. Aunty Em had been drawn against one of the top seeds, a team of internationals from the Emerald City. She had been quite proud, and reasonably so, thought Dorothy, that the margin after 32 boards had only been 3 IMPs.

When a match is that close, every member of the losing team would normally think of hands where they personally could have saved the team. That wasn't the way Aunty Em thought. To her it was quite clear that the loss had been caused by Uncle Henry failing to find the criss-cross squeeze to make 3NT on board eighteen. Admittedly in the other room, a perfectly reasonable lead had given the ninth trick, but that didn't let Henry off the hook.

And 3 IMPs had also been the margin in their match when the Scare-crow's team had put the witches out of the event. It had been disappointing to draw one of the teams of their own club in the first round. However, the Chairman of the Lollipop Guild had congratulated Dorothy. 'It's a very good thing, yes indeed a very good thing, that you played and defeated them. Had they been allowed to play a team from any other club, I hate to think, yes hate to think, what impression they would have given of our club. We might even have been expelled from the Ozian Bridge Union!'

Dorothy had thanked him, but he had continued in an undertone 'I do have worries about the Tin Man representing us, but I'm sure, sure indeed, that you have the personality and ability to defuse any problem situation.'

The third Sunday in January arrived and they set off in the Lion's car along the yellow brick road to Poppyfield, passing several old dilapidated factories from the country's former industrial past. The car sped along at 50 miles per hour. They did remember that the Lion had once approached 55 mph, but that was during a heated discussion about a hand he had passed out.

The Tin Man's temper wasn't improved by the unnecessarily long journey sitting in the back of the car with the Scarecrow. His legs creaked as he walked up the stairs to the Poppyfield club. 'Let's hope we can be so far up after sixteen boards that they concede.' He continued with a grimace. 'Otherwise we'll be lucky to get back in time for the Monday evening pairs!'

They went into the club and the Scarecrow, in the forceful manner he had seen the Tin Man use as team captain, strode up to two portly grey-haired men sitting in the lounge drinking coffee.

'I'm looking for the captain of the Poppyfield team in the Ozian Cup', he announced.

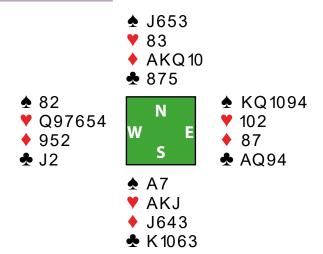
'I am the captain,' said the slimmer of the two. 'You may remember we played against you last year in that, em, friendly match.' The word 'friendly' clearly stuck in his throat. 'You may not remember me, but we certainly won't forget one member of your team.'

The captain looked up and saw the Tin Man come in. 'I can see we're in for another enjoyable afternoon, I don't think,' he groaned.

Play was soon underway. The match was to be over 32 boards, played in two halves. The Tin Man and Dorothy were playing a pair of ladies of a certain age who had clearly not forgotten the previous time they met the Tin Man. They introduced themselves as Clara and Margaret, and took the North-South seats. To be more precise, they sat northwest and southwest respectively, to maintain the maximum distance possible at the bridge table from the Tin Man in the East seat.

After fourteen boards, the Tin Man felt quietly confident. Clara and Margaret would have disagreed with the 'quietly', but at least there had been no major incidents. The penultimate board of the set was placed on the table, much to the relief of the Poppyfield pair.

Dealer South. N/S Vul.



The auction had been short and simple, a strong notrump opener followed by a Stayman sequence.

West	North	East	South
Dorothy	Clara	Tin Man	Margaret
_	_	_	1NT
Pass	2♣*	Pass	2♦*
Pass	3NT	All Pass	



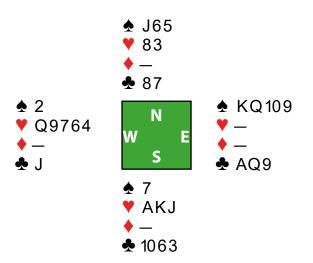
West, Dorothy, took stock. She had an obvious long suit to lead, but it was of poor quality and she had very little chance of getting back in to enjoy any winners in it. She decided to try and find her partner's suit, and found the good lead of the \$\ddot{8}\$.

Margaret looked disconsolately at dummy. Despite their combined values, she only had seven top tricks. It looked as if she needed both the queen of hearts and the ace of clubs to be well positioned. She consoled herself with the thought that with 26 points between them, and no fit in a suit, the contract would be the same in the other room.

She won the first trick with the ace, entered dummy with a diamond and

then played a club to the king. When this held, her countenance brightened. With eight tricks in the bag, she decided to run her diamond suit to see what happened. She never liked it when good players did this to her: somehow they ended up with what they usually described as a squeeze, or she and her partner got in a mess and both unguarded the wrong suit. She wasn't sure what ending she was aiming for, but it was worth a try.

With seven cards left, the lead was in dummy. The Tin Man had discarded both his hearts and Dorothy had thrown a small heart. Margaret had six tricks lined up in front of her, and this was the position she faced:



She led a heart from table and the Tin Man, with a flourish, threw his ♣A. Disappointed that her heart finesse wasn't going to work, she played the ace and cashed the king. The ♣Q ostentatiously appeared from the Tin Man's hand. Not really understanding what was going on, she led her ♣10. However Dorothy won this with the ♣J and the defence cashed the rest of the tricks for one down.

'Don't worry Clara,' Margaret said as she shifted her seat slightly further to the west, that will be a flat board as the queen of hearts is wrong.'

'I doubt it very much,' said the Tin Man pushing back his chair. 'After my partner's excellent lead, combined with my brilliant unblocking play I'm confident we'll gain a further 12 IMPs.'

'Oh, and what did I do wrong?' Margaret glared at him. 'Was this another hand to add to the enormity of my inadequacies?' She remembered with total clarity the phrase used last year by the Tin Man.

'I'm sure my partner didn't mean that.' Dorothy jumped in immediately before the Tin Man could draw breath, silencing him with a ferocious glare. You played it very well indeed, but we just happened to find the ideal defence. It's very hard luck for you.'

'Thank you, that's very nice of you to say so,' said Margaret with another dagger-throwing look at the Tin Man.

'That man is impossible,' she thought to herself. She had been aware that a disastrous 1,700 penalty she had conceded was to be the centre piece of the Tin Man's article the previous year. She had asked her cousin, Cissie,

who was a member of the Over The Rainbow Club, to let her see anything he wrote about the match. She had been surprised indeed by its anodyne nature when it had been published. 'It must have been that nice girl he plays with who stopped him,' she reflected.

Board sixteen offered no hope of a swing for either side. Clara and Margaret remained icily silent throughout and left the table as fast as decency allowed, muttering about 'checking the urn.'

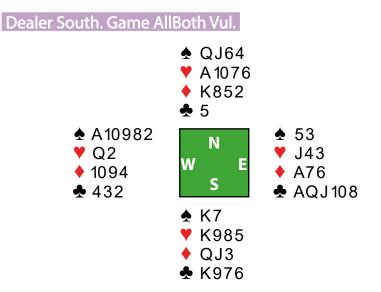
The half time scoring was a source of great pleasure to the Tin Man and rather surprising for the Lion. There were four double figure swings in their direction, which more than compensated for the loss of 9 IMPs through a dribble of unexplained undertricks and overtricks. The Lion had been expecting the usual interrogation about these, knowing well that all of them, and a few others that had turned out flat, had been misplays by the Scarecrow.

'I thought we would gain on boards three and eleven.' The Tin Man was in an exuberant mood. 'My superb play on three and Dorothy's reasonable line on eleven were unlikely to be replicated. And then on board fifteen, I'm willing to bet they didn't find the discards of their top clubs.'

'What discards?' queried the Lion. He was glad that the Tin Man was focusing on a hand where his partnership had done nothing untoward. 'My partner's, ...em, um, usual touch with the cards has eluded him so far, but he made game on that one. After the heart lead, he just entered dummy and played a club to the king. After that, he had nine tricks on top.' The Lion intoned a silent 'Thank goodness.'

Five minutes later the bemused Scarecrow muttered 'yes, that was very clever of you,' having listened to the Tin Man describing in detail the play at his table, without having understood a word of it. It seemed that he had deliberately thrown away winners but that Dorothy had come to the rescue, but he knew better than to say so. As the Tin Man paused for breath, Dorothy looked at the card. 'What happened on board seven? We gained 10 IMPs, so you must have made game, but there were four unavoidable losers in the normal heart contract and a notrump contract would be a disaster on any lead.

This was the hand:



'At our table,' Dorothy continued, 'South opened One Club, North responded One Heart, and South raised to the two-level. They made the obvious nine tricks, losing three aces and a trump.'

'I'm not sure that you want to hear about our bidding,' the Lion warned them. Suffice it to say that we got to Four Hearts.'

Dorothy accepted his warning but the Tin Man, impervious to the maintenance of good team morale, insisted that they tell him.

'Well, the Scarecrow has been playing weak no-trump with Hank, and forgot that we play strong. I used Stayman, and invited with Three Hearts over his Two Heart response.'

The Tin Man rolled his eyes 'You invited with that hand when your partner had opened a strong NT. As mad as each other!'

The Lion ploughed on to the end of the auction 'I think my partner may not have recognised this as an invitational situation. He did look perplexed, and then bid 3NT. I converted back to the heart game.'

The full auction had been:

West	North	East	South
Captain	Lion	Secretary	Scarecrow
_	_	_	1NT
Pass	2♣*	Pass	2♥
Pass	3♥	Pass	3NT
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

'Their captain was sitting West and started with the ace of spades, followed by another spade won by my partner's king.' The Lion was pleased to have got the auction out of the way and hurried on with the play. 'In with the king of spades, the Scarecrow played the queen of diamonds. This was won by East and he now switched to the ace of clubs followed by the ten of clubs. My partner played a low club and the six of hearts from dummy.'

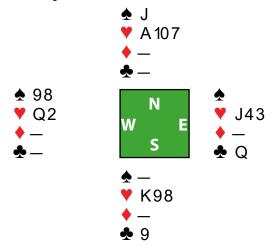
The Lion paused. 'We then had a two minute intermission until I reminded my partner it was his turn. He pulled out the jack of diamonds, and I had to tell him that he was in dummy. He was looking very confused, and then it dawned on me what was happening. He obviously thought he was playing in 3NT.

'I watched in horror as he played two more rounds of diamonds. Then I saw him sit back in relief; he clearly thought he had nine tricks for his contract. I thought he was going to claim, but thankfully, he decided to play on. His experience with making claims has not been good lately, or indeed ever.

'He called for the queen of spades, and East went into a huddle, eventually discarding the eight of clubs. My partner discarded the five of hearts, and called for the jack of spades.' The Lion paused. 'I then made my best play of the session.' He looked at Dorothy and the Tin Man. 'I realised it was best to leave him playing Three Notrump. I informed him he was in his own hand, and when he opened his mouth, rather rudely told him not to argue.'

The Lion had a broad smile on his face as he continued. 'He is aware that his record of knowing which hand he is in is about as good as his record for making claims, so he meekly continued with the king of clubs, discarding his master diamond from table. It had been at least 30 seconds since he had set it up: long enough for him to forget.'

This was now the position with the lead in the Scarecrow's own hand:



'I believe I timed this to perfection,' the Lion was preening himself. 'When he led his last club from hand I let him 'discard' the seven of hearts, corrected him again when he was about to pull a card from his own hand to the next trick, and waited till he had called for the jack of spades from dummy. I knew I had to act exactly at that moment. East was no fool and had his jack of hearts ready to play to give the Scarecrow a losing option.

"Sorry partner', I said to him, 'I had a trick wrong; you've lost three tricks in your FOUR HEARTS contract. He jumped, overruffed, and then took an agonising five minutes before eventually finessing the queen of hearts.'

'I think I have to say well played to both of you,' said Dorothy as the Tin Man looked on aghast. Three Notrump might not be makeable but Four Hearts certainly is if you play it as if you were in 3NT.'

'I did tell you he was lucky,' Dorothy whispered to the Tin Man as they returned to the table.

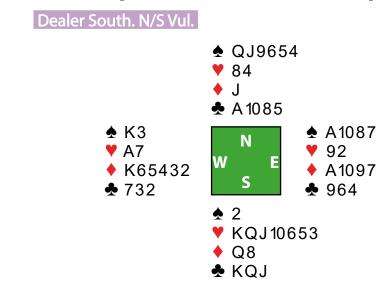
'Lucky! I can think of other adjectives, none of them polite! I suppose they won't concede with only 31 IMPs in it,' the Tin Man added morosely, as they took their seats for the second half.

'Would you mind sitting West?' the Lion asked the Scarecrow. 'There's a draught in that seat, and you know how that can affect me. You've got a much stronger physical constitution than I have.' The Lion mused to himself that he certainly couldn't say that about the Scarecrow's thinking processes.

By the time they reached the last two boards, the Lion was frowning.

These two ladies hadn't played anything like as badly as the Tin Man had told him they would. Indeed, they had hardly thrown an IMP. He certainly couldn't say that about his partner who had gone down in two solid games, as well as giving undertricks and overtricks like confetti. It was also possible that he might himself have been a little cautious on a couple of hands.

Board 31, the penultimate board of the match, was placed on the table:



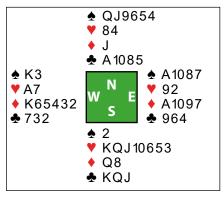
Margaret as South opened the auction with One Heart. The Scarecrow overcalled Two Diamonds. He had managed to work out that he had six diamonds and ten points. He didn't like to get too bothered about minor issues like suit quality. Clara showed her spade suit and the Lion thought hard before plucking up the courage to raise his partner's diamonds. Margaret closed the auction with a firm Four Hearts. Her manner made it clear that she did not want to hear anything further about her partner's spade suit.

The full auction had been:

West	North	East	South
Scarecrow	Clara	Lion	Margaret
_	_	_	1♥
2♦	2♠	3♦	4♥
All Pass			

The Scarecrow was looking out the window. He sorted his cards, putting

the trumps at the right hand side of his hand. He always preferred to do that as it helped him remember what the contract was. It was already dark outside, they had a long journey back, and he knew that he would have to sit in the back seat with the Tin Man as company. There were worse fates he was sure, but not many. However well he played he always seemed to do things that the Tin Man disapproved



of, and today he suspected that there might be more than usual. He shivered as he thought about explaining these to the Tin Man. Sometimes his poor memory for the hands was a blessing. As he mused, the ♥7 fell on the table face up.

Margaret looked at dummy and sighed. This contract should be easy, but unless she could ruff the second round of diamonds there would be four losers. She realised that if she drew the trumps, the defence, after winning the ace of trumps would be able to cash two diamonds and a spade.

She played her \$\infty\$8 hoping that one defender had both the ace and king of diamonds and no trumps left. It was not to be. The Scarecrow won the trick with his \$\infty\$K, and for want of anything better to do, played his ace of trumps and then another diamond. The Lion won this and quickly cashed his \$\infty\$A to defeat the contract.

The Lion breathed a small sigh of relief. At least this deal had some potential for them. The rally, however, ground to a halt as soon as it had started with the final board presenting no real chance of a swing.

The scoring up hadn't taken long. The Lion's fears had been justified. They had only won the match by 7 IMPs. If it hadn't been for the 10 IMPs they had won on the second last board, it would have been a disaster.

As it was, the Tin Man was clearly out of sorts. This had not been helped by the Poppyfield team showing them to the door as soon as the scoring was over. 'We need to lock up,' said the Chairman, desperately wanting to see the back of the Tin Man.

'Yes,' Clara added to Dorothy, I hope you get on well in the next round. I don't think a friendly match has been arranged this year, so we might not see you for a while.'

'And I hope your partner won't be writing any articles,' added Margaret. Before long they were back in the Lion's impressive vehicle, heading back to Munchkinland at a sedate rate. The Scarecrow's apprehension proved fully justified.

'Will this car journey ever end?' he wondered. The Tin Man insisted on looking over every board of the second half to see how they could have lost so many IMPs. By the time he came to board 31, his mood could only be described as exceedingly severe, with the atmosphere in the car frosty in the extreme.

'So they saved us by failing to make a simple Four Hearts.' The Tin Man looked at the hand record. 'It's a trivial make. If the defence pull trumps, one of your losing diamonds goes on the clubs. If they don't you can ruff a diamond.'

'Really,' piped up the Lion, 'how much would you be prepared to bet on that?'

'Stop being silly,' the Tin Man said dismissively, 'any of us,' he stared pointedly at the Scarecrow, 'would have no trouble.'

'How much?' said the Lion.

'OK, if you want to throw your money away, we'll have a glass of wine on it at tomorrow evening's pairs. That is, of course, if we get home in time! So tell me then, how you propose to beat it?'

'So tell me,' the Lion retorted, 'how you would make it on the lead of the seven of hearts'

The Tin Man laughed and looked at the hand record again. The laughter stopped. He was silent for five minutes.

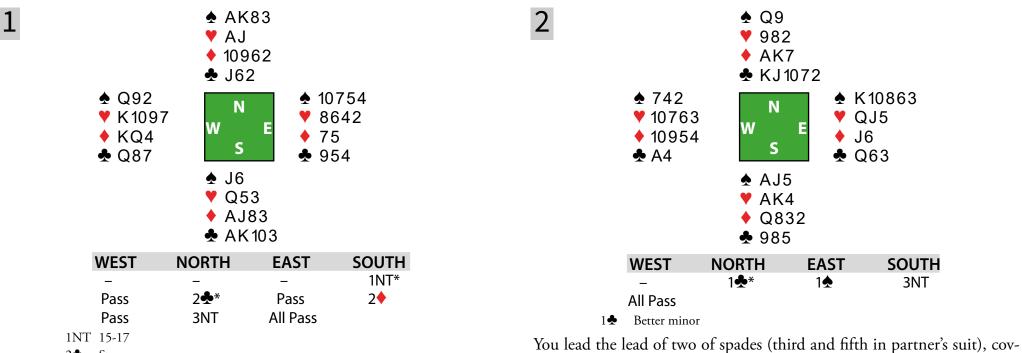
'You seem to have a point.' He eventually broke the silence. 'But who, apart from Garozzo, would find such a lead?'

'Perhaps you're sitting beside Garozzo then,' the Lion chuckled, and I'll have a large glass of merlot, thank you. Oh, and while you're at it, I think you could buy the same for my partner.'

'I think that's a very fair solution,' said Dorothy, 'but a white wine for me please.' She looked across. The Lion had a smile from ear to ear. And the speedometer showed 55 miles per hour.

Answers to "Defend With Julian Pottage"

See page 25



2♣ Stayman ered by the nine, ten and jack. Declarer now leads the nine of clubs. What You lead the ten of hearts, partner playing the six under the jack. After the is your plan ten of diamonds runs to your queen, what are your plans?

Despite the 28 HCP minimum their way, you might still beat the contract. Partner must hold the ten of spades (to protect your queen from a finesse) and another diamond (so that your opponent makes at most two diamond tricks). Fortunately, you know that partner begun with four hearts from the six signal at trick one and South's denial of a four-card major. This means that declarer will have no time to set up a long card in one of the black suits as well as the diamond suit.

With your strength in the black suits, you would like partner to win the fourth round of hearts. You thus lead the nine of hearts next. After getting in again, you cash the king of hearts and lead the seven to partner's eight. You plan to discard a spade and to do so smoothly on the fourth round of diamonds. This plan succeeds by force if South's shape is 2-3-4-4; it gives you a chance if declarer is 3-3-4-3 and has fudged a point (no spade jack) or fails to read the squeeze ending correctly.

You have not had a lot of time to think about what to do.

If partner has the ace of spades and the queen of clubs, it does not much matter which of you gets in first. Your partner will be able to duck the second round of spades, forcing out declarer's stopper, leaving the suit ready to run whichever one of you gains the lead.

Suppose declarer has the ace of spades but not the queen of clubs. In this case, you must win the first club because your opponent would be able to hold up the ace of spades if partner's entry went first.

Having taken the ace of clubs, you must continue spades. Moreover, in case declarer reads the club position and decides to try for an endplay, it is vital that you lead the four rather than the seven. Removing East's exit cards in the red suits will mean cashing all the red tops, which will set up winners for you to cash if you can get in with the seven of spades.



Vu-Bridge - Play Like a Champion

Dynamic Doubletons by Ben Norton (UK)

David Bird has previously written.

"A good way to improve your opening leads is with the Vu-Bridge opening leads quizzes. You are given 5 problems, each with the bidding. You choose your lead and then look to see what the writer thinks is the best lead. He will give his reasoning for the choice.

"Of course, there is some luck involved (as always in bridge). Do not think I got that one wrong.' Maybe at the table your choice would have been a winner. The idea is to improve the number of times that you hit the best lead. Often the opponents' bidding will help you.

"Terence Reese used to say 'Blind leads are for deaf players'. The more you practice, the 'luckier' you will be!"

Doubleton leads against suit contracts are like Marmite for most players. Some love them, reminiscing of the many times they were able to score a third-round ruff as the setting trick, while others hate them, aggrieved by the prospect of opening up a key suit for declarer and exposing partner's holding. I take the middle ground. For now let's focus on when a doubleton lead is attractive.

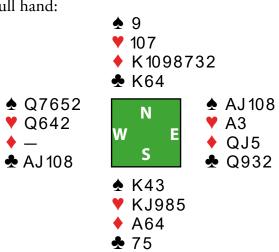
In many ways the criteria for a doubleton lead is similar to that of a singleton, the main difference being that a singleton rates to be much more effective, for if you can get partner in you will score a ruff, but when the lead is from a doubleton you need not only to find partner with a good holding and entry, but for your ruff to stand up. However, whereas a singleton lead is an all-out offensive move, a doubleton could be a good passive option, akin to hedging your bets. I recently picked up this hand:

★ K43♥ KJ985◆ A64◆ 75

I was sitting South at Love All. East dealt and opened a short club and I overcalled 1♥. West doubled to show four or more spades (part of the modern craze, transfers over 1♣) and partner volunteered 2♦. My RHO raised to 2♠, promising four, and when I raised to 3♦ West made a nebulous game try of $3 \checkmark$, his partner accepting and bidding $4 \spadesuit$.

What would you have led in my position? To my mind leading from either red suit is fraught with danger, and since the opponents have limped into game via an invitational sequence, one should strive to defend passively unless there is an immediate danger, e.g. a long suit in dummy, in order to give nothing away. A trump is hardly appealing either. Leading from Kxx will only serve to give away a tempo or perhaps even pick the whole suit up when partner has J(x).

In my opinion this is the perfect hand for a doubleton lead. East doesn't have to hold real clubs on the auction, so it's fairly likely that you'll be able to ruff the third round in peace. What's more you can hope to have control of trumps, for the A rates to be on your right, with the opening bidder, such that declarer won't be able to draw all of your trumps before letting you in. In this way if partner has the A he can hold it up to good effect, maintaining the defensive communications. Even the K in partner's hand might be enough, so long as dummy has the Ace, because even if declarer plays low from dummy you can imagine under-leading your A to get partner in and receive a ruff. The best part is, even if partner doesn't have enough in the club suit to give you a ruff, a club may still be the safest lead. The full hand:



On my \$\righthfamble 7\$ lead declarer had a problem. Should he go up with the Ace, catering for my lead being a singleton, or is it best to play low, cutting the communications when I've led from a doubleton? Declarer opted to win the Ace and play Ace and another trump, thereby making his game whenever spades had split evenly or the lead was a singleton. You can hardly blame him for that. Essentially he had to decide whether I had this shape or a 3.5.4.1 pattern, which would have made for a sounder raise to 3\$\rightharpoonup\$ than the hand I actually held.

Altogether, the conditions that make a doubleton lead appealing are:

Control of trumps (e.g. Ax, Kxx or maybe Qxxx)

Visualising an entry to partner's hand, either in the doubleton suit or an outside suit

Your doubleton suit hasn't been bid naturally, for then your third-round ruff is more likely to stand up

Your holding is headed by a fairly big spot-card, primarily the 6, 7, 8 or 9, making it easier for partner to read

The opponents haven't announced a strong side-suit, which would make it necessary to take your tricks quickly

Holding good trumps, e.g. K10x, a trump promotion may be on the cards When looking for a safe lead, a small doubleton is often a good option

You are now invited to take an interactive quiz through Vu-Bridge, which poses five interesting problems based on doubleton leads. You can either click on the link below or use your smartphone with this flash-code.

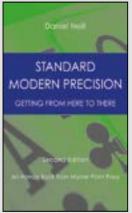
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BIDDING BOOKS FROM MASTER POINT PRESS

THE BRIDGE PUBLISHER



STANDARD MODERN PRECISION: SECOND EDITION

Daniel Neill

Over the last 20 years a consensus bidding system among American national champions has been chosen and is now the *lingua franca* for hundreds among the pro circuit, top junior players and strong tournament players. This book will introduce you to the system, called Standard Modern Precision, with lots of examples, quizzes and real-life hands bid by actual world champions.

PLAYING 2/1: THE REST OF THE STORY

Paul Thurston

Paul Thurston's 25 Steps to Learning 2/1 was an instant bestseller, winning the 2003 American Bridge Teachers' Association Book of the Year award. In a tantalizing postscript to that book, he promised a sequel, one that would cover 'the rest of the story' for those who wanted to add modern sophistication to their 2/1 bidding. Here at last he delivers, and the long wait has been worth it. The book describes an understandable and playable version of today's most popular system, something that has been missing from the literature until now.



ALSO FROM PAUL THURSTON

25 Steps to Learning 2/1

If you know how to bid using Standard American, you can make the move to the modern Two-over-One system using the 25 easy Steps contained in this book.

AVAILABLE FROM FROM A BRIDGE RETAILER NEAR YOU

A)

B)

C)

D)

E)

F)

G)

Bridge with Larry Cohen – 13 or 20?

www.larryco.com

The brilliant American player, writer and teacher presents a series of articles aimed at intermediate players.

Usually, it is lack of concentration, not lack of knowledge, but there is an auction type that seems to cause trouble.

In my classes (usually on play of the hand), I innocently put in deals such as this:

- **★** KQ96
- **7**54
- ♦ K7654
- ♣ A2
- A 140074
- **♠** AJ 10874
- **♥** AK
- ♦ 1092
- **♣**J3

North deals and the auction should be routine.

North opens 1♦.

South responds $1 \triangleq$ (though some students get mixed up and think this is a 2/1 GF auction and respond $2 \triangleq$ – which of course, is a mistake. $2 \triangleq$ is a jump-shift. Not a 2/1 bid. $1 \triangleq$ is normal, showing 6+ HCP).

North has a routine rebid. He should raise spades. He has a minimum opening bid, so should raise, of course, to only $2\clubsuit$. Yet, the rebid is often something else. Some raise to $3\spadesuit$ thinking it shows a limit raise. No! A raise to $3\spadesuit$ shows a strong hand—in the 16-17 invitational to game range. Others do even worse, raising all the way to $4\spadesuit$! This shows 20 or so points. Remember that responder might have only 6 points.

So, I decided to write a little quiz. In the questions below, your job is to answer if the last bid shown is more likely to be 13 points (approximately) or 20 points (approximately).

West	North	East	South
1♥	Pass	2♥	Pass
4			

West North East South

1♣ Pass 1♥ Pass

4♥

West	North	East	South
1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass
1♠	Pass	4♠	

West	North	East	South
1♦	1♥	Double	Pass
1♠	Pass	4♠	

West	North	East	South
1♣	1♦	Double	Pass
4 ♥			

West	North	East	South
1♠	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♦	Pass	4♠	

West	North	East	South
1♦	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♦	Pass	2♠	Pass
4♠			

Page 35

H)

West	North	East	South
1♣	Pass	1♥	Pass
2			

Answers:

- A) 20. The response of $2 \checkmark$ could have been made with not much (like 6 or 7), so the jump to game is very strong.
- B) 20. East's 1♥ didn't promise more than 6 points, so West must have about 20 to insist on game.
- C) 13. East's partner opened, so East is just insisting on game with his approximate 13. With 20, he would have done something stronger to explore slam.
- D) 13. Same explanation as C.
- E) 20. Same explanation as B (the negative double on the one-level could have been made with only 6 points).
- F) 13. When already in a game force, a jump to game is a minimum in context. Contrast this to A (where you weren't forced to game)
- G) 13. Same explanation as F. Go slower with extras to explore slam (when already forced to game).
- H) 13. An easy one to end.

While we are talking about numbers, how about this?

The Rule of 7

Rules? Schmules. There are too many "Rules of #x" out there. I prefer the Rule of Thinking.

If you must know, the "Rule of 7" was designed to tell declarer in no-trump how many times to hold up. For example, say he gets a heart lead and this is the heart suit:



How many times should declarer hold up?

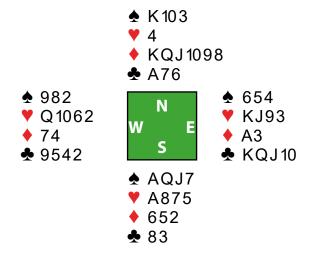
The Rule says to total up your hearts (you have 5) and subtract from 7.

That leaves "2" which is how many times you should hold up.

Now, let's forget that rule (I never use it) and try some good old logic instead.

We will look at 4 deals and in each case we will have a heart holding of ♥A875 opposite ♥4.

Let's start with this one:



Against 3NT, West leads the ♥2 (fourth best).

What does the Rule of 7 say?

What does the Rule of Thinking say?

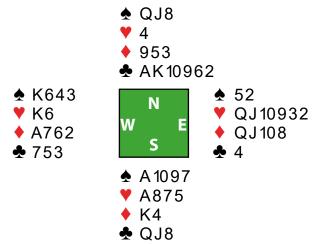
The Rule of 7 says to hold up twice (7-5).

The Rule of Thinking says to win the first heart and don't hold up.

From the lead of the deuce (4th best), declarer knows the hearts are splitting 4-4. Not only does that make a hold-up play irrelevant, but it gives the defence a chance to switch to a devastating club and defeat the contract. Winning the first heart produces 9 tricks.

On this deal the Winning Play was to hold up 0 times.

Letry another:



This time East opens 2♥ and South reaches 3NT on the ♥K lead.

What does the Rule of 7 say?

What does the Rule of Thinking say?

The Rule of 7 says to hold up twice (7-5).

In that case you would duck the ♥K and duck the next heart.

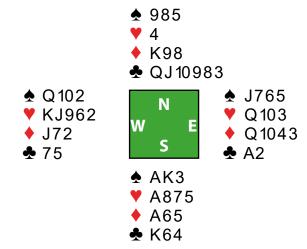
East would then shift to the ♦Q for down two.

The Rule of Thinking says that hearts are 6-2 (East opened 2).

Win the second heart (you know they are 6-2) and cross to dummy in clubs for the spade finesse. If the ♠K is wrong and East has the ♠A, it's not your day.

On this deal the Winning Play was to Hold up 1 time.

Let's try another:



Against 3NT, West leads the ♥6, fourth best. East plays the ♥Q.

What does the Rule of 7 say?

What does the Rule of Thinking say?

The Rule of 7 says to hold up 2 times (7-5).

This time the Rule of Thinking yields the same result.

You will have to knock out the ♣A.

There is no other suit you fear a shift to.

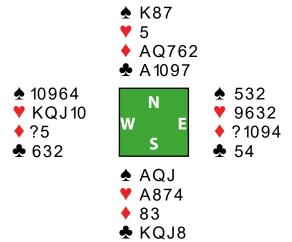
If hearts are 4-4, nothing will matter.

If hearts are 6-2, holding up once would suffice, but you have no way to know if they are 6-2.

Holding up twice (winning the third round) caters to this very common 5-3 split. East's ♥Q wins the first trick. You let the ♥10 hold the second trick. On the third heart, there is no benefit to holding up again (if they are 4-4, it won't matter). So, you win the third round of hearts and play clubs. If one defender has 5 hearts and the ♣A, there is nothing you can do about it. Here, the holdup play (twice) leads to 10 tricks.

On this deal the Winning Play was to Hold up 2 times.

One final try:



Playing matchpoints, you are in 3NT with the ♥K lead.

What does the Rule of 7 say?

What does the Rule of Thinking say?

The Rule of 7 says to hold up twice (7-5).

The Rule of Thinking says to hold up 3 times!

You have 9 top tricks. The only issue is how to try for an overtrick.

The obvious source for an overtrick is the diamond finesse – but is it safe to take it?

If you win an early heart and run your winners and then take the diamond finesse, the defence might set you by cashing too many hearts. You don't know they are 4-4. They could be 5-3.

If you win an early heart, you won't know the heart split. Even winning the third heart is not safe. What if West started with ♥KQJ and East with ▼109632? Then when you take the diamond finesse, you risk defeat.

Why not hold up hearts (no shift will hurt) until the 4th round? Once you see they are 4-4, you can take the diamond finesse in complete safety.

On this deal the Winning Play was to hold up 3 times!

There you have it. I always prefer thinking and logic to "rules." The Rule of 7 told you the wrong information nearly every time. With it, you would have woodenly held up twice on each deal. In Real Life, the correct play was to hold up 0,1,2 and 3 times. This should put the Rule of 7 into "Rule Heaven." Maybe the "Rule Graveyard" is a better phrase.



The **World Bridge Series** is an incredibly exciting and challenging tournament, with many different Championships available to participants.

It is made even more interesting due to the fact that all the events are transnational, so that players from across the world, from different National Bridge Organisations, can come together as team-mates or in partnership to compete.

The venue is the magnificent Marriott Orlando World, where we have obtained special rates for all participants – please see below for how to make your reservation.

There are several restaurants and lounges within the complex, and excellent amenities that we feel sure you will enjoy ... and if you are bringing the family there is even a shuttle service to Walt Disney World®! Orlando is, of course, a very well-known and popular resort, with plenty to see and do in the area. It's not all Disney – there is the Epcot Centre and Universal Studio as well as other museums and galleries. For the golfers among you there are golf courses, and there are several parks and lakes to enjoy.

The Opening Ceremony will be held on Friday 21st September.

The following is the outline schedule of the main events. A full detailed schedule will be published here in due course.

The first events are the **Open**, **Women's** and **Senior** Teams Championships: the Rosenblum Open Teams will start on Saturday 22nd September, the McConnell Women's Teams and the Rand Senior Teams are expected to start a day later.

The Teams Championships are followed by the **Open**, **Women's**, and **Senior** Pairs – the Open Pairs starts on Tuesday 25th September, the Women's and Seniors on Wednesday 26th September. Players eliminated from the KO stages of the Teams, up to and including the semi-finals, will be able to drop into the Pairs events, following the regulations that will be specified in the Supplemental Conditions of Contest for the Championships which will be published here in due course.

The Mixed Teams will start on Tuesday 2nd October and the Mixed Pairs on Thursday 4th October.

Junior Players will also be able to enter the **Youth Triathlon** event starting on Monday 1st October. In addition there will be the **Joan Gerard Cup** – a pairs event – starting on Sunday 30th September, a **Seniors Triathlon** starting on Tuesday 2nd October, as well as a **Pairs Short Track** starting on Friday 5th October and an IMP Pairs starting in the afternoon of Friday 5th October.

Alongside all these tournaments there will be a number of other WBF events of one or two days (pairs or swiss) available for those wishing to participate in shorter tournaments. Details of these will be announced on the website in due course.

Players in good standing with their National Bridge Organisations are eligible to compete in any of these events, providing of course they meet all the WBF Eligibility requirements (including those relating to the ages of Senior or Youth players).

Registration must be made through the WBF Website, and the pages for this will be available from April 2018.

We look forward to welcoming many players to Orlando where we are sure it will be an enormously successful Championship!

Stay tuned on championships.worldbridge.org/orlandows18 for further information, including accomodation details

From The Archives

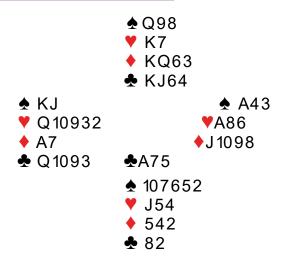
by Brian Senior

In addition to his many roles in the bridge world Brian Senior is the editor of the World Bridge Championships Book

Having worked on Daily Bulletins for around 25 years and started writing magazine articles at least a decade before that, even allowing for all that has been lost over the years for one reason or another I have a substantial archive of old articles to mine for interesting deals. One theme which recurs over and over again is the benefit of declarer simply running winners to see if pressure can be put on the defenders.

This first deal comes from a 2000 Camrose Trophy match between England and Northern Ireland.

Board 29. Dealer North. All Vul.



In one room, Glyn Liggins, for England, opened the North hand with 1♦. This went round to David Greenwood who overcalled 1♥ on the West cards. Remarkably, he was left to play there. After a low diamond lead, he emerged with eleven tricks for +200.

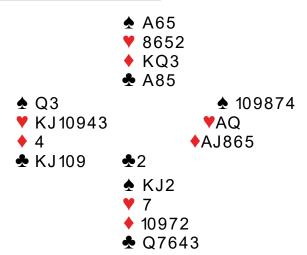
For N. Ireland, Ian Lindsay opened the North hand with 1NT(14-16) and Rex Anderson transferred to spades. When Rob Cliffe doubled the 2♥ transfer, Nick Sandqvist took him seriously enough to leap to 4♥ as East.

The contract is much easier when played by West as North is endplayed at trick one. Against Sandqvist, South was able to lead a threatening doubleton club to the nine and jack. If declarer wins this there is no way to avoid the club ruff as the cards lie and Sandqvist started well by ducking. Back came a low club and he allowed his seven to hold. Sandqvist crossed to the king of spades to lead the queen of hearts to the king and ace. Anderson won the next heart and switched to a diamond, which Sandqvist had to win as the cards lie to avoid the club ruff. He did so but then tried to cash the ace of clubs, playing for the remaining heart to be with the long clubs, in which case he would be able to ruff a club in hand. When Anderson ruffed the club, the contract was one down; – 100 and 7 IMPs to Northern Ireland.

See what happens if declarer draws the last trump after winning the ace of diamonds. North is squeezed and has to throw a spade as if he pitches a diamond declarer can give up a diamond then ruff out the remaining diamond honour, while a club discard is equally disastrous as the king will then fall under the ace. But what does North discard when declarer now cashes a fourth heart? He cannot throw his last spade as that turns the spade jack into declarer's tenth trick, and still cannot pitch a club. So he throws a diamond but now declarer discards a spade from hand and just gives North a diamond, wins the return and ruffs a diamond, bringing down the remaining honour and establishing a tenth trick. There is no escape.

This next one also comes from early 2000, when the 1999 World Championships were held over by a few months so that they could be held in Bermuda for the fiftieth anniversary of the first Bermuda Bowl. The deal comes from the first match in the Venice Cup round robin stage. This was the last international tournament at which a combined Great Britain team took part, prior to the devolution which has seen England, Scotland and Wales play as separate nations since then.

Board 6. Dealer East. E/W Vul.



In the match between Great Britain and China, the Chinese West declared $4\heartsuit$, against which Nicola Smith led the king of diamonds to dummy's ace. Declarer led a club to the jack and ace and Smith switched to a trump. Declarer won in dummy, ruffed a diamond, then ruffed a club. After ruffing another diamond back to hand, establishing the jack, she drew the remaining trumps and cashed the king of clubs. There were two spades and a club to lose now for -100.

West	North	East	South
Dhondy	McGowan		
_	_	1♠	Pass
2♥	Pass	2♠	Pass
3♥	Pass	4♥	All Pass

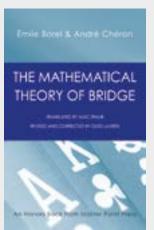
The play followed exactly the same lines in the other room except that Heather Dhondy, for England, did not cash the king of clubs after drawing trumps. She was down to ♣K10 and ♠Q3 and South had been squeezed out of a spade. South actually bared the ♠K to keep three clubs, but it didn't matter. Dhondy exited with a spade and South had to win and lead a club into the tenace (had she kept two spades, the club lead would merely have been delayed by one trick, and of course, dummy was full of spade and diamond winners if North overtook the ♠J to get South off play). That was +620 and 12 IMPs to Great Britain.

On this second deal, declarer did not actually have any extra winners to cash, simply drawing trumps enacted the squeeze, but the principle was the same as on the previous deal – run a few winners and sometimes good things may happen.

It occurred to me that the same position would have been reached had South been 4-1-4-4 with the same high cards and, once again, declarer could succeed by playing for the endplay. But suppose that South discards down to the bare queen of clubs to keep three spades, even though it looks as though declarer has the ♣10 for the play of low to the jack then ruff the nine. Might not declarer try for the endplay once again, not imagining that South would bare the queen of clubs so playing for her to be 3-1-4-5? Now the defence will come to three spade tricks and the contract is down one.

If you are interested in obtaining a copy of the World Bridge Championships Book then Brian can be contacted at bsenior@hotmail.com

MASTER POINT PRESS the bridge publisher



THE MATHEMATICAL THEORY OF BRIDGE

Émile Borel and André Chéron

Translated by Alec Traub Revised and Corrected by Giles Laurén

134 Probability Tables, Their Uses, Simple Formulas, Applications & 4000 Probabilities.

Originally published in 1940 this classic work on mathematics and probability as applied to Bridge first appeared in English translation in 1974, but has been unavailable for many years. This new edition corrects numerical errors found in earlier texts; it revises the previous English translation where needed and corrects a number of textual and typographical errors.

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Funbridge is a game available on smartphones, tablets and computers allowing you to play duplicate bridge anywhere, anytime.

As you know, bridge is played with four people sitting at a table and it may be hard to find four players... With Funbridge, this problem is a thing of the past! Indeed, you don't have to wait until your partner or opponents are available to play a deal with you because on Funbridge, they are managed by the artificial intelligence. Yes, you partner a robot and play against robots that are available 24/7!

Robots offer many advantages. Among them, you can pause and resume the game later. You are the game master! Moreover, and this is precisely the very essence of Funbridge, you are judged fairly against thousands of other players of the app who play the same deals as you.

As the app is easy to navigate around and well-designed, you will easily and quickly discover the various game modes offered that are split into three main themes: tournaments, practice and challenges between players. Each of them comes along with sub-game modes that are equally attractive. You won't get bored!

Funbridge will be the perfect ally if you want to take up bridge or just improve your skills. Indeed, you will make rapid progress thanks to the practice modes available including "exclusive tournaments", i.e. customised tournaments created by other community players providing opportunities for exchanges about the deals played. You will thus be able to ask your questions to advanced

players and to increase your knowledge.

The app is full of very useful small features: watch a replay of other players' moves (bidding and card play), replay deals to score better, get the meaning of the bids played by the other players sitting at the table, ask the computer for advice, get an analysis of the way you play by the artificial intelligence at the end of a deal played... You will definitely learn from the app!

When you will feel ready, you will be able to pit yourself against thousands of other players by playing tournaments on Funbridge: tournaments of the day, series tournaments and Team Championships. As you can understand, this is the competition part of the app. In these different game modes, you will join rankings and see your rank change live based on your results.

You will also find "federation tournaments" in that section of the app. Several national bridge federations including the English Bridge Union and the French Bridge Federation have placed their trust in Funbridge to hold official tournaments awarding federation points allowing their members to increase their national rank directly via the app. You can't find your federation on Funbridge yet? Be patient, it is only a matter of time! Meanwhile, you can take part in tournaments of other federations since they are open to all.

Finally, you will enjoy comparing yourself with the other community players thanks to short individual tournaments called "challenges". The aim is to get the best scores on all the deals of

the tournament to beat your opponent. May the best win!

Note also that the developers of the app are surrounded by experts... Indeed, Jérôme Rombaut, 2017 Vice World Bridge Champion with France, is by their side. He is in charge of the artificial intelligence of the app. His objective? Make it behave like a human player.

Funbridge is the perfect bridge app. It suits all players with its comprehensive and various game modes. Its weak point? It is highly addictive! We strongly encourage you to try it out if you have not already done so, especially since you get 100 free deals when you sign up. Once you have used them up, you receive 10 free deals every week or you can opt for one of our subscription offers with unlimited deals (from €9 per month).

A few figures

8 bidding systems (ACOL, SAYC, French 5-card major, 2/1, Polish Club, Nordic system, NBB Standard, Forum D)

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Kit's Corner

by World Champion Kit Woolsey

World Champion Kit Woolsey provides insight into the mind of an expert bridge player through in-depth analysis of hands he played at recent Major Tournaments. Kit provides you with the opportunity to play along with him and decide what you would do at each critical juncture.

Death Distribution

In a semi-finals match in the Senior trials for USA2, you must decide whether or not to compete on a good hand with no clear action.

As West, you hold:

Dealer East. E/W Vul.

♠ KQ5

Y Q1098

♣ AQ63

West	North	East	South
_	_	Pass	1♠
?			

Your call?

If you choose to act, the possibilities are 1NT or double. Both of these actions have serious deficiencies.

Your spade stopper is fine for a 1NT overcall. But you are a little light. A 1NT overcall is perhaps the most dangerous overcall to make, as it can get doubled on sheer power. You are vulnerable, and if you are doubled you don't have a place to run.

A takeout double brings hearts into the picture, but has the disadvantage of having only a doubleton diamond. With some shapes partner will be forced to respond 2♦ on a four-card suit, and that will not be happy since you clearly wouldn't be able to bid anything. While you are less likely to get doubled than if you overcall 1NT, it could still happen. Even if you aren't doubled, 100 a trick can be expensive.

One final factor in favour of passing is that partner is a passed hand. Since you open almost all 11-counts, it is unlikely that you will get blown out of a vulnerable game if you pass. If partner weren't a passed hand, then passing would be more dangerous.

All things considered, it looks prudent to pass.

You pass. The bidding continues:

West	North	East	South
_	_	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♠	Pass	Pass
?			

If you choose to balance, your calls mean as follows:

Double: Either hearts and clubs, 3-suited, or red suits with longer diamonds. After you double, if partner bids 2NT that would ask if one of your suits is diamonds. You would bid 3 if it is, 3 if you have hearts and clubs.

2NT: Diamonds and another suit. If diamonds and hearts, hearts are at least as long. If partner bids $3\clubsuit$ you will correct to $3\spadesuit$.

Your call?

Unlike your previous turn, you have the tools to avoid playing a disastrous 4-2 diamond fit, since if you double and partner has 4 diamonds he will bid 2NT and you will bid 3\$\Displaystructure to let him know you have only hearts and clubs. In addition, from the enemy auction you know that partner has at most two spades, which increases the chances of finding a decent fit in one of your suits. On the downside you will be committed to the three-level, which might be too high.

Let's see what the Law of Total Tricks tells us. Assume partner has a doubleton spade. That means that we will have at least an 8-card fit somewhere unless he has the death distribution of 2-3-5-3, in which case we have no 8-card fit. If both sides have 8-card fits, the trump total is 16. Bidding at the 3-level over 2♠ contracts for 17 total tricks, 1 more than the trump total. This is okay, since one of the contracts is likely to make. If partner has a 5-card heart or club suit or a singleton spade the trump total will be 17, in which

case it is almost certainly correct to compete. If he has the death 2-3-5-3 the trump total will be 15, in which case competing is almost certainly wrong.

It looks like a close call. A major factor arguing against competing is your spade holding. That queen of spades is a likely trick on defence, but may be worthless on offense. If that card were a small spade, competing would be much more attractive whether or not there were any more high cards outside of spades. On the actual hand, the percentage action is probably to sell out. You pass, ending the auction.

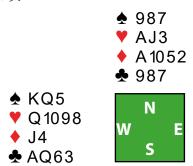
West	North	East	South
_	_	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♠	All Pass	

Your lead?

Your agreements from interior sequences are that you lead the second highest of the interior sequence (which is the third highest card in the suit) from lengths of 3, 4, or 6. With a 5 or 7-card suit, if you choose to lead an honour you lead top of the interior sequence.

Nothing is attractive. A heart lead looks like the least of evils. It definitely won't cost a trick if partner has the king or the jack, and might not cost in other variations. In addition, it might establish a trick or two for the defence. Black suit leads are clearly more dangerous, and a diamond lead has plenty of risk.

You lead the ♥9.

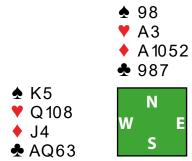


The jack is played from dummy. Partner plays the ♥7 and declarer the ♥5. Your agreements are suit-preference at trick one. 2, 3, 4 (by priority) are defined as suit-preference low. 10, 9, 8 (by priority) are defined as suit-preference high. 6, 5, 7 (by priority) are defined as encouraging. If third hand

doesn't have the spot card he would like to signal with, he gives what he judges is the least damaging signal.

At trick 2, declarer leads the $\triangle 7$ off dummy, Partner plays the $\triangle 4$, declarer the $\triangle 2$, and you win the queen.

What do you lead now?

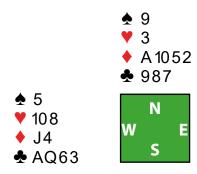


You know partner couldn't signal suit-preference high, since you are looking at the ♥1098. He signalled middle, encouraging, but you know he doesn't really mean that. He almost certainly has a low spot. Apparently he is doing his best to make it clear to you not to play him for anything in clubs.

For now, it has to be right to punt safely with another heart and let declarer play the hand. You clearly can't play a black suit, and there isn't a rush to touch diamonds.

You lead the queen of hearts. Declarer wins the ace in dummy. Partner plays the \checkmark 6 (standard current count) and declarer the \checkmark 2. Declarer leads a spade from dummy, partner plays the \spadesuit 10, declarer the jack, and you win the king.

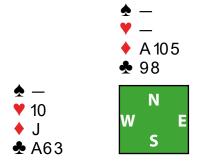
What next?



It looks natural to simply exit with another heart. But this is not right.

Declarer could be 5-4 in the majors, and if that is the case it is essential to return a trump so declarer doesn't ruff the fourth round of hearts in dummy. Declarer probably would be misplaying the hand if this is the case, but you have nothing to lose by playing a trump. In addition, leading the third round of trumps takes an entry out of dummy, cutting down on declarer's options.

You choose to lead the ♥8. Partner follows with the ♥4, and declarer wins the king. Declarer leads a trump to dummy, partner discarding the ◆3. Now declarer leads a small diamond from dummy. Partner wins the queen, and leads the ◆2. Declarer plays the ◆5, and you win the queen. What do you do now?

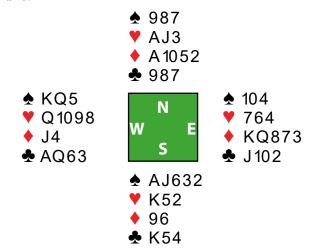


The count of the hand is clear. Declarer presumably started with 2 diamonds and 3 clubs. He could in theory have started with 3 diamonds and 2 clubs, but if that is the case you will always get another diamond trick and your ace of clubs.

You can't tell exactly what the club position is. However, the simplest defence is to return a diamond. This takes care of dummy, and declarer will have to make his club play and whatever happens happens. Returning a heart might not be safe. This leaves the ace of diamonds as a link to dummy, and partner might be under some pressure if the last trump is cashed.

You choose to play a heart. Declarer ruffs, crosses to the ace of diamonds, and leads a club to jack, king, and ace. Partner started with J10x of clubs, so the contract is down 1.

The full hand is:



It may appear that declarer could have made had he cashed his last trump. East would have had to keep the diamond guard, so would have to come down to stiff club honour which would be squashed by declarer's king. However, dummy would also have to come down to a stiff club in order to retain the diamond threat, and in the end West's \$\ddot\6\$ 6 would have beaten declarer's \$\ddot\5\$. Of course had West properly led a diamond, none of these potential complications would have occurred.

Should East have returned the ♣2 or the jack of clubs?

East can see that declarer has 7 tricks, so he needs West to have ♣AQ to defeat the contract. However, he could see that if that is the case a small club return should suffice provided West leads back a diamond. If declarer started with ♣KQx the small club return would save an overtrick.

It is to be noted that East did, in fact, have the death distribution, so had West reopened the partnership would have arrived at an uncomfortable 3-level contract in a 7-card fit and almost certainly would have gone down at least one trick.

At the other table West chose to make an immediate takeout double of the $1 \spadesuit$ opening bid. North bid $2 \heartsuit$ showing a good spade raise. East temporarily kept silent, but when $2 \spadesuit$ got passed back to him he reasonably competed with $3 \diamondsuit$ expecting more trump support. The defence failed to get hearts going in time, so declarer escaped for down 1.

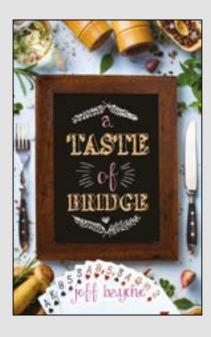
The reason we play these leads from interior sequences is so declarer won't

always know what is going on. Pairs who play coded leads where jack denies and 10 or 9 show zero or 2 higher give away the position to declarer if he has a problem in the suit. Our approach doesn't necessarily give the position away to declarer, while third seat can almost always figure out what is going on. It is easy to remember, as we are leading the same card (low from 3 and third best from even) that we would be leading if we were making our normal count lead.

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THE BRIDGE PUBLISHER



A TASTE OF BRIDGE

BY JEFF BAYONE

Jeff Bayone's Honors Bridge Club in New York is the largest in North America, perhaps in the world. This book is based on their beginners' course, a series of six lessons that have started thousands of people on the road to enjoying the world's most popular card game. This book is intended to give the reader a taste of bridge, and whet the appetite for more.

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Believe me, you won't be disappointed if you're learning to play bridge and this book is your first exposure to the game. Bayone tells us in his introduction that the course outlined in this book is the one taught at Honors Bridge Club in New York City. And it's easy to see why players flock to his club. Each chapter is short, concise, and focused. Bayone begins not with bidding, but with the play of the cards. This is a sensible approach. Players want to pick up the cards, move them about, and see patterns develop. If someone in your circle wants to learn to play bridge, this is the perfect book for them to learn from.

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— Dee Berry, American Bridge Teachers' Association Quarterly



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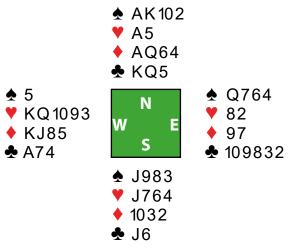
The Surprising Winners

by David Bird

o celebrate the sixth centenary of the foundation of St Hilda's Convent, a 12-table mixed pairs event was in progress. Twelve monks and novices from St Titus had participated in a random draw with twelve nuns and novices from St Hilda's. Since all eight participating novices had been drawn with adult partners, there was some discussion as to whether the Mother Superior had manipulated the draw in some way. She might possibly regard any partnerships between male and female novices as inappropriate.

The Abbot had been paired with the somewhat gruff Sister Thomas. She had played well so far and he was keen to preserve their likely position near the top of the ranking list.

Dealer West. Both Vul.



West	North	East	South
Brother	The	Sister	Sister
Aelred	Abbot	Kiara	Thomas
1♥	Double	Pass	1♠
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

When the Abbot jumped to $4\spadesuit$, Sister Thomas raised a bushy eyebrow. Did

he realise that she might hold nothing at all? West led the king of hearts and when the dummy went down she saw that there was at least some play for the contract. 'Thank you, partner,' she said. 'Ace, please.'

Now, how many tricks did she have? One heart, two clubs and two diamonds if the king was onside. If that was all, she would need five trump tricks to make the contract. East was poised to overruff the dummy in hearts, so maybe she should leave the two top trumps intact. 'Two of spades, please,' she said.

Sister Kiara, a rather attractive dark-haired novice, won with the trump queen. She returned her remaining heart, Brother Aelred winning with the ♥9. Since East had played high-low in hearts and not raised his 1♥ opening, Brother Aelred was inclined to place her with a doubleton in the suit. He therefore returned the ♥10.

'Ruff with the ace, will you?' said Sister Thomas, observing the diamond discard on her right. 'And play the five of clubs.'

Brother Aelred won the club jack with the ace and persevered with the queen of hearts. 'Ruff with king,' said Sister Thomas. She continued with the ♠10, overtaking with the jack, and drew East's trumps. After a successful finesse of the ♠Q, she played dummy's two club winners, discarding a diamond from her hand. 'I believe that's ten tricks,' she said.

The Abbot unwrapped the score-sheet, liking what he saw. 'Only one other pair made it,' he said. 'Well played, partner.'

Brother Aelred shrugged his shoulders. 'I don't think I did anything wrong,' he said to his young partner.

'Not this time, no,' Sister Kiara replied. 'If I'd held slightly better spotcards in the trump suit, your heart leads would have beaten it.'

At the other side of the cardroom, Brother Lucius took his seat to face the Abbot's distant cousin, Sister Grace. She had been less than fortunate in the draw for partners and faced the aged Brother Sextus, only an occasional player back at St Titus.

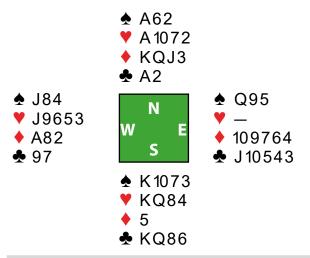
Brother Lucius smiled at Sister Grace. 'Have we arrived at the table of

some eventual prize winners?' he said.

Noting that Lucius had done little better than her in the draw, Sister Grace returned his smile. 'If they're awarding a prize for the oldest partnership in the field, I believe my partner and I are the current favourites,' she replied.

This was the deal before them:



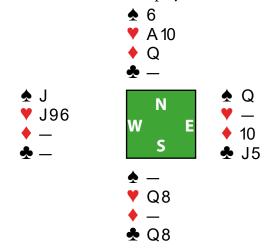


West	North	East	South
Brother	Brother	Sister	Sister
Lucius	Sextus	Myrtle	Grace
_	1♦	Pass	1♥
Pass	4♥	Pass	4NT
Pass	5♣	Pass	6♥
All Pass			

With every chance of scoring an eventual trump trick, Brother Lucius banked his ♦A at trick 1. He continued with the ♦2, won in the dummy. Sister Grace discarded a spade from her hand and played a trump to the king, not overjoyed to see East discard a diamond on the trick. What could be done?

It seemed to Sister Grace that she would need West to hold a third diamond. If that was the case and two rounds of each black suit stood up, she would be in with a chance. She played a trump to dummy's seven and called for another diamond winner, discarding a second spade. When Lucius followed to this trick, she continued with the ace-king of clubs and the ace-king

of spades. These cards remained in play:



Sister Grace now led the ♣Q. Brother Lucius could see what would happen if he threw the ♣J. Declarer would discard from dummy and cross-ruff the last three tricks. When Lucius prevented this by ruffing with the ♥6, Sister Grace overruffed with dummy's ♥10 and now had to ruff either a spade or a diamond with the ♥8. Which should it be?

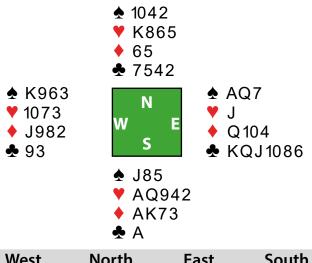
Sister Grace thought back to the tricks she had seen. When she had played the ace and king of spades, East had followed with two spot cards. If she had started with ΔQ Jxx, surely she would have split her honours to prevent a possible finesse of the $\Delta 10$. Yes, indeed!

Her calculations at an end, Sister Grace called for the ♠6 from dummy, ruffing with the ♥8. Lucius followed with the ♠J and declarer claimed the last two tricks on a high cross-ruff.

'Very nicely played,' congratulated Brother Lucius. 'If anyone else had bid 6♥ against me, I would have doubled!'

Brother Paulo had been drawn to partner an Irish novice, Sister Colleen. She had proved an erratic partner but he had enjoyed the tournament considerably. He was about to play this hand:

Dealer South. E/W Vul.



West	North	East	South
Brother	Sister	Sister	Brother
Damien	Colleen	Benedict	Paulo
_	_	_	1♥
Pass	2♥	3♣	4 ♥
All Pass			

The ♣9 was led and Sister Colleen, looked shame-facedly across the table. 'Forgive me, Brother,' she said. 'My hand is almost worthless. I was trying to shut them out.'

'Don't worry at all,' replied Brother Paulo. 'I use just the same tactics myself. They can't be successful all the time.'

Sister Colleen laid out her cards, beginning with the ♥K. She then sat back in her chair, trying to make herself look as small as possible.

'A useful dummy, partner,' said Brother Paulo. 'Well bid!'

The two hands fitted well. If trumps were 2-2, it would be an easy matter to draw trumps and take two diamond ruffs in the dummy. Still, East had shown long clubs and might well hold only one trump. What could be done in that case?

Many declarers would have laid down the ace of hearts next, playing a top card from the hand with two equal-value honours. Paulo preferred to lead to dummy's heart king, retaining the trump honours in his hand to guard

against a later trump promotion. When the ♥J fell from East, he nodded his head. Surely the card was a singleton.

A second round of trumps at this stage would have resulted in defeat. Declarer could take his two diamond ruffs, returning to hand once with a club ruff. He would then have to lead a black card from dummy, allowing the defenders to promote West's ♥10 with a third round of clubs. 'Small diamond,' said Brother Paulo.

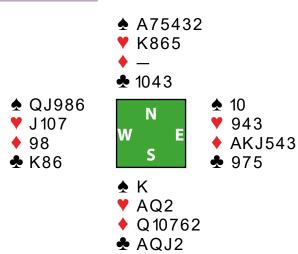
He won with the ace of diamonds and continued with the diamond king. A diamond ruff, followed by a club ruff to hand, allowed him to ruff his last diamond. West followed suit impotently and Paulo called for dummy's ▼8, winning with the queen. He drew West's last trump with the ace and scored the ▼9, conceding the last three tricks in spades.

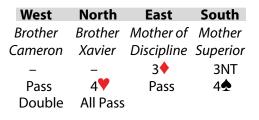
Sister Colleen had a tear in her eye as she looked across at her handsome partner. 'You rescued me, partner,' she said. 'You played it so beautifully.'

'No, no, it was easy,' Paulo replied. 'You did the difficult part, finding the raise to 2♥!'

The last round of the event saw the Mother Superior facing the Mother of Discipline. No-one observing the pleasant way in which they spoke to each would guess how determined they both were to score well on this particular round. The first board was uneventful and this was the final board of the tournament:

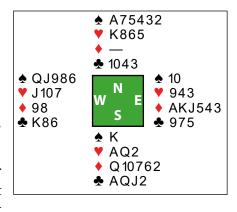
Dealer East. Both Vul.





'Your partner's 4♥ was a transfer, was it?' asked Brother Cameron.

'Foolish boy!' exclaimed the Mother of Discipline. 'Are you suggesting that the Reverend Mother would bid 4♠ if it wasn't a transfer?'



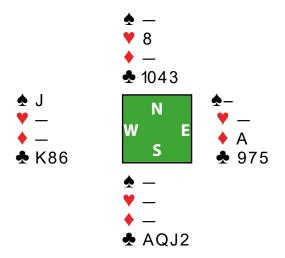
'No, it's just surprising that a new partnership would have discussed it,' replied Brother Cameron. 'We didn't, did we?'

'Make a lead, make a lead,' declared the Mother of Discipline.

Brother Cameron led the ♦9 and down went the dummy. 'Thank you,' said the Mother Superior. 'Ruff low, will you?'

A trump to the king brought the ♠10 from the Mother of Discipline. To justify Brother Cameron's penalty double, it was clear that he must hold the remaining trumps. The Mother Superior ruffed a diamond in dummy, West producing a second card in the suit. She then returned to her hand with the ace of hearts and led another diamond. Brother Cameron, who had no wish for dummy to score any more low trumps, ruffed with the ♠8.

The Mother Superior overruffed with the trump ace and continued with the queen and king of hearts, all following. She then led one of dummy's two remaining trumps. Brother Cameron won and drew dummy's last trump. These cards remained:



Brother Cameron could count declarer for four clubs remaining. If his partner held a club honour, all would be well. If not, some outburst could be expected from across the table. He marked time by cashing the jack of trumps. 'Small club,' said the Mother Superior. The ace of diamonds appeared from East and she discarded the ΦQ from her hand.

Brother Cameron exited with the \$\cdot 6\$ and the \$\cdot 10\$ was played from dummy, winning the trick. 'Play the heart,' said the Mother Superior. She discarded the \$\cdot J\$ from her hand and claimed the contract.

'What a foolish double, boy!' exclaimed the Mother of Discipline. 'I might hold nothing at all for my 3♠ opening.' Instinctively she reached towards her black punishment book. Realizing just in time that Brother Cameron was not subject to her jurisdiction, she diverted her hand towards her scoring pen. 'Minus 790. You think that will be a good score for us?'

'About the same as minus 620, probably,' replied Brother Cameron. 'The other pairs won't be playing transfer bids and a club lead from your hand beats it.'

'Insolence and ignorance are unattractive bedfellows,' declared the Mother of Discipline. 'Who in their right mind would lead a club with an ace-king in their hand?'

The mixed pairs tournament drew to a close. Two St Hilda's novices with a mathematical background had been assigned the task of scoring. After a commendably brief period of just ten minutes, they presented the results of their calculation to the Mother Superior.

'Quiet, everyone!' called the Mother of Discipline.

'The full results will be posted on the door in a moment,' announced the Mother Superior. 'For the moment, I will let you know the top three finishers.'

The Abbot edged forwards. Surely he and Sister Thomas would be in the first three. He had a small speech prepared, just in case they had managed to head the field.

'In third place, with the excellent score of 58.2%, were' ...the Mother Superior paused for effect... 'Brother Lucius and Sister Myrtle'.

There was loud applause, with many nuns unable to hide their surprise. When had Sister Myrtle ever finished in such a good position? Not within living memory.

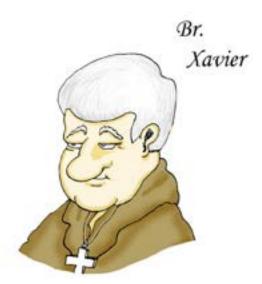
'And in second place, with 59.4% were – well played, indeed – the Abbot and Sister Thomas.'

The Abbot tried to look pleased. Only second place after all their good boards? Who had managed to finish ahead of them?

'The winners, with 62.1%... well, I never expected it, I must say... were Brother Xavier and myself.'

For a moment the Abbot closed his eyes as if in pain. Aware that a few players were looking in his direction, he then clapped loudly. 'Well played, indeed!' he cried. 'Very worthy winners.'

Goodness me, thought the Abbot, the Mother Superior must have played out of her skin to carry Xavier to first place. It was no easy task—he could bear witness to that himself. In fact, he and Xavier had finished only seventh in the last monastery duplicate. The Lord knew best, of course, but sometimes he really did move in the most extraordinary of ways





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The Auction Room

Mark Hortor

Welcome to the Auction Room, where we examine bidding methods from recent events. This month the Editor takes a look at the English trials for the European Championships in Ostend-the gateway to the Bermuda Bowl.

Ten pairs took part in the trials—the prize for the leading two would be a place in the team alongside Andrew Robson & Tony Forrester. As I reported last month this was the result:

		X IMPs
1	Jeffrey Allerton and Chris Jagger	110.50
2	David Bakhshi and Artur Malinowski	76.87
3	Michael Byrne and Kieran Dyke	61.25
4	Tom Townsend and Alex Hydes	14.13
5	Espen Erichsen and Glyn Liggins	14.12
6	Phil King and Andrew McIntosh	13.25
7	Neil Rosen and Martin Jones	-7.00
8	Simon Cope and Peter Crouch	-17.87
9	Frances Hinden and Graham Osborne	-88.00
10	Heather Dhondy and Brian Callaghan	-177.25

The Hands

(This month all the deals were played at IMPs.)

Hand 1. Dealer South. None Vul.



V	Vest	East
I	Dyke	Byrne
	1.	1♥
	3♦	4♦
	4NT*	5♥
	6♦	Pass
4NT F	RKCB	
5 ♥ 2	key cards	

Some pairs would be able to use the 4 bid as asking for keycards, but without a club control it would be unsound.

There was nothing to the play.

_	
West	East
McIntosh	King
1♦	1
3♦	3♥
3NT	4
4 ♠ *	4NT
5♦	Pass

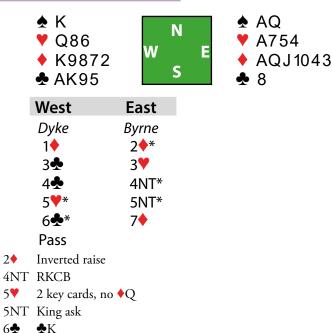
Here East preferred to show the extra length in hearts before supporting diamonds.

A commentator suggested that 4 might be asking for key-cards (there is note on an old convention card -If m agreed 4m+1 RKCB unless ambiguous). The bid of $4 \spadesuit$ was alerted, but not annotated by the BBO operator. Recommended auction: Hard to better the effort of Dyke-Byrne.

Marks: **6NT/6** \blacklozenge **10,** 5 \blacklozenge /3NT/4 \blacktriangledown 5.

Scores: 6NT+5.25 IMPs 6♦ +2.00 IMPs 5♦ -11.25 IMPs

Hand 2. Dealer South. All Vul.

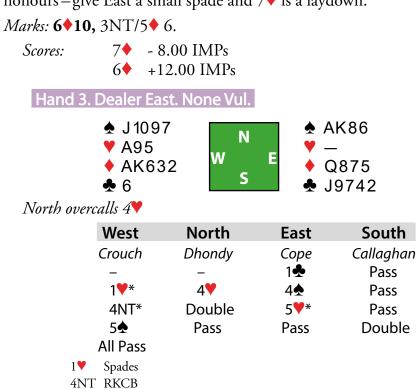


East's bidding is hard to understand—where was he hoping to dispose of his three losing hearts?

	West	East
L	Bakhshi	Malinowski
	1NT*	2♣*
	2♦*	3♦
	4♣*	4NT*
	5♠*	7♦
	Pass	
1NT	15-17	
4♣	Cue-bid	
4NT	RKCB	
5♠	2 key cards	+ ♦ Q

Another auction that did not address the issue of the potential heart losers. *Recommended auction:* Three pairs bid this dreadful grand slam – the other culprits were Hinden-Osborne. Suppose the auction starts 1♦-2♦*-3♣-3♥-3♠-4♦-4♠. As soon as West cannot bid 4♥ East knows that there

is a potential problem. This deal illustrates the weakness of unsupported honours – give East a small spade and 7♦ is a laydown.



5♥ 2 key cards

Having opened, should East bid $4\clubsuit$? His trumps and shape are very good, but apart from that he has little to offer. If he passes West is sure to double and then $4\spadesuit$ will not suggest any extra values.

South led the three of clubs from ♠Q43 ♥42 ♦J1094 ♣Q1053 and North won with the king and switched to the king of hearts. Declarer ruffed, cashed the top spades and played the five of diamonds, East following with the four. If declarer had played North for his 2-8-0-3 shape (remember South had led a fourth best ♣3) and run the ♦5 South would have had some explaining to do, but declarer put up dummy's king and had to concede one down.

West	North	East	South
McIntosh	Osborne	King	Hinden
_	_	Pass	Pass
1◆*	4♥	5NT*	Pass
6♦	All Pass		
1♦ Natural or 1	8-19 balanced		
5NT Pick a slam			

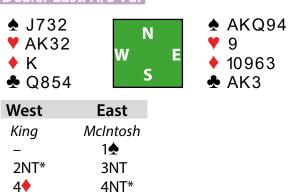
If you could be sure you were playing with a thirty-point pack (i.e. give North all the heart honours) then hoping for a slam is not totally ridiculous, but East's optimism proved unfounded.

North led the king of clubs and continued with the ace. Declarer ruffed, ruffed a heart and played the queen of diamonds. When West pitched a heart declarer knew his fate. He came to hand with a diamond and ran the jack of spades, finishing three down.

Recommended auction: If East opens $1 \clubsuit$ then after $1 \spadesuit - (4 \heartsuit)$ a pass should ensure that E/W do not go beyond 4.



Hand 4.. Dealer East. N/S Vul



2NT Game forcing,4+♠

5**♣***

Pass

The woefully inadequate E/W convention card throws little light on this

6

auction, simply stating that after 12-2NT there are 'various artificial continuations'. It looks as $4 \blacklozenge$ was a shortage with 4NT asking for key cards.

South led the ♣6 from ♠- ♥J1074 ♦AQ865 ♣10762 and declarer won in hand with the king and cashed the ace of spades. When South pitched the five of diamonds he exited with a diamond and South won and continued with the two of clubs. Declarer won, ruffed a diamond and played the seven of spades, taking North's ten with the queen and ruffing another diamond, at which point declarer claimed - he could cash a heart, ruff a heart and draw trumps, his losing diamond eventually going on the♥K.

West	East
Allerton	Jagger
_	1♠
2NT*	3NT*
4♠	Pass

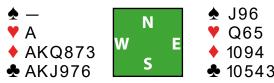
2NT Game forcing raise

3NT Extra values + a singleton heart.

Should West do more? Although his trumps were poor, he could expect his king of diamonds to be useful. It was a tough decision, but on balance I think he might have bid 4♦.

Recommended auction: Although we don't know the precise meaning of all the bids the King-McIntosh auction is one of many ways to reach 6♠. Another possibility would be to start 1♠-2NT-3♦*-3♥*-4♦* where 3♦ would show a non-minimum with a side suit void or singleton, after which West's asking bid of 3♥ elicits that East has a singleton heart. If West continues with a cue-bid of 4♥ East will probably risk 5♣ (West might have three small diamonds) after which $6 \spadesuit$ is sure to be reached.

Hand 5. Dealer South. E/W Vul.



North overcalls 2, South raises to 3 and North bids 4

West	North	East	South
Allerton	Dhondy	Jagger	Callaghan
_	_	_	Pass
2♣*	2♥	Pass	3♥
4	4♥	Pass	Pass
7♣	All Pass		

2♣ Game forcing or (22)23-24 balanced

North's initial action strikes me as odd. She was looking at ♠AQ1075 VKJ9874 ♦- ♣82. The convention card I can see says that over a strong 1 \clubsuit double would show the majors, so why not play that over 2 \spadesuit ?

I suppose you could call West's 7♣ mildly speculative, but he could hope to have a play opposite a huge number of worthless hands.

Should North have gone on to 7\bigve?

U					
West	North	East	South		
Erichsen	Malinowski	Liggins	Bakhshi		
_	_	_	Pass		
2♣	Double*	2◆*	3♠		
4♦	4♠	5♦	5♠		
7♣	Pass	Pass	7♠		
Double	All Pass				
2♣ Game forcin	ng				
Dble Majors					

There were three tricks to lose, -800.

2♦ Waiting

Recommended auction: All roads should lead to 7♣. If your luck is in the opponents won't sacrifice in 7♥/♠. Having said that, Rosen & Jones allowed Hinden & Osborne to play in 6♠ doubled.

The main interest in this hand lies in the question of how to bid defensively after an opening bid of 2. Every pair has some form of defence against a Strong 1♣, but it seems that little though has been put into how to defend after $2 \clubsuit$.

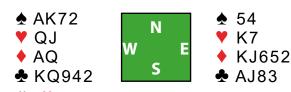
Here is one possible method (it works equally well against $1\clubsuit$):

Double	A one suited hand with hearts
2♦	A one suited hand with spades
2 Y	Two suits of the same colour
2♠	Two suits of the same rank
2NT	Two odd suits
3♣	Diamonds or both majors
3♦	Hearts or ♠+♣
3♥	Spades or both minors
3♠	Clubs or the red suits
3NT	♦ + ♦ or ♥ + ♣
·	

Marks: 7 - 10, 6 + 1 - 5.

Scores: 7♣ +15.50 IMPs 7**♠**X -5.00 IMPs 6♣ -5.50 IMPs 6♠X -11.00 IMPs

Hand 6. Dealer North. None Vul.



South overcalls 1

This was from round 14 featuring an important match between two of the three contenders. After 204 deals Byrne & Dyke held the lead with 87.75, ahead of Allerton & Jagger on 84.00 with Malinowski & Bakhshi on 77.87.

West	North	East	South
Dyke	Malinowski	Byrne	Bakhshi
_	Pass	1♣*	1♥
Double*	Pass	1NT	Pass
6NT	All Pass		

Clubs, unbalanced or any weak 1NT

South's overcall was based on ♠J10 ♥A98532 ♦984 ♣105 – there was a heart to lose, +990.

	West	East
	Erichsen	Liggins
	_	1♦
	2♠*	3♣
	4◆*	4♠*
	5NT*	7♣
	Pass	
2♠	4+♠,5+♣ ջ	ame forcing
4 ♦	Keycard	
4♠	1 or 4 keyc	ards

The meaning of 5NT was obviously unclear – perhaps West intended it as 'pick a slam' while East clearly assumed that it confirmed that all the aces were present.

South led his ace.

Recommended auction: Given a free run one possibility is: 1♦-2♣-3♣-3♠-3NT-4♦*-4♥*-4NT*-5♣*-6NT. After 1♦-(1♥)-Dble-(Pass)-2♣ I would expect West to push to a slam perhaps after bidding 2♥ and seeing East bid 2NT (although one pair managed to stop in 4♣).

Marks: **6NT/6♣/6♦ 10,** 3NT/4♠/5♦/5♣ 5.

Scores:

6NT+7.25 IMPs 6♣ +5.50 IMPs 7♣ -12.00 IMPs 4♣ - 8.00 IMPs

Hand 7. Dealer South. Both Vul.

West East Malinowski Bakhshi 1♣ 2♠* 2NT* 3♣* 6♦ Pass 1♣ Polish, (11)12-14 NT, 5+♣ (16+) 2♠ 5/4 ♦+♣, 8-11 2NT Asking 3♣ 4♦+5♣				
1♣ 2♠* 2NT* 3♣* 6♦ Pass 1♣ Polish, (11)12-14 NT, 5+♣ (16+) 2♠ 5/4 ♦+♣, 8-11 2NT Asking		West	East	
2NT* 3♣* 6 Pass Polish, (11)12-14 NT, 5+♣ (16+) 2♠ 5/4 ♦+♣, 8-11 2NT Asking	M	alinowski	Bakhshi	
6 Pass 1♣ Polish, (11)12-14 NT, 5+♣ (16+) 2♠ 5/4 ♦+♣, 8-11 2NT Asking		1♣	2♠*	
Polish, (11)12-14 NT, 5+♣ (16+) 2♠ 5/4 ♦+♣, 8-11 2NT Asking		2NT*	3♣*	
2♠ 5/4 ♦+♣, 8-11 2NT Asking		6♦	Pass	
2NT Asking	1♣	Polish, (11)1	2-14 NT, 5+ ♣	(16+)
O	2♠	5/4 ♦+♣, 8-	11	
3 ♣ 4 ♦ +5 ♣	2NT	Asking		
	3♣	4♦+5♣		

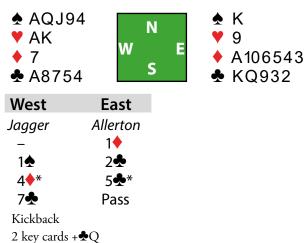
North led the seven of hearts from ♠9875 ♥7 ♦643 ♣KQ852 and declarer won with dummy's jack, ruffed a club, cashed the queen of diamonds and played the ace of hearts, ruffed and overruffed. When a spade to the queen held declarer played the king of hearts, ruffed and overruffed, cashed the ace of diamonds and played a spade. When the king appeared he could claim, +1370.

West	East
Allerton	Jagger
1♥	1NT
2♠	2NT
3♦	3NT
Pass	

After 1♥-1NT West had the option of rebidding 2♣, either natural or any game force. If his actual sequence promised a 4-5-4-0 then perhaps East should have raised diamonds. No doubt West would have preferred to rebid 2♦ – but that would not be forcing.

Recommended auction: 1♥-1NT-2♠-2NT-3♦-4♦-5♣*-6♦ looks reasonable.





West knew his partner held at least nine cards in the minors, so at worst the grand slam would be on a spade finesse and, as here, it would frequently be laydown.

West	East
McIntosh	King
_	1♦
1♠	2♣
2♥*	3♣
4♣	4♥*
5♦*	6♣
7♣	Pass
Fourth suit	forcing
Cue-bid	_
Cue-bid	

The convention card says if m agreed 4m+1 RKCB unless ambiguous, so this looks like a pure cue-bidding sequence. I wonder if West rejected a bid of 4♠ at his fourth turn, fearing it might be passed? Here West knew his partner held at least ten cards in the minors, so he could have bid 7♠ over 4♥.

Recommended auction: There is not much wrong with either of our featured auctions. If you don't have kickback in your repertoire then after 1 • -1 • -2 • West has options, which include 2 • and a jump to 4 •. The latter is played by some partnerships as asking for key cards. That would make bidding the grand slam with certainty very easy as after the response

of 4NT (2 key cards +♣Q) West could bid 5♦ to ask for specific kings, the 5♠ response being just what the doctor ordered.

Were West to try 7NT, the spade suit will deliver 5 tricks 71.86% of the time. (South held ♠10876, so all would be well.)

2 pairs stopped short of the top spot.

Marks: **7**♣ **10**, 7NT/7♠ 9, 6♣/6NT/6♠ 5.

Scores: 7♣ +5.5 IMPs 6♣ -8.25 IMPs

You can play through the deals mentioned in this article.

Just follow the links:

Hand 1: here or https://tinyurl.com/ybdleae4

Hand 2: here or https://tinyurl.com/y98hqemn

Hand 3: here or https://tinyurl.com/ybbmmxg5

Hand 4: here or https://tinyurl.com/yc9nzb68

Hand 5: here or https://tinyurl.com/yd6ft9hu

Hands 6 &7: here or https://tinyurl.com/yc77apce

Hand 8: here or https://tinyurl.com/yb6kzb7e



2

4

5



The Master Point Press Bidding Battle

Set 2

Moderated by Alan Mould

Welcome to the second ever set of the newly constituted New Bridge Magazine Bidding Battle. This month, the problems are an unusual bunch in that seven out of the eight come from the prolific Marc Smith (without whose input this feature would more or less cease to exist) and stem from a variety of tournaments. The exception is problem 7 which comes from reader Tina Jay, and came up in a local duplicate, though I have changed the scoring to IMPs. A healthy panel of 20 this month so straight on with the show.

PROBLEM 1

IMPs. Dealer North. None Vul.

- **★** 87532
- **♥** KQ76
- ♦ A53
- **♣** K

West	North	East	South
_	1♦	2♣	Pass
?			

Note: In BM standard, change of suit is forcing, 2NT natural and invitational opposite a minor suit overcall.

Bid	Marks	No. of Votes
Two Diamond	ls 10	15
Two Spades	8	4
2NT 1	7	1
Two Hearts	4	0
Three Clubs	2	0
3NT	1	0

A decent hand, both majors, but minimal support for partner. We are all taught that an "unassuming

		Т	HE BI	DS	8	MAR	KS
	Bid	Marks No	o. of Votes			Bid	Marks
1.	Two Diamonds	10	15		5.	Six Clubs	10

	Two Spades	8	4
	2NT	7	1
	Two Hearts	4	0
	Three Clubs	2	0
	3NT	1	0
2.	2NT	10	13
	Three Diamonds	8	3
	Two Clubs	6	1
	Three Hearts	5	2
	Two Spades	5	1
	One Spade	4	0
	Three Clubs	4	0
	3NT	3	0
3.	Three Hearts	10	7
	Three Spades	9	7
	3NT	9	6
	Any other bid	1	0
4.	Two Diamonds	10	8

3NT	3	0		Pass
Three Hearts	10	7	7.	Double
Three Spades	9	7		Four Hearts
3NT	9	6		Pass
Any other bid	1	0		3NT
Two Diamonds	10	8		Six Hearts
1NT	9	7	8.	Four Spades
Two Clubs	7	1		Five Spades
3NT	7	4		5NT
Two Hearts	2	0		Six Diamonds
Pass	1	0		Six Spades
				Five Diamonds

	Bid	Marks	No. of Votes	
5.	Six Clubs	10	9	
	4NT	9	8	
	5NT	9	1	
	Four Diamonds	8	1	
	Five Clubs	6	1	
	Four Hearts	5	0	
	Five Hearts	5	0	
	Four Diamonds	3	0	
	Seven Clubs	2	0	
6.	Five Clubs	10	11	
	Five Spades	9	7	
	4NT	7	2	
	Six Spades	4	0	
	Pass	1	0	
7.	Double	10	8	
	Four Hearts	9	7	
	Pass	8	2	
	3NT	8	3	
	Six Hearts	4	0	
8.	Four Spades	10	7	
	Five Spades	9	3	
	5NT	9	5	
	Six Diamonds	8	3	
	Six Spades	8	1	
	Five Diamonds	7	1	



Alan Mould - Your Moderator

cue-bid" such as Two Diamonds here, shows a good raise in partner's suit. Well, as the panel amply demonstrate here, it shows a good raise in partner's suit, except when it doesn't! By the largest majority of the set the panel bid Two Diamonds, hoping that partner can bid a major or NTs, all of which will be dandy, and if all partner can do is bid Three Clubs—just how bad can that be? They make the case extremely well, so I will just let them get on and make it. John gives a very detailed comment which addresses everything you could want about this problem:

Carruthers: Two Diamonds. Very close among Two Diamonds, Two Spades and 2NT. For Two Diamonds: Did not Terence the Great say, "A singleton king is as good as three small."? Neither my

hearts (too short) nor my spades (too anaemic) are suitable to bid immediately, and there seems to be no advantage to declaring from my side. I don't like Two Spades here as even if he has three-card support, I could lose three or four trump tricks in that strain. Not to mention burying hearts completely. However, Two Diamonds gives him an easy Two Heart or Two Spade bid if he has a four card major. For Two Spades: If he raises to Three Spades, I can bid 3NT to offer him a choice. If he raises to Four Spades, that will be our best spot. If I bid Two Diamonds and he bids Three Clubs, I'll have put myself on a nasty guess whether to bid again or not. If I bid 2NT, we'll miss our major-suit fit unless he has extra values; with a minimum, he'll just bid Three Clubs or pass. For 2NT: Expresses the value of my hand more accurately than any other bid. We could still get to four of a major if he bids again. I changed my mind about four times in the course of writing this answer. I still won't know what's best until I see his hand. Great problem. I'd give 9 marks to the second and third place vote getters, whatever they are.

More generous than me!

Leufkens: Two Diamonds. Looking for a major or extra's with a diamond stopper. Looks easy enough. If partner retreats to Three Clubs, I'm glad about my support. Anything above Two Spades risks losing major suit fit (if partner is minimum). Not so interested in eight card spade fit because of my suit quality.

This set went out to the panel before Xmas, which explains this:

Byrne: Two Diamonds. We hold a good hand and game is likely if partner's clubs are up to scratch. We need to make a forward going move and our options appear to be a call of no trumps (two seems closer to the mark than three) showing our spades

or bidding Two Diamonds as a UCB. The danger with Two Spades is that we play in the wrong game (partner will raise with any three card holding) but if I bid Two Diamonds there is a danger the eight card spade fit will go missing. Ah well, it's Christmas, I shall bid Two Diamonds and locate a 4-4 heart fit. Partner will have ♠ – ♥AJxx ♦xxx ♣AQJ10xx and we shall bid and make a grand slam! Ho ho ho.

Lawrence: Two Diamonds. Partner may bid a major here and I will raise either of them to game. Might end in a 4-3 heart fit. Bidding Two Spades might win. If partner has 3-3 in the majors, we would end in hearts rather than spades via my cuebid. For the record, I do not play a new suit as forcing. Too few hands come up where this is needed. It's the nice ten point hands with a good suit that are hard to bid if a new suit is considered forcing.

Marc and Sally both mention that partner ought to have a six card suit. Yeah right. The number of times I have seen overcalls of Two Clubs from good players on (say) 4-1-3-5 shapes. Because that is all you can do! To be fair to them, if partner only has five then then they will have a major, a diamond stop, or extra values, any of which will be good for us.

Smith: Two Diamonds. Tricky, but partner should have a decent six card suit for his 2m overcall so ending in Three Clubs shouldn't be a disaster. Meanwhile, partner might be able to bid a four card heart, in which case we've hit the jackpot. Two Spades just feels wrong on this suit (as well as missing the heart fit) and 2NT gives up on finding a fit in either major, which is still our best chance of game.

Brock: Two Diamonds. For me, he should have a six card suit, so if he is minimum I would expect Three Clubs to play OK. Two Diamonds allows him to introduce a four card major (maybe even a

chunky three card one) or bid NT or rebid clubs. What could be better?

Wolff: Two Diamonds. But pass a return to Three Clubs, not playing for partner to have 100 honors in clubs (or a combined no loser) and the ace of hearts. Granted with Two Spades being forcing it has moved up to perhaps 85%.

Some are very happy with Two Diamonds:

Teramoto: Two Diamonds. I want to know more about partner's hand. I will raise 2M to 4M, pass Three Clubs which shows a minimum hand, and bid 3NT over Three Diamonds.

That all seems fair enough Tadashi!

Rosen: Two Diamonds. Can't imagine doing anything else.

Others are less sanguine:

Sime: Two Diamonds. Risks a silly Three Club contract, but we need to reach a major if partner has four. I probably don't want to be in a 5-3 spade fit.

Robson: Two Diamonds. Gamble a (theoretically good raise) to find a major fit or right-side NTs. If partner repeats Three Clubs it'll be playable.

Alder: Two Diamonds. I like new suit forcing, but finally decided against Two Spades with such a weak holding. Yes, partner will think I have good club support, but if he rebids Three Clubs, I will hope he can make it.

Bowyer: Two Diamonds. With little enthusiasm but I must give partner the chance of showing a major or bidding no-trumps. If he bids Three Clubs I'll Pass.

Bird: Two Diamonds. He will expect another club (or two) but I show my strength and may catch a major-suit fit.

Rigal: Two Diamonds. It isn't perfect but the best way to find a major suit and playing Three Clubs facing a minimum hand with six clubs is hardly the

end of the world. I would rather bid Two Hearts than Two Spades but both are unacceptable.

No one bids Two Hearts, but this nicely brings us to the "unacceptable" Two Spades. Eric makes the case well:

Kokish: Two Spades. Because this is forcing it's the clearest route to 5-3 spades, which admittedly might not be our best strain. Two Diamonds is fine too, of course, and makes it easiest to find 4-4 hearts without putting any pressure on our cavalier East, who might have a more difficult bid over Two Spades, but even in the UK in a space-stealing (from the opponents) scenario, Two Clubs ought to be a real hand or real suit. After two Spades—Three Clubs (non-forcing) there will be a further decision: Three Diamonds, Three Hearts, or an indelicate 3NT.

I think Eric is the only player would will bid over Three Clubs by partner—he really does take two level overcalls seriously!

Green: Two Spades. Not ideal and I wouldn't mind playing an old school cue-bid which didn't promise club support. Here I will make a forcing Two Spades noise and hope to find out about the heart fit later (if it exists) even the Moysian could be the top spot. The problem with Two Diamonds is partner will expect club support and we may well miss our 5-3 fit.

Alon has the best answer to this problem:

Apteker: Two Spades. Can I double for takeout? (Yes, it is amazing how many bidding problems would be solved if we could only make a takeout double of partner's bid) Not perfect given the lack of suit quality and lack of fit but too much game potential to merely pass while 2NT is misdirected.

And Drew is in whimsical mode:

Cannell: Two Spades. Lead directing. :-) A natural

one-round-force seems in order here.

On his own, hardly a first for him, Joey makes the bid I suspect many readers will make:

Silver: 2NT. The KOACH believes that after a two over one overcall, 2NT should be forcing to three of overcaller's suit, a convenient treatment on this hand. In real life however, 2NT is rarely the end of the auction even if not forcing. So instead of cue-bidding with only a Kingleton (*I like Kingleton – I shall use that in future*) in partner's suit, or guessing a major, (or bashing 3NT) I'll choose to go slowly with 2NT in an attempt to get to an INTELLIGENT contract.

This time anything you do works as partner has a good hand and a major: $\bigstar K \forall Axxx \blacklozenge Qx \bigstar AQJxxx$.



Joey Silver

PROBLEM 2

IMPs. Dealer West. All Vul.

- ♠ AK
- ♥ AJ6
- ♦ AQ8653
- **4** 76

West	North	East	South
1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass
?			

Marks	No. of Votes
10	13
ds 8	3
6	1
5	2
5	1
4	0
4	0
3	0
	10 ds 8 6 5 5 4

We start with a moan:

Bird: 2NT. When short of worthwhile bidding problems, dip into the bag of old chestnuts. Some panellist, you never know your luck, may think of something new to say on this one.

Yes, it is indeed true that this kind of problem—a more or less balanced hand with a weak doubleton in an unbid suit is a very common bidding panel problem—but perhaps that is because it is in real bridge, and so far the expert community has not found a satisfactory solution to it. When I first started playing bridge, the mainstream view was that you bid Three Hearts (or even Four Hearts) with a few advocating 2NT or One Spade. Now the mainstream view is to bid 2NT (balanced or quasi-balanced hands always bid NTs as soon as possible and who cares about stoppers?) with a small minority trying other things. Do we really have no science to help us? Listen to Eric

for why this kind of problem is still worth discussing: **Kokish:** 2NT. Hands like this highlight the motivation for a forcing Two Club rebid, artificial or otherwise, but with no spilled milk over which to cry, it's one ugly rebid or another. I'd sooner bid Three Hearts than Three Diamonds, which explains why I'm bidding 2NT. "Unbalanced diamond" systems can use 2NT to force with three hearts and at least six diamonds, which gives them another check mark in the PRO column.

There you go... Some possibilities here include a forcing artificial Two Clubs (often a variant of the Cole convention—see http://www.bridgeguys.com/ <u>Conventions/Cole.html</u> for example), or simply playing Two Clubs as forcing and so on this hand you bid it and hope to sort everything out afterwards. Unbalanced diamond, which I play in one partnership, is a method whereby all balanced hands (including e.g. 3-3-5-2 shapes) outside the NT ranges are opened with One Club, so One Diamond can never be a balanced hand. This frees up the NT rebids for various meanings. You can either play transfers after One Diamond-One Major (so this hand would bid Two Clubs transfer to diamonds and then something to show a 3-6 good hand) or a Gazzilli1NT rebid (more or less any 16+ hand) or as Eric mentions 2NT to show 3-6.

In A New Bridge Magazine we have no such science, so as Eric says, we are stuck with one ugly rebid or another. 13 of the panel plump for the now mainstream 2NT.

Brock: 2NT. Don't like it much but prefer it to other options. I'm about to start playing transfer rebids by opener after a One Diamond opening—looks like a good hand for the system!

Quite!

Robson: 2NT. Absent methods, this is the best way to keep all balls in the air. With Alexander, I

also bid 2NT but this shows three hearts, six diamonds and 14+.

And there you go!

Sime: 2NT. No toys and no sensible force, so this is as near as I can get to describing my hand.

Cannell: 2NT. Flaws everywhere! I guess that is the point of this question. :) I feel this is the least of evils as the one major flaw is the lack of a club stopper (perhaps the sixth diamond, but not really). At least this way partner can inquire if I have a third heart.

Bowyer: 2NT. An old problem, n'est ce pas, with no good answers. This is as good (or as bad) as any. **Silver:** 2NT. No bid adequately describes this hand (my heart holding makes things awkward) with 2NT being, in my opinion, the least inadequate of them all.

Teramoto: 2NT. I would like to be able to find a 5-3 heart fit if we have one.

Alder: 2NT. This is why pairs use strong-club systems. Second choice: Four Hearts!

No one else suggests Four Hearts, but several mention the main alternatives:

Lawrence: 2NT. If I get another bid from partner other than 3NT, this will be easy to bid. Bids like Two Spades, Three Diamonds and Three Hearts are all possible but they all come with their own special issues.

Carruthers: 2NT. Similarly to Problem 1, my hearts are too short to jump raise and my diamonds are too anaemic to jump rebid. My second choice (a very distant second) would be the abominable Three Clubs. Two Spades violates the sensible principle, "Never manufacture a jump shift in a higher ranking suit."

Good rule that!

Green: 2NT. At least I can get my values across now and hope to get to our 5-3 fit later on. Developing

the auction after 2NT should be relatively easy apart from possibly losing the sixth diamond. I don't like Three Diamonds nor do I like 3NT (not being strong enough for the latter).

Leufkens: 2NT. Ugly, as wrong siding NT and burying the sixth diamond. But the rest is worse, and at least this keeps it simple. In contrast with creative souls who bid a black suit, for example.

We have two creative souls, one for bidding each black suit. We start with Marc's Two Clubs:

Smith: Two Clubs. I doubt this is going to be the majority choice (mark one up for the accurate predictions of the month) (Yes!! AM), but it's what I did at the table and I still think it's right. The alternative is 2NT, but when partner raises to game are you not going to be worried that you should be in a red suit, and perhaps higher than game? Indeed, when the hand occurred Five Diamonds was the right spot and no other pair got there.

Now Drew's Two Spades:

Rigal: Two Spades. Hoping not to hear Four Spades...but a jump to Three Diamonds or Three Hearts seems mis-directed and 2NT wrong-sides 3NT and might miss the 5-3 heart fit when partner makes the raise to game with a balanced hand.

We have Bobby for Three Hearts:

Wolff: Three Hearts. But only if partner understands that I prefer this type of choice where other players would never consider such a thing. The alternatives of either Three Diamonds, or 2NT both get about 70% from me. When and if partner bids on, of course, 3NT by him is not only possible, but sometimes necessary.

And finally, three for Three Diamonds:

Apteker: Three Diamonds. While suit quality is not great and heavy on values albeit in range, it is a better description than the 2NT alternative. It also offers the better part score if partner cannot



move. Also keeps all strains in the picture.

I am very surprised at Michael choosing this call: Byrne: Three Diamonds. It seems a straight choice between this and 2NT. Since I have no tenaces to protect (indeed a vulnerable club holding) I think I will bid Three Diamonds. Some 18 counts with a six card suit are worth a game drive but the spade holding has little flexibility and the bad diamond pips might be the difference between game and partscore if partner has a low doubleton.

Rosen: Three Diamonds. Won't score highly on this panel (2NT top marks my prediction) (two out of two on predictions for the panel this month—that is a record!) but lots of controls and AK doubleton suggest diamonds over NTs in my opinion.

Partner held $\triangle Q10x \bigvee Kxxx \bigwedge Kxxx \bigwedge xx$ and so had no reason to do anything other than raise 2NT to 3NT and that put $\triangle AQIxx$ on lead for one off with Five Diamonds cold.

Maybe this hand is an old chestnut, but I note that the 65% who bid 2NT get to the wrong contract, and the panel did find five different bids on the hand, so how terrible as a problem can it be?

PROBLEM 3

IMPs. Dealer East. None Vul.

- **♦** Q864
- ♥ Q109853
- ↓ J5▲ △

West	North	East	South
_	_	1♣	Pass
1♥	Pass	2♦	Pass
2♥*	Pass	3♣*	Pass
2			

- Natural and forcing with 5+ vs, but not game forcing necessarily
- 3♣ Natural and not forcing

Bid	Marks	No. of Votes
Three Hearts	10	7
Three Spades	9	7
3NT	9	6
Any other bid	. 1	0

We are now playing what is a fairly standard UK method after reverses with the lower of fourth suit and 2NT being usually for all bad hands (Blackout), rebidding our suit is forcing showing five but not necessarily strong (hence making partner's Three Clubs non-forcing), and supporting either of partner's suits FG. One of the focusses of the panel, quite rightly, is on whether Three Hearts from us now would be forcing

or not. My view is absolutely that it is, and for two different reasons. The first is the old principle that you don't fight partner—you don't pull his long suit to your long suit with a weak hand. The second, more subtle, one is that I think the panel have yet to appreciate the inferences of the fact that we play weak jump shifts now. What kind of hand can we have that would bid One Heart, then Two Hearts, then Three Hearts, and not have made a weak jump shift or have given up over Three Clubs? I do not believe such a hand exists and therefore Three Hearts must be forcing.

This problem was the closest of the set with seven marks each for Three Hearts and Three Spades, and six for 3NT. For the reasons above, I have used my casting vote in favour of Three Hearts. Let's hear from them first:

Lawrence: Three Hearts. I've only promised 65432 to here. Three Hearts is the first time I have shown real hearts. Assuming this is forcing.

Well, I am with you, Mike!

Apteker: Three Hearts. Just OK in terms of suit quality. If partner has a singleton honour Four Hearts may play better than 3NT.

Bird: Three Hearts. Our most likely game is in hearts. If partner hates hearts, Three Spades can bring us to 3NT. I am a little too good to pass Three Clubs.

Green: Three Hearts. Hoping to keep both Four Hearts and 3NT in the game. If partner has a doubleton heart he can raise and if he is not sure about 3NT he can ask with Three Spades. I have a sneaky admiration for Pass but we could have nine top ones in 3NT and the ace of clubs is a huge card.

I do not see how you can pass Three Clubs with the known values for game and three possible strains still in play.

Alder: Three Hearts. If partner continues with Three Spades, I will bid 3NT. This would have been harder if I had been 6=4=2=1.

The above all assume I think that Three Hearts is forcing. Sally is not so sure:

Brock: Three Hearts. First thought was that Three Diamonds should be forcing and I could bid that (OK that I do not understand at all — Three Diamonds is surely what we bid with ♠xxxx ♥ KQxxx ♠xxxx ♠ — or are you saying you would deny the fifth heart with that and bid Two Spades to bale out in Three Diamonds?). While that is my opinion it might not be partner's and could lead to a silly contract. Partner has not rebid NT (2NT also non-forcing?) (Yes, AM)) and if s/he wants to pass Three Hearts it might not be the end of the world (and is only a missed non-vulnerable game if it is).

Smith: Three Hearts. Forcing. You seem to have mixed up two alternative methods here (no, I haven't!). Two Hearts should be natural and FG (if you don't have enough for game you just have to go through the Lebensohl Two Spade relay and bid Three Hearts next) and Three Clubs should certainly be forcing too. Now there is some question about the forcing nature of Three Hearts, which is clearly the right bid but not one we can afford to make if partner is allowed to pass. Second choice Three Diamonds, to give partner a chance to bid Three Hearts on something like Ax.

Next up Three Spades. Michael bids it as he thinks it gives most flexibility:

Byrne: Three Spades. Fourth suit will now get us to NTs when partner is 2-1-4-6 and to hearts when he is 1-2-4-6. There is a case for rebidding the hearts but good intermediates can only get us so far, given that we are playable in several strains it must be better to wield out our flexible friend.

Whereas others bid it because they believe Three Hearts is not forcing:

Carruthers: Three Spades. I want to (a.) force to game (presumably Three Hearts would also be

non-forcing) and; (b.) give partner a chance to select 3NT or Four Hearts. I can't really insist on hearts here, but if he has honour doubleton, this gives him a chance to cooperate in that direction; 3NT by me here would end the auction.

I agree with John that surely Three Spades sets up a game force. Not so says Drew:

Cannell: Three Spades. As we are not on a game-force now a Three Heart bid would be non-forcing with six-plus hearts. So, I will attempt to show a sixth heart (*I do not see why this shows six hearts* − why can you not have say ♠xxx ♥AKxxx ♠Kx ♠xxx?) and some modicum of fear for 3NT. I hope partner will choose either 3NT or Four Hearts depending the major-suit holdings. If partner instead bids Four Clubs − I am bailing out.

Sime: Three Spades. My hand is too strong for Three Hearts. I realise that this might be a 26-count no game hand. However, with a probable source of tricks in clubs, I ain't backing that horse.

Teramoto: Three Spades. Three Hearts is non-forcing, so I bid Three Spades, looking for the best spot. **Robson:** Three Spades. fourth suit, just worth another bid and 3NT is a bit committal and will be silly if partner has a small singleton spade.

Rosen: Three Spades. Fourth suit forcing.

And finally, six look at their spade stopper and bid "The Mayor's":

Kokish: 3NT. As East could have raised to Three Hearts, non-forcing, with two decent hearts and no spade guard, it's a bit less likely that Four Hearts is our best game. If I could bid an artificial GF Three Diamonds I would do that to cater more smoothly to both 3NT and Four Hearts (3NT over a grope Three Spades), but as Three Diamonds here would show a weak hand with five hearts and four or five diamonds (*Quite! Thank you Eric*) that luxury is unavailable. Whether Three Hearts over Three

Clubs should be forcing is something to discuss in the post mortem: a case can be made either way. **Leufkens:** 3NT. I assume partner could have bid 2NT non-forcing also, so won't have a spade stopper, or has got extra club length. Three Spades seems not comfortable as partner might bid four of a minor when you should be in 3NT, like ♠Jx ♥x ♦AKxx ♣KQJxxx.

Fair point, also made by Paul:

Bowyer: 3NT. No enthusiasm but not a lot of choice. Three Spades might not get the job done if partner is unable to bid 3NT with, say, ♠Jx.

Wolff: 3NT. Running to daylight, although pass would score 90% with me. Three Spades instead would be terrible.

"Running to daylight" is an American football term meaning that a running back should look to run between tacklers to open sky (seems very sensible!), and by extension that opportunities need to be



seized. It is generally attributed to the legendary Green Bay Packers coach Vince Lombardi and is the title of his autobiography. Given this article will come out almost exactly at the time of this year's Superbowl—a pleasing 52nd one for bridge players, an American football term seems appropriate.

Rigal: 3NT. Not perfect; what is? That seems to be my normal response, but I can hardly pass Three Clubs and expect part score to be the limit.

Silver: 3NT. We in the colonies treat reverses seriously, so we should have a decent play for game somewhere, and on the auction 3NT seems like a standout.

Partner held a very atypical hand for his bidding $\triangle Ax \forall Ax \land AK - Q109xxxx$. Two Diamonds is no thing of beauty, but then neither is anything else. Perhaps I should have set partner's hand as the problem? Four Hearts is probably the best game, but 3NT will make most of the time that Four Hearts does, unless they meanly start leading diamonds...

PROBLEM 4

IMPs. Dealer North. None Vul

- **♠** 6
- **♥** AJ84
- AQ75
- ♣ K1075

West	North	East	South
_	1♣	1♠	Pass
?			

Bid	Marks	No. of Votes
Two Diamond	ls 10	8
1NT	9	7
Two Clubs	7	1
3NT	7	4
Two Hearts	2	0
Pass	1	0

this problem. About three years ago I was persuaded to take up what is now a common method after major suit overcalls among tournament players in the UK; viz change of suit forcing, cue-bid is a good three card raise and 2NT is a good four card raise. "What do you do when you have a good hand and no fit" I said. "Never happens" came the reply. And to be fair, it happens very, very rarely. In the time I have been playing it I have picked up only two hands which looked very like this one. On the first I bid a heavy 1NT and that was the right thing to do. On the second the auction went (One Club) – One Spade – (Three Clubs) to me and I judged that partner had a heap of old rope and passed. That was two off when we could make precisely nothing. These methods are now part of New Bridge Magazine standard, so when I was sent this hand I thought I would include it to see how the panel coped. Personally, I thought there would be a heavy majority for 1NT. Not so at all, just seven bid it, not without the expected complaints about the methods: **Kokish:** 1NT. As jumping to 3NT would be ridiculous facing some of today's overcalls, we're endplayed into Two Diamonds or a heavy 1NT. This is no testimonial to the beauty of new suit = F1 but rather a coping mechanism for the rest of the package. Note: While I suspect that New Bridge Magazine standard may well have extrapolated much of this from agreements after we open 1M and RHO overcalls in oM or 2m, we are obliged to deal with these agreements in solving the current problem. **Leufkens:** 1NT. Interesting system; so you can't

I wondered how much stick I was going to get about

force without a fit and without a five card suit. Anyway, a natural 2NT would be my choice, but within the limits I'll try 1NT, which is not too much of a distortion with the singleton in partner's suit. Alternative would be Two Clubs, but

why lie if not necessary.

That is my view Enri:

Green: 1NT. Looks like I don't have much choice. Perhaps a better agreement would be for the cuebid to show a three card raise or a hand strong enough to advance with a natural and invitational 2NT bid without support.

Perhaps it would—but then you need some agreements as to what partner does when s/he wants to bid game opposite a three card raise...

Robson: 1NT. Heavy but partner may bid again when we can make something and I'm stuck for an alternative.

Sime: 1NT. Slightly overweight for points, but poor for point location and shape.

Silver: 1NT. A bit of an underbid, but I would rather do that than go overboard with 3NT, or force at the two level with only a four card suit. At least this way I will know what to do should



Phillip Alder

my OX take another bid.

Rosen: 1NT. Seems to be this or 3NT! Non-vulnerable I'll have a bit in reserve.....

Four punt 3NT:

Brock: 3NT. I know it's horrible but the hand is too good for 1NT (though that could easily be the winning bid). This is the price I pay for 2NT showing a fit, and a cue-bid agreeing spades.

Lawrence: 3NT. Don't much care for your schedule of responses. I'm not allowed to cue-bid here, not that I would want to. I can't bid a natural 2NT. I won't bid Two Diamonds or Two Hearts. What's left? What's left is pass or 3NT. 3NT.

Wolff: 3NT. At least to me, just a horrible bid, but when 2NT is not natural and NF what else. Not only is 3NT a significant overbid, but what if partner is 5-4 in the majors. While it is not political of me' to show disdain for a system bid, I, for the life of me, cannot imagine that we should expand the use of a cue-bid to, yes some kind of support, but no, not just a three card raise, but any good hand but one which shows direction.

Alder: 3NT. The alternative is to bid Two Diamonds in the hope that partner's next bid is Two Hearts. But I think that is unlikely, so I will plunge into what I hope I can make without giving the opponents extra information.

Which brings us to Two Diamonds, which to my surprise garnered the most votes (a mere eight) and hence the top mark. Not that any of its advocates were particularly enamoured of it, but saw it as a way of hopefully bidding a natural 2NT next time, or, if they lucked out, being able to raise hearts. Marc makes the best case for the bid:

Smith: Two Diamonds. In the olden days, we'd probably all have judged this worth a natural 2NT, but that's no longer an option so we have to choose between Two Diamonds and a heavy 1NT. Two

Diamonds has the advantage that if partner bids Two Hearts we know what to do and if he just rebids his spades we can then bid a natural 2NT. The worst case scenario is that he raises to Three Diamonds, over which we might as well take a shot at 3NT rather than trying to make the same nine tricks for much less reward in what's likely to be a seven card fit.

Cannell: Two Diamonds. I guess I am more or less end-played into making a flawed one-round-force Two Diamond bid. At least we can find a 4-4 heart-fit if available. If partner rebids Two Spades I will try 2NT next as approximately 12-14 HCP (since a 1NT response in the first place would be about 9-11 HCP, or so).

Really? I would have thought the upper limit was higher than that opposite a NV one level overcall, which everyone happily bids on seven or eight counts these days.

Apteker: Two Diamonds. Kind of forced into this given system methods. If partner rebids two Spades, I will follow up with 2NT.

Paul has mild opprobrium directed at the methods ©:

Bowyer: Two Diamonds. Objection your honour! This is a crass system and I refuse to play it. Why (FFS) play 2NT as artificial after an overcall when it is (a) much more common to want to bid no-trumps naturally and (b) you can show raises in partner's suit via cue-bids. Tempted to abstain but I'll bid something stupid (Two Diamonds) on the grounds that I have been encumbered with fatuous bidding methods.

Michael says similar things, despite the fact that he plays these methods....

Byrne: Two Diamonds. I have the values for a solid raise to 2NT but gosh that went out of the window when someone made us play every single

bid as showing a fit for partner's suit. Responding Two Diamonds is a pretty daft idea, but at least we will find a 4-4 heart fit, and if partner rebids Two Spades then I can then bid 2NT. My first thought was to bash 3NT but there is no train to catch and my intermediates aren't that good.

John concurs:

Carruthers: Two Diamonds. This seems forced upon me as I don't have enough for 3NT and 2NT would be completely mis-descriptive. Do we really need all of Two Clubs, 2NT, Three Clubs, simple raises and fit jumps as raises of a one level overcall? I can see the utility of 2NT being used as a raise after our opening bid, since slam will often be in the picture and the number of trumps held might be critical, but after a one-level overcall, we needn't tell the world how many trumps we hold. That's just daisy picking.

Bird: Two Diamonds. Too good for 1NT. If he rebids Two Spades over Two Diamonds, my plan is to judge brilliantly whether to bid 2NT next.

Teramoto: Two Diamonds. 2NT is an underbid and 3NT may lose a heart fit. After Two Diamonds, it is easy to find a heart fit as partner will bid them.

On his own, only Barry is prepared to risk a Two Clubs cue-bid, promising three card support. Is this more, or less, dangerous than Two Diamonds?

Rigal: Two Clubs. I do play 2NT as a raise on all auctions but this one, where in a non-competitive auction we need 2NT natural. That not being so, I cue-bid Two Clubs and bidding 2NT over Two Spades is my best option.

Partner held ♠AQ109xx ♥Kxx ♠xxx ♣J (note the wonderful stiff♣J) and Marc comments "so 3NT was a fairly easy make", which suggests to me that the spades came in for five tricks. If they didn't, I think you may be struggling. Partner has a close decision himself over any of the advances by us.

PROBLEM 5

IMPs. Dealer East. All Vul

- **♦** 76
- \Lambda QJ

West	North	East	South
_	_	2♣	Pass
2♦	Pass	3♣	Pass
3♥*	Pass	4♣	Pass
?			
3 Pro	omising 5+	e e	

Bid	Marks	No. of Votes
Six Clubs	10	9
4NT	9	8
5NT	9	1
Four Diamond	ds 8	1
Five Clubs	6	1
Four Hearts	5	0
Five Hearts	5	0
Four Diamond	ds 3	0
Seven Clubs	2	0

It seems to me that very little advance has been made in the expert community on how to develop the auction after a Two Club opening. I think the problem is that they just do not come up very often, and so in that sense it is a less fruitful avenue for work than others. However, when they do come up, they are liable to generate double figure swings and so are important. Here, we have a GREAT hand for clubs in context— QI and an outside ace to boot. I was hoping this problem would generate discussion of whether 4NT is keycard or a good raise in clubs (it did); whether Four Diamonds is effectively Last Train for clubs (it didn't much); and whether Four Hearts is actually a cue-bid for clubs (not really)—after all,

how can we have a hand that wants to bid Four Hearts naturally, but which is not good enough for a Two Heart positive response? Anyway, with more or less of a shrug of the shoulders, nearly half the panel just give up and bid Six Clubs.

Bird: Six Clubs. Partner has a hand willing to play in Five Clubs facing a bust. In that case it should be a breeze to make Six Clubs opposite this treasure chest.

Quite—which means you should be trying for a grand slam, surely?

Robson: Six Clubs. Perhaps this is a sort of picture bid showing good clubs and hearts (now there is one for the post mortem!). Clearly my QJ are gold dust, partly because partner, missing those cards, must have a monster outside.

Marc is one of the few panellists to mention the nature of Four Hearts:

Smith: Six Clubs. What I think my man should have bid at the table rather than a rather feeble Five Clubs. Since we've so far shown no values at all we have a massive hand for a partner who has committed to an 11 trick game on his own. If slam doesn't have decent play opposite this then partner doesn't have a Two Club opening. The only danger is that I may be too good for Six Clubs, but there's not much I can do about that as another heart bid would be natural rather than a Q.

Rigal: Six Clubs. Simple value bid; partner doesn't stretch to open Two Clubs on one suiters, so I expect full values here. Five Clubs would be a huge underbid here.

Teramoto: Six Clubs. I cannot invite a slam, (can you not, Tadashi? The panel find a couple of ways) so I have to decide now. This hand is closer to Six Clubs than Five Clubs.

Lawrence: Six Clubs. A value bid. Partner had a chance to show four spades so I don't worry that

I'm missing a spade contract. My hand is just too good to bid Five Clubs. I would hate to hear partner pass slowly. Wish I had one more club.

Bowyer: Six Clubs. Delicate slam try.

Cannell: Six Clubs. Damn the torpedoes. My hand is pretty good for partner. I am not sure I can receive the right information for a grand slam if I go through 4NT RKCB instead so will make a Landy Slam Try.

Michael gives us a full analysis:

Byrne: Six Clubs. I wish I'd given a positive now, Two Clubs – Two Hearts – Three Clubs – Four Clubs seems much more economical. (Having said that I wasn't worth one unless somehow I knew that partner had clubs, which I didn't) (Indeed! AM). Anyway, holding two cover cards (does anyone use that term anymore?) (haven't heard it in years) we have a clear drive to slam, in fact a grand is quite possible. Partner's bidding is interesting why hasn't he bid 3NT? I suspect a very shapely hand such as ♠AQ ♥Kx ♠A ♣AKxxxxxx or the like. The trouble with hoping that the hearts come in is that a trump lead will kill a quick entry so I will need a 3-3 break whether partner has Kx or KQ (maybe Jx with trumps 2-1).

It was in this very column only a couple of months ago that Michael mentioned the theory that the partner of a Two Club opener could never bid Blackwood and hence it was always something else. Michael maintained he had always ignored this and his slam bidding had improved no end as a result! Clearly, Drew is in Michael's camp. However, the second highest vote, with eight votes, was for 4NT and they are split as one Blackwooder, six "good raise in clubs", and one undeclared. Thus Michael, you seem to be in a minority.

Green: 4NT. For me this should be RKC and not natural. At least if I can confirm all the keycards are present then partner may be able to bid the

grand. Normally I might manufacture a cue-bid but with nothing at all in those suits I think that is quite dangerous. Not that 4NT is so obvious either but I have to do something with such prime cards. I considered Five Hearts as a slam try with club support (I can't have good enough hearts to bid Five Hearts else I would have responded Two/Three/Four Hearts) but this would be risky unless partner was known to be on a similar wave length.

Five Hearts is a nice idea – like it.

Brock: 4NT. Surely, I can't use RKCB when partner has opened Two Clubs? This should be better than a Five Club bid.

Enri is pragmatic about the bid:

Leufkens: 4NT. Can't bid Five Clubs with this great hand. How can I RKCB opposite a game-forcing? I wanted to say, it should be something like this, because otherwise you would make a cue-bid, but as a partner I wouldn't be convinced of that. I just hope it's going to work out, and think this is the best chance.

John is the only person to mention Four Diamonds: Carruthers: 4NT. I like to play this as encouraging toward slam, whereas Five Clubs would be discouraging. Four Hearts strongly suggests playing there and Five Clubs is completely inadequate. The principle of 4NT here is that the partner of a Two Club opener or a jump shifter, after denying strength, cannot logically be asking for key cards, so 4NT should be used for some other purpose. This is it. The alternative could be a new convention, call it "First Train" - here, a bid of Four Diamonds. **Silver:** 4NT. Since it is unreasonable to believe that a minimum hand (I bid a negative Two Diamonds over Two Clubs) is now asking for aces. So, under these circumstances, it is only reasonable to treat 4NT by the small hand as a forward going move with a trump (club) fit.

Alder: 4NT. I am expecting one or two points on the panel, but I feel strongly that this should be a five-and-a-half-club bid. I cannot possibly have an RKCB hand. Can I really wish to play in 4NT? That is so unlikely that I think this slam-try meaning is much better.

Seven agree with you Phillip

Apteker: 4NT. Should be forward going in clubs and not natural or RKCB. If partner responds RKCB, that is fine as I intend to bid to at least Six Clubs in any event. Other than a practical jump to Six Clubs, can't think of any other reasonable bids as Four Diamonds and Four Spades are natural. Well, I play in at least one partnership where the responder to a Two Club opener cannot show a second suit unless opener bids NTs, so all new suits are support for partner—not a ridiculous idea.



Ben Green

Sime: 4NT. Four Clubs is trump setting, so partner must think his clubs are self-supporting. Therefore, he has eight clubs, partly counterfeiting the value of my honours. Nevertheless, there might still be a grand.

We have three single votes. One for Four Diamonds: **Rosen:** Four Diamonds. Sounds like a cue for clubs so why not?

One for 5NT. What does that mean in this sequence? Eric tells us:

Kokish: 5NT. 5NT or Six Clubs. One of these bids must be reserved for ace of hearts, strong trumps, and no obvious side asset. As this hand is a clear slam force (East has a 10+-trick two-bid in a minor missing the quack of clubs and the $\forall A$ if he has a heart void it's easy to see how good the spades and diamonds must be) with seven interest, 4NT (not Blackwood) is simply not enough. I like 5NT but not in a partnership in which East will not understand it as descriptive. The problem with Five Hearts is that it might not be intuitive to interpret it as intended. The problem with Six Clubs is that too many partnerships would wrongly treat it as a best guess rather than a grand-slam try. I guess we'll soon find out if this partnership has a future.

Usually, 5NT is pick a slam, but that is not logical here. Eric makes a very strong case for this to be what he says and I have thus upgraded it.

Completely on his own and out of kilter with the panel, Bobby is prepared to give it up in game:

Wolff: Five Clubs. A definite underbid, but it seems like all I have left is to bid Six Clubs myself, a bid which would score 70%. Some phony cuebid certainly is not in the running with me.

Partner has done pretty well to bid Four Clubs on $\triangle A \bigvee KQx \blacklozenge A \triangle AK109xxx$ rather than look at hearts. Clearly a grand is laydown (best is 7NT if

you can find a route there) and maybe the 4NT and 5NT bidders (and even Four Diamonds) will get you there provided you know what it means. Is partner supposed to bid Seven Clubs over Six Clubs? Maybe if you think that Four Diamonds and Four Spades are cue-bids for clubs rather than natural (as in that case what else can you have but the heart ace?), but none of it is easy.

PROBLEM 6

IMPs. Dealer East. E/W Vul

- ♠ AK96432
 ▼ 75
- 96
- ♣ A4

Wes	t North	East	South
_	_	1♣	1♥
1♠'	[*] 4♥	4♠	Pass
?			
1♠	Promised 5+ ♠	s for this p	artnership

BidMarksNo. of VotesFive Clubs1011Five Spades974NT72

Six Spades 4 0 Pass 1 0

Yes, partner has been forced to bid Four Spades under pressure; and yes, we have no red suit controls; and yes, we could be off in Five Spades; but the panel rightly point out that seven, let alone six, could be cold here. Applying the useful rule of thumb as to whether it is more likely to make six or go off in five this is a clear move, and none of the panel seriously consider passing. It is therefore simply a matter of how you move, not if you move. The panel splits into two mainstream camps—those who focus on a heart control by bidding

Five Spades, and those who show their club control with Five Clubs, and hope that both red suit controls will emerge somehow. Let's start with the simpler Five Spade camp:

Silver: Five Spades. Holding a five loser, opposite a partner who opened the bidding, then bid freely at the four level, I cannot give up on the possibility of slam. I am willing to gamble that partner has a diamond control, but not that he has a heart control, ergo Five Spades, asking if he has one. I expect that with both red aces he will bid Six Diamonds on the way, in which case I will bid Seven Spades.

Indeed, partner should, and indeed, you will!

Green: Five Spades. Asking for a heart control. Since a grand slam could be laydown I feel I must make a move. One might bid Five Clubs but I don't see the advantage over Five Spades which sends a clear message (Well, how about ♠QJx ♥A ♠xxx ♠KQJxxx. That will get you to Six Spades via Six Hearts and will be a quick one down). I wonder if playing in clubs or NT from partner's side might be best? Picture Kx in hearts that needs protecting. Bowyer: Five Spades. Focussing on lack of heart control. Unlikely we are off the ♠AK.

Bird: Five Spades. Although partner has been bounced, there could easily be a slam when he has a singleton heart.

Since you will always be in slam when partner has a singleton heart that probably needs to be a bit more than "could easily be a slam". Iain sees the problem: Sime: Five Spades. Asking for a heart control. Yes, we might be in a slam off top tricks, in which case I will apologise.

Bet you wouldn't ©

Lawrence: Five Spades. Points out my biggest concern and doesn't mess with my partner's mind. Passing is an acceptable choice but it does risk missing a slam. Even Seven Spades is possible.

Bobby, whilst bidding Five Spades, is alone in thinking it is not purely about asking for a heart control. He also makes a valid point about the merits of a pressure Six Spades bid:

Wolff: Five Spades. It could be argued that Five Spades asks for heart control before bidding slam, but since partner may be making a competitive raise it probably should just be treated as a general slam try. However, my second choice of Six Spades, not a confusing Five Clubs, to which I rate Six Spades 90% (do not disregard the pressure on N/S to take a NV sacrifice) and Five Clubs, the scientific choice, only about 80%.

Well Bobby, no one bid Six Spades, but 11 bid Five Clubs. Michael sees the problem in sorting out the red suit controls:

Byrne: Five Clubs. I confess this seems a bit of a non-problem ("no brainer" as the cousins would say) since I have loads of tricks and no control in hearts. My bid of Five Clubs will....hang on, I've just worked out what the problem is. Partner will bid Five Diamonds over Five Clubs and I will have no idea if he has a heart control. (♠QJxx ♥xx ♠ A ♣KQxxxx). Mind you, if I bid Five Spades to ask for a heart control then I won't know if we are off two diamonds. Since partner having a short heart is so likely (sooooo likely, what have the oppo got for their bidding?) I will bid Five Clubs and then leap to a slam over the expected Five Diamonds response. If they cash two hearts, so be it.

Enri, I think, is worried about both red aces off it: **Leufkens:** Five Clubs. I know, partner can be weak, but chances to make a slam (even grand) are bigger than going down in five. The real problem will come later, when partner is forced to bid six with a diamond and heart control (after Five Clubs – Five Diamonds – Five Spades).

And Barry about going down in five:

Rigal: Five Clubs. Yes, I might go down at the five-level on a diamond ruff, but partner can have a huge hand for this auction and I already have so many extras I can't go quietly. Second choice an insouciant RKCB.

Did I mention the rule about going off in five compared with making six? Here it is:

Rosen: Five Clubs. Seems more likely we can make six than we go down in five.

Cannell: Five Clubs. Cue-bid in clubs in hopes of encouraging partner's help with some red-suit controls for our side.

Carruthers: Five Clubs. Worth a try. Even if he had a balanced minimum, slam would still be possible, and he has more than that since I just peeped One Spade.

Alder: Five Clubs. This is close, especially if our opponents are happy to break the Law by bidding Four Hearts with only a nine-card fit. But we could be cold for a grand slam, so I cannot pass.

Apteker: Five Clubs. Even though partner may have bid Four Spades with shaded values under pressure, I have too much not to make a slam going move.

Teramoto: Five Clubs. A cue-bid and a slam try. **Brock:** Five Clubs. Seems normal enough.

Kokish: Five Clubs. Blackwood may be more practical as East will rarely have two heart losers when West has these black suits (♠QJx ♥xx ♠AK ♠KQJxxx, is possible, though). I can respect 4NT in the morning.

So, Eric, time to respect Andrew and Marc:

Robson: 4NT. Too easy to cue-bid Five Clubs but frankly I'll take the chance on a heart control and Blackwood into seven facing two aces and a king. **Smith:** 4NT. It seems unlikely that partner doesn't have a singleton heart, so the objective is to avoid bidding the slam missing two aces. Although

partner has bid Four Spades under pressure, he is surely marked with good minor suits since I have the top spades and he has short hearts. After all, ♠xxx ♥x ♠Axx ♣KQxxxx is all I need to make slam cold.

The grand was indeed cold opposite ♠Qxx ▼ - ♠AQxx ♠KQJxxx. Michael's sequence will surely get you there as partner will raise Six Spades to Seven Spades and indeed Five Clubs ought to get you there after Five Clubs – Five Diamonds – Five Spades – Six Hearts. 4NT will get you there provided you can show the void. Five Spades is probably the easiest route as partner has a clear Six Diamond bid and we can bid a confident Seven Spades.

PROBLEM 7

IMPs. Dealer North. E/W Vul

- **♠** AQ5
- ♥ AKQJ108
- ♦ QJ9
- **♣** A

west	North	East	South
_	2♦*	Pass	2 ♥*
?*			

- 2♦ Weak only multi (weak 2♥ or weak 2♠ the only options)
- 2♥ Pass or correct
- ? In BM standard double is take out of hearts, $2\spadesuit$, $3\heartsuit$ and $4\heartsuit$ natural

Bid	Marks	No. of Votes
Double	10	8
Four Hearts	9	7
Pass	8	2
3NT	8	3
Six Hearts	4	0

This turned out to be a problem question since I discovered that this sequence is culturally dependent.

I asked the panel how likely it was that if they passed Two Hearts, it would be passed out when North actually had spades. The first part of Eric Kokish's answer (see below) was "If N/S have the agreement that opener can pass Two Hearts with spades, it's a pre-alert and probably not something the sponsoring organization should allow, so I have no qualms in passing." I responded to Eric saying that, as far as I was aware, pre-alerts did not exist in England (and certainly not at a low level) and that passing 2M when holding the other suit was quite a common tactic. This generated an exchange between Eric and myself whereby he maintained I was speaking heresy as far as North America and most of Europe was concerned. I thus contacted Gordon Rainsford, the EBU chief tournament director, for his views. He told me that it is perfectly fine under EBU regulations for you to have the agreement to pass Two Diamonds (Multi) -(Pass) - 2M - (Pass) with the "wrong suit", but it would need to be properly disclosed. To have that agreement, either explicit or implicit (which basically means your partner might expect you to have done it), according to EBL or WBF regulations turns the bid into a controlled psyche and so would turn the convention into a "Brown Sticker". Not all EBL & WBF events allow such conventions and when they do they state that "a viable suggested defence to any Brown Sticker convention must be filed. Hence the cultural difficulty with this problem in that the non-English panellists can pass Two Hearts knowing that opener will have to bid Two Spades, whereas the English panellists would be considerably worried that Two Hearts will end the auction (all the more likely of course the longer you pause over Two Hearts).

The other, more minor, issue is that the defence described in the problem, is unquestionably sub-optimal. The best method is to play that doubling Two Diamonds—(Pass)—2M is either takeout of that

major OR shows that major, and whatever LHO does will then tell partner which it is. So, in this method you would double Two Hearts on our actual hand, or on $\forall AKxxxx$ and a 12 count, or on a 4-1-4-4 12 count, or any hand that wants to show hearts or make a takeout double of hearts. The point being that opener, unless they have nerves of steel, cannot pass with spades to mess you up, and they do not know which hand type you have - if you have the takeout double, your partner will pass as they have the hearts and that will be 1400 or so. Having said all that, I specified the defence given in the problem since (a) it would not be a problem otherwise, (b) it is unquestionably the second best defence to the multi and, (c) it is far and away the most common defence to the multi in this country.

So, we are now where we are with this problem. Eight of the panel, enough for the 10 marks, make the takeout double of Two Hearts, as would I have done. Is this so bad? After all, North will bid Two Spades and we can still bid hearts then which will be natural and stronger than other ways of bidding hearts. A takeout double with 100 honours to six in the suit I hear you say. Well, yes, but very strong hands have different rules. We would all double One Spade on $\triangle AKQxx \ AQx \ AK \ xxxx simply because that is what you have to do...$

What case do the doublers make?

Apteker: Double. Over 2NT Lebensohl, I intend to bid Four Hearts right siding the contract rather than 3NT. Game needs very little from partner to make. If partner shows values via a Three Club bid, I will bid Three Hearts natural and forcing. If partner unexpectedly bids Three Diamonds, we are on our way to at least Six Diamonds/6NT (fair enough!). I do not think it is likely to be passed out if I pass as opener is likely to have spades.

See my comments at the start about the cultural

difficulties with this problem. Alon thinks it is very unlikely as opener will have spades, whereas all the UK panellists know opener may still pass with spades: Green: Double. At this vulnerability I am not risking a pass as depending on my opponents this could easily be passed out. In my opinion the better the opponent the more likely the pass. If the auction proceeds Two Spades on my left, Pass, Pass then I will have another decision to make. I could jump to Four Hearts. I could bid Three Spades and I could just try 3NT. It's not clear.

Rosen: Double. Then bid hearts or NTs next time. I can't stomach passing then not getting another chance!

Byrne: Double. I intend to develop the auction by bidding hearts. What do I think the odds of Two Hearts being passed out are? 0% since this hand isn't being played anywhere. I suppose at the table the opponents might try and pull a fast one, if you are asking what are the odds that they actually have hearts then the answer is they don't, but a canny operator has been known to lie as to what suit they have (heaven forbid!). Anyway, I have loads of points and I want to smoke the wolf out of his lair before I commit myself one way or another.

Sime: Double. Yes, I have heard of Two Hearts passed by a man with spades. Hopefully so has my partner. If I thought that this opponent was capable of such villainy, I had better double. I will probably double again if Two Spades is passed round. If partner bids 2NT Lebensohl, I will bid Four Hearts.

Robson: Double. Not likely to end in Two Hearts if I pass but you never know; and I'd like to start eliciting info from partner. In my dreams partner bids a good Three Diamonds.

Bobby has some history for us, and it looks like it revolved around the exact cultural problems I have

been discussing:

Wolff: Double. I assume that later heart bidding by me will be treated as natural. I will only be trying to at least keep our side able to bid what may be a lay down slam. To only just jump to Four Hearts is much too risky, so of all the other choices, double seems to be less dangerous. If anyone was playing against the Austrians who played in the Maastricht, Holland 2000 Olympiad the risk of it being passed out would be 99+%. I do not know anyone who would be expected to get this one right, but I was there and, although this hand did not occur (at least to my knowledge) but if it did, its dollars to doughnuts that North would have passed, while having spades as his WTB. I have the scars accruing from this hand as I was the Appeals Chairman at that tournament and this topic caused the commotion.

I can just imagine the discussion between the various cultural factions: "He cannot pass with the wrong suit." "Don't be silly, of course he can." "That is not allowed." "Of course it is—it is just sensible bridge." And on and on. Be assured Bobby, this is not the hand from then; it came up about four months ago.

Teramoto: Double. I expect that opener will bid Two Spades after my double. Then I will bid Four Hearts, showing a better hand than an immediate Four Hearts.

Two "risk" a pass, or do not risk it if the hand is being played outside the UK. The aforementioned Eric and his countryman:

Kokish: Pass. If N/S have the agreement that opener can pass Two Hearts with spades, it's a pre-alert and probably not something the sponsoring organization should allow, so I have no qualms in passing. I will double Two Spades before bidding hearts or 3NT, Lebensohl affecting any decision. If it has gone (Two Spades) Pass (Three

Spades) the choice will be especially difficult and the slow diamond holding could be better with a trump suit; further complexity accrues from having no stated agreement here about 3NT = NAT vs 3NT = minors. If South raises Two Spades to Four Spades I will double and convert Five Clubs to Five Hearts. FWIW, I'm of the opinion that this sort of problem is best left to partnership bidding features like Challenge the Champs.

Silver: Pass. Are you telling me I cannot make a takeout double of spades? What a system you are having us play. So, what are my choices? 3NT or Four Hearts? Both grossly inadequate when slam our way is a real possibility. S, in reality the only reasonable choice left is to Pass Two Hearts, and hope the Villains don't wise up and play there. Is this any way to run a railroad? SAD, SO SAD.

Joey, we invented the multi and this is the standard English defence for sure.

The rest of the panel simply give up and bid whatever game appeals to them. Sorry, but that seems grossly inadequate to me on this huge hand. Have I mentioned the cultural difficulties at all? Compare this:

Lawrence: Four Hearts. Obnoxious problem. Passing has some merit but I doubt anyone can find it in tempo. If I make a very heavy pass, I can't help but wonder if North might decide to pass Two Hearts with his weak two bid in spades. (Is this a legal ploy?) If that happens, I expect that my partner would be 100% to pass. If he somehow found a bid, it would be a different 100% that we would have a visit from the director. I don't have enough experience to pass smoothly with this hand. 3NT is a very acceptable choice.

With these:

Brock: Four Hearts. I can't see that passing is likely to help. Even if it goes two Spades – Pass - Pass and

I double. If I pass I think it is very likely that North will too. I play this system and do that quite often, especially if I (West here) take any unnatural time to pass (which I probably would). Then partner is under ethical pressure too.

Bird: Four Hearts. It would obviously be ill-advised to pass and have to endure scarcely subdued chuckles when North passes on his long spades.

Rigal: Four Hearts. OK nothing is perfect but rather than pass and have it go AP (All Pass – AM) (2% likely) I will try this. We don't have a forcing heart call and can never show this hand after doubling first.

Phillip and Marc make the points I made about the defence to the multi:

Alder: Four Hearts. I really want to abstain because your methods are so wrong. Double should be either-or: either takeout or penalty, to allow for this situation. I cannot double for takeout, because later heart bids would not be natural. Pass risks the bidding ending and our getting 300-400 instead of 620 (although, I agree, that is not a disaster at IMPs). It is much worse if I pass and North, sensing from my pause what is happening, passes with spades, a coup I pulled once.

Smith: Four Hearts. This is a problem is created purely by playing a stupid system. Double should be two way, particularly against a weak only multi, either hearts or takeout of hearts. We clearly cannot afford to pass here as North is likely to pass it out and play for losing a bunch of 50s no matter which major he holds. A double from us forces him to tell partner which hand we have. Here we are just left with a total guess.

Three for 3NT:

Leufkens: 3NT. Chances that leftie will pass depends on country and sort of tournament, sort of opponents, et cetera. In general, it's still an

exception that somebody makes this tactical call. But even if North bids Two Spades, how do you think you develop the action in a meaningful way? Two Diamonds—Pass—Two Hearts—Pass—Two Spades—Pass—Pass—Double—Pass—2NT (Lebensohl)—Pass—Three Hearts is not 100% forcing, so what are you going to do? As most will know by now, I'm a very practical bidder. As it's not easy to get help from partner, while bringing across the full potential of my hand, I just blast the most likely contract. North doesn't know I've got a double stopper in both majors, and his partner might have some spades, he'll lead a spade most likely. Partner knows I've got a monster (whatever sort of) so can move on if he's got enough.

But does he? Isn't that what we bid on $\Phi Kx \nabla Ax \Phi AKQJxxx \Phi xx$ as well?

Bowyer: 3NT. I make the practical shot while showing a good hand (so partner might conceivably bid on). Pass is not for me as I have no idea who these opponents are. LHO might want to make this a lifetime ambition by passing out Two Hearts while holding a weak two in spades – not a likely prospect but it has happened.

Cannell: 3NT. Pass is a possibility, but despite the 2:1 odds (from my major-suit lengths in a vacuum – though, much less as North may or may not decide six hearts to the nine is a Multi) I will not gamble on that possibility. I will use Hamman's Rule, and hope that he is right (he usually is).

Last word to a third accurate panel prediction (and the only North American who thinks opener may pass with spades):

Carruthers: Four Hearts. I intend to develop the auction by winning the opening lead, pulling trumps and claiming 13 tricks. If I pass, I'm begging North to psyche a pass himself. If North has any imagination at all (regardless of the pair's agreements) he should pass with ♠KJxxxx ♥xx ♦xxx or the like.

Partner held $\ x \ \ xxx \ AKxx \ \ Q10xxx$ so Seven Hearts is indeed cold. Reader Tina Jay asked wistfully how you should get there. It seems to me Tina that most of the panel will be playing this hand in game. Sometimes the multi scores a real goal. Given the issues with the various regulations between countries, everyone gets lots of marks.

PROBLEM 8

IMPs. Dealer West. All Vul

- **★** KQJ1063
- **Y** 54
- ♦ AQJ64

♣ -

West	North	East	South
1♠	3♥*	4♣	Pass
4	Pass	4 💙	Pass
?			
3♥ N	atural and we	ak	

Bid	Marks	No. of Votes
Four Spades	10	7
Five Spades	9	3
5NT	9	5
Six Diamonds	8	3
Six Spades	8	1
Five Diamond	ls 7	1

What is going on here? Specifically, what is the nature of partner's Four Heart bid? Is it a grope for the best contract? Does it agree spades? Does it agree diamonds? Is it, horror of horror, an auto cue-bid for partner's own clubs? These were the questions Marc asked me when he sent me the problem. I had no idea, and it is clear that neither do the panel. What is clear is that we have a much, much better hand that we might

have and it seems to be we should bid a slam, or at the very least, strongly invite one. It thus somewhat shocks me that eight of the panel sign off in game, seven of them in Four Spades, which is enough to gain the 10 marks. Those that bid Four Spades are all at least honest that they have no idea what partner means by Four Hearts:

Green: Four Spades. Two low hearts look horrible to me so I will go back to my first bid suit. It is not clear which suit partner is hoping to play in so I will describe my hand.

An unusual method from Sally:

Brock: Four Spades. Who knows what Four Hearts means? Partner probably doesn't know what trumps should be. (I don't play Four Clubs as natural here. All four level bids agree spades and with clubs partner has to start with a double.)

Alder: Four Spades. To be honest, I have no idea! I would like 4NT to be a slam-try without first-round spade control, but I expect partner would treat it as RKCB—unless he just cue-bid Four Hearts because he had nothing better to do, not to agree diamonds.

Byrne: Four Spades. Whether I think Four Hearts is a cue-bid agreeing diamonds or an expert style choice of games waffle Four Spades is presumably the right next step. If partner passes this then hopefully we won't have missed a cold grand although I do appear to hold an unexpectedly good hand. Mind you, a void club and two small hearts is hardly going to set the world on fire...let's wait and see what happens before deciding which contract to go down in.

Alon thinks it is a choice of games cue:

Apteker: Four Spades. Partner was just probing for the best game and does not suggest diamond support nor a heart control.

Silver: Four Spades. The fact that I am re-bidding

the suit I opened with at the four level is more an offer to play that a cue-bid.

Which suggests that Joey thinks Four Hearts is a cue for diamonds. David agrees:

Bird: Four Spades. Surely, I have to show that I am playable here with little spade support. If partner corrects to Five Diamonds, denying a club control, I can consider raising to Six Diamonds then.

And Marc, having asked all the questions, believes Four Hearts agreed diamonds.

Smith: Five Diamonds. Was Four Hearts a cuebid agreeing diamonds? Would Four Spades therefore be a cue or an alternative contract? For me, Four Diamonds should have been a cue agreeing clubs, meaning that we should have just bid Four Spades with this hand on the previous round. Now I think Four Hearts must be a cue or we're still fumbling around at the four level trying to decide which suit to play rather than concentrating on level. As such, my black-suit controls are the wrong way around: ♠A and a singleton club would have been much more attractive. Partner is likely to hold a singleton spade so cue-bidding a second round control is just likely to lead him into a wrong decision, and we cannot cue a void in his main suit, so we're left, rather unhappily, with Five Diamonds.

Going up, three invite a slam with a general values Five Spades:

Robson: Five Spades. Seems about right on all fronts. I may have opened Four Spades (yes, undisciplined I know).

Wow!

Rigal: Five Spades. Partner tortures me, I torture him. This just sounds like a better hand than Four Spades to me. Four Hearts could be a mark-time call in such a heavily competitive auction.

Or, if you are Eric, a specific message Five Spades: **Kokish:** Five Spades. Big spades, good hand, no heart control, no club support. If East was coming in diamonds he might be able to picture my hand and place the contract confidently.

Three bid a slam in diamonds, not because they think Four Hearts agreed diamonds, but simply because they think it is the right thing to do. Neil make no comment on his bid, but Bobby, in particular, is mindful of the problems:

Wolff: Six Diamonds. I suppose partner could have long solid clubs and heart control intending to be interested in a club slam, and if so, I may have rained heavily on his parade, but, if so, and I only decided to bid Five Spades, should I pass if partner now offers Six Clubs? Or should I bid even fewer spades or only Five Diamonds, not doing justice to my hand with either bid, unless partner had the cursed hand I suggest.

Teramoto: Six Diamonds. Showing my good two-suited hand.

Paul goes one step further with Six Spades:

Bowyer: Six Spades. I first wrote down 5NT (pick a slam—and then convert Six Clubs to Six Diamonds.). However, this hand can play in spades no matter what. I know I'd bid Six Spades at the table, so that's what I'm going to bid here.

It is indeed hard to see how Six Spades will be inferior to Six Diamonds.

Finally, five (I am surprised it was not more) go for the now ubiquitous "5NT, pick a slam".

Carruthers: 5NT. My first instinct was to bid a simple Six Diamonds, what I think we can make. I need very specific cards (four key cards or the three outside clubs) for seven, and if he has them, he might bid it over that. It's a bit awkward, since Four Spades and Five Clubs could be passed and Five Diamonds is not enough. I could try Five

Hearts, but he could go to seven with the spade ace, heart singleton, diamond king and club aceking if I did that. As it is, I can pull Six Clubs (if that's what he bids over 5NT) to Six Diamonds and pass Six Diamonds if that's what he bids. The bonus to 5NT is that it gives him a chance to bid Six Hearts (now or after Six Clubs-Six Diamonds).

Fair enough.

Cannell: 5NT. Pick-a-slam. Four Hearts is a little nebulous though likely a cue in support of diamonds. I will let partner know I can play slam in either of my suits. I will pull Six Clubs from partner to Six Diamonds if that occurs – right or wrong.

Lawrence: 5NT. Will correct Six Clubs to Six Diamonds. If partner has ♠Ax ♥Ax ♦Kxx we have a cold slam somewhere. If he also has the ace of clubs, we have a grand. Hope he can work it out. I imagine that Alan is happy he doesn't have to answer this and other hands from this month.

I sure am Mike—but then that is always the case. And for that, Mike wins the comment of the month. Leufkens: 5NT. So, partner has got a nice hand with a heart cue. Four Hearts is NOT last train, as trumps have not been agreed. After Six Clubs I'll bid Six Diamonds. I hope partner is a practical bidder (also) and would have bid something else with ♠x ♥A ♠xxx ♣AKQJxxxx.

Sime: 5NT. Pick a slam, correcting Six Clubs to Six Diamonds to suggest diamonds or spades.

Partner held $\triangle xxx \forall A \land Kx \triangle AK109xxx$ so Six Spades is excellent, but not today, since the Three Heart bidder had a singleton diamond and two low spades so the ruff took care of Six Spades.

Not a bad set of problems this month—only three with overall majorities, and every problem having at

least three answers, with a total of 37 answers, making just over four a problem. Low scores this month from the panel, also suggesting a good set of problems. Pride of place goes to David Bird with 78, closely followed by Michael Byrne and Tadashi Teramoto on 77, followed by John Carruthers on 76. Can any reader top 78?



David Bird

SET 320 – THE PANEL'S BIDS & MARKS

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
David Bird	England	2♦	2NT	3♥	2.	6♣	5♠	4♥	4♠	78
Michael Byrne	England	2.	3♦	3♠	2.	6♣	5♣	Double	4♠	77
Tadashi Teramoto	Japan	2♦	2NT	3♠	2.	6♣	5♣	Double	6 ♦	77
John Carruthers	Canada	2♦	2NT	3♠	2	4NT	5♣	4 ♥	5NT	76
Phillip Alder	USA	2♦	2NT	3♥	3NT	4NT	5♣	4♥	4♠	75
Alon Apteker	South Africa	2♠	3♦	3♥	2	4NT	5♣	Double	4♠	75
Sally Brock	England	2♦	2NT	3♥	3NT	4NT	5♣	4 ♥	4♠	75
Ben Green	England	2♠	2NT	3♥	1NT	4NT	5♠	Double	4♠	75
Iain Sime	Scotland	2♦	2NT	3♠	1NT	4NT	5♠	Double	5NT	75
Paul Bowyer	England	2.	2NT	3NT	2.	6♣	5♠	3NT	6♠	74
Drew Cannell	Canada	2♠	2NT	3♠	2.	6♣	5♣	3NT	5NT	74
Mike Lawrence	USA	2♦	2NT	3♥	3NT	6♣	5♠	4 ♥	5NT	74
Enri Leufkens	Netherlands	2♦	2NT	3NT	1NT	4NT	5♣	3NT	5NT	74
Andrew Robson	England	2.	2NT	3♠	1NT	6♣	4NT	Double	5♠	74
Eric Kokish	Canada	2♠	2NT	3NT	1NT	5NT	5♣	Pass	5♠	72
Neil Rosen	England	2.	3♦	3♠	1NT	4 ♦	5♣	Double	6 ♦	72
Joey Silver	Canada	2NT	2NT	3NT	1NT	4NT	5♠	Pass	4♠	71
Barry Rigal	USA	2.	2♠	3NT	2♣	6♣	5♣	4 ♥	5♠	69
Marc Smith	England	2♦	2♣	3♥	2.	6♣	4NT	4♥	5 ♦	69
Bobby Wolff	USA	2♦	3♥	3NT	3NT	5♣	5♠	Double	6♦	64



Master Point Bidding Battle Competition – Set 3

Open to All – Free Entry

PROBLEM 1

IMPs. Dealer South. None Vul.

- ♠ AKQJ942
- **y** _
- ♦ AKQJ10
- **♣** A

West	North	East	South
_	_		4
?			

PROBLEM 2

IMPs. Dealer West. All Vul.

- ♠ -
- **♥** A5
- ♦ AQJ109
- ♣ AK10963

West	North	East	South
1♣	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♦	Pass	3♠*	Pass
4	Pass	4♠	Pass
?			
3 1 1	oser at worst	FG	

PROBLEM 3

IMPs. Dealer West. All Vul.

- **♦** QJ104
- **Y** A96
- ♦ AK743
- ♣ Q

West	North	East	South
1♦	1♠	Double	Pass
2			

PROBLEM 4

IMPs. Dealer East. None Vul.

- **♠** —
- **7** 6
- ♦ AKJ10954
- ♣ AKQ104

West	North	East	South
_	_	Pass	1♠
2NT	Pass	3♣	Pass
?			
2NT mi	nors		

PROBLEM 5

IMPs. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

- **★** K632
- **7** 104
- ♦ J107543
- **♣** A

West	North	East	South
_	_	1♣	1♠
?			

PROBLEM 6

IMPs. Dealer South. E/W Vul

- ♠ 95
- ♥ AQ3
- ♦ AQ3
- ♣ Q10863

West	North	East	South
_	_	_	4♠
Pass	Pass	Double	Pass
?			

PROBLEM 7

IMPs. Dealer South. All Vul.

- **★** 52
- **V** 8742
- ♦ A92
- ♣ AK86

West	North	East	South
_	_	_	Pass
Pass	Pass	1♦	Double
1♥	2♣	2♥*	Pass
?			
2 9 For	ur cards		

PROBLEM 8

IMPs. Dealer East. All Vul.

- **♠** 6
- **♥** Q76
- ♦ K9843
- **♣** 6432

West	t North	East	South
_	_	2♣*	Pass
2♦*	Pass	2♠	Pass
3♦	Pass	3♥	Pass
?			
2♣	23+ bal or any FG hand		
2♦	Negative or waiting relay		

Send entry to biddingbattle@newbridgemag.com or enter via the website www.newbridgemag.com. Entries to arrive before the end of the month.

A New Bridge Magazine Bidding System

Basic Method

Natural

Five-card majors

Minors are three cards in length minimum. Always open $1\clubsuit$ with 3-3 or 4-4, so $1\spadesuit$ is 3 cards only if precisely 4-4-3-2 shape

15-17 no-trump in all positions and vulnerabilities Two over one is game forcing in all uncontested auctions

A 1NT is up to a non-game force but it is not-forcing. However the only hands that Pass are weak no-trump types.

Jumps at the two-level are weak (eg, 1 • - 2 •) and at the three-level are invitational (eg 1 • - 3 •)

1M – 3M is a limit raise

Inverted minors are played. 1m - 2m is F2NT and 1m - 3m is pre-emptive. Over 1m - 2m, 2NT is a WNT and is non-forcing, 3m is unbalanced and non-forcing. All other bids are at least quasi-natural and FG

Weak $2 \spadesuit$, $2 \heartsuit$ and $2 \spadesuit$ (5 – 9, six-card suit). In response 2NT is a relay asking for a high-card feature if not minimum with 3NT showing a good suit, non-minimum. $3 \clubsuit$ asks for a singleton with

3NT showing a singleton ♣. 4♣ is RKCB

Three-level openings are natural and pre-emptive. Over $3 \diamondsuit / \heartsuit / \diamondsuit$, $4 \diamondsuit$ is RKCB and over $3 \diamondsuit$, $4 \diamondsuit$ is RKCB.

3NT opening is Acol gambling – solid suit and at most a queen outside.

Four-level openings are natural.

No-trump bidding:

After 1NT 15 – 17, $2\clubsuit$ = Stayman, $2\diamondsuit/2\blacktriangledown$ = transfers, $2\spadesuit$ = \clubsuit s with 2NT/ $3\clubsuit$ denying/showing a fit, 2NT = \diamondsuit s with $3\clubsuit/\diamondsuit$ denying/showing a fit. After this new suits are splinters. $3\clubsuit$ is 5 card Stayman, $3\diamondsuit$ is 5-5 ms FG, $3\blacktriangledown/\spadesuit$ 1-3-(4-5) / 3-1-(4-5) and FG. $4\clubsuit$ is 5-5 majors, game only, $4\diamondsuit/\blacktriangledown$ = $\blacktriangledown/\spadesuit$ s (then 4NT = RKCB and new suits are Exclusion).

1NT rebid = 12-14 with $2\clubsuit$ a puppet to $2\spadesuit$ to play in $2\spadesuit$ or make an invitational bid, $2\spadesuit$ is game forcing checkback, new suits at the 3 level are 5-5 FG and higher bids are auto-splinters.

Jump 2NT rebid = 18 - 19 with natural continuations.

After 2 over 1, 2NT is 12-14 balanced or 18-19 balanced and 3NT is 15-17 range with a reason not to have opened 1NT

3NT rebid after a one-level response shows a good

suit and a good hand.

After 2NT, 20-22, $3\clubsuit$ = Stayman, $3\diamondsuit/3\blacktriangledown$ = transfers, $3\spadesuit$ = slam try with both minors. Four-level bids are as after 1NT opening.

Kokish is played after $2\clubsuit$ opening $(2\clubsuit-2\blacktriangledown-2\blacktriangledown-2\Rho -2\Rho -2\Rho + balanced FG, and <math>2\clubsuit-2\blacktriangledown-2\Rho + 2\Rho + balanced NF)$

Initial response:

Jump shifts are weak at the two-level and invitational at the three-level. Bidding and rebidding a suit is invitational, bidding and jump rebidding a suit is FG (eg $1 \diamondsuit$, $2 \heartsuit$ is weak, $1 \diamondsuit$, $1 \heartsuit$, $2 \diamondsuit$ 2 \heartsuit is invitational; $1 \diamondsuit$, $1 \heartsuit$, $2 \diamondsuit$, $3 \heartsuit$ is FG).

2NT after 1 - 1 is natural and invitational without 4M.

2NT after $1 \checkmark / 1 \spadesuit =$ game-forcing with 4+ card support. Continuations in new suits are splinters, $3 \checkmark / \spadesuit$ extras with no singleton, 3NT = 18-19 balanced, 4 new suits are 5-5 good suits, $4 \checkmark / \spadesuit$ minimum balanced.

Continuations:

1x – 1M – 2M promises four-card support or three-card support and an unbalanced hand. Balanced hands with three-card support rebid 1NT Reverses are forcing for one round after a one-level

How to Enter

Send your chosen bid in each of the eight problems, by email to biddingbattle@newbridgemag.com or enter via the website www.newbridgemag.com. Entries must be received before the end of the month. Include your name, email address and number of the set which you are entering.

response. The lower of 2NT and 4th suit encompasses all weak hands, responder's rebid of own suit is F1 but not necessarily strong, all other bids are FG.

All high reverses are game-forcing.

Jumps when a bid of the suit one level lower is forcing are splinters, as are four-level responses in a lower-ranking suit to $1 \checkmark / 1 \spadesuit$. Jumps when the previous level is forcing are splinters.

4th suit = game-forcing.

When responder's suit is raised a return to opener's suit is forcing.

Slam bidding:

Roman Key Card Blackwood (1 or 4, 0 or 3, 2, 2 + trump Q).

Exclusion Blackwood only in clear circumstances including a jump to the five-level in a new suit and after $1NT - 4 \checkmark / \checkmark$. Responses are 0, 1, 2.

Cue-bids are Italian style, that is the lowest control is shown regardless of whether it is first or second round or a positive or negative control and skipping a suit denies a control in that suit. Exception: a negative control in partner's suit is not shown immediately.

The default for 5NT is "pick a slam".

Competition:

Responsive and competitive Doubles through 3♠ – after that, Doubles are value-showing, not penalties.

Negative Doubles through 3♠ – after that, Doubles are value showing, not penalties.

After a 1M opening bid and an overcall, 2NT = four-card limit raise or better and a cue-bid is a

three-card limit raise or better, raises are pre-emptive, change of suit forcing one round but not FG. New suits at the three-level are FG.

After a 1m opening and an overcall, 2NT is natural and invitational and the cue-bid is a limit raise or better, raises are pre-emptive, change of suit F1 but not FG, new suit at the three-level is FG.

Fit-jumps after opponents overcall or take-out Double.

Fit jumps after our overcalls. Jump cue-bid is a mixed raise (about 6-9 with four-card support)

Double jumps are splinters.

Lebensohl applies after interference over our 1NT. An immediate 3NT shows a stopper but not 4oM, 2NT then 3NT shows a stopper and 4oM, 2NT then cue-bid shows no stopper but 4oM immediate cue-bid shows no stopper and no 4oM. In summary 3NT at any time shows a stopper and cue-bid at any time denies one, a jump to $3 \triangleq$ (eg $1NT - 2 \checkmark - 3 \triangleq$) is FG.

2NT is rarely natural in competition (except as defined above). Possibilities include Lebensohl or scramble if game is not viable.

Overcalls:

After a 1M overcall, 2NT = four-card limit raise or better and a cue-bid is a three-card limit raise or better, raises are pre-emptive, change of suit forcing one round. Fit jumps, jump cue is a mixed raise (about 6-9 and four trumps)

After a minor-suit overcall, 2NT is natural and invitational and the cue-bid is a limit raise or better, raises are pre-emptive. Fit jumps, jump cue is a mixed raise (about 6-9 and four trumps)

Weak jump overcalls, intermediate in 4th.

Michaels cue-bids. 1m - 2m = Ms, 1M - 2M = oM and m with 2NT asking for the m, inv+ and 3m P/C

Defences:

Against all pre-empts, take-out Doubles with Lebensohl responses – same structure as above.

2NT is rarely natural in competition (except as defined above). Possibilities include Lebensohl or scramble if game is not viable.

Over 2M, $4\clubsuit/\blacklozenge$ are Leaping Michaels (5,5 in \clubsuit/\blacklozenge and oM, FG). Over Natural weak $2\diamondsuit$, $4\clubsuit$ = Leaping Michaels (5, 5 in \clubsuit & a M with $4\diamondsuit$ to ask for M). Over $3\clubsuit$, $4\clubsuit$ = Ms and $4\diamondsuit$ = \diamondsuit 8M with $4\heartsuit/\spadesuit$ as P/C. Over $3\diamondsuit$, $4\clubsuit$ = Nat and $4\diamondsuit$ = Ms. Over $3\heartsuit$, $4\clubsuit/\diamondsuit$ = Nat, $4\heartsuit$ = \diamondsuit 8m, 4NT = ms. Over $3\diamondsuit$, $4\diamondsuit/\diamondsuit/\diamondsuit$ = nat, $4\diamondsuit/4$ NT = two-suiter

Over their 1NT, Double = pens, $2\clubsuit$ = majors, $2\diamondsuit$ = 1 major, $2\heartsuit/\spadesuit$ = $5\heartsuit/\spadesuit$ & 4+m 2NT = minors or game-forcing 2-suiter.

Over a strong 1♣, natural, Double = majors, 1NT = minors, Pass then bid is strong.

Grand Prix

In addition there is an annual Grand Prix with Master Point Press prizes of £100, £50 and £35. Only scores of 50 and over will count and the maximum score is 400. Each contestant's Grand Prix total is their five best scores over the year (January – December).

WEST

Hands for the March 2018 Partnership Profile

Bid these hands with those on the following page with your favourite partner; then turn to The Auction Room inside to see how your score compares to that of the experts

Hand 1. Dealer South. None Vul.

- ♠ AQ4
- **Y** 3
- ♦ KQJ7432
- ♣ KJ

Hand 2. Dealer South. All Vul.

- ★ K
- **V** Q86
- ♦ K9872
- ♣ AK95

Hand 3. Dealer East. None Vul.

- **♦** J1097
- ♥ A95
- ♦ AK632
- **♣** 6

North overcalls 4♥

Hand 4.. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

- **♦** J732
- **♥** AK32
- K
- ♣ Q854

Hand 5. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

- **♠** —
- **♥** A
- ♦ AKQ873
- ♣ AKJ976

North overcalls 2♥, South raises to 3♥ and North hids 4♥

Hand 6. Dealer North. None Vul.

- **★** AK72
- ♥ QJ
- ♦ AQ
- ♣ KQ942

South overcalls 1♥

Hand 7. Dealer South. Both Vul.

- **★** AQ64
- **♥** AKQ108
- ♦ QJ85
- **♣** —

Hand 8. Dealer North. None Vul.

- ♠ AQJ94
- AK
- **♦** 7
- ♣ A8754

MASTER POINT BIDDING BATTLE



Results - Set 1

Leading the way with a score of 79, and thus our first winner, is Olivier Jacques. He was followed by Adamic Tomaz with 78. There was a four-way tie for third place between Bill Gordon, Tony Burt, Mike Ralph and Colin Brown, all of whom scored 76. As the Bidding Battle Moderator was unable to split the tie Mrs T's titfer was brought back into action and Mike was first out of the hat and is awarded third prize. Next was Colin so he claims the fourth prize.

When three rounds have been completed we shall start giving the Grand Prix standings.

Other Good Scores

- 75 Michael Prior, José Eduardo de Souza Campos Filho
- 74 Alon Amsel, Dennis Dewit
- 73 Andrew Morris, Stuart Nelson, Gregor Rus
- 72 Olga Shadyro, Mark Bartusek
- 70 Ian Hamilton, Gonzalo Goded Merino
- 69 Pär Ol-Mårs, David Barnes, Nikolas Bausback

How to Claim Your Prize

The winners will receive an email from Master Point Press sending you a Gift Certificate. You will then need to create an account using your email address in order to validate your Certificate.

EAST

Hands for the March 2018 Partnership Profile

Bid these hands with those on the previous page with your favourite partner; then turn to The Auction Room inside to see how your score compares to that of the experts

Hand 1. Dealer South. None Vul.

- **★** K8
- ♥ AKJ1086
- ♦ A5
- ♣ Q63

Hand 2. Dealer South. All Vul.

- ♠ AQ
- ♥ A754
- ♦ AQJ1043
- **8**

Hand 3. Dealer East. None Vul.

- **★** AK86
- **v** —
- ♦ Q875
- **♣** J9742

North overcalls 4♥

Hand 4.. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

- ♠ AKQ94
- **y** 9
- 10963
- ♣ AK3

Hand 5. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

- **♦** J96
- ♥ Q65
- **1094**
- ♣ 10543

North overcalls 2♥, South raises to 3♥ and North hids 4♥

Hand 6. Dealer North. None Vul.

- **★** 54
- **♥** K7
- ♦ KJ652
- ♣ AJ83

South overcalls 1♥

Hand 7. Dealer South. Both Vul.

- **★** 1032
- **♥** J
- ♦ AK72
- ♣ J10973

Hand 8. Dealer North. None Vul.

- **★** K
- **y** 9
- ♦ A106543
- ♣ KQ932

Running Costs

In order to meet our production costs we are relying on sponsorship, advertising revenue and donations.

Sponsorship can come in many forms—one that is proving popular is the sponsorship of a particular column—as you will see from the association of FunBridge with Misplay these Hands with Me and Master Point Press with The Bidding Battle.

We have set ourselves a target of 50,000+ readers, which should be enough to attract a significant level of advertising. As that number increases we will be able to approach more famous companies who might wish to associate themselves with the bridge playing community.

You can help us to achieve our aims in several ways.

Firstly—and by far the most important—by telling all your bridge playing friends that we exist and making sure they register at our web site, www.newbridgemag.com

Secondly by becoming a sponsor. That could take many forms—I have already mentioned the possibility of being linked to a column within the magazine and you will see from this issue that is already popular. There is also the possibility of linking directly to the title.

Thirdly by becoming a Friend of the magazine. That would involve a donation. Anyone donating £500 would become a Golden Friend. Setting up a standing order to pay a modest sum each month is an option suggested by one of our readers.

If you would like to discuss any of the above contact me at: editor@newbridgemag.com

Ask not what what A New Bridge Magazine can do for you – ask what you can do for A New Bridge Magazine.