

A NEW BRIDGE MAGAZINE

Lions in Winter
Slams and Sacrifices
From the Archives

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A NEW BRIDGE MAGAZINE

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Trials and Tribulations

The trials for England's Women's Team for the 2018 European Championships took place 2nd-5th March.

After the trials the Selection Committee (excluding conflicted members) decided that the presence of a substitute for one third of the event prevented the Brock team as a team of four from being declared clear winners. It was concluded that, for a variety of reasons, the substitute allowed to the Brock team is likely to have materially affected the results of the trials.

The Selection Committee therefore concluded that the Senior team (Nevena Senior, Heather Dhondy, Catherine Draper and Gillian Fawcett) be declared winners of the trials and invited to represent England in the European Championships. They then sought to add a third pair, asking both pairs in the Brock team, Sally Brock & Fiona Brown and Nicola Smith & Yvonne Wiseman to make up the team. Both declined but the selectors asked them to reconsider. Eventually Brock & Brown accepted.

Am I alone in being bewildered by a process that has resulted in the world's number one ranked player not being a member of the team?

Meanwhile the trial to represent England in the Senior Teams at the European Championships has been won by Peter Shelley, Malcolm Pryor, David Muller, Alan Mayo, Rob Cliffe & Trevor Ward. (See this month's Auction Room.)

The closely contested playoff against the team of John Hassett, David Mossop, Gunnar Hallberg, John Holland, Brian Senior and Paul Hackett was decided by 24 IMPs over 96 boards. Four

of the six sessions were won by only single figure margins – a 39 IMP win in session 4 proving decisive for the Shelley team.

The European Team Championships take place in Ostend, Belgium, on 6th-16th June.



Camrose Decider

The second weekend of the Camrose Trophy, which was postponed due to the recent bad weather, will now be played at the beginning of this month, 6th-8th April near Dublin.

The team originally selected to represent England on the second weekend (Alexander Allfrey & Andrew Robson; Tony Forrester & Graham Osborne; David Gold & Mike Bell) are not able to play. The England team will therefore be:

Janet de Botton & Artur Malinowski, Espen Erichsen & Glyn Liggins, David Bakhshi & Tom Townsend, plus NPC Alan Mould.

As usual you will be able to follow all the action on BBO.

England leads by 4.93 VPs after the first weekend.

Schapiro Spring Fours

There is still time to enter this classical event run on double elimination so that no team is out of the hunt until they have been beaten twice. This year's (one-off) venue for the event which takes place between 4-8 May, is the Hilton Hotel, Warwick.

Wrong View

In last month's editorial I mentioned the wrong website address for Vu-Bridge. The place to go is: www.vubridge.com

WBF News

At its meeting held in Philadelphia during the recent ACBL Nationals the Executive Council of the WBF 2018 unanimously agreed that starting from 2019 a Mixed Teams Championship should be added alongside the Open (Bermuda Bowl) Women's (Venice Cup) and Seniors (d'Orsi Trophy) at the World Bridge Teams Championships. The Zonal Conferences will hold qualifying Championships/Trials as they do for the other categories.

At the same meeting the Executive Council, on the proposal of the President, approved with two abstentions that the number of teams participating in the World Bridge Teams Championships should be raised from 22 to 24 in each category, by giving Europe an additional two places: the duration of the championship will not change, being 8 days of round robin and 6 days of KO (Quarter-final, Semi-final and Final) played as 96 board matches.

Playbridge

Bridge lends itself to technological advances. For some of the latest innovations take a look at <http://www.playbridgeuk.com/>

The Way Ahead

Bridge Teachers play a vital role in the promotion of bridge by introducing new players to the

game. Their importance is recognised by annual awards presented jointly by the EBU and English Bridge Education & Development. The Alec Salisbury Award is made to the school teacher who has made the most effective contribution to promoting bridge.

The Tom Bradley Award is made to the (non-school) teacher who has made the most effective contribution to promoting Youth bridge.

More information on the awards and the process for making a nomination is available at: <http://www.ebedcio.org.uk/awards>.

United we Stand

A host of experts met during the ACBL's most recent National tournament in Philadelphia to raise awareness of what they describe as a threat to "the very soul of the game." Although disciplinary hearings in North America and Europe have resulted in the permanent banning of several top pairs convicted of collusive cheating, some of the accused have turned to civil courts to have their sentences overturned or reduced. In January, the European Union's Court of Arbitration for Sport ruled that the European Bridge League's ban of Fulvio Fantoni and Claudio Nunes was invalid, a decision that sent shock waves through the bridge world. Recognizing that world, zonal and national bridge federations could be compelled by courts to allow the participation of players who had previously been banned, some players are trying to take matters into their own hands by demanding that these bridge organizations announce in advance who would be invited to their tournaments. This would permit players to avoid participating in

events in which those previously convicted planned to play. The group in Philadelphia created buttons that read "Say No to Cheats," and posted a petition that was available for anyone to sign. More than a hundred players proudly sported the buttons throughout the day, and roughly an equal number signed the petition, which read in part:

We appreciate the efforts of the national and international federations in dealing with this cancer. We have no doubt they share our common cause. Yet we also see that there are times when their hands are tied by the red tape of bureaucracy and the maze of legal interpretations. Bridge players around the world have a right to decide where to play and against whom. It is for this reason that we ask the organizers of major tournaments for full transparency regarding participants. Concerned players can then make a decision as to whether they wish to withdraw from the event.

Zia Mahmood, one of the rally organizers, said:

"With the expulsion of these players, the feeling at tournaments became so much better because we all knew we were having a fair game. But after the recent events in Europe, a sense of unease has returned. It would be as if someone who came to your home treated you and your family horribly, but after kicking them out, you were somehow forced to invite them back. So this is why we're doing this: The federations' hands may be tied, but ours aren't."

Fellow rally organizer Boye Brogeland—who also led the initial charge against the collusive cheaters in 2015—said:

"We need a new approach when it comes to cheating. It's so hard to prove the method by which someone might cheat, but the statistical analysis of unusual

results shows us the way. We have to take action early even if we can't prove it to the smallest detail. This is important for the players. I don't think the organizers know how much the players care about this."

Howard Weinstein, chair of the ACBL's Anti-Cheating Commission, said:

"The best thing you can do to help with possible cheating cases is to speak up. File those player memos! If you see something, say something. One hand doesn't prove anything, but patterns can only appear if there's enough evidence."

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Test Your Technique

with Christophe Grosset

see Page 91

Dealer East. N/S Vul.

	♠ A652	
	♥ KQ53	
	♦ AK104	
	♣ A	
♠ 843		♠ Q1097
♥ J98		♥ A6
♦ 97		♦ 86532
♣ J9652		♣ K3
	♠ KJ	
	♥ 10742	
	♦ QJ	
	♣ Q10874	

West	North	East	South
Rombaut	Grosset	Combescur	Skorchev
—	—	1NT*	Pass
2♣	Double*	2♠	Double*
Pass	3♠	Pass	3NT

Dble Values
Dble Values

Playing matchpoints, you end up in the wrong contract of 3NT after your opponent made your life difficult by opening in mini no trump (9-11) from East.

Hearts are clearly going to make one more trick than no-trumps if trumps do not behave too badly. How can you try to steal a trick on a spade lead from West?

The Lions in Winter

The Editor reports on the Second Winter Games in Monaco.

With its superb venue, the Fairmont Hotel, which affords outstanding playing conditions, and a magnificent (and lengthy) prize list, the Winter Games offers a perfect bridge cocktail. In the main event, the Zimmermann Cup, the teams play a three-day qualifier over 15 rounds, with the top 16 advancing to the four-day knock out phase. The winners collect a handsome €30,000, and there are excellent prizes all the way down to 16th place.

Non-qualifiers or teams wanting to play for only four days can compete for the FMB Trophy, a Board-a-Match event, with two days of qualification followed by the finals. The winners of final A collect €8,000 (and there are prizes down to 12th place) while in Final B there are five prizes, the winners taking home €4000.

Although Monaco is often thought of as the playground of the rich, its proximity to France means that you can stay across the border and pay more user-friendly prices.

It was therefore no surprise that the second edition of the Winter Games attracted a vastly increased entry.

Alongside Jean-Paul Meyer and Francesca Canali, my role was to report the action for the Daily Bulletin. This year we decided upon a theatrical theme.

Memory

Memory is a show tune from the 1981 musical *Cats*. It is sung by the character Grizabella, a one-time glamour cat who is now only a shell of her former self. The song is a nostalgic remembrance of her glorious past and a declaration of her wish to start a new life. Sung briefly in the first act and in full near the end of the show, *Memory* is the climax of the musical, and by far its most popular and best-known song. Elaine Paige originated the role of Grizabella in the West End production of *Cats*, the first to perform the song publicly on stage and bringing attention to its writers Andrew Lloyd Webber and Trevor Nunn.

My favourite version is the one by José Carreras, who gained fame with a wider audience as one of the Three Tenors alongside Plácido Domingo and Luciano Pavarotti in a series of mass concerts that began in 1990 and continued until 2003. (You can see it at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Ifai53IyJs>)

Having visited Monaco so many times I have a few memories – especially about the extraordinary Bermuda Bowl final in 2003. Walking back to my hotel in Beausoleil on Friday evening I suddenly remembered that the night before the historic climax to that contest we had visited an Indian restaurant just across the border in France – and there it was, just a few metres away.

As the second Winter Games got under way I couldn't help but speculate about what memories they will evoke 'as time goes by' (of course you all know where that line comes from!)

In the first round I followed the fortunes of the holders, who, following the traditions of other majors sporting contests, took centre stage on BBO. (There was the added spice of a father vs. son element although they sat at separate tables.) The match started quietly, but then burst into life.

Board 6. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

♠ A	♠ Q 10 9 7 6 4	♠ J 8 4 3
♥ J 6 2	♥ K 9 3	♥ 10 8 7 4
♦ A 9 2	♦ K 7 6 3	♦ Q J 10
♣ Q 10 9 6 3 2	♣ —	♣ J 8
	<div> <div>W</div> <div>N</div> <div>S</div> <div>E</div> </div>	
	♠ K 2	
	♥ A Q 5	
	♦ 8 5 4	
	♣ A K 7 5 4	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bakke</i>	<i>Helness</i>	<i>Rasmussen</i>	<i>Helgemo</i>
–	–	Pass	1♣
Pass	1♠	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♣*	Pass	2♦*
Pass	2♠	Pass	3NT
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

East led the queen of diamonds and West took the ace and returned the nine, declarer winning with the king, playing a heart to the queen and cashing the top clubs discarding diamonds. Only now did declarer turn his attention to the trump suit and having seen East's ♣J on the second round of the suit he started with the two. West's ace was a happy sight as it meant declarer could not lose more than two trumps, +420.

♠ Q 10 9 7 6 4
♥ K 9 3
♦ K 7 6 3
♣ —

♠ A
♥ J 6 2
♦ A 9 2
♣ Q 10 9 6 3 2

W N E S

♠ J 8 4 3
♥ 10 8 7 4
♦ Q J 10
♣ J 8

♠ K 2
♥ A Q 5
♦ 8 5 4
♣ A K 7 5 4

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Versace</i>	<i>Helness</i>	<i>Lauria</i>	<i>Hoyland</i>
–	–	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♥*	Pass	2♠
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

West led the three of clubs and declarer took two rounds of the suit pitching diamonds, crossed to dummy with the king of hearts and played a spade to the king and ace (in isolation this is the best line for 5 tricks at 42.95%, but ignores the evidence provided by the club suit). West played the queen of clubs and when declarer ruffed with dummy's six of spades East overruffed and switched to the queen of diamonds, one down, -50 and 10 IMPs for the holders.

If you live in London there is an old saying that you wait for hours for a bus and then two turn up at the same time. Sometimes it is like that in bridge—you wait an age for a big swing and then....

Board 8. Dealer West. None Vul.

	♠ AK8642	
	♥ A108	
	♦ 7	
	♣ 654	
♠ J73	<div style="background-color: #90EE90; padding: 10px; display: inline-block;">N W E S</div>	♠ Q5
♥ J7		♥ 9532
♦ KQ1086		♦ J953
♣ K103		♣ A82
	♠ 109	
	♥ KQ64	
	♦ A42	
	♣ QJ97	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bakke</i>	<i>Helness</i>	<i>Rasmussen</i>	<i>Helgemo</i>
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♣
2♦	2♠	3♦	4♠
All Pass			

East led the five of diamonds and declarer won with dummy's ace, cashed the top spades and played a club to the queen and king. West returned the queen of diamonds and declarer ruffed, cashed the ace of hearts and played a heart to the king. When he continued with dummy's queen West ruffed and exited with a diamond, declarer ruffing and playing a club to the jack, +420.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Versace</i>	<i>Helness</i>	<i>Lauria</i>	<i>Hoyland</i>
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♣*
Pass	2♦*	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

I don't have the N/S convention card, but I'm prepared to speculate that 2♣ and 2♦ had some hidden meaning.

West led the king of diamonds and when East followed with the jack he

continued the suit. Declarer was doomed and he pitched a heart from dummy on the second round of the suit, finishing three down, -150 and another 10 IMPs for the holders who had made a comfortable start to the defence of their title.

Scaramouche

Scaramouche is a romantic adventure film based on the 1921 novel *Scaramouche* by Rafael Sabatini as well as the 1952 film version starring Stewart Granger as *André Moreau*. Ah, I hear you say, the advertised theme of the *Bulletins* is the theatre. Be patient dear reader, all will be revealed in a moment.

In France just prior to the Revolution, Marie Antoinette asks her cousin Noel, the Marquis de Maynes to uncover the identity of *Marcus Brutus*, a dangerous pamphleteer rousing hatred of the aristocracy (Moreau's best friend).

Meanwhile, Moreau, a nobleman's bastard, kidnaps his beloved Lenore to keep her from marrying another man. Afterwards, Moreau learns that his father is the Count de Gavrillac. While travelling to meet his parents, Moreau runs into Aline de Gavrillac, the Queen's ward, when her carriage breaks down. They are strongly attracted to each other, but Moreau's ardour suddenly cools when he learns that she is his half-sister.

By chance, de Maynes a master swordsman, encounters Marcus Brutus, provokes him into a duel, then toys with his inexperienced opponent before killing him. Enraged, Moreau attacks, but does no better than his dead friend. After de Maynes easily disarms him several times, Moreau chooses discretion over valour and flees for his life, vowing to kill de Maynes the same way he slew de Valmorin:

"You're going to die as he died, by the sword. You'll be driven back step by step, until you stand helpless as he did. Then I, Andre Moreau, will kill you as you killed him. I swear it, Philippe. By all that I hold sacred, I swear you this man's death!"

As the plot unravels Moreau takes lessons from de Maynes' personal fencing instructor, Doutreval and then his teacher, Perigore. In the climax the rivals engage in a spectacular encounter which takes place a performance of the De Binet Troupe in the theatre (you see, it fits our theme – just). The prolonged duel (reputedly the longest in screen history at about seven minutes) ranges throughout the theatre, from the balcony boxes, to the lobby, through the main seats, onto the stage, into the backstage area, and finally back on the

stage itself. At the end, Moreau has de Maynes at his mercy, backed against the proscenium arch, defeated, helpless as Philippe de Valmorin had been; but something he cannot explain stays his hand. Moreau stabs his sword into the stage and stalks off, leaving de Maynes bloodied but alive.

Later, Moreau learns from Philippe's father that his father was not the Count de Gavrillac, but rather the old Marquis de Maynes, the Count de Gavrillac's friend; Noel de Maynes, the man he could not kill, is his half-brother. He then realizes that he is not related to Aline after all, so they can be married. Lenore, after giving him her blessing, consoles herself with a certain Corsican officer.

After that lengthy pre-ambule I expect you are anxious to see some bridge – in Round 2 I opted for the duel between Mahaffey and Bridge24PLB.

Board 5. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

♠ Q7		
♥ K2		
♦ 10653		
♣ QJ1065		
♠ A9852		♠ K1064
♥ A104		♥ QJ83
♦ A9		♦ KJ
♣ K42		♣ A73
		♠ J3
		♥ 9765
		♦ Q8742
		♣ 98

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Brogeland	Chmurski	Lindqvist	Golebiowski
–	Pass	1♣	Pass
1♥*	Pass	2♠*	Pass
2NT*	Pass	3NT	Pass
4♠	All Pass		
1♥	Transfer		
2♠	Four card support		

If you infer that 3NT implies some concentration of values in the red suits West might prefer 4♣ to 4♠. Then East bids 4♦ and West 4♥. Still, it's not clear that East will do more than bid 4♠.

Maybe East should bid 3♥ over 2NT. If West then bids 4♣ East's cue-bid of 4♦ is good news for West, who may be able to envisage the near perfect fit. +480.

♠ A9852	♠ Q7	♠ K1064
♥ A104	♥ K2	♥ QJ83
♦ A9	♦ 10653	♦ KJ
♣ K42	♣ QJ1065	♣ A73
	♠ J3	
	♥ 9765	
	♦ Q8742	
	♣ 98	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Tuczynski</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>	<i>Sielicki</i>	<i>Zia</i>
–	Pass	1♣	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♠	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

In these days of opening bids on modest values (o tempora o mores!) West was content to go directly to game, no swing.

I did find a pair who bid the slam – in the match between No Name Red and Emerald:

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Lengy</i>	<i>Oymen</i>	<i>Baraket</i>	<i>Aksuyek</i>
–	Pass	1♣	Pass
1♥	Pass	2♠	Pass
3♣	Pass	4♠	Pass
4NT*	Pass	5♥*	Pass
6♠	All Pass		

4NT RKC

5♥ 2 key cards

It gave Emerald 11 IMPs.

Board 8. Dealer West. None Vul.

♠ 1065	♠ 9	♠ AJ7432
♥ KQJ	♥ 10852	♥ 964
♦ A52	♦ K98	♦ J4
♣ Q1064	♣ AKJ52	♣ 73
	♠ KQ8	
	♥ A73	
	♦ Q10763	
	♣ 98	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brogeland</i>	<i>Chmurski</i>	<i>Lindqvist</i>	<i>Golebiowski</i>
1♣	Pass	2♥*	Pass
2♠	All Pass		

2♥ 6♠, 2-9 or 6+♠ semi-solid or better.

North led the ace of clubs and switched to the eight of hearts, South winning with the ace and returning the nine of clubs, clarifying the position in that suit. North won with the jack, and now needed to find a diamond switch. When he played the king of clubs, declarer ruffed and South over-ruffed and returned a heart (it was too late for a diamond), declarer winning and playing a spade to the ace and a spade, claiming eight tricks for +110.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Tuczynski</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>	<i>Sielicki</i>	<i>Zia</i>
1♣	Pass	2♠*	Pass
Pass	Double	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

2♠ Weak, 6♠

West led the six of spades and East took the ace and returned the four, declarer

winning with the king and playing a diamond to the eight. East won and played a third spade. That was all the help declarer needed as he could clear the diamonds. Had he won the heart switch immediately he could have squeezed West for an overtrick, but he was happy enough with +400 and 11 IMPs.

Board 10. Dealer East. All Vul.

♠ AQ102
♥ 1082
♦ 9
♣ AKQ105

♠ J9
♥ A7
♦ KQ7632
♣ J92

W N E S

♠ 6543
♥ J9543
♦ 54
♣ 84

♠ K87
♥ KQ6
♦ AJ108
♣ 763

Open Room

	West	North	East	South
	<i>Brogeland</i>	<i>Chmurski</i>	<i>Lindqvist</i>	<i>Golebiowski</i>
	–	–	1♣*	Pass
	1♠*	Pass	1NT	Pass
	3♦	Pass	3NT	All Pass
1♣	11-22 HCP, 2+♣ May have 2 cards ♣ and 4 cards ♦ (4-3-4-2). Normally opens 1♦ with 4-2-4-3. Can choose with 4-4 in the minors			
1♠	No major unless GF ♦+M			

South led the four of hearts and declarer took his winners, +600.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Tuczyński</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>	<i>Sielicki</i>	<i>Zia</i>
–	–	1♣	Pass
3♦*	Pass	3NT	Pass
Pass	Double*	All Pass	
3♦	Game forcing		

Would you have some agreement about the meaning of North's double?

South led the three of spades and North won with the ace and cashed his clubs, +500, 15 IMPs and a big win for Mahaffey.

The Lesson

The Lesson (La Leçon) is a one-act play by French-Romanian playwright Eugène Ionesco. It was first performed in 1951 in a production directed by Marcel Cuvelier (who also played the Professor). Since 1957 it has been in permanent showing at Paris' Théâtre de la Huchette, on an Ionesco double-bill with *The Bald Soprano*. The play is regarded as an important work in the "Theatre of the Absurd"

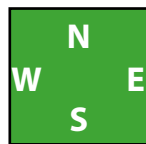
This play takes place in the office and dining room of a small French flat. The Professor, a man of 50 to 60, is expecting a new Pupil (aged 18). The Professor's Maid, a stout, red-faced woman of 40 to 50, worries about the Professor's health. As the absurd and nonsensical lesson progresses, the Professor grows more and more angry with what he perceives as the Pupil's ignorance, and the Pupil becomes more and more quiet and meek. Even her health begins to deteriorate, and what starts as a toothache develops into her entire body aching. At the climax of the play, after a long bout of non sequiturs (which are frequently used in Ionesco's plays), the Professor stabs and murders the Pupil. The play ends with the Maid greeting a new Pupil, taking the play full circle, back to the beginning.

It is not unknown for a bridge deal to contain an instructive point, but fortunately, although there are some players who are ready to offer partner advice there are virtually none who are prepared to resort to violence to drive home their point!

In Round 3 there were a couple of deals that proved to be tough problems for declarer -whether they were in any way instructive I leave to your judgement.

Board 12. Dealer West. E/W Vul.

♠ 854		
♥ K10984		
♦ 10		
♣ A952		
♠ QJ3		♠ K976
♥ Q3		♥ AJ52
♦ Q983		♦ AJ6
♣ KQ86		♣ 74
♠ A102		
♥ 76		
♦ K7542		
♣ J103		



Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>O Rimstedt</i>	<i>Hoiland</i>	<i>M Rimstedt</i>	<i>Stornes</i>
1♣*	Pass	1♥	Pass
1NT	Pass	2♣*	Pass
2♦*	Pass	3NT	All Pass
1♣ 2+♣			

Would you overcall 1♥ with North's cards? Our vote is in the affirmative.

North led the ♥10 and declarer won with the queen and played a diamond for the ten, jack and king. South switched to the jack of clubs, covered by the king and ace and North returned a club for the ten and queen. Declarer could knock out the ace of spades and cover the club return, claiming the balance for +400.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Stabell</i>	<i>Kubac</i>	<i>Kvangraven</i>	<i>Zorlu</i>
1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass
1NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

Here North led the five of spades and South won with the ace and switched to the jack of clubs, covered by the king and ace. North returned a club to

the ten and queen and declarer played a diamond to the jack. When it held he returned to hand with a spade and played the queen of diamonds, going up with the ace when North discarded a heart and played a third diamond, South taking the king and returning a club. North won and exited with a club, but declarer could not go down from here, +400 and a flat board.

When Brogeland was in 3NT, Hoogenkamp, North, who had not overcalled, also led the five of spades, but South put in the ten and declarer won with the queen and played a diamond for the ten, jack and king. South returned the seven of hearts for the three, four and jack and now declarer had to guess where the missing aces were located. When he played a spade, expecting North to hold the ace it was South who produced it and he played a second heart, dooming declarer to a one trick defeat, -50.

At the other table:

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Harris</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>	<i>Root</i>	<i>Zia</i>
Pass	Pass	1♣*	1♦
2♣	2♥	Pass	Pass
3♥*	Pass	3NT	All Pass

South led the seven of hearts for the queen, king and five and North switched to the eight of spades, South allowing declarer's nine to hold. When declarer played the jack of diamonds South won and fatally cashed the ace of spades, putting declarer one step ahead. The winning defence is to go back to hearts or switch to the jack of clubs. -400 cost Mahaffey 10 IMPs.

In the match between Emerald and Zimmerann Lauria responded to the opening bid of 1♣ with a game forcing 1NT, wrong-siding the contract (its theoretically unbeatable played by West). South led the four of diamonds and declarer won with the jack, played a spade to the queen and the jack of spades, South taking the ace and exiting with the jack of clubs (North had followed with the four and eight of spades). When dummy's king held declarer played a diamond to the ace, North parting with the four of hearts and cashed the king of spades. When declarer exited with a diamond South took the king, North pitching a club and exited with a heart. Now declarer could not avoid the loss of five tricks.

The winning line was to exit with a low heart. North can take dummy's queen with the king, but with only hearts and clubs left will not be able to

avoid an eventual throw in that will force him to surrender a ninth trick to dummy's club queen.

In the other room Multon overcalled 1♥ and now Baraket finished in 3NT. However, South led the four of diamonds and declarer won with the jack and played on spades, South taking the second round and belatedly switching to a heart, covered by the queen, king and ace. Declarer played a club to the king and when it held he cashed his spades and the ace of diamonds and could then play the jack of hearts and a heart achieving the endplay I just mentioned for a big pick up. However, it appears that declarer misread the situation and exited with a diamond, South winning and playing a club, giving North the last four tricks for a flat board.

The last deal of the round was a corker—an excellent one for the arm-chair analysts:

Board 20. Dealer West. All Vul.

♠ AQ652		♠ J10943
♥ K7532		♥ 8
♦ K74		♦ Q82
♣ —		♣ K1052
♠ K8		
♥ 964		
♦ J103		
♣ AJ864		
	♠ 7	
	♥ AQJ10	
	♦ A965	
	♣ Q973	



Open Room

West	North	East	South
Harris	Meckstroth	Root	Zia
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♥	Pass	3♥
Pass	3♠	Pass	3NT*
Pass	4♦*	Pass	5♦
Pass	6♥	All Pass	

That looks like a serious 3NT slam try.

East led the five of clubs and declarer ruffed West's ace, cashed the king of diamonds, played a diamond to the ace, ruffed a club, cashed the ace of spades, ruffed a spade, ruffed a club and exited with a diamond. East won and could now have ensured the defeat of the contract by exiting with a trump. When he obligingly returned a spade declarer could ruff, ruff a club and cross-ruff the last three tricks for +1430.

If declarer exits with a diamond instead of cashing the ace of spades, East wins and can exit with a trump, but now declarer can take the spade finesse and then cross-ruff his way home.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Brogeland	Hoogenkamp	Lindqvist	Helle
Pass	1♥	Pass	2NT*
Pass	4♣*	Pass	4♦*
Pass	4♠*	Pass	5♦*
Pass	5♥	Pass	5♠*
Pass	6♥	All Pass	
2NT	Heart support		
4♣	Splinter		
4♦	Cue-bid		
4♠	Cue-bid		
5♦	Cue-bid		
5♠	Cue-bid		

Here East led the jack of spades and declarer won with the queen, ruffed a spade, ruffed a club and continued the cross-ruff, cashing two diamonds along the way to flatten the board.

Meanwhile:

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Versace	Roll	Lauria	Levin
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♠*	Pass	3♥
Pass	3♠	Pass	3NT
Pass	4♣	Pass	4♦
Pass	6♥	All Pass	

West led the jack of diamonds and declarer won in hand, played a spade to the ace and ruffed a spade. His next, fatal, move was to cash the ace of hearts. He took a second round, crossed to the king of diamonds, ruffed a spade ruffed a club and drew the outstanding trump. There were only eleven tricks, -100.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Lengy	Multon	Bareket	Zimmermann
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♣*
Pass	2♥	Pass	2NT*
Pass	3♦*	Pass	3♥*
Pass	3NT*	Pass	4♣*
Pass	4♥*	Pass	4♠*
Pass	4NT*	Pass	5♠*
Pass	5NT*	Pass	6♣*
Pass	6♥	All Pass	

After a diamond lead declarer won in hand, cashed the ace of spades, ruffed a spade, ruffed a club, played a diamond to the ace, ruffed a club, ruffed a spade and ruffed a club. These cards remained:

♠ —	♠ Q6	♠ J10
♥ 964	♥ K7	♥ 8
♦ J	♦ 7	♦ Q
♣ A	♣ —	♣ K
	♠ —	
	♥ AQ	
	♦ 96	
	♣ Q	

♠ K8	♠ AQ652	♠ J10943
♥ 964	♥ K7532	♥ 8
♦ J103	♦ K74	♦ Q82
♣ AJ864	♣ —	♣ K1052
	♠ 7	
	♥ AQJ10	
	♦ A965	
	♣ Q973	

He now ruffed another spade, but was careful to do so with the ace of hearts! The point behind this play was mentioned by Pierre Schmidt, commenting on BBO. When this spade is ruffed West can dispose of the ace of clubs. When declarer then plays a club from dummy, West ruffs with the ♥9! (exactly how Bénédicte Cronier brought about declarer's downfall in her match when he failed to see the danger and ruffed with the ♥Q).

If declarer overruffs, he is one down (East's ♥8 will be the setting trick!!)

So declarer must discard his diamond, but West plays a trump and declarer should realise his only chance is to win the trick with ♥K! (now you see why it was necessary to ruff with the ♥A.

The ♥8 falls and last two tricks are taken by the ♥7 and ♠Q!! Beautiful n'est ce pas?

Romeo & Juliet

Romeo and Juliet is a tragedy written by William Shakespeare early in his career about two young star-crossed lovers whose deaths ultimately reconcile their feuding families. It was among Shakespeare's most popular plays during his lifetime and along with *Hamlet*, is one of his most frequently performed plays. Today, the title characters are regarded as archetypal young lovers. It is with good reason that their names are preserved as part of the phonetic alphabet.

However, there is an ulterior motive behind my adoption of this title. 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 claims, 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. Of course he is right, but perhaps someone should inform him that in bridge we have had mixed partnerships since the dawn of time. There were some pretty good ones competing in Monaco—one of them features in this brief report on Round 4.

Board 1. Dealer North. None Vul.

♠ A4
 ♥ 762
 ♦ A8642
 ♣ A83

♠ 8652
 ♥ AKQJ105
 ♦ 7
 ♣ 105

N
 W E
 S

♠ KJ7
 ♥ 43
 ♦ J9
 ♣ KQJ642

♠ Q1093
 ♥ 98
 ♦ KQ1053
 ♣ 97

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bertheau</i>	<i>Padon</i>	<i>Hallberg</i>	<i>Bakhshi</i>
–	1♣	3♣	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

North led the two of hearts and declarer played three rounds pitching the seven of spades (South parted with the three of diamonds) and followed them with the ten of clubs. North took the ace, cashed the ace of spades and the ace of diamonds and then offered his surrender, +420.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Malinowski</i>	<i>Whittaker</i>	<i>De Botton</i>	<i>Black</i>
–	Pass	1♣	Pass
1♥	Pass	2♣	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

Here North led the ace of diamonds and South followed with the three (looking at that dummy don't you think South might try something else, the ♦K look normal but—perhaps the ♦Q is a shot, hoping that a spade switch might work well?) Anyhow, North continued with a diamond and

declarer ruffed, drew trumps, South throwing the ♣7 and advanced the five of clubs. North took the ace and tabled the four of spades. It is hard to blame declarer for getting that wrong (remember North had passed as dealer) and down he went, -50 and 10 IMPs.

If North opens the bidding then declarer will have a read on the location of the high cards, so a spade switch at trick two is essential. Alternatively you can lead the ♠A at trick one, which was the choice of Cabanes against Duboin and Bilde—he continued the suit and declarer could not avoid two down and an 11 IMP loss.

Board 5. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

♠ K9	♠ Q72	♠ AJ864
♥ A108743	♥ KJ96	♥ Q2
♦ 10743	♦ AJ98	♦ 6
♣ A	♣ 74	♣ Q10652

♠ 1053

♥ 5

♦ KQ52

♣ KJ983

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bertheau</i>	<i>Padon</i>	<i>Hallberg</i>	<i>Bakhshi</i>
–	Pass	Pass	Pass
2♥	Pass	Pass	Double
All Pass			

I confess I don't understand this auction at all. Whatever the meaning of West's opening bid why do you want to compete when partner could not open the bidding?

North led the seven of clubs and declarer won and exited with a diamond. North won and tried the king of hearts, but declarer won, played a spade

to the ace, ruffed a club, ruffed a diamond, came to hand with a spade and claimed – his ♥1087 were sure to produce a trick – +470

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Malinowski</i>	<i>Whittaker</i>	<i>De Botton</i>	<i>Black</i>
–	Pass	Pass	Pass
1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♦	Pass	2♥	All Pass

North led the seven of clubs and declarer won and gave up a diamond, South winning and retuning a heart. Declarer ducked that, won the heart continuation in dummy, came to hand with a spade, cashed the ace of heart and played a spade to the jack. When it held he had an overtrick, +140 – but lost 8 IMPs.

Board 6. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

	♠ K65	
	♥ AQ986	
	♦ 653	
	♣ K10	
♠ J843		♠ 102
♥ 73		♥ K105
♦ K2		♦ A10987
♣ QJ432		♣ 986
	♠ AQ97	
	♥ J42	
	♦ QJ4	
	♣ A75	



Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>B Cronier</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>P Cronier</i>	<i>Sementa</i>
–	–	Pass	1♣
Pass	1♦*	Pass	1♥*
Pass	3♠*	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

1♦ Hearts

West led the three of clubs and when dummy's ten held declarer was in clover. He played a spade to the ace and a heart to the queen and king, subsequently cashing out for ten tricks and +430.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Duboin</i>	<i>Cabanes</i>	<i>Bilde</i>	<i>Gautret</i>
–	–	Pass	1♣
Pass	1♥	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♦*	Double	2♥
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

East led the six of clubs and declarer won with dummy's ace as West followed with the two and ran the jack of hearts. East won with the king and was not hard pressed to switch to the seven of diamonds. West won, returned a diamond and a diamond ruff was the setting trick, -50 and 10 IMPs.

Board 8. Dealer West. None Vul.

	♠ AK	
	♥ A74	
	♦ 109864	
	♣ 932	
♠ Q98		♠ 104
♥ J832		♥ KQ1065
♦ J5		♦ K32
♣ KQ75		♣ J84
	♠ J76532	
	♥ 9	
	♦ AQ7	
	♣ A106	



Open Room

West	North	East	South
B Cronier	Bocchi	P Cronier	Sementa
Pass	1♣*	1♥	2♥*
3♥	Pass	Pass	Double
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

2♥ Transfer

East led the king of hearts and declarer won with the ace, played a diamond to the queen, cashed the ace of diamonds and exited with a diamond. East won and switched to a club, but it was too late. Declarer went up with dummy's ace, cashed the top spades and played a diamond throwing a club. West could ruff and cash a club, but declarer had the rest, +420.

It occurred to me that West might have been able to bid 3♣ (you have 2♠ available to show a good raise to 3♥) which would have enabled East to find the essential club lead at trick one.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Duboin	Cabanes	Bilde	Gautret
Pass	Pass	2♥*	2♠
3♥	3NT	All Pass	

2♥ 6+♥ 5-10

East led the king of hearts and declarer ducked twice, won the third heart and ran the nine of diamonds. West won and played a heart and declarer, discarding a little carelessly, finished four down to lose 12 IMPs.

Le Cid

Le Cid is a five-act French tragicomedy written by Pierre Corneille, first performed in December 1636 at the Théâtre du Marais in Paris and published the same year. An enormous popular success, Le Cid was the subject of a heated polemic over the norms of dramatic practice known as the *Querelle du Cid* (Quarrel of *The Cid*.) Cardinal Richelieu's *Académie française* acknowledged the play's success, but determined that it was defective, in

♠ AK			
♥ A74			
♦ 109864			
♣ 932			
♠ Q98			
♥ J832			
♦ J5			
♣ KQ75			
♠ J76532			
♥ 9			
♦ AQ7			
♣ A106			

part because it did not respect the classical unities.

Today, *Le Cid* is widely regarded as Corneille's finest work, and is considered one of the greatest plays of the seventeenth century.

When first performed the play was a success, although it was quite controversial due to its divergence from the standard playwriting guidelines of the time. The piece was groundbreaking for a few reasons. It had a happy ending, which was rare for "tragedies" of the time, and allowed later tragicomic playwrights to end their plays in a variety of ways.

The Round 5 match between The Bush and Team Ventin featured some explosive deals – who would enjoy the happier ending?

Board 11. Dealer South. None Vul.

♠ K10			
♥ KJ1087			
♦ 764			
♣ Q97			
♠ AQJ53			
♥ A			
♦ AQJ5			
♣ A63			
♠ 842			
♥ Q632			
♦ K2			
♣ KJ82			
♠ 976			
♥ 954			
♦ 10983			
♣ 1054			

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Palma	Fredin	Nystrom	Ekenberg
–	–	–	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♠	Pass
3♦	Pass	3♥	Pass
4♣	Pass	4♠	All Pass

Declarer had to lose a spade, but with the black suits otherwise behaving there were twelve tricks, +480.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bessis</i>	<i>Hult</i>	<i>Amoils</i>	<i>Wrang</i>
–	–	–	Pass
2♣*	Pass	2♦*	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♦*	Pass	4♥	Pass
4♠	Pass	4NT	Pass
5♣	Pass	5♦	Pass
6♠	All Pass		

The same 12 tricks meant 11 IMPs for The Bush.

I was about to move on to the next deal when it occurred to me that North was perhaps unlucky that his trumps were ♠K10. Give him ♠K6 and he can follow with the six on the first round of the suit! If declarer uses the ♣K as an entry for a second finesse it may appear that the contract will fail, but declarer can try for a doubleton ♣Q before cashing two diamonds to get rid of dummy's remaining clubs.

Board 12. Dealer West. N/S Vul.

♠ J2
♥ J642
♦ KQ862
♣ 53

♠ K6
♥ AK83
♦ AJ43
♣ A87

♠ AQ1098754
♥ Q
♦ 107
♣ K6

♠ 3
♥ 10975
♦ 95
♣ QJ10942

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Palma</i>	<i>Fredin</i>	<i>Nystrom</i>	<i>Ekenberg</i>
1♣*	Pass	1♥*	Pass
1NT	Pass	2♦	Pass
2♥	Pass	2♠	Pass
2NT	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♣	Pass	4NT	Pass
5♣	Pass	7NT	All Pass

1♥ presumably showed spades. North led the ♦K and declarer claimed, +1520.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bessis</i>	<i>Hult</i>	<i>Amoils</i>	<i>Wrang</i>
1♦	Pass	1♠	Pass
2NT	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♣*	Pass	4NT*	Pass
5♣*	Pass	6♠	All Pass

If 5♣ promised four key cards then signing off in 6♠ is too cautious. It cost 11 IMPs.

Board 14. Dealer East. None Vul.

	♠ 8	
	♥ Q53	
	♦ AKJ1095	
	♣ K109	
♠ 6	<div style="background-color: #76c73f; color: white; padding: 10px; border: 1px solid black; width: fit-content; margin: auto;">N W E S</div>	♠ KQ10743
♥ AJ62		♥ 94
♦ Q632		♦ 874
♣ J765		♣ 82
	♠ AJ952	
	♥ K1087	
	♦ —	
	♣ AQ43	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Palma	Fredin	Nystrom	Ekenberg
–	–	2♦*	2♠
Pass	3♦	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

2♦ Multi

West led the ace of hearts and continued with the two, so declarer won with the ten, went to dummy with the queen, cleared the diamonds and emerged with eleven tricks, +460.

♠ 8			
♥ Q53			
♦ AKJ1095			
♣ K109			
♠ 6			♠ KQ10743
♥ AJ62			♥ 94
♦ Q632			♦ 874
♣ J765			♣ 82
			♠ AJ952
			♥ K1087
			♦ –
			♣ AQ43

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Bessis	Hult	Amoils	Wrang
–	–	2♠	Pass
3♠	Double	All Pass	

This cost 1100 (five down) and 12 IMPs.

Imagine a sequence that goes 2♠-(Dble)-3♠-(Dble). I think everyone would say the second double is for takeout, so if you were planning to convert the double of 2♠ for penalties you have to Pass and hope partner can double for a second time. It is not unknown for players to attempt to exploit that by raising partner's pre-empt with a shortage (I once saw John Armstrong do it with a void!).

Board 15. Dealer South. N/S Vul.

♠ 10			
♥ AJ8			
♦ K42			
♣ KQ7643			
♠ QJ5			♠ AK8742
♥ K97			♥ 643
♦ J83			♦ 9765
♣ J1052			♣ –
			♠ 963
			♥ Q1052
			♦ AQ10
			♣ A98

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Palma	Fredin	Nystrom	Ekenberg
–	–	–	1♣
Pass	2♣*	2♠	Pass
Pass	3♠*	Pass	4♥
Pass	Pass	Double	Pass
Pass	5♣	Double	Pass
Pass	Redouble	All Pass	

2♣ Game forcing

Doubling 4♥ was a speculation – after a club lead ruffed East underleads in spades to get a second ruff and then plays a spade which ensures a trick for West's ♥K. Doubling 5♣ requires a different adjective. The redouble boosted the score to +1400.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Bessis	Hult	Amoils	Wrang
–	–	–	1♣
Pass	3♠*	4♠	5♣

3♠ Splinter

That was +620 but a loss of 13 IMPs.

That made the half-time score 27-23, The Bush going on to win 31-29.

Quartet

Quartet is a play by Ronald Harwood about aging opera singers. The setting is a retirement home for musicians. Three elderly former opera-singers, who often worked together, are sitting out on the terrace. Reginald is quietly reading a serious book, but the jovial, priapic Wilfred is chuckling about sex, as he regards Cissy, lying back and listening to music through her headphones. They are about to be joined by newcomer Jean, who was a major star in her day and to whom Reginald was once unhappily married.

Is there any chance that these four will ever sing together again? A gala concert is about to take place at the retirement home to celebrate Verdi's birthday. Three of the four are keen to recreate the third act quartet "Bella figlia dell'amore" from *Rigoletto* and one is not. But the play eventually moves to an uncertain conclusion when they don costumes and lip-synch to their own retro recording.

Writing for *The Independent*, Paul Taylor described the play as "an unashamed – no, shameless – vehicle for four feisty old troupers whose task is to make us laugh a little, sigh a little and cry a little as they take us into the bittersweet world of facing up to age and mortality."

Bridge is a game for quartets and sometimes as the play unravels it is hard to know if we should laugh, sigh or cry. Let's see if any of these emotions might have surfaced in the Round 6 match between De Botton and Coldea.

Board 2. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ —		
♥ AKJ4		
♦ QJ8742		
♣ KQ9		
♠ AJ76		♠ KQ10932
♥ 1086		♥ Q32
♦ K9		♦ 1053
♣ A542		♣ 3
	♠ 854	
	♥ 975	
	♦ A6	
	♣ J10876	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Charlsen	Ionita	Hoftaniska	Stegaroiu
–	–	2♦*	Pass
3♥*	Pass	3♠	Pass
Pass	Double	Pass	4♣
Pass	4♦	All Pass	
2♦ Multi–3-8 HCP with 6 card suit (might be 5 in 3rd hand/24+NT/gambling minor)			
3♥ Pass or correct			

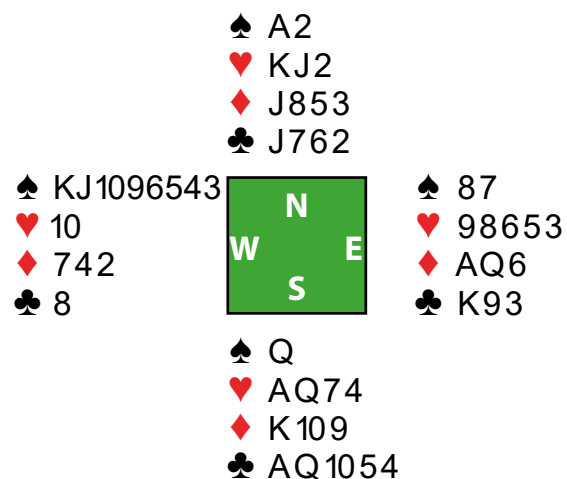
East led the three of clubs and West took the ace as declarer started to unblock the clubs, following with the queen and then playing the king when West returned the five, East ruffing and switching to the queen of spades. West put up the ace but declarer ruffed, played a diamond to the ace and a diamond, claiming ten tricks, +130.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Marina	Padon	Coldea	Bakhshi
–	–	2♦*	Pass
2NT*	3♦	4♠	Pass
Pass	Double	All Pass	
2♦ Multi–weak with ♠/♥ or 23-24 balanced or strong with ♦/♣			

South led the ace of diamonds and when North followed with the jack he switched to the five of hearts. North cashed the king and ace, but declarer had the rest, +590 and 12 IMPs for Coldea.

Board 6. Dealer East. E/W Vul.



Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Charlsen</i>	<i>Ionita</i>	<i>Hoftaniska</i>	<i>Stegaroiu</i>
–	–	Pass	1♣
3♠	Pass	Passs	Double
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

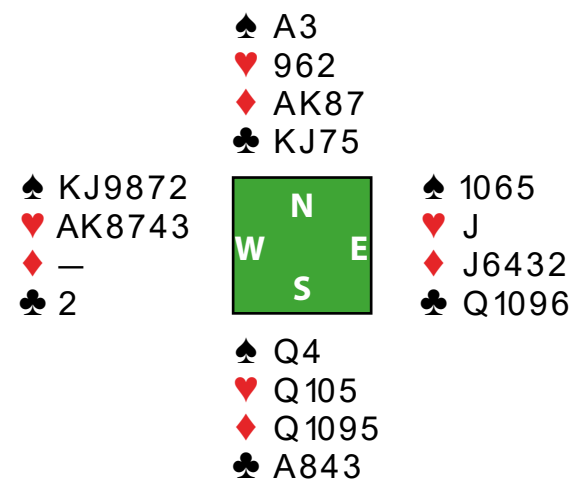
East led the eight of spades and declarer ducked, won the second spade and ran the jack of clubs. When it held the contract was safe, +430.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Marina</i>	<i>Padon</i>	<i>Coldea</i>	<i>Bakhshi</i>
–	–	Pass	1♣
3♠	Pass	Pass	Double
Pass	4♠*	Pass	5NT*
Pass	6♣	All Pass	

West led the ten of hearts and declarer won with dummy's king, drew trumps via the finesse, went to dummy with the ♥J and played a diamond to the nine – +920 and 10 not unlucky IMPs to De Botton.

Board 7. Dealer South. All Vul.



Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Charlsen</i>	<i>Ionita</i>	<i>Hoftaniska</i>	<i>Stegaroivu</i>
–	–	–	Pass
1♠	Double	Pass	1NT
3♥	Pass	3♠	All Pass

North led the ace of diamonds and declarer ruffed, cashed the ace of hearts, ruffed a heart and played a spade to the eight, +200.

Should West have rebid 4♥?

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Marina</i>	<i>Padon</i>	<i>Coldea</i>	<i>Bakhshi</i>
–	–	–	Pass
1♠	Double	2♠	Double
4♠	Double	All Pass	

As before North led the ace of diamonds and declarer ruffed, cashed the ace of hearts and ruffed a heart. Declarer then ruffed a diamond and ruffed a heart with the ♠10 before playing a spade to the eight, +990 and 13 IMPs for Coldea.

The Comedy of Errors

The Comedy of Errors is one of William Shakespeare's early plays. It is his shortest and one of his most farcical comedies, with a major part of the humour coming from slapstick and mistaken identity, in addition to puns and word play. It has been adapted for opera, stage, screen and musical theatre numerous times worldwide. Given the difficulty of bridge (*The best play badly, the rest are awful*. Bob Hamman) had Shakespeare been a bridge journalist he would have had many opportunities to re-use the title.

In Round 7 we follow the fortunes of Mahaffey and Salvo—judge for yourselves if the players committed any errors, comical or otherwise.

There was a sensation on the second deal of the round when Brogeland & Lindqvist were looking at ♠AQ108543 ♥1032 ♦63 ♣J opposite ♠KJ92 ♥AKQJ9 ♦AK9 ♣A. West opened 3♠ and when East bid 4NT he replied 5♦. On the CC it says 4130 and East's 6♠ ended the auction and resulted in the loss of 11 IMPs.

Board 13. Dealer North. All Vul.

♠ J86	♠ Q532	♠ K1074
♥ AJ109	♥ KQ72	♥ 63
♦ 86532	♦ K10	♦ QJ974
♣ Q	♣ A94	♣ KJ
	♠ A9	
	♥ 854	
	♦ A	
	♣ 10876532	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
O Rimstedt	Meckstroth	M Rimstedt	Zia
–	1♣*	1♦	2♦*
3♣*	Pass	3♦	5♣
All Pass			
1♣	3+♣		

East led the queen of diamonds and declarer won performe with dummy's ace and played a heart, West rising with the ace and returning the nine. Declarer won, cashed the ace of clubs and claimed,+600.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Brogeland	Kubac	Lindqvist	Zorlu
–	1♣	1♦	2♠*
3♣*	Pass	3♦	4♣
All Pass			

Of course declarer took eleven tricks, but lost 10 IMPs.

Board 18. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ A	♠ J102	♠ K87653
♥ K62	♥ QJ103	♥ 875
♦ K10542	♦ AQ86	♦ 97
♣ AQ52	♣ K7	♣ 106
	♠ Q94	
	♥ A94	
	♦ J3	
	♣ J9843	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
O Rimstedt	Meckstroth	M Rimstedt	Zia
–	–	3♠	All Pass

There are a number of players who adhere to the principal of bidding one more than the presumed level of your pre-empt—the American World Champion Karen McCallum for example.

South led the jack of diamonds covered by the king and ace and North switched to the queen of hearts, declarer winning with dummy's king,

unblocking the ace of spades and exiting with a sneaky two of diamonds. North put up the queen and played the three of hearts, South taking the ace and continuing with the nine. North won with the ten and followed it with the jack, ruffed by declarer with the six and overruffed by South who exited with the three of clubs. Declarer tried dummy's queen and North won and returned the eight of diamond, ruffed and overruffed. North still had a trump trick to come, four down, -200.

♠ A	♠ J102	♠ K87653
♥ K62	♥ QJ103	♥ 875
♦ K10542	♦ AQ86	♦ 97
♣ AQ52	♣ K7	♣ 106

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brogeland</i>	<i>Kubac</i>	<i>Lindqvist</i>	<i>Zorlu</i>
–	–	2♦*	Pass
2♥*	Pass	2♠	Pass
Pass	Double	Pass	3♣
All Pass			
2♦ Multi–2-7 HCP with a 6-card major (may have 5-card green vs red) or a strong NT (24+)			
2♥ Pass or correct			

West cashed the ace of spades and after some thought switched to the two of clubs. Declarer won with the jack and returned a club, West taking the ace, cashing the queen and exiting with his remaining club. Declarer won and played the jack of diamonds covered by the king and ace and when declarer ran the queen of hearts West won and exited with a heart. Declarer had to lose a trick at the end, -50 and a 7 IMP swing.

Board 20. Dealer West. All Vul.

♠ K873	♠ AQJ9654	♠ –
♥ AK82	♥ QJ	♥ 109543
♦ QJ9	♦ 82	♦ AK1073
♣ J7	♣ 52	♣ K98

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>O Rimstedt</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>	<i>M Rimstedt</i>	<i>Zia</i>
1♣*	1♠	3♣*	Double
4♥	All Pass		
1♣	2+♣ 12-14 bal (includes 5♦2♣) or 11-22 natural		
3♣	5♥+5♦		

North led the five of clubs and South won with the queen, cashed the ace and continued with the ten, ruffed by declarer with the eight of hearts and overruffed by North who exited with the ace of spades, declarer soon claiming the rest, +620.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brogeland</i>	<i>Kubac</i>	<i>Lindqvist</i>	<i>Zorlu</i>
1♣*	3♠	Double	Pass
3NT	All Pass		
1♣	11-22 HCP, 2+♣ May have 2 cards ♣ and 4 cards ♦ (4-3-4-2). Normally opens 1♦ with 4-2-4-3. Can choose with 4-4 in the minors.		

North led the eight of diamonds and declarer won with dummy's ace, South following with the six, and ran the ten of hearts, North winning with the

jack. When North exited with queen of spades declarer had ten tricks and a push.

Could North have found the club switch that would have put the contract two down?

That is a tough question to answer, but playing a spade when you know declarer has the king is hardly dynamic.

Mahaffey came out on top, 28-12.

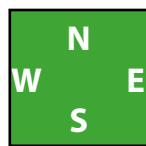
Waiting for Godot

Waiting for Godot is a play by Samuel Beckett, in which two characters, Vladimir and Estragon, wait for the arrival of someone named Godot who never arrives, and while waiting they engage in a variety of discussions and encounter three other characters. *Waiting for Godot* is Beckett's translation of his own original French play, *En attendant Godot*, and is subtitled (in English only) "a tragicomedy in two acts". In a poll conducted by the British Royal National Theatre in 1990 it was voted the "most significant English language play of the 20th century".

A bridge journalist must wait for an interesting deal – but sometimes they never arrive. Such was the case in the Round 8 match between Gamax and NoName, although it started promisingly:

Board 1. Dealer North. None Vul.

	♠ 2	
	♥ K852	
	♦ 10976	
	♣ 7432	
♠ 9		♠ AQ87
♥ AQ106		♥ J743
♦ J8		♦ AK53
♣ AKQ1065		♣ J
	♠ KJ106543	
	♥ 9	
	♦ Q42	
	♣ 98	



Open Room

West	North	East	South
Winkler	Unal	Homonnay	Sen
–	Pass	1♦	3♠
Double*	Pass	4♥	Pass
4NT*	Pass	5♥*	Pass
6♥	All Pass		

South led the nine of clubs and declarer won with the jack and played a heart to the ace followed by the queen. North won and switched to the two of spades, but declarer was in a position to claim, +980.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Gundogdu	Birman	Imamoglu	Lakatos
–	Pass	1♦	3♠
Double	All Pass		

West led the ace of clubs and continued with the king, followed by the queen, East pitching the seven and three of hearts. Declarer ruffed and played the nine of hearts, West rising with the ace and switching to the jack of diamonds. East played three rounds of the suit, so West scored the nine of spades and exited with a heart. Declarer was forced to ruff that and East was left with three certain trump tricks, five down, -1100 and 3 IMPs for Gamax.

Once West had played a third club declarer could have saved a trick playing on spades, starting with the king. On the other hand if West switches to diamonds at trick three the defenders collect the maximum.

Board 4. Dealer North. All Vul.

♠ A10843	♠ KQ5	♠ 7
♥ 843	♥ AKQ6	♥ J972
♦ J42	♦ A7	♦ 1096
♣ J5	♣ AQ73	♣ K9862
	♠ J962	
	♥ 105	
	♦ KQ843	
	♣ 104	



Open Room

West	North	East	South
Winkler	Unal	Homonnay	Sen
Pass	2♣*	Pass	2♦*
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♣*
Pass	3♦*	Pass	3♠
Pass	4NT	Pass	5♦
Pass	6NT	All Pass	

That looks like a Puppet Stayman auction to me, although I'm not sure why North felt entitled to jump to 4NT. That the diamonds broke was the only good news and in due course declarer had to lose a club and a spade, -100.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Gundogdu	Birman	Imamoglu	Lakatos
Pass	2♣*	Pass	2♦*
Pass	2♥*	Pass	2♠*
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♣
Pass	3♦	Pass	3♥*
Pass	3NT	Pass	4♦
Pass	4♥	Pass	4♠
Pass	5♣	Pass	6♦
Pass	6NT	All Pass	

That appears to be somewhat similar, but this time with a dash of Kokish, although the 2NT rebid is generally played as showing 25+. With a decent five card suit South was entitled to introduce it, but with nothing in hand, North should perhaps have signed off in 4NT. So, no swing.

NoName won 14-4.

Carousel

Carousel is the second musical by the team of Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II. The 1945 work was adapted from Ferenc Molnár's 1909 play *Liliom*, transplanting its Budapest setting to the Maine coastline. The story revolves around carousel barker Billy Bigelow, whose romance with millworker Julie Jordan comes at the price of both their jobs. The show includes the well-known songs *If I Loved You*, *June Is Bustin' Out All Over* and *You'll Never Walk Alone*, the latter being adopted as an anthem by the supporters of Liverpool FC in the early 1960's. In 1999, *Time* magazine named *Carousel* the best musical of the 20th century.

If I Loved You contains the line *I'd let my golden chances pass me by!* and when Lavazza faced Coldea in Round 9 it proved to be a match where one of the teams missed a number of opportunities.

Board 12. Dealer West. N/S Vul.

♠ QJ85	♠ 76	♠ A92
♥ —	♥ KJ953	♥ 10764
♦ K8632	♦ A10	♦ Q94
♣ AKJ3	♣ Q987	♣ 1052
	♠ K1043	
	♥ AQ82	
	♦ J75	
	♣ 64	



Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Stegaroiu</i>	<i>Bianchedi</i>	<i>Ionita</i>	<i>Madala</i>
1♦	1♥	Pass	2NT*
Pass	3♣	Pass	3♥
All Pass			

2♥ Heart support

East led the four of diamonds and declarer took West's king with the ace and returned the ten, East winning with the queen and exiting with the two of spades. When declarer played dummy's three the defenders quickly cashed two clubs and a spade for one down, -100.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Duboin</i>	<i>Coldea</i>	<i>Bilde</i>	<i>Marina</i>
1♦	1♥	1♠	2NT*
3♣	Pass	3♦	3♥
All Pass			

2NT Heart support

The play started in identical fashion, but when East switched to the two of spades declarer put up dummy's king and pitched a spade on the jack of diamonds, soon claiming an overtrick,+170 and 7 IMPs.

Board 13. Dealer North. All Vul.

	♠ AQ7				
	♥ K82				
	♦ QJ8764				
	♣ 10				
♠ J86432		W N E S		♠ K5	
♥ 63				♥ 1074	
♦ A				♦ K109532	
♣ 9843				♣ K2	
	♠ 109				
	♥ AQJ95				
	♦ —				
	♣ AQJ765				

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Stegaroiu</i>	<i>Bianchedi</i>	<i>Ionita</i>	<i>Madala</i>
–	1♦	Pass	1♥
Pass	1NT*	Pass	2♠*
Pass	3♠*	Pass	4♣
Pass	4♥	Pass	6♥
Pass	6♥	All Pass	

West led the ace of diamonds and declarer ruffed, cashed the ace of clubs and ran the queen, East winning with the king and returning the three of diamonds. Declarer ruffed, ruffed a club with the king of hearts, drew trumps and cashed his clubs. With the king of spades offside he was one down, -100.

If declarer had adopted a different line he might have taken all the tricks – but I can't think of any obvious reason why he should have done so – can you?

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Duboin</i>	<i>Coldea</i>	<i>Bilde</i>	<i>Marina</i>
–	1♦	Pass	1♥
Pass	2♦	Pass	3♣
Pass	3♥	Pass	4♣
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

Under no pressure, declarer ruffed the ace of diamonds lead and played a club to the ten and king, finishing with eleven tricks, +650 and 13 IMPs for Coldea.

Board 18. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ 9	♠ KJ7432	♠ Q865
♥ J108	♥ A	♥ 95
♦ 985	♦ J102	♦ K764
♣ Q109432	♣ A76	♣ J85
	♠ A10	
	♥ KQ76432	
	♦ AQ3	
	♣ K	



Open Room

West	North	East	South
Stegarioiu	Bianchedi	Ionita	Madala
–	–	Pass	1♥
Pass	2♠*	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♥	Pass	4♠
Pass	5♦	Pass	5NT
Pass	6♥	All Pass	

Declarer won the club lead in hand, played a heart to the ace, pitched a diamond on the ace of clubs, ruffed a club, drew trumps, cashed the ace of spades and cashed his trumps, catching East in a show up squeeze, +1460.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Duboin	Coldea	Bilde	Marina
–	–	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♦*	Pass	2♥
Pass	2♠	Pass	4♥
Pass	4NT*	Pass	5♦*
Pass	7♥	All Pass	

West led the eight of hearts and after winning with dummy's ace declarer

came to hand with a spade and drew trumps. It is unclear what happened next, but there was no way to go down, +2210 and a second 13 IMP swing to Coldea.

Board 19. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

♠ K	♠ J97	♠ 6432
♥ KQ9532	♥ 87	♥ 6
♦ 4	♦ KQ10652	♦ 9873
♣ J9762	♣ Q4	♣ AK83
	♠ AQ1085	
	♥ AJ104	
	♦ AJ	
	♣ 105	



Open Room

West	North	East	South
Stegarioiu	Bianchedi	Ionita	Madala
–	–	–	1♠
2♠*	3♠	4NT*	Pass
5♣	Pass	Pass	Double
All Pass			

2♠ Spades and a minor

4NT Bid your minor

For my money at this vulnerability its enough to bid 4♣ over 3♠ – if partner has a good hand they can decide if it is a good idea to go on.

North led the king of diamonds and South overtook it and returned the jack, declarer ruffing, crossing to the ace of clubs and playing a heart. Do you blame South for putting up the ace? It cost a defensive trick as all South could do now was cash the ace of spades, -200.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Duboin</i>	<i>Coldea</i>	<i>Bilde</i>	<i>Marina</i>
–	–	–	1♠
2♥	2♠	All Pass	

West led the king of hearts and South won and cashed the ace of spades – the appearance of the king resulting in twelve tricks, +230 and an IMP.

Imagine you were in 4♠?

Now you must choose between cashing the ace of spades a la Rabbi, or taking two rounds of diamonds ending in dummy and then playing East for a doubleton king of spades.

It was Coldea who took the lion's share of the VPs winning 36-14.

A Man for All Seasons

A Man For All Seasons is a play by Robert Bolt based on the life of Sir Thomas More. It was first performed in London opening at the Globe Theatre on 1 July 1960. It later found its way to Broadway, enjoying a critically and commercially successful run of over a year. It was subsequently made into a multi-Academy Award-winning 1966 feature film.

The plot is based on the true story of Sir Thomas More, the 16th-century Chancellor of England, who refused to endorse King Henry VIII's wish to divorce his wife Catherine of Aragon, who did not bear him a son, so that he could marry Anne Boleyn, the sister of his former mistress. The play portrays More as a man of principle, envied by rivals such as Thomas Cromwell and loved by the common people and by his family.

In Round 10 we were treated to a deal on which one of the best known and most popular players of modern times was given an opportunity to demonstrate his skills. We start with an excerpt from the match between Netherlands Juniors and NoName.

Board 3. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

♠ QJ9
♥ J97
♦ A87642
♣ 6

♠ 75
♥ AQ82
♦ J1095
♣ 1082

♠ A4
♥ K10653
♦ Q3
♣ AJ74

♠ K108632
♥ 4
♦ K
♣ KQ953

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Gundogdu</i>	<i>Kiljan</i>	<i>Imamoglu</i>	<i>Tijssen</i>
–	–	–	1♠
Pass	2♠	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

West led the jack of diamonds and declarer won in hand with the king and played a spade to the queen, East winning with the ace and accurately switching to the three of hearts. West won with the queen and continued with the ace, declarer ruffing and playing the king of clubs. East won and returned a spade and declarer could manage only nine tricks, -50.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sprinkhuiz</i>	<i>Unal</i>	<i>Mendes de Leon</i>	<i>Sen</i>
–	–	–	1♠
Pass	2♠	Double	4♠
All Pass			

The play was almost card for card—the only differences being that East returned the five of hearts and declarer played the queen of clubs—no swing.

This was from Mahaffey-Coldea:

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Stegaroiu</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>	<i>Ionita</i>	<i>Zia</i>
–	–	–	1♠
Pass	2♠	3♥	3♠
4♥	4♠	Double	All Pass

Once again West led the jack of diamonds. Time stood still as declarer calculated – eventually he put up dummy's ace of diamonds (!) and played a club. East found the fine play of ducking, but to no avail. Declarer won, ruffed a club with the queen of spades, ruffed a diamond, ruffed a club with the nine of spades, ruffed a diamond and ruffed a club, West pitching the eight of hearts. Declarer ruffed another diamond and played the king of spades. He could not be prevented from making an overtrick, +690.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brogeland</i>	<i>Coldea</i>	<i>Lindqvist</i>	<i>Marina</i>
–	–	–	1♠
Pass	2♠	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

For the fourth time the lead was the ♦J. Declarer missed the winning line and having won with the king he played the queen of clubs from his hand. East won and switched to a third and fifth three of hearts, West winning with the queen. A spade switch now leaves declarer a trick short, but West tried to cash the ace of hearts and declarer could ruff two clubs in dummy for +420 so Zia's brilliant play was worth only 7 IMPs.

Before we leave this deal it is worth making a further point. Suppose that having won the king of diamonds declarer plays a spade to the queen. East wins and must switch to a heart. West wins and might now play a second spade (a heart comes to the same thing). Declarer wins in dummy and plays a club. Now East must withhold the ace (we saw a similar situation in the previous round). It's a well known defensive principal – but never easy to find at the table.

Board 7. Dealer South. All Vul.

♠ Q763		
♥ 95		
♦ K763		
♣ 542		
♠ AK		♠ J85
♥ KQ643		♥ 87
♦ 1054		♦ AJ82
♣ AKJ		♣ Q983
	<div> <div>N</div> <div>W</div> <div>E</div> <div>S</div> </div>	
♠ 10942		
♥ AJ102		
♦ Q9		
♣ 1076		

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Gundogdu</i>	<i>Kiljan</i>	<i>Imamoglu</i>	<i>Tijssen</i>
–	–	–	Pass
2NT	Pass	3♣*	Pass
3♥*	Pass	3NT	All Pass
3♣ Puppet Stayman			
3♥ 5♥			

North led the five of clubs and declarer won with the ace and played the three of hearts for the nine, seven and ten. South returned the four of spades and declarer won with the king, cashed the king of clubs, overtook the jack with dummy's queen, cashed the nine of clubs throwing a diamond as South parted with a spade and North a diamond and played a heart. South took the ace and exited with a spade, but declarer had ten tricks, +630.

If South withholds the ace of hearts and declarer plays an honour he will then have to play the ten of diamonds to get home.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sprinkhuiz</i>	<i>Unal</i>	<i>Mendes de Leon</i>	<i>Sen</i>
–	–	–	Pass
1♥	Pass	1NT	Pass
2NT*	Pass	3♣*	Pass
3♥*	Pass	3♠*	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

Once again North led the five of clubs. Declarer won with the ace, cashed the king and then took the jack. His next move was the ♥K, South taking the ace and switching to the four of spades. Declarer won with the ace, cashed the queen of hearts and continued with the three, hoping that the suit would break. It was a forlorn hope, as South won and played a second spade, which doomed declarer to defeat, -100 giving NoName 13 IMPs.

Board 9. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

♠ AKQ62	♠ 7	♠ J1093
♥ 965	♥ K74	♥ AQJ8
♦ 954	♦ K106	♦ AQJ2
♣ AJ	♣ Q98754	♣ K

♠ 854	♠ 854
♥ 1032	♥ 1032
♦ 873	♦ 873
♣ 10632	♣ 10632



Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Gundogdu</i>	<i>Kiljan</i>	<i>Imamoglu</i>	<i>Tijssen</i>
–	3♣	Double	4♠
Double	Pass	Pass	5♣
Double	All Pass		

East led the ace of hearts, which looks like a good start for declarer, but the reality is that the defenders have an almost infinite way to take the contract six down. East switched to the jack of spades and West overtook it and now made a mistake, playing a second spade instead of going back to hearts or playing a diamond. Declarer ruffed and played a club to East's king and won the heart return with dummy's king. Best now is to exit with a heart, but declarer played a second club and West won and switched to a diamond, East winning with the jack, cashing the jack of hearts and exiting with a spade. Declarer still had two diamonds to lose, down 6, -1400.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sprinkhuiz</i>	<i>Unal</i>	<i>Mendes de Leon</i>	<i>Sen</i>
–	Pass	1♦	Pass
1♠	Pass	2NT*	Pass
3♦*	Pass	3♠*	Pass
3NT*	Pass	4♠	Pass
4NT*	Pass	5♥*	Pass
6♠	All Pass		

Bidding the slam and taking all the tricks was worth 2 IMPs – the Netherlands first of the match, which they lost 4-39.

These were the contrasting auctions from my other featured match:

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Stegaroiz</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>	<i>Ionita</i>	<i>Zia</i>
–	Pass	1♦	Pass
1♠	2♣	3♣*	4♣
4♠	5♣	Double	Pass
5♠	All Pass		

Perhaps East might have done better to bid 4♣ over 2♣. +710 did not look promising.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Brogeland	Coldea	Lindqvist	Marina
–	Pass	1♦	Pass
1♠	Pass	4♠	Pass
6♠	All Pass		

+1460 and 13 IMPs for Mahaffey en route to a comfortable win, 35-2.

Endgame

Endgame, by Samuel Beckett, is a one-act play with four characters. It was originally written in French (entitled *Fin de partie*); Beckett himself translated it into English. The play was first performed in a French-language production at the Royal Court Theatre in London, opening on 3 April 1957. It is commonly considered, along with such works as *Waiting for Godot*, to be among Beckett's most important works.

Bridge players are all too familiar with the endgame—frequently one of the most important phases of the contest. Would it have a role to play in the Round 11 match between K1 and De Botton?

Board 12. Dealer West. N/S Vul.

	♠ 87	
	♥ 7543	
	♦ J10632	
	♣ 97	
♠ AJ3		♠ 96542
♥ AKJ6		♥ 109
♦ 5		♦ K98
♣ AQ1083		♣ 652
	♠ KQ10	
	♥ Q82	
	♦ AQ74	
	♣ KJ4	



Open Room

West	North	East	South
Aronov	Padon	Damyanova	Bakhshi
1♣	Pass	1♥*	1NT
Double	2♣	All Pass	

1♥ Spades

No doubt North was planning to do something when 2♣ was doubled, but we will never know what cunning plan he had in mind.

East led the ten of hearts which led the trick. If East now switches to a club West wins, cashes a top heart and plays a third heart for East to ruff. Another club allows West to draw trumps and now cashing two more clubs and the master heart sees declarer (still to discard) reduced to ♦AQ ♠KQ10. As you can see he is squeezed and will take only two tricks.

In practice East played a second heart and West won and played two more hearts, South ruffing, and playing the king of spades. When that held he cashed the ace of diamonds and exited with a diamond, West pitching the ♠J as East won with the king. A careless spade exit endplayed West allowing declarer to score a trump trick, so only four down, -400.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Charlsen	Stefanov	Hoftaniska	Nanev
1♣*	Pass	1♠	1NT
Double	2♦	Pass	2♠*
Pass	3♣	Pass	3♦
Double*	Pass	3♠	All Pass

1♣ 2+♣, 9-21, any 4-3-3-3

South led the king of spades and declarer ducked, won the spade continuation with the jack and played the ace of clubs and a club, South winning and exiting with the queen of spades. Declarer won in dummy and exited with a club, claiming nine tricks when South cashed the ace of diamonds—so 6 IMPs for K1.

Meanwhile we were in time to see what happened in Lavazza-Zimmermann.

West	North	East	South
Versace	Bocchi	Lauria	Sementa
1♣*	Pass	1♠	1NT
Double	2♦	Pass	Pass
Double*	Pass	3♣	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♠	All Pass

With an awkward choice South opted for the eight of hearts and declarer won with the ten and played a club to the queen. When it held he continued with dummy's jack of spades. South could win, but had no good move, declarer soon claiming +420.

Superficially it may appear that leading a top spade is better, but that is not the case. Say declarer wins and plays three rounds of hearts, ruffing and playing a club to the queen. After cashing the ace of clubs declarer plays the fourth heart pitching his last club and the defenders have no answer.

What is more, if declarer ducks the opening spade lead it is even possible to make an overtrick! I'll leave you to work that one out!

In the other room E/W played in 3♣ recording +130 to hold the loss to 7 IMPs.

Board 15. Dealer South. N/S Vul.

♠ 2		
♥ A986		
♦ J8763		
♣ K109		
♠ 73		♠ KQ10865
♥ Q753		♥ KJ1042
♦ K105		♦ Q4
♣ QJ85		♣ —
♠ AJ94		
♥ —		
♦ A92		
♣ A76432		



Open Room

West	North	East	South
Aronov	Padon	Damyanova	Bakhshi
—	—	—	1♣
Pass	1♥	1♠	2♣
Pass	3♣	3♥	3♠*
Pass	5♣	Pass	Pass
Double	All Pass		

West led the three of hearts and declarer put up dummy's ace pitching the two of diamonds and played two rounds of diamonds, East winning and returning the king of hearts. Declarer ruffed and played a club for the jack and king. Declarer then embarked on a cross-ruff and West ruffed in with the ♣Q on the third round of spades and exited with a club for one down, -200.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Charlsen	Stefanov	Hoftaniska	Nanev
—	—	—	2♣*
Pass	2♦*	4♣*	Double
4♥	Double	All Pass	
2♣ Precision			
2♦ Inquiry			
4♣ Majors			

North led the nine of clubs and declarer ruffed in dummy and played the king of spades. South won, cashed the ace of diamonds and exited with a diamond, declarer winning in dummy and playing the ten of hearts (the ♠Q is best). North ducked and when declarer now played the ♠Q he ruffed, cashed the ace of hearts and exited with a heart. Declarer won and cashed the king of diamonds pitching a spade. When South also parted with a spade it cost his side a trick as declarer could now play the queen of clubs. South won and returned a club, but declarer put in the eight and had escaped for only two down, -300, still a loss of 11 IMPs.

KI won 18-2 – a great start to the day for them.

L'étoile

L'étoile is an opéra bouffe in three acts by Emmanuel Chabrier with a libretto by Eugène Leterrier and Albert Vanloo.

The opera has been performed with increasing frequency and further afield over recent years, including an Opera North production in 1991 (which was the first time I saw it) and has subsequently been performed all around the world, the Royal Opera House in London giving several performances in early 2016.

Act 1

King Ouf 1 roams his city, in disguise, searching for a suitable subject to execute as a birthday treat. Hérissou de Porc-Epic, an ambassador, and his wife, Aloès, arrive, accompanied by his secretary, Tapioca, and Laoula, the daughter of a neighboring monarch. They are traveling incognito, and the princess is being passed off as Hérissou's wife. Their mission, of which Laoula is unaware, is to marry her to Ouf. Complications arise when Laoula and a poor pedlar, Lazuli, fall in love at first sight. Scolded for flirting, Lazuli insults the disguised king and thus becomes a desired candidate for death by impalement. But Siroco, the king's astrologer, reveals that the fates of the king and the pedlar are inextricably linked; the stars predict that they will die within 24 hours of each other. Fortunes change again, and Lazuli is escorted with honours into the palace.

Act 2

Lazuli, fêted and well fed, grows bored with luxury and longs for Laoula. Ouf, still unaware of the disguises, furthers the lovers' hopes of marriage by imprisoning the supposed husband, Hérissou. The lovers depart but Hérissou escapes and orders the pedlar to be shot. Gunfire is heard, but although Laoula is brought in there is no sign of Lazuli. Ouf bemoans his impending death.

Act 3

Lazuli, having escaped harm, overhears Ouf, Siroco and Hérissou discussing the situation, and eventually reveals himself to Laoula. They plan a second elopement. The king and Siroco try to raise their spirits with a large glass of green chartreuse. Ouf, desperate to produce an heir to the throne, plans to marry Laoula, even if for an hour, but finds that he has run out of time. However, when the clocks strike five and nothing happens, Ouf declares that the astrologer's predictions must have been wrong. The Chief of Police then appears with Lazuli, who was caught on his way out of the country.

The King blesses Lazuli and Laoula's marriage.

Although the opera ends happily for everyone, that is not generally the case in a bridge match. When Zimmermann faced Russia in Round 12, whose star would be shining brightly when the curtain fell?

Board 1. Dealer North. None Vul.

	♠ KQ5	
	♥ K7	
	♦ AK987	
	♣ AK2	
♠ J2		♠ 9
♥ Q104		♥ A863
♦ J104		♦ Q632
♣ QJ1095		♣ 8743
	♠ A1087643	
	♥ J952	
	♦ 5	
	♣ 6	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Dubin	Multon	Kazantsev	Zimmermann
–	2♣*	Pass	2♦*
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♥*
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♣*
Pass	4♦*	Pass	5♦*
Pass	5NT	Pass	6♦
Pass	6♠	All Pass	
2♣	22-23 balanced or game forcing		
2♦	Relay (others would be natural +3 controls)		
3♥	Transfer		
4♣	Cue-bid		
4♦	Cue-bid		

If 5♦ was also a cue-bid perhaps 5NT was delayed Blackwood?

Whatever, the laydown slam was reached, East leading the ♥A to save some time, +980.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Helgemo</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Helness</i>	<i>Orlov</i>
–	1♣*	Pass	1♦*
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♥*
Pass	3♠	Pass	5♠
Pass	6♠	All Pass	

1♣ Strong
 1♦ Negative
 3♥ Transfer

Here too East tabled his ace – no swing.

Board 4. Dealer West. All Vul.

	♠ AQ93	
	♥ K6	
	♦ 108432	
	♣ A6	
♠ KJ7		♠ 86542
♥ 10954		♥ AQ3
♦ Q97		♦ J6
♣ J72		♣ Q93
	♠ 10	
	♥ J872	
	♦ AK5	
	♣ K10854	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Dubin</i>	<i>Multon</i>	<i>Kazantsev</i>	<i>Zimmermann</i>
Pass	1♦	Pass	1♥
Pass	1♠	Pass	2NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

West led the two of clubs and declarer played low from dummy, allowing East's queen to hold the trick. He returned the nine of clubs to dummy's ace and declarer now elected to duck a diamond – a potentially losing idea.

West won with the seven and switched to the four of hearts. When declarer played low from dummy, East won with the queen and now had to find the difficult defence of switching to a spade. Not unnaturally it was far too tempting to cash the ace of hearts and continue with the three and now declarer was in command, soon claiming the rest, +600.

What do you make of the play in the heart suit?

If declarer did not have the ♥J would he not have taken his only shot by rising with dummy's king? If that is right then perhaps the spade switch is not impossible to find?

On the other hand, if declarer had won the first round of diamonds and cashed the king of clubs he would always have taken nine tricks.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Helgemo</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Helness</i>	<i>Orlov</i>
Pass	1♦	Pass	1♥
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♦	Pass	3♦
All Pass			

East led the three of clubs for the jack and ace and declarer played a club to the ten and pitched a heart on the ♣K. He cashed the top diamonds and Had he gone flat out (taking the spade finesse) he would have made six, but he contented himself with just two overtricks, +150, a loss of 10 IMPs.

Board 6. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

♠ A862	♠ 73	♠ Q54
♥ 2	♥ J864	♥ KQ97
♦ AK1043	♦ QJ95	♦ 76
♣ 1095	♣ J43	♣ KQ82
	♠ KJ109	
	♥ A1053	
	♦ 82	
	♣ A76	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Dubin</i>	<i>Multon</i>	<i>Kazantsev</i>	<i>Zimmermann</i>
–	–	1♣	Double
1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

South led the eight of diamonds and declarer won with dummy's ace and ran the ten of clubs. When it held he played a club to the eight and cleared the clubs, South returning the two of diamonds. Declarer won and exited with a diamond and North won and played the seven of spades. South won with the nine and could play any of remaining cards—he opted to cash the ace of hearts and continue the suit and declarer could not get beyond eight tricks, -100.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Helgemo</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Helness</i>	<i>Orlov</i>
–	–	1♣	Double
1♠	Pass	2♠	Pass
2NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

3NT appears to have little chance, but when North led the queen of

diamonds declarer had a glimmer of hope. The first trick was completed by the six, two and three of diamonds. Imagining he had struck gold, North continued with the five of diamonds only to discover that his motherload was pyrites (fool's gold) and declarer won with the ten and played the ten of clubs covered by the jack and king. Declarer played a club to the nine, cashed two diamonds pitching hearts and then went back to clubs. South won, cashed the ace of hearts and exited with a heart, declarer claiming +600.

Board 8. Dealer West. None Vul.

♠ A872	♠ K3	♠ Q109
♥ A754	♥ K9632	♥ QJ
♦ AJ4	♦ KQ96	♦ 8752
♣ 95	♣ J2	♣ Q843
	♠ J654	
	♥ 108	
	♦ 103	
	♣ AK1076	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Dubin</i>	<i>Multon</i>	<i>Kazantsev</i>	<i>Zimmermann</i>
1♣	1♦	All Pass	

Somewhat mystified by North's overcall I asked Jean-Paul if he could offer an explanation. He suggested it might be a transfer—a French convention called Cachalot. That looked plausible, but when I checked the convention card it confirmed—as I suspected—that overcalls are natural.

I suggested that perhaps North had removed the wrong card from the bidding box and when Jean-Paul said we should ask I suggested that he would be the perfect man for the job.

He then reminded me of the classic comic sketch involving Peter Cook and Dudley Moore as an officer and a pilot, Perkins, during the war.

Officer: I want you to lay down your life, Perkins. We need a futile gesture at this stage. It will raise the whole tone of the war. Get up in a plane, Perkins, pop over to Bremen, take a shufti, don't come back. Goodbye, Perkins. God, I wish I was going too.

Perkins: Goodbye, sir—or is it *au revoir*?

Peter Cook: *No, Perkins. It's goodbye.*

(Now substitute Jean-Paul for Perkins and you should see the point.)

Anyhow, on this layout declarer was not hard pressed to record seven tricks (I trust you will forgive me for not giving you a trick-by-trick account of this riveting contract).

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Helgemo</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Helness</i>	<i>Orlov</i>
1♥	Pass	1NT	Double
All Pass			

I'm not sure if South's double was conventional—perhaps showing four spades and a longer minor?

South led the ten of hearts and declarer was allowed to win with dummy's jack. He played the queen of spades from dummy (unlucky, running the ten saves a trick) and North won and switched to the jack of clubs. That gave the defenders the next five tricks when declarer withheld dummy's queen after which South's heart exit ensured two down, -300 and 5 IMPs for Russia who went down 24-12.

Three Act Tragedy

Three Act Tragedy is a work of detective fiction by Agatha Christie first published in the United States by Dodd, Mead and Company in 1934 under the title *Murder in Three Acts* and in the UK by the Collins Crime Club in January 1935 under Christie's original title.


The book features Hercule Poirot, supported by his friend Mr Satterthwaite, and is the one book in which the pair collaborate.

In Round 13 Mahaffey, consistently drawing the biggest audience at the BBO tables, met Vytas. Judge for yourselves how many tragedies took place.

There was a sensational start when both teams missed an easy grand slam.

(They arrived late and had to play a replacement deal.)

Board 12. Dealer West. N/S Vul.

♠ 1074		♠ AK6
♥ AJ9842		♥ 73
♦ A1093		♦ K8
♣ —		♣ K109732
♠ Q53		
♥ K105		
♦ J64		
♣ Q864		
♠ J982		
♥ Q6		
♦ Q752		
♣ AJ5		

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Klukowski</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>	<i>Gawrys</i>	<i>Zia</i>
Pass	2♥*	3♣	Pass
Pass	Double	Pass	3♥
All Pass			

2♥ Constructive weak two

The defenders started with three rounds of spades and West switched to a diamond, East winning and returning the suit. Declarer won in dummy and played the queen of hearts covered by the king and ace. With no entry to dummy he cashed the jack and conceded one down when the ten failed to appear, -100.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brogeland</i>	<i>Tuszynski</i>	<i>Lindqvist</i>	<i>Jassem</i>
Pass	1♥	2♣	Double
2NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

North led the ten of diamonds and South won with the queen and switched

to the queen of hearts for the king and ace, North switching to the seven of spades. Declarer won with dummy's ace and played the king of clubs, South taking the ace and playing his remaining heart, so the contract was five down, -250 and 8 IMPs to Vytas.

Board 16. Dealer West. E/W Vul.

♠ 9532		♠ A7
♥ J8		♥ KQ64
♦ K1083		♦ 9765
♣ AK3		♣ 754
♠ KQJ108		♠ 64
♥ 52		♥ A10973
♦ —		♦ AQJ42
♣ J109862		♣ Q



Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Klukowski</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>	<i>Gawrys</i>	<i>Zia</i>
2♠*	Pass	3♣*	Double
Pass	3♠*	Double	Pass
Pass	4♦	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

2♠ 6-10 PC, 5+♠ & 5+♣/♦

3♣ Pass or correct

West led the ten of spades and East won with the ace and switched to the six of diamonds, West ruffing, cashing the king of spades and exiting with the queen, ruffed by declarer who played the nine of hearts for the five, jack and king. He won the diamond exit, unblocked the queen of clubs, went to dummy with the king of diamonds, cashed two clubs pitching diamonds and ran the eight of hearts. he could then play either card from dummy, collecting East's trumps—pretty, but still one down, -50.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brogeland</i>	<i>Tuszynski</i>	<i>Lindqvist</i>	<i>Jassem</i>
2♠*	Pass	Pass	3♥
Pass	3♠*	Double	4♦
Pass	5♦	All Pass	

2♠ Good weak 2, 6♠ 8-11

West led the king of spades and East overtook it and mysteriously returned the five of clubs. Declarer won, cashed the ace of diamonds, crossed to dummy with the ten, pitched his last spade on the ♣A, threw a heart on the king and played the jack of hearts, claiming, +400 and 10 IMPs.

Board 18. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ K1087542		♠ 63
♥ K10		♥ J853
♦ —		♦ 1052
♣ Q754		♣ AK108
♠ J		♠ AQ9
♥ 94		♥ AQ762
♦ KQJ9863		♦ A74
♣ J32		♣ 96



Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Klukowski</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>	<i>Gawrys</i>	<i>Zia</i>
—	—	Pass	1NT
3♦	4♥*	5♣	5♦*
Pass	5♠	All Pass	

4♥ Transfer

5♦ Cue-bid

East cashed his clubs, West following with the three and jack. Declarer ruffed

the next club high and played the queen of spades, +650.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brogeland</i>	<i>Tuszynski</i>	<i>Lindqvist</i>	<i>Jassem</i>
–	–	Pass	1♥
4♦	4♠	5♦	6♠
Pass	Pass	Double	All Pass

With no room to manoeuvre South guessed to bid slam, -100 and a 13 IMP loss.

Board 19. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

	♠ AQJ1082	
	♥ –	
	♦ Q5432	
	♣ 65	
♠ 54		♠ K6
♥ Q9542		♥ AK63
♦ K106		♦ AJ987
♣ 943		♣ J7
	♠ 973	
	♥ J1087	
	♦ –	
	♣ AKQ1082	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Klukowski</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>	<i>Gawrys</i>	<i>Zia</i>
–	–	–	1♣
Pass	1♠	Double	2♣
2♥	4♠	Double	All Pass

East led the ace of hearts and declarer ruffed and played the ten of spades. East won and switched to the seven of diamonds and declarer ruffed in dummy, cross-ruffed the red suits, drew trumps and then played clubs, +790.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brogeland</i>	<i>Tuszynski</i>	<i>Lindqvist</i>	<i>Jassem</i>
–	–	–	2♣*
Pass	3♠	Double	4♠
All Pass			
2♣ Polish Club			

Declarer ruffed the heart lead, crossed to dummy with a club, ruffed a heart, went back to dummy with a second club, ruffed a heart, ruffed a diamond, ruffed a heart, ruffed a diamond, ruffed the queen of clubs with the ace of spades and ruffed a diamond, +420, losing 9 IMPs on the deal and the match, 34-23.

Suppose you were in 6♠ and East hits upon the lead of the ace of diamonds?

You ruff and run the nine of spades. When it holds no doubt you will repeat the finesse.....

Last Board

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. *Master Point Press* have just published a collection of fascinating deals, each of which is that last board, the one that decided a world title or represented an individual triumph or tragedy. Would the conclusion of the qualifying contest provide a story that might find its way into Volume 2?

With only two matches left, interest was concentrated on the teams hovering around 16th place. The penultimate round was quiet – this was the only potentially significant deal:

Board 4. Dealer West. All Vul.

♠ 873	♠ AK2	♠ J54
♥ 9	♥ QJ632	♥ AK1087
♦ KJ62	♦ A5	♦ Q98
♣ J10975	♣ AK8	♣ 43
	♠ Q1096	
	♥ 54	
	♦ 10743	
	♣ Q62	



Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Cima</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>	<i>Burgay</i>	<i>Zia</i>
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♣*
Pass	3♥	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

3♣ Puppet Stayman

East decided to lead a heart—and that handed declarer his ninth trick, +600.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brogeland</i>	<i>Buratti</i>	<i>Lindqvist</i>	<i>Mariani</i>
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♥
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♣
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

Here East led the jack of spades and declarer cashed four tricks in the suit pitching a heart. A heart to the jack lost to the ace and when East exited with a club declarer put up dummy's queen and played another heart. When West discarded he claimed eight tricks, -100 and 12 IMPs away.

In Round 15 Lavazza, who were not safe, got a tough draw against The Bush. This was a critical deal:

Board 14. Dealer East. None Vul.

♠ QJ2	♠ A97	♠ K108643
♥ KQ9	♥ A42	♥ J1076
♦ 653	♦ KQ10	♦ 987
♣ AJ72	♣ Q985	♣ —
	♠ 5	
	♥ 853	
	♦ AJ42	
	♣ K10643	



Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Amoils</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Bessis</i>	<i>Sementa</i>
—	—	2♠	Pass
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT
Double	All Pass		

I was surprised West didn't raise to 3♠, but when he doubled 3NT it did not appear to matter. However, before the result is posted the Gods have determined that there is the small matter of the opening lead. East opted for the jack of hearts and when West followed with the nine (unblocking an honour saves a trick) declarer won with the ace and played a club to the king and ace. West switched to the queen of spades and declarer took the ace, cashed the king of diamonds, overtook the queen with dummy's ace and advanced the ten of clubs. That was ten tricks, +650.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Duboin</i>	<i>Fredin</i>	<i>Bilde</i>	<i>Ekenberg</i>
—	—	2♠	Pass
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

There was no raise here either, and also no double. Once again the lead was the jack of hearts and as before West contributed the nine. Declarer won, cashed the king and queen of diamonds and then – choose your own adjective – played the nine of clubs, putting up the king when East discarded. West won and switched to the queen of spades. Declarer won, overtook the ten of diamonds and played the ten of clubs, but West could cover that and there were only eight tricks, -100 and a devastating 12 IMP loss (effectively a 23 IMP swing if 3NT doubled is defeated and made in the other room) that made sure Lavazza advanced.

Those of you who like an exciting finish may be interested in the adventures of team Bernal. They had a very bad run at the start, after 6 matches they were at table 33, having recorded 2 big loses, 2 small loses, and 2 small victories. But then they started to win, taking 8 matches in a row, to leave them lying 12th, 7 VP ahead of 17th place with one round to go.

With 9 boards played the scoreboard revealed they had fallen to 19th place (they were losing 18.5-1.5 to Team Ventin). Gonzalo Goded, who was sitting out, went straight to the room to console his team mates.

Meanwhile there was the small matter of the Last Board:

Board 20. Dealer West. All Vul.

♠ AKJ75	♠ Q64	♠ 1098
♥ K42	♥ Q9853	♥ A106
♦ AK93	♦ 84	♦ 52
♣ J	♣ Q65	♣ AK732
	♠ 32	
	♥ J7	
	♦ QJ1076	
	♣ 10984	

♠ QJ2	♠ A97	♠ K108643
♥ KQ9	♥ A42	♥ J1076
♦ 653	♦ KQ10	♦ 987
♣ AJ72	♣ Q985	♣ —
	♠ 5	
	♥ 853	
	♦ AJ42	
	♣ K10643	

In the Open Room E/W played in the regulation 6♠ for +1430.

In the replay E/W went for 6NT – and the 17 IMP swing was just enough to move Bernal into the final qualification position.

Basically it was an almost perfect example of Swiss *submarine tactics*, except that when they appeared to have achieved their aim Team Ventin was waiting for them with a hammer aimed at their heads, but somehow they managed to make a final leap just when it appeared they were drowning.

Cabaret

A sophisticated entertainment, usually with music and song, sometimes satirical, performed in bars, restaurants etc.

The rise of the Cabaret genre in the 1930's is reflected in Christopher Isherwood's novel *Goodbye to Berlin*, dramatised as *I am a Camera* and turned into a musical, *Cabaret*.

Performers are given the *call* (the traditional name for the order or warning that they are required) as the time for the curtain to rise approaches (the aptly named curtain-call). Even today a call boy may be used to make the announcements sometimes uttering clichés such as '*Overture and beginners, please*'.

Time is adhered to strictly, just as in bridge and breaches of punctuality are frowned upon.

Everyone was seated in good time for the first of the three sessions that would reduce the main event to just eight teams.

There were only nine double figure swings in the match I elected to follow between Mahaffey and Ina Man Red.

Board 1. Dealer North. None Vul.

♠ 5	♠ 64	♠ AJ8732
♥ K82	♥ J654	♥ Q93
♦ J1084	♦ K	♦ 732
♣ J10752	♣ KQ9864	♣ A
	♠ KQ109	
	♥ A107	
	♦ AQ965	
	♣ 3	



Open Room

West	North	East	South
Karwur	Meckstroth	Bojoh	Zia
–	Pass	1♠	2♦
Pass	3♣	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

West led the five of spades and when East put in the seven, declarer won with the ten and played a club for the king and ace. East cashed the ace of spades and exited with the three of hearts, West winning with the king and returning the eight. Declarer won with the ten and could count nine tricks, +400.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Brogeland	Lasut	Lindqvist	Manoppo
–	Pass	1♠	2♦
Pass	3♣	Pass	3NT
Double	All Pass		

The stakes were raised at this table.

West led his spade and East took the ace and switched to the seven of diamonds. Declarer won with dummy's king, played a spade to the nine and

a club for the king and ace. When East returned a diamond declarer won with the ace and exited with a diamond. West won and calmly returned his last diamond, East discarding a spade. Declarer had nine tricks in view, but there was no way to reach the queen of clubs and he had to go one down, -100 and a fast 11 IMP start for Mahaffey.

I expect the reader will be ahead of me here when I explain how declarer could have made 3NT.

When East exits with a second diamond after winning the ace of clubs, declarer should simply continue with the master diamond and a diamond. West wins and is endplayed, either allowing declarer to enjoy the ♣Q or having to open up the heart suit.

There is a winning defence, but it is not likely to be found at the table!

West must lead a diamond, declarer winning, playing a spade to the nine followed by a club to the king and ace. Now East exits with a heart and West wins and returns the jack of diamonds. Declarer plays three rounds of the suit to put West on lead, but a heart exit, East covering dummy's card will keep declarer off the table and eventually East will collect two spades.

In Vytas v Netherlands Juniors Sprinkhuiz found the lead of the jack of diamonds against Tuszynski! Declarer won and played a spade and now East failed to rise with the ace (it would still have been difficult to find the heart switch). Declarer won with the ten and played a club to the king and ace and East returned a diamond. Now declarer made the mistake of ducking and West won and exited with a diamond restricting declarer to eight tricks.

In Lavazza v Coldea Madala went down after a spade to the ace and a spade. He won with the ten, played a club to the king and ace, won the diamond return and played a heart for the ten and king. Now West could exit with a diamond and there were only eight tricks.

At the point where declarer is in dummy with the ♦K it is right to play a heart, but it must be the jack. If West wins that he will eventually be endplayed. If East covers the jack declarer wins and cashes two spades. Provided he reads the ending he will be able to force West to surrender at some point—for example if West's last four cards are ♥K ♦J ♣J10 declarer will, holding ♥107 ♦96 exit with a heart. If West keeps two hearts he will be forced down to one club and thrown in on the fourth round of diamonds.

This line works even if East is 6-2-3-2 with a doubleton heart honour.

In Zimmermann v Russia Versace was another who failed to find the play

of the jack of hearts and his counterpart, Orlov, was treated to the lead of the two of clubs by Helgemo, after which the only winning move is for declarer to play East for the singleton ace – no, I wouldn't have found that either.

Board 5. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

♠ Q93	♠ K764	♠ J1085
♥ AKJ84	♥ 9	♥ Q73
♦ 864	♦ KQ5	♦ J1097
♣ 109	♣ KQ875	♣ A6
	<div>W N E S</div>	
♠ A2		
♥ 10632		
♦ A32		
♣ J432		

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Karwur</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>	<i>Bojoh</i>	<i>Zia</i>
–	1♣	Pass	1♥
Pass	1♠	Pass	3♣
Pass	3♦	Pass	5♣
All Pass			

East led the jack of diamonds and declarer won with dummy's ace and played a club for the nine queen and ace. East exited with the seven of diamonds and declarer won, played three rounds of spades, ruffing and got off play with a heart. West took the ace and forced declarer with a heart. After ruffing a spade was ruffed with the jack of clubs and the 2-2 trump break meant eleven tricks, +600.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brogeland</i>	<i>Lasut</i>	<i>Lindqvist</i>	<i>Manoppo</i>
–	2♣*	Pass	2♦*
2♥	2♠	3♥	4♣
Pass	4♥	Pass	5♣
All Pass			

The play was virtually the same, except that the defenders did not force declarer, but when he ruffed the fourth spade he did so with the four of clubs and was overruffed. It looks silly, but imagine West was 3-6-3-1? However, that would mean East had raised to 3♥ on a doubleton – which do you think is more likely? Whatever, it was a 12 IMP swing for Mahaffey.

Board 11. Dealer South. None Vul.

♠ J10
♥ K94
♦ KQ95432
♣ 7

♠ K87652
♥ J106
♦ —
♣ KQ94

W N E S

♠ 943
♥ Q8532
♦ AJ87
♣ J

♠ AQ
♥ A7
♦ 106
♣ A1086532

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Karwur</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>	<i>Bojoh</i>	<i>Zia</i>
–	–	–	Pass
Pass	3♦	4♣	4♦
5♦*	Pass	5NT*	Double
7♣	Pass	Pass	7♦
Pass	Pass	Double	All Pass

East cashed the ace of clubs and followed it with the ace of spades followed by the queen, West overtaking with the king and playing a third spade. Declarer ruffed with the king of diamonds, drew trumps and played a heart to the king, so he lost a second heart and was five down, -1100. Did declarer think it was unlikely that West could bid a grand slam without an ace? On the other hand, how could East bid 5NT without a heart control?

Thanks to a visit from one of the players I can add a little more information about the auction:

- 5♦ Guarantees first round control
- 5NT First round controls in both majors

That made it easy for West to bid 7♣. It doesn't explain declarer's play in hearts.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brogeland</i>	<i>Lasut</i>	<i>Lindqvist</i>	<i>Manoppo</i>
–	–	–	Pass
2♠	3♦	4♠	5♦
5♠	All Pass		

Judge for yourselves what went wrong here – the outcome was a loss of 11 IMPs, making the score 34-31 in favour of Mahaffey.

Board 15. Dealer south. N/S Vul.

♠ 85		
♥ J9852		
♦ A952		
♣ 52		
♠ AKQ9764		♠ 32
♥ 3		♥ AK74
♦ 106		♦ KJ4
♣ KJ6		♣ AQ107
♠ J10		
♥ Q106		
♦ Q873		
♣ 9843		



Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Karwur</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>	<i>Bojoh</i>	<i>Zia</i>
–	–	–	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♣	Pass
3♠	Pass	4NT*	Pass
5♠*	Pass	6♠	All Pass

4NT RKCB

5♠ 2 key cards +♠Q

North led.... drum roll please.... the two of diamonds and when declarer played dummy's four and South produced the queen East wished he had preferred 6NT.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brogeland</i>	<i>Lasut</i>	<i>Lindqvist</i>	<i>Manoppo</i>
–	–	–	Pass
4♦*	Pass	4NT*	Pass
5♠*	Pass	6NT	All Pass

4♦ 8-9 tricks with good ♠ (max one loser), 1st, 2nd, 4th

4NT RKCB

5♠ 2 key cards +♠Q

South led the jack of spades so that was +1020 and 14 IMPs for Mahaffey.

Board 20. Dealer West. All Vul.

♠ K73	♠ AJ842	♠ Q
♥ AJ10643	♥ Q7	♥ K52
♦ AJ86	♦ —	♦ KQ7542
♣ —	♣ KQJ652	♣ 873

♠ 10965	♠ 10965
♥ 98	♥ 98
♦ 1093	♦ 1093
♣ A1094	♣ A1094



Open Room

West	North	East	South
Karwur	Meckstroth	Bojoh	Zia
1♥	2♥*	3♥	4♠
5♥	Pass	Pass	Double
All Pass			

I saw South's double described as 'action' by one commentator. North led the king of clubs and declarer ruffed, crossed to the king of hearts and played a heart to the jack, so 'only' +850.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Brogeland	Lasut	Lindqvist	Manoppo
1♥	2♥*	3♥*	3♠
4♥	4♠	All Pass	

2♥ Spades and a minor

In some partnerships East would have been able to bid 3♦ to show that suit and heart support, while other use 4♦ in the same way (you might like to have a fourth heart). Should West have preferred 4♦ to 4♥?

West led the ace of hearts and continued with the three, East winning with the king and retuning the three of clubs, West's ruff ensuring the defeat

of the contract, +100 and 13 IMPs for Ina Man Red – trailing 48-69 at the lunch break.

Topdog/Underdog

Topdog/Underdog is a play by American playwright Suzan-Lori Parks which premiered in 2001 off-Broadway in New York City. In 2002 Parks received the Pulitzer Prize for Drama and the Outer Critics Circle Award for the play

The play chronicles the adult lives of two African-American brothers, Lincoln and Booth, as they cope with women, work, poverty, gambling, racism, and their troubled upbringings. Their parents deserted the brothers when they were youngsters, and they became dependent on each other. Lincoln (in his late 30s), who had been an expert Three-card Monte player, lives with his younger brother Booth (in his early 30s), because his wife asked him to leave. Lincoln has taken a job as an Abraham Lincoln impersonator. Booth is trying to become a card sharp, but is not successful.

Bridge, like so many sporting contests, is frequently a battle between a topdog and an underdog – and sometimes the result is unexpected. In the match between the number 7 and 12 seeds it was hard to predict who might emerge as winners.

Board 1. Dealer North. None Vul.

♠ K7	♠ J1042	♠ AQ985
♥ 10932	♥ KJ87	♥ AQ5
♦ QJ1086	♦ 52	♦ —
♣ 53	♣ Q76	♣ A10984

♠ 63	♠ 63
♥ 64	♥ 64
♦ AK9743	♦ AK9743
♣ KJ2	♣ KJ2



Open Room

West	North	East	South
Nystrom	Auken	Hult	Welland
–	Pass	1♠	3♦
Pass	Pass	Double	All Pass

Those who live by the sword.... There was nothing to the play declarer going four down, -800.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Gawel	Ventin	Jagniewski	Palma
–	Pass	1♠	2♦
Pass	Pass	Double	All Pass

A level lower meant a trick more, -500 and 7 IMPs.

Board 3. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

♠ AK83		
♥ K1073		
♦ Q85		
♣ 87		
♠ J92		♠ 4
♥ A5		♥ QJ86
♦ A4		♦ KJ932
♣ AKJ932		♣ Q54
	♠ Q10765	
	♥ 942	
	♦ 1076	
	♣ 106	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Nystrom	Auken	Hult	Welland
–	–	–	2♠
3♣	3♠	Double*	Pass
5♣	All Pass		

The defenders started with two rounds of spades and declarer ruffed, overtook the queen of clubs, ruffed a spade, came to hand with a diamond, drew trumps, played a diamond to the king and ran the jack of hearts, +600.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Gawel	Ventin	Jagniewski	Palma
–	–	–	Pass
1♣*	Double	1♦*	Pass
2NT	Pass	3♠	Double
Pass	Pass	4♠	Pass
6♣	All Pass		

1♣ 2+♣, 11-21 5+♣, 11-13 balanced, 17-19 balanced, 4441♦ 11-21
1♦ Transfer

The defenders played two rounds of spades and declarer ruffed, cashed the queen of clubs and advanced the queen of hearts. When this drew no reaction he put up the ace, ruffed a spade, came to hand with the ace of diamonds and ran his trumps, executing a show up squeeze on West for a 13 IMP swing to Club Enthusiast.

Board 5. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

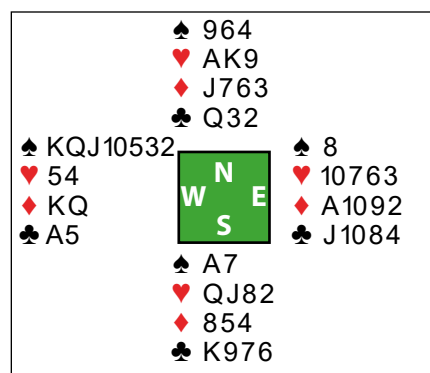
♠ 964		
♥ AK9		
♦ J763		
♣ Q32		
♠ KQJ10532		♠ 8
♥ 54		♥ 10763
♦ KQ		♦ A1092
♣ A5		♣ J1084
	♠ A7	
	♥ QJ82	
	♦ 854	
	♣ K976	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nystrom</i>	<i>Auken</i>	<i>Hult</i>	<i>Welland</i>
–	Pass	Pass	Pass
1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♠	Pass
3♠	All Pass		

North led the four of spades and South took the ace and switched to the four of diamonds. That clarified the position in the suit and declarer was never taking more than nine tricks, +140.

♥	QJ82
♦	854
♣	K976



Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Gawel</i>	<i>Ventin</i>	<i>Jagniewski</i>	<i>Palma</i>
–	Pass	Pass	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

North led the king of hearts and continued with two more rounds of the suit, declarer ruffing and playing the queen of spades. South took the ace and tried for a promotion by returning the queen of hearts. Declarer ruffed high and played trumps, keeping the $\heartsuit A109$ $\clubsuit J10$ in dummy. South pitched the seven of clubs, followed by the nine. If that promised an even number of clubs (no convention card!) South was now known to be 2-4-3-4. Declarer was already known to be 7-2 in the majors so can only have four minor suit cards, so when declarer played his last spade, North, down to $\heartsuit J763$ should have known it was safe to pitch a diamond. When he parted with the queen of clubs declarer cashed the queen of diamonds, overtook the king with dummy's ace and ran the ten of clubs to bring off a pseudo guard squeeze that was worth 7 IMPs.

Board 12. Dealer West. N/S Vul.

♠ A9		♠ K872
♥ 64		♥ K5
♦ A764		♦ J98
♣ KJ952		♣ A763
	<div>W N E S</div>	
♠ 543		♠ QJ106
♥ J1087		♥ AQ932
♦ K532		♦ Q10
♣ 104		♣ Q8

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nystrom</i>	<i>Auken</i>	<i>Hult</i>	<i>Welland</i>
1♣	Pass	1♦*	Pass
1♥	Pass	2♦	Pass
2NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

North led the two of spades and declarer won with the nine and played on clubs, happy to see South's ten appear on the second round. North won that trick with the ace and switched to the king of hearts. Declarer took dummy's ace, came to hand with a spade, cashed three clubs, went to the queen of hearts and exited with a heart. South won with the ten and down to ♠3 ♦K3 exited with the spade. North won and returned the nine of diamonds but declarer covered with the ten and had an overtrick, +430.

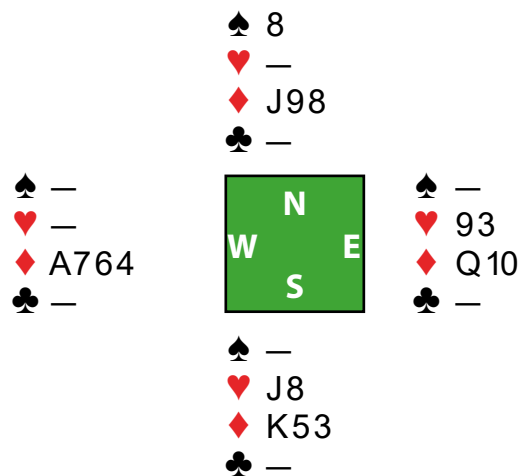
Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Gawel</i>	<i>Ventin</i>	<i>Jagniewski</i>	<i>Palma</i>
1♣*	Pass	1NT*	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♦	Pass
2♥	Pass	2♠	Pass
2NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

1♣ 2+♣, 11-21 5+♣, 11-13 balanced, 17-19 balanced, 4441♦ 11-21
1NT Game forcing relay

South led the ten of hearts and declarer won with the queen and played on clubs, North taking the second round and returning the king of hearts. Declarer won and played a spade to the nine, North winning an exiting with a club. Declarer won, and cashed two more clubs and the ace of spades, throwing three hearts from hand. When he played a diamond to the queen South won and had two hearts to cash, one down, -50 and 10 IMPs for Ventin.

To get home, declarer must part with his spades (throw winners, keep losers!) to reach this position with South still to discard:



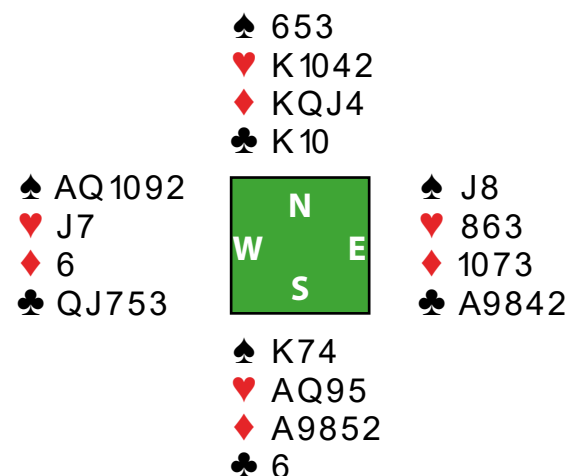
If South throws a heart declarer plays a diamond to the ten. South wins and can only exit with a diamond. Declarer wins in hand and exits with a heart, forcing South to surrender the last trick to dummy's ♦A.

If South throws a diamond declarer cashes the ace of diamonds and exits with a diamond and now the nine of hearts comes into its own at trick thirteen.

The phrase 'stepping stone' springs to mind.

In the five-card ending if South has retained a spade declarer also keeps one in dummy, along with two diamonds and two hearts. Now when he cashes the last club he pitches a diamond and then continues with the ace of diamonds and a diamond, when someone will be endplayed.

Board 17. Dealer North. None Vul.



Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nystrom</i>	<i>Auken</i>	<i>Hult</i>	<i>Welland</i>
—	1♣	Pass	1♦*
2♠	Pass	Pass	2NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

1♣ Any balanced hand including any other 5-card suit, also 5422
1♦ 4+♥

West led the three of clubs and East took dummy's king with the ace and switched to the jack of spades, giving the defenders the first ten tricks, -300.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Gawel</i>	<i>Ventin</i>	<i>Jagniewski</i>	<i>Palma</i>
—	1♣	Pass	1♠*
2♠	Pass	Pass	3♥
Pass	3♠*	Pass	3NT
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

West led the queen of clubs and when declarer played the ten from dummy the spotlight was on East.

In the World Pairs Championship in Biarritz in 1982 my partner, the

mercurial Roman Smolski, in a virtually identical situation, found the brilliant defence of winning with the ace and making the essential switch.

Alas, on this occasion the Polish star missed his cue and when he followed with the four declarer was home with ten tricks and 12 IMPs.

That was the start of a strong finish by Ventin, who led 93-55 with 20 deals remaining.

My Fair Lady

My Fair Lady is a musical based on George Bernard Shaw's play *Pygmalion*, with book and lyrics by Alan Jay Lerner and music by Frederick Loewe. The story concerns Eliza Doolittle, a Cockney flower girl who takes speech lessons from Professor Henry Higgins, a phoneticist, so that she may pass as a lady.

As play unfolded in the last session of the Round of 16 it became clear that most of the matches were of academic interest only, but on this deal declarer was required to ‘find the lady’.

Board 3. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

♠ K32
 ♥ AKQ106
 ♦ KJ83
 ♣ J

♠ J10654
 ♥ J
 ♦ 92
 ♣ K8654

♠ Q9
 ♥ 53
 ♦ Q765
 ♣ 109732

♠ A87
 ♥ 98742
 ♦ A104
 ♣ AQ

In the other room the Indonesians had bid smoothly to 6♥, for +980.

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Karwur</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>	<i>Bojoh</i>	<i>Zia</i>
–	–	–	1NT*
Pass	2♦*	Pass	2♠*
Pass	3♦	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♠*	Pass	4NT*
Pass	7♥	All Pass	

1NT 15-17
2♦ Transfer
2♠ Fit
4♠ Kickback Keycard
4NT 0-3 keycards

West led the jack of hearts and declarer won with dummy's ace and cashed two more hearts, East pitching the three of clubs and West the four of spades and the five of clubs.

Declarer's next card was the jack of diamonds and when East followed with the seven he let it run (didn't someone write a *Bols Tip* entitled – 'Roll over Houdini, when they don't cover they don't have it'? Of course once you play the jack you are committed).

How do you suppose declarer arrived at the winning decision?

The late Terence Reese maintained that on every deal there was always a clue, however small, that might point declarer in the right direction. Could it be, that having seen West pitch first a spade ('the idle fifth' as Patrick Jourdain called it) and then a club he formed an opinion that West was 5-5 in the black suits?

I couldn't find Zia, so my theory is unproven, but moments later declarer was claiming—another big swing for Mahaffey as they advanced to the quarter-finals.

The only match that had the potential to offer an exciting finish was the one between de Botton and Delta TV Programs. By the time they had reached Board 16 de Botton led 129-120. Jean-Paul, who was following the play, was predicting a win for the Italians, as they had posted some promising looking results in the Open Room, which was well ahead.

Board 16. Dealer West. E/W Vul.

	♠ 1094	
	♥ 76	
	♦ 7642	
	♣ 8653	
♠ 62		♠ AQJ
♥ A2		♥ Q10854
♦ AKQ953		♦ J
♣ A109		♣ K742
	♠ K8753	
	♥ KJ93	
	♦ 108	
	♣ QJ	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Mariani</i>	<i>Padon</i>	<i>Buratti</i>	<i>Bakhshi</i>
1♦	Pass	1♥	1♠
Double	Pass	2♠	Pass
3♦	Pass	3NT	All Pass

South led the jack of clubs and declarer was not hard pressed to record 12 tricks, +690.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Charlsen</i>	<i>Burgay</i>	<i>Hoftaniska</i>	<i>Vivaldi</i>
2♣*	Pass	2♦*	Pass
2NT	Pass	3♦*	Pass
3NT*	Pass	4♣	Pass
4♥	Pass	5NT*	Pass
6♣	All Pass		

2♣ 18-19 NT/20-21 NT/ 8+ tricks with a suit/GF

2♦ Relay

3♦ Transfer

5NT Pick a slam

If West had decided upon 6♦ or 6NT he would have had excellent chances – indeed, as long as declarer takes the right view in clubs there is no defence, even after a heart lead, as South can become the victim of a strip-squeeze, eventually being thrown in to lead into the spade tenace.

6♣ appeared to be hopeless.

North led the three of clubs and when South followed with the jack declarer ducked. He won the club continuation in hand, cashed the ten of clubs, played a diamond to the jack and drew the outstanding trumps. He came to hand with the ace of hearts to reach this three-card ending:

	♠ 109	
	♥ 7	
	♦ —	
	♣ —	
♠ 6		♠ AQ
♥ 2		♥ Q
♦ 5		♦ —
♣ —		♣ —
	♠ K8	
	♥ KJ93	
	♦ 108	
	♣ QJ	

When he cashed the last diamond North obligingly discarded the seven of hearts! That turned declarer's two of hearts into a menace and when declarer threw dummy's queen of hearts South was forced to discard the eight of spades.

Suddenly, like a Phoenix rising from the ashes, the contract could be made, but it was a big ask. Declarer played a spade and....finessed. Two down, and 13 IMPs that proved to be just enough to see Delta advance.

Hamlet

You could not (or at least I could not) have a Bulletin with a theatrical theme without including the *The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*, often shortened to *Hamlet*, Shakespeare's play set in Denmark.

Hamlet is Shakespeare's longest play, and is considered among the most

powerful and influential works of world literature, with a story capable of “seemingly endless retelling and adaptation by others”. It was probably one of Shakespeare’s most popular works during his lifetime, and still ranks among his most performed, topping the performance list of the Royal Shakespeare Company and its predecessors in Stratford-upon-Avon since 1879.

Mentioning the location of the play I cannot let the opportunity pass to pay tribute to Henrik, Prince Consort of Denmark, who died just before the start of the second Winter Games. He was a passionate bridge player and a great supporter of Danish Bridge, an ever present every two years at the famous Copenhagen Invitational, sometimes playing in the Pro-Am event that precedes the tournament.

Good night sweet prince: And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest!

Board 2. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ K94		
♥ KQJ643		
♦ K		
♣ 654		
♠ Q75		♠ AJ863
♥ A852		♥ 1097
♦ A2		♦ J43
♣ A1092		♣ K8
	♠ 102	
	♥ —	
	♦ Q1098765	
	♣ QJ73	



Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Lauria</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Versace</i>
—	—	2♠	Pass
2NT	3♥	All Pass	

The defenders started with three rounds of clubs, East ruffing and returning the three of diamonds. Declarer pitched a spade on the next club and East ruffed and exited with the ten of hearts, declarer finishing five down, -500.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Helgemo</i>	<i>Bianchedi</i>	<i>Helness</i>	<i>Madala</i>
—	—	Pass	3♦
Double	Pass	4♠	All Pass

South led the ten of diamonds and declarer won with dummy’s ace, played the queen of spades covered by the king and ace and exited with the nine of hearts. South ruffed, cashed the queen of diamonds and continued with the five, ruffed and overruffed by North who exited with the king of hearts. Declarer had to lose a heart, so one down and 11 IMPs to Lavazza.

Only one other pair reached 4♠ in the match between Bernal and Vytas:

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Jassem</i>	<i>Hoyos</i>	<i>Tuszynski</i>	<i>Bernal</i>
—	—	Pass	Pass
1♣	1♥	Double*	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♠	Pass
3♥	Pass	4♣	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

North led the king of hearts and declarer won with the ace as South pitched the six of diamonds. A spade to the jack was followed by the ace of spades and declarer then played the nine of hearts North winning as South pitched the seven of diamonds. North cashed the king of spades and then fatally cashed the queen of hearts. He exited with the king of diamonds, but declarer won in dummy, cashed the ♥8 pitching a diamond, overtook the ten of clubs with the king and ran his trumps, squeezing South in the minors for +420 and a 7 IMP pick up as they were in 3♠ making +140 in the other room.

If North exits with the king of diamonds declarer can win and play a heart, but now North can, after winning with the queen, exit with a club, destroying declarer’s communications.

The winning line for both declarers in 4♠ is to go after the clubs, playing three rounds of the suit pitching a heart. South wins and might switch to a diamond but declarer wins with the ace and plays the fourth club. If North ruffs the losing heart goes from dummy, while if North discards,

one winning line is to pitch a diamond and then exit with a diamond. South wins, but must then give up a ruff and discard. (Where East was the declarer there will be no ruff and discard, but declarer will be able to ruff the enforced diamond exit which has the same effect.)

Meanwhile in *Delta TV v Ventin*:

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nystrom</i>	<i>Burgay</i>	<i>Palma</i>	<i>Cima</i>
–	–	Pass	Pass
1NT	2♦*	Double	Pass
Pass	2♥	Double	3♦
Pass	3♥	Pass	Pass
Double	All Pass		

2♦ Multi Landy

That little adventure cost 1400. The comparison was with 2♠+1 so it cost 15 IMPs.

If South's pass showed diamonds North ought to pass. In any event he should certainly pass 3♦.

Board 7. Dealer South. All Vul.

♠ A2		♠ Q6
♥ 864		♥ QJ52
♦ K		♦ QJ952
♣ K975432		♣ J8
♠ J5		
♥ AK973		
♦ A83		
♣ AQ6		
	<div> <div>N</div> <div>W<div>S</div>E</div> </div>	
♠ K1098743		
♥ 10		
♦ 10764		
♣ 10		

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Lauria</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Versace</i>
–	–	–	3♠
Double	4♠	Pass	Pass
Double	Pass	4NT*	Pass
5♣	Pass	5♦*	Pass
5♥	All Pass		

4NT Two places to play

5♦ Red suits

North led the ace of spades and continued the suit, South winning and switching to the ten of clubs. North won with the king and gave his partner a ruff. Back came a diamond and when North won with the king the contract was three down, -300.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Helgemo</i>	<i>Bianchedi</i>	<i>Helness</i>	<i>Madala</i>
–	–	–	3♠
Double	4♠	All Pass	

West led the ace of hearts and switched to the five of spades. Declarer won with the king and played the ten of clubs, West taking the ace, cashing the ace of diamonds and reverting to the king of hearts. Declarer could not avoid the loss of two more diamonds, -200 and 11 IMPs for Zimmermann.

Board 9. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

♠ 8
 ♥ 96432
 ♦ A1053
 ♣ Q62

♠ J1095
 ♥ 8
 ♦ 87
 ♣ J109753

♠ AKQ72
 ♥ A5
 ♦ KQ9642
 ♣ —

♠ 643
 ♥ KQJ107
 ♦ J
 ♣ AK84

A green square with 'N' at the top, 'S' at the bottom, 'W' on the left, and 'E' on the right.

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Lauria</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Versace</i>
–	Pass	1♦	1♥
Pass	4♥	4♠	5♥
5♠	Pass	6♠	7♥
Pass	Pass	Double	All Pass

West led the eight of diamonds and declarer went up with dummy's ace and played a spade, East putting up the king. There was no way to get a club ruff now, so two down, -300.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Helgemo</i>	<i>Bianchedi</i>	<i>Helness</i>	<i>Madala</i>
–	Pass	1♦	1♥
Pass	4♥	4♠	5♥
5♠	Pass	6♠	7♥
Double	All Pass		

West led the seven of clubs and the ruff meant three down, -500 and 7IMPs for Zimmermann.

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nystrom</i>	<i>Burgay</i>	<i>Palma</i>	<i>Cima</i>
–	Pass	2♣	2♥
Pass	4♥	4♠	5♣
5♥	6♦	6♠	Double
All Pass			

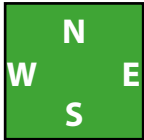
South led the king of clubs and declarer ruffed with the queen of spades, crossed to dummy with the jack of spades and played a diamond. When the king held he cashed the ace of hearts, ruffed a heart and played another diamond. Now North took the ace – too late the hero – and declarer claimed, +1660 and 17 IMPs as at the other table:

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Mariani</i>	<i>Hult</i>	<i>Buratti</i>	<i>Wrang</i>
–	Pass	1♦	1♥
Pass	4♥	4♠	Pass
Pass	5♥	All Pass	

The contract was one down when West led the jack of spades and promptly switched to the jack of clubs at trick two when East followed with the two of spades.

Board 10. Dealer South. All Vul.

♠ A Q 2		
♥ Q 9 6 4 3		
♦ K Q J 10		
♣ 3		
♠ K 10		♠ 9 7 3
♥ A J 8 7		♥ K 5
♦ 9 5 4		♦ A 7 3
♣ A 9 5 4		♣ K J 10 7 2
♠ J 8 6 5 4		
♥ 10 2		
♦ 8 6 2		
♣ Q 8 6		

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Lauria</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Versace</i>
–	–	1♣	Pass
1NT	Pass	3♣	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

North started with three rounds of diamonds, declarer winning in dummy and getting the clubs wrong. South won the third round of the suit and switched to the four of spades so the contract was five down, -500.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Helgemo</i>	<i>Bianchedi</i>	<i>Helness</i>	<i>Madala</i>
–	–	1♣	Pass
1♥	Pass	1NT	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

South led the five of spades and North took the king with the ace and switched to the king of diamonds. Declarer won at once with the ace, but then got the clubs wrong, crossing to the ace and then playing back towards the king. The good news was that North pitched the two of spades, blocking the suit, so declarer escaped for two down, -200 and another 7 IMPs for Zimmermann.

Would anyone find a way home in 3NT?

Bernal v Vytas

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Lantaron</i>	<i>Gawrys</i>	<i>Goded</i>	<i>Klukowski</i>
–	–	Pass	Pass
1♣	1♥	2♥	Pass
2NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

North led the king of diamonds and declarer won the third round of the suit with dummy's ace, cashed the king of clubs and then ran the jack. He ran the clubs and when the last one hit the table this was the position:

♠ AQ		
♥ Q96		
♦ 10		
♣ –		
♠ K10		
♥ AJ87		
♦ –		
♣ –		
	<div> <div>N</div> <div>W</div> <div>S</div> <div>E</div> </div>	
♠ J865		♠ 973
♥ 102		♥ K5
♦ –		♦ –
♣ –		♣ 2

When declarer cashes the last club pitching a heart North has no good discard.

He opted for a heart and declarer cashed the king, ace and jack for +600 and 10 IMPs (they made 2NT in the other room).

At the lunch break Zimmermann led 34-22.

The Tempest

The Tempest is a play by William Shakespeare, thought by many critics to be the last play that he wrote alone. It is set on a remote island, where the sorcerer Prospero, rightful Duke of Milan, plots to restore his daughter Miranda to her rightful place using illusion and skilful manipulation. He conjures up a storm, the eponymous tempest, to cause his usurping brother Antonio and the complicit King Alonso of Naples to believe they are shipwrecked and marooned on the island. There, his machinations bring about the revelation of Antonio's lowly nature, the redemption of the King, and the marriage of Miranda to Alonso's son, Ferdinand.

Walking along the seafront at lunchtime the waves were crashing against the sea wall and the wind was increasing in strength. Was that a portent of an exciting second set in the quarter-finals? The trailing teams were probably hoping so.

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Molenaar</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>	<i>Verbeek</i>	<i>Zia</i>
–	Pass	Pass	1♦
4♥	5♦	5♥	Pass
Pass	Double	All Pass	

Should North lead an ace? Even if he does, the defenders still need at least one spade ruff.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brogeland</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Lindqvist</i>	<i>Nab</i>
–	Pass	2♦*	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♥	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

2♦ 2-7 HCP 6 card ♠/♥ OR 24+NT (may be 5 cards green v red)

3♠ Asks for major suit length

If you study the convention card in addition to the above annotations there is also a note to the effect that $2\heartsuit-3\spadesuit$ is a slam try with \clubsuit .

In practice declarer played the king of spades at trick two followed by a second spade to dummy. When that held and South discarded declarer played a heart and North ruffed, cashed the ace of spades and then switched to clubs, three down, -150 and 13 IMPs for Netherlands Red.

This was Lavazza v Zimmermann

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Duboin</i>	<i>Multon</i>	<i>Bilde</i>	<i>Zimmermann</i>
–	Pass	2♠	3♣
4♣	5♣	Pass	Pass
5♥	Double	5♠	Pass
Pass	Double	All Pas	

South led the two of spades and declarer won with dummy's king and played a club, North rising with the ace and exiting with the six of spades. Declarer won with the queen, ruffed a club and started on the hearts, North ruffing the second round and switching to the eight of diamonds. Declarer won and ruffed a diamond, but he had a spade and two clubs to lose, three down -500, still worth 3 IMPs.

At double dummy declarer can escape for two down, playing on hearts at trick two. North ruffs the second round and plays two rounds of clubs, but declarer ruffs and exits with the $\spadesuit J$!

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Versace</i>	<i>Bianchedi</i>	<i>Lauria</i>	<i>Madala</i>
–	Pass	Pass	1♦
Double	Redouble	2♠	3♣
3♥	5♦	All Pass	

West led the ace of hearts and switched to the king of spades, but declarer won with dummy's ace, knocked out the ace of diamonds and claimed, +600.

Board 9. Dealer South. All Vul.

♠ 3	♠ QJ	♠ A109764
♥ J653	♥ K972	♥ 4
♦ AJ109	♦ 652	♦ KQ843
♣ Q1093	♣ K752	♣ A
	♠ K852	
	♥ AQ108	
	♦ 7	
	♣ J864	



Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Molenaar</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>	<i>Verbeek</i>	<i>Zia</i>
–	–	–	Pass
Pass	Pass	1♠	Pass
1NT	Pass	4♦	Pass
5♦	All Pass		

South led the ace of hearts and continued with the ten, declarer ruffing and claiming, +600.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brogeland</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Lindqvist</i>	<i>Nab</i>
–	–	–	Pass
Pass	Pass	1♠	Pass
1NT	Pass	2♦	Pass
3♦	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♠	Pass	4NT	Pass
5♣	Pass	6♦	All Pass

Here too the defenders started with two rounds of hearts, but declarer ruffed and played to establish the spades, ruffing three times in dummy with the

♦9, ♦10 and ♦A, using the ♣A as one entry back to hand, +1370 and 13 IMPs for Mahaffey.

Board 12. Dealer West. N/S Vul.

♠ Q9643	♠ K10872	♠ 5
♥ KQ9	♥ A1082	♥ J654
♦ 765	♦ A108	♦ K942
♣ K9	♣ 6	♣ A1043
	♠ AJ	
	♥ 73	
	♦ QJ3	
	♣ QJ8752	



Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Molenaar</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>	<i>Verbeek</i>	<i>Zia</i>
1NT*	2♣*	Pass	2♦*
Pass	2♠	Pass	2NT
Pass	3NT	Double	All Pass

1NT (9) 10-12

2♣ Majors

2♦ No preference

West led the six of diamonds and East won with the king and returned the two, declarer dropping the jack, winning the return with the queen and running the jack of spades. When it held he unblocked the ace, played a diamond to the ace and came off dummy with a club, West winning with the nine, cashing the king and switching to the king of hearts. Declarer ducked, won the next heart and claimed six tricks, -800.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brogeland</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Lindqvist</i>	<i>Nab</i>
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♥	Pass	2NT
All Pass			

Declarer could do no better in the replay, so two down, -200 but 12 IMPs for Netherlands Red.

Board 19. Dealer North. E/WVul.

♠ AJ1032	♠ KQ96	♠ —
♥ 9753	♥ AK8	♥ QJ10
♦ 105	♦ AK93	♦ QJ8642
♣ 108	♣ A4	♣ Q962
	♠ 8754	
	♥ 642	
	♦ 7	
	♣ KJ753	



Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Molenaar</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>	<i>Verbeek</i>	<i>Zia</i>
—	—	—	Pass
Pass	2♣*	Pass	2♦*
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♣*
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

East led the queen of hearts and declarer won and played three rounds of diamonds, pitching a heart and then ruffing with the four of spades. West overruffed (it does not help to pitch a club) and returned a heart, declarer winning and ruffing a diamond with the ♠7. West overruffed, cashed the

ace of spades and exited with a spade and declarer won, cashed two more spades and played clubs. He did not need to finesse, as East had come down to two clubs, +420.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brogeland</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Lindqvist</i>	<i>Nab</i>
—	—	—	Pass
Pass	2♣*	Pass	2♦*
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♣
Pass	3♦*	Pass	3♥*
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

Declarer won the heart lead, cashed the ace of diamonds, ruffed a diamond and played a spade to the king, East's discard of the four of diamonds coming as a shock. If declarer now pitches a heart on the king of diamonds he is on track a la Meckstroth, but fatally he now ruffed a diamond and West simply pitched a club (overruffing works just as well). Declarer came to hand with the ace of clubs, cashed the king of hearts and played a club to the king. West ruffed, played a heart to East's jack and with ♠AJ10 left was assured of two trump tricks, +50 and 10 IMPs for Mahaffey ahead 83-60 going into the final session .

The Lion in Winter

The Lion in Winter originally a 1966 Broadway play, is set during Christmas 1183, at King Henry II's château and primary residence in Chinon, Anjou, within the Angevin Empire of medieval France. Henry wants his youngest son, the future King John, to inherit his throne, while his estranged and imprisoned wife, Duchess Eleanor of Aquitaine, temporarily released from prison for the holidays, favours their oldest surviving son, the future King Richard the Lionheart. Meanwhile, King Philip II of France, the son and successor of Louis VII of France, Eleanor's ex-husband, has given his half-sister Alais, who is currently Henry's mistress, to the future heir, and demands either a wedding or the return of her dowry.

As the quarter-finals went into the last session the trailing teams needed

something special to happen.
Could a hero emerge?

Board 2. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

	♠ 987543	
	♥ 62	
	♦ AK3	
	♣ A5	
♠ 10		♠ AK2
♥ AJ104		♥ Q98753
♦ 10654		♦ 98
♣ J982		♣ 43
	♠ QJ6	
	♥ K	
	♦ QJ72	
	♣ KQ1076	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Helness</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Helgemo</i>
–	–	2♥	Double
5♥	5♠	All Pass	

There are many players who adhere to the theory that in this type of situation you should pre-empt to the level that you would like your opponents to play at. Whatever your views about that it was a triumph here, +100.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Versace</i>	<i>Bilde</i>	<i>Lauria</i>	<i>Duboin</i>
–	–	Pass	1♣
Pass	1♠	2♥	Pass
5♥	Double	All Pass	

5♥ had to go two down, -300 and 9 IMPs for Lavazza.

In Mahaffey v Netherlands Red Drijver led the eight of diamonds against Lindqvist's 4♠. Declarer won and played a spade and now the defenders

had the communications to score a diamond ruff for +100. It was tough for declarer to find the winning move of a heart at trick two. It was worth 9 IMPs when Zia and Meckstroth lost 300 in 5♥ doubled.

Board 3. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

	♠ J1096	
	♥ 53	
	♦ 1087432	
	♣ 2	
♠ A87		♠ 3
♥ AJ982		♥ K1064
♦ K5		♦ QJ
♣ K96		♣ AQJ873
	♠ KQ542	
	♥ Q7	
	♦ A96	
	♣ 1054	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Helness</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Helgemo</i>
–	–	–	1♠
2♥	4♠	4NT	Pass
5♣	Pass	5♥	Pass
6♥	All Pass		

North led the two of clubs and declarer won with dummy's queen, played a heart to the ace and a heart to the king for +1460.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Versace</i>	<i>Bilde</i>	<i>Lauria</i>	<i>Duboin</i>
–	–	–	1♠
Double	4♠	4NT	Pass
5♣	All Pass		

Declarer took twelve tricks for a loss of 13 IMPs.

Netherlands Red also bid this slam to pick up 13 IMPs in what was now a desperately close match.

Board 4. Dealer West. All Vul.

	♠ Q63	
	♥ 8	
	♦ Q9872	
	♣ Q953	
♠ J854		♠ AK2
♥ QJ9543		♥ 102
♦ 4		♦ KJ3
♣ 107		♣ AK864
	♠ 1097	
	♥ AK76	
	♦ A1065	
	♣ J2	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Helness</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Helgemo</i>
2♥	Pass	2♠	Pass
3♥	Pass	4♥	All Pass

North led the two of diamonds for the jack and ace and South switched to the seven of spades. Not being blessed with second sight, declarer played the jack and took North's queen with dummy's ace to play the ten of hearts. When it held he pitched a spade on the king of diamonds and played three rounds of clubs, ruffing. There were only nine tricks, -100.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Versace</i>	<i>Bilde</i>	<i>Lauria</i>	<i>Duboin</i>
Pass	Pass	2♦*	Pass
3♣*	Pass	3NT	Pass
4♣*	Pass	4♥	All Pass

South led the nine of spades and declarer put up dummy's jack, which held

the trick! Now declarer could set about drawing trumps and had only to take the correct view in diamonds for +620 and 12 IMPs for Zimmermann.

If North covers the jack of spades declarer should finish a trick short but suppose he plays low on the opening lead? After winning in hand he cashes the top clubs and then starts on the trump suit. South can't play a second spade – the suit (most appropriately for Winter Games) is frozen, so he will probably win the second heart and play two more rounds of the suit. Declarer wins the fourth heart and plays a diamond for the jack and ace. South can only return a diamond to dummy's king which leaves these cards:

	♠ Q6	
	♥ —	
	♦ —	
	♣ Q9	
♠ J8		♠ A2
♥ QJ		♥ —
♦ —		♦ —
♣ —		♣ 86
	♠ 107	
	♥ —	
	♦ 106	
	♣ —	

Declarer ruffs a club and plays his last heart, squeezing North.

Board 5. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

♠ A982	♠ Q 1043	♠ 7
♥ J4	♥ AQ1063	♥ 9752
♦ 732	♦ K1086	♦ Q94
♣ AKJ6	♣ —	♣ Q7432
	♠ KJ65	
	♥ K8	
	♦ AJ5	
	♣ 10985	



Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Helness</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Helgemo</i>
—	1♥	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♠	Pass	2NT
Pass	4♣	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

West led the seven of diamonds and declarer won with the jack, played a spade to the ten and a spade to the king, East parting with the seven of clubs. Declarer turned his attention to hearts and when the jack appeared on the second round he claimed eleven tricks, +650.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Versace</i>	<i>Bilde</i>	<i>Lauria</i>	<i>Duboin</i>
—	1♥	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♥
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

East led the two of clubs, so that was a speedy two down, -200 and a loss of 13 IMPs.

Board 13. Dealer North. All Vul.

♠ 832	♠ 76	♠ AQ94
♥ KJ73	♥ A8	♥ Q964
♦ AQJ54	♦ 9872	♦ 6
♣ 4	♣ 109532	♣ AK86
	♠ KJ105	
	♥ 1052	
	♦ K103	
	♣ QJ7	



Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Helness</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Helgemo</i>
—	Pass	1♣	Pass
1♦	Pass	3♥	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

South led the two of hearts and North took the ace and switched to the seven of spades, South winning with the ten and playing a second heart. Declarer won in hand and played a diamond to the queen. When it held he cashed the ace and ruffed a diamond with the queen of hearts, claiming eleven tricks, +650.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Versace</i>	<i>Bilde</i>	<i>Lauria</i>	<i>Duboin</i>
—	Pass	1♣	Pass
1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

South led the queen of clubs and declarer won with the ace, played a diamond to the ace, ruffed a diamond, cashed the king of clubs pitching a spade, ruffed a club and played a spade to the queen. South won with the king and

returned the jack and declarer won and played his last club. That allowed South to throw the king of diamonds away and when declarer pitched a spade on the queen of diamonds South ruffed and played the ten of spades, ruffed by the jack of hearts and overruffed by North who played the eight of hearts. Declarer could win in dummy, but could not deny South the setting trick with the ♥10, -100. Almost any other line would have produced at least ten tricks, but this one cost 13 IMPs, giving Lavazza a small chance.

Board 18. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

	♠ Q	
	♥ QJ9	
	♦ KQ82	
	♣ A8765	
♠ J1054		♠ K863
♥ 3		♥ 1082
♦ AJ1095		♦ 73
♣ J42		♣ KQ93
	♠ A972	
	♥ AK7654	
	♦ 64	
	♣ 10	



Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Helness</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Helgemo</i>
–	–	Pass	1♥
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♥
Pass	3♠*	Pass	4♣*
Pass	4♦*	Pass	4NT*
Pass	5♦*	Pass	6♥
All Pass			
3♠	Splinter		
4♣	Cue-bid		
4NT	RKCB		
5♠	One key card		

West led the ace of diamonds and continued with the five. Declarer won

in dummy and played the queen of spades, covered by the king and ace, ruffed a spade and played the queen of diamonds. East ruffed (as he had to) with the eight of hearts (the ten also works) and declarer overruffed, ruffed a spade, cashed the ace of clubs and ruffed a club. It was already clear that the timing was wrong for the trump reduction that was necessary to neutralise East's ♥102 and declarer was soon conceding one down, -100.

The critical moment was at trick three. Declarer must play a third diamond (the queen is the obvious card) starting the trump reduction immediately.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Versace</i>	<i>Bilde</i>	<i>Lauria</i>	<i>Duboin</i>
–	–	Pass	1♥
Pass	2♣*	Pass	2♠
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♣
Pass	3♥	Pass	3NT
Pass	4♣*	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

2♣ Artificial game force

West cashed the ace of diamonds and continued with the jack, declarer winning with dummy's king and continuing with the queen, ruffed by East with the ♥8 and overruffed by declarer who now cashed the ace of spades and ruffed a spade. Now the route to 12 tricks is to play the dummy's remaining diamond, then after ruffing you cross to the ace of clubs, and cross-ruff the black suits. When declarer cashed the ace of clubs he could take only eleven tricks, +650 and 13 IMPs that gave Lavazza a glimmer of hope, quickly extinguished by the quiet nature of the last two deals.

Meanwhile Netherlands Red had taken a narrow 5 IMP lead against Mahaffey. The Closed Room had finished play while there were still seven deals to play at the other table. Nothing bad had happened for either team, but there were no obvious deals on which Mahaffey could hope to gain. By the time board 18 settled on the table Mahaffey had narrowed the gap with a couple of overtricks. Close to 4000 spectators already knew the result in the other room:

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Zia	Verbeek	Meckstroth	Molenaar
–	–	Pass	1♥
2♦	2NT	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

West led the four of spades and declarer won with the ace and played a diamond to the king. When it held he cashed the ace of clubs, and cross-ruffed spades and clubs, eventually pitching a diamond on the fourth club, finishing with eleven tricks, +650.

♠ Q			
♥ QJ9			
♦ KQ82			
♣ A8765			
♠ J1054			♠ K863
♥ 3			♥ 1082
♦ AJ1095			♦ 73
♣ J42			♣ KQ93
♠ A972			
♥ AK7654			
♦ 64			
♣ 10			

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Nab	Lindqvist	Drijver	Brogeland
–	–	Pass	1♥
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♥
Pass	3♥	Pass	4♣*
Pass	4♦*	Pass	4NT*
Pass	5♣*	Pass	5♦*
Pass	6♦*	Pass	6♥
All Pass			

The players had no way of knowing that the auction in this room ensured that this would be the deal that decided the outcome of the match.

We had quite a few kibitzers in the Bulletin Room. The general feeling was that declarer would be unlikely to find the winning line—after all, the problem had proved too much for Helgemo.

West led the two of clubs and declarer won with the ace. He ruffed a club and played a diamond. West took the ace and returned the jack and declarer won with the king and continued with the queen. East ruffed with the eight of hearts and declarer overruffed, cashed the ace of spades, ruffed spade, ruffed a club, ruffed a spade, ruffed a club, ruffed a spade and played a diamond, collecting East's ♥102.

Bravo Boye! from the thousands watching online.

The 13 IMPs so brilliantly earned on this deal proved decisive.

This is a fascinating hand, with many complex facets.

In simple terms, declarer starts with 6 trump tricks, two aces and at least one diamond. That makes it clear that declarer will need to ruff some spades, so the drawing of trumps must be postponed.

As it happens the only lead that defeats the slam (in theory, as it is still possible for the defence to go wrong) is a trump. Declarer wins in dummy, cashes the ace of club, ruffs a club and plays a diamond. Say West takes the ace. It is now essential to play a second diamond. If West plays for example a spade for the queen, king and ace, declarer ruffs a spade and can then play trumps, squeezing West in the pointed suits (of course its better to establish the clubs!)

A trump lead is an unlikely choice, as it may pick up partner's holding, but there is one further aspect that is worth noting. Give West the ♥8 and East the ♥1032 and now the only lead that allows the slam to make is the ♦A!

Declarer will win the diamond continuation, cash the ♣A, ruff a club, cash the ♠A, ruff a spade and play the ♦Q, when East has no good move.

If West leads a club, declarer wins with dummy's ace, ruffs a club and plays a diamond. Now West must duck, only taking the ace after declarer has ruffed another club and plays a second diamond. A trump switch now is in time to beat the contract, perhaps safer than playing the ten of diamonds, as partner must ruff with the ♥10, which brings the ♥8 into the game, echoing a defensive theme we saw earlier in the tournament.

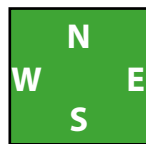
The Winter's Tale

The Winter's Tale is a play by William Shakespeare originally published in the First Folio of 1623. Although it was grouped among the comedies, some modern editors have relabelled the play as one of Shakespeare's late romances. Some critics consider it to be one of Shakespeare's "problem plays" because the first three acts are filled with intense psychological drama, while the last two acts are comedic and supply a happy ending.

As the semi-finals got under way the question on everyone's lips was, 'who will enjoy a happy ending?'

Board 1. Dealer North. None Vul.

♠ J985	♠ Q762	♠ K1043
♥ 4	♥ AK863	♥ 975
♦ A72	♦ KJ5	♦ 10943
♣ QJ874	♣ 10	♣ A6
	♠ A	
	♥ QJ102	
	♦ Q86	
	♣ K9532	



Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Versace</i>	<i>Palma</i>	<i>Lauria</i>	<i>Nystrom</i>
–	1♥	Pass	2NT*
Pass	3♥	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♦	Pass	4NT*
Pass	5♥*	All Pass	

2NT Heart support

4NT RKCB

5♥ 2 key cards

I have it on excellent authority that it is possible that 3♥ may have promised a singleton club. Still, you shouldn't really go past 4♥ with these cards.

East led the four of spades and declarer won perforce with dummy's ace and played a diamond to the king followed by a club, East taking the ace and exiting with the five of hearts. Declarer won with the six and played a diamond for the queen and ace. West returned the queen of clubs and declarer won with dummy's king, pitching a spade, played a diamond to the jack, ruffed a spade and cashed the jack of hearts. When West discarded a club declarer could not avoid the loss of a third trick, -50.

Declarer could have improved his timing.

When in and with the six of hearts he should ruff a spade and play the

queen of diamonds. West wins (otherwise a diamond goes on the king of clubs) and plays a club, but declarer pitches a spade, comes to hand, ruffs a spade and can claim.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wrang</i>	<i>Helness</i>	<i>Hult</i>	<i>Helgemo</i>
–	1♥	Pass	2NT*
Pass	3♠	Pass	3NT
Pass	4♣	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

4♥ was not in danger and declarer did not go flat out, recording ten tricks with ease, +420 and a 10 IMP start for Zimmermann.

Board 3. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

♠ AK1075	♠ J86	♠ 43
♥ Q	♥ KJ97	♥ 1085432
♦ KQ6	♦ J102	♦ A97
♣ AJ106	♣ K87	♣ 43
	♠ Q92	
	♥ A6	
	♦ 8543	
	♣ Q962	



Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Versace</i>	<i>Palma</i>	<i>Lauria</i>	<i>Nystrom</i>
–	–	–	Pass
1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♥	Pass
2NT	Pass	3♥	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

South led the four of diamonds and declarer won with dummy's king and played the queen of hearts. North put up the king and must have been pleased when it held the trick. He returned the ten of diamonds and declarer won with the ace, played three rounds of spades, ruffing, and exited with a heart to South's ace. When South exited with a diamond (a club was essential) declarer won with dummy's queen and played a spade. Suddenly North's two certain trump tricks had been reduced to one. He could pitch a club, but so would declarer, who would then ruff a spade, cross to dummy with a club and play another club, +420.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Wrang	Helness	Hult	Helgemo
–	–	–	Pass
1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♥	All Pass

At this table South led a diamond and declarer won in dummy and played the queen of hearts, North winning with the king and returning a diamond. Declarer won in hand and exited with a heart, South winning and exiting with a club. Declarer came to eight tricks, +110 – a second double digit loss in the space of three deals.

Board 5. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

♠ –	♠ 103	♠ AKJ9854
♥ 875	♥ Q643	♥ KJ9
♦ QJ97	♦ 10853	♦ K
♣ KQ9865	♣ 732	♣ AJ
	♠ Q762	
	♥ A102	
	♦ A642	
	♣ 104	



Open Room

West	North	East	South
Versace	Palma	Lauria	Nystrom
–	Pass	1♠	Pass
1NT	Pass	2♣*	Pass
2♦*	Pass	2♠	Pass
3♣	Pass	3♠	Pass
3NT	Pass	4♦	Pass
4♠	All Pass		
2♣	Gazzilli		
2♦	8+		

South led the two of spades and declarer won with the jack and played three more rounds of spades, pitching two hearts and two clubs from dummy. South exited with the ten of clubs and declarer took four tricks in the suit pitching a diamond and a heart and played a heart to the jack, +450.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Wrang	Helness	Hult	Helgemo
–	Pass	1♠	Pass
1NT	Pass	2♣*	Pass
2♦*	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

South led the ten of clubs and declarer won with the ace and played the ace, king and jack of spades, South winning with the queen as two hearts and club went from dummy. At this point, as the cards lie, declarer must play the ♦K. When he continued with the ♠J South won and played a club. Declarer won with dummy's king, played the queen of clubs, ruffing with the eight of spades when North followed, drew the outstanding trump and played the king of diamonds. South took it with the ace and exited with the two of hearts, North following with the three. Declarer had to win in hand and surrender two heart tricks, one down, -50 and (you will know the number by now!) another 11 IMP loss.

Board 9. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

♠ 10	♠ Q5	♠ AK9632
♥ 10752	♥ AKJ83	♥ Q
♦ AJ32	♦ 1098	♦ K765
♣ KJ96	♣ Q103	♣ A2
	♠ J874	
	♥ 964	
	♦ Q4	
	♣ 8754	



Open Room

West	North	East	South
Versace	Palma	Lauria	Nystrom
–	1♥	1♠	Pass
1NT	Pass	2♥*	Pass
2NT	Pass	3♦	Pass
3♥*	Pass	3♠	Pass
5♦	All Pass		

South led the four of hearts and North won with the king and continued with the ace, declarer ruffing, cashing the ace of spades, ruffing a spade, cashing the ace of diamonds, playing a diamond to the king and playing the king of spades. North could ruff, but declarer had the rest, +600 and 10 more IMPs for Zimmermann, threatening to run away at 45-3.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Wrang	Helness	Hult	Helgemo
–	1♥	1♠	Pass
Pass	Double	Pass	2♥
Pass	Pass	2♠	All Pass

Declarer lost two spades and a heart, +170.

Board 11. Dealer South. None Vul.

♠ 107543	♠ AK	♠ QJ96
♥ 10973	♥ Q652	♥ AJ8
♦ J	♦ K87542	♦ A
♣ J82	♣ K	♣ AQ975
	♠ 82	
	♥ K4	
	♦ Q10963	
	♣ 10643	



Open Room

West	North	East	South
Versace	Palma	Lauria	Nystrom
–	–	–	Pass
Pass	1♦	Double	4♦
Pass	Pass	Double	Pass
4♠	5♦	Double	All Pass

Declarer lost to the missing aces, one down, -100.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Wrang	Helness	Hult	Helgemo
–	–	–	Pass
Pass	1♦	Double	3♦
Pass	Pass	Double	Pass
4♦*	Pass	4♠	All Pass

Declarer lost two trumps and a heart and safely navigated the club suit by starting with dummy's two, +420 and a badly needed 8 IMP pick up.

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Versace</i>	<i>Palma</i>	<i>Lauria</i>	<i>Nystrom</i>
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♣*	Pass	2♥
Pass	3♥	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

East cashed two diamonds and switched to a club, declarer taking the rest by crossing to dummy in spades and running the nine of hearts, +420.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wrang</i>	<i>Helness</i>	<i>Hult</i>	<i>Helgemo</i>
1♣	4♥	5♣	5♥
All Pass			

When the defenders started with two diamonds and club switch the contract was 'down on the go' and Ventin pulled back another 11 IMPs.

They had come back well after the early setbacks and trailed 35-51 at lunch.

Macbeth is a tragedy by William Shakespeare dramatising the damaging physical and psychological effects of political ambition on those who seek power for its own sake.

A brave Scottish general named Macbeth receives a prophecy from a trio of witches that one day he will become King of Scotland.

The incantation of the witches is well known:

Double double toil and trouble

Fire burn and caldron bubble

Cool it with a baboon's blood

Then the charm is firm and good

Consumed by ambition and spurred to action by his wife, Macbeth murders King Duncan and takes the Scottish throne for himself. Forced to commit more and more murders to protect himself from enmity and suspicion, he soon becomes a tyrannical ruler. The bloodbath and consequent civil war swiftly take Macbeth and Lady Macbeth into the realms of madness and death.

In the backstage world of theatre, some believe that the play is cursed, and will not mention its title aloud, referring to it instead as “*The Scottish Play*”. Over the course of many centuries, the play has attracted some of the most renowned actors to the roles of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth. It has been adapted to film, television, opera, novels, comics, and other media.

In the second session of the semi-finals the use of the red card caused a lot of blood to be spilt.

Board 7. Dealer South. All Vul.

♠ 107542	♠ Q	♠ KJ9863
♥ K6	♥ AQ10853	♥ 92
♦ AQ5	♦ J10	♦ 9862
♣ A54	♣ K863	♣ 9
	♠ A	
	♥ J74	
	♦ K743	
	♣ QJ1072	



Open Room

West	North	East	South
Jassem	Meckstroth	Tuszynski	Zia
–	–	–	Pass
1♠	2♥	4♠	5♥
Double	All Pass		

East led the nine of clubs and West won with the ace and returned the four, East ruffing and switching to the eight of diamonds. West took the queen and ace and played another club, so, when declarer took the trump finesse that was three down, -800.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Brogeland	Gawrys	Lindqvist	Klukowski
–	–	–	Pass
1♠	2♥	4♠	5♥
All Pass			

‘No double no trouble’ as they say. Here, after a more or less identical defence, declarer tried to drop the king of hearts and was four down, still worth 9 IMPs to Vytas.

Board 9. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

♠ 97	♠ 104	♠ KQ653
♥ J9652	♥ KQ1043	♥ –
♦ 3	♦ 65	♦ AQ10974
♣ K10987	♣ AQ64	♣ 52
	♠ AJ82	
	♥ A87	
	♦ KJ82	
	♣ J3	



Open Room

West	North	East	South
Jassem	Meckstroth	Tuszynski	Zia
–	1♥	2♥*	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♦	Double
All Pass			

2♥ Spades and a minor

South led the jack of clubs for the king and ace and North returned the queen of hearts, declarer ruffing and playing the king of spades. South won and played a club, North winning with the queen and returning the four. Declarer pitched a spade and South ruffed and played the eight of hearts, declarer ruffing, cashing the ace of diamonds and exiting with the nine. South won, cashed the king and exited with the ace of hearts. Declarer could ruff and cash a spade, but was four down, -1100.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Brogeland	Gawrys	Lindqvist	Klukowski
–	1♥	2♥*	2♠
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

2♥ Spades and a minor

2♠ Heart support

East led the king of spades and declarer won with dummy's ace and played a heart to the king, East discarding the six of spades. Declarer continued with the ten of spades and East took the queen, cashed the ace of diamonds (declarer dropping the six) and exited with a spade. That was a mistake—better to play a second diamond, when West can ruff and will then need to find the play of exiting with jack or nine of hearts (a known stratagem, but not easy to find at the table) when winning in hand will eventually result in the loss of a trump trick. West ruffed the spade and declarer overruffed, crossed to the ace of hearts and drew another round of trumps. He then played a diamond to the jack and West ruffed and exited with the nine of clubs. Declarer ran that to dummy's jack and was home, +420 but 12 IMPs the poorer, Mahaffey regaining the lead at 49-43.

Things were even worse in the other semi-final Hult overcalled 1♥ with 3♣ losing the same 1100 in 3♦ doubled. Lauria and Versace bid 1♦-1♥-1♠-1NT-2♠ and played there, losing 200, but gaining where it mattered to the tune of 14 IMPs.

Board 18. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ J7	♠ Q52	♠ AK106
♥ AJ86	♥ 42	♥ KQ9
♦ QJ52	♦ AK843	♦ 7
♣ 1087	♣ A96	♣ KQJ52

♠ 9843	♠ AK106
♥ 10753	♥ KQ9
♦ 1096	♦ 7
♣ 43	♣ KQJ52



Open Room

West	North	East	South
Versace	Ventin	Lauria	Wrang
–	–	1♣	Pass
1♦	Pass	2♠	Pass
2NT	Pass	3♠	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

North led the three of diamonds for the nine and jack and declarer played a spade to the ace and a club to the ten. When it held played a club to the jack and then took four rounds of hearts. North pitched his remaining spades, so +430.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Nystrom	Multon	Hult	Zimmermann
–	–	1♣	Pass
1♦*	1♥*	Double*	1♠
Double	All Pass		

1♦ Transfer
1♥ Takeout
Dble Heart support

Just a thought—after East's double can you play that a redouble by South shows 4 spades and 1♠ shows 5?

West led the jack of spades and East played three rounds of trumps and switched to the queen of clubs. There was no way to avoid four down, -1100 and 12 IMPs to Ventin who led by 2 IMPs going into the final session. Meanwhile, Vytas was 12 ahead of Mahaffey.

The Force of Destiny

La forza del destino, *The Power of Fate*, often translated as *The Force of Destiny* is an Italian opera by Giuseppe Verdi. It was first performed in the Bolshoi Kamenny Theatre of Saint Petersburg, Russia, on 10 November 1862.

Over the years La Forza has acquired a reputation for being cursed, following some unfortunate incidents. The supposed curse reportedly kept Luciano Pavarotti from ever performing the opera and the tenor Franco

Corelli to follow small rituals during performances to avoid bad luck.

As the final session of the semi-finals got under way with all to play for, the teams were hoping that any luck would be of the favourable kind.

Board 3. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

♠ J10943		♠ KQ8765
♥ A8742		♥ —
♦ 3		♦ 1094
♣ K10		♣ J932
	<div>W<div>N</div>E<div>S</div></div>	
		♠ A
		♥ J10653
		♦ QJ62
		♣ AQ7
		♠ 2
		♥ KQ9
		♦ AK875
		♣ 8654

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Versace</i>	<i>Ventin</i>	<i>Lauria</i>	<i>Palma</i>
–	–	–	1♦
2♦*	3♦	6♥	Pass
Pass	7♦	Double	All Pass

2♦ Majors

I suspect South wishes he had doubled 6♥.

7♦ cost 1100—still the players must have been getting used to such numbers by now.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nystrom</i>	<i>Helness</i>	<i>Hult</i>	<i>Helgemo</i>
–	–	–	1♦
2♦*	Pass	2NT*	Pass
3♣*	Pass	4♥	All Pass

2♦ Majors

A straightforward +620 to lose 10 IMPs.

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Jassem</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>	<i>Tuszynski</i>	<i>Zia</i>
–	–	–	1♦
1♠	Pass	2♦*	Pass
2♥	Pass	4♥	All Pass

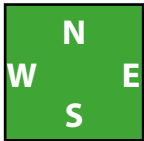
North led the four of diamonds and South won with the ace and returned the five, declarer ruffing, cashing the ace of hearts and claiming, +620.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brogeland</i>	<i>Gawrys</i>	<i>Lindqvist</i>	<i>Klukowski</i>
–	–	–	1♦
1♠	Pass	2NT	Pass
3♥	Pass	4♥	Pass
Pass	Double	Redouble	All Pass

North's action double backfired to the tune of +1080 giving Mahaffey 10 IMPs.

Board 8. Dealer West. None Vul.

♠ AQ862		♠ K9
♥ J10		♥ KQ6
♦ K7		♦ 1052
♣ K873		♣ QJ962
		
		♠ 1054
		♥ A983
		♦ AQ64
		♣ 105
		♠ J73
		♥ 7542
		♦ J983
		♣ A4

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Versace</i>	<i>Ventin</i>	<i>Lauria</i>	<i>Palma</i>
1♠	Pass	2NT*	Pass
3♦	Pass	4♠	All Pass

North led the jack of clubs and South took the ace and returned the four, declarer winning with the king, playing three rounds of diamonds pitching a heart, cashing the ace of hearts, ruffing a heart and ruffing a club. South overruffed and played the jack of diamonds, ruffed with the six and overruffed with the nine, North returning the queen of clubs, South's overruff representing the setting trick, -50.

♠ K962			
♥ 9			
♦ A5432			
♣ Q65			
♠ 103			♠ QJ7
♥ J1084			♥ 752
♦ Q98			♦ KJ76
♣ K984			♣ J102
♠ A854			
♥ AKQ63			
♦ 10			
♣ A73			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nystrom</i>	<i>Helness</i>	<i>Hult</i>	<i>Helgemo</i>
1♠	Pass	2NT*	Pass
3♣	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

North led the queen of clubs and South took the ace and returned the four, declarer winning with the king and playing the jack of hearts covered by the queen and ace and declarer played a spade to the queen and king. If North now plays a club the contract will be two down, as South will be able to overruff the dummy twice, but he cashed the king of hearts and when South followed with the two he switched to the five of diamonds. A grateful declarer won with dummy's queen and took the winning view in spades, running the ten and claiming when it held, +420 and 10 IMPs.

Board 11. Dealer South. None Vul.

♠ QJ84			
♥ AJ2			
♦ KQJ			
♣ 752			
♠ 107			♠ 3
♥ 975			♥ Q106
♦ 864			♦ A109753
♣ A10984			♣ QJ6
♠ AK9652			
♥ K843			
♦ 2			
♣ K3			

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Versace</i>	<i>Ventin</i>	<i>Lauria</i>	<i>Palma</i>
–	–	–	1♠
Pass	3NT*	Pass	4♣
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

West led the five of hearts for the jack, queen and king and declarer drew trumps and played a diamond, +420 when East switched to the queen of clubs.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nystrom</i>	<i>Helness</i>	<i>Hult</i>	<i>Helgemo</i>
–	–	–	1♠
Pass	2NT*	Pass	3♥
Pass	3NT	Pass	4NT
Pass	5♦	Double	5♠
All Pass			

A diamond lead and a club switch dealt with this, +50 and 10 IMPs to Ventin.

Board 13. Dealer North. All Vul.

♠ AKJ5
♥ 108
♦ AQ84
♣ Q108

♠ Q86
♥ AK6432
♦ 7
♣ 762

N
W E
S

♠ 1074
♥ J5
♦ J106532
♣ A9

♠ 932
♥ Q97
♦ K9
♣ KJ543

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Versace</i>	<i>Ventin</i>	<i>Lauria</i>	<i>Palma</i>
–	1NT	Pass	3♣*
Pass	3♦	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

East led the two of diamonds and declarer won with the ace and knocked out the ace of clubs, scoring +600.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nystrom</i>	<i>Helness</i>	<i>Hult</i>	<i>Helgemo</i>
–	1NT	Pass	3NT
Double*	Pass	Pass	4♣
Pass	5♣	All Pass	

West started with three rounds of hearts and East overruffed with the ace of clubs, +100 and another 12 IMPs to Ventin, who were on their way to the final.

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Jassem</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>	<i>Tuszyński</i>	<i>Zia</i>
–	1NT	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

East led the five of diamonds and declarer won with dummy's nine and a play a club for the queen and ace, East switching to the jack of hearts, covered by the queen and king. When West switched to the eight of spades declarer won with the ace, unblocked the diamonds, came to hand with the ♣10, cashed two diamonds and then ran the clubs, squeezing West for +660.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brogeland</i>	<i>Gawrys</i>	<i>Lindqvist</i>	<i>Klukowski</i>
–	1NT	Pass	3NT
Double	4♦	All Pass	

This unhappy contract was four down, -400 and 14 IMPs that put Mahaffey ahead, 77-68 and try as they might, Vytas could not overturn the deficit.

Carmen

Carmen is an opera in four acts by French composer Georges Bizet, first performed at the Opéra-Comique in Paris on 3 March 1875, where its breaking of conventions shocked and scandalized its first audiences.

Bizet died suddenly after the 33rd performance, unaware that the work would achieve international acclaim within the following ten years. *Car-men* has since become one of the most popular and frequently performed operas in the classical canon. It starts with one of the most rousing over-tures in the Opera canon.

Could the start of the final equal or even surpass it?

Board 3. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

♠ 1043	♠ AJ952	♠ 6
♥ Q9875	♥ 4	♥ AK106
♦ AKJ92	♦ 10543	♦ 876
♣ —	♣ KQ9	♣ AJ542

	♠ KQ87	
	♥ J32	
	♦ Q	
	♣ 108763	



Open Room

West	North	East	South
Wrang	Lindqvist	Hult	Brogeland
—	—	—	Pass
1♥	1♠	2NT*	4♠
5♦	Pass	6♥	All Pass

2NT Heart support

Were North to somehow find a diamond lead, 6♥ cannot be made, as declarer cannot afford to draw trumps and the threat of a diamond ruff cannot not be circumnavigated.

Fortunately North had a much better looking alternative.

Declarer ruffed the club lead and ducked a spade, South winning with the eight and retuning the seven. Declarer ruffed in dummy with the ♥10 and played a diamond for the queen and ace. A heart to the ace was followed by the ace of clubs pitching a diamond and a club ruff, establishing the jack. Declarer ruffed a spade with the king of hearts (!) pitched a diamond on the jack of clubs and played a heart to the seven, claiming, +1430.

As the cards lie, the diamond position is such that after taking the spade ruff declarer can afford to cash the ♥AK. He then plays on clubs, establishing the jack, ruffs a spade and cashes the ♣J in safety before playing a diamond.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Zia	Nystrom	Meckstroth	Palma
—	—	—	Pass
1♥	1♠	3♠*	4♠
Pass	Pass	5♣	Pass
5♦	Pass	5♥	All Pass

3♠ Splinter

North led a club and declarer ruffed and played the ten of spades, South winning with the queen and returning a spade. Declarer ruffed in dummy, cashed the ace of clubs pitching a spade followed by a diamond to the ace. With the queen appearing declarer drew trumps ending in hand and played the two of diamonds, securing twelve tricks when North followed with the four, +680 but a loss of 13 IMPs.

It had been all Ventin so far, ahead 26-1 after 5 deals.

Board 6. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

♠ QJ432	♠ A	♠ K1098
♥ J9	♥ 874	♥ 653
♦ K762	♦ 95	♦ QJ1083
♣ A2	♣ KQJ10986	♣ 3

	♠ 765	
	♥ AKQ102	
	♦ A4	
	♣ 754	



Open Room

West	North	East	South
Wrang	Lindqvist	Hult	Brogeland
—	—	Pass	1♥
1♠	2♦*	3♠	4♠
Pass	5♣	All Pass	

East led the ♦Q to hold declarer to eleven tricks, +400.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Zia	Nystrom	Meckstroth	Palma
–	–	Pass	1♥
1♠	2♣	3♥*	Pass
3♠	5♣	Pass	6♣
All Pass			

3♥ Spade support

When East led the ♦Q declarer could only win with dummy's ace and play a club, West rising with the ace and cashing the ♦K, +50 and 10 IMPs for Mahaffey.

Board 10. Dealer East. None Vul.

♠ J		
♥ KJ63		
♦ J82		
♣ QJ965		
♠ Q1042		♠ A9865
♥ Q85		♥ A1097
♦ 65		♦ KQ97
♣ AK84		♣ –
		♠ K73
		♥ 42
		♦ A1043
		♣ 10732



Open Room

West	North	East	South
Wrang	Lindqvist	Hult	Brogeland
Pass	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♣*	Double	2♥	3♣
4♠	All Pass		

2♣ Drury

South led the ten of clubs and declarer cashed dummy's ♣AK pitching the ♥109 and played a diamond for the king and ace. He ruffed the club return and played a spade to the queen, no doubt pleased to see North's jack. A spade to the ace was followed by the queen of diamonds and a diamond ruff, declarer coming to hand with the ace of hearts, ruffing his last diamond and claiming ten tricks, +420.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Zia	Nystrom	Meckstroth	Palma
Pass	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♣*	Pass	4♠	All Pass

2♣ Drury

South led the four of hearts and declarer played low from dummy, taking North's jack with the ace, cashing the ace of spades and continuing with the five. South won with the king and continued with the two of hearts and North won with the king, declarer following with the ten. A third heart now would have meant one down, but North was minded to return the eight of diamonds and a grateful declarer was soon claiming +420 and a flat board.

You may have noticed that if declarer ducks the ♥J he cannot be defeated, but that is a tough play to find.

Board 14. Dealer East. None Vul.

♠ J75	♠ 102	♠ 43
♥ J754	♥ K109	♥ Q632
♦ J10852	♦ 9	♦ AK6
♣ 4	♣ KQ109865	♣ AJ73

W

N

S

E

♠ AKQ986
♥ A8
♦ Q743
♣ 2

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wrang</i>	<i>Lindqvist</i>	<i>Hult</i>	<i>Brogeland</i>
—	—	1♣	1♠
All Pass			

West led his club and East won with the ace and returned a spade and declarer won with the king and played a diamond, West winning with the jack and returning a second spade. In dummy with the ten declarer ran the ten of clubs pitching a diamond, but West ruffed and returned the five of diamonds East cashing the \spadesuit AK, +110.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Zia</i>	<i>Nystrom</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>	<i>Palma</i>
–	–	1♣	Double
All Pass			

South started with his top spades, so North got his diamond away on the third round as declarer ruffed. North ruffed the king of diamonds and tried the ♣10 but declarer put in the jack and played a heart for the jack and king. He won the king of clubs with the ace and ducked a heart to South's

ace. In due course he scored a trick with the ♥Q, three down, -500 and 9 IMPs for Ventin.

Would you have looked for a happier spot than 1♣ doubled?

Board 18. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ 72	♠ K109	♠ AQJ5
♥ AKQ65	♥ 1084	♥ 2
♦ 3	♦ J652	♦ AQ74
♣ KQJ107	♣ 983	♣ A542
	<div>W N E S</div>	
	♠ 8643	
	♥ J973	
	♦ K1098	
	♣ 6	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wrang</i>	<i>Lindqvist</i>	<i>Hult</i>	<i>Brogeland</i>
–	–	1♦	Pass
1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♣	Pass	3♣	Pass
4♣*	Pass	4♦*	Pass
4♥*	Pass	4NT*	Pass
5♠*	Pass	5NT*	Pass
7♣	All Pass		

North led a trump and declarer made his contract by a combination of drawing trumps, ruffing diamonds in case the king fell early and then falling back on the spade finesse, +1440.

I wonder how declarer would have played if North had led the ten of spades?

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Zia</i>	<i>Nystrom</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>	<i>Palma</i>
–	–	1♣	Pass
1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♦*	Pass	3♦	Pass
4♣	Pass	5NT*	Pass
6♣	All Pass		

2♦ Fourth suit forcing

5NT Pick a slam

South led the ♠6 which gave the overtrick at once, +940 but an 11 IMP loss which meant Ventin was ahead 46-23, taking a useful lead into the second session.

Orpheus in the Underworld

Orphée aux enfers, whose title translates from the French as *Orpheus in the Underworld*, is an opéra bouffe (a form of operetta).

The work, first performed in 1858, is said to be the first classical full-length operetta. Offenbach's earlier operettas were small-scale one-act works, since the law in France did not allow full-length works of certain genres. *Orpheus* was not only longer, but more musically adventurous than Offenbach's earlier pieces.

This also marked the first time that Offenbach used Greek mythology as a background for one of his pieces. The operetta is an irreverent parody and scathing satire on Gluck and his *Orfeo ed Euridice* and culminates in the risqué *Galop infernal* (“Infernal Gallop”) that shocked some in the audience at the premiere. The latter piece is famous outside classical circles as the music for the “can-can” (to the extent that the tune is widely, but erroneously, called “can-can”).

As the second set of the final got under way would team Ventin 'gallop' further ahead, or would Mahaffey rein them in?

Before we take a look at deals from this session, this was the last deal of the first set.

Board 20. Dealer West. All Vul.

♠ AJ83
♥ 76
♦ AKJ1064
♣ 6

♠ KQ8765
♥ KQJ9
♦ 2
♣ 107

♠ 4
♥ A1054
♦ Q3
♣ AK8542

♠ 102
♥ 832
♦ 9875
♣ QJ93

W N E S

I was watching the Closed Room and as you will see from my narrative it looked as if declarer was going to take 11 tricks, so I dismissed it from my thoughts and went for a quick lunch.

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nystrom</i>	<i>Lindqvist</i>	<i>Hult</i>	<i>Brogeland</i>
1♠	2♦	3♣	Pass
3♥	Pass	4♥	All Pass

North started with the ace of diamonds followed by the king and declarer ruffed, played a club to the king and a spade, North winning and returning a trump. Declarer won with the king and cashed the queen of spades before playing a club. If North ruffs this and plays his low spade declarer will go down, but he discarded a diamond and declarer won with the king and ruffed a club. Now the winning line is to overtake the king of hearts with dummy's ace and play a club. When declarer preferred to ruff a spade with the ♥5 South overruffed and exited with a trump and the 'cold' contract was one down.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Zia</i>	<i>Ventin</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>	<i>Wrang</i>
1♠	2♦	Double*	3♦
3♥	4♦	4♥	All Pass

North led the king of diamonds and switched to his club (some pairs play that this promises a singleton) declarer winning in dummy and playing a spade for the king and ace. North returned the ace of diamonds and declarer ruffed. At this point I expected him to ruff a spade, return to hand with a trump, ruff a spade high, draw trumps and claim 11 tricks, but in fact he played a club and North ruffed and exited with the ♦J. Declarer pitched a club from dummy, ruffed in hand, drew trumps and claimed, +620 and 12 IMPs that made the match much closer that I had assumed it would be.

Note to self: Always watch until the very last card – you never know!

As it happened, the deals from the second session were not exactly riveting – after nine deals Mahaffey had accumulated 5 small swings to Ventin's 3, leading the session 16-6, making the match score 55-51 in favour of Ventin.

Mahaffey should have taken the lead on the next deal – Zia and Meckstroth cashed the first four tricks against 2NT and still had two aces to come, but they lost their way and allowed declarer to get home, negating the excellent result achieved by their teammates, who had played in a vastly superior contract of 3♦ for +110.

I assumed Zia would send a note from the Closed Room offering suitable remuneration if we left out the diagram, but it was clearly lost in transit.

Board 19. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

♠ A 10 9 7 4 3		♠ J 5
♥ J 7		♥ Q 5 4 3 2
♦ Q 10 7 3		♦ K 6 4
♣ 10		♣ 6 4 3
♠ K Q		
♥ A 8 6		
♦ A J 5 2		
♣ K J 8 2		
	<div> <div>N</div> <div>W</div> <div>E</div> <div>S</div> </div>	
♠ 8 6 2		
♥ K 10 9		
♦ 9 8		
♣ A Q 9 7 5		

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nystrom</i>	<i>Lindqvist</i>	<i>Hult</i>	<i>Brogeland</i>
–	–	–	Pass
1♣*	2♠	Pass	Pass
Double	Pass	3♥	3♠
Double	Pass	4♣	Double
All Pass			

1♣ had various possible meanings, one of which was a strong no-trump type, but it looks as if as the auction evolved East played his partner for more than four clubs. 3♠ doubled would have made, so East/West were right to look elsewhere, but 4♥ is a better spot – and who knows if it would have been doubled?

North led the ten of clubs, a good start for the defence and declarer won with the jack and played the queen of spades, North winning and retuning the three to declarer's king. when he cashed the ace of hearts North should have unblocked the jack, when 1100 is on the cards, but when he failed to pass that test he found himself on play when the jack held the next trick, so he had lead a diamond (or offer a ruff and discard) which meant declarer 'escaped' for -800.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Zia	Ventin	Meckstroth	Wrang
–	–	–	Pass
1♣	2♠	Pass	3♠
All Pass			

East led the three of hearts and declarer won with the jack and returned the seven to dummy's ten and West's ace. The ace of diamonds was followed by a diamond to the king and a diamond and when the spades divided declarer could claim, +140 but a loss of 12 IMPs and a new leader, Mahaffey ahead for the first time, 67-55.

Clearly I selected the wrong title for this session – it should have been *All Quiet on the Western Front*.

All's Well that Ends Well

All's Well That Ends Well is a play by William Shakespeare. It is believed to have been written between 1604 and 1605, and was originally published in the *First Folio* in 1623.

Though originally the play was classified as one of Shakespeare's comedies, it is now considered by some critics to be one of his problem plays, so named because they cannot be neatly classified as tragedy or comedy.

After two sets, with the match still in the balance it was very much an open question as to which of the two teams would consider my choice of title appropriate.

On the very first deal Zia and Meckstroth stopped in 3♣ with ♠A ♥Q3 ♦K1084 ♣KJ9864 opposite ♠KJ73 ♥K764 ♦753 ♣A7 for +110 but everything was friendly and 3NT recovered 7 IMPs for Ventin.

Board 2. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ 7		♠ KJ
♥ Q532		♥ AJ
♦ J109		♦ Q6543
♣ A6543		♣ QJ64
♠ Q65		
♥ K10976		
♦ K2		
♣ K75		
	<div> <div>N</div> <div>W</div> <div>E</div> <div>S</div> </div>	
♠ A1098432		
♥ 84		
♦ A87		
♣ 9		

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Palma	Lindqvist	Ventin	Brogeland
–	–	1NT	2♦*
3NT	All Pass		

2♦ Multi Landy

South led the ace of spades and continued with the eight, declarer winning with the king and playing the jack of clubs. When that held he cashed the ace of hearts and ran the jack, North electing to duck (he could have won and switched to diamonds just as well). Declarer played a diamond to the king, North dropping the jack, and played a second diamond, North winning with the ten. He cashed the ace of clubs and exited with a club and declarer could do no better than win in dummy and play two rounds of hearts, North winning and playing a diamond, one down, -50.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Zia	Nystrom	Meckstroth	Hult
–	–	1NT	2♦*
Double	Redouble*	Pass	2♠
Pass	Pass	3♦	Pass
3♥	Pass	3NT	All Pass

2♦ Mutli Landy

Rdbl Bid your suit

Here South led the nine of spades and declarer won with the jack and played a club for the nine, king and ace. When North returned the three of clubs declarer knew the spades were 7-1 and he went up with the queen, cashed the ace of hearts, overtook the jack with the king and continued with the ten. North won and played the ten of clubs, but declarer won, played a diamond to the king and cashed two hearts. He then played a spade, knowing South would have to surrender a spade at the end, a fine +400 and 10 IMPs.

Board 3. Dealer South E/W Vul.

♠ A	♠ Q9874	♠ KJ632
♥ 98	♥ J103	♥ AQ2
♦ K54	♦ J872	♦ A103
♣ AK86543	♣ Q	♣ 102
	♠ 105	
	♥ K7654	
	♦ Q96	
	♣ J97	



Open Room

West	North	East	South
Palma	Lindqvist	Ventin	Brogeland
–	–	–	Pass
1♣	Pass	1♥	Pass
3♣	Pass	3NT	All Pass

South led the ♥4 so declarer had an easy route to 12 tricks, +690.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Zia	Nystrom	Meckstroth	Hult
–	–	–	Pass
1♣	1♠	3NT	Pass
4NT	Pass	6NT	All Pass

That was very well bid by E/W.

South led the ten of spades and declarer won perforce with the ace and cashed the top clubs. North's discard meant the king of diamonds had to be used as an entry to the clubs, and that meant there was no longer a route to 12 tricks as the card lay.

You might think that 6♣ is better, but if North leads the ♥J (as he surely would) you can't make that either. It was a somewhat fortunate 13 IMPs for Ventin.

The Rueful Rabbit would have made 6NT!

Having won the ace of spades he played a club, but inadvertently selects the three! North wins and plays a heart, but the Rabbit takes the ace, cashes the king of spades and then runs his clubs, executing a double squeeze and taking his twelfth trick with the four of diamonds.

On the following deal, Palma forgot the system. Holding ♠K1054 ♥AK2 ♦Q107654 ♣- he opened 1♦ and North overcalled 1♠. Ventin bid 2NT showing diamond support and Palma bid 3♠ which was supposed to be a singleton. That was correctly explained to Lindqvist and when the final contract was 6♦ it induced him to lead the ace of spades which was the only way to give the contract as East's spade holding was ♠98 and there would always have been two losing spades.

That was 26 IMPs on two successive deals – was it Ventin's lucky day?

In contrast to the deals in the previous session these were red hot. The next deal offered N/S a slam, but some massive pre-emption by East who had an eight card spade suit and the right vulnerability proved impossible to overcome.

Board 6. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

	♠ 109		
	♥ Q764		
	♦ Q954		
	♣ A95		
♠ 8	<div>W<div>N</div>E<div>S</div></div>	♠ AJ7632	
♥ AJ8		♥ 3	
♦ J10		♦ A632	
♣ KQJ10763		♣ 42	
	♠ KQ54		
	♥ K10952		
	♦ K87		
	♣ 8		

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Palma</i>	<i>Lindqvist</i>	<i>Ventin</i>	<i>Brogeland</i>
–	–	2♠	Pass
3♣	Pass	3♦	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

North led the six of hearts and declarer took South's king with the ace and played on clubs, North winning the second round and switching to the ten of spades. When that held switched to the four of diamonds and South won with the king and returned the king of spades. Declarer took dummy's ace and returned the jack, South winning with the queen and playing safe, exiting with a diamond, so only two down instead of five.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Zia</i>	<i>Nystrom</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>	<i>Hult</i>
–	–	2♠	Pass
3♣	All Pass		

Declarer took ten tricks, winning the diamond lead and cross ruffing, which promoted North's ♣9 into a trick, +130 and 8 IMPs to Mahaffey, who led 93-87 as the set reached the midway point.

The teams exchanged 4 IMPs over the next four deals and then both N/S pairs did well to bid on over a 4♥ sacrifice on Board 15 to record a vulnerable game.

By the time the penultimate deal settled on the table we knew it would be the one that determined the outcome:

Board 19. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

	♠ A 10	
	♥ Q 10 9 4	
	♦ Q 8 4	
	♣ A J 9 6	
♠ K 6 2	<div>W<div>N S</div>E</div>	♠ Q J 9 7 3
♥ A 8 7 3		♥ K 2
♦ K J 6 5		♦ 7
♣ Q 2		♣ K 10 8 7 5
	♠ 8 5 4	
	♥ J 6 5	
	♦ A 10 9 3 2	
	♣ 4 3	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Palma</i>	<i>Lindqvist</i>	<i>Ventin</i>	<i>Brogeland</i>
–	–	–	Pass
1♣	Pass	1♥*	Pass
1♠	Double	2♣	2♦
Pass	Pass	2♠	Pass

1♥ Spades

On this layout, you have a shot at ten tricks (which cannot be prevented if you do everything right). The Closed Room auction we already knew, so once Ventin stopped short the result was no longer in doubt – Mahaffey was going to win.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Zia</i>	<i>Nystrom</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>	<i>Hult</i>
–	–	–	Pass
1♦	Pass	1♠	Pass
1NT	Pass	2♠	All Pass

10 tricks were recorded at both tables.

Jim Mahaffey had been intending to lead his team in Monaco, but was unable to travel because of health problems – we wish him a speedy recovery and hope that he will be able to return to defend the title in 2020.

So, there you have it, the end of another fabulous tournament in Monaco thanks to the support of the tireless Pierre Zimmermann.

Make a note now – Edition 3 will be in February 2020.



Espen Lindqvist, Jeff Meckstroth and Boye Brogeland of the winning team accompanied by Yves Aubry and Pierre Zimmermann

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The Tempest: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Tempest; The Lion in Winter: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Lion_in_Winter_\(1968_film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Lion_in_Winter_(1968_film)); Macbeth: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Macbeth>; The Force of Destiny: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/La_forza_del_destino; Carmen: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carmen>

Orpheus in the Underworld: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orpheus_in_the_Underworld;

Alls Well that Ends Well: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/All%27s_Well_That_Ends_Well

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Misplay These Hands With Me

Cover Story

Playing in a Pairs event with a partner who is noted for his individualistic approach to the bidding I pick up a hand with potential:

♠ AQ6
♥ —
♦ KQ109874
♣ K76

With only our side vulnerable partner opens 1♣ and East overcalls 1♥. When I bid 2♦ West jumps to 3♥. That silences my partner and East, leaving me to find a bid. 4♥ is a possibility, but I decide to keep it simple and jump to 5♦, which leaves us with this auction:

West	North	East	South
—	1♣	1♥	2♦
3♥	Pass	Pass	5♦
All Pass			

West leads the two of hearts and dummy is somewhat of a mixed blessing:

♠ K74
♥ KJ86
♦ AJ6
♣ 843

♠ AQ6
♥ —
♦ KQ109874
♣ K76

It would not have occurred to me to open 1♣ in preference to 1♦, but no doubt partner was planning to rebid 1NT and hoping to deter a club lead.

West's lead suggests he has an honour so I put in dummy's jack, hoping

to force out the ace. When East covers with the queen I ruff and cross to dummy with a trump. When both defenders follow I draw a second round. With fingers crossed I try a club to the king but West wins with the ace and I have to lose two more tricks in the suit to go one down. This was the full deal:

♠ K74	♠ 852
♥ KJ86	♥ AQ953
♦ AJ6	♦ 3
♣ 843	♣ Q1095
♠ J1093	
♥ 10742	
♦ 52	
♣ AJ2	
	<div> <div>W</div> <div>N</div> <div>E</div> <div>S</div> </div>
	♠ AQ6
	♥ —
	♦ KQ109874
	♣ K76

Post mortem

There was no rush to put up the jack of hearts. Say declarer plays dummy's eight and East covers with the nine. Declarer ruffs, crosses to dummy with a trump and plays the king of hearts. East must cover to prevent a club being discarded and declarer ruffs, goes back to dummy with a trump and plays the jack of hearts. Once again East must cover and declarer ruffs, plays three rounds of spades ending in dummy and advances the six of hearts. When East cannot cover declarer discards a club and although West takes the trick he must then lead away from the ace of clubs or give a ruff and discard.

As it happens -100 was not too bad. At many tables N/S reached 3NT and East led the ten of clubs. When West won the second round a switch to the ten of hearts gave the defenders the first seven tricks.

Total Recall

My partner in the final of the World Pairs Championship is renowned for his unorthodox approach to the bidding, but this is more than compensated for by his dexterity as declarer. Early on I pick up:

♠ A8
♥ AKJ5
♦ Q1086543
♣ —

With only our side vulnerable I open 1♦ and when West overcalls 1♥ partner doubles. I was half expecting West to bid – but not in hearts. I decide to keep something in hand and rebid a modest 2♦. When West doubles my partner redoubles and East bids 3♣.

I must do something positive now and I decide on 4♣. My partner bids 4♦ and continues with 4♠ over my 4♥. Although it is conceivable that I should do more I decide to close proceedings with a jump to 6♦, leaving us with this lengthy auction:

West	North	East	South
–	–	–	1♦
1♥	Double	Pass	2♦
Double	Redouble	3♣	4♣
Pass	4♦	Pass	4♥
Pass	4♠	Pass	6♦
All Pass			

West leads the king of clubs and dummy is not quite up to expectations:

♠ K432
♥ 76
♦ A7
♣ A8643

♠ A8
♥ AKJ5
♦ Q1086543
♣ —

Assuming there is only one trump loser I will need to find a trick. I take the ace, discarding my small heart and ruff a club, West following with the jack. I cross to dummy with a diamond, West playing the jack and East the two. When I ruff a third club West follows with the queen. It looks as if West started with only three clubs so my best chance must be to throw him in to lead into my hearts. I need to remove his exit cards, so I cash the ace of spades and play a second spade.

Disaster strikes when West ruffs this with the king of diamonds and produces the five of clubs. I can ruff and draw the last trump, but I have to lose the last trick to West's queen of hearts. This was the full deal:

♠ K432		♠ QJ9765
♥ 76		♥ 2
♦ A7		♦ 92
♣ A8643		♣ 10972
♠ 10		
♥ Q109843		
♦ KJ		
♣ KQJ5		
	<div> <div>N</div> <div>W</div> <div>E</div> <div>S</div> </div>	
♠ A8		
♥ AKJ5		
♦ Q1086543		
♣ —		

Post mortem

Declarer should not have been misled by West's play in the club suit. His second round double was a clear indication that he held four clubs. After cashing the ace of spades declarer should exit with a diamond. West wins but must either play a heart or a club, the latter enabling declarer to establish a parking place for the jack of hearts. Now if West had followed to the first diamond with the king.....

Deals that Caught My Eye

David Bird looks at some big boards from the England European Trials

Ten pairs were selected for a 4-day trial, the top two to join the exempted Tony Forrester and Andrew Robson to represent England in the 2018 European Championships. We will look at some deals that caused substantial cross-IMP swings.

Round 2 Board 16 Dealer West. E/W Vul.

♠ AQ9	♠ J763	♠ —
♥ 10432	♥ KQ7	♥ J85
♦ K42	♦ J9763	♦ AQ108
♣ QJ3	♣ A	♣ K107654
	♠ K108542	
	♥ A96	
	♦ 5	
	♣ 982	

West	North	East	South
Crouch	King	Cope	McIntosh
1♣	Double	1♠*	4♠
Pass	Pass	Double	All Pass

Simon Cope's 1♠ was a transfer to clubs. It seemed that a double was the best second-round action on the East cards, but the North/South cards fitted well and ten tricks could not be prevented. Declarer won the ♣Q lead and conceded a diamond, subsequently ruffing two clubs in dummy. +590 for N/S.

Each board would be played five times, for the cross-imping. The other table broadcast on *Bridge Base Online* was:

West	North	East	South
Allerton	Dyke	Jagger	Byrne
1NT	Pass	3♠	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

The weak 1NT stole the show, with Chris Jagger's 3♠ showing spade shortage. Kieran Dyke led the ♥Q, continuing with king and another heart. When Michael Byrne switched to a spade, Jeffrey Allerton finessed the queen successfully and knocked out the ♣A. That was +600.

Other Tables

N/S Hinden/Osborne	+590	4♠X= by S	E/W King/McIntosh
N/S Erichsen/Liggins	-100	5♠X-1 by S	E/W Rosen/Jones
N/S Dhondy/Callaghan	-750	5♣X= by W	E/W Townsend/Hydes

The swing on the next board was caused largely by the choice of opening lead at the first table:

Round 4 Board 19. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

♠ KJ102	♠ 6543
♥ 1062	♥ AKQJ9
♦ K62	♦ J73
♣ Q65	♣ 9
♠ A97	♠ Q8
♥ 874	♥ 53
♦ Q5	♦ A10984
♣ AJ1083	♣ K742

West	North	East	South
<i>Dyke</i>	<i>Hydes</i>	<i>Byrne</i>	<i>Townsend</i>
—	—	—	Pass
1♣	Pass	1♦	Pass
1♥	Pass	4♥	All Pass

West's 1♣ promised two or more clubs (could be a weak 1NT) and 1♦ showed hearts. What would you lead against 4♥ from the North hand?

Alex Hydes reached for the ♣5. The contract can still be beaten if South somehow manages to withhold his ♣K. Since North might have led from ♣Q1085, or similar, I don't think we can fault Tom Townsend for playing his king.

Kieran Dyke won with the ♣A and led the ♣8, covered by the queen and ruffed in dummy. He then drew trumps in three rounds and scored five trumps, four clubs and the ♠A for +420.

West	North	East	South
<i>Crouch</i>	<i>Jones</i>	<i>Cope</i>	<i>Rosen</i>
–	–	–	Pass
1♣	1♠	1NT*	Double
2♥	Pass	3♥	All Pass

Simon Cope's 1NT showed hearts and, very reasonably, they stopped in 3♥. Martin Jones found a better lead than at the other table, the ♥2. Crouch won in the dummy and led the ♣9, covered by 2, 10 and queen. He won the trump continuation and led a diamond to the queen and king. An accurate third trump was won in dummy and Crouch could not avoid going two down in 3♥ for -200.

Other Tables

N/S King/McIntosh	-100	3♥-1	by E	E/W Dhondy/Callaghan
N/S Hinden/Osborne	-100	4♥-1	by E	E/W Allerton/Jagger
N/S Erichsen/Liggins	+140	2♥+1	by E	E/W Bakhshi/Malinowski

♠ KJ102
♥ 1062
♦ K62
♣ Q65

♠ 6543
♥ AKQJ9
♦ J73
♣ 9

♠ A97
♥ 874
♦ Q5
♣ AJ1083

W N E S

♠ Q8
♥ 53
♦ A10984
♣ K742

Round 6 Board 24. Dealer West. Neither Vul.

♠ J9	♠ AK765432	♠ —
♥ Q1032	♥ 8	♥ AKJ76
♦ AKJ	♦ 75	♦ Q932
♣ KJ84	♣ 65	♣ A972

W

N

E

S

♠ Q108
♥ 954
♦ 10864
♣ Q103

West	North	East	South
<i>Crouch</i>	<i>Liggins</i>	<i>Cope</i>	<i>Erichsen</i>
1NT	4♠	5♣	Pass
5NT	Pass	6♣	Pass
7♣	All Pass		

When North overcalls 4♠, East can hope that his partner will have little wasted in spades and it is reasonable to head for a small slam. I was expecting East to bid 5NT (pick-a-slam) to look for a fit, but of course 5♠ is also available. What is the difference? One possible method would be to use 5♠ to show hearts and another, 5NT to indicate the minors. We cannot tell from this auction how Crouch and Cope treat the two bids. Crouch had two possible places to play and responded 5NT, to ask partner for a trump suit. Since West might have held the minors, Cope bid 6♣.

I was very surprised when West continued to 7♣. Might his partner not have had a close decision between doubling 4♠ and committing to a small slam? Espen Erichsen led the ♠Q and declarer could not go wrong in the trump suit, so that was +1440. As you see, 7♥ is a slightly better slam, since one club discard is available on the diamonds. You can therefore pick up South's possible ♣Q10xx without having to guess. (Since West's 5NT had indicated two places to play, East might have responded 6♦. He would then end in a heart slam when West held hearts and clubs.)

West	North	East	South
Dhondy	Jones	Callaghan	Rosen
1NT	4♠	Double	All Pass

East's double was a cautious view of his side's slam prospects and only +300 was collected.

Other Tables

N/S Byrne/Dyke	-940	6♣+1 by W	E/W King/McIntosh
N/S Bakhshi/Malinowski	-940	6♣+1 by W	E/W Allerton/Jagger
N/S Hinden/Osborne	-1510	7♥= by E	E/W Townsend/Hydes

Round 7. Board 9. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

	♠ AQ962	
	♥ 63	
	♦ KJ32	
	♣ AJ	
♠ 103		♠ 74
♥ KQ1054		♥ J
♦ Q64		♦ 10985
♣ Q94		♣ K76532
	♠ KJ85	
	♥ A9872	
	♦ A7	
	♣ 108	

West	North	East	South
Osborne	Dyke	Hinden	Byrne
–	1♠	Pass	2NT
Pass	3♦	Pass	4♦
Pass	4♥	Pass	4NT
Pass	5♠	Pass	6♠
All Pass			

Michael Byrne's 4♦ was a cue-bid that denied any club control. Since South was otherwise unlimited, Dyke no doubt felt obliged to bid a Last Train 4♥ to show a control in clubs. RKCB resulted in a borderline but reasonable slam. A diamond lead would have assisted declarer but Frances Hinden led

her singleton ♥J. Dyke won with dummy's ♥A, cashed the ♠K and led a second round of hearts to West's king, East throwing a club. He ruffed the heart continuation with the ♠Q, played the ♠A and led a diamond to the ace. What next?

The kibitzers were expecting a diamond to the jack and a swift claim but Byrne preferred to ruff a fourth round of hearts. He continued with the ♦K and a diamond ruff. This brought down the ♦Q on the third round and the slam was his.

Since the chance of the ♦Q falling in three rounds (with seven cards out) is less than that of a finesse against the ♦Q, it seems that declarer was hoping to add some squeeze chance at the end. Suppose that both defenders follow with low diamonds on the third round. Playing the ♠J would squeeze West if he held the ♦Q and ♣KQ remaining, but starting with such a club holding when there are nine clubs out is a minuscule chance.

Cope and Crouch stopped in 4♠ at the other table (1♠–2♣–2♦–2♠–3♠–4♠). Crouch's 2♣ was a game-forcing relay and 11 tricks were made for +450.

Other Tables

N/S Dhondy/Callaghan	+480	4♠+2 by N	E/W Bakhshi/Malinowski
N/S Townsend/Hydes	+480	4♠+2 by N	E/W Allerton/Jagger
N/S Erichsen/Liggins	+450	4♠+1 by N	E/W King/McIntosh

Round 10. Board 7. Dealer South. Both Vul.

	♠ AQ1075	
	♥ KJ9874	
	♦ –	
	♣ 82	
♠ –		♠ J96
♥ A		♥ Q65
♦ AKQ873		♦ 1094
♣ AKJ976		♣ 10543
	♠ K8432	
	♥ 1032	
	♦ J652	
	♣ Q	

West	North	East	South
<i>Allerton</i>	<i>Dhondy</i>	<i>Jagger</i>	<i>Callaghan</i>
—	—	—	Pass
2♣	2♥	Pass	3♥
4♦	4♥	Pass	Pass
7♣	All Pass		

With no mechanism to announce both majors, Heather Dhondy started with 2♥. What should West say after South raises to 3♥?

4NT was suggested, but is it absolutely certain that partner will read this as Unusual? Even if he does, it won't help you much to see a bid of 5♣ or 5♦ across the table. I like Allerton's 4♦ best. After the 2♣ opening it is, of course, forcing.

Dhondy was happy to bid 4♥ and we are told that there was laughter round the table when Allerton then bid 7♣. Neither North nor South could consider a 7♥ sacrifice. As far as North was concerned, there could be a stack of spades over her.

Dhondy has great respect for Allerton's bidding, it goes without saying, but not enough to prevent her from leading the ♠A. Allerton ruffed, laid down the ♣A and claimed the balance for +2140. There was no need to finesse against the ♦J since he could ruff the fourth round of the suit. Note how well E/W had done to end in clubs. Playing in 7♦, you would have no entry to take the trump finesse.

West	North	East	South
<i>Erichsen</i>	<i>Malinowski</i>	<i>Liggins</i>	<i>Bakhshi</i>
–	–	–	Pass
2♣	Double	2♦	3♠
4♦	4♠	5♦	5♠
7♣	Pass	Pass	7♠
All Pass			

Artur Malinowski had a double to show both majors. Thereafter N/S did well to find the 7♠ sacrifice. It was only three down for 800, a 16-IMP gain when compared with the score at the other table.

♠ AQ1075
♥ KJ9874
♦ —
♣ 82

♠ —
♥ A
♦ AKQ873
♣ AKJ976

W N E S

♠ J96
♥ Q65
♦ 1094
♣ 10543

♠ K8432
♥ 1032
♦ J652
♣ Q

Other Tables

N/S Hinden/Osborne	-500	6♠X-2 by S	E/W Rosen/Jones
N/S Byrne/Dyke	-800	7♠X-3 by S	E/W King/McIntosh
N/S Townsend/Hydes	-1390	6♣+1 by W	E/W Cope/Crouch

We'll end with a bidding problem. You are sitting East at Game All.

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	1♣	1♥
1♠	3♥	Pass	Pass
Double	Pass	?	

♠A10 ♥KJ62 ♦J108 ♣ K1083

You open 1♣. What action will you take on the third round, facing partner's take-out double of 3♥?

Round 16. Board 20. Dealer West. Both Vul.

♠ J9532	♠ K86	♠ A10
♥ —	♥ Q1053	♥ KJ62
♦ A753	♦ 9642	♦ J108
♣ A754	♣ Q6	♣ K1083
	<div>W N E S</div>	
	♠ Q74	
	♥ A9874	
	♦ KQ	
	♣ J92	

West	North	East	South
<i>Dhondy</i>	<i>Dyke</i>	<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>Byrne</i>
Pass	Pass	1♣	1♥
Double	3♥	Pass	Pass
Double	Pass	Pass	Pass

Dhondy's double of 1♥ promised spades. Callaghan passed the next double for penalties. He won the ♠3 lead with the ace and returned the ♠10. Byrne won with dummy's king and called for the ♥Q, covered by the king and

ace. A club to the queen and king was followed by the ♦J to the king and ace. Dhondy delivered a spade ruff and that was two down – 500 for N/S.

West	North	East	South
Bakhshi	Jones	Malinowski	Rosen
Pass	Pass	1♣	1♥
1♠	3♥	Pass	Pass
Double	Pass	3NT	All Pass

Bakhshi's 1♠ was equivalent to Dhondy's double at the other table. So Malinowski faced the same decision on the third round. His choice of 3NT is puzzling, since he is unlikely to make that contract facing a passed hand.

The defence was accurate. Rosen's lead of the ♥9 went to the queen and king. Declarer led the ♣8 to the ace and finessed the ♠10 to the queen. South switched to the ♦Q, taken with the ace, and a spade to the ace dropped two spot-cards. The ♦J to the king was followed by a spade to North's king. The ♥10 and another heart then gave Rosen three more tricks. It was three down, N/S scoring +300 and a 13-IMP swing on the two-table comparison.

Other Tables

N/S Allerton/Jagger	+200	5♣-2 by E	E/W Cope/Crouch
N/S King/McIntosh	-200	3♥-2 by S	E/W Townsend/Hydes
N/S Hinden/Osborne	-500	3♥X-2 by S	E/W Erichsen/Liggins

This was the final result:

1 st	Jeffrey Allerton & Chris Jagger	+110.50
2 nd	David Bakhshi & Artur Malinowski	+76.87
3 rd	Michael Byrne & Kieran Dyke	+61.25
4 th	Tom Townsend & Alex Hydes	+14.13
5 th	Espen Erichsen & Glyn Liggins	+14.12
6 th	Phil King & Andrew McIntosh	+13.25
7 th	Neil Rosen & Martin Jones	-7.00
8 th	Simon Cope & Peter Crouch	-17.87
9 th	Frances Hinden & Graham Osborne	-88.0
10 th	Heather Dhondy & Brian Callaghan	-177.25

Congratulations to the first two pairs, who will join Tony Forrester and Andrew Robson to represent England in the 2018 European Championships.

Women's & Seniors' Pairs

will be played in Ostend before the
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Letter from Germany – Of Slams and Sacrifices

Martin Cantor

Team Bundesliga – the first weekend

I like the way that the German Team Bundesliga is structured. First and second divisions, together with three parallel third divisions, each of ten teams. Promotion and demotion between them all, as well as between the third divisions and regional leagues. Nine thirty-two board matches played over three weekends. The DBV (Deutsche Bridge-Verband) having changed the playing times to avoid what used to be an after-Saturday-midnight finish, the players now emerge from each weekend looking human at least, if still somewhat frazzled.

So it was that fifty teams, the best part of three hundred bridge players, converged on the lightly snow-covered spa city of Kassel in January. Our Bielefeld team travelled, as ever, hoping for promotion to the second division. Sadly, by the end of the first weekend, our hope was, if not extinguished, then reduced to a glimmer after one draw and two narrow defeats.

The big swings come of course from the (actual or imagined) slam hands and the thin games. I won't embarrass myself by describing the two makeable 4♠ contracts I went down in, but four hands in the slam zone produced interest – not to mention some odd results.

Match 1 Board 5 Dealer North. N/S Vul.

♠ AK752		
♥ AQ95		
♦ 107		
♣ 84		
♠ 43		
♥ K643		
♦ AQ6		
♣ Q962		
♠ —		
♥ J107		
♦ KJ85432		
♣ AKJ		



My partner Omid Karimi and I got lucky on this hand when a bidding misunderstanding left us in a makeable game rather than an unmakeable slam. This was our auction:

West	North	East	South
	<i>Omid</i>		<i>Cantor</i>
–	1♠	Pass	2♦
Pass	2♥	Pass	3♣
Pass	3♦	Pass	4♣
Pass	4♠	Pass	5♦
All Pass			

Once partner opened the bidding my hand certainly had slam potential, but only if we could find a fit. 2♦ was natural and game forcing. Since 3♦ at my second turn would set the suit, which it certainly wasn't good enough for, I chose 3♣ asking partner to describe his hand. My plan was:

- if partner bid 3♦, showing three small or a top honour doubleton, to cue-bid 4♣, intending to bid the diamond slam if partner next cue-bid in hearts (4♦ rather than 4♣ by me would be keycard for diamonds which wouldn't help me at all);
- to cue-bid in clubs if partner rebid his hearts, heading towards a heart slam;
- to bid 3NT if he produced the nothing-more-to-show 3♠;
- and to pass an unlikely 3NT.

Partner however decided that I must have a big minor two-suiter and (since we play minorwood) took 4♣ as keycard for that suit, and so bid 4♠ to show his two aces without the ♣Q. Lacking (as I thought) a heart control I signed off in 5♦ which, with both diamond honours offside, was quite high enough. Mind you, 6♦ is far from the worst slam that any of us has been in, and it was bid at three of the fifty tables. Thirty-five played in 3NT, nine just making, fifteen with 1 overtrick, ten with 2 and one with 3 overtricks. Three played in 4♥, one off, one making, one with an overtrick. Two pairs stopped very safely in 3♦, while one for some reason played 4♠ (3 off) while one intrepid E/W stole the board in 3♣X-3.

Match 1, Board 19, Dealer South. E/W Vul.

♠ A843
♥ 764
♦ KJ105
♣ A10

♠ K652
♥ 8
♦ 9876
♣ Q984

♠ 7
♥ QJ3
♦ Q32
♣ KJ7653

♠ QJ109
♥ AK10952
♦ A4
♣ 2

If anyone had bid to and made the optimal contract of 7NT I suspect the tournament directors might have asked them to return their copy of the hand records. I'm glad to say that nobody did. Single dummy you want to be in 6♥ needing either the spade finesse or to play hearts for no loser. Only 7 pairs managed to find that contract (all in the first division), compared to the twenty-five, including us, in 6♠.

Our auction was:

West	North	East	South
–	–	–	1♥
Pass	1♠*	Pass	1NT*
Pass	4♠	Pass	4NT
Pass	5♥	Pass	6♠
All Pass			

1♠	0-4 spades and 5-11 points, or exactly 4 spades and 12+
1NT	4 spades
4♠	4 spades and 12-15

East led the ♦2 and Omid suffered a rare blindspot. Seduced by the lead into his tenace he won the ♦J, cashed the ♣A and ruffed the ♣10, thereby cooking his own goose. He should of course have won the first (or at least the second) trick with the ♦A to finesse in trumps, followed by the safety play of a heart to the 10. Perhaps surprisingly at this level he wasn't alone in going down on a diamond lead, joined of course by all those who got

a club lead and didn't use their second sight to immediately take the deep finesse in hearts. Twelve pairs, including ten in the first division, stopped safely if surprisingly in game – together with one who stopped not so safely in 4♠ since (s)he managed to go one off. One North played 6NT and was lucky enough to get the ♠7 lead, making in some comfort. The pair who bid to 7♥ clearly didn't have the hand records since they went one down.

Three boards later we were in the slam zone again with this:

Match 1, Board 22. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

♠ A98
 ♥ 32
 ♦ A1054
 ♣ KJ98

♠ J3
 ♥ J87654
 ♦ 763
 ♣ A6

♠ 1076542
 ♥ —
 ♦ 82
 ♣ 107543

♠ KQ
 ♥ AKQ109
 ♦ KQJ9
 ♣ Q2

N
 W E
 S

Our auction was relatively short and sweet:

West	North	East	South
–	–	Pass	2♦*
Pass	2♥*	Pass	2NT*
Pass	6NT	All Pass	

2♦	Multi
2♥	Pass or correct
2NT	20-22

West led the ♥5 and I had visions of an overtrick if I could sneak a club trick. Well that hope disappeared when East discarded, so I won and conceded the club ace for twelve tricks. Which all seemed entirely unremarkable, even as we scored up a flat board, so I gave it no further thought and didn't even look at the full hand. Until later when several friends approached me to ask what we'd played. The reason for their obvious disappointment soon became apparent

as they bemoaned having bid to 6♦ to go one or two off on the heart ruff, depending on who it was played by and, if by South, whether West cashed the ♣A before playing a heart. One South did make an overtrick in 6NT, which you can do legitimately after a heart lead if you can get one club trick past West as (s)he is then squeezed in clubs and hearts. If failing to do that that had been my biggest mistake of the weekend I'd have been delighted and we'd be sitting much higher up the table. Two pairs were doubled in 6♦ and stayed there to go two down. Deservedly I think for not pulling to 6NT. Another pair was also doubled in 6♦ but, rather than stay there, chose to redouble. Which strikes me as more than passing odd, and got what it merited in the shape of minus 600. And, to prove that Omid and I aren't the only pair capable of bidding misunderstandings, one pair played the board in 3♥. At least they made it, and with an overtrick to boot.

One last slam (or not) hand for you.

Match 3, Board 1. Dealer North. None Vul.

♠ A63		
♥ Q4		
♦ 97652		
♣ J54		
♠ 1095		♠ KQ742
♥ —		♥ AK963
♦ AQJ1043		♦ K8
♣ AK63		♣ 9
	♠ J8	
	♥ J108752	
	♦ —	
	♣ Q10872	

At our table the auction was

West	North	East	South
Omid		Cantor	
—	Pass	1♠*	2♠*
3♦	Pass	3♥*	Pass
4♠	Pass	4NT	Pass
5♥	Pass	6♠	All Pass

- 1♠ Precision so limited to 15HCP
- 2♠ 5-5+ ♥ and a minor, weak or strong
- 3♥ Explained as stopper ask (but what else would you bid?)

I led the ♥J, and declarer took quite some time before ruffing and leading a spade. My partner now went into the tank. And stayed there. For minutes. Several minutes. Since I didn't think declarer had eight spades, and that therefore partner was considering what to discard, it was clear that Omid had the ♠A. All credit to him, rather than to the telepathy I was trying to exert across the screen, for rising with his ace to give me the diamond ruff that beat the contract. Which gained 8 IMPs when teammates took South's 3♣ doubled two off. Elsewhere 19 pairs shared our result, five made the unbeatable 6♦, one of them doubled. One declarer beat him- or herself in 6♦ by getting spades wrong, another managed somehow to go two down in the same contract. Nobody found the pairs top spot of 6NT. Two bid grand slams—one in diamonds one off, one (from the first division) in spades, two off doubled. Which only goes to show (as we saw in the first hand above) how hard it can be to bid slams accurately with a void, especially when opponents rudely interfere. Top score on the board went to the N/S pair who doubled 5♣ and took it six off.

It goes almost without saying that where there are slams there are sacrifices. Firstly a successful one that Omid bravely bid entirely on his own:

Match 2, Board 30. Dealer East. None Vul.

♠ Q9		
♥ AKQJ10954		
♦ 965		
♣ —		
♠ AJ64		♠ K105
♥ 7		♥ —
♦ K732		♦ A104
♣ 10743		♣ AKQJ652
	♠ 8732	
	♥ 8632	
	♦ QJ8	
	♣ 98	

The auction:

West	North	East	South
<i>Omid</i>		<i>Cantor</i>	
–	–	1♣	Pass
1♦	4♥	5♣	Pass
6♣	6♥	Pass*	Pass
Double	All Pass		

East's final pass was (of course) forcing. The play for nine tricks and -500 didn't take long. Sadly, when we came to score up, instead of gaining 9 or 10 IMPs from teammates' 6♣ (the overtrick depending on finding the ♠Q), we lost 2 when teammates stopped in 5♣. But at least we didn't lose the 10 if Omid had let 6♣ play. Or the 800 (8 IMPs) or possibly 1440 (14 IMPs) we might have conceded if the opponents had bid on to 7♣.

If my first example was only partly successful, my second is one of those where the operation was a success but the patient died. Holding ♠K2 ♥J7632 ♦J83 ♣653, third in hand at love all, I heard Omid open 2♥ showing 5 hearts, 4+ of any other suit, and 6-10 HCP. East passed and I had to decide how many hearts to bid. East's pass made it marginally more likely that the ♠A would be with East, so defensive prospects looked poor. If I bid 4♥ and they bid to 4♠ I would regret not having bid 5♥. My initial estimate was that 5♥ doubled might cost 800 if partner was minimum, but then opponents would have slam. Or 300-500 if he was stronger and they had game. If they only had a part score we might lose 100 or at worst 300. Having recently re-read Larry Cohen's *Following the LAW* I decided to apply some Law of Total Tricks science. We had a ten card fit. Opponents at least eight and quite possibly nine. Adjustments would be positive if anything, to take account of the unbalanced distribution (Omid would be at worst 5422 and possibly 5431, 5521 or even 5530, while one opponent had a singleton or void heart), plus we would have a double fit if Omid's second suit was a minor. So assuming nineteen total tricks, if opponents had 920 or 980 in slam we would be four off for -800. If they had 11 tricks for 400 or 450 we would be -500. If they had ten tricks then our -300 would score well against 420 if they had a spade fit, but badly if they didn't. And if they were provoked into bidding something unmakeable we stood to gain anything

♠ Q9			
♥ AKQJ10954			
♦ 965			
♣ –			
♠ AJ64			♠ K105
♥ 7			♥ –
♦ K732			♦ A104
♣ 10743			♣ AKQJ652
♠ 8732			
♥ 8632			
♦ QJ8			
♣ 98			

from about five to ten IMPs. If the opponents were vulnerable the decision would be clear cut, but even at love all the maths seemed to favour the aggressive option. So 5♥ was my choice, doubled by West and, after considerable thought, passed out by East. As you can see from the full hand, E/W can make 6♣ so in theory my decision was right. As so often however, practice turned out differently, since at the other table South raised to just 4♥, and over West's double East bid 4♠, and did well to get out for one down but a loss of 13 IMPs. And elsewhere? 6♣ was bid at just 2 of 50 tables. As a footnote, I invite Larry to correct or comment on my LAW analysis. The full hand:

Match 2, Board 17. Dealer North. None Vul.

		♠ J654	
		♥ AKQ98	
		♦ 1062	
		♣ 8	
♠ A983			♠ Q107
♥ –			♥ 1054
♦ A974			♦ KQ5
♣ AQ1042			♣ KJ97
		♠ K2	
		♥ J7632	
		♦ J83	
		♣ 653	

As you might expect from this selection, there were some big IMP scores across the divisions. If you want more details you can find them on the DBV website at http://www.bridge-verband.de/images/uploads/ftp4001/18_01_20_team.html

Our team meanwhile will be trying to rekindle our hope and, more usefully, hone our bidding and play to try to get the six big wins that might carry us into the second division. Or at least some modest wins to make sure we don't get relegated.

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DEFEND WITH JULIAN

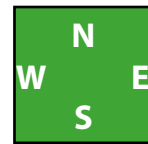
POTTAGE

The Questions

Solutions on page 98

1

♠ KQJ52
♥ 943
♦ A4
♣ J43



♠ 7
♥ AK876
♦ KJ982
♣ 102

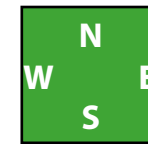
WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
–	–	1♥*	1♠
2♥	4♠	All Pass	

1♥ Five-card majors

Partner leads the five of hearts (third and fifth if leading low in a suit bid by the leader's partner) to your king, declarer playing the two. What is your plan?

2

♠ –
♥ KQ76543
♦ AK94
♣ K6



♠ AQ9542
♥ A102
♦ Q1083
♣ –

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
–	–	–	1♣
Pass	1♥	1♠	2♣
3♠*	4♥	4♠	Double
Pass	5♣	All Pass	

3♠ pre-emptive

Partner leads the two of diamonds, the king winning. At trick two, you capture the king of hearts with the ace, partner playing the jack (standard count). What do you return?



Test Your Technique

with Christophe Grosset

see Page 4

Dealer East. N/S Vul.

	♠ A652	
	♥ KQ53	
	♦ AK104	
	♣ A	
♠ 843		♠ Q1097
♥ J98		♥ A6
♦ 97		♦ 86532
♣ J9652		♣ K3
	♠ KJ	
	♥ 10742	
	♦ QJ	
	♣ Q10874	

West	North	East	South
Rombaut	Grosset	Combescure	Skorchev
—	—	1NT*	Pass
2♣	Dble*	2♠	Dble*
Pass	3♠	Pass	3NT

Dble Values

Dble Values

Playing matchpoints, you end up in the wrong contract of 3NT after your opponent made your life difficult by opening in mini no trump (9-11) from East.

Hearts are clearly going to make one more trick than no trumps if trumps do not behave too badly. How can you try to steal a trick on a spade lead from West?

Your main hope is that the same opponent holds the king of clubs and the 4th spade (very likely that East will have both) AND loses track of the hearts spots. What we suggest is taking the lead and playing the four of hearts to the king

and later (in the event that your opponents play spades again after they take the ace of hearts; if they play clubs, there is nothing you can do anyway) cashing the queen of hearts, playing the 7 from hand and finally the five from dummy, and the ten from South on the 3rd round. That way, with 2 cards to go, you will play the three of hearts from dummy, with a small spade in dummy, while in hand you'll have the two of hearts and the queen of clubs. If East did not pay enough attention to the first round of hearts, he might well discard his spade! This is the situation when East has to make the right discard:

	♠ 6	
	♥ 3	
	♦ —	
	♣ —	
♠ —		♠ 7
♥ —		♥ —
♦ —		♦ —
♣ J9		♣ K
	♠ —	
	♥ 2	
	♦ —	
	♣ Q	

When North leads the ♥3, East must know if South is left with the ♥2 or the ♥4. One could argue that keeping the seven of hearts in hand and the five in dummy is more likely to work as East, if he loses track, might elect to discard the king of clubs since if he is wrong, his partner might still have the queen of clubs. This is also a fine plan. Just make sure you get rid of the ten of hearts on the 3rd round, a defender is much more likely to keep track of that card because a bridge players' brain is trained for it!

This kind of play works much more often than you would think in the real world... But unfortunately it won't on Funbridge as our robots do not forget any of the cards played!

Should Auld Acquaintance...

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

Dorothy had returned from their second round Ozian Cup match in Poppyfield pleased to have progressed to the last sixteen, although the final result had been rather too close for comfort. She was relieved, however, that the match had passed off without incident. The Poppyfield team had remembered only too clearly their encounter with the Tin Man at last year's friendly match, and had been on edge from the moment they realised they would be playing a team including him.

Dorothy was saddened as the Over the Rainbow Bridge Club had played an annual social match against the Poppyfield Bridge Club for several decades, yet the unfortunate events of the previous year's encounter had clearly put the very existence of that fixture under threat.

All the problems had centred round one individual – her partner. His behaviour at the table, and his intention to write up some of the opposition's worst hands in the district magazine had not been forgotten, and certainly not forgiven. Dorothy feared that if the social match dropped out of the calendar this year, it might never return. She knew that this type of friendly event was important to many of the members of their own club, and she felt it was important to try to correct the situation.

The obvious person to discuss this with was Auntie Em, and she went round to visit her the following day. Though not one of the club's office-bearers, Em was a long-standing member of the committee, the elder stateswoman of the club, and a person with a knack for getting things done.

'I'm sorry to say that things are worse than we thought,' she told her aunt. 'I seriously think that if we invite them, they would refuse if there was even a possibility that the Tin Man might play.'

'Then he must not play.'

'But how can we stop him? You know how he is. I don't expect he even wants to play, but once he is told that he can't then he will kick up an almighty fuss.' Dorothy sighed. 'After all,' she continued, 'any team from the club selected on merit would have to include him.'

'That's easy then,' Auntie Em chuckled, 'We will arrange matters so that we don't select on merit.' Dorothy looked nonplussed.

'We will recast the match as an event for non-experts,' Auntie Em continued. 'It's our turn to host. You can be the match manager, and I'll take care of the catering. There will be no place for him.' Em was feeling pleased with herself. She felt confident that by excluding those who believed themselves to be experts she would be able to rid the team of a number of the most likely troublemakers, not just the Tin Man.

Over the next three days it seemed to Dorothy that events moved very quickly indeed. After a conversation with Auntie Em, the club president, the Chairman of the Lollipop League, came away convinced he had thought of the idea himself. Such were the ways of Auntie Em. He propelled it through the committee, at a special meeting called when he knew the Wicked Witch of the West would be unable to attend.

There then followed a series of delicate phone calls to Poppyfield, in which the Tin Man's name was mentioned several times. At the end of the three days, the Chairman was able to announce at the Club's Thursday evening session that the match would be going ahead, revamped in exactly the way that he had proposed. Dorothy looked across at Auntie Em, whose face at this point resembled the Cheshire Cat.

Em's catering role seemed, somehow, to include selection, and she was pleased with the team that she had put together. First on the list were, of course, the Chairman of the Lollipop Guild and the Mayor of Munchkinland – both smooth operators who knew how to handle people, and were, incidentally, half decent players. Next came Ada and Cissie, who would not fall out with anyone, and would play a sound game.

The Lion was to line up with Glinda. The Wicked Witch of the West had wanted to play but had been unable to rebut Auntie Em's assertion that she was simply too good to take part. It was Glinda who had suggested she might play with the Lion. 'I would learn such a lot partnering him,' she had told Auntie Em. 'And he's such a gentleman. I hope he'll be willing to play with me.' Auntie Em suppressed a giggle, reckoning there wasn't a snowball's chance in hell of the Lion declining this offer.

Finally, she had picked the Scarecrow and Hank. There were three reasons

for this. Firstly, they were entirely inoffensive chaps, who would certainly not upset the delicate feelings of the Poppyfield team. Secondly, if she wasn't able to play herself, she felt she deserved some amusement as a kibitzer. However, the main reason, which went against every fibre of her being, was that she felt it might be politic if Poppyfield won this year's encounter. There could be no safer way of ensuring that than having this partnership in the team.

When the day arrived the Poppyfield team was warmly welcomed at the Over The Rainbow Bridge Club. Auntie Em had put on a delicious spread, including a selection of items produced at the farm which she and Uncle Henry ran.

Dorothy had taken a safety play. She had told the Tin Man that their next round opponents in the Ozian Cup would be playing a match on BBO, which so happened to coincide with the Poppyfield encounter. In case that did not hold his attention, she had lent him a bridge book she had bought specially for this purpose, and asked him to come back with recommendations on which chapters she should study. She was not sure that she was looking forward to the inevitable discussions that he would expect to have after she had read the indicated sections, but the two distractions did seem to have the desired effect of keeping the Tin Man busy and away from kibitzing the match.

Hank was especially excited to have been selected. No-one had ever picked him for any sort of team before. The Mayor of Munchkinland was used to giving the appearance of remaining calm under pressure, but inwardly he felt panic spreading through his body as Hank prattled on at him about the lessons that the Scarecrow had been giving him on splinters. Fortunately Hank was happy to hold up both ends of the conversation and the Mayor had to do no more than nod, smile encouragingly, and eat one of Em's chicken pies. Eventually Hank came to a halt.

'I must say, that sounds marvellous,' the Mayor managed to say. 'I'm sure you will winkle out a few slams than none of the rest of us have thought of.'

Spearheading the Poppyfield team were Clara and Margaret: the pair that the Tin Man had particularly offended the previous year. Dorothy had feted them from the moment they arrived, and made sure that their coffee cups were never empty.

Clara and Margaret started against Ada and Cissie, and then played their second set against the Scarecrow and Hank.

Margaret found herself looking at:

♠ 104
♥ K103
♦ QJ875
♣ J73

She heard her opponents bidding to slam by the following auction:

West	North	East	South
Clara	Hank	Margaret	Scarecrow
–	1♣	Pass	2♠
Pass	4♦	Pass	4♥
Pass	4♠	Pass	4NT
Pass	5♥	Pass	6♠
All Pass			

Clara, on lead started to ask questions.

'How do you play Two Spades?'

'He's got a strong hand,' Hank replied. 'At least sixteen points I would think, and a six card suit.'

'And what was Four Diamonds?'

'I'm hoping that is a splinter,' said the Scarecrow, slightly anxiously. 'It should mean diamond length and he is short in spades.' The Scarecrow saw Hank's jaw drop. 'I'm so sorry, he continued, 'I've said that the wrong way about. He has spade support and is short in diamonds, em, that is, if we are on the same wavelength.' He looked hopefully at his partner, who gave him a reassuring nod.

'And Four Hearts?' continued Clara, this time looking at Hank.

'Another splinter,' Hank asserted with great confidence.

'Not just a cue-bid?' Clara queried.

'Oh, no,' said Hank. 'I don't think you can play splinters and cue-bids can you? How would partner know?'

Clara gave a puzzled nod, and decided that there was little point in asking about the Four Spade bid. 'Roman Key Card?' Then when it was clear that no-one was going to answer she said, 'The 4NT bid. Was that Roman Key Card?'

'Oh,' Hank jerked awake. 'No just normal Blackwood.'

'He's shown two aces,' the Scarecrow contributed.

Clara nodded again then put the ♥2 on the table.

Hank laid down his dummy, somewhat laboriously, and Margaret could see:

♠ J5
♥ AQ84
♦ 7
♣ A98654

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ 104
♥ K103
♦ QJ865
♣ J73

‘Splintering with two card support?’ Clara was incredulous.

‘Well, um, you see, I thought the thing was that we knew we had an eight card fit.’ Hank was floundering. ‘Is that not right, partner?’

‘I think we had better talk about it later,’ replied the Scarecrow, not wanting to commit himself publicly to an opinion. After a moment’s thought he asked Margaret what sort of leads they played, not that he was particularly interested, but in the hope it would divert attention from the auction.

‘We’ve just changed over to third and fifth.’ Margaret smiled at the Scarecrow. ‘All the experts in our club say they’re so much better.’ She looked again at her partner’s lead and turned to Hank. ‘You did say that Four Heart bid was a splinter, did you not?’

‘Oh definitely, we were just discussing this very situation yesterday.’ Hank was delighted; he felt that for once he had a bit of system firmly in his brain!

‘What is going on?’ Margaret wondered to herself. ‘Declarer is short in hearts and partner has led a low one. Surely she is showing me that she has the jack. Declarer has to be void, but then why didn’t he take a free finesse? Maybe he thinks that Clara wouldn’t lead away from the king so he is saving the queen. He’ll be able to ruff my king down but he won’t have the entries to cash the queen. But if I put the king in now and he ruffs then his queen will be set up.’

Reluctantly, she played the ♥10 and looked in horror as the Scarecrow won the ♥J.

This was the full hand:

Dealer North. Love All

♠ A72 ♥ 97652 ♦ 943 ♣ Q10	<table border="1" style="width: 60px; height: 60px; margin: 0 auto;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ 104 ♥ K103 ♦ QJ865 ♣ J73
	N										
W		E									
	S										
♠ J5 ♥ AQ84 ♦ 7 ♣ A98654		♠ KQ9863 ♥ J ♦ AK102 ♣ K2									

The Scarecrow played a trump to the jack in dummy and then another trump won by the ace of a very mystified Clara. It looked like declarer, with his hair sticking out all over the place, had as much idea about bidding as he had about sartorial elegance. Splinter indeed, when he clearly had both the king and jack of hearts! Baffled, she switched to a diamond.

The Scarecrow took stock as he won this trick with his king. He had five trump tricks, two in each of the other suits. He thought that added up to eleven. Falling back on his usual technique in these situations, he played out his trumps. Margaret was able to discard two diamonds easily enough on the third and fourth rounds of spades. At this point they were down to:

SCARECROW



♠ —	♥ AQ8	♦ —	♣ A986
♠ —	♥ 976	♦ 94	♣ Q10
♠ —	♥ —	♦ A102	♣ K2
♠ 86	♥ —	♦ —	♣ —

The Scarecrow played another trump. He looked at dummy. ‘You choose,’ he said to his partner, ‘as long as it’s not an honour.’ Hank picked a small club. Margaret looked at her hand in despair. Anything that she discarded now was going to be fatal. She too, picked a club.

Keeping his last trump in case of emergencies, the Scarecrow cashed the ♦A, the ♣K and then crossed to the ♣A. The ♥A took care of one of his small diamonds, and since he was as sure as he could be that neither ♥K nor the ♦Q had appeared he decided to gamble that the ♣9 was now a winner. It was, as he explained later, a ‘restricted choice’ situation.

‘I’m sorry,’ said Hank. ‘I guess more trumps would have helped. You had to play it really well.’

‘Thank you,’ muttered the Scarecrow, unaccustomed to having to respond to compliments. ‘Actually your length in the other suits came in pretty handy, as it happens.’

Clara was staring at Margaret, and trying to find the right words. She was determined not to let Poppyfield down by any reaction that could be considered as Tin Man-esque. ‘Might you have taken the king of hearts?’

‘I’m sorry,’ said Margaret. ‘I thought you had shown an honour.’

‘I thought that the count would be more useful to you. The two of hearts and the auction told you that declarer had a singleton.’

Clara took a deep breath. ‘Well, never mind. Goodness me, look at the buffet table. It has completely filled up again!’

Poppyfield was marginally ahead at half time – a part of the proceedings

that thanks to Auntie Em’s unstinting hospitality was an event in itself. Auntie Em was at her most cheerful. All was going to plan, with broad smiles on the faces of all eight members of the Poppyfield team.

Early on in the second half Clara and Margaret, now North-South, played this treacherous board against the Mayor and the Chairman.

Dealer South. N/S Game

♠ Q932	♥ 83	♦ 106	♣ AJ1092
♠ AJ54	♥ 104	♦ KJ42	♣ 875
♠ 10876	♥ AKQJ52	♦ Q9	♣ K

West	North	East	South
Mayor	Clara	Chairman	Margaret
—	—	—	1♥
Pass	1♠	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

My apologies if I was wrong to go on,’ said Clara as she awaited dummy. ‘I’m a bit borderline.’

‘Never mind,’ replied Margaret. ‘My hand might suit you well, or it might not. I’m sure that you will do your best.’

The Chairman selected the ♦A for his opening lead, to get a look at this interesting sounding dummy. When his partner encouraged he continued with a second round of the suit. The defence could not be stopped from taking the two master spades. Indeed it was only thanks to the spade finesse that Clara managed to escape for one down.

‘On the plus side,’ The Mayor told his opponents, ‘it goes even worse if you play in your lovely heart suit. Double dummy, I know, but the defence

could start with a low spade to the king, a diamond to the jack, ace and another spade, ruffed by East, another diamond back to me and then another spade ruff. Yes in hearts you can be held to seven tricks! I don't see anyone making a contract on this one.'

Aunty Em had been following this board round the room and knew that only one pair had gone plus North-South. Having opened One Heart and seen his partner respond One Spade, the Lion had raised Glinda to Two Spades, where she played. She didn't make the best of the trump suit, but managed to take eight tricks.

Aunty Em migrated with the board to the table where the Scarecrow and Hank were North-South and hovered in the background. Hank was tiring and the rate of play at this foursome was somewhat slower than the others. Margaret's ill-fated Four Spades was going to be their last board, and indeed the last of the event.

Aunty Em went over to Dorothy, who was checking the scores as they came through from the bridgemates. 'How is it going?' she whispered.

'If Hank and the Scarecrow can go plus on the last board then we will win.'

Aunty Em laughed inwardly. Things were working out perfectly. Hank and the Scarecrow were North-South and the chances of them stopping low enough to make anything seemed remote. Nevertheless, she found herself a vantage point from which to follow the hand.

Hank was sitting South. He opened One Heart and heard his partner respond One Spade. With a good hand, support for partner's suit and a side shortage, Hank decided to splinter in clubs. Unfortunately his choice of Three Clubs didn't get the message across as well as he had hoped. The Scarecrow was delighted by his partner's rebid and jumped to Five Clubs.

Hank had an uneasy feeling about this. Surely his partner couldn't want to play in his shortage? Well, if one convention had failed him, he could always try another. He bid Five Diamonds, confident that his partner would read it as fourth suit forcing. He would happily pass five of either major.

From the Scarecrow's side of the table this looked like a cue-bid, but he had nothing extra to show so he signed off in Six Clubs. Hank was starting to feel alarmed. He decided to retreat to the safety of his solid six-card suit, bidding Six Hearts. That closed an eventful auction:

West	North	East	South
	<i>Scarecrow</i>		<i>Hank</i>
–	–	–	1♥
Pass	1♠	Pass	3♣
Pass	5♣	Pass	5♦
Pass	6♣	Pass	6♥
All Pass			

Aunty Em smiled and sighed, and wondered how far this contract would go down. Her team selection couldn't have been better, she thought to herself.

The Poppyfield played in the West seat led the ♠A, and this is what he could see after the first trick:

♠	Q93
♥	83
♦	106
♣	AJ1092
♠	J54
♥	104
♦	KJ42
♣	875



He looked hard at his partner's ♠K. Time stood still. The minutes ticked by. What on earth was going on? Clearly, his partner had worked out that they had no more spade tricks to take and was trying to send him a message. What was declarer's shape? One spade, obviously. Quite probably he had seven hearts on this bidding, and at least four clubs. Maybe South's auction was designed to get North to bid the grand slam if he had the ♠A? Yes! That was it – declarer was 1-7-0-5 and his partner was screaming out for a club ruff! Feeling very satisfied, West switched to the ♣8. Hank called for a low card from the dummy and East paused to think. After the best part of a minute he played low and declarer's king won the trick.

Hank was pleased not to be down quite yet. He quickly drew trumps. Even he realised that the ♠J was not going to be with the person who had played the king under the ace. He played the ♠10 and, when that held, followed it up with one to the nine. The ♣A allowed him to pitch a diamond. The ♣J was covered by the queen and ruffed. The fourth round of spades put him back in the dummy, allowing him to discard his remaining

diamond on a club. Left with nothing but trumps, Hank soon found that he had made his unlikely slam.

So, mused Em, part-score and slam can make, but game goes down!

Dorothy was quickly able to announce a win for the home team by 1,400 points. Auntie Em herded the players to the buffet table. Desperate to ensure that the Poppyfield team still felt positive despite the result, Auntie Em pushed the Mayor and the Chairman to work their ways around the visiting team, spreading bonhomie.

Eventually everyone had consumed as much as they could, and socialised as much as they felt able. Before they left, Margaret stepped forward to make a short speech on behalf of the visitors.

‘We have all had a lovely day, thank you so much. It is nice to see the good spirit in which such matches can be played. The catering was, of course, superb. The doggy bags are much appreciated, though I’m not sure any of us will be able to eat for several days! Yes, there were good spirits and good food aplenty. There was only one shortage that made its mark today.’ She paused, pleased with her punchline, ‘and that was the shortage bids made by your pair of young men. I’m sure there is a great article for the district magazine just waiting to be written about them!’



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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

Answers to “Defend With Julian Pottage”

See page 90

1

	♠ KQJ52	
	♥ 943	
	♦ A4	
	♣ J43	
♠ 83		♠ 7
♥ Q105		♥ AK876
♦ 10763		♦ KJ982
♣ A865		♣ 102
	♠ A10964	
	♥ J2	
	♦ Q5	
	♣ KQ97	

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
–	–	1♥*	1♠
2♥	4♠	All Pass	

1♥ Five-card majors

Partner leads the five of hearts (third and fifth if leading low in a suit bid by the leader's partner) to your king, declarer playing the two. What is your plan?

Since partner would not lead low from QJ105, you can envisage a second heart winner. If you can make a diamond and partner a club, surely not too much to ask for, you can defeat the contract.

One thing you could try is a diamond switch at trick two (or at trick three having cashed the ace of hearts). This will work if partner has the queen of diamonds and any club honour. Come to think of it, if declarer is 5-2-3-3 and partner holds the ace or king of clubs, you can beat the contract on a passive exit.

On the actual layout, when declarer is 5-2-2-4 and holds the queen of diamonds, neither a passive defence nor a diamond from your side will work. You need partner to attack diamonds. You need to return a low heart, ideally the eight as suit preference, hoping partner holds the queen. Indeed, since it would be normal to lead the jack from J-10-x, partner should hold the queen. So do that.

2

	♠ –	
	♥ KQ76543	
	♦ AK94	
	♣ K6	
♠ J8763		♠ AQ9542
♥ J9		♥ A102
♦ 2		♦ Q1083
♣ 98543		♣ –
	♠ K10	
	♥ 8	
	♦ J765	
	♣ AQJ1072	

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
–	–	–	1♣
Pass	1♥	1♠	2♣
3♠*	4♥	4♠	Double
Pass	5♣	All Pass	

3♠ pre-emptive

Partner leads the two of diamonds, the king winning. At trick two, you capture the king of hearts with the ace, partner playing the jack (standard count). What do you return? The initial diamond lead is surely a singleton. If you return a diamond and partner's trumps are good enough still to win a trick after ruffing, you will beat the contract with a heart, a ruff and a trump trick.

Moreover, if partner has a trump trick, it looks like a passive low heart exit might do. Declarer cannot run the hearts without giving up a trump (and ruffing a heart as well). Your side could then have a spade to cash.

The awkward situation occurs when partner's trumps are all low. South's free rebid, the lack of a final double and the fact that partner appears to want a ruff are all consistent with a collection of low trumps opposite. Fortunately you can still succeed if you can find a way to shut out the heart suit. You need to attack the side entry to the hearts, the second high diamond. You need to return the queen of diamonds and hope that partner works out not to ruff. Since you would surely return a low diamond if you wanted it ruffed, this may well work.



Vu-Bridge - Play Like a Champion

Dynamic Doubletons by Ben Norton (UK)

Make a Plan

We're all familiar with the concept of making a plan as declarer before even playing a card from dummy. However, this can be equally well applied to the opening lead. Granted, the inferences available to you are less manifold and are based primarily on the bidding, which isn't always a reliable source, but it still pays to form a basic defensive plan before opening the play.

The main decision you have to make is whether to adopt an active or passive line of defence. Aggression is the name of the game if you feel declarer will make his contract if left to his own devices; as such you must set about establishing quick tricks. On the other hand if you feel they might struggle, go passive, striving to give nothing away. There are some well-known tell-tale signs that may indicate whether declarer rates to bring his contract home:

How are the cards lying? If they're favourably placed for declarer, defend actively, if not try to give nothing away and let your poor RHO squirm. The tenaces are likely to be with the opponents' length. Thus if dummy has bid a suit in which you hold KJx, declarer will have an easy time setting the suit up. But say you have KJx in declarer's suit instead, or a holding with a good intermediate such as Q9xx. That bodes well for the defence. How the key suits are splitting is also relevant. Obviously a foul trump break could wreak all kinds of havoc.

Examine the auction. When your opponents have sailed into game, usually with one hand being unlimited (1NT-3NT being a prime example) declarer could well have extra strength at his disposal, suggesting you must attack else watch declarer mop up his plus score. Conversely, when they've meandered to game, normally with both hands limited (perhaps via an invitational sequence), the enemy are unlikely to have a great deal more than the bare minimum of power required for their contract. Don't give declarer his game-going trick.

Do they have a source of tricks? If an opponent has shown a long, strong side-suit, perhaps via a Gambling 3NT or opening or similar, he may well have enough tricks on top should you give him the lead. Ergo you must cash your tricks on the go.

Leading aggressively constitutes taking risks in an attempt to set the contract quickly. Underleading honours should be preferable to a 'safe' small

sequence such as 1098x, or from a bunch of small cards. The same factors are present in that leading from a queen or perhaps a king rates to be more effective than a jack, since you need less from partner to set tricks up. One might also try leading from an ace if the need for quick tricks is dire. Following a similar line of logic, it's more attractive to lead from shorter holdings than longer ones, because declarer is less likely to ruff your winners. In this way you may wish to lead from Kxx instead of Kxxxx.

In contrast, the hallmark of a passive lead is to give declarer nothing he couldn't take by himself. Therefore leading away from unsupported honours is out, as is firing out from a high two-card sequence with no supporting spot cards, take KQx as an example. A trump lead could be a good shot, while having the useful side-effect of reducing declarer's ruffing potential, but be careful not to spear partner's holding. The best holdings to lead from are sequences of three-cards, J109x being a good example, or failing that collections of small cards, say xxx. Some poor long holdings are also viable, perhaps Jxxxx.

Taking this into account, what path would you start the defence off with on this hand, taken from a recent county match:

♠ 32
♥ K1093
♦ KQ73
♣ J85

At unfavourable vulnerability, partner opens a short club, which is either a balanced hand without a five-card suit outside of clubs, or unbalanced with real clubs. RHO gets stuck in with a 3♠ pre-empt and you pass, lacking the values for a negative double opposite what's likely to be a weak no-trump. West's raise to 4♠ ends the auction. What's your plan?

Given LHO's apparent lack of high-card strength, he rates to have a source of tricks. Even though it appears as though you have the red suits locked up, it would be dangerous to let declarer get on with it, since your honours in those suits will be beneath dummy's tenace. As such a trump lead is out, but this is rarely right when declarer has shown exceptionally long trumps at any rate. The ♦K is more attractive than a heart, simply because you have more

strength there, but there is a better option still. Partner is very likely to have real clubs now, given that he probably has short spades. Leading partner's suit is an attractive option given that he'll have supporting honours. You'll likely need at least one club trick to set this, so start along that line from the off. Apart from setting up tricks this will also maintain a tempo if dummy has a source of tricks in a red suit, because while you still guard that suit partner can switch to the other one. Leading a heart or a diamond is essentially guessing, and may prove fatal if you hit dummy's suit. The full deal:

Dealer East. E/W Vul.

♠ A7		
♥ A874		
♦ A10864		
♣ 96		
♠ 32		♠ J9
♥ K1093		♥ QJ6
♦ KQ73		♦ 95
♣ J85		♣ AK10743
♠ KQ108654		
♥ 52		
♦ J2		
♣ Q2		



As you can see, a diamond lead gives declarer a vital tempo along with his game bonus, as does a trump. On the ♣5 lead partner takes the first two tricks then shifts to hearts. Easy-peasy.

You are now invited to take an interactive quiz with Vu-Bridge, which poses five opening lead problems, each of which requires you to form a basic plan. You can either click on the link below or use your smartphone with this flash-code.

<http://www.vubridge.com/QM/Users/BridgeMag/BM20180415.php>



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No Trump Interference

I often get asked, “Larry, what should we do when they use a Convention (such as Cappelletti, or DONT against our Strong No-trump?) There is no fast answer. To cope with interference, you need to do a little studying and memorizing. Otherwise, be prepared for some accidents. You and your partner have to come to some agreements.

It is impractical (unless you are a world-class bridge pro) to try to memorize different schemes versus different methods. To play System-A against DONT, but System-B against Cappelletti, and System-C against Brozel would be too much memory drain.

Here is a simple scheme to deal with any kind of interference—you can choose parts or all of it. For a more complete (and more difficult) scheme, see below.

They Double

If they double 1NT (as a convention), don’t even bother asking what the Alert means. Just ignore the interference. I mean I-G-N-O-R-E! All your bids mean what they would have meant without the artificial double. If 2♦ would be a transfer, then it is still a transfer. Just pretend they passed. “Systems on.”

If they Penalty Double 1NT, then just play All Natural - no Stayman, no Transfers. Use Redouble as a rescue/runout.

They Overcall with 2♣

You can also ignore ALL 2♣ overcalls (no matter what they mean). You double to say, “They stole my bid.” So, double is Stayman. All other calls mean what they would have meant if the opponent had passed. 1NT (2♣) 2♥ is a transfer to spades.

They Overcall with 2♦ or Higher

If they overcall 2♦ or higher, I suggest you abandon transfers completely. Bid naturally (and if you know lebensohl, you can use it). Play Double as

“negative.” It would take too long to explain exactly what qualifies as “negative.” But, here is a simple explanation: It is NOT penalty. It is not purely showing the other major(s). It just means, “Partner, I have values to bid, but no bid I can conveniently make.” So, double a 2♦ overcall with:

♠ AJ32 ♥ K62 ♦ 54 ♣ 10876.

This scheme is not 100% complete, but it will help you cope with most situations with a minimal amount of memory strain.

Here is a medium-complicated scheme for more experienced players to deal with any kind of interference—you can choose parts or all of it.

Their Overcall Promises Both Majors

First, let’s get a specific situation out of the way : The opponents show MAJORS. Most conventions over 1NT have a way to show MAJORS. If the opponents do show majors (with some contraption that is below 2♥), I suggest:

2♥ = GF in ♣

2♠ = GF in ♦

2NT = lebensohl (see below) - Relay to 3♣

3 of a minor = Natural, Invitational

3 of a MAJOR = GF, Shortness (0 or 1) in that MAJOR

3NT = To Play, Neither MAJOR stopped

Use the 2NT mechanism to show stoppers—after the Relay to 3♣ : 3 MAJOR shows only that major stopped; 3NT shows both MAJORS stopped. Relaying with 2NT also lets you sign-off in 3 of a minor (either pass the relay with clubs or sign-off in 3♦ with diamonds

NOTE: Using this method, when they show MAJORS, you can show either minor (Weak, Invitational, or Forcing) and can show which MAJOR(s) are stopped, and also can show both minors and shortness in a major.

OK—That alone should take some brain-power to memorize, but I like it because it is mostly natural/logical (especially if you are already familiar with the idea of using lebensohl-FADS—more on this below).

Now, what if they interfere with a bid that does NOT specifically show

BOTH MAJORS?

They Double

If they make an artificial DOUBLE, just ignore it – system 100% on (Stayman, Transfers, etc.). If they make a penalty DOUBLE, then you should not play any conventions – not even STAYMAN. Use all bids as natural (even 2♣ and 2♦♥). You can decide if you want to do something fancy with REDOUBLE (or use PASS to force a REDOUBLE to show a 2-suited hand).

They Overcall 2♣

I don't care what it shows (unless it is BOTH MAJORS). It can be ♣, a transfer, a 2-suiter, a 3-suiter, an either-or, a reverse upside down poisoned dragon, whatever. Just IGNORE it. This is where you might have heard the term "Mirror Double" – or "Stolen Bid." You just double to say, "Partner, I would have bid 2♣, Stayman." Double means they "stole your bid." All other actions are as if they passed. Just ignore them. 2♦ is what it would have been without their interference. All bids (even 2NT) are treated as if the opponent Passed.

They Overcall 2♦ or Higher

So far we can deal with any bid that promises BOTH MAJORS, doubles and any kind of 2♣ overcall. That leaves overcalls of 2♦ or higher. Again, it is best not to start asking questions and getting involved with which convention they use. Treat them all the same (unless 2♦ is specifically BOTH MAJORS). No matter what they bid, no matter what it means (other than MAJORS), here is the schedule:

BIDDING A SUIT (on the 2-level) = NATURAL, NF

BIDDING A SUIT (on the 3-level) – see below (lebensohl explained)

BIDDING 2NT or 3NT (see below – lebensohl explained)

BIDDING A SUIT (on the 4-level) = all jumps to 4, are "Front of Card" – Texas, Gerber – whatever you use.

Exception: If you bid one of their KNOWN suits (a suit they have promised) on the 2-level, you might choose not to treat it as natural – your choice.

Using "Transfer" lebensohl

If you've read this far, you are probably familiar with at least some form of lebensohl.

Responder's bid of 2NT when the opponents interfere after 1NT requests partner to bid 3♣, usually for a sign off. Simple lebensohl (please don't write in about the failure to capitalize – that is correct as written – don't ask!) works fine in conjunction with the above, but better (ADVANCED!) is to use "Transfer lebensohl." Here is how it works:

We open 1NT, and they overcall. If they bid 2♣, you just ignore it (so if you bid 2NT after their 2♥ overcall, you should treat the auction as if it went 1NT PASS 2NT – however you play it). If they overcall with 2♦, 2♥, or 2♠ I recommend TRANSFER lebensohl (only for very experienced players with strong memories). If we respond with a suit on the 2-level, it is natural, NF. Using Transfer lebensohl, if we bid a suit on the 3-level, starting with 3♣, it is a transfer to the "next" suit. (I'll explain the quote marks in a moment). By transferring, we are showing the suit (5+) transferred to with invitational or better values. (With less than an invitation, we either sign-off on the 2-level, or bid 2NT to relay to 3♣ to sign-off – the old fashioned-lebensohl way). When we show invitational or better, opener can sign-off (just bid the suit transferred to), or he can accept the game try (by doing many things, including 3NT if he wishes). If opener "signs off" and you have the "or better," of course you just bid again (naturally). Some examples:

1NT (2♥) 3♣ = Diamonds, invitational or better (to sign off in ♦, responder would have bid 2NT to relay to 3♣, then bid 3♦).

1NT (2♠) 3♦ = Hearts, invitational or better. (If opener bids 3♥, he rejects your invitation, but you bid again with a GF.)

Remember, if responder wants to sign off, he bids naturally on the 2-level if possible, or uses 2NT to relay to 3♣ to sign off on the 3-level. Using the transfer promises at least a game invite.

Now, what about the "quote marks?" When transferring to your suit on the 3-level, you have to take their suit into account. For example, if 2♥ showed ♥ and a minor, it wouldn't make much sense for you to transfer (via 3♦) into ♥. Accordingly, this is what we do: Transferring into "their suit" (such as 3♦ into their ♥) shows not their suit, but the next higher

suit—i.e., ♠. Are you ready to kill me by now? Sorry, but if you want to be prepared, there is no shortcut. You simply must devote a little time to study and practice this. So, transferring “into their suit,” is like transferring “through” their suit. What if you actually bid their suit? (Example, they bid 2♦ to show ♦ and whatever, and you bid 3♦). Cue-bidding their suit means what it means with regular lebensohl, typically “Stayman, no stopper.” This assumes “FADS—Fast Always Denies Stopper.” If you want to Stayman with a stopper, you go through the 2NT relay, then cue-bid 3♦. OK, no doubt you are ready to just scrap this and wing it, but maybe some examples will help:

After 1NT (2♠ = ♠ and whatever, or just ♠):

2NT = Relay to 3♣ (either to play 3♣ or as a prelude to sign-off in 3♦ or 3♥, or to follow with 3♠ to show Stayman and a ♠ stopper, or to follow with 3NT to just show a ♠ stopper—no Stayman)

3♣ = ♦ Invitational or better (Opener rejects by bidding 3♦, but responder bids on naturally with a GF. Opener pre-accepts by bidding above 3♦)

3♦ = ♥ Invitational or better (Opener rejects by bidding 3♥, but responder bids on naturally with a GF. Opener pre-accepts by bidding above 3♥)

3♥ = ♣ Invitational or better—This was tricky, but remember: Transfer to “their” suit is “through” their suit to the next highest suit, ♣ in this case.

3♠ = Cue-bid showing “Stayman, no ♠ stopper”

3NT = To play, no 4-card ♥ suit, no ♠ stopper (Fast Denies)

If the transfer lebensohl lost you, you can try plain lebensohl. If that also loses you, I doubt you’ve read this far. If you’ve read this far and wish you hadn’t, you might consider viewing a “simple version” of how to cope with interference over your 1NT. (At least I didn’t call it the “version for dummies.”)

What about Doubling their Overcall?

I was afraid you’d ask. Again, I like to separate it into 2 classes, and not get overly complicated. First, let’s say they promise BOTH MAJORS. I like to use DOUBLE as penalty-oriented. It says you can double at least one of their suits, and give partner a chance to double as well. It sets up a force. If you pass and then DOUBLE, that should be a lightish takeout. For example:

1NT (2♣ MAJORS) X = penalty oriented (says nothing about ♣). Passing

and then doubling their 2 MAJ = takeout of that MAJOR.

If their interference is anything else (on any level), use X as cards/negative. It doesn’t “promise” the other major(s), but you try your best. Think of double as just saying, “partner, I have values to act, but no suit to bid and nothing else fits.” For example, let’s say partner opens 1NT and they bid 2♦ to show ♦ and either MAJOR. I would DOUBLE with each of these hands:

♠AQ52 ♥1097 ♦62 ♣J653

♠A52 ♥A97 ♦62 ♣65432

♠J52 ♥K1097 ♦2 ♣Q6532

Again, pass and then double is just a lightish takeout, competing. I’d use these “negative doubles” over NATURAL overcalls as well as CONVENTIONAL overcalls. If you have a true penalty pass of their known suit, you can pass and hope partner reopens with a double.

Now you know why people like to use conventions to interfere with your no-trump. If you aren’t prepared, expect some major accidents. If you study this and adopt it, but your partner doesn’t, you can also expect some big disasters, but at least you were warned. Expect some growing pains, some memory pains, but eventually you’ll be better for studying this area of the game.

From The Archives – Missed Opportunities

by Brian Senior

It is far too many years since I last visited Australia's Gold Coast Congress. Trawling through my old files I found a couple of deals from an early 2000s edition on which declarer spurned opportunities offered by my inaccurate defence. By coincidence, they were both Board 21 of their respective sessions.

Board 21. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

♠ —	♠ QJ10862	♠ A7
♥ 1095432	♥ AK	♥ Q76
♦ 72	♦ AQ96	♦ K10853
♣ KQJ63	♣ 4	♣ 982
	<div> <div>N</div> <div>W S E</div> </div>	
	♠ K9543	
	♥ J8	
	♦ J4	
	♣ A1075	

Our first declarer was in 6♠ from the North seat against silent opponents. He won the club lead, ruffed a club and led the ♠J. When East played low, declarer also played low, and thereby went down in a slam which had just become cold as he eventually had to rely on the diamond finesse.

When East played low on the jack of spades, declarer's extra chance was to play the king from dummy. When that holds the trick he can ruff another club, cash the ace and king of hearts, then play a second spade. As East does not have a fourth club with which to get off lead the partial elimination succeeds. He has to lead into the diamond tenace or give a ruff and discard and the slam is home.

Our second deal comes from a Pairs event.

Board 21. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

♠ J8	♠ AKQ965432	♠ 107	
♥ A	♥ K	♥ 76532	
♦ 109754	♦ A	♦ K2	
♣ A10986	♣ K4	♣ J532	
	<div>♠ N ♥ W ♦ S ♣ E</div>		
	♠ —		
	♥ QJ10984		
	♦ QJ863		
	♣ Q7		
West	North	East	South
—	3NT	Pass	4♣
Double	4♠	5♣	Pass
Pass	5♠	Pass	Pass
6♣	Double	All Pass	

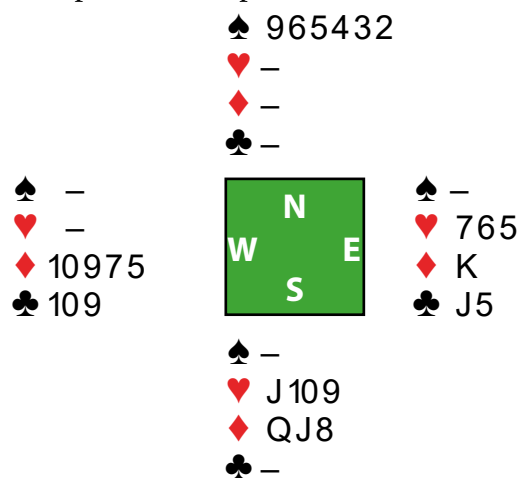
It is sometimes a hard life being a bridge journalist. You sit and play or watch session after session without spotting anything newsworthy, then when a possible hand comes along, the chances are spurned by the players. Take this example. 3NT was something I had not come across before and indeed have never met since, asking for aces with the 4♣ response showing none. The final 6♣ bid was a bit pushy, but the double of 4♣ might have been more a lead-director than anything and West was hoping for a ten-card club fit. Anyway, with the normal result +650 for North/South, the play was all about getting out for three down and – 500 for a near top, or losing 800 for a zero.

South led the ♥Q to the ace and the king appeared. Declarer led a diamond and North won his ace, perforce, and cashed two top spades, South

throwing a heart and a diamond. Now North, not wishing to open up the clubs, understandably enough, played a third spade, giving a ruff and discard. Declarer and South both threw hearts, while dummy ruffed low. Now declarer played a diamond and North ruffed low. With a trump still to lose, that was four down for – 800.

Let's go back to the point where declarer played the diamond and his king was ruffed. He should surely expect the ruff. The bidding plus North's defence mark him with his actual shape as he would surely not have given a ruff and discard had he held a second diamond with which to exit. So declarer's line was doomed to failure.

Try instead leading ace and another club at this point. If North wins he must lead another spade in this position;



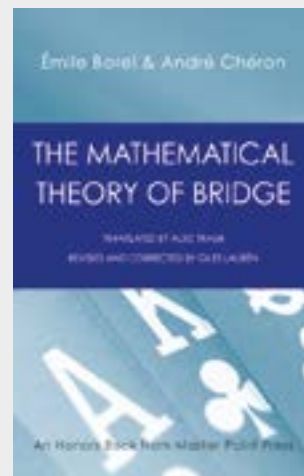
Declarer ruffs in hand with the ♣5 and South is squeezed. If he throws a heart, the hearts can be ruffed out, if a diamond, declarer cashes the ♦K and ruffs out the diamonds. Either way, it is just three down for – 500.

A fine play but there is still more to the deal. What if North unblocks the ♣K under the ace. Now South wins the second club and can lead a heart in the diagrammed position. There is no squeeze and we are back to four down.

Now that would be a story, but have you spotted the fact that the defence do not need to allow the position to develop at all. Take away the first ruff and discard and there will never be a squeeze anyway, but if declarer plays the first diamond without touching trumps the contract is four down by force with potential squeezes not even coming into the equation. North wins

the ♦A and plays two rounds of spades. South ruffs the second spade and can return a diamond for North to ruff. A third spade is played and ruffed with the queen, and North's king is promoted for the fifth defensive winner.

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Translated by Alec Traub
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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)

Over 150 countries represented

50,000 active players every day

1 million deals played every day

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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.

A Gift Horse

In a Rosenblum round robin match, you are presented with an unusual opportunity...

As West, you hold:

Dealer East. None Vul.

♠ Q9
♥ AQ94
♦ A983
♣ K102

West	North	East	South
–	–	2♣*	Pass
2♦*	Pass	3NT*	Pass
?			

2♣ 6+ clubs, 10-15 points

2♦ Artificial ask

3NT 5 spades, 6 clubs

3♠ instead would show a solid club suit with no 4-card major. The reason for inverting these from the more natural sounding meanings is so responder can declare 3NT opposite the solid club suit.

Available to you now are:

- 4♣ Natural force, slam interest
- 4♦ RKC for clubs
- 4♥ Slam try in spades
- 4♠ To play
- 4NT RKC for spades
- 5♣ To play

Your choice?

You have a perfect hand for RKC. Partner has at most 2 red cards, and you have those taken care of. If partner has 2 keycards, or 1 keycard and the queen of clubs, you will be willing to bid 6♣. Partner probably will have the king of spades to get up to an opening bid if he is missing an ace, and if not maybe he has the jack of spades and the spade finesse will be on. If it is the queen of clubs which is missing, maybe it will come down. Should partner turn up with two keycards and the queen of clubs, you can then ask about specific kings. If he produces the king of spades in addition, you can comfortably bid the grand.

You bid 4♦. The bidding continues:

West	North	East	South
–	–	2♣*	Pass
2♦*	Pass	3NT*	Pass
4♦	Double	4NT	5♦
?			

4♦ RKC for clubs

4NT 2 keycards, no queen of trumps, diamond control

Your call?

If South hadn't stepped in you were planning on bidding 6♣, hoping for either picking up the queen of clubs, partner having the king of spades, or partner having the jack of spades and a winning spade finesse. South's 5♦ call presents you with a new option - going for a penalty. Is it a Greek gift? Should you ignore it and just bid 6♣ as planned, or should you be willing to look this gift horse in the mouth?

How will they do in 5♦? You know a lot about this hand, so you should be able to make a good estimate. Partner is presumably void in diamonds, so his shape is 5-2-6-0. He has both black aces, no queen of clubs, and probably one of the major-suit kings, although he could have opened a light 2♣ without them. The opponents presumably have a 5-4 diamond fit, but the rest of their distribution is unknown.

You will be on lead against 5♦, and you have the king of clubs and the ace of hearts for entries. This means you will probably be able to draw their trumps and limit them to 4 trump tricks before they are able to get a ruff in the short hand. On the side they have no club tricks, at most 1 spade trick, and perhaps a couple of heart tricks at best. This means that in your worst case scenario you figure to collect 800, and if partner has either major-suit king it could well be 1100 or even 1400. Your slam is only worth 920. On top of that, 6♣ might not be making. It is right to look this gift horse squarely in the mouth and double.

You double, ending the auction.

West	North	East	South
–	–	2♣*	Pass
2♦*	Pass	3NT*	Pass
4♦	Double	4NT	5♦
Double	All Pass		

Your lead. 3rd and 5th leads, upside-down count and attitude signals.

It is clearly right to lead a trump. You have every side suit well under control. The only source of tricks for the opponents is in trumps.

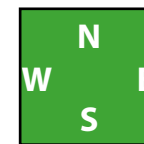
Partner figures to be void in trumps, so it probably can't cost to lead the ace of trumps. That would be necessary if the opponents might be immediately crossruffing the hand out from under you. However, that is very unlikely. It would take one opponent to be void in clubs, and the other void in spades. Otherwise, if you lead a small trump you will be able to get in and play ace and a trump in time. It is always possible that the opponents have really gone out on a limb and partner has a stiff trump honour. Furthermore, it might be necessary to hang onto the ace of trumps in order to keep control of things in case the danger isn't what you think it is.

Given that you are leading a small trump, you should lead the 9 or the 8. It probably won't matter, but there is no reason to let declarer score a very cheap trump trick.

You choose to lead the 3 of diamonds.

♠ 107
♥ J752
♦ K7642
♣ Q3

♠ Q9
♥ AQ94
♦ A983
♣ K102



Declarer plays the 2 from dummy. Partner discards a club, and declarer wins the 5. Declarer now leads a club towards the queen. How do you defend?

♠ 107
♥ J752
♦ K764
♣ Q3

♠ Q9
♥ AQ94
♦ A98
♣ K102



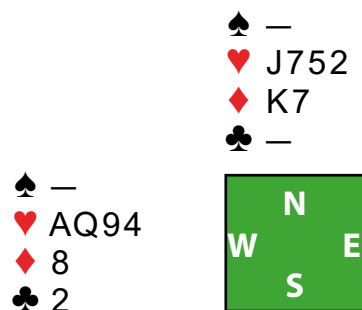
Things are going as planned. You have the entries to draw trumps, and your major-suit queens will be powerful on defence. It looks right to play win and play ace and a trump.

If you do win and play ace and a trump, your low trump play should be the 9. Even though your hearts are stronger, You would prefer partner leads a spade rather than a heart.

Perhaps going up king of clubs isn't right. After you play ace and a trump declarer will probably put partner in with the second round of clubs, and partner will be forced to lead a major. It would be better if declarer is forced to break the majors. If you play 10 of clubs to queen and ace, partner will probably find the club return, since with king-doubleton of clubs you would have gone up with the king of clubs. If he doesn't nothing is lost, since he was going to have to lead a major anyway if you win the first club trick. That looks like a better defence.

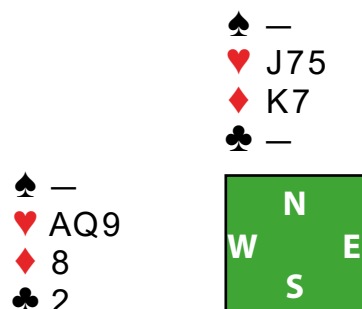
You choose to win the king of clubs and play ace and 9 of diamonds. Partner discards another club and a spade. Declarer wins in his hand, and leads a club to your 10, queen, and partner's ace.

Partner now plays ace and a low spade. Declarer wins the king, and leads a heart. What do you do?



Even though you need to get in to draw the fourth round of trumps, there is no reason to rush to win this trick. Regardless of who has the king of hearts, going up with the queen may cost a trick.

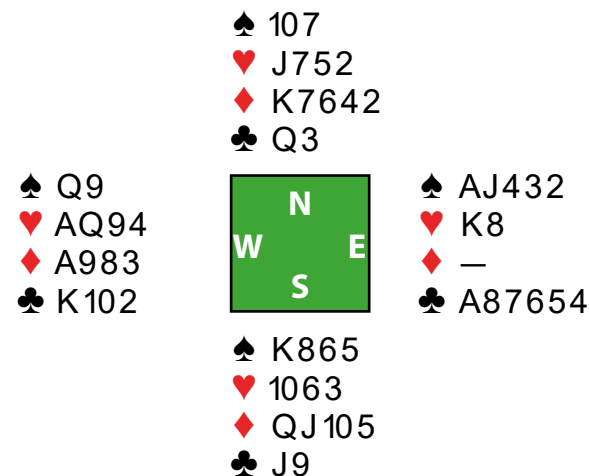
You play small. Declarer ducks in dummy. Partner wins the 8 of hearts, and leads the king of hearts. Do you overtake?



Overtaking will definitely set up a heart trick for declarer. You have to play small and hope partner has a safe exit.

You play small. Partner leads the jack of spades. You discard your last club. Declarer ruffs in dummy with the king of diamonds, and leads a heart to you. Hopefully, you lead your last trump, but declarer has the 8 of spades to score the last trick so you only defeat them 5 tricks for +1100.

The full hand is:



Partner was truly end-played after winning the king of hearts.

Clearly partner erred when he led the ace of spades. Had he led a small spade, your queen of spades would have been the entry to draw the last trump and get another trick. However, he should never have had the opportunity to make this mistake. Had you properly ducked the club, partner would have had a safe club return. It is always right to build a fence around partner when you know the hand.

Could declarer have handled things better?

Declarer knew the likely distribution from the bidding, so he can play East for some honour-doubleton in hearts. After the low diamond lead, he should have put up the 7 so he could win in dummy and lead a heart through the honour-doubleton. Simply a matter of playing too quickly at trick 1. This illustrates why you would have been better off leading the 8 or 9 of diamonds.

Even after the error at trick 1, declarer can recover by leading the 10 of hearts from his hand. This will allow him to establish the jack of hearts eventually, and the defence has no counter.

While it didn't make any difference on this hand, having an agreement about what partner's bids mean when a high-level artificial call gets doubled is very important. Our agreement is that with no first or second round control in the doubled strain, next hand passes. If the person making the artificial call is still interested he redoubles, and we are exactly where we

were before the double. If the person making the artificial call also has no control, he can hit the brakes and place the contract. If the partner of the artificial bidder has a first or second round control of the suit, he simply makes the same bid he would have made had there been no double.

What does a direct redouble mean? For the most part it is a bid we do not make, since that throws us off the intended track. If we do redouble, it shows no control but the queen of the suit, so partner will know that his king is, in fact, a control, and he doesn't have to worry about it being led through.

Many pairs complicate the issue, trying to make use of pass and redouble to save space. We find that unnecessary and confusing. When we bid RKC, for example, we know what the space considerations are and have worked out that there is sufficient space. Our approach keeps us on the planned track, gets us possibly valuable information, and avoids confusion.

Our use of 4♦ as RKC for clubs is consistent with our general philosophy of 4T+1 always being RKC for T provided 4T+1 isn't needed as natural. This gives us the same relative spacing as when 4NT is RKC for spades. There is always room for the queen ask below 5T, eliminating the need for 1430. Also, with 5T+1 being the king ask (the same as 5NT being the king ask when spades are trumps), there is room to ask for specific kings.

Some pairs use 4♣ as RKC for clubs on auctions such as this in order to save space. I don't think this is efficient. The space isn't needed. 4♦ as RKC for clubs gives you all the space you need. There are many hands where you want to set clubs trump, but you aren't in position to take control. By having 4♣ be a natural call, you give partner room to bid 4♦ RKC if his hand is appropriate.

NEW FROM

MASTER POINT PRESS

THE BRIDGE PUBLISHER

HAND OF THE WEEK

BY JOEL MARTINEAU



Perhaps the best way to improve your bridge is to watch an expert play, and try to understand the reasoning behind their bids and plays. Here, readers follow the bidding and play (or defense) of fifty-two deals — one a week for a year — and listen to the author's thinking as each hand develops. Understanding why the experts do what they do is the first step towards being able to do it yourself — at least some of the time!

Joel Martineau (Canada) was a finalist in the 2017 Canadian National Teams Championships. Since retiring from teaching literature at the University of British Columbia he has focused on teaching bridge.

AVAILABLE FROM A BRIDGE RETAILER NEAR YOU

by David Bird

Dealer South. N/S Vul.

East returned a spade, clearing the suit, but nine tricks were now there.

The Abbot won and scored the ace of diamonds. He then crossed to the club ace and scored king and another diamond. If a spade had not been returned, the diamond ace would have served as an entry.

‘Nothing we could do,’ observed Brother Aelred. ‘Did you understand my diamond signal with the jack, partner? I was letting you know that I held a sequence of honours headed by the jack.’

Yes, indeed, thought the Abbot. It was a very helpful signal... for declarer.


A few rounds later the Abbot faced his nemesis, Brother Cameron. It was a mystery to the Abbot why he so often fared badly against this opponent. He was incomparably superior to the novice in every area of the game, it went without saying. As for Brother Xavier, well, he was no worse than Cameron’s partner, Brother Damien. The only explanation the Abbot could imagine was that, contrary to all expectation, he was letting Brother Cameron’s antics affect his level of play in some way.

Brother Cameron turned towards Brother Xavier. ‘Well done for winning that mixed pairs event at St Hilda’s,’ he said.

‘Thanks, that’s kind of you,’ Brother Xavier replied. ‘In a way it was quite refreshing to be playing with someone different after such a long time.’

The Abbot made no comment. He had been thinking along those lines for most of the last year or two. This was the deal before them

Dealer West. Both Vul.

♠ —	♠ A7432	♠ KQJ98
♥ 732	♥ AK984	♥ QJ10
♦ J95	♦ 862	♦ Q10
♣ AKQ10652	♣ —	♣ J93
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> ♠ — ♥ 732 ♦ J95 ♣ AKQ10652 </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> ♠ KQJ98 ♥ QJ10 ♦ Q10 ♣ J93 </div> </div>		
	♠ 1065	
	♥ 65	
	♦ AK743	
	♣ 874	

West	North	East	South
<i>The Abbot</i>	<i>Brother Damien</i>	<i>Brother Xavier</i>	<i>Brother Cameron</i>
3♣	4♣	Pass	4♠
Pass	Pass	Double	All Pass

The Abbot had no qualms about opening 3♣ on his hand. No doubt those taking their first steps in the game, such as the present opponents, would view his hand unsuitable in some way or simply too strong. If they ever followed his path in the game, playing at the top level for several decades, they would soon change their minds.

Brother Damien announced a major two-suiter with his 4♣ bid and Brother Xavier lost no time in doubling the eventual contract of 4♠.


The Abbot led the ♣K and down went the dummy. ‘Is that a vulnerable 4♣ bid?’ he queried.

‘I thought so,’ Brother Damien replied. ‘If partner holds half the missing cards outside clubs, we should have game somewhere.’

‘Ruff,’ said Brother Cameron. He noted that the Abbot and Brother Xavier were looking pointedly in his direction. ‘Thank you, partner,’ he added.

Brother Cameron paused to consider his prospects. On the face of it, he had a loser coming in diamonds and might therefore need a 3-2 trump break. Such a favourable development was unlikely after Brother Xavier’s final double.

Brother Cameron crossed to his hand with the diamond ace and ruffed another club in dummy. A diamond to the king was followed by the ace-king of hearts and a heart ruff. A third club ruff left these cards still in play:

♠ —	♠ A7	♠ KQJ98
♥ —	♥ 98	♥ —
♦ J	♦ 8	♦ —
♣ AQ106	♣ —	♣ —
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> ♠ — ♥ — ♦ J ♣ AQ106 </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> ♠ KQJ98 ♥ — ♦ — ♣ — </div> </div>		
	♠ 106	
	♥ —	
	♦ 743	
	♣ —	

The young declarer had taken the first eight tricks. ‘Play a heart,’ he said.

Brother Xavier ruffed with the ♠J, a diamond discard appearing on his left. The position was painfully clear to him but nothing could be done. He returned the ♠Q to dummy’s ace and a further heart lead promoted the ♠10 for the game-going trick.

The Abbot slumped in his chair. ‘You think declarer would have played it that way without your double, partner?’ he enquired.

‘Maybe not,’ Brother Xavier replied. ‘Still, I seemed to have four certain trump tricks in my hand. You sometimes have a defensive trick or two when you open a vulnerable pre-empt.’

‘Strange hand,’ observed Brother Cameron. If we play it from the long-spade hand, the obvious trump lead beats it.’

The Abbot beckoned for the next board to be brought into position. Obvious trump lead, did the boy say? Successful opening leads were rarely obvious to his present partner. He would doubtless have ‘led your suit, partner’ and the result would have been the same.

Not long afterwards, the Abbot faced Brother Adam and Brother Mark, a novice pair who had shown signs of improvement in recent weeks. He was keen to encourage them, not liking the wide gulf between Brother Cameron and Brother Damien and the rest of the novitiate.

The Abbot attempted a welcoming smile. ‘Are you having a good session?’ he enquired.

‘Yes, thank you, Abbot,’ replied Brother Adam.

The Abbot nodded happily. Another welcome difference between this pair and the dreadful Brother Cameron was their unflinching politeness.

This was the first deal of the round:



Dealer South. None Vul.

♠ K62		♠ 984
♥ A6		♥ Q983
♦ K9742		♦ 86
♣ J75		♣ K1096
♠ QJ105		
♥ J54		
♦ QJ53		
♣ Q2		
	<div> <div>N</div> <div>W</div> <div>E</div> <div>S</div> </div>	
♠ A73		
♥ K1072		
♦ A10		
♣ A843		

West	North	East	South
Brother Mark	Brother Xavier	Brother Adam	The Abbot
–	–	–	1NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

Brother Mark led the queen of spades and the Abbot won in his hand. There were seven tricks on top and it seemed that the diamond suit offered the best chance of adding two more.

The Abbot cashed the ♦A, drawing the 3 and the 8 from the defenders. He noted the fall of the ♦8 with interest. Dummy’s ♦97 had now become equals. Surely the best chance of four diamond tricks was to find East with ♦Q8 or ♦J8.

The Abbot led the ♦10 from his hand, the ♦5 appearing from West. ‘Play the king,’ he said. The fall of the ♦6 from East was not exactly what he had wanted to see. It seemed that the only remaining hope was to find diamonds 3-3. ‘Low diamond,’ he said.

East showed out and Brother Mark won with the jack. He persisted with spades, won with dummy’s king, and the Abbot set up a diamond as his eighth trick. West’s thirteenth spade put the game one down.

‘You needed to run the ten of diamonds,’ observed Brother Xavier.

The Abbot exhaled slowly. ‘Ah yes, thank you so much,’ he replied. ‘I

assume you didn't notice the fall of the ♦8 on the first round.'

'Did that make any difference?' queried Brother Xavier.

Sighing heavily, the Abbot turned towards Brother Adam. 'Please tell me you didn't play the 8 to show count to your partner,' he said.

'Of course not,' Brother Adam replied. 'It's a standard false card when dummy has the 97. Otherwise declarer has no option but to run the 10 on the second round. Mind you, it's the first time I've seen it.'

'It seems it's the first time my partner has seen it, too,' said the Abbot. 'I played with the odds, rising with dummy's king. I can do no more.'

The last round of the event saw the Abbot facing Lucius and Paulo.

Brother Xavier smiled at Brother Lucius. 'I expect you're glad to be partnering Paulo instead of Sister Myrtle,' he observed.

Goodness me, thought the Abbot. Were these non-stop references to a completely meaningless mixed pairs going to last all year?

This was the deal before them:

Dealer South. Both Vul.

♠ KQJ1095	♠ 873	♠ 2
♥ 4	♥ KQ86	♥ J975
♦ QJ7	♦ A6	♦ 1098543
♣ Q107	♣ K853	♣ J6
	♠ A64	
	♥ A1032	
	♦ K2	
	♣ A942	



West	North	East	South
Brother Lucius	Brother Xavier	Brother Paulo	The Abbot
–	–	–	1NT
2♠	3♠	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

When Brother Lucius overcalled in spades, Brother Xavier's 3♠ was Lebensohl. It denied a spade stopper and showed four cards in the other major. Lucius led the king of spades against the resultant heart game and down went the dummy.

The Abbot won with the spade ace, noting that East's ♠2 suggested a 6-1 spade break. The king and queen of trumps revealed a 4-1 break and he continued with a third round of trumps to the 10. There were nine tricks on top and a tenth would come from the club suit if that suit divided 3-2.

Leaving the trump jack outstanding, the Abbot led the ♣2 from his hand. His aim was to call for dummy's ♣8, ducking into the hand that had no spades remaining. Sensing this, Brother Lucius inserted the ♣10. The Abbot could not afford to duck now, since two rounds of spades with East discarding clubs would be followed by a club ruff. That would be the case whether clubs were 3-2 or 2-3. 'King, please,' said the Abbot.

A second round of clubs to his ace drew the jack from East and a spot-card from West. Inserting the 10 from ♣10-x would have been somewhat unlikely, so the Abbot was inclined to place the ♣Q with West. What could be done in that case? He played two rounds of diamonds to leave this position:

♠ QJ10	♠ 87	♠ –
♥ –	♥ 8	♥ J
♦ Q	♦ –	♦ 10954
♣ Q	♣ 85	♣ –
	♠ 64	
	♥ A	
	♦ –	
	♣ 94	



The Abbot now exited with a club. If East had produced the ♣Q, he would have had no good return. A diamond would allow the Abbot to score his last two trumps separately; a trump would let him score a club trick. As it was, West won the third round of clubs and scored two spade tricks. When he played a fourth round of spades, the Abbot ruffed with dummy's ♥8 and had the last two tricks whether East chose to overruff with the ♥J or not.

‘Nice ending,’ observed Brother Lucius, nodding his congratulations. ‘3NT is there but it’s only worth 600 when the club stopper lies with the spades. 620 should be good for you.’

Brother Xavier opened the travelling score-sheet. ‘Yes, it’s a very good one,’ he reported. ‘For a moment I thought I was still at St. Hilda’s!’



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The Auction Room

Mark Horton

Welcome to the Auction Room, where we examine bidding methods from recent events.

This month we take a look at the final of the English Senior Trials for the European Championships in Ostend between **Hackett** (John Hassett, David Mossop, Gunnar Hallberg, John Holland, Brian Senior, and Paul Hackett) and **Shelley** (Rob Cliffe, Alan Mayo, Trevor Ward, Peter Shelley, Malcolm Pryor and David Muller).

The Hands

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

Hand 1. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

♠ AQ 10		♠ K 8 7 6
♥ K Q J 4 3 2		♥ A 7 6
♦ 7		♦ A 10 5
♣ A 8 6		♣ K 5 3



West	East
Pryor	Muller
–	1NT
2♦*	2♥
4♦*	4♠*
5♣*	5♦*
5♥	6♥
Pass	

- 2♦ Transfer
- 4♦ Splinter
- 4♠ Cue-bid
- 5♣ Cue-bid
- 5♦ Cue-bid

If East had held a doubleton ♣K then I suspect he would have cue-bid 6♣ over 5♥, when West can jump to 7♥. However, you need very firm agreements for that to be the case.

South led the ♠4 from ♠J9543 ♥5 ♦KJ2 ♣Q742 and when dummy's ten held declarer had all the tricks, +1460.

West	East
Hassett	Mossop
–	1♣*
1♥	1♠
2♦*	2♥
3♥	4♦*
4NT*	5♥
6♥	Pass
1♣ 3+♣	
2♦ Game forcing	
4♦ Cue-bid	
4NT RKCB	
5♥ 2 key cards	

Here North was on lead and when he opted for the singleton ♠2 declarer claimed all the tricks, +1460.

Recommended auction: If you know that the East hand is limited (slightly clearer in the first auction) then unless East has a doubleton club a grand slam will depend on bringing in the spade suit. The odds play is to cash the ♠AQ, hoping the ten will appear or that the suit is 3-3. I prefer the first auction - but not by much.

Marks: 6♥/6NT10, 7♥/7NT 5.

Running score: Hackett 10 (0) Shelley 10 (0)

Hand 2. Dealer South. N/S Vul.

♠ K7
 ♥ AQJ863
 ♦ Q
 ♣ AK109

♠ AJ64
 ♥ K975
 ♦ J1096
 ♣ 5



South opens 1♦ and rebids 3♣

West	North	East	South
Mossop	Cliffe	Hassett	Mayo
–	–	–	2NT*
3♣*	4♥	Pass	4NT*
Pass	5♥*	Pass	6♥
All Pass			

2NT Minors, 7-11

3♣ Hearts with spade tolerance

4NT RKCB

5♥ 2 key cards

South's opening bid was based on ♠8 ♥- ♦AK8754 ♣QJ7432 and he led the ♦K and switched to the ♣4, declarer winning in dummy and playing to ruff two clubs for +980.

With such extreme distribution perhaps South should start with 1♦?

West	North	East	South
Muller	Hallberg	Pryor	Holland
–	–	–	1♦
Double	Pass	2♦*	3♣
5♥	All Pass		

2♦ Majors

With three suits controlled it's hard to say why East did not go on to 6♥. Perhaps he thought 5♥ was asking for good trumps (or a diamond control). On the other hand, there was no need for West to jump to 5♥ - in this situation a simple 3♥ would be forcing.

Recommended auction: If South opens 1♦ and rebids 3♣ West can bid 3♥. If East then bids 4♣ West can cue-bid 4♦ and they will surely reach 6♥.

Marks: 6♥10, 4♥/3NT 5.

Running score: Hackett 20 (11) Shelley 15 (0)

Hand 3. Dealer North. None Vul.

♠ Q
 ♥ A10962
 ♦ QJ852
 ♣ A8

♠ K762
 ♥ KQJ7
 ♦ –
 ♣ KQ1052



West	East
Hackett	Senior
–	1♣
1♥	3♦*
3♠*	4♣*
4NT*	6♥*
Pass	

3♦ Splinter

3♠ Cue-bid

4♣ Cue-bid

4NT RKCB

6♥ 1 key card plus a void

With two key cards and a void East responds 5NT, so there was no danger of bidding a grand slam off an ace. The defenders lead a spade, but clubs were 3-3 so the play did not take long, +980.

West	East
Mayo	Cliffe
–	1♣
1♥	3♥
4♣	4♦*
4♥	6♥
All Pass	

4♦ Splinter

Recommended auction: Which do you prefer - the 3♦ splinter or the jump to 3♥. They both got the job done.

Marks: 6♥10, 4♥/3NT 5.

Running score: Hackett 30 (11) Shelley 25 (0)

Hand 4. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

♠ A6		♠ KQJ73
♥ KQJ82		♥ 10974
♦ 63		♦ AJ
♣ J864		♣ AQ



North opens 2♦ (weak) and South raises to 5♦.

West	North	East	South
Ward	Senior	Shelley	Hackett
–	2♦	Double	5♦
Double	All Pass		

No doubt West thought that if his side could take eleven tricks in hearts there would be fair penalty to be had.

North's opening bid was based on ♠1084 ♥65 ♦KQ1082 ♣K53 so six down and -1400 is a theoretical possibility. East led the ♠K and West overtook it and returned the six. East won and played the queen of spades and West discarded the ♥K. Now the defenders needed declarer to go wrong in trumps, but he made no mistake, holding the penalty to -1100.

West	East
Hallberg	Holland
–	1♠
2♥	3♥
4♥	4NT*
5♠*	6♥
All Pass	
4NT RKCB	
5♠ 2key cards + ♥Q	

When West could not cue-bid in a minor over 3♥ (what would 3♠ have meant?) East judged that his two-level response must contain good trumps.

North led the ♦K and declarer won dummy's ace and played three rounds of spades pitching a diamond. Now all he needed was the club finesse and that was a not unlucky +1430.

Recommended auction: 6♥ is dreadful. When West can only bid 4♥ at his second turn East has no reason to go on.

Marks: 4♥/5♦x 10, 6♥ 2.

Running score: Hackett 32 (19) Shelley 35 (0)

Hand 5. Dealer West. Both Vul.

♠ A42		♠ KQ76
♥ KJ3		♥ Q94
♦ 32		♦ 1076
♣ KQJ108		♣ A76



After 1♣-1♠ South doubles and North bids 2♦

West	North	East	South
Cliffe	Hassett	Mayo	Mossop
1♣	Pass	1♠	Double
1NT	2♦	3NT	All Pass

South's double was on ♠J983 ♥A8765 ♦KQ84 ♣—

North led the ♥10 and all South had to do was win and switch to the king of diamonds. However, he followed to the first trick with the ♥5 and declarer could claim nine tricks.

Despite the result, E/W's bidding leaves a lot to be desired. With one red suit unstopped West is not compelled to bid over the double. East did not have to jump to 3NT - he could have bid 3♦ when West will bid 3♠.

One of many Internet problems means that we are deprived of the auction at the other table, but the contract was 3NT by West. It went one down, so the defenders made no mistake.

3♠ can be defeated - if South leads the ♦K North can overtake and switch to the ♥10, but that is not an easy defence to find.

Recommended auction: 1♣-1♠-(Dble)-2♣-(2♦)-3♦*-(Dble)-3♠ after which East must choose between a Pass and 4♠.

Marks: 3♣10, 3♠ 9, 4♠ 7, 3NT 2.

Running score: Hackett 34 (19) Shelley 37 (12)

Hand 6. Dealer East. Both Vul.

♠ Q 10 9 6
 ♥ AK 7 4
 ♦ AKQ
 ♣ 7 6

♠ AKJ 5 3
 ♥ 3
 ♦ 9 4
 ♣ AK 10 4 2



West	East
Shelly	Ward
–	1♣*
2♥	2♠
3♠	4♣
4NT*	6♠
7♠	Pass

1♣ Precision

I wonder if 2♥ was showing controls?

I can't say why East jumped to 6♠, but it was easy enough for West to advance, +2210.

West	East
Hackett	Senior
–	1♠
2NT*	3♣
3♦*	3♥*
4NT*	5♣*
5NT	6♣*
7♠	Pass

2NT Spade support

3♦ Cue-bid

3♥ Cue-bid

4NT RKCB

5♣ 0 or 3 key cards

5NT King ask

6♣ ♣K

Recommended auction: Hackett-Senior is hard to beat.

Marks: 7♠ 10, 6♠/6NT 5, 4♠/3NT 2.

Running score: Hackett 44 (19) Shelley 47 (12)

Hand 7. Dealer West. None Vul.

♠ A 8
 ♥ A 8 5 4
 ♦ AKQJ 5 3
 ♣ 8

♠ Q 5
 ♥ J 6 2
 ♦ 10 8 4
 ♣ AKQJ 7



West	East
Hallberg	Holland
1♦	2♣
2♥	3♦
3♠	3NT
4♦	5♣
7♦	Pass

Once East admitted to a first round club control West went all in, +1440 when the clubs broke 5-2 - but North held ♣109.

To what extent do you think West was gambling?

West	East
Mayo	Cliffe
1♦	2♣
2♥	3♦
3♠	3NT
4♦	5♣
6♦	Pass

An identical auction up to the final bid.

Recommended auction: Is there a way to reach 7♦ (or 7NT) without taking any risks? Suppose West bids 6♣ over 5♣ - would that get the message across?

Marks: 7♦/7NT 10, 7♣ 8, 6♦/6NT 7, 6♣ 6, 5♦/5♣/3NT 5.

Running score: Hackett 54 (30) Shelley 54 (12)

Hand 8. Dealer East. Both Vul.

♠ Q5		♠ AJ642
♥ 9		♥ AJ6
♦ J964		♦ KQ872
♣ AKQ762		♣ —



West East

Hackett	Senior
–	1♠
2♣*	2♦*
3♣*	3♦
4♦	4♥
5♣	5♠
6♦	Pass

- 2♣ Natural game forcing or Drury
- 2♦ Asking
- 3♣ Game forcing
- 4♥ Cue-bid

South was looking at ♠K98 ♥K10743 ♦A103 ♣93 and opted to lead the ♣9. Declarer ruffed and played on diamonds, South winning the second round and exiting with the ♦10. Declarer won with dummy's jack and tried the clubs. He could establish an extra trick in the suit but eventually had to fall back on the losing spade finesse, -100.

West East

Mayo	Cliffe
–	1♠
2♣	2♦
2♥*	3♦
4♣	4♥
5♦	6♦
Pass	

- 2♥ Fourth-suit forcing

Recommended auction: Is a void in partner's suit such a great asset? South again led the ♣9, no swing. If the response of 2♣ is game forcing West might do better to raise to 3♦ on the next round. A tough deal to cope with near the end of the match.

Marks: 5♦ 10, 3NT 6, 6♦ 5.

Running score: Hackett 59 (30) Shelley 59 (12)

A dead heat in the bidding, with Hackett winning on IMPs. However, it was Shelley who won the match.

You can play through the deals mentioned in this article.

Just follow the links:

Hands 1&2: [here](https://tinyurl.com/y7qbnrru) or <https://tinyurl.com/y7qbnrru>

Hands 3 & 4: [here](https://tinyurl.com/ybvgjtrv) or <https://tinyurl.com/ybvgjtrv>

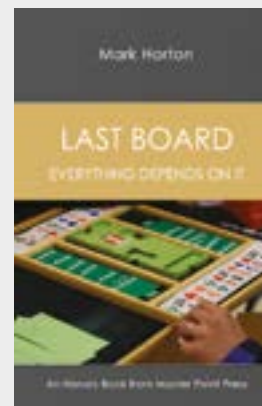
Hand 5: [here](https://tinyurl.com/ybhvy5g6) or <https://tinyurl.com/ybhvy5g6>

Hands 6 & 7: [here](https://tinyurl.com/y9n4jjnm) or <https://tinyurl.com/y9n4jjnm>

Hand 8: [here](https://tinyurl.com/ycn3ppbk) or <https://tinyurl.com/ycn3ppbk>

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LAST BOARD

Mark Horton

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. 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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The Master Point Press Bidding Battle

Set 3

Moderated by Alan Mould

Hi to all our readers. Here we are in the fourth month of New Bridge magazine and the third article of the Bidding Battle. This month the problems come from the following sources: Problem 1 is from this year's Camrose first weekend and was sent to me by various people including the editor; problem 2 is the same problem as two months ago with a different auction and was sent in by Marc Smith; problem 3 was sent to me by international player and friend Gary Hyett; problem 4 I held in the Northern Year End Congress teams; problem 5 was held by my partner, Jeff Smith, in the Manchester Congress teams; problem 6 was sent to me by Mike Lawrence; problem 7 was sent to me by John Matheson and comes from the Scottish Cup; and finally problem 8 I held when I was helping out Michael Byrne at an under 21 squad training weekend (Michael is the U21 squad leader). A perfectly formed panel of 19 this month (well, not perfect, but prime at least), so on with the show.

PROBLEM 1

IMPs. Dealer South. None Vul.

♠ AKQJ942

♥ —

♦ AKQJ10

♣ A

West	North	East	South
—	—	—	4♥
?			

THE BIDS & MARKS

Bid				Bid			
		Marks	No. of Votes			Marks	No. of Votes
1.	Seven Spades	10	8		Five Clubs	3	0
	4NT	9	1		Five Hearts	2	0
	Five Hearts	9	7		Four Clubs	1	0
	Six Hearts	9	1	5.	1NT	10	10
	Seven Hearts	9	2		Pass	9	7
	5NT	4	0		Two Diamonds	8	1
	Seven Diamonds	3	0		Three Diamonds	7	1
	All other bids	1	0		Any other bid	1	0
2.	Five Hearts	10	9	6.	Five Clubs	10	5
	4NT	9	2		Pass	9	4
	Five Spades	9	1		4NT	9	3
	5NT	8	2		Five Spades	9	3
	Six Spades	7	1		5NT	9	2
	Pass	7	4		Six Clubs	8	2
	Five Clubs	3	0		Any other bid	1	0
	Six Clubs	2	0	7.	Pass	10	5
3.	Five Hearts	10	9		2NT	9	1
	4NT	9	2		Three Clubs	9	3
	Five Spades	9	1		Three Diamonds	9	3
	5NT	8	2		Two Spades	8	1
	Six Spades	7	1		Four Hearts	7	4
	Pass	7	4		3NT	4	0
	Five Clubs	3	0		Three Hearts	2	0
	Six Clubs	2	0	8.	Four Hearts	10	10
4.	Three Spades	10	7		Three Spades	9	7
	Four Diamonds	9	4		3NT	6	2
	Four Spades	9	3		Four Clubs	2	0
	Five Diamonds	8	2		Four Spades	1	0
	Five Spades	8	2		Five Hearts	1	0
	Six Clubs	7	1				
	Six Diamonds	5	0				



Alan Mould – Your Moderator

Bid	Marks	No. of Votes
Seven Spades	10	8
4NT	9	1
Five Hearts	9	7
Six Hearts	9	1
Seven Hearts	9	2
5NT	4	0
Seven Diamonds	3	0
All other bids	1	0

This hand is not constructed, but actually came up in the first weekend of this year's Camrose series. For our overseas readers the Camrose is the home international series played between England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, and a second team from whichever country is the host to make it an even number. This is the nearest I have

ever seen to a 13 trick hand. Who could resist simply bidding Seven Spades on it? None of the six players who held the hand in the Camrose could, and neither can almost half the panel. Since the panel, not surprisingly, give the game away, I will tell you the full story now. All six declarers got doubled by the Four Heart opener and waited philosophically for the diamond lead (well five of them did but more on that later). Highly amusingly (except for the declarers) a club was led, but your singleton ace got ruffed(!) for one down. OK, here we go:

Bowyer: Seven Spades. Yes, I have seen this hand (from the Camrose, I believe). When given the hand I bid Seven Spades, so that's what I do here, despite the result. I'd certainly not redouble after RHO doubled as the risk of a ruff is all too great. It's a surprise that Seven Spades goes off on a CLUB ruff, but *c'est la vie*.

Smith: Seven Spades. What else am I supposed to do? Yes, perhaps partner has the ♥A, ♣KQJ of clubs and a singleton spade and a defender has five spades to the ten, and now on a heart lead I can discard the ace of clubs and then throw my three spade losers on partner's high clubs. It all seems just a bit too convoluted to even think about, though. I don't know the hand so I guess Seven Spades gets doubled by the opener with a diamond void. *C'est la vie!*

We are going to need to pay the French commission for use of that phrase soon.

Apteker: Seven Spades. If Seven Diamonds makes and Seven Spades fails, too bad, can't think of a clever way of finding out.

McGowan: Seven Spades. I do not recognise the hand, don't suppose I shall ever hold it. I guess someone has Txxxx in spades and Seven Diamonds is cold, but seriously??

Bobby is having a little joke with us...

Wolff: Seven Spades. A small study, just to give an edgy opponent, who does not have a spade trick, a temptation to double. Yes, a little illegal and unethical action.

Lawrence: Seven Spades. Seven Spades looks obvious and easy. But there is just a little wiggle room available here. Five Hearts. In the event that partner bids diamonds, I will bid Seven Diamonds. If he bids something else, I will bid Seven Spades. Wish I could ask for aces. Then, 7NT might be the best spot. But I still have to wonder if it's worth looking for Seven Diamonds? I'm betting that the other room will be in Seven Spades 100% of the time. If I'm in Seven Diamonds, I lose two IMPs if both slams are making. I gain a ton if Seven Diamonds makes and Seven Spades fails. I'm not going to work out the odds on this but if my partner has zero spades, there is a 20% chance of a 5-1 or 6-0 split. If partner has one spade, spades divide 5-0 around 3%. If partner has two or more spades, Seven Spades is cold. Losing two IMPs may be too rare to warrant looking for Seven Diamonds. If you know the exact percentages, Alan, please publish them with your next article. Put me down for Seven Spades.

OK, since you ask nicely, I may as well burn several thousand of my remaining brain cells before complete senility sets in ("Too late" I hear Michael Byrne cry from the other end of Manchester). I am usually unconvinced by these arguments about 2 IMPs or so; they also come up with people arguing against safety plays for example. My experience is that team matches are very rarely lost by the odd IMP or two, but much more by the 10s, 13s and 17s.... Anyway, to look at this we need to make some assumptions. It is simply too hard (well it is too hard for me) to look at all the options in a vacuum, looking at all possible hands partner can have. So, I will simply look at the case

with partner's actual hand, which is ♠ - ♥K10xxx ♦xxx ♣KQxxx. Barring what actually happened (a club ruff), Seven Diamonds is pretty much cold, so let us just state that Seven Diamonds is cold. Let us further assume that the pre-emptor has seven or eight hearts, which seems pretty clear at the vul and looking at partner's holding. Then if you are in Seven Spades you make it with any 3-3 or 4-2 break, or singleton 10, and you go off when there is 10xxxx in either hand. You also go off when they are 6-0 but then you are going off in Seven Diamonds as well, so I shall ignore that case. According to me (well OK, according to the excellent website <http://www.automaton.gr/ttlen/odds.htm>), the chance of making under these conditions is 69.7% if South has 7 hearts, 10xxxx of spades is 23.9% chance and the remaining is the 6.3% is the 6-0 break when both go off. If South has eight hearts then the chance of making is 61.8%, 10xxxx of spades is 28.9% and the remaining 9.2% is the 6-0 break. Because I cannot be bothered doing anything cleverer such as using Bayes Theorem, let's just average these. This means we get the odds of making as 65.75%; the odds of Seven Spades failing due to 10xxxx as 26.4%, and the odds of 10xxxxx when both fail as 7.75%. If you are in Seven Diamonds and the opponents in Seven Spades, you lose 2 IMPs (+2140 -2210) whenever Seven Spades makes, gain 19 IMPs (+2140 +50) whenever Seven Spades fails and are flat when both fail. Your expectation then is $-2 \times 65.75\% + 19 \times 26.4\% + 0 \times 7.75\% = 3.7$ IMPs. You need to subtract off from this the occasions when diamonds are 5-0 and hearts are 7-1 rather than 8-0 (the heart lead then beats us), which is surprisingly an 11% chance. However, on almost all of those occasions, Seven Spades is failing as well (either there is a diamond ruff or the spades cannot break) so can be pretty much ignored. Thus, on partner's

actual hand, Seven Diamonds is a big winner over Seven Spades.

Bird: Seven Spades. It's fair enough to bid this, as all six players did, and take your medicine if South finds a Lightner Double. In retrospect, though, nothing is likely to be lost if you start with Five Hearts and bid Six Hearts over the expected Six Clubs. If partner does not see the light and bid Six Spades, you can try your luck with Seven Hearts and trust that he doesn't think you are trying to expose a psyche by South.

Which brings us to the other alternatives. The panel, amusingly, only bid spades at the seven level, but bid hearts at every legal level:

Robson: Five Hearts. May as well. No need to bid Seven Spades yet (haven't seen the hand).

Sime: Five Hearts. I don't know the hand, but I suspect that bidding Seven Spades right now didn't work out well. Either North had five spades or, more likely, South doubled and ruffed a diamond lead. Let's see if we can make partner declarer, either in Seven Spades or in Seven Diamonds.

Green: Five Hearts. There seems to be no rush to bid Seven Spades as I can always do that later but if partner can play it then on a really good day we may avoid a ruff in diamonds.

Or clubs!!

Teramoto: Five Hearts. I want partner to play Seven Spades. If I bid Seven Spades, opener may double with a void in diamonds. I would like to bid Seven Hearts as a transfer to Seven Spades, but only if he must bid Seven Spades.

Rosen: Five Hearts. Where's the rush?

Rigal: Five Hearts. Trying to reach Seven Spades by partner; will bid Six Hearts over Six Clubs, Seven Hearts over Seven Clubs and hopefully partner will work it out.

So, there are two, sometimes interlinked, reasons

to bid hearts. One is to try and get partner to play Seven Spades to avoid the potential (and actual) ruff; the other is to try and ascertain if Seven Diamonds is the correct contract. After all, given partner say ♠ - ♥xxxx ♦98xxx ♣xxxx and Seven Diamonds is completely cold whereas Seven Spades may have a trump loser. Unless partner miraculously bids diamonds over Five Hearts though, it is hard to see how we will possibly be able to work that out. And surely partner will NEVER bid diamonds over Five Hearts. Assuming it is interpreted as Michaels; either partner will bid Five Spades, or they will bid Six Clubs as pass/correct. What hand can they have when they will ever voluntarily bid diamonds? I just cannot construct one. Enri makes these points well:

Leufkens: Five Hearts. I must admit, this is one of the strangest problems ever presented to me. Surely, I wanted to blast Seven Spades. Especially because chances of finding a better diamond than spades fit is nihil, and you don't want to be in Seven Diamonds opposite 2-1 diamond-spades with partner. But possibly Seven Spades is better in partner's hand, so to remove possibilities of diamond ruff. You never know what partner will answer on Five Hearts ☺. By the way, bid low and hoping to be doubled is way too risky for me...

No one actually suggested walking Fido this time (where is Joey when we need him?). The problem is that we just have SOOOOO much. What can the opponents possibly have to double us on?

Onwards and upwards:

Cannell: Six Hearts. Showing any two-suiter – possibly three-suiter (perhaps with more spade length, but not sure of that). I also feel this is certain first-round heart control and having no problem with the seven level. Of course, I pull Seven Clubs to Seven Diamonds, and hope to land on my feet.

Hmmm... How on earth will partner work out

that you have seven spades and five diamonds? Will partner pull to Seven Spades with say ♠J and ♦xx or ♠xx and ♦xx when Seven Spades is much better?

Alder: Seven Hearts. I think Five Hearts is the right choice, but this bid is so good because when partner converts to Seven Spades, he plays in a grand slam with the suit first mentioned at the seven level and with a void in trumps!

That sounds like a good reason ☺. John gives a very lengthy answer:

Carruthers: Seven Hearts. What I bid in my head on the hand when I saw the board live. The goal is to get the Four Heart bidder on lead rather than receiving the lead. The greatest danger in bidding Seven Spades, which is what all six players bid (although one did go through Five Hearts first) in the first Camrose weekend, is a diamond ruff by the Four Heart bidder. I know that it was a surprise club ruff that defeated Seven Spades, but the greater danger is a diamond ruff. Horton pointed out that Seven Spades may be defeated if the six missing spades go 5-1 with the 10 guarded. However, you 'know' if you bid Five Hearts that you'll see Six Clubs opposite, not Six Diamonds. What about Five Hearts, then Seven Hearts? Doesn't that sound like RHO psyched with ♠KQJ10xxx ♥x ♦xx ♣xxx? I would not want to test partner on that one. What about 5NT followed by Seven Hearts? That suffers from the same defect as Five Hearts followed by Seven Hearts. I suppose you could define one of those as a transfer to Seven Spades and the other as 'to play', but by the time it comes up again, in the Afterlife, you'll have forgotten which is which. I gave the companion hand (♠ – ♥K10xxx ♦xxx ♣KQxxx) to Joey Silver and gave him my auction: (Four Hearts) – Seven Hearts and asked him what he'd bid. He said Seven Spades without hesitation, adding that he'd have bid 7NT

with the ace of hearts. In our 15 years of playing together we had never discussed this (unsurprisingly), so I was springing it on him in a vacuum.

I have to say that with all these heart bids, it does give the pre-emptor some great options. Next time I am NV opposite a passed partner I really fancy winging out Four Hearts on ♠KQJxxxx and out or so.

Alone on the panel, Eric does not bid a major. He tries 4NT for a combination of theoretical and tactical reasons:

Kokish: 4NT. There are two main issues: (1) trying to get doubled when we can make seven; (2) catering to playing in diamonds lest we need to ruff a spade. It is far from clear how to accomplish both these tasks, but it can't hurt to start with 4NT and see how much East likes diamonds. Life is too precious these days to present a full plan for the rest of the auction.

OK, that at least will find out if partner has a preference for diamonds over clubs (something I cannot see any heart bid doing). It is unlikely, but if partner does bid diamonds you can raise to seven with confidence. And if partner doesn't, you can fool around for a bit and eventually bid Seven Spades. Partner ain't allowed to bid Eight Clubs and will not be bidding 7NT without the heart ace (and probably ought to with), so will have to shrug and Pass. I like it, and have promoted it in the marking accordingly.

Last word to the only panellist who actually held the hand. It is early on, but with this fine comment, Michael also wins the comment of the month:

Byrne: Seven Spades (and send it back if they double!). Ah yes, this stupid hand. I held this hand towards the end of the first set of the Camrose against Northern Ireland. I was briefly considering Five Hearts in an effort to get to Seven Diamonds facing ♠ – ♥xxxxx ♦9xxx ♣xxxx when I realised I had no idea how the rest of the auction

would go, and would have no chance of conveying what I actually had. One reason for an immediate Seven Spades is that when you are about to suffer a ruff (the Four Heart opener having a void) the opponents might try and give it in clubs instead of diamonds, the opening leader not appreciating what sort of hand you have. In the real world partner held ♠ – ♥K10xxx ♦xxx ♣KQxxx and Seven Spades was a fair contract although a 5-1 spade break is higher than usual. As it happens the Four Heart bidder held a void club and his partner led one from J10xxxxx after he had doubled. A lot of (no doubt very wise) kibbitzers/team-mates all explained to me how I should have bid Seven Hearts to get partner to play it, looking pleased with themselves. I politely asked what spade they would use to ruff the ♥A with, 10xxx spades and a void heart with the other hand is far more likely than a side void with the Four Heart opener. In the interests of full disclosure I should admit that I was the only player to redouble and lose three IMPs. (Learned commentators thought the redouble was an effort to get partner to bid 7NT with the ♥A, I can assure them my only aims were to increase the number of IMPs we gained and also to show how macho I was. I think I failed on both counts).

OK, here we go again! We need to make some assumptions once more. Opener has seven or eight hearts and if they have an outside void let us assume (not guaranteed) that the other hand will always find it in response to the Lightner double. Seven Spades from our hand will make if spades come in AND there is no outside void with the pre-emptor. Seven Spades from partner's hand will make on a heart lead IF there is no spade loser after we have guessed to ruff with something. My very rough calculations suggest, to my great surprise, that it is probably right to ruff low (there are just so few combinations that you can

pick up if hearts are 8-0 it seems best to play them to be 7-1). Since Seven Spades goes off from either hand if there is a trump loser, we can ignore that case I think. I have neither the time nor the energy to work this out. Can any mathematically minded reader do this? We need to compare the probabilities of opener having a void and at least one trump to those when a heart lead promotes a trump trick, either by force, or because of what we have chosen to ruff with. Then, when we have this situation again next millennium, we will know what to do.

And whilst I am here, what about Michael's redouble? If both go off (as they did), he loses 3 IMPs; if both make, he gains 10 IMPs (2240–1770); if he makes and they go off in the other room he gains 20 IMPs but would have gained 18 anyway; if he goes off and they make he loses 18 IMPs, but would have lost that same number anyway. So, more or less, he needs odds of three to one against or better that both make (the scenarios where one makes and the other doesn't being almost irrelevant). I leave it to you, good reader, to decide if he had.

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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 loser suit at worst, FG		

Bid	Marks	No. of Votes
Five Hearts	10	9
4NT	9	2
Five Spades	9	1
5NT	8	2
Six Spades	7	1
Pass	7	4
Five Clubs	3	0
Six Clubs	2	0

This is the same hand as problem 2, two months ago (the January set of New Bridge Magazine) with a different auction. There, partner had elected to bid Three Hearts at his second turn, showing a 5-5 game force, and then bid Four Spades over Four Diamonds. The majority of the panel, 10 votes to 8 (with the 8 votes spread across 6 different bids!), chose to table the dummy in that auction. Now partner has chosen to ignore his hearts, show a good spade suit and then bid them again. Does this make a difference? Yes, say the panel! The passers are now in the minority, with only four of them. Interestingly, of the three of those who answered two months, only one (Bobby) is consistent in his Pass:

Wolff: Pass. Enough already. Yes, I will trust

partner.

Eric and Iain have changed their view:

Kokish: Pass. As Four Spades is not forcing and South will lead a heart, I believe that pass is the percentage action. Even if we have no spade loser, there will too often be handling charges. You can appreciate how I feel about Problem 2 two months ago when East could have bid Three Spades rather than his obscure choice.

Sime: Pass. Every bid from partner makes me more pessimistic about slam. When he showed his “one-loser suit” I was 4-5, not 5-6, in the minors. He would have regarded AQJxxxx as a one-loser suit. Even if it becomes one, a heart lead would probably sink Six Spades.

Enri did not answer two months ago, but is alone in commenting on the nature of Four Diamonds, believing it to be a cue for spades, rather than patterning out:

Leufkens: Pass. Partner could have done more than Four Spades if he likes his hand. Especially with solid spades. With Three Spades trump suit seems to be settled, so Four Diamonds seems to be a cue and partner denies a heart cue. I'm sure not everybody agrees on this...

The rest of the panel bid on, with nine making the clear cue of Five Hearts. As ever, there are different intentions; some will float Five Spades; others are driving slam:

Alder: Five Hearts. If partner has a completely solid suit, maybe he can bid seven.

Robson: Five Hearts. So, may have Seven Spades if partner's spades are absolutely solid.

Smith: Five Hearts. Ah this hand again. It seems right to cue-bid the heart control now. If all partner can do over that is bid Five Spades, I'll give up, but I expect him to do more if he has a red suit king to go with his spades.

Bird: Five Hearts. Leaping to Six Spades would be a bit of a punt. Anyone whose bidding is elegant enough to be invited onto the NBM panel will doubtless look elsewhere.

Green: Five Hearts. Six Spades could be cold but partner may be worried with no heart control. Picture ♠AKQxxxx ♥xx ♦xx ♣x where on a heart lead partner can ditch the heart loser on the top clubs then eventually take a diamond finesse for the overtrick.

Carruthers: Five Hearts. My problem will come if he bids Five Spades over that. Then slam may depend on his outside shape. Four Spades may even be the limit over ♠KQJ10xxx ♥xxx ♦xx ♣x, but he'd be rather disappointed if I passed Four Spades and he had eight solid.

Surely that hand is not this sequence John? That is surely either Four Spades over One Club or Four Spades over Two Diamonds (or just Two Spades over One Club is you are feeling wimpy).

Teramoto: Five Hearts. There is a chance for a slam. This shows something in hearts.

Rigal: Five Hearts. Shows heart control emphasizes problem in trumps; Five Spades would worry about hearts.

Lawrence: Five Hearts. He could have solid spades. Five Hearts is less ambiguous than raising to Five Spades.

The last two comments bring us to...

Apteker: Five Spades. If partner is playable opposite a void for no losers, we want to be in slam. After a heart lead, we can either set up clubs or fall back on a diamond finesse. The five level, however, is certainly not safe if partner has to lose a spade so pass is a reasonable alternative.

I am with Barry here. Five Spades sounds like asking for a heart control to me. But maybe there is no hand we can have where we do not have one.

Two panellists simply let Blackwood do the walking, prepared to drive to whatever level the answers say:

McGowan: 4NT. Can't remember this one either.... There is a likely spade loser, but does he have ♦K? Whatever the response to RKC I can ask about ♠Q next - if he has it but no ♦DK I'll just have to hope he has solid spades or can get rid of his heart loser(s) somewhere.

Cannell: 4NT. RKCB for spades. If I receive a Five Spade response I will shoot out Seven Spades. Less than that I settle for Six Spades. A jump to 5NT after Four Spades should be pick-a-slam – not Josephine.

Which also brings us to....

Byrne: 5NT. I seem to remember I had no idea what to do when I held this hand last time and it hasn't got any easier. As I understand it Three Spades shows a good hand so I am not going to play this in less than a slam. Four Diamonds had the ring of ambiguity to it, but Four Spades sounds terminal. At least this way I will play in the right suit even if I am a couple of levels too high....can't partner have ♠AQJ10xx ♥xxx ♦Kx ♣xx?

Not sure! If Four Diamonds was definitely natural, isn't it time partner fessed up to some club support?

Rosen: 5NT. Pick a slam. Nearly just bid Six Spades to tell you the truth.

Which also brings us to (this is déjà vu all over again)....

Bowyer: Six Spades. What's "one loser at worst" I wonder, with this partner? ♠KQJ9xx? If I trust him I'd bid Six Spades.

The bidders are categorically right. Slam is cold opposite ♠AKQJxxx ♥QJ98x ♦x ♣ - . Should partner have bid more? It is hard to see what. We would, for example, have bid exactly the same way with the same hand without the ♥A and the five level is now in significant jeopardy.

PROBLEM 3

IMPs. Dealer West. All Vul.

♠ QJ104
♥ A96
♦ AK743
♣ Q

West	North	East	South
1♦	1♠	Double	Pass
?			

Bid	Marks	No. of Votes
2NT	10	8
Pass	9	6
Two Hearts	7	2
Two Diamonds	6	1
1NT	5	1
Any other bid	1	0

These types of hands, where the overcall has stolen our natural rebid, are much more of a problem in a SNT system than a WNT system. If we were playing WNT, we could and would rebid 1NT, which actually shows our strength, and is only a small club away from the right shape. But we cannot do it here as 1NT is a serious underbid. And if you were playing WNT and took away (say) the ♥A then you could rebid Two Diamonds fairly comfortably. It might not be a great partscore, but for sure if partner does not bid again, you ain't missed game. It is only in SNT land that these hands become a problem, where everything is either a serious overbid or a serious underbid. So, no prizes for guessing which way the panel go. Eight votes for 2NT, showing 18-19 balanced (well 0 out of 2 ain't bad, as Meatloaf didn't say ☺).

Cannell: 2NT. A big overbid, but other calls feel even more misguided. The double check in spades made me do it.

Similar sentiments from Tadashi:

Teramoto: 2NT. I choose the overbid of 2NT,

because of the efficient spade stopper and I am hoping for tricks in diamonds.

Wolff: 2NT. An overbid but strategic and the best of difficult choices.

Green: 2NT. Great problem! Close for me between pass, 1NT and 2NT. I opt for a slight overbid as I don't want to miss a vulnerable game. Pass could obviously work well if partner has some spades but he hasn't promised any and we could be defending One Spade with five or even six diamonds cold.

Bowyer: 2NT. The best way of reaching a vulnerable game, if it's there. Pass is too risky.

Let's just hold onto that thought for a while.

Carruthers: 2NT. Not willing to defend and hope to take seven or more tricks.

And again.

Lawrence: 2NT. Passing is a close second choice. It would be more appealing if our side wasn't vulnerable too. 2NT has the advantage of allowing us to explore other contracts.

Barry clearly counts differently to me:

Rigal: 2NT. I agree it is not perfect but this might be about right on values, and Two Hearts or Three Hearts just seems way off base.

On his own, and with a different kind of overbid altogether, is Phillip. Phillip also brings up a theoretical point (which Eric also makes later on):

Alder: Three Hearts. There is a case for playing that a jump to 2NT says that you have 15-17 and had been planning to rebid in spades. Pass could work, but would be more of a matchpoint gamble.

OK, I have not heard of this but it does seem to have merit. 1NT is a WNT, 2NT is 15-17ish and saying they stole my bid and 3NT is 18-19ish or long diamonds and a stop. Plus, you have Two Spades available for FG hands. If you do not have at least a play for 3NT if you have 18-19 balanced, then perhaps partner should not have been doubling in

the first place!

We move onto the underbids. Two make the bid they hope with encourage partner the most:

Bird: Two Hearts. If I discount the singleton ♣Q I am not too good for this rebid, with only three card heart support.

Leufkens: Two Hearts. This is my first ever to bid Two Hearts on a three card in this situation. But Two Diamonds looks ridiculous, both in suit as in discouraging partner. It still doesn't look like a notrump hand. And I think Two Hearts will be the easiest to encourage partner to bid more. I hope he understands if I bid 3NT over his Three Hearts☺.

This is something I thought I would never see. Michael goes for what he himself describes as a "massive underbid". A paper pussy cat no less!

Byrne: Two Diamonds. Not sure I like this one in a strong no trump structure. I would have liked to rebid no trumps but I have far too much for 1NT and not enough for 2NT. I think I am going to choose a massive underbid to give partner plenty of room to try again and the opponents plenty of room to go for a penalty.

Two for what I consider to be an even more massive underbid:

Smith: 1NT. Very tricky! I am a bit good for either 1NT or Two Hearts, but I guess that if I ignore the singleton queen it is only a 14 count (*with a decent five card suit and a double stopper in their suit!*). The alternative of 2NT should show 18-19, the same as it would if the auction had gone One Diamonds–One Heart–2NT unopposed, and this hand is not close to that good.

Liz has forgotten we now play a SNT:

McGowan: 1NT. 15-17 with a spade stopper. Gives him room to show five+ hearts if he has them.

And so, we come to final panel choice, which six

panellists were up for. I have to say I am amazed at this choice, and would never have the bottle for it, but six panellists go for the jugular and Pass. I suppose it ain't game if it makes.

Robson: Pass. Gotta go for it. 500 v 600 is worst case.

Is it? I would have thought -360 v +140 was the worst case.

Apteker: Pass. Unfortunately, I have to guess early with little information from partner about his shape and values. It may well make but I expect to beat it and hope for a big score especially if we have 3NT on. It will probably be the wrong decision if partner has four + diamonds. One of the reasons to pass is that there is no easy other descriptive bid to make.

That certainly feels like the best reason to pass to me.

Rosen: Pass.

Plenty of analysis there!

Eric mentions the treatment that Phillip referred to above:

Kokish: Pass. This could be a forum for those who believe a jump to 3NT would include 18-19 BAL to express themselves—I believe TGZ is one of them (*The Great Zia—AM*); they could bid 2NT here to suggest 15-17 UNBAL—what's the problem? Weak notrumpers could bid 1NT painlessly (of course). I can't pretend to know whether Pass is a long-run winning action, but as two Diamonds is beneath contempt, two Hearts and 1NT underbids, 2NT (when 18-19) and Three Hearts oddball overbids, Pass has a bit more going for it.

Sime: Pass. No number of No Trump fits and North may lead a club anyway. So, partner, please put that spade nine on the table and let's enjoy a bloodbath.

Partner does lead a spade and has the 9, but he

does not lead it as he has three of them!

Pass is very, very right on this hand as partner held ♠9xx ♥Kxx ♦Qxx ♣AJ10x (OK, hardly a classical double, but what else?). 2NT gets you to 3NT; Three Hearts probably gets you to 3NT; 1NT, Two Diamonds and Two Hearts get you to those contracts; Pass get you the gold. The overcaller is 5-3-2-3 with all of the relevant cards and the hand is about whether he can squeeze a fourth trick out of the play to avoid sticks and wheels (1100).

PROBLEM 4

IMPs. Dealer East. None Vul

♠	—			
♥	6			
♦	AKJ10954			
♣	AKQ104			
West	North	East	South	
—	—	Pass	1♠	
2NT*	Pass	3♣	Pass	
?				

2NT minors

Bid	Marks	No. of Votes
Three Spades	10	7
Four Diamonds	9	4
Four Spades	9	3
Five Diamonds	8	2
Five Spades	8	2
Six Clubs	7	1
Six Diamonds	5	0
Five Clubs	3	0
Five Hearts	2	0
Four Clubs	1	0

I invited the panel to comment on whether they would have preferred a different initial action. Most were pretty happy with 2NT, but there were those who

commented vociferously in both directions. Contrast for example this:

Bowyer: Six Clubs. Don't like 2NT AT ALL. I think such two-suited bids should be restricted to hands where you are not faced with "do I raise?" problems on the next round (well I wasn't thinking of passing Paul!). Some pairs play these bids as either "weak or strong", a treatment I regard as fatuous and one which I think is deservedly losing popularity. What do I do now? No idea. I would have doubled the first time round, for all the awkwardness of that action (no one else even mentioned the possibility of double, an action I do not like AT ALL ☺). Now I raise to Six Clubs, partly in protest to the stupidity of my previous action.

Contrast with this:

Byrne: Five Spades. A different initial action?? Are you suggesting we overcall Two Diamonds or Double!! (Not me Michael, but as you can see Paul above is a doubler and there are several who wanted to bid Two Diamonds) Anyway, this hand is becoming more familiar now, did I get given this one in the car on the way somewhere? I seem to remember someone made a strong sounding bid and then played a dicey slam in part-score.... (more on that later...) Anyway, I'm not playing this hand in less than a slam in keeping with my overbidding roots (making up for the last hand I see), so I better bid something strong sounding. A leap to Four Spades might be exciting but it also seems pointless, what am I expecting partner to bid? I shall try Five Spades and be sure of getting to seven when that makes. Of course, partner can't have a crazy hand like 5-6-0-2 since he would have opened that Two Diamonds for the majors (or indeed One Heart).

Ho ho! We do not play an Ekren Two Diamonds (weak with both majors) as Michael well knows. I

assume he think Five Spades is Exclusion (it certainly ought to be) so is going to bid a grand opposite the ♥A. Wow!

Paul is alone in bidding Six Clubs; Michael had one supporter:

Green: Five Spades. Asking for key cards outside of spades. I'm happy to gamble that partner has three clubs. I don't know if I would start with 2NT as I might be concerned that partner might pass with an extreme major two suiter and a poor hand. I might start with 4NT and then bid Five Spades over Five Clubs, partner should get the message with the ace of hearts!

But are you not at severe risk of simply playing in the wrong suit here! Partner with equal length will always bid clubs before diamonds and now you are in a trump suit with two fewer cards than the other one. And if partner has one more club than diamond, then you are STILL in the shorter trump suit. I just cannot see how it is right to commit to clubs without even exploring the option of playing in diamonds. Thus, I like this bid (well I should, since it is what I bid at the table):

Kokish: Four Diamonds. The one thing we can't do is start with 2NT and not have a plan when East responds Three Clubs, as well he might. Let's not forget he might be 2-2 or 1-2 in the minors. If 2NT is our choice (I would have started with Four Spades—strong minors—and converted Five Clubs to Five Diamonds, or start with Two Diamonds in understanding partnerships (please don't cancel my free membership just because I shared this with you) (I told you there were some Two Diamond overcallers. One day I hope to set ♠AKQJxxx ♥—♦AKQJxx ♣—after a One Club opener, just to see if this is a One Spade overcall for Eric ☺). West must get diamonds into the picture, so bids like Four Spades or Six Clubs are inappropriate (Thank

you Eric!). Four Diamonds sends the right message, IMO, and will get us the ♥A if East has it. We may still have a guess coming, but at least East will be involved.

Lawrence: Four Diamonds. 2NT is OK since failure to do so may cause other issues later. It would be terrific if partner volunteered some information. Four Diamonds. Isn't this about 99% forcing?

1% more than that in my view. Not so, however, Liz's:

McGowan: Four Diamonds. Three Diamonds would show the extra distribution, but not quite such a good hand. Partner would strain to jump over 2NT with any sort of fit and a few values, so this could be a complete misfit, in which case we might have three losers, but if he has something like: ♠xxxxx ♥xxx ♦xx ♣xxx he should bid game.

Neil is with me:

Rosen: Four Diamonds. Sounds forcing (could bid Three Diamonds to show a very good but NF hand). Quite happy with 2NT.

Two panellists try Five Diamonds. How partner is supposed to know to bid Six Clubs with ♠xxxxx ♥Axxx ♦x ♣xxx, but Pass with the majors the other way round I have no idea.

Robson: Five Diamonds. I think partner should know to raise with ♠xxxx ♥xxx ♦xxx ♣xxx (a mouse on the bidding!)

Teramoto: Five Diamonds. This should show 7-5ms with a very strong hand.

Everybody else bids spades, with Three Spades topping the bill with seven votes:

Apteker: Three Spades. I would like to explore slam while showing the extra diamond length and trying to find out about the ace of hearts as well. I intend to bid Four Diamonds over 3NT or Four Clubs which should be forcing or Five Diamonds over Five Clubs which should also be forcing. I

really do not know what a jump to Four Diamonds or Five Diamonds might show now but hope the panel can enlighten me.

Do you feel enlightened Alon?

Leufkens: Three Spades. I like 2NT. Not ideal, but at least you let partner know about where your strength is. Maybe some more strength than partner expects but that you can start explaining that from now on.

Marc sees the problems (thank you Marc!):

Smith: Three Spades. I plan to bid Four Diamonds if all partner can do next is Four Clubs. Since I can do so economically, though, it seems right to cue-bid the spade control first. I do wonder, though, whether partner will now take diamond bids as cue-bids with clubs agreed and worry about two losing hearts. Hmm. Very difficult.

Bobby is not even going to try for diamonds:

Wolff: Three Spades. Yes, I will bid Six Clubs over a rebid of Four Clubs by partner and hope for ♠xxx ♥xxxx ♦xx ♣xxxx, but perhaps that is too much to hope for.

Bird: Three Spades. Bidding some number of diamonds immediately will not get the job done. I will start with Three Spades and then bid Five Diamonds. Will partner rate the ♥A or the ♦Q as potentially useful cards? I hope so.

And is he supposed to know the ♥A is useful and the ♠A useless, how?

John at least has a solid plan and an idea as to how to get to the right strain at the right level:

Carruthers: Three Spades. Can I coax a heart bid out of him? Suppose he has something like ♠Jxxx ♥Axxx ♦xx ♣xxx? Is that enough for a grand slam? It's not a very good one, needing something good to happen in both minors to succeed. However, if, as expected, he bids 3NT or Four Clubs (or even over Four Hearts), I'll try 5NT, which must show

better diamonds and probably a two card disparity. That way, he could bid Six Diamonds with equal length in the minors. Then I'll either Pass (no Four-Heart bid) or raise to seven (if he bid Four Hearts). Is this a hand from Valkenburg in 2000?

If you are referring to the famous Hamman hand then no, certainly not – we would have had a lot more bidding by now! Nothing so grand I am sorry to say. It was the Year End Congress in Blackpool (and please do not ask how I did).

Sime: Three Spades. If East responds 3NT or Four Clubs, I will try again with Four Diamonds. If Five Clubs, I will try Five Spades en route.

Three for Four Spades. Does this not again lock us into clubs? As ever, different people believe it means different things:

Alder: Four Spades. Either Roman Key Card Void-wood or void-showing (well that is helpful then!) but not asking for key cards. I am happy either way. I do not mind 2NT, because the alternatives look more flawed.

Rigal: Four Spades. I'd bid Two Diamonds and plan Six Diamonds next. As it is I'll bid Four Spades now and offer a choice of slams next I think.

How?

Cannell: Four Spades. Exclusion RKCB for clubs. Three Spades would be a random forcing bid. I guess 2NT is OK as it leaves us some room.

OK, confession time. I held the hand and bid Four Diamonds on the given sequence, it never occurring to me that it would not be obviously forcing. John Holland felt otherwise and passed on ♠KQxxx ♥QJxxxx ♦ – ♣xx. With ♦Qx and ♣Jx in the opener that was an embarrassing 12 tricks. This hand caused complete chaos around the room. Some Easts elected to Pass partner's 2NT overcall. That usually made 12 tricks when the defence failed to cash their three major suit winners. Some Easts opened the majors hand and

then panicked at various points in the auction, often dropping partner in Four Clubs. Anyone who found a way to Six Clubs obviously made it, particularly as the lead was usually a spade (from either side) so generating 13 tricks. The oddest result of all was when East opened One Heart. South overcalled One Spade, West doubled as that was the only forcing bid (yuk, yuk, yuk) and found themselves on lead to that contract! That crawled one off. Too much Christmas cheer all round I think.



Phillip Alder

PROBLEM 5

IMPs. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ K632
♥ 104
♦ J107543
♣ A

West	North	East	South
–	–	1♣	1♠
?			

Bid	Marks	No. of Votes
1NT	10	10
Pass	9	7
Two Diamonds	8	1
Three Diamonds	7	1
Any other bid	1	0

My partner held this hand in the Manchester Congress teams in the first weekend of January. He chose 1NT, which I would not have done – off shape, horribly anti-positional spade stopper and almost no continuation would leave you well placed. So, I wondered what the panel would make of it. Shows what I know! This is the first problem so far to have majority support for a bid and that bid is... 1NT:

Bird: 1NT. I am well short of a forcing Two Diamond bid and 1NT paints a better picture than Pass.

Does it? If you say so David. Michael and Paul do think it is a problem:

Byrne: 1NT. A horrible bid but I can't think of anything better (Two Diamonds is not better!). Notwithstanding the fact we will wrong side no trumps when partner has...well any holding really (quite!), I also have a concealed source of tricks and a side singleton (*Why make sure a poor bid then?*). Tough - beggars can't be choosers.

Bowyer: 1NT. I don't like it, but like Pass (or

the dangerous Two Diamonds) even less. Nasty problem.

Apteker: 1NT. I have a stopper and am in range. No reason to pass or do anything else.

Alder: 1NT. I hope to show my diamonds on the next round.

Cannell: 1NT. What the heck!?

Green: 1NT. The value bid. I know that this might be anti-positional but if I pass then I would have to bid at least Three Diamonds over the double and partner could easily be 1-4-2-6 shape and we may get to the wrong spot.

Kokish: 1NT. Somewhat tactical, and I do not hate passing instead. I expect to be able to show diamonds without overstating my strength when it is appropriate to bid again. Maybe we can shut out their hearts when that is an issue.

I assure you Eric that is not the issue this time ☺.

Smith: 1NT. I am not good enough for Two Diamonds and I hate to pass and then have to try to catch up later, so what else?

Leufkens: 1NT. I hate it, but Two Diamonds doesn't help either and overstates my values. Passing make things even worse as you have to do catch-up later.

The last two comments bring us to what I would have done. Liz sums up my views:

McGowan: Pass. Some may bid 1NT but this is borderline for strength, has a poor stopper and no source of tricks. The bidding is probably not over – and if it is we should collect a few 100s.

Robson: Pass. With spade length, no need to stretch, will have a second chance.

That is also my view.

Sime: Pass. All bids are flawed, and I have no cause to make a flawed bid on this round.

Also my view.

Rigal: Pass. I hate everything but plan to bid

diamonds at some level next or defend to One Spade if it's a part-score deal.

Rosen: Pass. Intending to bid next time. Nice hand for transfers after a One Spade overcall.

Indeed—bidding Two Clubs transfer and floating Two Diamonds has attractions (not that it would have happened this time).

Teramoto: Pass. I will bid Three Diamonds if partner doubles One Spade. Pass then Three Diamonds shows 8-9 points and long diamonds.

Wolff: Pass. But 1NT, nothing else, 70%

Two players are prepared to bid their suit:

Carruthers: Two Diamonds. Here we are on the fifth hand of the set and already we've had two hands without a void! (*Ho ho ho! Would you prefer me to set problems where you have a 4-3-3-3 16 count first in hand and I ask you what you open?*) If one of those diamonds had been a heart, 1NT.

Mike makes an anti-system bid:

Lawrence: Three Diamonds. Mildly invitational. Really an ugly hand. 1NT and pass could work best. I think that Three Diamonds, unless totally wrong, comes closer to showing this hand. If the hand belongs to us in diamonds, Three Diamonds may shut out their heart suit.

The system states "Fit-jumps after opponents overcall or take-out double" so Mike has actually shown diamonds and clubs here. I know Mike hates fit jumps, and there is certainly an argument that they are not sensible over a potential two card club suit, but it is in the system. I have chosen to give Three Diamonds a decent mark anyway.

My partner, Lancashire player Jeff Smith, did bid 1NT and the auction got no better for him when it continued Two Spades on his left, Three Hearts from partner and Pass on his right. With an unappetising choice, Jeff now chose very well on the hand to raise to Four Hearts. I held ♠ - ♥AKQxx ♦Kx ♣K109xxx.

With both rounded suits 3-3 this contract was always destined to come home, but the ♦Q to the ace and a diamond back to my king did not exactly cause me any pain, and 12 tricks was worth a couple of IMPs.

PROBLEM 6

IMPs. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

♠ 95
♥ AQ3
♦ AQ3
♣ Q10863

West	North	East	South
—	—	—	4♠
Pass	Pass	Double	Pass
?			

Bid	Marks	No. of Votes
Five Clubs	10	5
Pass	9	4
4NT	9	3
Five Spades	9	3
5NT	9	2
Six Clubs	8	2
Any other bid	1	0

This problem was sent to me by Mike Lawrence and what a great problem it turned out to be! Six different bids from the panel, and none of them gaining more than five votes. It just goes to show yet again how effective high level pre-emption first in hand is. We have a hand that we just might have doubled on ourselves. Only one panellist mentioned this action so might is maybe a little strong. But we passed and now partner has doubled. Anything from not having game on (♠Kx ♥KJxx ♦Jxx ♣AKJx with the diamond finesse wrong) to a cold grand slam (♠Ax ♥KJxx ♦Kxx ♣AKJx) is possible and we have to start guessing at the five level. In these circumstances, the

usual rule is to take the middle ground. Just garnering the 10 points with five votes, are those panellists who simply bid game in their longest suit. Drew puts the "standard" case:

Cannell: Five Clubs. I do not want to hang partner for aggression. I am not sure I can scientifically investigate better levels or strains here. Passing out Four Spades doubled may not score more than 300/500.

Carruthers: Five Clubs. There's no middle ground here. Yes, Partner could have ♠x ♥KJxx ♦KJxx ♣AKJx and you'll have missed a slam, equally, you could be off two spade tricks or two aces. Could I pass with my balanced hand? Sure, and find Partner with 1=4=3=5, then receive inadequate compensation.

Bird: Five Clubs. How pleasing it is to be offered an obvious 10 points on a silver platter. Thank you, Jeeves!

Hmmm David. Given that the voting was 5, 4, 3, 3, 2 and 2 votes I do not think this is as clear cut as you make out, but yes you have the 10 points.

Rosen: Five Clubs. Might well make slam here, we only pull the double with a definite chance of making, so partner may well be able to raise.

I think hoping partner will raise when we have all this lot is looking through rose tinted spectacles. Take a look at John's hand and remove any or all of the jacks. Slam is cold and partner would not think of raising.

Smith: Five Clubs. This should show a good hand that expects to make 11 tricks rather than a bad one that doesn't think we can take four tricks defending. Partner is certainly invited to bid on, but I don't see that I can do more with two low spades.

Three panellists pass the time of day with 4NT. What are they hoping this will achieve?

Byrne: 4NT. Hmm....now this is another

interesting hand. At this vul partner's double is suggesting we own the hand and is suitable for us to remove if we fancy it. On that basis I should definitely take it out since facing a perfect: ♠ - ♥Kxxx(x) ♦Kxxx(x) ♣AKxx we appear to be lay-down for a grand and might not even beat Four Spades on a bad day! (declarer has eight spades and dummy has three and a side singleton, admittedly this needs us to forget to lead a trump but then it has been a long week). So, having decided to take it out, where to? I think I shall start with 4NT and hope to pick up a club suit from partner which I will raise to slam. If partner bids Five Diamonds I shall carry on with 5NT and hope everything works out.

OK, Michael is driving slam and is looking for the best fit. Liz is prepared to play at the five level and is concerned that five of a red-suit may be better (it is easy to see that partner may be 1-4-5-3 with ♣Kxx for example with Five Diamonds being a lot better.

McGowan: 4NT. Two places to play. Sort of. Hardly ideal, but I do not want to emphasise these clubs in case partner has a long red suit. Maybe Pass is best, but it seems likely we can make at least game and I hate to sell out.

Rigal: 4NT. Not willing to commit myself between Five Clubs and Six Clubs so will delay the decision one round.

I am unsure what you will gain from partner's bid that will help you in that decision Barry.

Five other panellists are, like Michael, driving to a slam, and trying to get to the best strain. Three go via Five Spades and two via 5NT. What is the difference between these? Only the Koach knows:

Kokish: Five Spades. Impossible problem, of course. 4NT or 5NT risks East being 2-4-4-3 and bidding Five Clubs or Six Clubs risks East passing with 2-4-5-2. Five Clubs is really wet but could

easily be the winner. Pass will at least secure a plus score (usually) and might be enough to win the board if the other E/W go minus. The advantage in Five Spades (once committing to slam) is that East will bid 5NT with no five-card suit, so if he bids Six Diamonds instead he will have five.

OK, Five Spades means partner has a "no five card suit 5NT" available.

Alon, however, thinks Five Spades shows first round spade control, which I think may be more mainstream.

Apteker: 5NT. With so much values and everything working, slam should be makeable unless partner has either really stretched to balance or has a doubleton spade without the ace both of which are unlikely. Getting to the best slam though is not so simple. A Six Club bid could be right opposite 1-5-4-3 but 5NT caters for 1-4-6-2 and 1-5-5-2 type hands as well. It also has the advantage of bringing the grand into play by denying first round spade control with which one could have bid Five Spades.

Paul and Bobby do not think Five Spades shows first round control:

Bowyer: Five Spades. A complete guessing game. Slam may be cold, it may have no play. The weaker partner is, the shapelier he figures to be - a slam would be cold opposite a 0-5-4-4 12 count. True, a slam may be off two top losers; my only alternative is Pass, playing for 500-800.

Wolff: Five Spades. Partner is likely to have a five card suit and if he doesn't he should bid Six Clubs since he likely has a singleton spade.

Robson: 5NT. Guess slam. We'll play the right one via 5NT I think.

Phillip and Enri simply bid slam in their long suit
Alder: Six Clubs, I expect (little or) no company on the panel, but I must be the declarer in case

North is void in spades.

And you must not be if partner has ♠Kx.

Leufkens: Six Clubs. Big guess, but so are Pass and Five Clubs. I think chances are good that we can make this or partner will go to a making six red. It depends obviously on how much partner is allowed to do in fourth hand. But with some solid partners this should be OK often.

Partner will need quite a suit to do this when we have suggested clubs so firmly and have not gone through Five Spades or 5NT, won't he?

It is a well-established principle that on balanced hands in these situations and/or when you are unsure of the denomination you pass and take the money. Four panellists do that. Tadashi puts the case:



Andrew Robson

Teramoto: Pass. It is difficult to judge whether we have a slam or not. Pass and defend for the sure plus score.

Sime: Pass. The odds on finding four clubs opposite are probably worse than even money. I will settle for the penalty.

It is very unlikely I would have thought though that partner has neither four clubs nor a five card red suit.

Half the panel are bidding slam, Ben is worried about game:

Green: Pass. There is no guarantee (although it's likely) that game is making (could be down on a foul break) so I will take the money and lead a trump. I must admit I wouldn't be in this position as I would have doubled Four Spades initially.

Told you there was one.

Last word to the man who held the hand:

Lawrence: Pass. A really nasty guess. I played this hand and passed Four Spades Doubled on this auction. It wasn't best. Their side had seven spades to the KQJ10xxx and they also had an ace and a ruffing trick in dummy. We got 300. Six Clubs was the best spot.

Partner held ♠A ♥Kxxxx ♦Kxx ♣KJxx so if you want to get to slam you have to bid it yourself.

With it obviously being such a close decision, everybody gets plenty of marks.

PROBLEM 7

IMPs. Dealer South. All Vul

♠ 52
♥ 8742
♦ A92
♣ AK86

West	North	East	South
–	–	–	Pass
Pass	Pass	1♦	Double
1♥	2♣	2♥*	Pass
?			
2♥	Promises four trumps		

Bid	Marks	No. of Votes
Pass	10	5
2NT	9	3
Three Clubs	9	3
Three Diamonds	9	3
Two Spades	8	1
Four Hearts	7	4
3NT	4	0
Three Hearts	2	0

Well, as the local said when asked for directions, "I wouldn't have started from here". I invited the panel to comment on whether or not they would have preferred different actions and several did so in fairly strident manner. Firstly, there are those who think opening the bidding is automatic (I don't care much either way), and then there are those who think One Heart is bonkers (and here I am in agreement with them). However, it has made a great problem, with, for the second time running, six different bids from the panel and no bid getting more than five votes. The auction has developed into a curious sort of "good news, bad news" hand. Partner has an opening bid with four card support—good news; but the auction has warned us that the majors are likely to

be lying badly both in terms of breaks and in terms of the finesses being wrong—bad news. How much notice should we take of this gypsy's warning? "A lot" say five panellists, all of whom I am sure would not have passed here without the opposition bidding, but do so now.

Sime: Pass. Without the interference, or even if North was the doubler, I have the values for an invite. However, whilst we may have the cards for game, the opponents have warned us off. South was prepared for North to compete in hearts, and his hearts are badly placed for us. Moreover, partner is possibly short in clubs, perhaps counterfeiting our King.

Teramoto: Pass. The bidding suggests the cards are lying badly in the majors.

Lawrence: Pass. No second thoughts. I'm not sure I like the auction but it has worked well. We found our 4-4 fit and can address the question "how high". For me, Two Hearts is high enough.

Green: Pass. I wouldn't introduce the hearts with such a poor suit. I would pass initially and then hope to double spades for takeout. I can't redouble as that would leave me poorly placed if the opponents bid spades (as double would be penalty).

Bowyer: Pass. Don't particularly like One Heart, but the alternatives are no better (redouble should show a desire to penalise, not just a random collection of high cards) (*What about Pass and a take-out double on the next round a la Ben? That would be my choice*). So, I'll go along with One Heart. What now? Pass. Close, but I'm not convinced the cards are well placed - South is very likely to be 4-4 in the majors.

At the other end of the spectrum, four panellists simply blast game. Two of them think this is a routine opening bid, which may partially explain matters. None are more vociferous than John:

Carruthers: Four Hearts. In what parallel universe is this a Pass in any seat? West was obviously an inveterate point-counter and needed 12 to open. He's waiting for ♠QJ ♥QJxx ♦QJx ♣QJxx. I might not have bid One Heart, but there's no arguing that it worked out well, finding four-card support opposite. partner should have a solid opening in fourth chair. I cannot settle for a game-try, vulnerable, at IMPs; perhaps at Pairs I might.

Alder: Four Hearts. I would have opened One Club (or preferably one weak notrump, but that is not NBM Standard) and would have redoubled in preference to one heart (perhaps unwisely). Now we are vulnerable at IMPs, so fire away. I do not think 3NT will be preferable.

Leufkens: Four Hearts. This problem is too difficult to me. Not to answer it, but why it is a problem? Partner wasn't forced to open fourth in hand. Sure, my hearts are weak and South has some too, but come on, being afraid doesn't help in bridge.

Cannell: Four Hearts. Vulnerable at IMPs I am not taking the low road. The game bonus is too enticing. I am OK with the original Pass and 50-50 on One Heart versus redouble at my second turn.

In between, we have the various game tries. Let's start with the "natural" game tries of Three Clubs and Three Diamonds:

Rigal: Three Clubs. I would have redoubled rather than bid One Heart on such a poor suit. But the auction has worked out fine. Maybe Three Clubs now over Two Hearts feels about right.

Eric, as ever, gives us a detailed analysis:

Kokish: Three Clubs. Sure, West could open One Club or Redouble and many would prefer one or both of those actions, but that's more about style, partnership, and personal experience. In the problem setting, West must bid again, and whether the best action is 2NT, Three Clubs, Three Diamonds

or Three Hearts is probably also personal. As the early auction suggests that East has four spades and so will be either 4-4-3-2 or 4-4-4-1/4-4-5-0, our destination is far from clear. We may be too high in Three Hearts against a likely four-one break (PH takeout doubles are usually shape-perfect) and I guess Three Clubs will help East appreciate a doubleton club while turning him off when he is short there. Notrump should play from the East side.

Rosen: Three Clubs. Deciding between Three Clubs and Three Diamonds - let's go for Three Clubs. I like to open A, A, K within this system base.

On to Three Diamonds:

Robson: Three Diamonds. Sorry ONE HEART?!? Is this a misprint? Redouble – even pass – is surely better than introducing four rags here... I 'spose Three Diamonds now (partner is likely 3-4-5-1) but I must speak to the waiter later.

I assume Andrew is going to ask what hallucinogens have been put in the water.

Smith: Three Diamonds. A long-suit game try in hearts. It goes without saying that I think this A-A-K hand is an automatic opening bid, preferably One Heart but, if not permitted under your methods, then One Club. Partner is never going to believe we have this much after we've passed.

Bird: Three Diamonds. I am happy not to open, although many would. Bidding One Heart on four low cards when you expect South to hold the majors is unattractive. I would prefer a redouble. As it has gone, I must choose between 2NT and Three Diamonds for my game-try. When 3NT is the right contract, partner may continue with Three Spades over Three Diamonds.

Which brings us to 2NT, the choice of three panellists.

Wolff: 2NT. Yes, I would not bid One Heart with that suit (or whatever it should be called,

but having bid it, I can now accept it).

Barry Myers, my partner in the senior trials recently, refers to such things as "a suit I would be ashamed to wear".

Michael has some mild opprobrium about our actions to date, but you have to read carefully to pick it up:

Byrne: 2NT. Yes, I think I might just have preferred to open the bidding. An old mentor of mine used to frequently shout "How many F*&^%ing times do I have to tell you Peter, two and a half Culbertsons is worth an opening bid". This hand contains three Culbertsons so if it was an opening bid in the 1950s it certainly is now. As for bidding One Heart over the double, I am not sure which of Hammers House of Horrors I dredged that one from, clearly four cards headed by the 8 is what I wanted to show my partner. Anyway, having taken this route, I had better make a try for game, and 2NT seems OK for now. Hopefully, partner has ♠Axx ♥Axxx ♦KJxxx ♣x and every suit will break/finesses will work. Better still ♠AK ♥xxxx ♦KQJxx ♣xx partner raises to 3NT and we wrap up nine tricks and take applause from all sides. (Unlikely....)

The seals are lining up even as I type. Who, by the way, is Peter?

Liz does not think much of our actions either:

McGowan: 2NT. The principle of Not Giving Yourself an Impossible Problem Next Time suggests that I should open this 3QT hand. One Club is easy if playing five card majors; 1NT is the best option if playing a weak no-trump. Not nice, but it would make me feel less ill than I do now – no sum of money could persuade me to bid One Heart over the double. I believe partner's opener should be sound in fourth position, so perhaps I should bid game myself, but I fear we might lose

four spades and a heart before we got going. I have apparently taken up torturing partner, so I may as well follow through.

Four Spades seems a little unlikely when we have a doubleton and they must be 4-4-3-2 round the table I would have thought.

Alone amongst the panel, Alon makes his game try in his doubleton:

Apteker: Two Spades. I have too much to pass vulnerable at IMPs despite my poor hearts so I am making a game try. If partner does not accept, Two Spades allows partner to counter with Three Diamonds which I will accept.

Given that the panel view is strongly not to drive game on this hand, I have downgraded the Four Heart bid slightly. It was certainly very wrong at the table. Partner had ♠Kxx ♥AKxx ♦QJ10xx ♣x so a perfectly acceptable hand and a game you surely want to be in without the bidding. BUT, to no one's surprise, South held ♠AQxx ♥QJ10x ♦xx ♣Qxx and suggested that Four Hearts was not making. That was -500 without the option.

PROBLEM 8

IMPs. Dealer East. All Vul.

♠ 6
♥ Q76
♦ K9843
♣ 6432

West	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

Bid	Marks	No. of Votes
Four Hearts	10	10
Three Spades	9	7
3NT	6	2
Four Clubs	2	0
Four Spades	1	0
Five Hearts	1	0
Pass	0	0

This problem surprises me. By the equal largest majority of the set (even then, only 11 out of 19), the panel opt to raise partner's second suit with three card support, both taking the bidding high at this point and suggesting (I agree, certainly not promising) four card support.

Cannell: Four Hearts. Sure, this easily could be a Moysian Fit, but still might be a reasonable contract. All bids are flawed. I am just looking for the least flawed.

OK.

Green: Four Hearts. 3NT could be right but I'm not sure whether partner should have a 5-4-1-3 hand as he would know that Three Hearts might endplay me. I think partner is more likely to be 5-5 in the majors and I don't fancy 3NT opposite that. I think I might have bid a natural 2NT over Two Spades if that would be possible?

I am unsure that partner would not bid his hand naturally with 5-4-1-3. After all, you have an easy Three Spade bid with any sort of support.

Lawrence: Four Hearts. Seems like an easy choice. At least I have some values that may make up for lack of a fourth heart.

Andrew is the first of a few panellists who would have bid 2NT last time:

Robson: Four Hearts. Not ideal but what else? I owe him a heart but my ♥Q is partial compensation. Would have bid 2NT over Two Spades so we don't miss a club fit.

Barry looks to an old quote:

Rigal: Four Hearts. Close my eyes, lie back and think of England. No idea what to do but at least this should be a playable trump suit.

A reference to a deeply sad journal entry of a certain Lady Hillington in 1912 "When I hear his steps outside my door, I lie down on my bed, open my legs and think of England". It is now often bowdlerized to "Close my eyes and think of England". She was married to Charles William Mills, second Baron Hillington, who had retired from active business life five years prior to this journal entry, owing to ill health, so it is entirely possible that this did not happen very often.

Apteker: Four Hearts. While Three Hearts may not be natural, I expect partner to have at least four most of the time, otherwise he would likely have been able to bid 3NT. If he has only four hearts, the 4-3 fit should play OK.

I really do not see why Three Hearts would not be natural. What has partner got that would make it unnatural? There does not seem a hand. And anyway, partner will surely get himself out of it if he has introduced a three card suit, or whatever.

Teramoto: Four Hearts. The clubs are too small to bid 3NT. This hand looks OK for a 4-3 heart fit.

Phillip looks back to a simpler time:

Alder: Four Hearts. Some 33 years ago, I played that if you had a big 5+-5+, you opened with an Acol two in the major, but if you had a strong 5+-4, you opened Two Clubs. (With a weak two in a major, you opened two diamonds.) That agreement would help here. But what else do you bid but Four Hearts? 3NT is hardly attractive, even if technically correct. Even if we are in a 4-3 fit, it could play well.

Ah, Acol Twos – those were the days!

Wolff: Four Hearts. 3NT is just too grisly and

others can prefer Three Spades, but those who do, should be careful who plays with them since, I will expect musical chairs. IOW changing partners.

And that takes us to the choice of seven of the panel. This was a banker:

Kokish: Three Spades. Three Diamonds is not wrong, but makes it much more difficult for East to get clubs into play, and I'd have preferred a waiting 2NT. Over Three Hearts, West has an easy mark-time Three Spade bid, just as he would after One Spade – 1NT; Three Hearts. East will not expect spade support and will finish describing his hand. When he raises himself to Four Spades that will be based on his own long suit, not West's two-card support.

Eric had plenty of support:

Carruthers: Three Spades. Oh my. If I were certain that Four Clubs was a choice of games, that's what I'd bid. Partners never seem to appreciate the subtlety of that kind of bid though (*no, they think it is a cue for hearts*). And maybe Four Clubs is a Humpty-Dumpty bid after all (*"When I use a word," Humpty Dumpty said, in rather a scornful tone, "it means just what I choose it to mean—neither more nor less."*). I can't bid 3NT or Four Hearts in case he has something like ♠AKQJ109 ♥AKJx ♦Ax ♣x. If his spades are poor in context and he raises us to Four Spades, he may still make it on outside power. At least I'll be joined in Three Spades by Silver and Kokish (*I am sure you would have been, but Joey is missing this month*). Three Spades gives him a chance to bid 3NT with Kx or AQ of clubs.

Sime: Three Spades. Since Four Clubs should be a cue-bid (*told you!*), the choice seems to be between Four Hearts and an extremely false preference of Three Spades. The latter is more flexible, as partner can try 3NT, bid Four Diamonds with a fragment,

or rebid hearts with five.

Smith: Three Spades. A Three Spade bid here is needed as a probe denying the ability to bid anything else, ie I cannot bid 3NT (no club value), I cannot bid Four Diamonds (a weak suit) and I cannot bid Four Hearts (less than four card support). Ergo!

Leufkens: Three Spades. Not happy, but partner should allow for a hand like this. This is obviously NOT stronger than Four Spades as we haven't found a fit yet.

True indeed.

McGowan: Three Spades. Delayed preference does not promise much in the way of support, though I would prefer a doubleton! If partner now bids Four Hearts, Four Spades or 3NT I shall pass. If he cues Four Clubs I shall bid Four Hearts and hope he reads it.

Hmmm... good luck with that! You give preference to partner's first suit, he cue-bids, and then you try and play in his second suit.

Bird: Three Spades. Partner knows that I do not hold three spades, so this is not as risky as it may seem. He can now say 3NT, played from the right side, or rebid a five card heart suit. If he bids Four Spades instead, on a 6-4 hand, why should that not be our best spot?

Sorry Paul and Neil, but I REALLY do not like this:

Bowyer: 3NT. REALLY interesting problem, with no satisfactory answer. I assume Three Diamonds showed something (as 2NT would be a second negative?) Thus, partner is unlikely to Pass 3NT with a 5-4-3-1 hand. 3NT is unlikely to fail with 28+ points, should it end the auction, and the bid may allow partner to bid again on a really good hand.

Rosen: 3NT. With no great confidence.

Last word of the month to the man who knows the hand:

Byrne: Four Hearts. This hand is familiar to me as well. Were you my team-mate?...Oh, I remember now, it comes from a training weekend that I roped you in to help with. Your partner chose Four Hearts (I can't see what else we can do) and there was some interest in the play of a slam. Since partner has in no way implied five hearts raising to game might get us to the wrong slam if he bids on, I am not worried about Four Hearts going down given the embarrassment of riches I hold. Having said that, raising partner once doesn't lock us into hearts, he is welcome to show diamond support or go back to spades if he thinks that is better. (Could this be a 3-3 fit? I don't think so, if partner wants to bid a three card suit then he needs to bid on when we raise).

Partner held ♠AKQ10xx ♥AKJx ♦ – ♣AQx (anyone who tells me this is a One Spade opener, I am not listening). It seems pretty tough to pass Four Hearts (well it was too tough for me) but you certainly do not want to be any higher. I bid on and played Six Hearts. North led a diamond (good for them) but South did not read the lead and played the ace from ♦AJxx. That allowed me to pitch one club, win the club switch, ruff a spade, pitch the other club on the ♦K, and draw trumps for a breathless, and somewhat embarrassing, 1430. It is worth noting that I would have thought partner will pass 3NT and with every card wrong and the spades not coming it, that will go down on a club lead.

A fine set of problems this month. Only two had an overall majority (the lowest in my tenure I think), all had at least three panel bids, four had six bids and all told the panel chose 41 different bids, an average of just over five a problem. Perhaps not surprisingly with so many bids, the marks are very

spread out this month. Best in show is Ben Green on 76, the lowest winning total I can remember in my tenure and I will bet several readers top it. He is followed by a whole gaggle of panellists on 75, Alon Apteker, David Bird, Mike Lawrence, Barry Rigal, and Tadashi Teramoto.



Ben Green

SET 3 – THE PANEL'S BIDS & MARKS

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
Ben Green	England	5♥	5♥	2NT	5♠	1NT	Pass	Pass	4♥	76
Alon Apteker	South Africa	7♠	5♠	Pass	3♠	1NT	5NT	2♠	4♥	75
David Bird	England	7♠	5♥	2♥	3♠	1NT	5♣	3♦	3♠	75
Mike Lawrence	USA	7♠	5♥	2NT	4♦	3♦	Pass	Pass	4♥	75
Barry Rigal	USA	5♥	5♥	2NT	4♠	Pass	4NT	3♣	4♥	75
Tadashi Teramoto	Japan	5♥	5♥	2NT	5♦	Pass	Pass	Pass	4♥	75
Drew Cannell	Canada	6♥	4NT	2NT	4♠	1NT	5♣	4♥	4♥	74
Bobby Wolff	USA	7♠	Pass	2NT	3♠	Pass	5♠	2NT	4♥	74
John Carruthers	Canada	7♥	5♥	2NT	3♠	2♦	5♣	4♥	3♠	73
Andrew Robson	England	5♥	5♥	Pass	5♦	Pass	5NT	3♦	4♥	73
Marc Smith	England	7♠	5♥	1NT	3♠	1NT	5♣	3♦	3♠	73
Phillip Alder	USA	7♥	5♥	Pass	4♠	1NT	6♣	4♥	4♥	72
Iain Sime	Scotland	5♥	Pass	Pass	3♠	Pass	Pass	Pass	3♠	72
Eric Kokish	Canada	4NT	Pass	Pass	4♦	1NT	5♠	3♣	3♠	71
Michael Byrne	England	7♠	5NT	2♦	5♠	1NT	4NT	2NT	4♥	70
Paul Bowyer	England	7♠	6♠	2NT	6♣	1NT	5♠	Pass	3NT	69
Liz McGowan	Scotland	7♠	4NT	1NT	4♦	Pass	4NT	2NT	3♠	69
Neil Rosen	England	5♥	5NT	Pass	4♦	Pass	5♣	3♣	3NT	69
Enri Leufkens	Netherlands	5♥	Pass	2♥	3♠	1NT	6♣	4♥	3♠	67



Master Point Bidding Battle Competition – Set 4

Open to All – Free Entry

PROBLEM 1

IMPs. Dealer West. E/W Vul.

♠ J53
♥ A865
♦ AKQ873
♣ —

West	North	East	South
1♦	Pass	1NT	Double*
?			

Dble takeout of diamonds

PROBLEM 2

IMPs. Dealer West. E/W Vul.

♠ Q987532
♥ Q
♦ K
♣ Q1032

West	North	East	South
?			

PROBLEM 3

IMPs. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

♠ 105
♥ K9
♦ AK854
♣ AKQJ

West	North	East	South
—	—	—	3♠
?			

PROBLEM 4

IMPs. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

♠ Q1085
♥ 102
♦ 986
♣ AQ102

West	North	East	South
—	—	—	1♦
Pass	1♥	2♥*	Pass
?			

2♥ Natural

PROBLEM 5

IMPs. Dealer West. None Vul.

♠ 865
♥ A72
♦ AKJ53
♣ AK

West	North	East	South
1♦	2♥*	3♦	3♠
?			

2♥ Natural and weak

PROBLEM 6

IMPs. Dealer East. All Vul.

♠ 7
♥ K1052
♦ J76
♣ KJ1063

West	North	East	South
—	—	1♦	Pass
1♥	Pass	4♥*	Pass
?			

4♥ 18-19 bal. or equivalent. Denies a splinter

PROBLEM 7

IMPs. Dealer West. All Vul.

♠ 632
♥ QJ764
♦ AKQ6
♣ 5

West	North	East	South
1♥	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♦	Pass	2♠*	Pass
?			

2♠ Fourth suit forcing

PROBLEM 8

IMPs. Dealer North. All Vul.

♠ K
♥ J4
♦ Q107643
♣ J863

West	North	East	South
—	3♥	Double	Pass
4♦	Pass	4♥	Pass
?			

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♣ with 3-3 or 4-4, so 1♦ 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

2♣ shows 23+ balanced or any game forcing hand
Weak 2♦, 2♥ and 2♠ (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♣ asks for a singleton with 3NT showing a singleton ♣. 4♣ is RKCB

Three-level openings are natural and pre-emptive. Over 3♦/♥/♠, 4♣ is RKCB and over 3♣, 4♦ is RKCB.

3NT opening is Acoll gambling – solid suit and at most a queen outside.

Four-level openings are natural.

No-trump bidding:

After 1NT 15 – 17, 2♣ = Stayman, 2♦/2♥ = transfers, 2♠ = ♣s with 2NT/3♣ denying/showing a fit, 2NT = ♦s with 3♣/♦ denying/showing a fit. After this new suits are splinters. 3♣ is 5 card Stayman, 3♦ is 5-5 ms FG, 3♥/♠ 1-3-(4-5) / 3-1-(4-5) and FG. 4♣ is 5-5 majors, game only, 4♦/♥ = ♥/♠s (then 4NT = RKCB and new suits are Exclusion).

1NT rebid = 12 – 14 with 2♣ a puppet to 2♦ to play in 2♦ or make an invitational bid, 2♦ 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♣ = Stayman, 3♦/3♥ = transfers, 3♠ = slam try with both minors. Four-level bids are as after 1NT opening.

Kokish is played after 2♣ opening (2♣-2♦-2♥-2♠-2NT is 25+ balanced FG, and 2♣-2♦-2NT is 23-24 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♦, 2♥ is weak, 1♦, 1♥, 2♣ 2♥ is invitational; 1♦, 1♥, 2♣, 3♥ is FG).

2NT after 1♣/1♦ is natural and invitational without 4M.

2NT after 1♥/1♠ = game-forcing with 4+ card support. Continuations in new suits are splinters, 3♥/♠ extras with no singleton, 3NT = 18-19 balanced, 4 new suits are 5-5 good suits, 4♥/♠ 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

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.

Reverses are forcing for one round after a one-level 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♥/1♠. 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♦/♥. 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♠ (eg 1NT – 2♥ – 3♠) 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♣/♦ are Leaping Michaels (5,5 in ♣/♦ and oM, FG). Over Natural weak 2♦, 4♣ = Leaping Michaels (5, 5 in ♣ & a M with 4♦ to ask for M). Over 3♣, 4♣ = Ms and 4♦ = ♦&M with 4♥/♠ as P/C. Over 3♦, 4♣ = Nat and 4♦ = Ms. Over 3♥, 4♣/♦ = Nat, 4♥ = ♠&m, 4NT = ms. Over 3♠, 4♠/♦/♥ = nat, 4♠/4NT = two-suiter

Over their 1NT, Double = pens, 2♣ = majors, 2♦ = 1 major, 2♥/♠ = 5♥/♠ & 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
April 2018 The Auction Room

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 North. E/W Vul.

♠ AQ10
♥ KQJ432
♦ 7
♣ A86

Hand 2. Dealer South. N/S Vul.

♠ K7
♥ AQJ863
♦ Q
♣ AK109

South opens 1♦ and rebids 3♣

Hand 3. Dealer North. None Vul.

♠ Q
♥ A10962
♦ QJ852
♣ A8

Hand 4.. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

♠ A6
♥ KQJ82
♦ 63
♣ J864

North opens 2♦ (weak) and South raises to 5♦.

Hand 5. Dealer West. Both Vul.

♠ A42
♥ KJ3
♦ 32
♣ KQJ108

After 1♣-1♠ South doubles and North bids 2♦

Hand 6. Dealer East. Both Vul.

♠ Q1096
♥ AK74
♦ AKQ
♣ 76

Hand 7. Dealer West. None Vul.

♠ A8
♥ A854
♦ AKQJ53
♣ 8

Hand 8. Dealer East. Both Vul.

♠ Q5
♥ 9
♦ J964
♣ AKQ762

MASTER POINT BIDDING BATTLE



Results - Set 2

José Eduardo de Souza Campos Filho from Brazil tops the scores this month with 76 and so claims the first prize of a £40 Gift Certificate. Joint second with 75 were **Peter Barker** (New Zealand) and **Stuart Nelson** one mark behind the winner with 75. Mrs T's head-gear was pressed into action yet again and Stuart was the fortunate one and so wins £30 whilst Peter will receive a £20 Gift Certificate from Master Point Press. There was a three-way tie for fourth on a score of 74 between **Mark Burtusek**, **Alex Athanasiadis** and **Frank Turton**. A further dip into Mrs T's hat produced the name of Alex and so he wins the £10 voucher.

When three rounds have been completed we shall start giving the Grand Prix standings.

Other Good Scores

73 *Andrew King, Rodney Lighton*
72 *Lajos Hajdu, Mike Ralph*
71 *George Willett*
70 *Pär Ol-Märs, Bato Protega*
69 *Bill Linton*

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
April 2018 The Auction Room

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 North. E/W Vul.

♠ K876
♥ A76
♦ A105
♣ K53

Hand 2. Dealer South. N/S Vul.

♠ AJ64
♥ K975
♦ J1096
♣ 5

South opens 1♦ and rebids 3♣

Hand 3. Dealer North. None Vul.

♠ K762
♥ KQJ7
♦ —
♣ KQ1052

Hand 4.. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

♠ KQJ73
♥ 10974
♦ AJ
♣ AQ

North opens 2♦ (weak) and South raises to 5♦.

Hand 5. Dealer West. Both Vul.

♠ KQ76
♥ Q94
♦ 1076
♣ A76

After 1♣-1♠ South doubles and North bids 2♦

Hand 6. Dealer East. Both Vul.

♠ AKJ53
♥ 3
♦ 94
♣ AK1042

Hand 7. Dealer West. None Vul.

♠ Q5
♥ J62
♦ 1084
♣ AKQJ7

Hand 8. Dealer East. Both Vul.

♠ AJ642
♥ AJ6
♦ KQ872
♣ —

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.