

A NEW BRIDGE MAGAZINE

The Big Match

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A NEW BRIDGE MAGAZINE

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Ph.D. in Bridge

The Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Stirling in Scotland seeks a Ph.D. candidate to undertake a three-year project for the first-ever doctoral research project on bridge. This three year, fully-funded Ph.D. studentship offers an exciting opportunity to contribute to the development of a new, innovative academic field: the Sociology of Bridge. The results of this research studentship will be beneficial to the wider bridge community, providing insights into why people play, as well as what helps and hinders their learning.

For further information and application details see: <https://www.findaphd.com/search/projectdetails.aspx?PJID=97713> The closing date for applications is 22 June 2018.

Under Fire

Bahar Gidwani, Chief Executive Officer of the ACBL, has been relieved of his duties. According to ACBL President Jay Whipple, "While Mr. Gidwani brought many new ideas to the organization, we regret there are issues that remain unresolved despite counselling by the Board of Directors." For legal reasons, Whipple cannot elaborate further. The Board of Directors has appointed Chief Financial Officer Joe Jones to fill the role of acting CEO until a successor is named. A search committee has been formed and work is underway to fill the position. Gidwani had been in the job for less than one year.

Ambassador from Waikato

The talents and enthusiasm of Jane Stearns from Cambridge have been recognised and put to

good use by New Zealand Bridge. Jane has addressed the regional conferences of Canterbury, Auckland, Otago, and the Central District's annual conference. Her main message is of fundamental importance: how to arrest the falling numbers in bridge.



Jane has done sterling work in revitalising several clubs around the district. She will "adopt" a club for a year, working with the committee and the members to get lots of learners along to the lessons which she presents using NZB material. There's often refurbishment of the premises, a new website, involvement in X-Clubs ... in truth - a veritable make-over of the whole club. Starting with her time as Club Captain at Cambridge, Jane has used her special magic to breathe new life into Te Aroha, Te Awamutu, Matamata, and this year Putaruru/Tokoroa.

Using material from her more advanced Nesting Pairs programme (which is designed to build partnerships) her trips away have often involved giving seminars at clubs in the region in the week leading up to the regional conference. Read about Jane's journey through Central Districts by clicking here

Forty Years On

In June 1978 an article by David Bird entitled Bridge in the Vicarage appeared in Bridge Magazine. It introduced the Abbot and the monks of St Titus and this month's article marks David's remarkable achievement of having entertained the

world's bridge players with their sometimes hilarious adventures for forty years.

To mark the occasion we are delighted to include the original article in this issue – one of my all time favourites.

EBL News

This month, in the first of what we hope will become a regular series, we highlight the activities of the European Bridge League. You can follow the 2018 European Championships in Ostend between 6 & 16 June. Once again the EBL are leading the way by using professional commentators for the BBO coverage.

Promotion

The third edition of the Asia Cup is taking place in Goa this month and I have been helping with the preparation of the Souvenir Brochure and the Bulletins. My old friend Subir Roy has suggested that in today's age of 365 day sales and Buy 1 get 1 Free, it might be a 'Unique Selling Point' to promote the magazine with the catch line- Buy None Get One Free.

Madeira XXI

You can see details of this year's Madeira Festival in this issue (page 96). Considered by many to be the best in the world it offers significant discounts to those who book before the end of July 2018. A New Bridge Magazine will be producing the Daily Bulletin and your Editor will be reviewing the previous day's play every morning.

Read, Mark, Learn

Some years ago a magazine called European Bridge conducted a survey among leading experts about the best way to improve one's game. The overwhelming majority strongly advocated reading as an essential ingredient.

From time to time we will review the latest books and to make life a little simpler we have enlisted the help of three of the leading suppliers of books (and all things bridge related). North American readers can contact Baron Barclay Bridge Supply; The United Kingdom and Europe will be able to call upon the services of Chess & Bridge and those of you in the Southern hemisphere will be able to utilise the services of Paul Lavings' Bridgegear.

To get to the relevant website all you have to do is click on any of the logos that you will see in the magazine or on our web site.



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Test Your Technique

with *Christophe Grosset*

see *Page 41*

♠ 87
♥ Q6
♦ QJ9865
♣ 765

♠ AQ
♥ K1053
♦ AK
♣ KQJ109

The bidding goes:

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|----------|-------|
| – | – | – | 2♣ |
| Pass | 2♦ | Pass | 2NT |
| Pass | 3NT | All Pass | |

How do you play on a spade lead?

The Big Match

The Editor reports on the 2018 Lady Milne Trophy.

The Holiday Inn in Edinburgh was the venue for the 2018 Lady Milne Trophy. England were hoping to retain the trophy but they were forced to make a late change when Abbey Smith was unable to take part.

This is how the teams lined up:

| | |
|-----------|--|
| Scotland | Abi Wilson & Sheila Adamson, Liz McGowan & Fiona McQuaker, Sam Punch & Paula Leslie, NPC Alan Goodman |
| England | Heather Dhondy & Sally Anoyrkatis, Alexandra Birchell & Qian Li, Claire Robinson & Heather Bakhshi, NPC David Burn |
| Ireland | Joan Kenny & Teresa Rigby, Anna Onishuk & Lucy Phelan, Gilda Pender & Hilary McDonagh, NPC Terry Walsh |
| Wales | Ceri Pierce & Maggie Pierce, Charlotte Ingham & Sue Ingham, Eleanor Price & Jennifer Wardell, NPC Gwynn Davis |
| SBU | Anne Symons & Helen Kane, Lucia Barrett & Veronica Guy, Laura Middleton & Julia Palmer, NPC Iain Sime |
| N.Ireland | Heather Hill & Clare Watson, Toni Sproule & Dymphna Friel, Florence Boyd & Shelagh McCaughan, NPC Alan Hill |

As an aside, I recently discovered a collection of short stories, Aberystwyth Boy, written by the Welsh non-playing captain, Gwynn Davis. They reflect his experiences of growing up in the seaside town of his birth between the ages of ten and eighteen. When I checked on Amazon I discovered it had nothing but five star reviews – and it deserves every one of them.

In the first round England, Scotland and Northern Ireland were winners, with England establishing a lead over the hosts which they gradually increased. With three matches completed the table looked like this:

| | |
|-----------|-------|
| England | 45.26 |
| Scotland | 40.65 |
| SBU | 28.37 |
| Ireland | 24.47 |
| N.Ireland | 21.63 |
| Wales | 19.62 |

The top two were to meet in Round 4 in a match that would go a long way to determining who would end up holding the trophy.

Board 1. Dealer North. None Vul.

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------|---|----------|---|--|---|--|---|--|---|--|--|
| ♠ K8 | | ♠ AQ74 | | | | | | | | | |
| ♥ AJ7 | | ♥ Q10965 | | | | | | | | | |
| ♦ A32 | | ♦ 54 | | | | | | | | | |
| ♣ KJ1042 | | ♣ 73 | | | | | | | | | |
| ♠ 1093 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ♥ K4 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ♦ Q10976 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ♣ Q96 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | <table border="1"> <tbody> <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> </tbody> </table> | | N | | W | | E | | S | | |
| | N | | | | | | | | | | |
| W | | E | | | | | | | | | |
| | S | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | ♠ J652 | | | | | | | | | |
| | | ♥ 832 | | | | | | | | | |
| | | ♦ KJ8 | | | | | | | | | |
| | | ♣ A85 | | | | | | | | | |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|------------|-------------------------|----------|--------|
| Anoyrkatis | Leslie | Dhondy | Punch |
| – | 1NT* | 2♣* | Double |
| Pass | 3NT | All Pass | |
| 1NT | 14-16 | | |
| 2♣ | Hearts and another suit | | |

England's Captain, David Burn was following the match on BBO and was not sure about the meaning of West's pass. One well known ption is for it to deny three hearts, but you need to agree if it promises real clubs. I wonder what East would have done if North had passed the double?

When East led the ♣7 declarer took West's queen with the king and cashed four more tricks in the suit, discarding the major suit twos from dummy as West parted with her remaining nines and East her lowest card

in each suit. Declarer's next move was to play a diamond to the jack and West won and switched to the ♥K. Declarer won, cashed two diamonds ending in dummy and played a spade to the king. East won, but was endplayed, forced to give up the game going trick in one of the majors.

When she was in with the queen of diamonds, West was right to switch to hearts, but she needed to play the four.

East wins and returns a heart and declarer cannot take more than eight tricks.

Declarer did not need to take the diamond finesse – she could have established a ninth trick by playing on spades – perhaps a little easier to do if East's overcall had shown the majors.

| | | |
|----------|----------|----------|
| ♠ 1093 | ♠ K8 | ♠ AQ74 |
| ♥ K4 | ♥ AJ7 | ♥ Q10965 |
| ♦ Q10976 | ♦ A32 | ♦ 54 |
| ♣ Q96 | ♣ KJ1042 | ♣ 73 |
| | ♠ J652 | |
| | ♥ 832 | |
| | ♦ KJ8 | |
| | ♣ A85 | |

Board 4. Dealer West. All Vul.

| | | |
|--------|-----------|---------|
| ♠ A942 | ♠ K1086 | ♠ J53 |
| ♥ 752 | ♥ J8 | ♥ A9 |
| ♦ KQ6 | ♦ AJ852 | ♦ 1043 |
| ♣ A102 | ♣ QJ | ♣ 97543 |
| | ♠ Q7 | |
| | ♥ KQ10643 | |
| | ♦ 97 | |
| | ♣ K86 | |

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|----------|----------|--------|-------|
| Adamson | Birchall | Wilson | Li |
| – | 1NT* | 2♣* | Pass |
| 2♠ | 3♣ | Pass | 3NT |
| All Pass | | | |
| 1NT | 15-17 | | |
| 2♣ | Majors | | |

I have my doubts about this auction – did South really pass?

East led the ♠4 and declarer won with the king and decided to cash the king of clubs and then run the jack, West winning with the queen. Here too a low heart return is effective but hard to find and West returned the ♥K. Declarer won with the ace, crossed to the ace of clubs, returned to hand with a diamond and cashed two more clubs, pitching hearts from dummy, East coming down to ♠AQ ♥Q10 ♦4. Now the winning line is to play a spade. East wins and exits with a diamond, but declarer takes dummy's king and exits with a spade forcing East to surrender a heart trick. When declarer tried the diamond finesse West won and returned her remaining heart putting the contract two down, an 11 IMP start for Scotland.

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|------------|-----------------------|----------|-------|
| Anoyrkatis | Leslie | Dhondy | Punch |
| 1♣* | 1♦ | Pass | 1♥ |
| Pass | 1♠ | Pass | 3♥ |
| Pass | 4♥ | All Pass | |
| 1♣ | 1+♣ (only if 4-4-4-1) | | |

Faced with a choice between rebidding 2♥ or pushing with 3♥ South, despite her dubiously placed ♣K (as is often the case in this situation, appearances can be deceptive) selected the aggressive action.

West led the ♥2 and East won with the ace and switched to the ♣7, West winning with the ace. At this stage it is essential for West to play a diamond honour. When she returned a heart declarer drew trumps and played a spade to the king followed by a spade to the queen and ace. Only now did West play the ♦Q but declarer won with dummy's ace and ruffed a spade, the appearance of the jack providing a discard for her losing diamond on dummy's ♠10, +620.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|----------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------|
| <i>Adamson</i> | <i>Birchall</i> | <i>Wilson</i> | <i>Li</i> |
| 1♣ | 1♦ | Pass | 1♥ |
| Pass | 1♠ | Pass | 1NT |
| All Pass | | | |

West led the ♠2 and when East contributed the three declarer won with the seven and played a heart to the jack, East taking the ace and switching to the ♣7.

West took the ace and returned the ten and declarer won in dummy and knocked out the ♠A for ten tricks, +180, but a loss of 10 IMPs.

| | | | |
|---------|--|-----------|--|
| ♠ K1086 | | | |
| ♥ J8 | | | |
| ♦ AJ852 | | | |
| ♣ QJ | | | |
| ♠ A942 | | ♠ J53 | |
| ♥ 752 | | ♥ A9 | |
| ♦ KQ6 | | ♦ 1043 | |
| ♣ A102 | | ♣ 97543 | |
| | | ♠ Q7 | |
| | | ♥ KQ10643 | |
| | | ♦ 97 | |
| | | ♣ K86 | |

Declarer won perforce with the ace, tested the clubs and claimed eight tricks when they broke, +120.

Had the contract been 3NT declarer would have had excellent chances of taking nine tricks, as the only 100% way for the defenders to prevail after a diamond lead and heart switch is for South to win the first round with the king (!) and then return the six.

To see why this is important imagine South wins the first heart with the jack and returns the king. Declarer wins and cashes the ♦K followed by five clubs. The last of these will be too much for North, down to ♠KJ ♥Q10 ♦3. Retaining the ♥K (as at the table) allows declarer to develop the diamonds.

Board 6. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

| | | | |
|---------|--|----------|--|
| ♠ KJ5 | | | |
| ♥ Q1094 | | | |
| ♦ A32 | | | |
| ♣ 763 | | | |
| ♠ A92 | | ♠ Q73 | |
| ♥ 7532 | | ♥ A8 | |
| ♦ 6 | | ♦ KJ1098 | |
| ♣ KQ985 | | ♣ A102 | |
| | | ♠ 10864 | |
| | | ♥ KJ6 | |
| | | ♦ Q754 | |
| | | ♣ J4 | |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|-------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|
| <i>Anoyrkatis</i> | <i>Leslie</i> | <i>Dhondy</i> | <i>Punch</i> |
| – | – | 1NT | Pass |
| 2♣* | Pass | 2♦* | Pass |
| 2NT | All Pass | | |

South led the four of diamonds and North won with the ace and switched to the four of hearts, South winning with the jack and returning the six.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|----------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------|
| <i>Adamson</i> | <i>Birchall</i> | <i>Wilson</i> | <i>Li</i> |
| – | – | 1♦ | Pass |
| 1♥ | Pass | 2♣ | Pass |
| 3♣ | Pass | 3♠ | Pass |
| 5♣ | All Pass | | |

East could not rebid 1NT – it would have promised 18-19.

To be sure of defeating 5♣ South must find a heart lead which is virtually impossible.

She went with the ♠4 and declarer, not blessed with second sight, played low from dummy, North winning with the king. Now a heart switch is required, but when North returned the ♠J declarer won with the queen, took dummy's top clubs and played a diamond. When North went up with the ace declarer was spared a guess and she won the trump return and took a ruffing finesse in diamonds for +600 and another 10 IMPs to Scotland, well ahead at this stage to the tune of 37-0.

Board 10. Dealer East. All Vul.

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| ♠ K105 ♥ 9543 ♦ 95 ♣ 10953 | ♠ QJ7 ♥ AKQ762 ♦ A10 ♣ KQ <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 60px; margin: 0 auto; text-align: center;"> N W E S </div> | ♠ 9642 ♥ J108 ♦ K762 ♣ J8 ♠ A83 ♥ — ♦ QJ843 ♣ A7642 |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|-------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|
| <i>Anoyrkatis</i> | <i>Leslie</i> | <i>Dhondy</i> | <i>Punch</i> |
| – | – | Pass | 1♦ |
| Pass | 1♥ | Pass | 2♣ |
| Pass | 2♠* | Pass | 3♣ |
| Pass | 3♥ | Pass | 3NT |
| Pass | 6NT | All Pass | |

2♠ Fourth-suit forcing

At double-dummy you can make 6♦, declarer leaving trumps well alone after a club lead, eventually getting home via a cross-ruff.

West led the ♥3 and declarer won with dummy's ace pitching a spade, unblocked dummy's clubs and then played three rounds of hearts pitching another spade and two diamonds. West won and returned the ♣10, declarer winning with the ace and playing a diamond to the ten. East won and played a spade, so that was one down, -100.

Closed Room

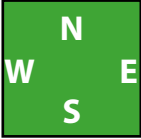
| West | North | East | South |
|----------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------|
| <i>Adamson</i> | <i>Birchall</i> | <i>Wilson</i> | <i>Li</i> |
| – | – | Pass | 1♦ |
| Pass | 1♥ | Pass | 2♣ |
| Pass | 2♠* | Pass | 3♣ |
| Pass | 3♥ | Pass | 3NT |
| Pass | 4♣ | Pass | 4♠* |
| Double | 6NT | All Pass | |

2♠ Fourth-suit forcing
4♠ Cue-bid

West elected to lead the ♠5 and declarer won with dummy's jack. That was a good start but it was still not obvious how declarer could arrive at twelve tricks. Her next move was to cash dummy's ♦A and continue with the ♦10. If East wins this and plays a spade, declarer wins with the ace and cashes three diamonds, squeezing West in three suits.

When East played low declarer may have considered overtaking with the queen, hoping for a doubleton nine or a 3-3 break, but that is a much easier play to find on paper. When the ten held she cashed the king of clubs and then played four rounds of hearts, throwing West in. If declarer had come down to ♠A8 ♣A76 she would have made the contract, but her first discard on the hearts was the ♠8 and West could exit safely with a spade, ensuring one down and flattening the deal.

Board 11. Dealer South. None Vul.

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ♠ — ♥ A943 ♦ J87542 ♣ K109 |  | ♠ KJ652 ♥ K76 ♦ 63 ♣ QJ5 | ♠ A9 ♥ Q85 ♦ AKQ9 ♣ 8763 |
|-------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|-------------------|--|---------------|--------------|
| <i>Anoyrkatis</i> | <i>Leslie</i> | <i>Dhondy</i> | <i>Punch</i> |
| – | – | – | 1NT* |
| 2♠ | 3♣* | 4♠ | 5♦ |
| All Pass | | | |
| 1NT | 14-16 | | |
| 3♣ | Diamonds with at least invitational values | | |


4♠ doubled would have cost -300, but on this layout 5♦ was unbeatable. Declarer ruffed the spade lead in dummy, drew trumps, pitched a club on the ♠A, played a heart to the ace, a heart to the queen and a heart, +400.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|----------------|--|---------------|-----------|
| <i>Adamson</i> | <i>Birchall</i> | <i>Wilson</i> | <i>Li</i> |
| – | – | – | 1NT* |
| 2♦* | 3♣* | 3♥* | 3NT |
| All Pass | | | |
| 1NT | 15-17 | | |
| 2♦ | Multi Landy, one major | | |
| 3♣ | Diamonds with at least invitational values | | |
| 3♥ | Pass or correct | | |

West led the ♠7 and declarer ducked, won the next spade and rattled off the diamonds. However, there was no pressure on anyone (she would have had some minor chances of a defensive error if West had held the ♥K) and there were only eight tricks. Trying for an endplay declarer went two down and Scotland gained another 11 IMPs to lead 53-6.

Board 13. Dealer North. All Vul.

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ♠ — ♥ K87 ♦ K875 ♣ KQ10865 |  | ♠ KJ10853 ♥ Q104 ♦ 10 ♣ A74 | ♠ AQ76 ♥ 952 ♦ QJ9642 ♣ — |
|-------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|-------------------|--|---------------|--------------|
| <i>Anoyrkatis</i> | <i>Leslie</i> | <i>Dhondy</i> | <i>Punch</i> |
| – | 1♣* | 2♠ | Double* |
| 4♦* | Pass | 4♠ | All Pass |
| 1♣ | 2+♣, natural or balanced, (5♦ min opening possible) generally, 9+ points/6-card suit (11+ if balanced) | | |
| 4♦ | Fit jump | | |

Do you blame South for leading a club, which allowed declarer to dispose of a heart from dummy, after which taking ten tricks was never in doubt, +620.

More to the point, what do you make of the auction?

With E/W almost certainly having a ten card fit in spades North was known to be void and must therefore have real clubs. That makes the South hand a monster and at the very least South should bid 5♣. 4NT might be the best bid although it would not be easy for North to do more than bid 5♣.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|----------------|---|---------------|-----------|
| <i>Adamson</i> | <i>Birchall</i> | <i>Wilson</i> | <i>Li</i> |
| – | 1♣* | 1♠ | Double* |
| 3♦* | Pass | 3♠ | All Pass |
| 1♣ | 2+♣, clubs or balanced 11-14/18-19, with no 5-card suit can have 4 diamonds | | |
| 3♦ | Fit jump | | |

| | | |
|-----------|----------|-----------|
| ♠ — | ♠ — | ♠ KJ10853 |
| ♥ K87 | ♥ 952 | ♥ Q104 |
| ♦ K875 | ♦ QJ9642 | ♦ 10 |
| ♣ KQ10865 | ♣ — | ♣ A74 |
| ♠ AQ76 | ♠ 942 | ♠ — |
| ♥ AJ63 | ♥ — | ♥ — |
| ♦ A3 | ♦ — | ♦ — |
| ♣ J932 | ♣ — | ♣ — |

Here too South's decision to pass is hard to explain.

She led the ♦A but continued the suit, after which declarer could have taken twelve tricks. She finished with ten, +170, but that gave England 10 IMPs, now trailing 16-53.

Board 16. Dealer West. E/W Vul.

| | | |
|----------|--------|---------|
| ♠ 10 | ♠ K543 | ♠ 986 |
| ♥ A4 | ♥ 975 | ♥ J1083 |
| ♦ AJ986 | ♦ K102 | ♦ 543 |
| ♣ KJ1098 | ♣ A73 | ♣ Q65 |
| ♠ AQJ72 | ♠ — | ♠ — |
| ♥ KQ62 | ♥ — | ♥ — |
| ♦ Q7 | ♦ — | ♦ — |
| ♣ 42 | ♣ — | ♣ — |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|-------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|
| <i>Anoyrkatis</i> | <i>Leslie</i> | <i>Dhondy</i> | <i>Punch</i> |
| 1♦ | Pass | Pass | Double |
| 2♣ | 2♠ | 3♦ | 4♠ |
| All Pass | | | |

East led the ♣5 and declarer ducked the first round of the suit, took the next with the ace and played two rounds of spades, West pitching the ♦9. A heart for the eight, queen and ace left declarer with no way to avoid the loss of a heart and a diamond, -50.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|----------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------|
| <i>Adamson</i> | <i>Birchall</i> | <i>Wilson</i> | <i>Li</i> |
| 1♦ | Pass | Pass | 1♠ |
| 2♣ | 2NT* | Pass | 4♠ |
| All Pass | | | |

2NT Spade raise

With an awkward lead West went with the ♥A which handed declarer the contract on a plate, +420 and 10 badly needed IMPs for England who trailed 26-53 at the interval.

You can replay these deals [here](#) or <https://tinyurl.com/ycl5yllz>

Board 21. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

| | | |
|----------|----------|---------|
| ♠ K7 | ♠ Q1084 | ♠ AJ965 |
| ♥ A95 | ♥ Q6 | ♥ 873 |
| ♦ KJ76 | ♦ 109 | ♦ A853 |
| ♣ AK74 | ♣ 109653 | ♣ Q |
| ♠ 32 | ♠ — | ♠ — |
| ♥ KJ1042 | ♥ — | ♥ — |
| ♦ Q42 | ♦ — | ♦ — |
| ♣ J82 | ♣ — | ♣ — |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|------------|---------------------|--------|-------|
| Anoyrkatis | Leslie | Dhondy | Punch |
| – | Pass | 1♠ | Pass |
| 2♣ | Pass | 2♦ | Pass |
| 2♥* | Pass | 2♠ | Pass |
| 3♦ | Pass | 3♥* | Pass |
| 4NT* | Pass | 5♥* | Pass |
| 6♦ | All Pass | | |
| 2♥ | Fourth-suit forcing | | |
| 3♥ | Fifth-suit forcing | | |
| 4NT | RKCB | | |
| 5♥ | 2 key cards | | |

| | | | |
|----------|--|--|----------|
| ♠ Q 1084 | | | |
| ♥ Q6 | | | |
| ♦ 109 | | | |
| ♣ 109653 | | | |
| ♠ K7 | | | ♠ AJ965 |
| ♥ A95 | | | ♥ 873 |
| ♦ KJ76 | | | ♦ A853 |
| ♣ AK74 | | | ♣ Q |
| | | | ♠ 32 |
| | | | ♥ KJ1042 |
| | | | ♦ Q42 |
| | | | ♣ J82 |

When East bid 3♥ she was clearly looking for a heart stopper, which indicated she had no wasted values in hearts. With all her cards working West asked for key cards.

South led the ♣8 (second and fourth) and declarer won in hand with the queen, cashed the ace of diamonds and played a diamond to the king. She pitched two hearts on dummy's top clubs and played three rounds of spades, ruffing in dummy. After cashing the ♥A she cross-ruffed the majors for twelve tricks, +920.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|----------|-----------------|---------|----------|
| McQuaker | Bakhshi | McGowan | Robinson |
| – | Pass | Pass | 2♦ |
| Double | 2♥* | 3♠ | Pass |
| 4♠ | All Pass | | |
| 2♦ | Weak Multi, 3-8 | | |
| 2♥ | Pass or correct | | |

The combination of East's initial pass and South's aggressive opening left E/W with little chance of reaching a slam.

South led the ♥J and declarer went up with dummy's ace, crossed to the ♣Q and took two rounds of spades ending in dummy. She pitched two hearts on the top clubs, ruffed a heart, cashed the top diamonds and ruffed a heart, +420 but 11 IMPs to England.

On Board 25 both teams saw fit to reach 6♦ with ♠KJ ♥AKQ84 ♦A72 ♣Q102 opposite ♠Q10 ♥1052 ♦KQJ1054 ♣K7, Scotland bidding 2NT-6♦, West cashing her pair of aces, while England took a slower route (2NT-4♠*-5♣*-5♥*-6♦) that left East (who held ♠953 ♥963 ♦986 ♣J965) on lead. Liz McGowan tabled the ♣5 to ensure there was no swing.

Board 26. Dealer East. All Vul.

| | | | |
|-----------|--|-----------|--------|
| | | ♠ 6 | |
| | | ♥ A987543 | |
| | | ♦ J1075 | |
| | | ♣ 2 | |
| ♠ AQ95 | | | ♠ J82 |
| ♥ K | | | ♥ QJ62 |
| ♦ 4 | | | ♦ KQ86 |
| ♣ KQJ8653 | | | ♣ 97 |
| | | ♠ K10743 | |
| | | ♥ 10 | |
| | | ♦ A932 | |
| | | ♣ A104 | |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|------------|--------|--------|----------|
| Anoyrkatis | Leslie | Dhondy | Punch |
| – | – | Pass | 1♠ |
| 2♣ | 2♥ | Pass | 2♠ |
| 3♣ | 3♥ | Pass | 4♥ |
| Pass | Pass | Double | All Pass |

That looks like an auction from the Hammer House of Bridge Horrors. Looking at the convention card it appears that 2♥ was constructive but not forcing.

East led the ♣9 and declarer won with dummy's ace (West contributing the king) played a heart to the ace and the ♥9, East winning as a spade went from dummy and West pitched the ♣8. Declarer ruffed the club return and played the ♥8, East winning and switching to the two of spades for the king and ace. West returned the ♣Q, ruffed and overruffed

and East exited with the ♠J, declarer ruffing. She was down to the ♥7 and ♦J1075 while dummy held ♠10 ♦A932. Incredibly declarer cashed the ♥7 and only then played the ♦J covered by the queen and ace. That was declarer's last trick, four down, -1100.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|-----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| <i>McQuaker</i> | <i>Bakhshi</i> | <i>McGowan</i> | <i>Robinson</i> |
| - | - | Pass | 1♠ |
| 2♣ | All Pass | | |

North led her spade, declarer taking South's ten with the queen and playing the queen of clubs. It was not long before she was claiming nine tricks, +110 and 14 IMPs that brought England to within 5 IMPs at 54-59.

Board 27. Dealer South. None Vul.

| | | | |
|-----------|---------|----------|--|
| | ♠ KQ5 | | |
| | ♥ 7543 | | |
| | ♦ J10 | | |
| | ♣ 10984 | | |
| ♠ A4 | | ♠ 108732 | |
| ♥ A106 | | ♥ J9 | |
| ♦ AQ86543 | | ♦ K7 | |
| ♣ J | | ♣ AKQ3 | |
| | ♠ J96 | | |
| | ♥ KQ82 | | |
| | ♦ 92 | | |
| | ♣ 7652 | | |

| | | | |
|-----------|-----------|--------|--|
| | ♠ 6 | | |
| | ♥ A987543 | | |
| | ♦ J1075 | | |
| | ♣ 2 | | |
| ♠ AQ95 | | ♠ J82 | |
| ♥ K | | ♥ QJ62 | |
| ♦ 4 | | ♦ KQ86 | |
| ♣ KQJ8653 | | ♣ 97 | |
| | ♠ K10743 | | |
| | ♥ 10 | | |
| | ♦ A932 | | |
| | ♣ A104 | | |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|-------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|
| <i>Anoyrkatis</i> | <i>Leslie</i> | <i>Dhondy</i> | <i>Punch</i> |
| - | - | - | Pass |
| 1♦ | Pass | 1♠ | Pass |
| 3♦ | Pass | 3NT | All Pass |

If you accept the concept that West's rebid shows seven or so playing tricks then I don't think East can simply sign off with 3NT – the clubs are a source of tricks and the king of diamonds is a monster. Put me down for 4♣ after which West will surely push on to a slam.

Declarer took all the tricks, +520.


Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|-----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| <i>McQuaker</i> | <i>Bakhshi</i> | <i>McGowan</i> | <i>Robinson</i> |
| - | - | - | Pass |
| 1♦ | Pass | 1♠ | Pass |
| 2♦ | Pass | 3♣ | Pass |
| 3♦ | Pass | 4♦* | Pass |
| 4♠* | Pass | 5♦* | Pass |
| 6♦ | All Pass | | |

4♦ Minorwood
 4♠ 0-3 key cards
 5♦ Sign off opposite 0 key cards

I prefer the 3♦ rebid found in the other room, but Liz McGowan appreciated the value of her hand in support of diamonds and Scotland had 9 IMPs, declarer winning the heart lead, drawing trumps and overtaking the ♣J. That gave Scotland a little breathing space at 68-54.

Board 28. Dealer West. N/S Vul.

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ♠ 1087632 ♥ 4 ♦ AJ5 ♣ 532 |  | ♠ AQJ94 ♥ KQJ63 ♦ 86 ♣ K | ♠ — ♥ 92 ♦ KQ10943 ♣ QJ986 |
|------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|-------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|
| <i>Anoyrkatis</i> | <i>Leslie</i> | <i>Dhondy</i> | <i>Punch</i> |
| 1♥ | Pass | 2NT* | Pass |
| 3♣ | Pass | 3♥ | Pass |
| 4♣* | Pass | 4♠ | Double |
| Redouble* | Pass | 5♣* | Pass |
| 5♥ | All Pass | | |

| | |
|-------|---------------------|
| 2NT | 4♥, game forcing |
| 4♣ | Cue-bid |
| 4♠ | Cue-bid |
| Rdble | First round control |
| 5♣ | Cue-bid |

North led the ♦A and when South followed with the ten she switched to the ♠7, South ruffing and cashing the ♦K for one down.

Closed Room


| West | North | East | South |
|-----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| <i>McQuaker</i> | <i>Bakhshi</i> | <i>McGowan</i> | <i>Robinson</i> |
| 1♥ | Pass | 2♠ | 4NT* |
| Pass | 5♣ | 5♥ | All Pass |

4NT Minors

There is an old Russian proverb – ‘When you have said A you have to say B’. Having been bold enough to bid 4NT should South have doubled 5♥? Assuming North gets the message and leads a suit preference ♠10 the defenders will collect +300.

As it was North led the ♣2 and declarer was soon inscribing +510 and 11 IMPs onto her score card.

Board 30. Dealer East. None Vul.

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ♠ A952 ♥ 1094 ♦ AJ10972 ♣ — |  | ♠ QJ6 ♥ J82 ♦ Q4 ♣ 109642 | ♠ K108 ♥ AQ7 ♦ K6 ♣ KQ873 |
|--------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|-------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|
| <i>Anoyrkatis</i> | <i>Leslie</i> | <i>Dhondy</i> | <i>Punch</i> |
| — | — | 1♣ | Pass |
| 1♦ | Pass | 2NT | Pass |
| 3♠ | Pass | 3NT | Pass |
| 4♦ | Pass | 4♥ | Double |
| 4♠ | Pass | 4NT | Pass |
| 5♥* | Pass | 6NT | All Pass |

I cannot improve on David Burn’s comment on BBO: ‘This, sadly for England, was the real bidding. The partnership’s methods allowed for East to have rebid 2NT with a four-card major, but when she could not raise spades West should have called it a day.

South led the ♠4 and declarer took North’s jack with the king, cashed the

king of diamonds and played a diamond to the jack and queen, North returning the ♥2. Declarer played low and South won with the king and cashed the ♣A for two down.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|----------|----------|---------|----------|
| McQuaker | Bakhshi | McGowan | Robinson |
| - | - | 1♣ | Pass |
| 1♦ | Pass | 1NT | Pass |
| 2♦ | Pass | 3♣ | Pass |
| 3NT | All Pass | | |

| | | |
|-----------|----------|---------|
| ♠ A952 | ♠ QJ6 | ♠ K108 |
| ♥ 1094 | ♥ J82 | ♥ AQ7 |
| ♦ AJ10972 | ♦ Q4 | ♦ K6 |
| ♣ — | ♣ 109642 | ♣ KQ873 |
| | | ♠ 743 |
| | | ♥ K653 |
| | | ♦ 853 |
| | | ♣ AJ5 |

The early play was more or less identical, but at the point where she won a trick with the heart king South returned a heart, declarer winning and running the ten of spades. North won with the queen and switched to the ♣9, South's ♣A giving the defenders their fourth and last trick, +400 and another 11 IMPs to Scotland who won 91-54 which left them at the top of the table:

| | |
|-----------|-------|
| Scotland | 56.89 |
| England | 49.02 |
| Ireland | 43.37 |
| Wales | 34.58 |
| SBU | 33.41 |
| N.Ireland | 22.73 |

Both teams won in the last round, the final table looking like this:

| | | |
|---|-----------|-------|
| 1 | Scotland | 72.13 |
| 2 | England | 68.70 |
| 3 | Ireland | 58.87 |
| 4 | Wales | 39.34 |
| 5 | SBU | 37.91 |
| 6 | N.Ireland | 23.05 |

So, a famous victory for Scotland, who took full advantage of England's mistakes.

You can replay these deals [here](#) or <https://tinyurl.com/ybxsd8u9>



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

EBL News May 2018

www.eurobridge.org



In this new feature we highlight the activities of the European Bridge League and its members.

The European Bridge League was established in 1947 by eight NBFs meeting in Denmark.

It is a confederation of National Bridge Federations that organise Bridge in European nations. In turn the EBL organises bridge competition at European level. It is a member of the European Olympic Committee and of the World Bridge Federation, where it constitutes one of eight Zones in world bridge. Currently it has 46 member countries with over 350,000 players, which represents 60% of the players falling under the auspices of the World Bridge Federation.

The next major event in the EBL's calendar will be European Team Championships in Ostend, the gateway to the 2019 World Bridge Championships.

During the championships the Election of the EBL President and the Executive Committee members will take place during the Ordinary General Assembly on Saturday 9 June at the Andromeda Hotel in Ostend.

These are the current officers:

| | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------|
| President | Yves Aubry | France |
| 1st Vice President | Marc De Pauw | Belgium |
| 2nd Vice President | Radoslaw Kielbasinski | Poland |
| Hon. Secretary | Paul Porteous | Ireland |
| Treasurer | Josef Harsanyi | Germany |
| Presidential Committee | Sevinc Atay | Turkey |
| | Filippo Palma | Italy |
| Members | Jurica Caric | Croatia |
| | Jan Kamras | Sweden |
| | Eric Laurant | Netherlands |
| | Eitan Levy | Israel |
| | Jafet Olafsson | Iceland |
| | David R.Harris | England |

| Country | Membership |
|----------------------|------------|
| Albania | 133 |
| Austria | 2,645 |
| Belarus | 71 |
| Belgium | 7,241 |
| Bosnia & Herzegovina | — |
| Bulgaria | 509 |
| Croatia | 589 |
| Cyprus | 325 |
| Czech Republic | 385 |
| Denmark | 21,399 |
| England | 36,101 |
| Estonia | 472 |
| Faroe Islands | 150 |
| Finland | 1,422 |
| France | 81,630 |
| Georgia | 42 |
| Germany | 23,943 |
| Greece | 3,840 |
| Hungary | 538 |
| Iceland | 780 |
| Ireland | 3,232 |
| Israel | 5,477 |
| Italy | 20,513 |

| Country | Membership |
|--------------|----------------|
| Latvia | 194 |
| Lebanon | 542 |
| Lithuania | — |
| Luxembourg | 50 |
| Malta | 82 |
| Monaco | 135 |
| Netherlands | 79,471 |
| Norway | 7,852 |
| Poland | 5,198 |
| Portugal | 810 |
| Romania | 462 |
| Russia | 960 |
| San Marino | 41 |
| Scotland | 5,796 |
| Serbia | 189 |
| Slovakia | 209 |
| Slovenia | 271 |
| Spain | 4,990 |
| Sweden | 22,523 |
| Switzerland | 3,373 |
| Turkey | 5,613 |
| Ukraine | 60 |
| Wales | 2,210 |
| Total | 352,468 |

Each country casts votes depending on the size of its membership.

During this month's European Championships in Ostend, Elections will be held for both the office of President and membership of the Executive.

It is perhaps a sign of the health of the EBL that there are a record number of candidates.

Candidates to the Executive Committee Legislature 2018 – 2022

Presidency

| | |
|--------------|----------------|
| Yves Aubry | <i>France</i> |
| Marc De Pauw | <i>Belgium</i> |
| Jan Kamras | <i>Sweden</i> |

Executive Committee

| | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Sevinç Atay | <i>Turkey</i> |
| Olivier Audouard | <i>France</i> |
| Peter Belčák | <i>Slovakia</i> |
| Jurica Carić | <i>Croatia</i> |
| Igor Chalupec | <i>Poland</i> |
| Francesco Conforti | <i>Italy</i> |
| Jean-Louis Counil | <i>France</i> |
| Philippe Cronier | <i>France</i> |
| Marc De Pauw | <i>Belgium</i> |
| Panos Gerontopoulos | <i>Greece</i> |
| David Harris | <i>England</i> |
| Josef Harsanyi | <i>Germany</i> |
| Jan Kamras | <i>Sweden</i> |
| Radoslaw Kielbasinski | <i>Poland</i> |
| Eric Laurant | <i>The Netherlands</i> |
| Eitan Levy | <i>Israel</i> |
| Elisa Nicolás-Correa | <i>Spain</i> |
| Gilad Ofir | <i>Israel</i> |
| George Oikonomopoulos | <i>Greece</i> |
| Jafet Ólafsson | <i>Iceland</i> |
| Kari-Anne Opsal | <i>Norway</i> |
| Paul Porteous | <i>Ireland</i> |

The Never Ending Story

Mark Horton recalls some of the highlights from the European Team Championships.

Many of the current giants of European Bridge are familiar with the seaside resort of Scheveningen, having played there in one of Europe's outstanding tournaments, the Forbo, successor in title to the Hoechst.

In a world where mind sports have increasing relevance, you may be surprised to learn that the same town also played host to numerous chess tournaments. It gave its name to one of the most important variations of the Sicilian, one that is still amongst the most popular in use today, the Scheveningen Defence.

However, perhaps its most enduring claim to fame is that seventy years ago a small group of countries took part in the inaugural European Open Bridge Championships in the Dutch coastal resort. The prime mover was the President of the Dutch League, M. Anthonie Lucardie, and the 10th of June 1932 witnessed the birth of a competition that has grown into perhaps the greatest Championship in the history of Bridge.

In those now far off years the Championships were dominated by Austria and Hungary, who between them won five of the seven contests between 1932 and 1939, only France and Sweden acting as interlopers. In 1935 the Women's Championship started and the following year Austria did the double, no doubt in part due to the performance of the legendary Rixi Markus. Born in Romania, she lived in Austria, but the war caused her to move to Great Britain, for whom she won seven of her ten titles, the last 40 years after her first victory with the Austrian team.

The Second World War meant that the Championships went into hibernation, but after the formation of the European Bridge League in 1947 they resumed in 1948, stronger than ever. In the years after the war, Great Britain was the team to beat, as they won in 1948, 1949 and 1950. They could call upon such great names as Terence Reese, Maurice Harrison-Gray, and Kenneth Konstant, the then Editor of Bridge Magazine who, with six victories, stands second on the all time list.

In 1951 a new name was added to the list of victorious countries, when Italy won for the first time. Two names stand out from that first victory, that of Pietro Forquet and the legendary Carlos Alberto Perroux, without

question the greatest captain in the history of Bridge.

It was five years before Italy won again, victory in Stockholm marking the birth of the legendary Blue Team, which is to give Italy a matchless series of successes spanning twenty years. This time the team includes one Giorgio Belladonna, who went on to record no less than ten victories in the Championships. The team also included Walter Averelli and Massimo d'Alelio, well known members of the *Squadra Azzura*. Eugenio Chiaradia must be mentioned, as he won the title five times, to stand third on the all time list, along with Forquet. This remarkable group of players were almost invincible, and they invented the famous 'Roman and Neapolitan Club' systems.

The Championships were marked by a dramatic conclusion. When Italy meet France in the final round they have 12 wins and two defeats. France, still undefeated, has conceded four draws. A draw will give Italy the title because they have more match points. At half time Italy leads by 7 points. This sensational deal at the start of the second half has entered into legend:

Dealer North. N/S Vul.

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| ♠ A9 ♥ 854 ♦ A2 ♣ AKQJ103 | ♠ — ♥ KQJ732 ♦ QJ10 ♣ 8654 | <div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #4CAF50; padding: 5px; width: 60px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div> | ♠ KQ107643 ♥ — ♦ K87653 ♣ — |
| ♠ J852 ♥ A1096 ♦ 94 ♣ 972 | | | |

In the Open Room North passes and France bid and make Six Spades.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|-------------------|-------------|----------------|---------------|
| <i>Siniscalco</i> | <i>Jais</i> | <i>Forquet</i> | <i>Trezel</i> |
| – | 1♥ | 4♠ | Pass |
| 4NT | Pass | 6♦! | Pass |
| 6♠ | Pass | 7♠ | Double |
| 7NT | Pass | Pass | Double |
| All Pass | | | |

This is how the Daily Bulletin Editor (it was published in English and Swedish!) described events.

'When South doubled the bid of Seven Spades it gave East a chance to guess the position of the trumps. When the French made six tricks in hearts with a penalty of 1100 I thought the Italians would collapse and there were still 13 boards to play. Here Forquet did himself honour; he did not say a word, but continued to play calmly for the rest of the match. This excellent test of character allowed Siniscalco to recover.'

Italy goes on to draw the match 42-42 and take the title for the second time.


In the Women's series three countries dominated the Championships for almost twenty years, Denmark, Great Britain and France. It was not until 1967 that this tripartite monopoly was broken, when Sweden entered the winner's circle.

Although the Championships continue to grow in size, the sixties and seventies continue to be dominated by Italy, Great Britain and France, who between them collect twenty-five titles.

In 1961 in Torquay (the venue for the European Youth Championships later this year) the Congress of the EBL considers admission applications from England, Scotland and Wales. The proposal is rejected and it is almost forty years before there is a change of heart.

In 1965, in Ostend, Italy win for the fifth time, although Belladonna is the only regular member of the Blue Team taking part. The Championships feature this deal, which has passed into history:

Dealer North. N/S Vul.

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ♠ AK93 ♥ KQ102 ♦ AK872 ♣ — |  | ♠ Q52 ♥ 83 ♦ Q10943 ♣ 1073 | ♠ J874 ♥ AJ654 ♦ J5 ♣ J9 |
|-------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|

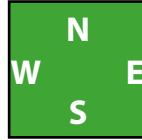
| West | North | East | South |
|-----------------|--------------------|----------------|----------------|
| <i>Collings</i> | <i>Chodziesner</i> | <i>Cansino</i> | <i>Deneile</i> |
| – | 2♣ | Pass | 2♥ |
| 4♠! | 5NT | 7♠ | Pass |
| Pass | Double | All Pass | |

After cashing the ace of diamonds North played the two of hearts. South took the ace and played back the nine of clubs, ruffed by North who switched to the nine of spades. Declarer put up the queen, ruffed a diamond and eventually scored a diamond trick. He proudly remarked afterwards ‘Who else would have made three tricks?’

In 1966 Great Britain’s Harrison-Gray plays for the last time, a fact recalled by Denmark’s Steen Møller, who made his debut in those same championships.

In Dublin in 1967, the number of teams taking part in the Open series reaches twenty for the first time. Italy is the reigning champion. Again Belladonna is the only player from Italy’s World Championship team. His performance is so brilliant that one journalist is moved to suggest that he could win the Championships all by himself. When Italy met Sweden, Belladonna produces a dazzling defence on this deal:

Dealer North. N/S Vul.

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ♠ AK ♥ 109754 ♦ QJ64 ♣ J5 |  | ♠ Q105 ♥ AK6 ♦ K8752 ♣ 103 | ♠ 763 ♥ J832 ♦ 10 ♣ AK972 |
|------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|

| West | North | East | South |
|-------------------|----------|-----------------|-------|
| <i>Belladonna</i> | | <i>Mondolfo</i> | |
| – | Pass | 1♦ | 2♣ |
| Double | All Pass | | |

Giorgio led the queen of hearts, and in the twinkle of an eye switched to the three of diamonds. His partner put up the king and played his top hearts, on which Belladonna discarded the nine and ace of diamonds! That was an essential move if the defence was to succeed. When East continued with a diamond, declarer ruffed with the nine of clubs, but West discarded a spade. Declarer made one last attempt by leading a low club, but our hero put up the queen and exited with a spade, ensuring that he would get another trump trick.

Sandra Landy, five times a winner, made her debut in the 1967 Championships in Dublin, playing with Dorothy Shanahan. She recalls that after a somewhat chequered start, the team managed to finish with the bronze medal and a crocodile handbag prize.

Her favourite story from the event occurred about half way through. The team had lost points on a board where the bidding had gone:

| | |
|----|-----|
| 1♥ | 1♠ |
| 3♥ | 3NT |

The contract going one down. Four Hearts would have made and Sandra

probably should have removed 3NT to 4♥. Fritzi Gordon strongly criticised Sandra's Three Heart rebid, clearly the hand was only worth two – had she no judgement? She listened to the voice of experience and resolved not to overbid so much.

The next day Sandra heard the auction go:

| | |
|----|-----|
| 1♥ | 1♠ |
| 3♥ | 3NT |
| 4♥ | |

Remembering the hand from the day before, she led a diamond, the only lead to give the defence a chance. When dummy went down it looked very like Dorothy's hand from the previous match, so she wrote down what she thought the South hand was and called the director. Everybody thought she must be a witch when she had it card perfect (her memory was better in those days). The board had not been redealt and it had to be cancelled, but it had already been played in the other room. After the match Sandra asked Fritzi how she had bid to Four Hearts. It went:

| | |
|--------|----|
| 1♥ | 1♠ |
| 4♥!!!! | |

That was when she learned never to trust expert opinions and advice on bidding!

In 1969 Italy won again in Oslo, a victory that was marked by the debut of the legendary Benito Garozzo as a member of the team.

There was a sensational finish in the Women's series. At the start of the last round the French were in the lead and Great Britain was second. France had to play a very elderly team of Greek Ladies who took them to the cleaners.

Great Britain played Denmark and there was a huge crowd round the table. Apparently a Director tried to warn them they were running late but Alan Hiron, the Captain, never heard the warning. The Danish girls were very young and nervous playing against Rixi Markus and Fritzi Gordon and were playing extra slowly.

Neither team had received any time penalties in previous matches. In those days the first overrun got a warning not a fine, so no one was worried.

The match did run late and Great Britain won and finished one VP ahead of France in the final table. But France appealed the result of a match they were not involved in. They knew the rules had been altered after the previous

Championship when someone, realising he could not be penalised, played so slowly that they didn't finish till 03.00!

Great Britain went to their hotel thinking they had won and arrived at the final banquet next day to find they had been fined 2VPs and was now in second place. You can imagine the fuss, with words flying everywhere, but it was France who got the Gold and Great Britain had a long wait until they won again.

In the seventies, the Italian Ladies, Marisa Bianchi, Rina Jabes, Maria Antonia Robaudo, Luciana Capodanno, Anna Valenti, Maria Venturini and Marisa d'Andrea win four titles in a row to match the achievement of their male counterparts in the fifties.

In Helsingor in 1977 Sweden win for the first time in 25 years and Lausanne 1979 is the end of the triumphs of two giants as Belladonna and Garozzo win what proves to be their last Open titles for Italy.

As the Championships enter a new decade, another name is added to the list of winners, as Poland take the crown in 1981. In 1983, Joel Tarlo, after being champion for Great Britain twenty years before in Baden-Baden, plays with the Spanish team at the age of 83. In 1985 after 49 years, Austria wins the Open in Salsomaggiore. In Brighton in 1987, the year that sees the addition of the Women's Pairs Championship, the French women's team wins consecutively for the third time, as José Damiani becomes President of the EBL. In 1989, Russia, where bridge was once banned, competes for the first time. As a contrast, so do San Marino, the oldest Republic in Europe established in 1293. A new name goes onto the Women's trophy, as Germany claim the title.

As we move into the nineties, two countries recall past glories as Great Britain, after almost thirty years, and Austria, more than fifty years on, win the Open and Women's events. In that year's Daily Bulletin, the German women present their profiles under assumed names – Mrs. Kat. Atastropy, Lady Di. Lemma, Mrs. Di. Saster, Mrs De. Bacle Miss Ery, Mrs. De. Terioration, together with their Captain, Mr De. Motivation.

In 1995, the year that sees the start of the Seniors, won by Poland, Italy, after an interval of eighteen years, begins a new Renaissance with victory in Vilamoura and they repeat the feat in Montecatini Terme in 1997, Malta in 1999 and Tenerife in 2001. At that tournament the creation of the European Open Championships sees the European Championships move to the

even numbered years and as the EBL celebrates the 70th Anniversary of the Championships Italy continues to dominate, creating a new record of five consecutive victories at Salsomaggiore in 2002 and then increasing that total to seven with runaway wins in Malmo in 2004 and Warsaw in 2006.

In 2008, the Championships in Pau adds a new name to the Roll of Honour as Norway take the title.

In 2010 Italy wins again – that victory takes Lorenzo Lauria’s personal tally to eight, placing him second on the all time list, just two behind the legendary Giorgio Belladonna while Norberto Bocchi & Giorgio Duboin win for the seventh time.

In 2012 a ninth name is added to the list of Champions as Monaco win – it is Geir Helgemo’s second win in four years.

Two years later, another name is inscribed into the role of honour, as Israel wins for the first time, but their team includes Lotan Fisher and Ron Schwartz and in September, 2015, Israel withdraws its team from the upcoming Bermuda Bowl in Bali.

In 2016 France wins after an interval of 33 years.

The en victorious countries in the Open Series are Austria, Hungary, France, Sweden, Great Britain, Italy, Poland, Norway, Monaco & Israel.

England’s victory in 2001 adds a new name to the Women’s trophy as does that of the Netherlands in 2002. After Sweden win (for the fourth time) at home in Malmo, France, after an interval of 11 years, add an eleventh title in Warsaw. Remarkably the only time that France topped the table during the Championship was after the last round. France make it a hat trick by winning in 2008 & 2010 but in 2012 they lose out to England after a nail biting last round. The Netherlands win in 2014, but when England recapture the title in 2016 it is Nicola Smith’s eighth victory, moving her into second place on the all time list.

The select band to win the Women’s title stands at nine – Austria, Denmark, France, Great Britain, Sweden, Italy, Germany, England and The Netherlands.

In the Seniors , Turkey’s win in 2008 sees them join Poland, France, Denmark and Germany as the only countries to have captured the Seniors title, but they are joined by England in 2014 and Israel in 2016, these victories coming after Poland and France have won in 2010 and 2102.

The Road to Ostend

All over Europe countries have been staging qualifying contests to determine who will represent them in Ostend.

The efforts of the EBL and their members to promote bridge are gradually lowering the average age of the competing pairs. The Swedish Open team for Ostend is almost certainly the youngest they have ever selected, their average age being 29.6 years – and possibly the youngest ever sent by any country:

The three pairs are:

Fredrik Nyström & Johan Upmark

Mikael Rimstedt & Ola Rimstedt

Simon Hult & Simon Ekenberg

France is one of the countries that always hold extensive trials.

The French women’s team that will compete at the European Championships in Ostend next June will be composed of Véronique Bessis-Carole Puillet, Joanna Zochowska-Vanessa Réess and Jennifer Mourgues-Anne-Laure Huberschwiller, who topped this ranking table at the end of three week-ends.

| | |
|--|----|
| 1. Vanessa Réess- Joanna Zochowska | 26 |
| 2. Véronique Bessis-Carole Puillet | 23 |
| 3. Jennifer Mourgues-Anne-Laure Huberschwiller | 19 |
| 4. Sylvie Willard – Catherine d’Ovidio | 18 |
| 5. Corinne Faivre- Sophie Dauvergne | 13 |
| 6. Bénédicte Cronier-Catherine Mus | 12 |

One of *A New Bridge Magazine’s* correspondents was following the event on BBO.

Carte Postale from Germany

Dear Mark

I was sitting here in Germany, looking over into France, and I saw a deal that involved both a variant of the Biltcliffe Coup, and a previously unseen (at least by me) distant cousin of the Striped-Tailed Ape.

I spent part of Easter Saturday commentating on BBO on the French Ladies Trials. That this was an event the French were taking extremely seriously was made abundantly clear by the fact that, as your colleague Ron

Tacchi will doubtless be horrified to hear, the play in France continued right through lunchtime, with just a 20 minute break between 14.00 and 14.20.

The format was not without interest, especially given the recent controversy, and extensive discussion on Bridgewinners, about this year's English Ladies Trials. The French Ladies competed over three weekends, each of 144 deals. For this weekend (I believe all three used the same format) six French pairs lined up sitting N/S against three Dutch and three Danish pairs.

This was the two coups hand.

Board 12. Dealer West. N/S Vul.

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|--|--|
| ♠ 109873 ♥ Q876 ♦ 95 ♣ 73 | | ♠ A J 6 2 ♥ A 10 9 2 ♦ — ♣ A 10 6 4 2 | ♠ 4 ♥ K J 5 3 ♦ A K Q 8 6 4 ♣ Q J |
| | | ♠ K Q 5 ♥ 4 ♦ J 10 7 3 2 ♣ K 9 8 5 | |

| West | North | East | South |
|---------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|
| <i>Bruijnsteeen</i> | <i>D'Ovidio</i> | <i>Dekkers</i> | <i>Willard</i> |
| Pass | 1♣ | 1♦ | 1♠* |
| Pass | 2♣ | Double | 3♣ |
| Pass | Pass | 3♦ | Double |
| Redouble | All Pass | | |

1♠ no majors

The Biltcliffe Coup – it's really more of an anti-coup or a suicide coup – is one where the opponents subside in a part-score and you protect, after which they bid on to and make a game which you have doubled. As the auction developed my co-commentator Pierre Schmidt alias Chmitty and I were pointing out that N/S can make a grand slam in clubs, though even getting to the small slam would not be so easy. So when it looked like they

were passing the hand out in 3♣ we started to discuss whether North or South was more to blame. Pierre thought Willard's 3♣ was undercooked, while I found D'Ovidio's third round pass rather timid. Alternatively you could say that they had been unlucky in both taking conservative views.

However Dekkers looked to have rescued them with her 3♦ Biltcliffe, since it now seemed certain that Willard would take another bid, and D'Ovidio would surely raise at least to game. Neither of us predicted South's double, though it is perfectly reasonable. West's redouble came both quickly and as an even bigger surprise. And there they played, going 2 down, losing one spade, one heart, two clubs and two trumps for -600.

In its classic form the Striped-Tailed Ape Coup sees you double the opponents' making game, so that they play there, because even with overtricks it's cheaper than their making slam. I've never seen this analogue in which you redouble your partner's doubled sacrifice to make sure that they don't bid on.

At the vulnerability D'Ovidio might have been tempted to bid on without the Redouble; only she could tell us, just as only Bruijnsteeen could tell us whether she redoubled to avoid that. Whatever the intention, it was certainly cheaper than slam would have been at 1370/1390 or even 2140 for the grand. At the table it gained a single IMP against 5♣+1. If Bruijnsteeen's redouble was deliberately aimed at saving against a slam, then it was inspired. If not, I have no idea what she intended.

Best wishes

Martin

© Martin Cantor

March 2018

The French Senior trials resulted in a win for Philippe Poizat, Michel Abecassis, Michel Lebel, Guy Lasserre, Alain Levy and Philippe Soulet and they will represent France at the European Senior Team Championships from June 10 to 16.

Nordic Junior U16 Championships and Junior Camp 2018

Micke Melander reports on the latest Junior activities in Sweden

The Nordic U16 Pairs Championship was played between 29th March and 1st April and parallel to this a Youth Camp was held in Varberg, South of Gothenburg, in Sweden. Both arrangements ended successfully and almost

50 young players had great fun practising bridge, bowling, bridge, football, bridge, boule and a lot more bridge except when enjoying and entertaining themselves.

U16 pairs

Twelve pairs from Sweden, Norway and Denmark participated in the U16 pairs. Christian Fredrik Johnsen & Magnus Saetre finally won after a great finish in the last round to secure the gold medals for Norway. Sweden's Markus Bertheau & Andreas Abragi finished second ahead of the Danes, Aron Tylvad & Daniel Tylvad.

Small Slam

In the second round of the U16 pairs Tiger and Isis Lundqvist managed to bid all the way to the small slam in clubs holding the following cards:

♠ KJ1098
♥ Q5
♦ 8632
♣ 107

♠ AQ
♥ K103
♦ —
♣ AKJ98654

| West | North | East | South |
|-----------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| <i>T. Tøsse</i> | <i>I. Lundqvist</i> | <i>M. D. Austad</i> | <i>T. Lundqvist</i> |
| — | — | — | 1♣* |
| 1♦ | 1♠ | 2♦ | 3NT* |
| Pass | 5♣ | Pass | 6♣ |
| All Pass | | | |

1♣ At least three clubs
3NT 18-19, 6+♣

6♣ was a very good contract, and for sure a very difficult destination to reach when both defenders competed without pre-empting too high and pushing N/S to the slam. In practical play it is only queen-third offside in trumps that could bring declarer down.

This was the full deal:

| | | |
|----------|------------|--------|
| ♠ 762 | ♠ KJ1098 | ♠ 543 |
| ♥ AJ87 | ♥ Q5 | ♥ 9642 |
| ♦ A10975 | ♦ 8632 | ♦ KQJ4 |
| ♣ 2 | ♣ 107 | ♣ Q3 |
| | | |
| | ♠ AQ | |
| | ♥ K103 | |
| | ♦ — | |
| | ♣ AKJ98654 | |

West, Thomas Tøsse, did very well when he selected to lead the only card that kept declarer to just twelve tricks; the ace of hearts.

When that held, he tried the ace of diamonds. Tiger Lundqvist ruffed and cashed the ace of clubs. When both opponents followed suit she could pull the last trump and claim the remaining tricks.

Sweden's Lundqvist sisters were the only pair who managed to bid the slam. Two pairs reached 5♣, two pairs stopped in 4♣ and one pair went down in 3NT.

Results

| | |
|------------------|---|
| U16 Championship | http://www.svenskbridge.se/tvl/278428/resultat#hem |
| Itchy Fingers | http://www.svenskbridge.se/tvl/278478 |
| Crazy Pairs | http://www.svenskbridge.se/tvl/278418 |
| Speedy Gonzales: | http://www.svenskbridge.se/tvl/278420 |
| Last Chance | http://www.svenskbridge.se/tvl/278423 |

Beside these events tournaments the campers played a team tournament parallel to the U16 Pair Championship.

On behalf of the attending juniors the Swedish Bridge Federation would like to thank the WBF and EBL for their support for the camp and the championship.

Fabienne Pigeaud 1959-2018

The French Bridge Federation are sad to report the death of Fabienne Pigeaud. She was 59 years old, a double champion of Europe, multiple champion of France, a girl apart, adorable and sensitive, a huge heart, a good heart that finally let go. The many messages on the Facebook page of the FFB testify to the attachment of bridgeurs to Fabienne. Sweet thoughts to her sisters Bénédicte, Elisabeth, her brother Emmanuel and their whole family.

Her portmanteau included victory in the Junior European Championships in 1984, the Women's European Championship in 1985 & 2006, numerous national titles and countless places on the podiums in competition and the biggest festivals throughout her career.



European Bridge Calendar 2018

| Dates | Event; Location | Information |
|---------------|---|--|
| Jun 6/16 | 54 th European Team Championships Ostend | www.eurobridge.org |
| Jun 9 | Città di Roma Trophy Rome, Italy | www.federbridge.it |
| Jun 9/17 | 20 th German Bridge Festival Wyk-auf-Föhr, Germany | www.bridge-verband.de |
| Jun 19/Jul 1 | 36 th International Bridge Festival Albena, Bulgaria | www.bridge.bg |
| Jun 22/28 | 52 nd International Festival Tel-Aviv, Israel | www.ibf-festival.org |
| Jun 29/Jul 1 | Marit Sveas IBT Oslo, Norway | www.msibt.org |
| Jun 29/Jul 10 | Biarritz Festival Biarritz, France | www.festival-bridgebiarritz.com |
| Jul 7-12 | International Festival Ajaccio, Corsica, France | www.corsebridge.com |
| Jul 18/26 | 60 th International Festival Deauville, France | www.mondial-deauville.com |
| July 27/31 | Dublin Summer Congress | www.cbai.ie |
| Jul 27/Aug 5 | 24 th Swedish Bridge Festival Örebro, Sweden | www.svenskbridge.se |
| Jul 29/Aug 3 | Chairman's Cup Örebro, Sweden | www.svenskbridge.se |
| Aug 3/7 | Summer Festival Pairs London, England | www.ebu.co.uk |
| Aug 3/12 | Norsk Bridgefestival Drammen, Norway | www.bridgefestival.no |
| Aug 15-19 | Summer Festival Teams London, England | www.ebu.co.uk |
| Sep 7/16 | Guernsey Congress Les Cotils, Guernsey, Channel Is. | www.ebu.co.uk |
| Sep 8/16 | 57 th International Festival Pula, Croatia | www.pulabridgefestival.com |
| Oct 19/21 | Vilnius Cup Vilnius, Lithuania | www.vilniuscup.lt |
| Nov 5/11 | 21 st Madeira Bridge Festival Madeira, Portugal | www.bridge-madeira.com |
| Nov 8/10 | 5 th Marbella International Marbella, Spain | www.marbellabridge.com |
| Nov 8/18 | 24 th International Red Sea Festival Eilat, Israel | www.bridgeredsea.com |
| Dec 27/30 | Year-End Congress London, England | www.ebu.co.uk |

Bridge in The Vicarage

The first David Bird story featuring the monks of St Titus

The first David Bird story featuring the monks of St Titus appeared in Bridge Magazine in June 1978.

The Reverend Richard Hyde unlatched the oak front door, and in from a howling gale came Abbot Yorke-Smith, looking even more red-faced than usual.

‘Come and warm yourself by the fire, Abbot; Father O’Neill is here already. Who did you manage to get for a fourth tonight?’

‘Well, it wasn’t easy to find anyone on choir practice night, but eventually I persuaded Brother Anthony to play again.’

‘Oh! Er...good,’ replied Rev Hyde unconvincingly.

Brother Anthony was a rather unpopular partner since, being a member of the Eustacian order, he had to obey their vow of total silence, and this naturally restricted his accuracy in the bidding. Only the previous week the Abbot had had to reprimand a young novice who had feigned a sudden severe cramp in the leg, and hobbled off towards the infirmary when he had cut brother Anthony at the monastery £1-a-hundred table.

The first hand of the evening was boldly bid by the Rev. Hyde:

Love All; Dealer West

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| ♠ 109762 ♥ Q9 ♦ Q1098 ♣ J4 | ♠ QJ543 ♥ K106 ♦ K72 ♣ A7 | <div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #4CAF50; color: white; padding: 5px; margin: 0 auto; width: 60px; height: 60px; display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> N W E S </div> | ♠ — ♥ AJ853 ♦ J5 ♣ Q109652 |
| | ♠ AK8 ♥ 742 ♦ A643 ♣ K83 | | |

| West | North | East | South |
|----------------|-----------------|-----------|----------|
| Father O’Neill | Brother Anthony | The Abbot | Rev Hyde |
| Pass | Pass | 1♥ | 3NT |
| All Pass | | | |

It was standard tactics to open light in front of Brother Anthony’s partner in order to disrupt even further communications which were already almost non-existent. Rev Hyde clearly regarded his solid holdings as adequate for the Eustacian gambling 3NT convention.

Father O’Neill’s queen of hearts was covered by the king and ace, and the Abbot’s club switch was won in the dummy. When Rev Hyde played off four rounds of spades the Abbot, shifting uncomfortably in his cassock, discarded two clubs and two hearts and was subsequently thrown in to concede a trick to dummy’s ten of hearts.

‘Sorry, Patrick, I should have tried baring my knave of hearts,’ said the Abbot, reluctantly writing down the score.

‘I forgive you,’ said his partner in a professional tone.

Soon afterwards the Abbot dealt the cards as follows:

Game All; Dealer East

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|
| ♠ 8 ♥ 86 ♦ A10543 ♣ A8732 | ♠ KQJ10 ♥ KJ ♦ KQJ ♣ KQJ9 | <div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #4CAF50; color: white; padding: 5px; margin: 0 auto; width: 60px; height: 60px; display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> N W E S </div> | ♠ A643 ♥ AQ52 ♦ 8 ♣ 10654 |
| | ♠ 9752 ♥ 109743 ♦ 9762 ♣ — | | |

Rev Hyde viewed his dismal collection in the South seat, and proceeded to open the bidding with a confident One Club. This diversion was, after all, fairly safe with Brother Anthony as partner.

Brother Anthony gazed wistfully at his 22-count. What could they make? A small slam? A grand slam? As he prepared himself to deliver the almost imperceptible shake of the head that had formed his bidding methods for the past 30-odd years, he thought how proud of him his fellow Eustacians must be.

| | | |
|----------|---------|---------|
| ♠ 8 | ♠ KQJ10 | ♠ A643 |
| ♥ 86 | ♥ KJ | ♥ AQ52 |
| ♦ A10543 | ♦ KQJ | ♦ 8 |
| ♣ A8732 | ♣ KQJ9 | ♣ 10654 |

| | |
|----------|---------|
| ♠ 9752 | ♠ A643 |
| ♥ 109743 | ♥ AQ52 |
| ♦ 9762 | ♦ 8 |
| ♣ — | ♣ 10654 |

‘Surely the Abbot was dealer,’ said Father O’Neill suddenly. ‘Your bid was out of turn, Richard, but there is no penalty if the Abbot passes.’

‘One Club,’ said the Abbot promptly, reaching for the rule book and eagerly locating the appropriate section.

‘It says that the offender’s partner is...silenced for the rest of the auction,’ he said, unable to hide his annoyance at this useless penalty.

‘Come, come partner, this is only a game between friends,’ said Father O’Neill compassionately. ‘Let us waive the penalty.’

Rev Hyde passed, and Father O’Neill raised the Abbot to Five Clubs.

Brother Anthony re-scanned his 22-count, seething with anger. They were making a mockery of him. They were insulting the venerable Eustacian order. They were implying that over 400 years of silence had all been in vain.

The time had come to teach them a sharp lesson.

‘Double!’ he said firmly, noting with interest that, since taking his vows at a tender age, his voice had broken.

Only the ticking of the grandfather clock interrupted the stunned silence that followed. Eventually the Rev Hyde, eyeing his partner with a singularly unclerical expression, led the ten of hearts. The Abbot won in hand, with the queen and cross-ruffed at high speed to produce the following ending with West, the dummy, on play:

| | | |
|--------|--------|-------|
| ♠ — | ♠ — | ♠ — |
| ♥ — | ♥ — | ♥ 52 |
| ♦ — | ♦ — | ♦ — |
| ♣ KQJ9 | ♣ KQJ9 | ♣ 106 |

| | |
|-------|-------|
| ♠ — | ♠ — |
| ♥ — | ♥ 973 |
| ♦ 105 | ♦ 9 |
| ♣ A8 | ♣ — |

Brother Anthony was forced to ruff the diamond high and exit with another high trump to the ace. Dummy’s last diamond promoted declarer’s ten of trumps and the game was home.

‘What on earth do you mean by breaking your vow of silence, just to double a cold game?’ cried the Rev Hyde.

Brother Anthony shook his head almost imperceptibly. Pulling up the cowl of his cloak, he walked sadly to the front door, and out into the unforgetting night.



Misplay These Hands With Me

Restricted Choice

Playing in the latter stages of the prestigious Spring Foursomes I pick up a hand with potential:

♠ AKQJ10
♥ K3
♦ –
♣ Q97653

With only our side vulnerable the player on my right opens 1♠. That's a surprise. I overcall 2♣ and when West passes my partner raises to 3♣. Well, I may not make it but I must go 5♣ which leaves us with this simple auction:

| West | North | East | South |
|----------|-------|------|-------|
| – | – | 1♠ | 2♣ |
| Pass | 3♣ | Pass | 5♣ |
| All Pass | | | |

West leads the five of spades and although dummy is a little short on trumps it has some useful features:

♠ 87
♥ A987
♦ J8762
♣ K8

♠ AKQJ10
♥ K3
♦ –
♣ Q97653

Partner did well to raise on a doubleton - if I had something along the lines of ♠AQx ♥xxx ♦x ♣AQJ10xx 3NT would have been cold.

To make 5♣ I will need to avoid the loss of three trump tricks. I win the spade lead and play a club to dummy's king. East wins with the ace and

returns the two of spades. West ruffs with the ten of clubs and returns a diamond. East plays the king and I ruff, cross to dummy with the ace of hearts and play a club. When East follows with the two I must decide whether or not to finesse. The Principle of Restricted Choice suggests that the finesse is right but when I play low West produces the jack and I am one down. This was the full deal:

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------|---|-------|---|--|---|--|---|--|---|--|---------|
| ♠ 5 | <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> <table style="border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <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> </div> | | N | | W | | E | | S | | ♠ 96432 |
| | | N | | | | | | | | | |
| W | | | E | | | | | | | | |
| | | S | | | | | | | | | |
| ♥ QJ654 | | ♥ 102 | | | | | | | | | |
| ♦ 10954 | ♦ AKQ3 | | | | | | | | | | |
| ♣ J104 | ♣ A2 | | | | | | | | | | |
| | ♠ AKQJ10 | | | | | | | | | | |
| | ♥ K3 | | | | | | | | | | |
| | ♦ – | | | | | | | | | | |
| | ♣ Q97653 | | | | | | | | | | |

Post mortem

Declarer could have avoided this problem by crossing to dummy with a heart at trick two and playing a low club. If East goes up with the ace to give West a ruff declarer loses only two trumps. It also gains if East started with a singleton ace of clubs.

At the other table East opened a 12-14 1NT and South overcalled 2♦ (spades and another) bid 3♣ over North's 2♥ (denying 3 spades) and then passed 3NT. East led the ace of diamonds and switched to the ten of hearts. Declarer won in dummy and played a club to the ten, king and ace and could make no more than eight tricks for a flat board. It is possible to make 3NT by running the spades and then taking several good views but it is probably too difficult in practice.

Guessing Game

The Vanderbilt Trophy is the oldest of the ACBL's major National Team Championships. During an all too rare good run in the event I pick up a modest hand:

♠ 6542
♥ K7
♦ AJ7543
♣ 7


Only the opponents are vulnerable and when the player on my right passes I have to decide if I should start with a weak 2♦. Despite the four card major I am about to reach into my bidding box when I remember we are playing a Multi 2♦. After my pass West has nothing to say and my partner opens 1♥. When I respond 1♠ he continues with 2♣. I should probably bid 2♥ now but the devil is in me and despite my instincts I bid a fourth suit 2♦.

Partner bids 2NT showing a diamond stopper and I continue with 3♦. When partner bids 3NT, I nervously bid 4♥, worried about my holdings in the black suits and hoping my ruffing value will be useful. However, partner is not finished and bids 4♠. Clearly he expects me to have five spades and since he cannot have three I retreat to 5♦. This is the story of our unfortunate auction:

| West | North | East | South |
|----------|-------|------|-------|
| – | – | Pass | Pass |
| Pass | 1♥ | Pass | 1♠ |
| Pass | 2♣ | Pass | 2♦ |
| Pass | 2NT | Pass | 3♦ |
| Pass | 3NT | Pass | 4♥ |
| Pass | 4♠ | Pass | 5♦ |
| All Pass | | | |

West leads the three of clubs and when dummy appears it confirms that we would have been better off in 3NT:

♠ KJ
♥ AQ964
♦ K10
♣ AJ85



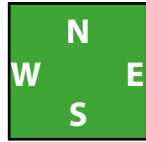
♠ 6542
♥ K7
♦ AJ7543
♣ 7

I go up with dummy's ace, and anxious to avoid a switch through the ♠KJ I ruff a club and play a diamond to the ten. When that holds I unblock the ♦K, cross to the ♥K and draw the last trump, East discarding the three of spades. I try the hearts and West discards the eight of spades on the third round. I ruff a heart and play a spade. When West follows with the nine I guess to play the king. East wins with the ace and returns a spade so I am one down.

This was the full deal:

♠ KJ
♥ AQ964
♦ K10
♣ AJ85

♠ Q1098
♥ 53
♦ Q82
♣ 10963



♠ 6542
♥ K7
♦ AJ7543
♣ 7

♠ A73
♥ J1082
♦ 96
♣ KQ42

Post mortem

When the ten of diamonds holds declarer should have considered the possibility that clubs would be 4-4. After another club ruff dummy is entered with the ♦K, the last club is ruffed and the outstanding trump is drawn. Now declarer plays on hearts, making an overtrick when the suit is 3-3 and on the actual layout throwing East in with the fourth heart to lead a spade. Declarer will only need to guess the spade position if West has four hearts.

Deals that Caught My Eye

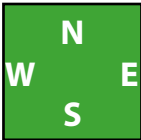
David Bird looks at the England Women's European Trials

Four teams-of-four contested a 4-day (9-match) trial to determine who would represent England in this year's Women's European Championships. We will look at some of the deals where a large number of IMPs were at stake. Our purpose will be to discuss whether the contestants might reasonably have gained or avoided these swings.

For the first of three round-robin series an agreed substitute, Kay Preddy, partnered Nicola Smith because snow storms had trapped Yvonne Wiseman in Sweden. The first two days were not broadcast on *Bridge Base Online*, so my report covers the Sunday and Monday sessions.

We start with two deals from a match between SENIOR and BAKHSHI. The first was a bidding board:

Dealer East. None Vul.

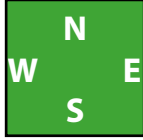
| | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|---------------|
| ♠ AQ96 ♥ AKJ953 ♦ — ♣ Q62 |  | ♠ KJ85 ♥ 4 ♦ AK108 ♣ J1087 | |
| ♠ 1073 ♥ Q2 ♦ QJ97632 ♣ 5 | ♠ 42 ♥ 10876 ♦ 54 ♣ AK943 | | |
| West | North | East | South |
| <i>Kater</i> | <i>Senior</i> | <i>Basa</i> | <i>Dhondy</i> |
| – | – | 1♣ | Pass |
| 2♦ | Double | 3♦ | 3♥ |
| Pass | 4♦ | 5♦ | 6♣ |
| Pass | 6♦ | Pass | 6♥ |
| All Pass | | | |

When Nevena Senior showed a strong hand with 4♦, Heather Dhondy offered the alternative slam of 6♣ and they eventually rested in 6♥. That was +980 successfully banked. Well done, yes, but East-West had been somewhat restrained with their pre-emption. This was the action at the other table:

| West | North | East | South |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| <i>Draper</i> | <i>Bakhshi</i> | <i>Fawcett</i> | <i>Robinson</i> |
| – | – | 1♣ | Pass |
| 3♦ | 3♥ | 5♦ | Double |
| All Pass | | | |

Catherine Draper applied more pressure with her 3♦ bid. Heather Bakhshi was top-weight for 3♥ and might have bid 4♥. When Gillian Fawcett raised the bar to 5♦, Claire Robinson could judge that North had a void diamond and might have bid 5♥. Her double was not unreasonable but +100 for one down was a hugely inadequate return on the North-South cards. It was 13 IMPs to SENIOR.

Dealer South. Both Vul.

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|--|
| ♠ 832 ♥ KQ97 ♦ 109842 ♣ K |  | ♠ AJ65 ♥ 63 ♦ AKQ ♣ 10872 | |
| ♠ 9 ♥ AJ42 ♦ 765 ♣ J9653 | ♠ KQ1074 ♥ 1085 ♦ J3 ♣ AQ4 | | |

| West | North | East | South |
|--------|--------|------|--------|
| Kater | Senior | Basa | Dhondy |
| - | - | - | 1♠ |
| Pass | 2♠ | Pass | Pass |
| Double | Pass | Pass | Pass |

How do you rate Ewa Kater's protective double? It seems rather light when playing IMPs. Even at matchpoints, you might bear in mind that you are vulnerable. At the other table 2♠ had been made, so a sizeable number of IMPs were at stake when Marusa Basa passed the double for penalties.

Heather Dhondy won the club lead in dummy and ran the ♠8 to West's singleton 9. Suddenly the defenders were in with a chance of beating the contract. West switched to the ♦7, partner winning with the queen, and all depended on a faultless trick 4 by the defenders. East needed to switch to the ♥6 and West would then have to hold up the ♥A, subsequently delivering a heart ruff.

West was marked with the ♥A, after her skimpy double, but Basa preferred to cash the ♦A next. Too late, she switched to the ♥6. If West ducks now, declarer can win in dummy and establish the diamonds with a low ruff. She can then return to dummy by ruffing the master ♣Q and lead the ♦10. East has to ruff, since declarer can otherwise play the ♦9 and ditch both hearts. Declarer then overruffs, ruffs the ♣A and plays the ♦9 to make the contract.

None of this came to pass because West took the heart ace immediately. Eight tricks were made for +670 and SENIOR picked up another 11 IMPs.

Bidding a grand slam when the ace of trumps is 'offside' is worthy of our attention. Who do you blame on this deal from a match between SENIOR and SEALE?

| | | |
|---------|----------|---------|
| ♠ 9 | ♠ 832 | ♠ AJ65 |
| ♥ AJ42 | ♥ KQ97 | ♥ 63 |
| ♦ 765 | ♦ 109842 | ♦ AKQ |
| ♣ J9653 | ♣ K | ♣ 10872 |
| | ♠ KQ1074 | |
| | ♥ 1085 | |
| | ♦ J3 | |
| | ♣ AQ4 | |

Dealer West. E/W Vul.

| | | |
|----------|-------------|------------|
| ♠ AQJ105 | ♠ 642 | ♠ K9 |
| ♥ K5 | ♥ A632 | ♥ QJ109874 |
| ♦ A76542 | ♦ 9 | ♦ KQJ10 |
| ♣ - | ♣ 98643 | ♣ - |
| | ♠ 873 | |
| | ♥ - | |
| | ♦ 83 | |
| | ♣ AKQJ10752 | |

| West | North | East | South |
|--------|--------|----------|---------|
| Dhondy | Seale | Senior | Godfrey |
| 1♦ | Pass | 2♥ | 5♣ |
| 6♣ | 7♣ | Double | Pass |
| 7♥ | Double | All Pass | |

I didn't like the jump shift on a queen-high suit and was at first inclined to assign a major share of the blame to East. On closer inspection, I changed my mind. West has already shown a massive hand with her 6♣ bid. If East is filling West's gaps in spades, hearts and diamonds, will she not at the very least make a forcing pass over North's 7♣? She would not need a club control to do this, because West has already indicated this with her 6♣ bid.

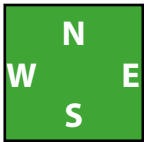
So, I think West should have been warned off the grand slam by East's double of 7♣. Another way of looking at it is that West did not bid 7♥ at her second turn. Why bid it at her third turn after a negative message from partner?

| West | North | East | South |
|--------|----------|-------|---------|
| Curtis | Draper | Gross | Fawcett |
| 1♦ | Pass | 1♥ | 5♣ |
| Double | Pass | 5♥ | Pass |
| 5♠ | 6♣ | 6♥ | 7♣ |
| Double | All Pass | | |

The ♥K lead allowed Fawcett to ditch one of her spade losers and the defenders scored +500 for a swing of 12 IMPs to SEALE.

Later on the Sunday, SENIOR faced BAKHSHI again. We will take a look at this bidding hand if only because 18 IMPs changed hands. What do you make of it?

Dealer South. E/W Vul.

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ♠ 9852 ♥ AKQ1054 ♦ 1085 ♣ — |  | ♠ 1073 ♥ J9 ♦ 974 ♣ KJ1043 | ♠ Q ♥ 873 ♦ AKQJ632 ♣ 97 |
|--------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|

| West | North | East | South |
|--------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|
| <i>Kater</i> | <i>Senior</i> | <i>Basa</i> | <i>Dhondy</i> |
| – | – | – | 3NT |
| Double | 4♥ | Pass | Pass |
| Double | All Pass | | |

Do you have a defence to the Gambling 3NT? David Gold, who was doing written commentary on Bridge Base Online, offered his methods to the kibitzers: 4♣ = both majors (possibly 5-4) and 4♦ then asks for the better major, 4♦ = one major, 4♥ and 4♠ show that major and a minor (5-5 shape). Impressive.

West entered with a double and Nevena Senior expected her partner to hold clubs rather than diamonds. She might have bid 4♣ or 5♣ (pass or correct) but preferred to mention her hearts. What action should West have taken when 4♥ ran back to her? I think 4♠ is best. Neither South nor North rate to have spade length. Apart from that, the opponents have the red suits locked up, so you can hardly risk defending 4♥.

West's double was passed out (what else could East do?) and the contract was made with two doubled overtricks for +790.


| West | North | East | South |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| <i>Draper</i> | <i>Bakhshi</i> | <i>Fawcett</i> | <i>Robinson</i> |
| – | – | – | 3NT |
| 4♠ | Double | All Pass | |

Draper preferred 4♠ to a nebulous double and so do I (in the absence of any specific machinery). Bakhshi expected South to hold long clubs. The odds lay in that direction, with her 3-card discrepancy, but it wasn't certain. In any case, whichever minor South held, East-West might have a hefty number of tricks in spades and the other minor. North should perhaps have bid a pass-or-correct 5♣ instead of doubling.

Bakhshi scored two heart tricks and switched to a diamond. Draper ruffed and was charmed to see the ♠Q appear from South on the first round. She could then claim the remainder. The doubled overtrick was worth +990 and that was 18 IMPs to SENIOR.

One big swing deserves another. Try this one for size, from a match between SENIOR and SEALE:

Dealer West. Both Vul.

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ♠ 108763 ♥ K ♦ J643 ♣ 1083 |  | ♠ A ♥ J75 ♦ K8 ♣ AKJ7642 | ♠ KQJ92 ♥ 2 ♦ AQ1092 ♣ 95 |
|-------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|

| |
|------------------------------------|
| ♠ 54 ♥ AQ1098643 ♦ 75 ♣ Q |
|------------------------------------|

| West | North | East | South |
|--------|-------|--------|----------|
| Dhondy | Seale | Senior | Godfrey |
| Pass | 1♣ | 1♠ | 4♥ |
| 4♠ | 5♥ | 5♠ | Pass |
| Pass | 6♣ | Pass | 6♥ |
| Pass | Pass | Double | All Pass |

As you see, a diamond lead would work well against 6♥. Had South somehow found a reason to pass the offer of 6♣ by North, the ♦K would have been protected.

What should West lead against 6♥ doubled, do you think? I don't see that her partner's double was Lightner. In any case, such a double would normally request a club lead. Dhondy's choice was the ♠3 and Senior must have closed her eyes for a brief moment when that dummy went down. Lizzie Godfrey won with dummy's ace and played a trump to her ace. If the ♥K had not fallen, she would have had a second chance – to discard both her diamonds on dummy's clubs. As it was, it remained only to inscribe +1860 in her scorecard.

| West | North | East | South |
|--------|--------|----------|---------|
| Curtis | Draper | Gross | Fawcett |
| Pass | 1♣ | 1♠ | 4♥ |
| 4♠ | 4NT | 5♦ | Pass |
| 5♠ | Double | All Pass | |

Marc Smith, my colleague on BBO voice commentary, tried to persuade me that North's 4NT was offering a choice of hearts or clubs, rather than being Blackwood. I was unconvinced, particularly as South's Pass over 5♦ was alerted and seems to be a DOPI call showing one key-card.

We should also note Susanna Gross's splendid 5♦ bid, ensuring that a diamond would be led against a potential 6♥ by South. Draper knew of two key-cards missing in hearts (possibly two aces), so could hardly gamble bidding a club slam.

For some reason BBO featured the SENIOR team in all four sessions on the Sunday and the first two on the Monday, with never a sighting of the BROCK team. The two big-hitting teams were not far apart when they met for the final match (of nine) on Monday afternoon. Brock would need 13 IMPs over 24 boards to win the trial.

| | | |
|----------|-------------|----------|
| ♠ 108763 | ♠ A | ♠ KQJ92 |
| ♥ K | ♥ J75 | ♥ 2 |
| ♦ J643 | ♦ K8 | ♦ AQ1092 |
| ♣ 1083 | ♣ AKJ7642 | ♣ 95 |
| | ♠ 54 | |
| | ♥ AQ1098643 | |
| | ♦ 75 | |
| | ♣ Q | |

This was a rather magnificent counting board played by Sally Brock:

Dealer North. North-South Vul.

| | | |
|---------|---------|---------|
| ♠ KQ73 | ♠ A854 | ♠ J109 |
| ♥ QJ84 | ♥ 106 | ♥ A9532 |
| ♦ 10952 | ♦ J76 | ♦ 84 |
| ♣ 4 | ♣ A1073 | ♣ Q52 |
| | ♠ 62 | |
| | ♥ K7 | |
| | ♦ AKQ3 | |
| | ♣ KJ986 | |

| West | North | East | South |
|--------|-------|----------|-------|
| Dhondy | Brown | Senior | Brock |
| – | Pass | Pass | 1NT |
| Pass | 2♣ | Pass | 2♦ |
| Pass | 3NT | All Pass | |

Dhondy led the ♠Q, Brock calling for dummy's ace and the ♠9 appearing from East. Rather than taking an immediate view of the clubs, Brock played four rounds of diamonds, finding that West had started with four cards in the suit. Since East had not opened a weak-two in hearts, it was reasonable to place West with four hearts too. She had chosen to lead a spade against 3NT, so there was every chance that her shape would be 4-4-4-1.

Brock baited her hook with the ♣J, dangled under Dhondy's nose. There was little chance of it being covered, at this level, but nothing to lose by giving it a try. When the ♣4 appeared, Brock overtook with the ♣A and, following her inferential count on the West hand, ran the ♣10 on the next round. Five clubs, four diamonds and the ♠A gave her a splendid over-trick. She had gained count information from three different sources: the opening lead, East's lack of a weak-two opening, and her own play of the diamond suit. Would the declarer at the other table be able to match this virtuoso performance?

| West | North | East | South |
|---------|--------|----------|---------|
| Wiseman | Draper | Smith | Fawcett |
| - | Pass | Pass | 1NT |
| Pass | 2♣ | Pass | 2♦ |
| Pass | 3NT | All Pass | |

Yvonne Wiseman led the ♠3, Fawcett rising with the ♠A since she could not afford East to win and switch to hearts. Instead of seeking further information by playing on diamonds, declarer played the ♣A and ♣K immediately. After scoring four diamond tricks, she cleared the club suit. The benefit of Wiseman's low spade lead was then seen when she was able to overtake partner's ♠9 on the third round of the suit. The defenders scored three spades, the ♥A and the ♣Q for 12 very well deserved IMPs to BROCK.

The final set of 12 boards went very much BROCK's way. They made two vulnerable 3NT contracts that went down at the other table. This was a brave piece of bidding by Smith and Wiseman:

Dealer North. Neither Vul.

| | | |
|----------|----------|----------|
| ♠ J105 | | ♠ AKQ872 |
| ♥ KQ8632 | | ♥ 107 |
| ♦ J74 | | ♦ 2 |
| ♣ 6 | | ♣ J973 |
| ♠ 96 | | |
| ♥ AJ5 | | |
| ♦ AK98 | | |
| ♣ AKQ2 | | |
| | ♠ 43 | |
| | ♥ 94 | |
| | ♦ Q10653 | |
| | ♣ 10854 | |

| | | |
|---------|---------|---------|
| ♠ A854 | | ♠ J109 |
| ♥ 106 | | ♥ A9532 |
| ♦ J76 | | ♦ 84 |
| ♣ A1073 | | ♣ Q52 |
| ♠ KQ73 | | |
| ♥ QJ84 | | |
| ♦ 10952 | | |
| ♣ 4 | | |
| | ♠ 62 | |
| | ♥ K7 | |
| | ♦ AKQ3 | |
| | ♣ KJ986 | |

| West | North | East | South |
|---------|----------|-------|--------|
| Wiseman | Senior | Smith | Dhondy |
| - | 2♥ | 2♠ | Pass |
| 3♥ | Pass | 4♠ | Pass |
| 4NT | Pass | 5♠ | Pass |
| 7NT | All Pass | | |

The key bid was Smith's 4♠ but Wiseman also did well to carry this all the way to 7NT. That was +1520 when the spades were 3-2.

| West | North | East | South |
|--------|----------|---------|-------|
| Draper | Brown | Fawcett | Brock |
| - | 2♥ | 2♠ | Pass |
| 3♥ | Double | 3♠ | Pass |
| 4NT | Pass | 5♠ | Pass |
| 6♠ | All Pass | | |

The odds for West bidding a grand were not there, once East had rebid only 3♠.

So, BROCK took the ninth and final match by 61-35, the margin exactly double the 13 IMPs that she had needed to win the trials. Sally Brock, Fiona Brown, Nicola Smith and Yvonne Wiseman were announced as the winners on the EBU web-site and would presumably be joined by Nevena Senior and Heather Dhondy.

These were the leading cross-IMP results over the four days:

| Rank | Player | Score |
|------|------------------|----------------------|
| 1 | Kay Preddy | +0.94 IMPs per board |
| 2= | Heather Dhondy | +0.81 |
| 2= | Nevena Senior | +0.81 |
| 4= | Sally Brock | +0.72 |
| 4= | Fiona Brown | +0.72 |
| 6 | Nicola Smith | +0.63 |
| 7 | Yvonne Wiseman | +0.48 |
| 8= | Catherine Draper | +0.17 |
| 8= | Gillian Fawcett | +0.17 |

The selectors then announced that since the BROCK team had won the first of the three round-robin segments (60 boards), with Kay Preddy playing well, all scores from that round-robin would be ignored. This was somewhat controversial, since Brock and Brown had a Butler score of +1.7 IMPs per board for those 60 boards. Consequently, Preddy's Butler score was inflated when compared with B&B's three opponent pairs.

When scoring only the two remaining round-robins, the SENIOR team (Senior/Dhondy, Draper/Fawcett) had won by a tiny fraction of 1 VP and were declared the winners. They would be joined by one pair from the BROCK team to represent England in the European championship. Understandably, Brock and Brown declined to accept this invitation, standing by their team mates.

For a week it seemed that because of a decision based on a fraction of 1 VP, the England team would contain only two of our Golden Girls rather than a splendid five. Finally, Brock and Brown did agree to join the team and I wish the chosen six well in Belgium.



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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. 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 White House Juniors 2018 – Triumph of the Comeback Kids

Martin Cantor

Martin Cantor reports on the latest edition of this long-running junior event.

The Editor's report on the 2018 Winter Games in the April issue included a section entitled 'The Last Board'. The Belgian team in the White House Juniors at the end of March must have had advanced sight of it, coming through for last gasp wins on the final boards of both their quarter-final and semi-final matches.

Generous sponsorship saw 24 teams from 19 countries competing, including teams from China, Japan and Singapore. Two pools of 12 played a full round robin, after which the top 6 from each played the Intermediate Final A, the remainder the Intermediate Final B. The top 7 from Intermediate A and the winner of Intermediate B then played knockout.

In the quarter-final Belgium trailed Sweden 44-53 going into 'The Last Board'.

Board 28. Dealer West. N/S Vul.

| | | |
|---------|--|-----------|
| ♠ 6 | | ♠ K2 |
| ♥ A94 | | ♥ KQ63 |
| ♦ K1072 | | ♦ AJ9853 |
| ♣ KJ543 | | ♣ 6 |
| ♠ J974 | | ♠ AQ10853 |
| ♥ 10752 | | ♥ J8 |
| ♦ Q4 | | ♦ 6 |
| ♣ Q72 | | ♣ A1098 |

| | | | |
|---|-------|---|--------|
| ♠ | 6 | ♠ | K2 |
| ♥ | A94 | ♥ | KQ63 |
| ♦ | K1072 | ♦ | AJ9853 |
| ♣ | KJ543 | ♣ | 6 |

| | | | |
|---|-------|---|---------|
| ♠ | J974 | ♠ | AQ10853 |
| ♥ | 10752 | ♥ | J8 |
| ♦ | Q4 | ♦ | 6 |
| ♣ | Q72 | ♣ | A1098 |

| | | | |
|--|---|--|---|
| | ♠ | | ♠ |
| | ♥ | | ♥ |
| | ♦ | | ♦ |
| | ♣ | | ♣ |

Commentating on BBO I predicted "The auction will be competitive". In the event it was somewhat less so than I expected, at least in the Open Room where I was watching.

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|------------------|----------------|----------------|-------------|
| <i>Khomiakov</i> | <i>Hansson</i> | <i>Bahbout</i> | <i>Mann</i> |
| Pass | 1♣ | 1♦ | 1♠ |
| Pass | 2♣ | Double | 3♠ |
| Pass | 3NT | Pass | 5♣ |
| All Pass | | | |

Bahbout led the ♥K to the ace. A spade was led to the ace and a spade ruffed, then the club jack to the ace and a club to the king. Declarer exited with a heart to East's queen, who cashed the diamond ace, and declarer conceded one down, minus 100.

The Closed Room saw a bit more action.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| <i>Sandin</i> | <i>Dewit</i> | <i>Clementsson</i> | <i>VandeWiele</i> |
| Pass | 1♣ | 1♦ | 1♥* |
| Pass | 1NT | Double | 2♦* |
| Double | 3♣ | Pass | 3♠ |
| Pass | 3NT | Pass | 5♣ |
| All Pass | | | |
| 1♥ | Spades | | |

Had South passed 3NT, East would have had to avoid a diamond lead for declarer's ninth trick, always assuming he could get the clubs right. In 5♣ he needed that too – and some more.

Clementsson also led the ♥K to the ace, but Dewit now finessed the spade queen, cashed the ace ditching a heart, and exited a heart to East. After the diamond ace and a diamond ruffed, he ran the ♣9, ruffed a spade with the ♣5, ruffed a diamond with the ace, and played the ♣10 to the J, claiming 11 tricks for plus 600, 700 in total and 12 IMPs to Belgium, winning 56-53.

Assuming East's second round double in both rooms showed four hearts,

and so at least nine red cards, then it seems right, in isolation, to finesse West for the club queen. But isolation is a rare luxury at the bridge table, and you have to take into account the need to set up and get at the spade suit for your tricks. So do you play for East to be 2452, 3451, 2461 or 1462? If there is a right answer I'm afraid I don't know it. But well done to Dewit, and hard luck to Hansson on the sort of hand, and result, that haunts bridge players.

On a final and trivial point, note the three singleton 6s.

And so Belgium progressed to the semi-final, where they faced Netherlands Red who, incidentally, had delivered a comeback of their own in their quarter-final. After the first segment they trailed England Red (who had topped their Round Robin Group) 57-12, but the Dutch stormed the second segment 51-5 for a 1 IMP win.

After 26 boards of the semi-final, with just two to go, the match was all square at 50-50.

Board 27. Dealer South. None Vul.

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ♠ 52 ♥ AKQJ8 ♦ 7 ♣ 109632 | | ♠ A87 ♥ 764 ♦ Q953 ♣ AKQ | ♠ K10963 ♥ 9 ♦ AJ8642 ♣ 8 |
| ♠ QJ4 ♥ 10532 ♦ K10 ♣ J754 | | | |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|---------------|--------------|---------------|-------------------|
| <i>Huvers</i> | <i>Dewit</i> | <i>Gotink</i> | <i>VandeWiele</i> |
| – | – | – | Pass |
| 1♥ | Double | 1♠ | 1NT |
| Pass | Pass | 2♦ | Pass |
| 2♥ | Double | 3♦ | Pass |
| Pass | Double | Pass | Pass |
| 3♠ | Double | All Pass | |

Commenting again on the Open Room I offered the laconic comment “there will be a swing here”.


South led the ♠Q, which North took with the ace to play the ♣K. He then reverted to spades, to East's 9 and South's jack. With three tricks in the bag, but needing two more, and presumably if mistakenly worried about discards on dummy's hearts, South now played the ♦K. Declarer took the ace, drew the remaining trumps, and cashed five heart tricks to make his contract and +530 to Netherlands.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|----------------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------|
| <i>Van Overmeire</i> | <i>Lucassen</i> | <i>Bahbout</i> | <i>Coenen</i> |
| – | – | – | Pass |
| 1♥ | Pass | 1♠ | Pass |
| 2♣ | Pass | 2♠ | All Pass |

A club was led and continued, and East made 8 tricks in comfort, plus 110 but 9 IMPs to Sweden, the size of their lead with one board to go. As another triviality, note North's four doubles from five calls in the Open Room. And so to the final board.

Board 28. Dealer West. N/S Vul.

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ♠ — ♥ Q85 ♦ 963 ♣ KQJ10876 |  | ♠ Q64 ♥ KJ4 ♦ KQ105 ♣ 432 | ♠ AK10987 ♥ A1063 ♦ J ♣ A5 |
| | | ♠ J532 ♥ 972 ♦ A8743 ♣ 9 | |

No reason for the trailing team to complain about any lack of swing potential here.

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|---------------|--------------|---------------|-------------------|
| <i>Huvers</i> | <i>Dewit</i> | <i>Gotink</i> | <i>VandeWiele</i> |
| 3♣ | Pass | 3♠ | Pass |
| 3NT | Pass | 4♥ | All Pass |

Unsurprisingly this did not play well. According to the play record declarer took the singleton club lead with the ace, and played a small heart to the queen and king. A club ruff was followed by ace and another diamond, ruffed. Declarer now played the spade ace pitching a club, a small spade ruffed, club king pitching a spade while South pitched a diamond. The diamond 9 was ruffed with the ♥10 and the ♠9 with the ♥8, and the ♣10 led for a claim of 7 tricks. However since declarer already has seven tricks, and still has the ace of trumps in hand, two down seems more likely. Meanwhile:

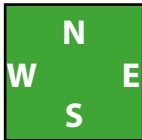
Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|----------------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------|
| <i>Van Overmeire</i> | <i>Lucassen</i> | <i>Bahbout</i> | <i>Coenen</i> |
| 3♣ | Pass | 3♠ | Pass |
| 4♣ | Pass | 5♣ | All Pass |

North led the ♦K and continued a low heart which ran to declarer's queen. He ruffed a diamond with the ace and claimed 12 tricks for +420 and 11 IMPs (whether 100 or 150 in the Open Room), and victory by 2 at 61-59. The swing on this board well deserved in my view, since I much prefer Jens Van Overmeire's 4♣ bid to Huvers' 3NT. For a further triviality you may have noticed that the Belgians scored their last board wins in both matches by making a 5♣ contract.

The 42 board final against the Czech Republic proved much more comfortable for Belgium, winning the first segment 44-0, and a final score of 109-56. Less excitement maybe, but still some interesting boards – these four all come from the second segment:

Board 21. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ♠ J9643 ♥ J72 ♦ J63 ♣ 52 |  | ♠ A5 ♥ A86 ♦ 8754 ♣ KJ74 | ♠ 72 ♥ 93 ♦ AKQ109 ♣ Q986 |
| | | ♠ KQ108 ♥ KQ1054 ♦ 2 ♣ A103 | |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|----------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|
| <i>Bahbout</i> | <i>Vojtik</i> | <i>Dehaye</i> | <i>Kolek</i> |
| – | 1♣ | 1♦ | Double* |
| Pass | 1♥* | Pass | 4♦* |
| Pass | 4♠* | Pass | 6♥ |
| All Pass | | | |
| Double | 4+♥ | | |
| 1♥ | 3♥ | | |
| 4♦ | Splinter | | |
| 4♠ | Cue-bid | | |

East led ace and another diamond, ruffed. Declarer played king and ace of hearts, then ace, king and ten of spades, ruffing. With a trump outstanding he crossed back to the ♣A, so going 1 down.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|--------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| Melcák | Overmeire | Klems | Khomiakov |
| – | 1♣* | 1♦ | 1♥ |
| Pass | 2♥ | Pass | 3♦* |
| Pass | 3♥ | Pass | 3♠ |
| Pass | 4♣ | Pass | 4♦ |
| Pass | 4♥ | All Pass | |

| | | |
|---------|----------|----------|
| ♠ J9643 | ♠ A5 | ♠ 72 |
| ♥ J72 | ♥ A86 | ♥ 93 |
| ♦ J63 | ♦ 8754 | ♦ AKQ109 |
| ♣ 52 | ♣ KJ74 | ♣ Q986 |
| | ♠ KQ108 | |
| | ♥ KQ1054 | |
| | ♦ 2 | |
| | ♣ A103 | |

West's ♦J lead was overtaken for a trump return, which meant South could draw two rounds of trumps and ruff a spade with the ♥A. He could cross back with a diamond ruff to draw the last trump and finesse the right way for two overtricks and 13 IMPs.

Board 26. Dealer East. Both Vul.

| | |
|-----------|----------|
| ♠ 10963 | ♠ KQJ |
| ♥ KJ3 | ♥ A107 |
| ♦ J1087 | ♦ AKQ654 |
| ♣ Q10 | ♣ 5 |
| ♠ A42 | |
| ♥ 964 | |
| ♦ – | |
| ♣ AK98743 | |

| |
|--------|
| ♠ 875 |
| ♥ Q852 |
| ♦ 932 |
| ♣ J62 |

Open Room

| West | East |
|---------|--------|
| Bahbout | Dehaye |
| – | 1♦ |
| 2♣ | 3♦ |
| 3♠ | 4NT* |
| 6♣ | 6♦ |
| Pass | |

Closed Room

| West | East |
|--------|-------|
| Melcák | Klems |
| – | 1♦ |
| 2♣ | 3♦ |
| 3♠ | 4♦ |
| 5♦ | 6♦ |
| Pass | |

Both rooms played in the inferior diamond slam, which on a heart lead needs trumps 4-3 and clubs 3-2 with either the long trump in North, or both the long minors in South. The club slam just needs trumps 3-2. I think the Belgian's auction was better until the final bid, where for my money Dehaye should pass partner's 6♣, a singleton being ample support. The club slam was never in question for the Czechs.

Board 27. Dealer South. Both Vul.

| | | |
|---------|----------|--------|
| ♠ J76 | ♠ K9532 | ♠ Q108 |
| ♥ J4 | ♥ A7 | ♥ K965 |
| ♦ KQ62 | ♦ A7 | ♦ 943 |
| ♣ 10976 | ♣ K532 | ♣ QJ4 |
| | ♠ A4 | |
| | ♥ Q10832 | |
| | ♦ J1085 | |
| | ♣ A8 | |

Open Room

| North | South |
|---------------|--------------|
| <i>Vojtik</i> | <i>Kolek</i> |
| – | 1♥ |
| 1NT* | 2♦ |
| 3NT | Pass |
| | 1NT 5+♠ |

In the Open Room the ♣Q was ducked, the jack taken by the ace, followed by a heart to the ace and one back to the queen. Three rounds cleared the spades and after East cashed his heart king declarer claimed 9 tricks.

| | | | |
|---------|----------|--------|--|
| ♠ K9532 | | | |
| ♥ A7 | | | |
| ♦ A7 | | | |
| ♣ K532 | | | |
| ♠ J76 | | ♠ Q108 | |
| ♥ J4 | | ♥ K965 | |
| ♦ KQ62 | | ♦ 943 | |
| ♣ 10976 | | ♣ QJ4 | |
| | ♠ A4 | | |
| | ♥ Q10832 | | |
| | ♦ J1085 | | |
| | ♣ A8 | | |

Board 28. Dealer West. N/S Vul.

| | | | |
|----------|----------|---------|--|
| | ♠ Q763 | | |
| | ♥ AQ1072 | | |
| | ♦ 3 | | |
| | ♣ 964 | | |
| ♠ 105 | | ♠ KJ2 | |
| ♥ 954 | | ♥ KJ8 | |
| ♦ AKQ652 | | ♦ 874 | |
| ♣ K8 | | ♣ 10753 | |
| | ♠ A984 | | |
| | ♥ 63 | | |
| | ♦ J109 | | |
| | ♣ AQJ2 | | |

Closed Room

| North | South |
|------------------|------------------|
| <i>Overmeire</i> | <i>Khomiakov</i> |
| – | 1♥ |
| 1♠ | 2♦ |
| 3♣ | 3NT |
| Pass | |

In the Closed Room declarer took the club lead in hand, played a spade to the king, which seems odd, then heart ace and heart to the 8 and West's jack. He ducked the club continuation to East who did well to play the ♠Q. Declarer now cashed the diamond ace and exited a spade. Down 2 and 11 IMPs to the Czech Republic.

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|----------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| <i>Bahbout</i> | <i>Vojtik</i> | <i>Dehay</i> | <i>Kolek</i> |
| 1NT | All Pass | | |

In the Open Room North led the heart 2 won by declarer with the 9. After cashing the diamond king to check, he ran the spade ten, then cashed diamonds and claimed 10 tricks (it might be that the operator lost the play, but ten ticks are there).

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|---------------|------------------|--------------|------------------|
| <i>Melcák</i> | <i>Overmeire</i> | <i>Klems</i> | <i>Khomiakov</i> |
| 1♦ | 1♥ | 1NT | Double |
| All Pass | | | |

In this room the ♥6 went to the queen and king, the diamonds were cashed, a second heart led and taken by the ace. When North next played the spade queen this declarer also had three overtricks, but doubled meant 480 against the 180 at the other table, and 7 IMPs.

To close, a final triviality which the eagle-eyed may have spotted. Sam Bahbout played with three different partners, which makes their achievement all the more impressive.



Highlights and New Features

Follow the European Bridge Team Championships on Funbridge Live!

As you well know, the 54th European Bridge Team Championships will be held from 6th to 16th June 2018 in Ostend, Belgium.

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Indeed, last year, Funbridge added a new feature called “Funbridge Live” to the app for Lyon 2017 World Team Championships.

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- Live streaming of the tables with the players (when available).

Matches are classified per tab in the following order: in progress, soon and archives. You will find the detailed broadcast schedule of the European Championships under “Soon”.

Select the match in progress that you want to watch and access the commentary and live streaming at the bottom of your screen.

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Meet the Funbridge team!

Some of our team members will attend the competition and Funbridge will have a stand on site. If you are there, feel free to go and meet them. They would be more than happy to welcome you!

DEFEND WITH JULIAN

POTTAGE

The Questions

1

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

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | N | |
| W | | E |
| | S | |

| WEST | NORTH | EAST | SOUTH |
|-----------|-------|------|-------|
| – | – | – | 1NT* |
| All Pass | | | |
| 1NT 15-17 | | | |

Partner leads the three of spades (second and fourth). What is your plan?

2

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

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | N | |
| W | | E |
| | S | |

| WEST | NORTH | EAST | SOUTH |
|------------------------|-------|----------|-------|
| – | – | – | 1NT* |
| Pass | 2♦* | Pass | 2♥ |
| Pass | 3NT | All Pass | |
| 1NT 15-17 | | | |
| 2♦ Five or more hearts | | | |

Partner leads the queen of diamonds. What is your plan?



Test Your Technique

with Christophe Grosset

see Page 4

♠ 87
♥ Q6
♦ QJ9865
♣ 765

♠ AQ
♥ K1053
♦ AK
♣ KQJ109

The bidding goes:

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|----------|-------|
| – | – | – | 2♣ |
| Pass | 2♦ | Pass | 2NT |
| Pass | 3NT | All Pass | |

How do you play on a spade lead?

After the spade lead, declarer has 4 top tricks and can easily establish 4 more in clubs or one more in hearts. The issue is that he will not be able to do both as he can afford to lose the lead only once before spades are set up for the defence.

Declarer should use the threat of the diamonds to force the defence to duck the king of hearts before playing on clubs. Following this idea, start by cashing AK of diamonds before playing the king of hearts. If the defence takes it, then thanks to the queen of hearts, declarer will be able to make 2♠, 1♥ and 6♦ for 9 tricks. If the defence ducks, declarer has now stolen a heart trick and can now establish clubs, making 2♠, 1♥, 2♦ and 4♣ for 9 tricks.

This line of play was found at the table during a rubber bridge game by Marcello Dadon from France. Would you have found it?

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Now You See Me

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

'I'm sorry but I can't play with you next Monday,' the Scarecrow informed the Lion.

'That's lucky,' the Lion replied. 'Since I told you last week that I'm taking Glinda out to the theatre that night. It should be excellent. A very good cast.'

'Oh yes!' the Scarecrow's face lit up. 'That's the theatre club carpool, isn't it? Nice that she is one of the three that you are taking in your car. The way you said it made me almost think it was a date!'

The Lion bristled. 'Well, that's my business. I'm picking her up, we will be sitting together, or at least in the same row, and I'll bring her back, so I can't see why you would object to my statement that I'm taking her out to the theatre. But getting back to you, what are you going to be doing on Monday, since you couldn't play with me even if I had been able to be in two places at once?'

'No, no,' the Scarecrow interposed, 'My Australian friend is going to be in the area and I said I would play with him.'

'I'll be very sorry to miss him,' said the Lion. 'Nice chap. Wizard with the cards.'

'Indeed, it's a pleasure playing with him. He does seem to like my style. I sometimes feel that he is a bit old fashioned, but I like to think that I help him to keep up-to-date on recent ideas on bidding and defence.' It was the Lion's turn to smile.

Monday night came. Dorothy had made the mistake of asking the Tin Man if he had had a good weekend.

'I'm at a loss to understand young people today' he replied. 'I told my niece that I would take her out for lunch. I chose the restaurant, and I drove her there in my car. Is that not taking her out? Then at the end of the meal she was taken aback to discover that I wasn't paying for her!'

At that moment, the Australian Card Wizard walked through the front door, clearly pleased at revisiting the club where he had played a memorable night with the Scarecrow a year before. He immediately recognised Dorothy and the Tin Man whom he had chatted to at the Emerald City Swiss Teams. He walked over and shook hands, sparing Dorothy the need

to craft an answer to the Tin Man.

After a couple of minutes, the Scarecrow arrived. Aware that playing with the Australian he would be the centre of attention, he had made some effort to smarten himself up. The effect was even worse than his usual haphazard and down-at-heel ensemble.

Ada blinked and Cissie tutted, clasping her handbag tightly to her midriff. 'I do believe that is a new shirt,' she observed. 'Perhaps if it had occurred to him to iron it, he might have noticed the label was still on it.'

Ada nodded in agreement. 'I don't believe I have seen him in a tie before. And I'm not sure that one has seen the light of day since the 1970s. They don't make them that wide anymore.'

Cissie winced. 'And really – a red and green checked shirt with a white and yellow striped tie! I should have worn my dark glasses. His friend the Lion is always so nicely dressed. Why can't the Scarecrow take a look at him once in a while if he wants to see what a smart man looks like.' She gave a start. 'Oh my goodness! Have you noticed his shoes?'

The Scarecrow beamed happily when he saw that his partner had arrived. After enquiring about his friend's journey, he quickly moved on to the more important things in life, as only bridge players can do. 'I wanted to talk to you about transfer breaks. I was watching the Kingdom of Ix junior team on BBO the other night and I saw them bid an awfully clever game that I'm sure the Lion and I would not have reached. Something about bidding a suit to show good trumps but a poor suit, or was it poor trumps but a good suit? Maybe it was both. Anyway, I wondered if we should try that?'

The Card Wizard nodded thoughtfully. 'It's a fascinating area which I must look into, but I don't think we should bother with that tonight. I'm sure it will work best for us if we keep things simple.'

The Scarecrow's mind had already moved on. 'I have learnt a lot about leads since our last outing at the Emerald City Swiss Teams. You know all the books seem to be against leads from a doubleton honour, but we wouldn't still be in the Ozian Cup if I hadn't found the lead of a trump from a doubleton ace.'

‘That could very well be a good lead,’ said the Card Wizard. ‘I’m sure Lawrence, Matheson and others who have written on the subject wouldn’t be against leading the ace of trumps when the auction suggests it.’

‘No, no, I led my small trump,’ the Scarecrow continued. ‘And it was the only lead to beat the contract. The Tin Man said something about a man called Garozzo, which seemed to be a compliment.’

‘I’m sure you’re right,’ the Australian shuddered, ‘but opportunities for such brilliancies don’t occur that often.’ He decided to change the conversation. ‘I have seen that you have had some great successes of late. Well done on winning the club individual!’

The Scarecrow blushed. ‘Yes, I have had some high finishes this season. If only your visit had been in a fortnight’s time you could have seen me being presented with the trophy.’

‘That would have been a pleasure,’ said the Australian warmly, ‘but I’m afraid I’m going to be out of the country at the end of April.’

Play was soon underway. This was an early board for Dorothy and the Tin Man. They were up against Dorothy’s aunt and uncle.

Dealer East, N/S Vul.

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ♠ QJ75 ♥ K753 ♦ Q102 ♣ K8 | ♠ 93 ♥ A96 ♦ AJ974 ♣ 1094 <div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #4CAF50; color: white; padding: 5px; display: inline-block; margin: 5px;"> N W E S </div> | ♠ 1082 ♥ 108 ♦ K6 ♣ QJ7653 | ♠ AK64 ♥ QJ42 ♦ 853 ♣ A2 |
|------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|

Aunty Em, in the South seat opened a strong no-trump, after East passed. She was a point short, but did have two good four-card majors and, more importantly, it increased the chances that she would be in charge of the play. Henry decided to upgrade his hand because of the decent five-card suit and

raised her to Three Notrump. The result was a thin game: something that did not unduly perturb Aunty Em as declarer.

| West | North | East | South |
|----------------|--------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| <i>Tin Man</i> | <i>Uncle Henry</i> | <i>Dorothy</i> | <i>Aunty Em</i> |
| – | – | Pass | 1NT |
| Pass | 3NT | All Pass | |

The Tin Man led a top spade, Dorothy encouraged and Aunty Em ducked. She won the low spade continuation and played a diamond to the seven and East’s king. Dorothy played a third spade won by Aunty Em in the South seat. She played her ♦8, covering the Tin Man’s ten with dummy’s jack. When Dorothy followed low she was on Easy Street. She soon had two spades, two hearts, four diamonds and a club.

‘Never seemed to get your clubs into gear,’ Aunty Em remarked, giving them all a good look at her ace-two.

‘With clubs six-two, when I don’t lead the king at trick one the chance has gone,’ the Tin Man said dismissively. ‘A major lead is normal on that auction. Sorry partner. I seem to have lacked the imagination to beat that game. Let us hope that my unspectacular approach will serve us better on other hands.’

A few rounds later this board crossed the paths of the Scarecrow, the Australian, Almira Gulch and Professor Marvel.

‘Ah, the winners of the club pairs!’ the Australian announced, much to the surprise of his opponents.

‘Have we met?’ Almira gave him a haughty look. No matter how presentable this fellow might look, anyone willing to play with the Scarecrow was unlikely to be suitable for her social, or bridge, circle.

‘No, I don’t think so,’ the Australian smiled amiably. ‘I visited the club last year and struck up a friendship with the Scarecrow. Since then I have kept half an eye on the club results.’

‘Delighted to make your acquaintance.’ Professor Marvel offered him a handshake. ‘I am still quite new here myself. I sometimes feel as if everyone else in the club has known each other for a hundred years.’

Miss Gulch looked daggers at him: ‘So kind to tell the world that I look like a centenarian.’

The Professor was sitting South. He had already found himself on the

wrong side of his partner a couple of times that evening through unsuccessful upgrades of his hand so he decided to play it safe and call his hand a weak no-trump. Systemically he should have opened One Diamond, but he selected an opening of One Club and rebid 1NT over his partner's One Diamond response. That ended the auction.

| West | North | East | South |
|--------------------|-------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| <i>Card Wizard</i> | <i>Miss Gulch</i> | <i>Scarecrow</i> | <i>Prof. Marvel</i> |
| – | – | Pass | 1♣ |
| Pass | 1♦ | Pass | 1NT |
| All Pass | | | |

The Professor could see:

- ♠ 93
- ♥ A96
- ♦ AJ974
- ♣ 1094
- ██████████
- ♠ AK64
- ♥ QJ42
- ♦ 853
- ♣ A2

The Australian led a top spade, the same lead as the Tin Man had found. Professor Marvel ducked then won the continuation.

With two spades, two hearts, and two minor suit aces in plain sight he had six sure tricks. He tried a diamond towards the dummy, just as Auntie Em had done, but here the paths diverged. The Australian instantly played the queen.

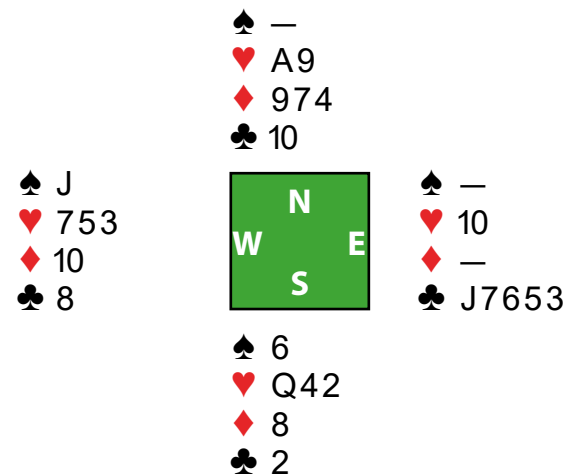
The Professor sat back and considered this development. If this was a singleton then that was going to make the task of setting the diamonds up much more tricky, and give the defence the chance to attack clubs. If, however, it was from king-queen then he was pretty well placed.

He won the diamond with dummy's ace and, needing to return safely to hand, switched to a low heart to the ♥8, ♥J and ♥K. That also set up his sixth trick and gave him the chance of the heart suit breaking for a seventh.

The Australian reverted to spades. The Professor won the king, discarding

a club from dummy, and played a second diamond. When West played low he relaxed. Even if the diamonds split 4-1, he was confident he now had eight tricks in the bag, and nine if the diamond split was kinder. He put in the ♦J and jumped back in his chair when the Scarecrow won the trick with the ♦K.

The Scarecrow switched to the ♣Q, and the Professor tried to recover his composure. He still had a diamond to lose and now the club suit would be wide open. His only hope, he decided, was a blockage in clubs, so he won the trick with the ace. The king followed the ace onto the table in perfect tempo. This was now the position:



With the club suit looking very dangerous, the Professor decided to cash out. He tried a heart to the ace, and noted the fall of the ten. However, if he cashed the ♥9 in dummy he would have no way back to hand. Hoping for a 3-3 break, he played a third heart, overtaking with the queen. The Australian claimed the remaining three tricks for the defence since the Scarecrow had nothing but winning clubs and he himself had the master in each of the other three suits.

'I must congratulate you!' the Professor beamed. 'That was a splendid queen of diamonds that you played. And from queen-ten-two!'

'Thank you. It couldn't have worked out better for me. I figured that if you had two diamonds it wasn't going to matter. If you had three then you were bound to play the nine, unless I diverted you.'

Almira was studying the bridgemate with disgust. 'No-one else has gone

down our way. YOU can't make 1NT yet someone has made 3NT. It's a complete bottom. And to think I always defend you on the strength of your declarer play!

The Professor chuckled. 'Very grateful I am too. Against the right defender, sometimes a bottom is the best that I can manage!'

On the third board of the set the Professor found himself holding:

♠ Q106
♥ AK105
♦ A6
♣ AK109

The Australian, on his left, opened One Spade and there were two passes to him. He jumped to 2NT and his partner raised him to 3NT.

| West | North | East | South |
|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| <i>Australian</i> | <i>Miss Gulch</i> | <i>Scarecrow</i> | <i>Prof. Marvel</i> |
| 1♠ | Pass | Pass | 2NT |
| Pass | 3NT | All Pass | |

The Australian led the ♦K and dummy was revealed to be:

♠ 432
♥ Q82
♦ J543
♣ Q85

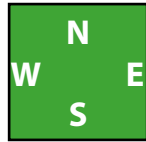
Professor Marvel reflected that the Australian, marked with most of the missing high cards, had no option but to give up a trick on the lead. With three top hearts, three top clubs, the ♦A and dummy's ♦J, he was up to eight tricks. Hopefully one of the rounded suits would give him a ninth.

He won the ♦A, played the ♣A, and crossed to the ♣Q in dummy, West playing the ♣J. So far, so good, thought the Professor. He now had nine tricks, and possibly ten if hearts came in too. It was vital to set up the ♦J before he lost his last entry to the dummy, so he came back to hand with a third club, West discarding a heart, and led his small diamond towards the dummy. Would West take the ♦Q? No, he played the ten.

'Jack, please,' he said to his partner, then, for the second time that evening, jumped in his chair when the Scarecrow played an unexpected diamond honour.

This was the full hand:

Dealer West, Love All

| | | |
|---------|---|--------|
| ♠ 432 | | ♠ 95 |
| ♥ Q82 | | ♥ J63 |
| ♦ J543 | | ♦ Q987 |
| ♣ Q85 | | ♣ 7642 |
| ♠ AKJ87 |  | |
| ♥ 974 | | |
| ♦ K102 | | |
| ♣ J3 | | |
| ♠ Q106 | | |
| ♥ AK105 | | |
| ♦ A6 | | |
| ♣ AK109 | | |

The Scarecrow was blissfully unaware that his two remaining diamonds were winners. He switched to a spade, allowing his partner to take five tricks in the suit. By sheer good fortune he happened to discard a club and two hearts so that when the Card Wizard played a third diamond the defence took two more tricks, bringing their total to eight.

'Quite superb!' said Professor Marvel. 'How wonderful to have two such hands in one set! What a tremendous lead! Lacking the queen-ten-two you improvised with the next best thing!'

'A bit of a teams play, I confess. Probably at pairs I should just try not to give anything away, but I could see myself getting endplayed and having to play spades or diamonds to you anyway. With my club and heart holdings there was little chance of getting my partner in with either of these suits, but in diamonds the queen, or even the jack, might be enough.'

Almira had spread the North-South hands on the table. 'Four clubs, four hearts and the ace of diamonds. Nine tricks that even a child could take. I can only assume that one of your lotions or potions has left you temporarily mentally incapacitated. Don't expect me to be so forgiving if this becomes a habit!'

At the end of play, Professor Marvel looked around for the Australian. He spotted the Scarecrow sitting in the social area studying his card.

He took a seat next to him 'Great tie you're wearing. It takes me right back to my youth. Where's your partner? He seemed a really groovy guy,

and I was hoping to have a chat with him.’

‘I haven’t seen him since we finished playing. He always leaves as soon as play has finished. It’s a shame as we don’t get a chance to discuss the hands.’ muttered the Scarecrow. ‘I’m quite hopeful we’ll be above average tonight,’ he continued.

‘If the rest of your evening was anything like your play at our table, you must have won,’ the Professor reassured him.

“These were two very interesting hands,’ the Scarecrow responded. He didn’t usually remember the hands but these two had stuck in his mind. ‘Yes, I think the discussion we had before we started was very useful to him. He clearly took up my suggestion on leads from honours.’ He thought for a moment. ‘I don’t pretend for a moment that I am anything like as good a player as he is, but it’s nice to see that even I can open his mind to new ideas. Hopefully I can persuade him to try some of my bidding suggestions.’

The Professor nodded at this wisdom. ‘We all have things to teach and to learn from each other. Oh, and by the way, I really must congratulate you on your outfit tonight.’ He smiled at the Scarecrow and gave him a friendly pat on the back.

The Lion, having failed to find the courage to invite Glinda for a drink, had made his way to the bridge club. He had to survive a virtual shoulder charge from the exiting Almira, and then the disappointment of having missed the Wizard from Oz. The Scarecrow was eager to tell him about the hands against Professor Marvel. The exact order of play was starting to become hazy to him but the Professor kept him straight.

‘How was your visit to the theatre?’ the Scarecrow asked, eventually. ‘Did the cast live up to billing?’

‘False advertising, I would call it.’ The Lion sniffed. ‘Suffice it to say that I will be careful to avoid any future performances starring Matt George, and Damon Clooney.’

Miss Gulch was cycling back to her mansion when the tournament director produced the evening’s results. 46% was not the sort of score to hang around for. She found that her misfortunes only seemed to bring out the worst in other people, and she had no interest in congratulating the hoi polloi when they achieved results beyond their station in life. The sight of the Scarecrow beaming from ear to ear, and blushing bright pink when he and his mysterious partner were announced as winners with 67% was one she was more than happy to miss.



Teachers, there hasn’t been praise like this for a new beginner bridge book in forever. And you can get a free e-copy from Master Point Press!

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Jeff Bayone

Answers to “Defend With Julian Pottage”

1

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ♠ Q973 ♥ 972 ♦ 7653 ♣ K6 | | ♠ J10 ♥ QJ106 ♦ QJ8 ♣ 9873 | ♠ AK42 ♥ 854 ♦ 102 ♣ AJ105 |
| | ♠ 865 ♥ AK3 ♦ AK94 ♣ Q42 | | |

| WEST | NORTH | EAST | SOUTH |
|----------|-------|------|-------|
| - | - | - | 1NT* |
| All Pass | | | |

1NT 15-17

Partner leads the three of spades (second and fourth). What is your plan? Since it would be normal to lead second highest from a collection of low cards, you can place partner with four spades headed by the queen. This gives your side four spade tricks to go with the ace of clubs.

A point of points tells you to expect at most six opposite—an ace or king as well as the queen of spades but not a third honour. A red ace or king might not help because that leaves declarer with the king-queen of clubs behind your ace. Unless those clubs are doubleton, declarer will have a double stopper.

Apart from the faint chance of a doubleton king-queen of clubs, can you see another chance? If partner has the king of clubs, you can make at least three fast tricks in the suit. In case declarer has two clubs with the queen you need to switch to the jack of clubs at trick two. This way you can untangle the clubs while you have the ace of spades as a re-entry.

2

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ♠ 10852 ♥ 1072 ♦ Q3 ♣ J863 | | ♠ QJ4 ♥ K9854 ♦ 92 ♣ KQ9 | ♠ 976 ♥ QJ3 ♦ AKJ10 ♣ 742 |
| | ♠ AK3 ♥ A6 ♦ 87654 ♣ A105 | | |

| WEST | NORTH | EAST | SOUTH |
|------|-------|----------|-------|
| - | - | - | 1NT* |
| Pass | 2♦* | Pass | 2♥ |
| Pass | 3NT | All Pass | |

1NT 15-17

2♦ Five or more hearts

Partner leads the queen of diamonds. What is your plan?

A count of points tells you that all the missing aces and kings are on your left. You have to hope that partner has four cards in each black suit (i.e. a 4-3-2-4 shape) to prevent your opponent from having nine top tricks. If you cash the diamonds or defend passively, declarer can set up a long card. You must attack hearts, aiming to make a heart trick to go with the four diamonds. You have three diamond stoppers, with two heart stoppers to knock out, which means time is currently on your side.

Another factor is that in attacking hearts you are setting up long hearts for your opponent. You will need to be in a position to cash out if you get a heart trick. If you lead the queen of hearts to the ace, what do you do after winning the next diamond? Whether you lead the jack or low, declarer can arrange for partner, who will by then be out of diamonds, to win your side's heart trick. You need to start with a low heart (or partner with ten), so overtake the diamond and switch to the heart three.



Vu-Bridge - Play Like a Champion

To Oblige or Defy by Ben Norton (UK)

To Oblige or Defy?

Many players believe it to be a crime to not lead partner's suit. True, it's usually a good idea since partner will have a reason to have stuck his neck out in the bidding. He'll either have a good suit, enabling him to cash quick tricks, or a good hand, with sufficient entries to set up his long suit. However, it's by no means set in stone that you must lead his suit.

There are no absolutes in this game and its good practice to exercise your own judgement. Partner's bid is a suggestion, often to help you with your opening lead, but sometimes it won't even be that. Indeed, partner should keep in mind that you'll be inclined to lead the suit bid, so when he has a close decision as to whether to enter the bidding with an overcall or lead-directing double he should bear his suit quality in mind. He doesn't always need an excellent holding to bid though. He might have ulterior motives in mind, for example at the time he took action he might have thought it was possible for your side to win the auction.

You'll lead partner's suit less often against suit contracts, where the aim is to get your tricks quickly, being less focused on establishing cards by virtue of length. Take these criteria on board, suggesting when you might try something else:

- Partner has re-bid his suit and you have unprecedented length. Look elsewhere for tricks, because they're unlikely to stand up
- The enemy have cue-bid or splintered in partner's suit. Explore a different avenue
- They've made an unexpected jump to game or slam in the face of partner's overcall, so suspect that they'll be prepared for a lead of partner's suit
- You have a solid sequence to lead, for example QJ10x or KQJx
- You plan to take ruffs in another suit
- You can form an altogether different plan
- Whereas against No-trumps slow tricks are the key, and the direction of

attack that the defence takes is crucial. Here are some of the more common factors that might sway you to spurn partner's suit in favour of your own:

You have an establishable suit of your own. It's not just honours that help, good intermediates do as well. It's a big bonus to have the Ace of your suit in particular, since you have control and can better maintain communication with partner

You have the majority of the defensive strength. Thus partner's unlikely to have enough entries to enjoy his suit

You're short in partner's suit. Unless your partner has bid his suit very strongly or your hand is very weak, it will probably be best to turn elsewhere

They've jumped in No-trumps, usually indicating that they have partner's suit under lock and key and are more than prepared for the lead, for example after (1♦)-1♠-(3NT)

Of course, the default should still be to lead partner's suit, after all he rates to have strength there, but you shouldn't do so religiously. There's no substitute for clear thinking and if you can construct a plan for the defence before you face your opening lead, all the better. Go along with it and have the courage to back your judgement. Partner will be understanding.

Take this example from the April session of the Coventry Pairs League, a well-attended competition held monthly where eight pairs in each division score up with the three pairs sitting in the opposite direction. Thus a lot of IMPs can be swung.

♠ A8653
♥ J10
♦ Q96
♣ J76

Sitting South at Love All, you pass as dealer. West opens 1♣, which could be short, partner chimes in with a 1♥ overcall and East's 1NT response is raised to game. What do you make of all this? What's your plan?

Your minor suit holdings may be well-placed for declarer, beneath the likely tenaces in dummy (the strong hand), which along with the straightforward nature of the auction suggests an active defence. Therefore you should look to establish and cash one of the major suits. Your doubleton honour holding in hearts could serve to support partner's values in the suit, but East will have at least one stopper for his 1NT call, likely two. Either way he's certainly prepared for a heart lead.

What's more East has denied four spades, making a spade lead more attractive. Your spade holding has no stuffing but you do have the ace, an excellent card for entry and control purposes. You also have around half of the defensive strength, so you can expect that partner will find it difficult to enjoy his long hearts unless his suit is of a very robust nature.

Putting all this together, a spade lead seems best. If you had a third heart or the ♠K instead of the ace a heart lead would be a clear favourite, but as it is you may need only to find partner with three spades for a spade to work. Even if hearts turns out to be the right suit to attack, your ♥10 may be a liability rather than a resource, serving to block the suit.

You opt to lead your fourth-highest spade, exposing yourself to the typical condemnation in the post-mortem if the ♥J would have beaten the contract. This is the right decision when the full hand is:

Dealer South. None Vul.

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|
| ♠ J2 ♥ K9 ♦ KJ3 ♣ AK10832 | ♠ K97 ♥ A75432 ♦ 105 ♣ Q4 | <div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #4CAF50; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin: 0 auto; width: 60px; height: 60px; display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> N W E S </div> | ♠ Q104 ♥ Q86 ♦ A8742 ♣ 95 |
| ♠ A8653 ♥ J10 ♦ Q96 ♣ J76 | | | |

Partner's ♠K wins the first trick and on the return of the nine declarer tries the queen in the vain hope that you'll win the trick. However, knowing partner would return the ten, not the nine from an original holding of ♠K1097 (so as to unblock the suit), you duck to retain communication. Faced with little alternative, declarer runs the ♣9 to partner's queen and a spade return results in a two-trick set.

How would the contract have fared on the ♥J lead? Declarer can make his game with the aid of five diamond tricks, two clubs and two hearts but would no doubt call for the king from dummy and play low on the heart return, thus failing when you win and shift to a black suit (preferably a club). However, he could succeed double-dummy by placing you with the ♥10, albeit he has little reason to do so.

You are now invited to take an interactive quiz with Vu-Bridge, which poses five opening lead problems, on all of which you must make the difficult choice between leading your partner's suit and an attractive alternative. You can either click on the link below or use your smartphone with this flash-code:

<http://www.vubridge.com/QM/Users/BridgeMag/BM20180615.php>




Bridge with Larry Cohen

www.larryco.com

The brilliant American player, writer and teacher presents three instructive deals to help you improve your declarer play.

Dealer West. Both Vul.

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ♠ J4 ♥ Q5 ♦ AKQ43 ♣ 7542 |  | ♠ Q1032 ♥ 10832 ♦ J76 ♣ K6 | ♠ AK9 ♥ AJ96 ♦ 10982 ♣ AJ |
|-----------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|

| West | North | East | South |
|----------|-------|------|-------|
| Pass | 1♦ | Pass | 1♥ |
| Pass | 2♣ | Pass | 3NT |
| All Pass | | | |

Boca Greens showed that it's a big bridge community when 66 players showed up for the first in a series of bridge lessons.

The deal above challenged all of the South players. The given bidding is one of many possible auctions. South was a bit conservative, but the final contract of 3NT is a good one.

West led the ♣10, and East was supposed to play the king (third-hand high). It looked as if South had nine easy tricks (five diamonds, and four more in aces and kings). South won the club ace and played out the ace-king-queen of diamonds. At this point, most Souths were chagrined to find that the fourth round of diamonds put them in the wrong hand. They won the fourth round of diamonds with the ten and couldn't get back to dummy to cash the fifth round of the suit. This meant down one.

Several declarers' saw the "trick," pardon the pun. They carefully led the diamond eight to the first round of diamonds. Then they threw the nine and ten under the other high diamonds from dummy. Now, dummy could stay on lead and cash the 4 and 3 since South's remaining diamond was the deuce. This was the easy way to make the contract.

The following deal is from the Round Robin of the 2000 Olympiad in Maastricht. It illustrates the flaw with so-called "problem-hands." Without the "alarm bell" to warn you, you might go wrong (as did many world class players that faced this problem without knowing it was a "problem-hand.")

Vulnerable against not, your partner opens 1♣, and RHO overcalls 1♥.

What do you do with:

♥ Q5
 ♥ QJ98
 ♦ KJ52
 ♣ 1083

Let's say you bid 1NT, and everyone passes.

The ♦10 is led and this is what you see:

♠ AKJ10
 ♥ 105
 ♦ 64
 ♣ QJ974

♠ Q5
 ♥ QJ98
 ♦ KJ52
 ♣ 1083

RHO wins the ♦A and returns the ♦Q.

Any thoughts?

This is nothing more than a hold-up lesson. If you duck the ♦Q you can't be defeated.

If you win trick 2 with your ♦K you can no longer make your contract.

This was the full deal.

Dealer West. Both Vul.

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ♠ 9764 ♥ A3 ♦ 109873 ♣ K2 | | ♠ AKJ10 ♥ 105 ♦ 64 ♣ QJ974 | ♠ 832 ♥ K7642 ♦ AQ ♣ A65 |
| | ♠ Q5 ♥ QJ98 ♦ KJ52 ♣ 1083 | | |

If you win Trick 2 (as did many Maastricht masters), you would take 4 spades and 2 diamonds for sure. You'd have to set up a club or heart trick. No matter which suit you played next, West would win and clear diamonds. The defence would get their ace-kings in hearts/clubs and THREE diamond tricks. By ducking trick 2 you guarantee your contract. If East happens to have more diamonds, then the suit is 4-3 and you will lose only 2 diamond tricks. If East shifts to clubs or hearts, that sets up your 7th trick. If East shifts to spades you can play on clubs to easily make your contract. It's easy once you are warned!!

That is always my argument against books/articles on card play – the reader is ready for the problem. The topic (or title) would be “Hold-Up Plays.” In real life, no alarm bells sound - that's what is so good about using everyday deals. (Note the not-so-subtle plug for my CD's: Play Bridge with Larry Cohen)

This hand is from the 2000 Olympiad in Maastricht.

| |
|-----------|
| ♠ 1075432 |
| ♥ — |
| ♦ AQJ |
| ♣ AKJ8 |

With both sides vulnerable you are in 3rd seat and after 2 passes you open 1♠ LHO jumps to 3♥ and your partner cue-bids 4♥ to show a good spade raise. RHO bids 5♥ and it's up to you.

There is no scientific answer, but I think that a jump to 6♠ is practical. Partner must have some of his values in spades, so we hope we won't have 2 trump losers.

The ♥K is led and this is what you see:

| |
|-----------|
| ♠ AKJ6 |
| ♥ 10 |
| ♦ 1083 |
| ♣ 109542 |
| |
| ♠ 1075432 |
| ♥ — |
| ♦ AQJ |
| ♣ AKJ8 |

You ruff, of course, and when you lay down the ♠A everyone follows. What are your chances of making this contract?

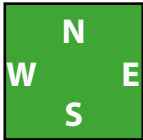
At first glance, you might go down if you lose to both the ♦K and the ♣Q.

However, there is an almost 100% line of play available. Simply draw the other trump and play a club to the ace. Once everyone follows, you can guarantee our slam (even if West had shown out, you'd still be cold).

Cross back to dummy in trumps and lead another club and finesse your ♣J. If it wins, you have no club loser. If it loses (clubs were 2-2), West is endplayed. He has to either give a ruff-and-sluff, or break diamonds. In either case you can throw your other diamond on the 5th club, and won't need the diamond finesse.

This was the full deal in Maastricht:

Dealer North. Both Vul.

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ♠ 6 ♥ KQJ432 ♦ K6542 ♣ 3 |  | ♠ AKJ9 ♥ 10 ♦ 1083 ♣ 109542 | ♠ Q8 ♥ A98765 ♦ 97 ♣ Q76 |
| | | ♠ 107543 ♥ — ♦ AQJ ♣ AKJ8 | |

| West | North | East | South |
|----------|-------|------|-------|
| — | Pass | Pass | 1♠ |
| 3♥ | 4♥* | 5♥ | 6♠ |
| All Pass | | | |

If declarer carelessly cashes the ♣AK first, he goes down. He'd lose to the ♣Q and the ♦K. Starting with the diamond finesse might work, but only because declarer would get lucky. He could test diamonds before playing clubs; when West shows up with 5 diamonds, to go with his known 6 hearts (from his pre-empt), declarer would know to play East for the ♣Q.



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From The Archives – First Visit

by Brian Senior

In recent years I have become the regular English Daily Bulletin Editor (there is also a Chinese section) at the Hong Kong Inter-Cities tournament, which is held near the end of July each year. The main event is the Open Teams, played over three days of qualifying for a place in the quarter-finals, with the knock-outs lasting for a further two days. There are also separate Ladies and Youth Team Championships and several other championship events crammed into the five-day tournament. It is a strong tournament with teams from all around the APBF zone taking part and it must be quite draining for anyone who chooses to play in all the events open to them as that means effectively three full sessions a day.

Though it is only recently that I have become a regular attendee, my first visit, also as Bulletin Editor, was back in 2002. On that occasion chief tournament director and organizer Anthony Ching produced two of his students as lay-out/page-making editors. They seemed to spend a huge amount of time talking to their boyfriends on their phones. Unfortunately, neither was a bridge player. They assured me that I was no longer required at some point in the evening but when I saw the bulletin the next morning I found hand diagrams spread over two pages and not quite the look I was used to. Of course, we take things for granted. Should it really have been obvious to a non-bridge player that a diagram needed to be all on the one page? I would have said yes, but if two highly intelligent young women couldn't work it out for themselves, perhaps I am wrong?

Anyway, my search through the material from the 2002 event brought up these two deals.

Board 4. Dealer West. All Vul.

| | | |
|------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| ♠ Q874 ♥ K982 ♦ J109 ♣ QJ | | ♠ 109 ♥ Q5 ♦ Q52 ♣ A109873 |
| ♠ AK3 ♥ A43 ♦ A873 ♣ K65 | | |

| West | North | East | South |
|------------|-------|------------|-------|
| <i>Kuo</i> | | <i>Zen</i> | |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | 1♦ |
| Pass | 1♥ | Pass | 2NT |
| Pass | 3♥ | Pass | 3NT |
| All Pass | | | |

The final round of the Open Teams qualifying saw Derek Zen and C.H.Kuo of the Chinese Taipei AIA team on defence against a very thin 3NT game. North's 3♥ bid showed four hearts and four spades and was a pretty aggressive effort, given that he had already bid once with his flat five-count. However, the cards lie quite well for declarer and one can see ways in which the contract might be let through.

C.H.Kuo led the queen of clubs and, when that held, continued with the jack. Derek Zen ducked again so declarer took the king. Needing something good to happen, declarer played three rounds of spades to Kuo's queen, North pitching a diamond. Now what? The heart position permits declarer to establish a second trick there while losing only one trick himself, and the

diamonds are breaking three-three. Passive defence may not prove to be good enough.

Kuo switched to the king of hearts – joy for declarer, who could see his contract making now without having to worry about the diamonds. He won the ace and confidently played back a heart to the jack and queen! Misery for declarer, as Zen cashed three club winners and the contract was defeated.

Kuo's lead of the ♥K was a Deschappelles Coup, the sacrifice of an unsupported honour to force an entry into partner's hand. Of course, on this occasion declarer could have succeeded had he realized what was going on and ducked the first heart. *(East needed to win the second club and clear the suit. Then when West gets in with the ♠Q he can switch to the ♦J and declarer must go down. Editor)*

The next deal comes from the semi-final match between Ambassador and Guangzhou.

Board 33. Dealer North. None Vul.

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|---|
| ♠ 10987 ♥ 6 ♦ AKJ874 ♣ Q9 | | ♠ KJ42 ♥ AKJ32 ♦ 93 ♣ J6 | ♠ 63 ♥ Q109874 ♦ 6 ♣ K1072 ♠ AQ5 ♥ 5 ♦ Q1052 ♣ A8543 |
|------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|---|

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|---|
| ♠ Q874 ♥ K982 ♦ J109 ♣ QJ | | ♠ 109 ♥ Q6 ♦ Q62 ♣ A109873 | ♠ J652 ♥ J1076 ♦ K64 ♣ 42 ♠ AK3 ♥ A43 ♦ A873 ♣ K65 |
|------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|---|

| West | North | East | South |
|-----------|--------------|-----------|------------|
| <i>He</i> | <i>Ching</i> | <i>Li</i> | <i>Lee</i> |
| – | 2♦ | 2♥ | 2NT |
| 3♦ | All Pass | | |

| West | North | East | South |
|-------------------|-------------|-----------|------------|
| <i>Chuancheng</i> | <i>Chen</i> | <i>Fu</i> | <i>Liu</i> |
| – | 2♦ | Pass | 2♥ |
| Double | All Pass | | |

Both Norths opened with a multi 2♦. Li Gong Chuan overcalled 2♥ and He Wei Wei, for Guangzhou, ended up in 3♦ as West. Anthony Ching led a spade and three rounds of those gave him a ruff. Ching switched to ♣K and a second club to the ace. Ringo Lee switched to his heart now. Declarer won in dummy and led a diamond to his jack. He had to concede one diamond for down two and –100.

For Guangzhou, Fu Zhong did not overcall on the East cards and Ju Chuancheng doubled 2♥ for take-out. Fu passed the double and Chuancheng led his heart to the seven and jack. Fu switched to the king of spades to dummy's ace and Chen Jien led to his ♣K then played the ♥8. Fu won the king of hearts and switched to the ♦9 for ten and jack. Chuancheng switched back to spades and dummy's queen won. Declarer ruffed a spade and played another heart to the ace but was now forced with a diamond. He cashed his last heart and led to the ace of clubs but Fu had a trump left and the defence had the remainder of the tricks for a slightly sweaty one down; –100 and 5 IMPs to Ambassador.

Could 2♥ doubled have been made? The problem was that declarer ran out of trumps and he would have succeeded had he been able to force East to ruff in before he had done so himself. It may risk an extra one down but suppose that we go back to the point where dummy won the queen of spades. What if declarer plays ace of clubs and, when that stands up, another club? East must ruff or declarer has eight tricks, and forces him with a diamond. Declarer ruffs and plays a heart and, though he can now be forced again, he still has the same number of trumps as East so can draw them all and cash a club for +470.

Club Corner

This month Tony Poole looks at Five-card Stayman

Strong hands in the range of 20+ that are balanced are usually opened 2NT, hoping to avoid the risk of a one-level opening being passed. It follows that an opening 2NT often contains a five card major. **Five-card Stayman** enables responder to investigate for 5-3 major-suit fits, thereby avoiding the risk of missing a potential 5-3 fit whilst also allowing for 4-4 major suit fits to be located. The bid is game-forcing.

There are several sequences where responder may wish to make use of this convention:

- A 2NT opening
- A 2♣ opening followed by a 2NT rebid
- A Multi 2♦ opening followed by a 2NT rebid
- A Benjamin 2♣ or 2♦ opening followed by a 2NT rebid

Why is it used?

On the deals where partner shows a strong balanced hand and you have a smattering of high cards you can look for a 5-3 fit as well as a 4-4 fit.

It is possible to use five-card Stayman over a 1NT opening but here we will concentrate on its use over 2NT.

Example:

♠ A K J 7 4
 ♥ A 7
 ♦ Q 7 4
 ♣ A Q 9

You open 2NT and find partner with:

♠ 10 6 3
 ♥ 8 6 5
 ♦ K J 5
 ♣ J 8 7 4

If you had opened 1♠ he might have passed and you would miss a game in 4♠. But using five-card Stayman your auction goes:

2NT 3♣
 3♠ 4♠

Isn't this a much better contract than 3NT on a heart lead? Admitted it isn't lay-down but it at least has chances.

Using five-card Stayman and its continuations

Over 2NT opening bid, Responder bids 3♣ (conventional) asking opener if he has a 5-card major (or indirectly a 4-card major).

If opener has a 5-card major then he bids it naturally.

If opener has a 4-card major (and not a 5-card major) he bids 3♦ (conventional) and responder bids his lowest major. If there is a fit then game is bid in the major, else 3NT is bid.

If opener doesn't have a five- or four-card major he bids 3NT.

Example auctions

2NT 3♣*
 3♥* 4♥*
 3♥ I have 5♥
 4♥ Good, I have at least 3♥ and sufficient points for game

2NT 3♣*
 3♥* 3NT*
 3♥ I have 5♥
 3NT I have at most two♥, but I had♠ interest.

2NT 3♣*
 3♦* 3♥*
 4♥*
 3♦ I don't have a 5-card major but I have a 4-card major
 3♥ I have 4♥
 4♥ I also have 4♥

2NT 3♣*
 3♦* 3♥*
 3♠* 3NT*
 3♠ I have 4♠ but don't have 4♥
 3NT I don't have 4♠

2NT 3♣*
 3♦* 3♥*
 3♠* 4♠*
 4♠ I also have 4♠

2NT 3♣*
 3NT*
 3NT I don't have a 5-card or 4-card major

Many players modify this convention to ensure that the opener gets to be declarer, keeping the strong hand concealed; it is known as Five-card Puppet Stayman:

The start of the convention is the same:

2NT 3♣

And the follow up bids by opener are the same:

3♦ no 5-card major but at least one 4-card major
 3♥ 5-card ♥ suit
 3♠ 5-card ♠ suit

If the responder has only one 4-card major he bids the other one (that he hasn't got). Knowing responder's 4-card major suit, opener places the contract:

3NT without a fit
 4♥/♠ with a fit (4-4)

If the responder has both 4-card majors, they bid either:

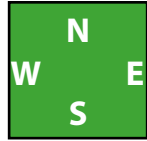
4♣ slam going values with both 4-card majors
 4♦ only game going values with both 4-card majors

With this knowledge opener bids his suit that he wants to play in and responder: passes (with only game values), or cue-bids or uses RKCB (with slam potential) – as applicable.

A few examples of the Puppet variety:

Example 1

Dealer South.

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| ♠ K ♥ 8743 ♦ Q964 ♣ K943 | ♠ A543 ♥ J2 ♦ 872 ♣ 8762 |  | ♠ J972 ♥ A95 ♦ 1053 ♣ J105 |
| ♠ Q1086 ♥ KQ106 ♦ AKJ ♣ AQ | | | |

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| – | – | – | 2NT |
| Pass | 3♣* | Pass | 3♦* |
| Pass | 3♥* | Pass | 4♠ |

All Pass

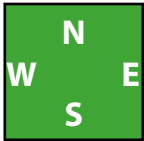
3♣ 5-card Stayman
 3♦ denies a 5-card major but holds at least one 4-card major
 3♥* I have 4♠ but not 4♥

Lead : ♥7 (or ♦4)

East will probably duck the heart lead. Declarer wins, goes to dummy with the ♠A, noting the fall of the king. To collect East's trumps declarer must play spades from dummy twice; once after winning the ♠A; then declarer forces out the ♥A, and discards a diamond on the third round of the suit. It is then possible to ruff the third round of diamonds and to take the marked spade finesse.

Example 2

Dealer South.

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ♠ KQJ104 ♥ 109 ♦ 862 ♣ A64 |  | ♠ 965 ♥ 872 ♦ 10954 ♣ 987 | ♠ A87 ♥ AK54 ♦ AK7 ♣ K53 |
|-------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| – | – | – | 2NT |
| Pass | 3♣* | Pass | 3♦* |
| Pass | 3♠* | Pass | 4♥ |

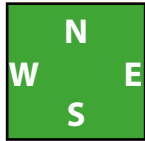
All Pass

- 3♣ 5-card Stayman
- 3♦ denies a 5-card major but holds at least one 4-card major
- 3♠* I have 4♥ but not 4♠

The contract of 4♥ is easy but 3NT would be defeated on a spade lead. In 4♥ declarer draws trumps, drives out the ♣A and makes 11 tricks.

Example 3

Dealer South.

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ♠ 62 ♥ Q10972 ♦ Q876 ♣ J86 |  | ♠ 1098 ♥ 543 ♦ A532 ♣ 43 | ♠ K53 ♥ K86 ♦ 109 ♣ A10752 |
|-------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| – | – | – | 2NT |
| Pass | 3♣* | Pass | 3♠ |
| Pass | 4♣* | Pass | 4NT* |
| Pass | 5♥* | Pass | 6♠ |

All Pass

- 3♣ 5-card Stayman
- 3♠ 5-card ♠ suit
- 4♣ cue-bid agreeing ♠
- 4NT RKCB
- 5♥ 2 key cards without ♠Q

A red-suit lead does not help and either black suit allows two diamonds to be discarded on the clubs.

Conclusion:

With 5-card Puppet Stayman:

The big hand always plays the contract, whether in NT, a five-card major, or a four-card major. The combination of having the lead run up to the strong hand and keeping it concealed will often enable the contract to be made, when played the other way round, it might fail.

When responder has a three-card major the convention allows the partnership to find an eight-card fit.



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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!

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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

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1 million deals played every day

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Book Reviews

Planning the Play: The Next level - Barbara Seagram and David Bird

Master Point Press US\$ 19.95, CD\$22.95, £12.95

Barbara Seagram hardly needs an introduction. In Canada, she runs the highly successful Toronto School of Bridge and has many books to her name. In 2004 she co-authored with Marc Smith, *25 Bridge Conventions You Should Know*, the highest selling bridge book of the past 50 years.

David hardly needs an introduction either. Most prolific bridge author of all time, creator of the famous Abbot series, writer for this highly esteemed magazine, BBO commentator extraordinaire.

Over the years, the two have written some 10 books together, including *Planning the Play of a Bridge Hand*. Their latest effort is its sequel.

The original covered less advanced topics such as the ruffing finesse, ducking, drawing trumps, and, of course, planning the play. The book was well received, and in 2010 it was named Book of the Year by the American Bridge Teachers' Association. Now, over eight years later, the two esteemed writers are attempting to one up themselves.

Obviously, the previous book was aimed at beginners, and Seagram and Bird have taken the initiative by aiming this book at intermediate players. This is a nice thematic touch, and it is reinforced by the books' similar style.

The book is robust, standing at 210 pages and 14 chapters, and each chapter covers a topic of declarer play with a number of deals and analysis. The hands are good and get across the points the authors are trying to convey, and the style of analysis is the same as that which was established in the original: in No Trumps, you count your winners, and in suit contracts, you count your losers. A simple concept, but the consistency within this book and the original is welcome.

At the end of each chapter you will find a "points to remember" section, which I think goes a long way to reinforce the most important aspects. Then the reader is invited to test his/her mettle with a group of single dummy problems. These too are a welcome addition, and afterwards you can turn

the page and look at the answers. As in the previous book, the authors have chosen to omit full hands for these problems, which might be a turn off for some.

As the book continues, this pattern repeats itself, and you will cover topics such as unblocking, safety play, trump control, avoidance play, and many others. Throughout the book, you will be guided with a kind and gentle style that should help make the journey easier. The writing isn't going to set your imagination alight, but you might find yourself smiling from time to time.

Once you reach the end of the book, you will be faced with a final challenge: 26 declarer play problems covering a variety of topics. As a result, you will have to do your best without the benefit of the chapter title to lend you a hand. And who knows, you may even run into a couple of surprises.

In conclusion, the book is good, but it isn't a must have. There are plenty of intermediate bridge books out there, and this one doesn't do much to set it apart from the rest. Still, it wouldn't feel amiss on anyone's bookshelf.

Stephen Kennedy



The Big Payoff: Slam Bidding at Bridge - Bill Treble

Master Point Press US\$ 21.95, CD\$25.95, £13.95

Bill Treble is well-known in Canadian bridge circles. He is a former bronze medallist in the Canadian Team Championships and a two-time Canadian Open Pairs champion. For over 12 years, he has been an accredited bridge instructor. In addition, he has been connected to the political side of bridge having served twice as president of the Manitoba Contract Bridge League.

The *Big Payoff: Slam Bidding at Bridge* is his fourth bridge book. In 2017, he received the American Bridge Teachers' Association Book of the Year award for *Defending at Bridge: A First Course*.

The publisher, Master Point Press, has labeled this book "Intermediate" and that sounds about right although, because of some of the bidding concepts and declarer challenges included, I would expect "serious intermediate" to be the level that would find this book most useful.

Treble begins slowly and carefully, outlining the conventions to be used and discussing the ingredients required for a successful slam. In particular, he focuses on the concept of Fast Arrival and the use of lots of splinter bids by both opener and responder. In setting the stage for slam bidding, he examines two scenarios: How to proceed when both hands are balanced and how to proceed when one or both hands are unbalanced. He follows this approach with a chapter devoted to cue-bidding, discussing topics such as cue-bidding styles, cue-bidding singletons, and advance cue-bidding.

Separate chapters are devoted to major-suit, minor-suit, NT, and strong-hand auctions. These chapters include discussion of many fine points of bidding such as opener's rebid of his major suit in a 2/1 auction, responder's second bid after opener has followed up a minor-suit opening with a NT rebid, and a new structure for showing minor-suit hands after partner's strong no-trump opening. In each case, Treble provides example hands to illustrate the bidding concepts and guides the reader through the process of assimilating the new material into his bidding arsenal.

I particularly enjoyed the tips to the reader that popped up throughout the book. They were not labeled as such and might have benefitted from being highlighted that way. I have seen a similar approach taken in other

Master Point Press books. As an example, in discussing using splinters over a minor-suit opening, Treble cautions the reader that there are three requirements to keep in mind: five-card support; no four-card major; no splinter beyond the three level. This is sensible advice, tailor-made for the anticipated audience.

After this careful analysis of different types of auctions, Treble launches into "Ask and Blast" in which he discusses Blackwood issues and when to simply blast into slam. He follows this chapter with one on some sophisticated techniques such as Exclusion Keycard, the Grand Slam Force, and Serious NT. None of these techniques is discussed in much detail, a shortcoming, but they are accompanied by example deals which convey the basics of the concepts. The last analytical chapter of the book deals with slam bidding in contested auctions and, though brief, it contains three of Treble's tips that should prove helpful to the intermediate player, or any player for that matter: have extra trumps in competitive situations; confirm a fit for partner quickly; and don't get caught up in the cue-bidding mania.

Throughout, Treble has included practice hands at the end of each chapter and there is a concluding chapter consisting solely of practice hands, incorporating many of the concepts learned along the way. In fact, all the practice hands make up more than half the print material of the book. That is not necessarily a bad thing since, when discussing the practice hands, Treble takes time to reinforce the concepts raised in the text. However, I think that more space could have been spent fleshing out some concepts and fewer practice hands included. While these practice hands are important in helping the reader visualize the bidding concepts in action, I am astounded at how frequently the two hands just happen to fit exactly the bidding patterns being discussed. I recognize in structuring a book of this nature that you want the reader to see how "the big payoff" can be achieved, but I certainly believe that "less" would have been "more".

I did spot some errors in analysis and some incomplete analysis in Treble's discussion of the play of the practice hands. In fact, one clear-cut error

in analysis occurred in the material discussed in the first chapter. These errors do not detract from the focus on slam bidding but should have been caught at some level.

The last chapter of the book may appeal to those readers who are familiar with articles presented in “The Bridge World” magazine, the main feature of this chapter being a debate about Fast versus Slow arrival conducted in the

December 1978 issue of the magazine and reprinted in the book with the permission of editor Jeff Rubens. Frankly, I found this an unnecessary addition but I do recognize that Treble wanted to present both sides of the issue to his readers, having come down strongly himself in favour of Fast Arrival.

The Big Payoff: Slam Bidding at Bridge is an organized work on slam bidding, recommended for the “serious intermediate” player. The bidding concepts are presented clearly with sufficient examples to engage and enlighten the reader.

Malcolm Ewashkiw



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!

AVAILABLE FROM A BRIDGE RETAILER NEAR YOU

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.

Is He Bluffing

Playing in the finals of the open team trials, you face a poker problem.

E/W Vul, South deals. As East, you hold:

♠ QJ43
♥ Q
♦ AK94
♣ 10976

| West | North | East | South |
|------|------------------|------|-------|
| - | - | - | Pass |
| 1♠ | 2♠* | ? | |
| 1♠ | 11-15, 5+♠ | | |
| 2♠ | Hearts and clubs | | |

You have various options available:

Dbf would show interest in defending, likely not spade support.

3♠ would be to play, no game interest.

3♥ would be a limit raise or better. This bid will definitely put you in a force unless you have a later opportunity to clarify that you just have a limit raise.

4♥ would be a splinter, slam interest in spades.

4♠ could be any hand. Partner must pass. It does not create a force. If the next hand bids, partner may not bid 5♠ on his own. If he wishes to bid 5♠ he doubles, giving you one last chance to defend. Thus, he would not have a penalty double available.

What call do you choose?

While game might not make if partner has the wrong cards, it has to be right to drive this hand to game. There are too many minimum hands partner might hold where game is laydown. In general, hands with singletons

or voids and a good fit should not invite game unless there is a way to show the singleton while inviting. Partner is too likely to mis-evaluate. It is better to just take the high road or the low road yourself.

Partner could have the perfect hand for slam, something like ♠AKxxxx ♥xxx ♦Qxx ♣A. The problem with splintering is that partner could have a good but not perfect hand and get too high. It is better to settle for game.

If you bid 4♠ and LHO competes to 5♥, partner has a pretty automatic pass and you won't know what to do. It is better to show the limit+ raise, create the force, and bring partner into the picture.

You bid 3♥. The bidding continues:

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| - | - | - | Pass |
| 1♠ | 2♠* | 3♥* | 5♥ |
| 5♠ | 6♥ | ? | |

5♠: Weaker than pass (forcing) followed by a pull.

What do you do now?

Since your hand is unlimited, you are still in a force. You know you can't make 6♠ if partner is weak. There is a lot of distribution out there and it is possible that 6♥ might make, but you have to double. You don't want to invite partner to bid 6♠, and that's what pass would do. The odds are that North is taking a save and they aren't making.

You double. Surprisingly enough, the auction isn't over. The bidding continues:

| West | North | East | South |
|------|----------|--------|-------|
| - | - | - | Pass |
| 1♠ | 2♠* | 3♥* | 5♥ |
| 5♠ | 6♥ | Double | Pass |
| Pass | Redouble | ? | |

Is he bluffing? It sounds like he might be. If he knew or thought that 6♥ was making, would he really risk having you run to 6♠ which figures to be down about 2 tricks in order to increase his score from +1210 to +1620?

That would be pretty greedy when he knows that you have a save which will cost considerably less than 1210. Surely he would be content with his good result. This argues that he may be trying to stampede you into running, and that he is willing to risk an extra 100 (or 300 if 6♥ is down 2) in order to manufacture a plus score out of nowhere. You would feel pretty silly if you ran and he was bluffing.

On the other hand, would he really expect a bluff to work? He knows that you are sure you have no chance to make 6♠, and with limit+ values opposite an opening bid you fully expect to defeat 6♥. From his point of view if he is off 2 quick winners the redouble just throws 100 points away. He could be 2-0 in the pointed suits and hope you miss on the opening lead, but then the redouble doesn't make much sense – it only alerts the opening leader that the contract might be making. He could be gambling somewhat. You know he is off the queen of hearts, and he might have AQJxxx of clubs and be hoping the club finesse is onside. But if he is gambling, you know by looking at your hand that he won his gamble.

It isn't clear why he risked the redouble on any of these hands. But logic indicates that you aren't taking the first 2 tricks. He isn't bluffing. You must believe him and take the save.

You bid 6♠. The fun has just begun.

| West | North | East | South |
|------|----------|--------|-------|
| – | – | – | Pass |
| 1♠ | 2♠* | 3♥* | 5♥ |
| 5♠ | 6♥ | Double | Pass |
| Pass | Redouble | 6♠ | Pass |
| Pass | 7♥ | ? | |

Now what?

Is he bluffing? He knows from your auction that you don't think 6♠ has a chance to make, since if you thought 6♠ had a chance you wouldn't have doubled 6♥. Would he really risk turning a sure plus into a minus in order to get an extra 300 points which he doesn't figure to get? Not very likely.

Is he gambling? Perhaps. But it doesn't sound like he is gambling on the lead. If he were off just a spade or diamond trick, would he really have redoubled and risked throwing away the sure 1210 for what might be down 1 in the grand or a lesser penalty against 7♠? Not likely. He might be gambling

on the heart or club suit, but from your hand that gamble wins. His auction says that he has two voids, and you have every reason to believe him.

Now you know why he redoubled 6♥. It was because the score for 6♥ merely doubled with an overtrick is only 1310, 200 points less than the 1510 for 7♥. But +1820 for 6♥ redoubled with an overtrick is greater than 1510.

Might it be right to pass the decision to partner? He has the same information that you have. He has the additional information that you aren't doubling 7♥, which means that you don't particularly think they are going down. If he doesn't have some possible help in the defence he should take the save. He could conceivably have king-doubleton of hearts – that wouldn't be inconsistent. There are two things wrong with this concept. One is that partner might have something like stiff king of clubs and be willing to defend, hoping that you had queen-doubleton or jack-third. The other and more important factor is that you have worked out what is going on. It is true that partner should also work it out, but there is that operative word "should". You know it is almost certainly correct to take the save, so it is your job to make the decision rather than give partner a chance to go wrong.

You choose to pass. Partner does also.

Partner leads a diamond, but as you knew deep in your bones it wasn't going to matter. The full hand is:

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------|---|---------|---|--|---|--|---|--|---|--|--------|
| ♠ – | | ♠ – | | | | | | | | | |
| ♥ AJ10972 | | ♥ Q | | | | | | | | | |
| ♦ – | | ♦ AK94 | | | | | | | | | |
| ♣ AKQJ542 | | ♣ 10976 | | | | | | | | | |
| ♠ AK10982 | <table border="1" style="text-align: center; width: 60px; height: 60px;"> <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 | | ♠ QJ43 |
| | | N | | | | | | | | | |
| W | | | E | | | | | | | | |
| | | S | | | | | | | | | |
| ♥ 5 | | ♥ Q | | | | | | | | | |
| ♦ J8762 | | ♦ AK94 | | | | | | | | | |
| ♣ 8 | | ♣ 10976 | | | | | | | | | |
| ♠ 765 | | ♠ 765 | | | | | | | | | |
| ♥ K8643 | | ♥ K8643 | | | | | | | | | |
| ♦ Q1053 | | ♦ Q1053 | | | | | | | | | |
| ♣ 3 | | ♣ 3 | | | | | | | | | |

Should partner have found the save?

It seems pretty clear that he should. You can't still be in a force. You ran from 6♥ redoubled to a contract you couldn't be expecting to make

considering your double of 6♥, so your pass can't invite him to bid 7♠ to make. But it does invite him to bid 7♠ as a save, since if you thought you could defeat 7♥ you would have doubled to prevent him from saving. He has no defensive prospects at all, and even at unfavourable vulnerability 7♠ doubled will cost far less than the value of the enemy grand. In fact, 7♠ goes down 3 for -800.

Do you like the way North handled his big 2-suiter?

I think what North did makes a lot of sense. While you might pull the redouble to 6♠, you don't figure to go all the way to 7♠. He is gambling on not losing a heart trick, but this is a very good gamble. The key is that if you had a sure heart winner you almost certainly would not save in 6♠ even after the redouble.

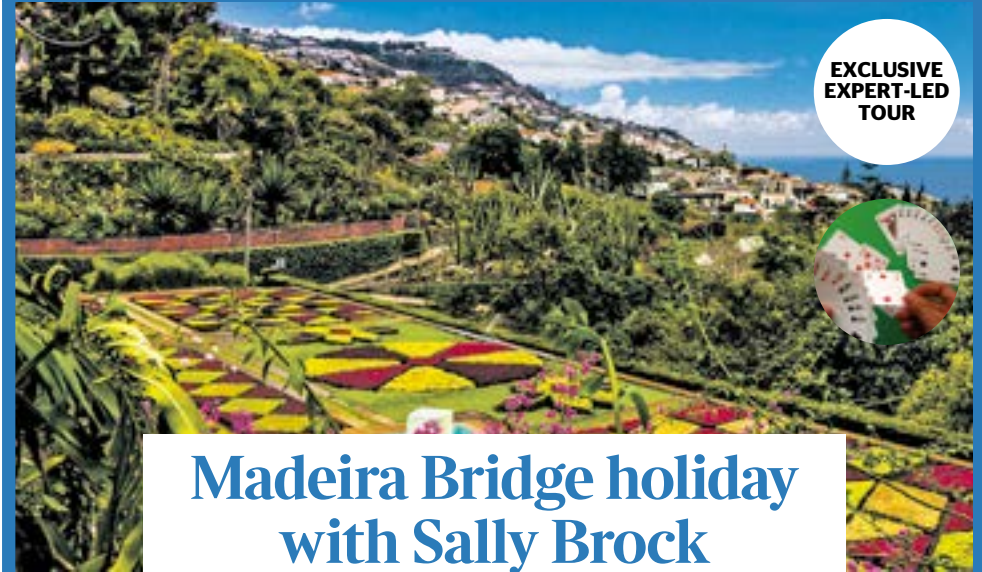
Do you like partner's choice of a 1♠ opening bid?

While light opening bids are fine when the alternative is to pass, there is no need to make a light opening one-level bid when a more descriptive pre-empt is available. Not a weak 2-bid or multi. The West hand has far too much playing strength for that. But a 3♠ bid is a very accurate description of the hand type, as well as having good pre-emptive value. Even a 4-level opening isn't out of the question, since the 6-5 shape gives the hand a lot of playing strength. It generally isn't necessary to over pre-empt when you hold the spade suit. If the majors were reversed, a 4♥ opening would be quite reasonable. The problem with a one-level opening is that your partner will be playing you for a different hand type, so even if light opening one-bids are part of the partnership style this is not the right hand to open 1♠.

If you would like to know what happened at the other table:

http://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?linurl=http://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=10168

THE TIMES Expert Traveller



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Brother Kyran's Big Improvement

by David Bird

To introduce some variety into the bridge at St. Titus, it was the monks' custom to hold a summer league. The matches were of 24 boards and this year a record seven teams had entered, including three from the novitiate. The Abbot's first match was against the least experienced of the novice teams. They were captained by Brother Kyran, who had recently been through the initiation process to the senior duplicate—a somewhat terrifying session in partnership with the Abbot.

'Ah, we're playing against my recent partner,' declared the Abbot, taking his seat for the first half of the match. 'We'll be able to see how much he learnt from the experience.'

Brother Xavier turned towards Brother Kyran. 'Did you enjoy partnering the Abbot?' he asked.

'Er... yes, thank you,' replied Brother Kyran. 'I learnt quite a lot, actually.' The novice struggled to dispel the occasion from his mind. The worst part had been the anticipation, lying awake all the previous night

This was an early board at the Abbot's table:

Dealer South. Both Vul.

| | | |
|----------|-------|---------|
| ♠ A93 | | ♠ 106 |
| ♥ 93 | | ♥ J4 |
| ♦ AKQ8 | | ♦ 97432 |
| ♣ AQ52 | | ♣ 10973 |
| ♠ KQJ87 | ♠ N | |
| ♥ K10865 | W S E | |
| ♦ — | | |
| ♣ 864 | | |
| ♠ 542 | | |
| ♥ AQ72 | | |
| ♦ J1065 | | |
| ♣ KJ | | |

| West | North | East | South |
|------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| <i>The Abbot</i> | <i>Brother Jake</i> | <i>Brother Xavier</i> | <i>Brother Kyran</i> |
| — | — | — | 1♦ |
| 2♦ | 2♠ | Pass | 2NT |
| Pass | 6♦ | All Pass | |

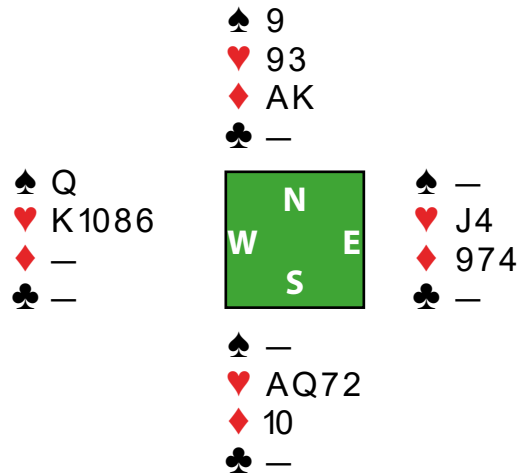
Brother Kyran opened on a balanced 11-count, realising that the Abbot might express some view on the matter later. The Abbot showed his major suits with a Michaels cue-bid and Brother Jake's 2♠ agreed diamonds, also showing a stopper in spades. Science was abandoned on the next round and the Abbot led the king of spades against a small slam in diamonds.

Brother Kyran won the ♠K lead in the dummy and paused to plan the play. He had six certain tricks in the side suits and would need to add six trump tricks. It wasn't obvious how this could be achieved. Perhaps he would need to find East with the heart king. Mind you, that wasn't very likely after the Abbot's Michaels bid.

'I hope you're not going to be this slow throughout the match,' declared the Abbot. 'We're not playing in the Gold Cup.'

'Low trump, please,' said Brother Kyran. He won with the jack and was alarmed to see the Abbot show out, discarding a spade. Ah well, no-one could blame him for a 5-0 trump break. He cashed the king and jack of clubs and returned to dummy with the queen of trumps.

When Brother Kyran played the ace and queen of clubs, Brother Xavier followed suit all the way and he was able to discard his two spade losers. A spade ruff in his hand left these cards still to be played:



Brother Kyran continued with the ace and queen of hearts, the Abbot winning with the king. Since he had no trump to return, Brother Kyran could not be prevented from scoring the last three tricks on a high crossruff. The slam had been made.

‘What a remarkable improvement in the young lad’s play!’ exclaimed Brother Xavier. ‘Your session together has worked a miracle, Abbot.’

The Abbot replaced his cards in the board. The hand had played itself. With the cards lying so favourably, the slam was lay-down.

Brother Xavier smiled to himself. ‘I only wish partnering you would have a similar effect on my own cardplay,’ he continued.

The Abbot made no reply. Improving Brother Xavier’s wooden cardplay would indeed be a miracle. He had spent a lifetime playing the card nearest to his thumb.

At the other table Lucius and Paulo faced Brother Martin and Brother Simon, who had both recently joined the monastery from the College of the Blessed St. Adrian in Somerset.

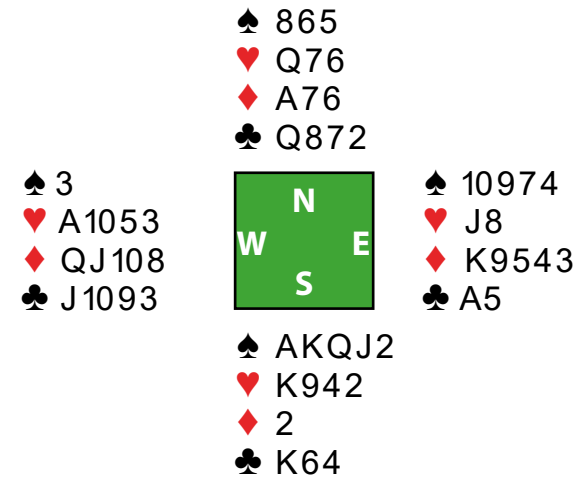
‘We’re playing Modified Acol,’ Brother Simon informed his opponents.

‘The system has served the country well for many decades,’ replied an amused Brother Lucius. ‘You found it inadequate in some way?’

‘We just made a few changes,’ Brother Martin replied. ‘They haven’t come up yet.’

The players drew their cards for this board.

Dealer South. Both Vul.



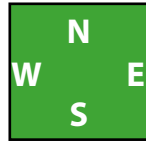
| West | North | East | South |
|-----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| <i>Brother Martin</i> | <i>Brother Paulo</i> | <i>Brother Simon</i> | <i>Brother Lucius</i> |
| — | — | — | 1♠ |
| Pass | 2♠ | Pass | 4♠ |
| All Pass | | | |

The neatly groomed Brother Martin led the ♦Q against the spade game. Brother Lucius won with dummy’s ace and paused to consider his prospects. He would need some luck in hearts or clubs. There was also a potential problem in keeping control if trumps broke 4-1. Perhaps the best shot was to lead a club from dummy at trick 2.

Brother Simon played low on dummy’s ♣2 and declarer’s king won the trick. When trumps were drawn in four rounds, West threw all his diamonds and a diamond was discarded from dummy. A heart to dummy’s queen won the next trick and was followed by another heart to the jack, king and West’s ace.

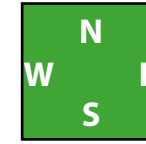
Brother Martin returned the ♣J, ducked in the dummy. East had to win with the bare ace and these cards were still in play:

| | | |
|-------|-------|--------|
| ♠ — | ♠ — | ♠ — |
| ♥ 7 | ♥ 7 | ♥ — |
| ♦ 7 | ♦ 7 | ♦ K954 |
| ♣ Q8 | ♣ Q8 | ♣ — |
| ♠ — | ♠ — | ♠ — |
| ♥ 105 | ♥ 105 | ♥ — |
| ♦ — | ♦ — | ♦ K954 |
| ♣ 109 | ♣ 109 | ♣ — |
| ♠ 2 | ♠ 2 | ♠ — |
| ♥ 94 | ♥ 94 | ♥ — |
| ♦ — | ♦ — | ♦ — |
| ♣ 6 | ♣ 6 | ♣ — |



Dealer South. E/W Vul.

| | | |
|---------|---------|-----------|
| ♠ A 102 | ♠ A 102 | ♠ 3 |
| ♥ A6 | ♥ A6 | ♥ 1097532 |
| ♦ 9832 | ♦ 9832 | ♦ K106 |
| ♣ J1085 | ♣ J1085 | ♣ K93 |
| ♠ 8753 | ♠ 8753 | ♠ — |
| ♥ KQJ84 | ♥ KQJ84 | ♥ — |
| ♦ AJ5 | ♦ AJ5 | ♦ Q74 |
| ♣ Q | ♣ Q | ♣ A7642 |



| West | North | East | South |
|---------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| <i>Brother Jake</i> | <i>Brother Paulo</i> | <i>Brother Kyran</i> | <i>Brother Lucius</i> |
| — | — | — | 1♠ |
| 2♥ | 2♠ | 4♥ | 4♠ |
| All Pass | | | |

When Brother Simon led back the ♦K, Lucius discarded a heart from his hand. West had to throw the ♥5. East's next diamond, ruffed by declarer, left West with no good card to play. He sat for a while, wondering what to do. 'It doesn't matter what I throw, does it?' he asked.

'I don't think so,' Lucius replied, facing his cards. 'It was a lucky one for us.'

The half-time score gave the senior team a lead of only 8 IMPs. 'Don't forget that these matches are victory-pointed,' the Abbot informed his team-mates. 'It won't help our cause to win by 20 IMPs or so against the bottom-ranked team in the league.'

'Quite so, Abbot,' replied Brother Paulo. 'In the second half I will do my best to stir things up.'

The Abbot winced. 'There's no need for anything like that,' he reprimanded. 'I don't want you coming back with another of your 1100s in minus column.'

Brother Paulo strained to recall what deal the Abbot was talking about. Did he mean the one against Brother Zac's team? That had been four years ago, maybe even five years ago.

The match restarted and Brother Lucius was soon in action:

Brother Jake and Brother Kyran couldn't believe their luck, playing a full twelve boards against their heroes, Lucius and Paulo. They were determined to make the most of it and maybe pick up a few tips.

Razor haircuts were not allowed in the monastery but Brother Jake kept his hair as short as possible. He patted his head as he considered what to lead against the spade game. A heart might seem obvious but there was limited potential in the suit after partner's raise. Maybe the ♣Q would prove more troublesome.

Brother James placed the queen on the table and down went the dummy. Brother Lucius chuckled to himself. 'Just 2♠ on such a good hand?' he queried. 'You must have taken the Abbot's half-time advice to heart.'

The novices exchanged a glance. What on earth could the Abbot have said? Brother Paulo shared his partner's amusement. 'I couldn't bid any higher,' he replied. 'I didn't want to risk another 1100.'

'No, indeed,' said Brother Lucius. 'Club eight, please.'

Again the novices looked at each other. The 8 from J-10-8-5? Lucius and Paulo seemed to play a different game from everyone else.


Brother Lucius won with the ♣A, crossed to the ace of trumps and discarded a diamond on the ♥A. After drawing trumps in three more rounds, he played a club to the jack and East's king. Lucius ruffed Brother Kyran's heart return with his last trump and crossed to the ♣10, picking up East's ♣9. Thanks to his unblock of the ♣8 at trick one, he was then able to return to his hand to enjoy two more club tricks. The contract was his.

'Nice play on the first trick,' observed Brother Kyran.

'Thanks,' Brother Lucius replied. 'Mind you, the day I block a suit like that is the day I consider giving up the game. Your declarer will find the same play, I'm sure.'

This was the final board of the match:

Dealer South. Both Vul.

| | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| ♠ 10742 ♥ 10862 ♦ K4 ♣ 1053 |  | ♠ 65 ♥ 93 ♦ 86543 ♣ J872 |
| ♠ J983 ♥ J754 ♦ QJ102 ♣ 94 | ♠ AKQ ♥ AKQ ♦ A97 ♣ AKQ6 | |

| West | North | East | South |
|------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| <i>The Abbot</i> | <i>Brother Jake</i> | <i>Brother Xavier</i> | <i>Brother Kyran</i> |
| – | – | – | 2♣ |
| Pass | 2♦ | Pass | 6NT |
| All Pass | | | |

After a brief but spectacular auction, the Abbot led the queen of diamonds. 'I haven't got very much for you,' said Brother Jake, as he laid out the dummy.

'Not very much, when you have a completely undeserved king?' grunted the Abbot. 'That's treasure trove after the auction you had.'

'Should I have raised to seven, then?' queried Brother Jake.

The Abbot dismissed the question with a flap of the hand. 'Best not to talk so much,' he said. 'Even with an unexpectedly good dummy like that, your partner may need to plan the play.'

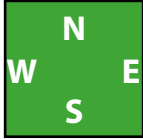
Brother Kyran could count eleven top tricks. If either major suit broke 3-3, or a jack dropped doubleton, he would need the ♦K as a later entry. 'Small, please,' he said.

Brother Kyran won with the diamond ace and played his three top spades. The suit broke 4-2 and the Abbot was left with the ♠J. If the ♣J was doubleton, he would need a heart entry to resolve the club blockage. His next move was therefore to test the club suit. Once again the suit broke 4-2, this time leaving East with the jack. The Abbot discarded the ♦10 on the third round of clubs, retaining his guards against dummy's major-suit 10s.

Brother Kyran smiled at his partner. 'Not much luck so far,' he said.

The Abbot raised an eyebrow. What about dummy miraculously appearing with a king? Anyway, did these youngsters feel obliged to talk non-stop during the play?

Brother Kyran played the three top hearts and once more the missing jack refused to show. This position had been reached

| | | |
|----------------------------|---|---------------------------|
| ♠ 10 ♥ 10 ♦ K ♣ – |  | ♠ – ♥ – ♦ 86 ♣ J |
| ♠ J ♥ J ♦ J ♣ – | ♠ – ♥ – ♦ 97 ♣ 6 | |

It seemed to Brother Kyran that he had reached the end of the road. He could cross to the king of diamonds but both of dummy's tens were losers.

If instead he played his losing club, the Abbot would discard the ♦J, keeping his two major-suit guards. East would win and play a diamond to the king. He would then have to lead whichever ten he had kept in the dummy. The position was hopeless.

When Brother Kyran led the ♣6, the Abbot did indeed discard the ♦J. The novice was about to throw one of the major suit tens when inspiration struck. ‘Throw the king of diamonds, please, partner,’ he said.

Brother Xavier won with the jack of clubs and returned the ♦6. Brother Kyran finessed the ♦7 and, amazingly, the contract was his.

‘Wow!’ exclaimed Brother Jake. ‘Perhaps I’ll be able to play like that after my initiation session with the Abbot.’

The Abbot was looking somewhat uneasy as he and Xavier rejoined their team mates to score up the session. ‘No need to worry,’ Brother Paulo informed them. ‘We have a good card.’

The Abbot’s team had won the match by just 1 IMP, worth 10.25 VPs against 9.75. ‘What a very moderate effort!’ exclaimed the Abbot. ‘Brother Cameron will probably pick up a maximum against this team.’

‘No worries, Abbot,’ declared Brother Paulo. ‘When we play against Brother Cameron, I will put the cats among the pigeons at our table.’

‘It didn’t work very well against Brother Zac, if you remember,’ retorted the Abbot. ‘I’m not just talking about that 1100. You lost 500 on another board in the same match.’ He tore up his scorecard and deposited the pieces in a nearby waste bin. ‘Just aim to play good bridge. That’s what I’ve always done.’

Br.
Xavier



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The Auction Room

Mark Horton

Welcome to the Auction Room, where we examine bidding methods from recent events.

The Palac Prymasowski (the Primates Palace) in Warsaw was the venue for the 2018 Palace Cup. The 10 teams played a double round robin, with the top four advancing to the semi-finals.

| | | |
|-----------|--------|---|
| Zia | 240.78 | Zia Mahmood, David Gold, Sabine Auken, Roy Welland, Wojtek Gawel, Rafał Jagniewski |
| Vytas | 214.81 | Vytautas Vainikonis, Wojtek Olański, Bogusław Gierulski, Jerzy Skrzypczak, Andrey Gromov, Alexander Dubinin |
| Connector | 186.33 | Cezary Serek, Konrad Araszkiwicz, Olech Bestrzyński, Krzysztof Kotorowicz, Piotr Nawrocki, Piotr Wiankowski |
| Era | 186.06 | Erikas Vainikonis, Andrey Arlovich, Stanislaw Golebiowski, Maciej Bielawski, Piotr Marcinowski, Mateusz Sobczak |

Zia met Era in the round of 4.

The Hands

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

Hand 1. Dealer North. None Vul.

| | | |
|---------|--|---------|
| ♠ AQJ82 | | ♠ K9653 |
| ♥ K75 | | ♥ 432 |
| ♦ AK632 | | ♦ Q1098 |
| ♣ — | | ♣ 3 |

North opens 1♣ (any balanced hand including any other 5-card suit) and South bids 1♦ showing 4+♥. North rebids 2♣ if possible. If allowed South bids 3♠ to show a fit for clubs. North bids 5♣.

| West | North | East | South |
|-----------|---------|-------------|----------|
| Bielawski | Auken | Golebiowski | Welland |
| – | 1♣* | Pass | 1♦* |
| Double | 2♣ | 2♠ | 3♠* |
| 4♣* | 5♣ | Pass | Pass |
| 5♦* | Pass | 5♠ | All Pass |
| 4♣ | Cue-bid | | |
| 5♦ | Cue-bid | | |

When East could not cue-bid in hearts West signed off.

South led the ♦7 from his ♠104 ♥QJ986 ♦7 ♣KJ1085 and declarer won, drew trumps and claimed eleven tricks—he could pitch one heart on the fifth diamond.

| West | North | East | South |
|-------|----------|------------|------------|
| Gawel | Arlovich | Jagniewski | Vainikonis |
| – | 1♣ | Pass | 1♥ |
| 2♣* | 2NT | 5♠ | Pass |
| 6♣ | All Pass | | |

Clearly West intended 2♣ to show his powerful two-suiter and East's 5♠ suggested he had got the message. Even so, a jump to 4♠ looks like the down the middle bid (this was the first board of the match) leaving West to decide if it is right to bid on.

North led the ♠7 and this unhappy contract was ten down.

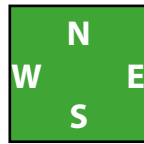
Recommended auction: After 1♣-1♥ West must choose between a double and something that shows a two-suited hand. If East then bids spades West can cue-bid in clubs, but when East cannot show a heart control West should probably give up on slam (would a repeat cue-bid in clubs ask about a third round heart control?)

Marks: 5♠ 10, 5♦ 8, 6♠ 5.

Running score: Zia 0 (0) Era 10 (14)

Hand 2. Dealer South. N/S Vul.

♠ AK6
♥ A1073
♦ 52
♣ AJ94



♠ J97
♥ 9
♦ AQJ4
♣ K10732

West East

| | |
|------------------|--------------------|
| <i>Bielawski</i> | <i>Golebiowski</i> |
| 1NT | 3♥* |
| 4♣ | 4♦ |
| 4♠ | 5♣ |
| Pass | |
| 3♥ | 31(45) |

It looks as if 4♣ set the suit, with East then cue-bidding in diamonds. When East had nothing more to show over 4♠ West let matters rest. Is there a case for 4♣/4♦ in this situation to ask for key cards? (It's possible that East's 4♦ was a key-card ask, with 4♠ showing 0-3.)

Auken held ♠Q852 ♥Q6542 ♦K8 ♣86 so taking all the tricks was easy enough.

West East

| | |
|--------------|-------------------|
| <i>Gawel</i> | <i>Jagniewski</i> |
| 1NT* | 2♠* |
| 3♣ | 3♥* |
| 4♣ | 4♦* |
| 4♥* | 5♣ |
| 6♣ | Pass |
| 1NT | 14-17 |

On the convention card 2♠ is described as 'standard bidding' - as Professor Joad would have remarked, 'it all depends what you mean by standard'.

It may have been a transfer to clubs or a range ask (there is a note suggesting that a rebid of 2NT would show a minimum), or minor suit Stayman with 3♥ showing a shortage.

3♥ looks like it was showing a shortage and then with clubs clearly agreed a couple of cue-bids saw West push on to the slam.

The club suit will play for no loser 57.9% of the time, and if there is a

trump loser the diamond king onside will usually be enough compensation.

Here too North led a low spade, +940.

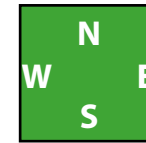
Recommended auction: In ANBM Standard the auction would start 1NT-2♠*-3♣*-3♦*-a transfer to clubs, West showing a fit and East then making a splinter. Then there is more than one route to 6♣. The simplest would be for West to bid 4♣ asking for key-cards.

Marks: 6♣ 10, 5♣ 7, 3NT 6.

Running score: Zia 10 (11) Era 17 (14)

Hand 3. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ KQ8
♥ Q7654
♦ AJ85
♣ A



♠ AJ
♥ J8
♦ KQ94
♣ KQJ87

West East

| | |
|------------------|--------------------|
| <i>Bielawski</i> | <i>Golebiowski</i> |
| - | 1NT |
| 2♦* | 2♥ |
| 3♦ | 3♥ |
| 3♠ | 3NT |
| 4♣ | 4♦ |
| 4NT* | 5♣* |
| 5♥ | Pass |

2♦ Transfer

It looks as if West thought hearts were agreed, with 5♣ showing 1 key card.

Welland led the ♠10 from ♠1094 ♥K1032 ♦106 ♣10963 and declarer won with the jack, played a club to the ace, a spade to the ace and the ♥J. North won with the ace and returned a spade and declarer won with dummy's king pitching a club, came to hand with a diamond and played a heart to the queen. South had two trump winners for one down.

As the cards lie declarer can make 5♥ by playing a low heart from dummy at trick three. If North ducks declarer plays the jack and South wins and returns a spade. Declarer wins, and ducks a heart. North wins and returns a spade and declarer wins in dummy, comes to hand with a diamond, ruffs a club, comes to hand with a diamond and plays clubs, neutralising South's trumps.

| West | East |
|-------|------------|
| Gawel | Jagniewski |
| – | 1♣* |
| 1♦* | 1NT |
| 2♣* | 2♦* |
| 3♥ | 3NT |
| 5NT | 6♦ |
| Pass | |

1♣ 2+♣, 5+♣ 11-21 or 11-13 balanced or 17-19 balanced or 4441♦ 11-121
 1♦ 4+♥
 1NT 17-19
 2♣ Checkback
 2♦ Minimum
 5NT Pick a slam


North led the ♠3 and declarer was soon claiming twelve tricks, +920.

Recommended auction: This is tough but by no means impossible. After 1NT-2♦*-2♥-3♦-4♦ if West bids 4♠ East knows that there is no heart control and can sign off in 5♦.

Marks: 4NT/5♦ 10, 6♦ 6, 5♥ 3.

Running score: Zia 16 (25) Era 20 (14)

Hand 4. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

| | | |
|----------|--|---------|
| ♠ K82 |  | ♠ Q4 |
| ♥ AQ972 | | ♥ K |
| ♦ J10862 | | ♦ AK753 |
| ♣ – | | ♣ A9763 |

South opens 1♣ (any balanced hand including any other 5-card suit) and rebids 3♣

| West | North | East | South |
|-----------|-------|-------------|----------|
| Bielawski | Auken | Golebiowski | Welland |
| – | – | – | 1♣ |
| 1♥ | Pass | 2♦ | 3♣ |
| 4♣* | Pass | 6♦ | All Pass |
| 4♣ | | | Cue-bid |

Clearly East believed West could not cue-bid in clubs unless he had a spade

control.

South held ♠AJ ♥J1086 ♦4 ♣KQJ1084 so the contract was a lay down, +1370.

| West | North | East | South |
|-------|----------|------------|------------|
| Gawel | Arlovich | Jagniewski | Vainikonis |
| – | – | – | 1♣ |
| 1♥ | Pass | 2♦ | 3♣ |
| 3♦ | Pass | 4♣* | Pass |
| 4♥* | Pass | 5♣* | Pass |
| 5♦ | All Pass | | |
| 4♣ | | | Cue-bid |
| 4♥ | | | Cue-bid |
| 5♣ | | | Last train |


Should West, with a spade control, have bid the slam?

Recommended auction: After South's 3♣, Bielawski's 4♣ looks a good idea to me. After that you can't argue with his partner's judgement.

Marks: 6♦ 10, 5♦/3NT 5.

Running score: Zia 21 (25) Era 30 (27)

Hand 5. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

| | | |
|---------|--|---------|
| ♠ 5 |  | ♠ A32 |
| ♥ QJ9 | | ♥ AK102 |
| ♦ A8543 | | ♦ KJ96 |
| ♣ AK108 | | ♣ 42 |

| West | East |
|---------|-----------------------|
| Welland | Auken |
| – | 1NT* |
| 3♠* | 4♦ |
| 5♣* | 6♦ |
| Pass | |
| 1NT | 14-16 |
| 3♠ | Shortage, both minors |
| 5♣ | Cue-bid |

South led the ♠4 from ♠K1094 ♥8754 ♦Q ♣QJ73 and when the ♦Q appeared on the first round of the suit declarer claimed all the tricks.

| West | East |
|------------|-------------|
| Vainikonis | Arlovich |
| – | 1NT* |
| 3♥* | 4♦ |
| 5♣* | 5♥* |
| 5NT* | 6♦ |
| Pass | |
| 1NT | 13-16 |
| 3♥ | Fragment |
| 5♣ | Cue-bid |
| 5♥ | Cue-bid |
| 5NT | Pick a slam |

Recommended auction: This is not an easy hand unless E/W are playing some form of minor-suit Stayman. In ANBM Standard West responds 3♥ to show a 1-3-(4-5) and after East's 4♦ a slam is sure to be reached.

Marks: 6♦10, 7♦7, 5♦/3NT 5.

Running score: Zia 31 (25) Era 40 (27)

These deals helped Zia to a 126.1-85 win while Vytras beat Connector 113.1-94.

Hand 6. Dealer South. Both Vul.

| | | |
|-----------|--|---------|
| ♠ – | | ♠ KQ87 |
| ♥ KQ65432 | | ♥ A |
| ♦ 10 | | ♦ AQJ72 |
| ♣ AKQ86 | | ♣ J93 |

South opens 2♦, Multi

| West | North | East | South |
|-------|------------|---------|-----------|
| Auken | Skrzypczak | Welland | Gierulski |
| – | – | – | 2♦* |
| 4♥ | Pass | 4NT* | Pass |
| 5NT* | Pass | 6♦* | Pass |
| 7♣* | Pass | 7♥ | All Pass |

| | |
|-----|------------------------|
| 4NT | RKCB |
| 5NT | 2 key cards and a void |
| 6♦ | Grand slam try |

Once East makes a grand slam try West can introduce the club suit. 7♥ depends more or less on the trump suit behaving (a 67.8% chance). South held ♠A106532 ♥108 ♦K5 ♣1074 so that was +2210.

| West | North | East | South |
|-------|------------|---------|-------|
| Dubin | Jagniewski | Olanski | Gawel |
| – | – | – | 2♦ |
| 4♥ | All Pass | | |

East must have thought it was possible West would overcall 4♥ with something like ♠- ♥KQJ65432 ♦K10 ♣1086. That would flout the generally accepted principle that you don't pre-empt over a pre-emptive opening.

Recommended auction: Roy Welland's choice of 4NT worked like a charm.

Joe Amsbury used to advocate a method where over a jump by partner one could ask for a control in a suit by bidding the one below it. Using that method one might bid (2♦)-4♥-4♠*-5♣*-5♦*-5♠*-5NT-6♥-7♥. After the 4♠ relay three cue-bids are followed by a 5NT trump ask, West showing two of the top three honours (a variation on the original Grand Slam Force).

Marks: 7♥/7♣ 10, 6♥/6♣ 7, 4♥/5♣/3NT 5.

Running score: Zia 41 (42) Era 45 (27)

Hand 7. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

| | | |
|---------|--|---------|
| ♠ AJ103 | | ♠ 2 |
| ♥ AQ872 | | ♥ K954 |
| ♦ Q | | ♦ AK10 |
| ♣ Q76 | | ♣ AJ843 |

| West | East |
|---------|------------|
| Olanski | Vainikonis |
| – | 1♣ |
| 1♥ | 3♠* |
| 3NT | 4♣* |
| 4NT* | 5♦* |
| 5NT* | 6♦ |
| 7♥ | Pass |

| | |
|-----|---------------|
| 3♠ | Splinter |
| 4♣ | Cue-bid |
| 4NT | RKCB |
| 5♦ | 0-3 key cards |
| 5NT | King ask |
| 6♦ | ♦K |

It's possible that 3NT was 'serious' i.e. showing slam interest.

North held ♠Q876 ♥J63 ♦J84 ♣1052 and led the ♥3. Declarer won with the queen, unblocked the ♦Q, played a heart to the king (South pitching a diamond) drew the outstanding trump and played a club to the jack - one down when South produced the king.

| West | East |
|---------|-------|
| Welland | Auken |
| – | 1♣* |
| 1♠* | 2♦* |
| 2♥ | 2♠ |
| 2NT | 3♣ |
| 3♥ | 4♣ |
| 4♦ | 4♥ |
| 4♠ | 4NT |
| 5♣ | 5♥ |
| 7♥ | Pass |

- 1♣ Any balanced hand including any other 5-card suit
- 1♠ Game forcing relay
- 2♦ 5+♣, 4+♥
- 2♥ Relay
- 2♠ 0/1 ♠
- 2NT Relay
- 3♣ 1435
- 3♥ Relay
- 4♣ 15+0/3 key cards with ♥ as trumps
- 4♦ Relay
- 4♥ No♥Q
- 4♠ Relay
- 4NT No♣K
- 5♣ Relay
- 5♥ ♦K no♣Q

Thanks to Sabine for explaining the auction, which illustrates the power of relay systems.

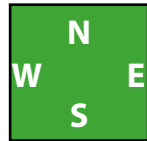
Once again North led a trump and declarer won and unblocked the ♦Q. He crossed to dummy with the ♣A, pitched two clubs on the top diamonds and ruffed a club. The appearance of the ♣K meant he could draw trumps and claim.

Recommended auction: After 1♣-1♥ a splinter rebid of 3♠ by East would make it easy for West to ask for key cards, but the hand is perhaps not quite strong enough for that. After 1♣-1♥-3♥-3♠-4♣-4♦-4♠ West can ask for key cards followed by kings before bidding 7♥.

Marks: 7♥ 10, 6♥ 7, 6♣ 6, 4♥ 5.

Running score: Zia 51 (59) Era 55 (27)

Hand 8. Dealer South. Both Vul.

| | | |
|--------|---|-----------|
| ♠ K542 |  | ♠ – |
| ♥ AQ54 | | ♥ KJ762 |
| ♦ 5 | | ♦ AKJ1084 |
| ♣ AJ75 | | ♣ 64 |

| West | East |
|-------|------------|
| Gawel | Jagniewski |
| 1♣* | 1♦* |
| 3♦* | 4♠* |
| 5♦ | 5♥ |
| Pass | |

- 1♣ 2+♣, 5+♣ 11-21 or 11-13 balanced or 17-19 balanced or 4441♦ 11-121
- 1♦ 4+♥
- 3♦ Splinter

Was East's 4♠ a void showing splinter? Might it have been asking for key cards, with 5♦ showing 2 + the ♥Q? Whatever the explanation it was a bad miss.

South led the ♦6 from ♠Q10987 ♥9 ♦Q62 ♣K1093 and declarer did not take long to claim all the tricks.

| West | North | East | South |
|------------|---------|-----------|----------|
| Skrzypczak | Welland | Gierulski | Auken |
| – | – | – | Pass |
| 1♣* | Pass | 1♥ | 1♠ |
| 3♥ | 3♠ | 5♠* | Pass |
| 6♥ | Pass | 7♥ | All Pass |

- 1♣ 11-14 balanced or 15-18 natural or 19+ any

It looks as if 5♠ was Voidwood with the response showing two key cards + the ♥Q.

Here South led her trump and declarer won in hand, drew trumps ending in dummy and played a diamond to the jack - one down.

Recommended auction: Suppose the auction starts 1♣-1♦-1♥-3♠*-4♣*-4♦*-4♥-4♠*? Now E/W are sure to reach a slam, but it's not so easy to stop in 6♥.

In *The Mysterious Multi*, Jan Van Cleeff and I describe the three-suited 2♥ opening devised by Graham Kirby and John Armstrong, which is perfect for this type of deal. The auction would go: 2♥-2NT-3♣-3♦-4♥-4NT-5♣-5♥-5♠-6♥, where in response to East's relays West has shown a diamond shortage, 14-15, 2 aces, 1 king (subsequently confirmed as the ♠K).

Marks: 6♥ 10, 7♥ 5, 5♥ 4.

Running score: Zia 55 (72) Era 60 (27)

Team Zia went into the last set of the final trailing 56-65 and they lost points on only three of the 16 deals, 10, 14 and 14 which gave Vytas a total of 103. Four deals were flat, but Zia scored 58 IMPs on the remaining nine to win by 9 IMPs.

You can play through the deals mentioned in this article.

Just follow the links:

Hands 1: [here](#) or <https://tinyurl.com/yb56ur4g>

Hand 2: [here](#) or <https://tinyurl.com/ybyhqdkb>

Hands 3, 4 & 5: [here](#) or <https://tinyurl.com/y8u2cqwl>

Hand 6: [here](#) or <https://tinyurl.com/y9wu6uae>

Hands 7 & 8: [here](#) or <https://tinyurl.com/yb5wbmuk>

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The Master Point Press Bidding Battle

Set 5

Moderated by Alan Mould

Welcome once more to everyone. This month's problems are from the following sources. Problem 1 I held in the recent EBU trials for the senior team in the 2018 European Championships; problems 2 and 3 were held by my partner Barry Myers in the same trials; problem 4 was sent to me by Mike Lawrence and was a problem in the US magazine Bridge World; problem 5 was sent to me by Iain Sime; problems 6 and 7 I found in John Swanson's Western Forum articles and come from the trials for the US Senior team (a serious crumbly bias this month); and finally problem 8 was sent to me by John Matheson and comes from rubber bridge. On we go...

PROBLEM 1

IMPs. Dealer West. E/W Vul

♠ 1075
♥ AQ32
♦ 10
♣ AJ865

| | | | |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| West | North | East | South |
| 1♣* | 2NT* | 3♥* | 4♦ |
| ?* | | | |

- 1♣ Could be two card suit in a balanced hand for this pair
- 2NT ♦ & ♥, at least 5-5
- 3♥ Good raise in ♣s (3♦ would have been FG with ♠s, 3♠ Nat but NF)
- ? Pass would not be forcing

THE BIDS & MARKS

| | Bid | Marks | No. of Votes | | Bid | Marks | No. of Votes | |
|----|---------------|-------|--------------|---------------|----------------|------------|--------------|----|
| 1. | Four Hearts | 10 | 8 | 5. | Two Clubs | 10 | 14 | |
| | Five Clubs | 10 | 8 | | Pass | 8 | 2 | |
| | Pass | 7 | 1 | | 1NT | 7 | 1 | |
| | 4NT | 2 | 0 | | 3NT | 4 | 0 | |
| | Five Diamonds | 1 | 0 | | Five Clubs | 3 | 0 | |
| | Six Clubs | 1 | 0 | | Double | 1 | 0 | |
| 2. | Four Hearts | 10 | 6 | 6. | Four Spades | 10 | 7 | |
| | Four Spades | 9 | 3 | | Four Clubs | 9 | 6 | |
| | Five Clubs | 9 | 2 | | Four Hearts | 9 | 2 | |
| | 4NT | 8 | 1 | | 4NT | 8 | 1 | |
| | Four Clubs | 7 | 2 | | Five Spades | 7 | 1 | |
| | 3NT | 6 | 1 | | Any other bid | 1 | 0 | |
| | Five Diamonds | 6 | 2 | | 7. | 3NT | 10 | 12 |
| | Any other bid | 1 | 0 | | | Four Clubs | 8 | 3 |
| 3. | Four Hearts | 10 | 10 | Double | 7 | 2 | | |
| | Double | 9 | 6 | Four Spades | 6 | 1 | | |
| | Six Hearts | 7 | 1 | 4NT | 3 | 0 | | |
| | Five Hearts | 5 | 0 | Five Diamonds | 2 | 0 | | |
| | 3NT | 2 | 0 | Any other bid | 1 | 0 | | |
| | Any other bid | 1 | 0 | 8. | Two Spades | 10 | 14 | |
| 4. | 3NT | 10 | 11 | | Three Spades | 8 | 2 | |
| | Four Hearts | 9 | 3 | | Three Diamonds | 7 | 1 | |
| | Four Clubs | 6 | 1 | | Pass | 4 | 0 | |
| | Double | 5 | 2 | | Two Diamonds | 3 | 0 | |
| | Pass | 1 | 0 | | 3NT | 1 | 0 | |



Alan Mould – Your Moderator

| Bid | Marks | No. of Votes |
|---------------|-------|--------------|
| Four Hearts | 10 | 8 |
| Five Clubs | 10 | 8 |
| Pass | 7 | 1 |
| 4NT | 2 | 0 |
| Five Diamonds | 1 | 0 |
| Six Clubs | 1 | 0 |

We have a minimum opening bid with a probably wasted ♥Q, but three more clubs that we might have (we could still be 4-4-3-2 at this point), and good controls. Should we bid Five Clubs, cue-bid, or simply Pass? The panel are strongly of the opinion that we have to bid, so I have downgraded Paul's lone effort:

Bowyer: Pass. The only alternative seems to be to take a flyer with Five Clubs, but the hand is weak and the hearts poorly placed. Maybe partner can

judge?

The rest of the panel are perfectly split between simply bidding Five Clubs and making the cue-bid of Four Hearts. Let's interleave them and see what we can learn:

Apteker: Five Clubs. I am not obliged to bid so bidding Five Clubs implies extra club length with some shape. The fact I have reasonable controls is not enough for me to make a cue of Four Hearts on my way to Five Clubs as my hand is a minimum, especially considering the wasted ♥Q.

Good arguments there, countered by:

Carruthers: Four Hearts. I have a great hand in context: three clubs more than promised, two aces and controls in both their suits. Despite all that, the heart queen is wasted, so I'll bid Five Clubs over Four Spades, leaving the rest to him. He should be able to tell I'm short in diamonds from his own hand and the opponents' bidding.

Cope: Five Clubs. I am not prepared to pass with real clubs and controls in both red suits, so the only choice seems to be this or a Four Hearts cue-bid. The latter seems to overvalue my hand as partner may well have a doubleton heart on this auction and the heart finesse rates to be off and there does not seem to be anywhere to dispose of all those spade losers. Give partner a decent hand that is 3-2-2-6 and we may not even make Five Club, but at least by bidding Five Clubs I can tell him I am happy with the strain.

Byrne: Four Hearts. I have shown two clubs and I have five and a singleton, so it looks like we have game on at least. I am surprised by this explanation of "good raise" surely a good raise that takes us past 3NT is GF, so I am expecting a five-card club suit and opening bid opposite, since balanced hands would start with a double. The ♥Q is waste paper but if partner has as little as ♠AKQx ♥x ♦xxx

♣Kxxxx slam is cold, and the Four Diamond bid does nothing to convince me that he has something else. A cue-bid here is not showing some enormous hand, merely an unbalanced hand with fair playing strength and inviting co-operation. If Three Hearts isn't game forcing then presumably Pass is NF, which makes me think Three Hearts should be GF and Pass should be. Ah well, if partner leaps to a slam then I will be well placed to blame him at least and explain how I had 9 of 11 working points.

Green: Five Clubs. I don't think I'm worth Four Hearts. My queen of hearts may well be waste paper (particularly in light of partner not bidding Four Hearts over 2NT showing club support with a singleton heart) and I have to show club support as pass would not be forcing.

Cannell: Four Hearts. Cue-bid in support of clubs on the way to wherever we are going. Since we could only have two clubs I need to show some oomph here for partner with the great club length, the short diamonds, and the heart ace.

It is early on in the article, but for this fine quote (unknown to me), Bobby wins comment of the month:

Wolff: Five Clubs. Nothing more, nothing less – reminding me of a gravestone in Tombstone, Arizona, the site of many American gun battles (with each other, while fighting to win the West from the Indians, usually lawbreakers (not the Indians, in the late 1800's): "Here lies Les Moore, 4 shots from a 44, no less, no more".

Smith: Four Hearts. Since I could have had short clubs, this is a pretty good hand opposite what is effectively a natural club bid from partner. Despite the minimum opening high card terms, I do also have controls in both of North's suits, so I think it is well worth a Four Heart cue-bid.

Bird: Five Clubs. With five clubs instead of a possible two, it is clear to advance in clubs. A slam-try of Four Hearts would be an overbid, with only 11 HCP and North likely to hold the ♥K.

Sime: Four Hearts. We may have a problem on this hand, but not on this round. Partner's hand is wide ranging, so the cue-bid seems obvious.

Rigal: Five Clubs. Pass here is NF I believe, so I have to bid Five Clubs. I feel I'm worth it though the risk of spade ruffs certainly exists. The shortage in the opponent's suit seems to justify this action (plus the extra shape).

Teramoto: Four Hearts. This is a cue and showing a better hand than bidding Five Clubs. It has only 11 HCP, but five cards in clubs plus a singleton looks OK.

Leufkens: Five Clubs. No idea actually, as partner could be something like 3-2-3-5, but that's pretty aggressive if less than opening values. As I've got three clubs more than I could have, I make my partner happy.

Robson: Four Hearts. Bid where I live. Cost little on the way to Five Clubs.

Lawrence: Five Clubs. No room for science. I have a nice minimum worth taking control.

Alder: Four Hearts. In for a penny, in for a euro. *Soon that may be a 100 to 1 bet....*

It seems to me that this has boiled down to how much store you put in your three extra clubs, compared to the fact that you are minimum with a probably wasted ♥Q. As the panel votes shows it is a very close call. Since I held the hand, it seems unreasonable to use my casting vote, so everyone apart from Paul (sorry Paul) starts off with 10 marks. I did bid Four Hearts, and then Five Clubs over Four Spades. Partner raised that to Six Clubs, which was an extremely poor, and failing, contract, opposite ♠AJx ♥xx ♦Axx ♣KQ10xx. So one of us had done too much.

Irritatingly, whilst Five Clubs is cold on the bidding (draw trumps, eliminate diamonds and play ace and another heart), the opposition arrived in 3NT after a heart overcall rather than 2NT on ♠Qx ♥KJ10xx ♦Kxxxx ♣x. On lead against that Pat Collins, put his faith in his stronger suit and that was 9 tricks in 3NT when a diamond lead would have beaten it.

PROBLEM 2

IMPs. Dealer East. None Vul.

♠ Q
♥ K6
♦ KQ732
♣ J10864

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| – | – | 1♠ | Pass |
| 1NT | Pass | 2♦ | Pass |
| 3♦ | Pass | 3♥ | Pass |
| ? | | | |

| Bid | Marks | No. of Votes |
|---------------|-------|--------------|
| Four Hearts | 10 | 6 |
| Four Spades | 9 | 3 |
| Five Clubs | 9 | 2 |
| 4NT | 8 | 1 |
| Four Clubs | 7 | 2 |
| 3NT | 6 | 1 |
| Five Diamonds | 6 | 2 |
| Any other bid | 1 | 0 |

This hand is also from the English Senior Trials and proved a great problem, with the panel producing no less than six different bids on the hand. We have been forced, more or less systemically, into an underbid of Three Diamonds (though it is interesting to note that on the same sequence Paul Hackett bid Four Diamonds, which perhaps is a better reflection of the hand's strength), and now have to find a way

to catch up, particularly given partner's patterning out of Three Hearts, which has improved out hand enormously. It is interesting to note that the 10 marks goes to a bid that at the table (and I was opposite this hand) I would have interpreted as natural—Four Hearts. Neither then, nor now, do I see why you cannot be 1-5-4-3 or even something like 0-6-4-3 and have found the right game at the 11th hour. Are you REALLY supposed to bid Two Hearts over Two Diamonds on (say) ♠ – ♥Qxxxxx ♦AKxx ♣xxx and play there opposite ♠Axxxx ♥ – ♦QJ10xx ♣AKQ with Six Diamonds cold? I just do not see it. Perhaps those who bid Four Hearts as a cue-bid can convince me:

Leufkens: Four Hearts. Obviously, I've got a spectacular hand, especially after Three Hearts (should indicate heart stop; 3NT would show club stopper with possible heart stopper). Don't think about 3NT, Five Diamonds is better most of the time. But opposite nice hands it could be six (♠AKxxx ♥Axx ♦Axxx ♣x). So Four Hearts to make everything clear. Find another partner if he passes, as Three Hearts didn't promise length in hearts at all!

Ah well, better give up my dream of playing for The Netherlands then. I think almost everyone thinks Three Hearts is patterning out. Marc and David at least think there is a danger:

Smith: Four Hearts. I have a huge hand for my bidding to date and now partner has committed to game I am surely worth a slam try on the way to Five Diamonds, particularly with no wasted values opposite partner's likely shortage. I suppose it is still just about possible for me to have five hearts on this auction, but I still think this should be a cue-bid with diamonds agreed rather than an offer to play Four Hearts.

Bird: Four Hearts. Since I have twice limited my hand, it seems that I should make a cue-bid of

Four Hearts on the way to Five Diamonds. Can partner possibly regard this as an offer to play in Four Hearts (when he holds 1-5-4-3 shape)? It's a bit worrying, perhaps, but if I bid only Five Diamonds instead I would be even more concerned.

Cannell: Four Hearts. Cue-bid in support of diamonds on the way to wherever we are going. ☺ (Including Four Hearts—AM ☺) This is a terrific hand in context on the given auction. I will cooperate wholeheartedly. Comfortable with 1NT and Three Diamond raise.

Wolff: Four Hearts. Stronger bidding than only Five Diamonds and with a heart control.

Sime: Four Hearts. Partner is probably short in clubs, so slam may be possible. Three Diamonds was OK; partner's Three Hearts bid has improved my hand considerably.

Well, if Four Hearts is possibly ambiguous, what about Four Spades as a splinter? Surely that is not ambiguous? We have denied any reasonable spade support and if by now we had ♠xxx or even say ♠K we could suggest that by bidding Three Spades. What hand can we have for leaping to Four Spades, other than a splinter? Three for that. Mike puts the case in exemplary fashion:

Lawrence: Four Spades. Three Diamonds feels feeble, but I'll accept it. There's no equivalent to the impossible Two Spade bid that occurs when partner opens One Heart. I'd like to bid Four Spades, a splinter bid, but that would cause my partner a headache in the absence of agreement. In fact, on reconsideration, I'll do that. I could have bid Three Spades if I was interested in spades with a doubleton honour. Further, it can't be a splinter for hearts since it forces us past Four Hearts. Would like to have this agreement but it feels as if it is self-explanatory.

Rigal: Four Spades. This has to be a splinter in

spades (playing 1NT NF Three Spades/3NT might be spade splinters/voids at the previous turn but that is neither here nor there). Partner has ♠Axxxx ♥Ax ♦Axxxx ♣x and I claim my 12 tricks and move on.

More good arguments from Alon:

Apteker: Four Spades. My hand is huge in context of the bidding. I could bid Four Clubs which unambiguously shows slam interest in diamonds, but this should promise club control, quite possibly first round. Four Diamonds is non-forcing, Four Hearts probably natural as I could still have five x hearts and 4NT probably RKCB which might get an unwanted Five Heart response. That leaves the Four Spades splinter.

Alon mentions and rejects Four Clubs. Two panellists go for it. I don't like it for the reasons he gives. Surely Four Clubs should show the ace opposite presumed shortage?

Cope: Four Clubs. We have undercooked the hand with Three Diamonds, and would prefer to have made a stronger sounding bid, but without special gadgets that does not seem possible. So, I had to settle for Three Diamonds - in a loud voice so partner knew I had extras. Now after the Three Hearts bid we want to investigate slam, so a picture bid showing slam interest seems appropriate - we cannot bid 4NT as two aces are not enough, and we cannot bid Four Hearts as a cue as that sounds natural, so this is the only forward going bid I can make for now.

John bids it, claiming it is a Bluhmer (explanation in his comment):

Carruthers: Four Clubs. A classic Bluhmer (named after its inventor, the late, great Lou Bluhm of Atlanta) : "I know you're short in clubs, Partner, and all my cards are outside clubs." I might have preferred Four Diamonds over Two Diamonds. At

this point, Four Hearts sounds too much like an offer to play and I'd not risk it. Otherwise, Five Diamonds. Even if no other panellist bids it, Four Clubs deserves 10 marks, yes? ☺

No! Apart from the fact that the rules forbid it, I do not see why this is not the ♣A. If you want an unambiguous Bluhmer, surely it is this:

Alder: Five Clubs. First, yes, Three Diamonds was cautious. Since it is IMPs, Four Diamonds would have been more accurate. Now I must try to catch up with a Bluhmer - a bid named after Lou Bluhm that just says, "Partner, I have a surprisingly good hand - much better than you would ever imagine. I am thinking about a slam and have no wasted values in your short suit, clubs." Perfect!

Andrew has another expression for it, which I have not heard before but is rather nice. An anti-splinter, showing no wasted values in partner's splinter!

Robson: Five Clubs. Anti-splinter, showing a moose for diamonds.

Between Four Clubs and Five Clubs, which have just Michael prepared to tempt fate (the dreaded two ace response) with RKCB:

Byrne: 4NT. Well this is a tricky problem. I raised to Three Diamonds showing something like 8-11, and now partner has patterned out my hand has grown immeasurably. I am sure partner is 5-3-4-1 (or better!!) since a 5-2-4-2 with a heart stop would just bid 3NT and worry about the clubs later. Partner rates to hold something like ♠AKxxx ♥Axx ♦Axxx ♣x and slam looks cold. Unfortunately, I don't have a cue-bid! A return to Four Diamonds would be NF (♠Jx ♥Qxx ♦KJxx ♣Jxxx) and a leap to Five Diamonds will hardly inspire a re-raise to slam. Can slam be off two aces? What about.... ♠AKJxx ♥AQJ ♦Jxxx ♣x? Yes, that's certainly consistent with partner's bidding so I am stuck. I think I shall bid 4NT (RKCB for diamonds I

hope!) and if we are short of aces partner can try the Mouldian 5-1 fit of spades. (I've just coined this term but I think it has a certain ring to it, I hope it sticks!). If partner takes this as key card for hearts (I don't think I can have that big a hand for hearts when I didn't bid Two Hearts over Two Diamonds) then I do at least have the ♥K so I will still find out about aces, a firm Six Diamonds will get the message across.

We will leave aside the slur on my name. Gary Hyett, when I played with him, coined the term of a "Mouldian dummy", to refer to a hand completely consistent with partner's bidding but utterly useless to you. The classic Mouldian dummy saw Gary open Four Hearts on ♠ - ♥AKJ109xx ♦Qxxx ♣xx and have me table my hand of ♠KQ10xxx ♥ - ♦xx ♣QJ10xx for the obvious four off. Good luck in trying to play in Five Spades after putting in Blackwood, by the way, Michael. Won't that be interpreted as a grand slam try?

We have three panellists who are prepared to give up on slam aspirations altogether. True to his beliefs is Paul:

Bowyer: Five Diamonds. Not a great hand for 2/1 as I seem to have made two stonking underbids. I'd love to bid 4NT now, partly to see East's reaction and because I think partner is patterning out with a 5-4-3-1 hand. How often does a 1NT response have the wherewithal to wheel out Blackwood? However, what would I do over Five Hearts? I'd be off two aces and up a creek with no steering apparatus. Bah! Can't see an alternative to Five Diamonds (other than a Six Diamond punt), so put me down for that.

Green: Five Diamonds. Happy to show a good hand without the ace of hearts or clubs (no Four Club/Four Heart bid) but enough to accept the



Ben Green

try. I don't know whether I will have nine runners on a heart lead in 3NT so I think Five Diamonds is likely a better spot. Three Diamonds was heavy but unless playing a fair bit of kit then there was little alternative.

And Tadashi bids the house, which as Ben says, I would have thought was less secure than Five Diamonds:

Teramoto: 3NT. ♥Kx and ♠Q singleton suggest 3NT. For example ♠AK and ♦A brings us to nine tricks pretty much.

My man chose Five Diamonds and that did not get the job done. I saw no reason to continue further given that I did not yet know I was opposite five-card support, or such suitable holdings. I held ♠AKxxxx ♥Axx ♦A109x ♣-. Clearly Seven Diamonds is where you want to be. This hand caused a major

swing at every table in the Senior European trials since everything was friendly EXCEPT that trumps were 4-0 (over the five-card suit). One table went off in Seven Diamonds and two made it. As Paul says this was not a great hand for 2/1. The Acol auction at teammates table started One Spade – Two Diamonds (also not an obvious choice) and my hand basically bid seven now. When declarer got the trumps right that was 17 out.

PROBLEM 3

IMPs. Dealer North. All Vul.

♠ AJ63
♥ AKJ874
♦ -
♣ AQ5

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| - | 3♠ | Pass | Pass |
| ? | | | |

| Bid | Marks | No. of Votes |
|---------------|-------|--------------|
| Four Hearts | 10 | 10 |
| Double | 9 | 6 |
| Six Hearts | 7 | 1 |
| Five Hearts | 5 | 0 |
| 3NT | 2 | 0 |
| Any other bid | 1 | 0 |

We have a very good hand and the right bits from partner will make a slam; ♠x ♥Qxx ♦xxxx ♣KJxxx is a GRAND for example, let alone a small. To my absolute immense surprise, 59% of the panel nevertheless simply bid Four Hearts. This is putting great strain on the bid as we would protect with Four Hearts on any reasonably suitable hand – ♠x ♥AKJxxx ♦xxx ♣Axx would be considered routine for example. Nevertheless, panellists do not feel that the five level is safe. Let's hear the arguments. Four Hearts is supported by

our resident mouse:

Bowyer: Four Hearts. Another day, another pre-empt, another guessing game. With spades to the left of me (so spade losers may be overruffed) I guess to bid Four Hearts.

And, also, by our resident tiger:

Byrne: Four Hearts. I have a great hand in high cards but slam is a far way off given that I have a lot of spade losers to take care of and even if partner has say ♠x ♥Qxx ♦KQxxx ♣Jxxx slam looks no play since the spades will get overruffed. The alternative is to double and then bid hearts but how do I convince partner he isn't allowed to have his seven-card diamond suit as trumps? ♠x ♥x ♦KQ10xxxx ♣Kxxx explaining to him that I was only joking to him when I told him I needed help in deciding which suit I wanted as trumps might



Alon Apteker

not go down so well... The only alternative (the "third way" one might say, I was reading a history of modern Britain the other day) is 3NT but that is too kooky even for me with a side void.

For our overseas readers "the third way" was Tony Blair's famous slogan about his brand of politics.

Green: Four Hearts. Pre-empts work. I can't Double and remove Four Diamonds to Four Hearts as that would show a flexible hand (which I don't have). We might miss a slam but on a bad day we may not even make game.

Well, true, but then if you open 2NT you may not make that with a 22 count even. It is a game of percentages.

Carruthers: Four Hearts. With my length in spades, even the five-level might not be safe.

Teramoto: Four Hearts. This may be an underbid, but I think the five-level is in danger sometimes. If I double Three Spades, partner may bid Five Diamonds.

Apteker: Four Hearts. Seems obvious even if Pass happens to be correct.

Wow – now Pass really would never occur to me.

Leufkens: Four Hearts. Ugly, but the rest is worse.

Bird: Four Hearts. If you start with a double, who knows what will happen? I would rather make a clear and natural (under-)bid. Even Four Hearts could go down if partner's cards are unhelpful.

Smith: Four Hearts. What else? A takeout double with a void in an unbid suit doesn't seem like a good idea, and 3NT is for the birds (although, not, I suspect, the David Birds) (*nice comment, but not this time Marc*). Of course, partner can have the right cards for slam and automatically pass Four Hearts (eg. ♠xx ♥Qx ♦xxxx ♣KJxxx) but that's why they pre-empt.

Robson: Four Hearts. Heavy but not doubling and creating murk.

There are six who are prepared to create this murk. And why? For this reason:

Wolff: Double. Then hearts - too strong for only Four Hearts.

Cannell: Double. Most flexible advance I think. I believe I have enough to bid hearts next if partner bids diamonds. If partner bids clubs at the four or five-level I am still thinking

Sim: Double. Because sometimes partner doesn't bid diamonds. And (this time) I can cope if he does.

Cope: Double. Nothing is ideal. I could pass and collect a few hundreds, or I could just bid a slightly wimpish Four Hearts. I understand that when I double partner will bid diamonds at some level (*shows what you know ☺ – AM*), and then I will bid hearts at the same level. Hopefully this will show some extra strength without committing us to higher levels unnecessarily.

I think Barry is actually having a joke:

Rigal: Double. Planning to bid hearts next, and see how it works from here. We haven't had a prediction for a while, have we? A unanimous panel, five people saying the problem might come on the next round, three people (including me) scolding our setter for a mouldy problem.

Whenever anyone predicts a unanimous panel, it is dollars to doughnuts that their chosen bid will not even be in the majority. The only bit of this prediction that is half right (well, OK, two thirds right) is that two people scolded me for a mouldy problem (I don't see why the sudden vilification of my name this month!?!):

Lawrence: Double. Not a good problem. At this point, it's Four Hearts or double. The problem will come up on the next round or two after partner bids Four Diamonds (or Four Clubs or Five Diamonds) after my double. Four Hearts could easily be the winner. Heck. On a bad day, passing Three

Spades could be right.

Not quite Four Hearts or Double Mike; Phillip is all in:

Alder: Six Hearts. Double just delays the problem – and this hand does not really have two places to play.

Barry Myers bid the panel's choice of Four Hearts on the hand. Maybe my judgement is completely to pot, but I did not think I was particularly close to moving on with ♠x ♥Qxxxx ♦Kx ♣Kxxxx.... In the other room, Phillip's choice of Six Hearts was made, and over that my hand gave it seven (as would I have done), so that was another 17 out. You will gather from these three hands that we did not do well in these trials.

PROBLEM 4

IMPs. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

♠ 4
♥ AKQ75
♦ AQ5
♣ KJ87

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| – | – | – | 3♦ |
| ? | | | |

| Bid | Marks | No. of Votes |
|-------------|-------|--------------|
| 3NT | 10 | 11 |
| Four Hearts | 9 | 3 |
| Four Clubs | 6 | 1 |
| Double | 5 | 2 |
| Pass | 1 | 0 |

I was sent this problem by Mike Lawrence and thought then that I would bid 3NT and so would the panel (all decent hands unsuitable for double bid 3NT over pre-empts!). However, there was an interesting point to it, so I put it in. I was right for once with 11 out of 17 bidding the house.

Teramoto: 3NT. Too good for Three Hearts and I cannot Double with a singleton spade.

That sums up my view Tadashi.

I would have bet my mortgage someone would say something like this:

Cannell: 3NT. Robert Hamman makes me do strange things at times!

Cope: 3NT. Too good for just a Three Heart bid. But to double and get a Four Spades response will leave me in an impossible situation. If you can guarantee me that they only bid Three Spades then double is fine as we can bid a delayed 3NT. Hamman's rule applies.

And this:

Leufkens: 3NT. What else?

And this:

Robson: 3NT. When in doubt. Could be silly.

Alder: 3NT. Live it up!!

Rather fuller analysis from a couple of panellists:

Byrne: 3NT. Another good problem, with the choice being 3NT, Double, then hearts (or no trumps over spades) an ultra-heavy Three Hearts or a wild and gambling Four Hearts (*is it now? Hold on to that thought for a while*). Three Hearts is just too feeble for me, I spend days telling people they're allowed to assume partner has 6-8 points after a pre-empt (it doesn't get any easier, no-one ever believes me) so game it is. Which one? Since a double will invariably see partner convert to spades (although if he has six it might be right!) I shall try 3NT and await the smug look of the opponents as they cash their six-card spade suit.

That is the obvious problem with 3NT yes.

Sime: 3NT. All choices have flaws. An overweight Three Hearts would be more attractive if not vulnerable or at match points. Unlike Problem 4, we will be in trouble if partner responds to a double by bidding game in my shortage. If partner has an

average hand (share of missing points and missing spades), 3NT will probably make.

Carruthers: 3NT. And hope Partner has a spade stop. (Not to mention a high card or two.)

Indeed!

Apteker: 3NT. It is either a big underbid of Three Hearts or the practical 3NT which has the greater upside if partner does not have hearts support or extra values. Can't double with the singleton spade.

Bowyer: 3NT. And ditto to my previous comment. Another day, another pre-empt, another guessing game. Who knows? I reject Double outright and try my luck with 3NT. It's as likely to be right as any other action.

To my amazement, we do have two doublers:

Green: Double. Nasty problem. Not ideal that partner might jump to 4♠ (and who could blame him with a fistful of spades) but I can't jump to 4♥ on a five bagger nor do I fancy 3NT with a singleton spade and I'm way too strong for a simple 3♥. So that leaves an unhappy double. Who knows, sometimes the opponents bid spades and I can double again!

In your dreams Ben, in your dreams!

Rigal: Double. This is really a two-part problem but double initially seems a no-brainer. The real problem is what to do over a Three Spades response from my partner. The choice between Four Hearts and 3NT is a tricky one. I think I bid 3NT but I'm not wedded to it.

Your predictions are getting worse Barry! At least last problem you had five supporters for your "unanimous panel double"; this time you only have one supporter for your "no brainer" double.

We have four panellists who are prepared to put their faith in their strong five-card suit and bid game in it:

Wolff: Four Hearts. Apparently, some lie needs

to be made and I opt to make it my heart length. Fair enough!

Marc moans that he cannot use one of his pet conventions, but even if I were playing it, I would not use it!

Smith: Four Hearts. Well, I seem to have been endplayed by the system into making my fourth consecutive Four Heart bid, something that I can't recall happening with a bid other than pass or double before (*me neither Marc*). This hand is too strong for Three Hearts, which partner should pass with a flat 7-8 count, and both double and 3NT come with their own obvious dangers. That leaves me with little option but a jump to game in my chunky five card major, since the system apparently does not include a Non-Leaping Michaels Four Clubs, which would have been my choice on this hand despite being a club short (but how else are you going to get to Six Clubs when it's right?).

Or to Five Clubs when it is daft.

Two think it clear:

Bird: Four Hearts. This is similar to Problem 3. A slam is possible but to bid anything other than Four Hearts has its own risks. (I am a man who looks twice in each direction before crossing a road.)

Lawrence: Four Hearts. Clear. East rates to have a modest hand and he rates to have three hearts or more. Further, it gives us a shot at reaching slams which 3NT does not. Double risks partner bidding too many spades.

This hand comes from the US "Bridge World", a source of many great problems, but who, irritatingly for us, never publish the companion hand, so I have never used them. However, Mike tells me he had a friend who did a simulation on this one and Four Hearts came out as a BIG winner. I was initially surprised, but if you come to think of it, it makes perfect sense. 3NT is right when partner has a spade stop

and enough bits and pieces to make nine tricks. In most of those scenarios the hearts play for four or five tricks, in which case you are almost always making Four Hearts as well, and you do not have the danger of them simply cashing out the spade suit. I think it is time we re-evaluated what to do with strong five card majors over the opponents' pre-empts.

PROBLEM 5

IMPs. Dealer South. None Vul

♠ 5
♥ K6
♦ AK5
♣ AK108654

| | | | |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| West | North | East | South |
| – | – | – | 1♣* |

?*

1♣ Could be two cards

? E/W methods are that Two Clubs is natural, Three Clubs is natural and weak. Pass and bidding clubs would also be natural if partner is silent, but would be interpreted as a UCB if partner has bid.

| Bid | Marks | No. of Votes |
|------------|-------|--------------|
| Two Clubs | 10 | 14 |
| Pass | 8 | 2 |
| 1NT | 7 | 1 |
| 3NT | 4 | 0 |
| Five Clubs | 3 | 0 |
| Double | 1 | 0 |

OK, this problem proved to be a damp squib. Yes, Two Clubs is natural, but we do have a HUGE hand for it. We would all be happy to bid Two Clubs without either of the red kings for example. Given the modern tendency towards more or less unlimited simple overcalls, I suspect that majority of the panel would overcall Two Clubs if the opening had been

One Diamond/Heart/Spade, but does the same really apply here, when it seems much more likely that the opponents will simply pass it out (South cannot be worried about a penalty pass from North as there are not enough clubs in the pack)? Yes, it does, say an emphatic 14 out of 17 of the panel, with various versions of "What else?". OK, let's get through them.

Byrne: Two Clubs. If I am playing a method where I can bid my longest suit naturally then I do so!! I agree I have a great hand, but it is not supposed to be weak and had they opened One Diamond I know Two Clubs would have got a few votes (*I suspect it would have got enough votes for the 10 marks myself*). I suspect the One Club opener will reopen with a double and I can blue flag it (that's redouble for those who don't like slang) and see what happens. If they pass Two Clubs out then probably the One Club opener will have 3 and my hand won't be as good as I thought.

Carruthers: Two Clubs. A great risk, but so is everything else.

Alder: Two Clubs. A considerable underbid, but nothing is perfect. As I doubt this will be passed out (*why on earth not?*), it should be a reasonable first step.

Bowyer: Two Clubs. Someone is about to bid spades, so I think that Pass is dangerous. I'm going to bid a heavy Two Clubs and trust it doesn't end the auction. Then only alternative, in my view, is a random (and ugly) punt of 3NT. Still, I've done worse things at the table...

Don't I know it

Cannell: Two Clubs. I fear that if I do not bid now the auction may be too unwieldy later. Therefore, I will underbid with a simple Two Club over-call now fully intending to bid again if the auction permits at a reasonable level.

Robson: Two Clubs. Heavy but other bids risk

creating murk. I always like to be a MFZ (murk-free zone).

A very sound principle in my view!

A couple of panellists do not play Two Clubs as natural, but are happy with it given that we have this hand:

Cope: Two Clubs. If you tell me that it is natural, which is not a weapon I have in my normal arsenal, I shall avail myself of the opportunity to use it. Passing and bidding later falls foul not only of partner making a bid, but also allowing my LHO into the auction at a low level when they might not have a hand good enough to compete at the two-level.

Good point.

Marc actually makes an accurate prediction!:

Smith: Two Clubs. I prefer to treat even potentially doubleton minor-suit openings as natural, so this is not a method I am familiar with. However, since we've been given the option of a natural Two Club overcall it would be churlish not to take advantage, and I will be surprised if a large majority of the panel to not do likewise. I guess there will still be some madmen who start with a takeout double, which would seem to be particularly bizarre here since, as I understand the method, when partner responds in a major I will no longer have natural club bids available. I suppose I am also in the 1NT overcall range, and I do have a club stop, but that is too warped even for me.

Bird: Two Clubs. I don't like the method of Two Clubs being natural but I am happy to take advantage of it being available here. On each of the last three problems, it is simply a step in the dark to start with a double.

No one on the panel started with double, which is hardly surprising since no club bids will ever be natural, but Alon thinks about it:

Apteker: Two Clubs. This is a big underbid, but I do not want to risk doubling, the only reasonable alternative, and have partner bid Four Spades. If partner was a passed hand, I would double as there would be less likelihood of having long spades.

True Alon, but how are you ever going to get your suit into the frame, as Enri points out?

Leufkens: Two Clubs. 1NT just too much of a distortion. No alternative I'm afraid. For example, after Double–Pass One Heart–Pass, what will you bid, as Two Clubs would not be natural?

Green: Two Clubs. I'm strong for it but I don't like the look of 3NT which is my only alternative.

I am also rather surprised that no one tried 3NT. Perhaps these are the reasons:

Rigal: Two Clubs. Best to play Rubens (transfer) advances after this, but if it goes All Pass, who is to say we can make 3NT? The odds are that clubs won't run I think, so jumping to 3NT and avoiding a spade lead does not guarantee nine tricks by any means.

Two for Pass and hope to work it out later:

Wolff: Pass. With 3NT=70% and no third choice.

It is interesting that Bobby does not think that Two Clubs, the choice of 82% of the panel, is actually in the running!

Teramoto: Pass. This hand is too good to overcall Two Clubs. I am planning to Pass, then jump to Three Clubs, showing a better hand.

And Mike tries an overweight and very off shape 1NT overcall:

Lawrence: 1NT. Repulsive problem. None of our system notes come close. I'll try 1NT and hope that we survive.

Last word to the man who sent in the problem:

Sime: Two Clubs. I still have no idea what to do with this hand. I will repeat my losing effort at the table.

Partner held ♠xxx ♥AQxx ♦Jxxx ♣Jx so Six Clubs is a good and making contract and Five Clubs is cold. Neither partner, nor anyone else, felt they should be bidding over Two Clubs, and so there it ended....

PROBLEM 6

IMPs. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

♠ A
♥ AKQJ95
♦ 8
♣ A5432

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| – | – | 3♠ | Pass |
| ? | | | |

| Bid | Marks | No. of Votes |
|---------------|-------|--------------|
| Four Spades | 10 | 7 |
| Four Clubs | 9 | 6 |
| Four Hearts | 9 | 2 |
| 4NT | 8 | 1 |
| Five Spades | 7 | 1 |
| Any other bid | 1 | 0 |

Partner has opened a red Three Spades, so really ought to have it. In particular, he ought to have a decent suit. It is entirely possible to construct hands where slam is cold, even, exceptionally, a grand slam, ♠KQJ10xxx, ♥xxx ♦– ♣Kxx may be a bit far fetched but that does make it cold. On the other hand you can construct hands where game is in danger (try Four Spades opposite ♠KQ10xxxx ♥xx ♦Qxx ♣Jx to see that there may be a problem), so we have issues about both strain and level. As might be expected, the panel focus primarily on what will be the best game, with seven simply raising to game in spades, believing it must be a sensible contract.

Smith: Four Spades. Wimpish, I agree, but +680 is not always a terrible score. How good is Six Spades



Ian Sime

likely to be? Give partner the assumed ♠KQJxxxx ♥xx ♦xx ♣xx and Six Spades is easily defeated: how hard is it for the defence to switch to a club after cashing a diamond winner? Bye-bye heart suit. Indeed, things are not much better if they force dummy with a second diamond either. Of course, slam could easily be cold – partner’s hearts are ten doubleton, for example, or he could have a singleton club. Plus, of course, he also needs solid enough trumps. Perhaps Six Hearts is a better shot, but with this distribution the most likely shape for partner is 7-1-2-3, so where are my losing clubs going?

Rigal: Four Spades. Let’s take a typical hand opposite ♠KQxxxx ♥x ♦xxx ♣xx. On any lead, Four Hearts needs a club break. In Four Spades ten

tricks needs very little to come home. Give partner two hearts and QJxxxx with a side king and Four Spades still seems very sensible. Given the vulnerability I expect (no, demand) decent spades opposite. Will slam make? I’m not giving it more than a passing glance. Two rounds of diamonds will surely jeopardize Six Spades.

Andrew comments on the range of possibilities:

Robson: Four Spades. Who knows? Wild volatility here so settle for a mid-position.

You can hear the weariness in Paul’s comment:

Bowyer: Four Spades. For the third time... Another day, another pre-empt, another guessing game (*yes, but this time the third opponent is firing at you Paul ☺*). What are the choices? Four Hearts or Four Spades, I suppose. Opposite a vulnerable pre-empt partner’s spades should be good, so I opt for Four Spades. If the point of this hand is to bid a slam (because partner has solid spades and the ♥10 for entry) then it’s too hard.

Sime: Four Spades. This somewhat depends upon what a vulnerable first seat pre-empt looks like for this partnership. Many now open Four Spades with KQJxxxx and a shortage (*even vul v non-vul Iain?*). Six Spades would be an outsider if his spades were not that good. Even if partner has the spade honours, a club lead or shift might kill dummy’s hearts.

Lawrence: Four Spades. For situations like this one, it would be nice if the moderator could give information that we would have at the table as to what partner’s style of Three Spades openers is. If my partner is prone to bidding Three Spades with QJxxxxx, I would bid Four Hearts instead.

I didn’t hold the hand, so I don’t know. Sorry

Bird: Four Spades. It is clearly wrong to bid Four Hearts with no idea what the fate of our low clubs will be. So, we have to judge whether partner will have the impressive spades we need for Six Spades.

Even if he holds ♠KQxxxx, there are potential problems in Six Spades. Trumps may break 4-1 or two rounds of diamonds may promote a trump trick. Also, it may be tricky to reach his hand to draw trumps. If I eventually have to say ‘Sorry, partner’, so be it.

Four Hearts did someone say – two panellists for that:

Wolff: Four Hearts. “What a tangled web we weave, when first we practice to BELIEVE” that good ol’ partner will have the hand for Six Spades.

To make it come to life partner likely needs probably KQJ of spades and a rounded suit singleton or the 10 of hearts or with no club lead or switch or the king of clubs without the heart 10. I will vote for Four Hearts (because of the above reasons) but have no qualms about instead raising to Four Spades or even Six Spades and hope partner does not have three hearts and/or two little clubs. And what about a club lead? A great problem, though thought of by a masochist, with the good news being he is a good bridge player with a keen bridge mind.

Why thank you kind sir!

Alder: Four Hearts. Could be down one or plus two.

Extra marks for the six panellists who remembered that we play Four Clubs over pre-empts as key card.

Apteker: Four Clubs. RKCB as per system notes. Vulnerable vs not, I expect a good seven card suit for partner’s opening who could even turn up with the ace of diamonds. I will accept with two key-cards but will give up if partner shows only one. Even with KQ of trumps, communication may be a problem on this hand or if the opponents force me to ruff trick two with my ace of spades, partner may need the jack of trumps as well.

Michael gives a full analysis:

Byrne: Four Clubs. Now this is a good hand, and another good problem. I am always a tiger on paper and go shooting off to slam and this hand is no different (*no different at the table either* 😊). First at red partner needs a proper hand so I am expecting to be facing KQ10xxxx or KQJxxxx. How will it play on a club lead? Partner is probably 7-1-3-2 (his shortage in our longest suit, and his fragment in our singleton) in which case I will make it on a major suit lead, or a diamond lead and club switch with favourable breaks. I shall try my ace asking device (is it Four Clubs? I can never remember) and check that partner doesn't have ♠QJ10xxxx ♥x ♦Kxxx ♣x where Six Spades seems dubious!

Green: Four Clubs. RKCB as per system. If partner shows one I'll ask for the queen and drive slam if he has it. KQxxxxx and out is not enough for a Three Spade bid at this vul so I hope he has the jack or some magic card. The ten of hearts would be perfec! I could go low with Four Spades or I suppose Four Hearts but I may struggle to get to the KQJxxxx of spades in dummy. Five Spades would be pre-emptive.

Cope: Four Clubs. Bidding to the appropriate level depending upon his response. In my own partnerships, he cannot have two with. Yes, I realize that we could go down on a club lead, but who among us has not?

Carruthers: Four Clubs. Since we play this as key card I shall bid it! What will I do over the continuations? Glad you did not ask.

Teramoto: Four Clubs. RKCB for spades.

Drew has not remembered our methods:

Cannell: 4NT. RKCB for spades. Vul versus not I expect a good suit from partner. I fully expect to hear one key-card whereupon I will ask for the spade queen next to make sure of the solidity of the spade suit, and then set the level of the contract.



Michael Byrne

Did Ben say Five Spades was pre-emptive? I happen to agree. Not so Enri:

Leufkens: Five Spades. Asks for spade quality, so best on this hand. In context of vul vs non-vul Three Spades.

This hand comes from the final of the seniors trials to select the US team and appeared in John Swanson's Western Forum bidding competition. Partner did not have much for a vul v not Three Spade opener ♠QJ10xxxx ♥10xx ♦Kxx ♣ – (no prizes for guessing this was Rodwell). So, this time Four Hearts is way, way better than Four Spades although both make and you have a shot at Six Hearts. However, South was 3-0-5-5 with most of the minor suit honours. At one table they made Five Hearts and at the other Five Diamonds doubled went on the card when Three Spades was raised to Four Spades and the heart fit never saw the light of day.

PROBLEM 7

IMPs. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

♠ AK
♥ AJ4
♦ 83
♣ K76432

| West | North | East | South |
|---------------------|-------|------|-------|
| – | 2♠* | 3♦ | 3♠ |
| ? | | | |
| 2♠ Natural and weak | | | |

| Bid | Marks | No. of Votes |
|---------------|-------|--------------|
| 3NT | 10 | 12 |
| Four Clubs | 8 | 3 |
| Double | 7 | 2 |
| Four Spades | 6 | 1 |
| 4NT | 3 | 0 |
| Five Diamonds | 2 | 0 |
| Any other bid | 1 | 0 |

We have a good hand, particularly as partner has wandered into the auction at the three level, but no fit for partner, and a suit we do not really want to introduce at the four level. As I suspected might happen, over two-thirds of the panel throw up their hands with a cry of "What can you do?" and bid The House:

Apteker: 3NT. A bit heavy but practical. I considered bidding a quantitative 4NT but I am not sure if partner would take it as such (*me neither*). Four Clubs has merit, but we may struggle to get out to 4NT if that is best (*Personally I would say it was impossible to play in 4NT after that start.*)

Michael gives us some thoughts:

Byrne: 3NT. Thank goodness, after a few brain teasers a nice easy "no brainer" as they say in the colonies. I have a double spade stopper, enough points for game but not to make slam obvious, and stoppers in the unbid suit. I think a better question

would be “given that everyone in the world would bid 3NT, construct three hands for partner where you miss a lay down slam”. The first hand seems to be: ♠x ♥Kxx ♦AKxxxxx ♣Ax where Seven Diamonds is on a 2-2 break (possible given the lack of a jump to Four Spades) and six looks easy. (Mind you he might not pass 3NT with that) (*of course he would!*). He could have ♠x ♥xx ♦AKxxxx ♣AJxx, now Seven Clubs looks better but he will pass 3NT. Does this mean I should bid something else? No, I don't think so, 3NT will be the long term winner (best result possible not best possible result etc...) and I suspect at the table it would have been bid universally. (Just realised I never gave you the third hand, how about ♠xx ♥Kx ♦AKJxxxx ♣Qx, more high cards but less shape....)

It is amusing that Michael thinks this is the easiest problem of the set and Marc the toughest:

Smith: 3NT. The most difficult problem of the set. We can probably make game in at least one of the minors, and slam in either could be easily be cold, but how to investigate both strain and level safely is unclear, since either bidding clubs or supporting diamonds suggests a better holding in the suit than I have. 3NT is clearly an option so Hamman's Rule applies.

It was a banker someone would say that. So does Paul:

Bowyer: 3NT. Calling Mr Hamman...

Similar sentiments from John:

Carruthers: 3NT. “If not now, when? If not me, who?”

Various versions of this quote with the same sentiments are attributed to various people, including John F. Kennedy and Mikhail Gorbachev. Most recently and amusingly, Ivanka Trump attributed it to the actress Emma Watson of Harry Potter fame (though to be fair, she did quote it in a speech at the United

Nations). The original version is usually attributed to Hillel the Elder, an ancient rabbinic scholar.

Lawrence: 3 NT. I have great values but don't have a sure source of tricks. Six Clubs or Six Diamonds could be right.

Tim also gives us the problems with anything other than 3NT:

Cope: 3NT. We would like to bid a natural 4NT, but I guess that would be keycard. So, a lily-livered 3NT is the only sensible option – starting with a Double or Four Clubs will just get us into a sequence where neither of us will know what is going on.

Green: 3NT. Have I missed the problem on this hand? I suppose we might make a slam sometimes but I'll be happy to make a game on this one.



John Carruthers

A joke from Drew:

Cannell: 3NT. Sorry – I am an automaton – or is it ottoman? ☺

Robson: 3NT. Could be cold for Seven Clubs but that's why they pre-empt.

Teramoto: 3NT. We may have a slam, but it is not certain. I choose 3NT this time.

Rigal: 3NT. Bid first think later...not sure what else might be on the agenda. Four Clubs is a nothing bid.

Three for said “nothing bid”:

Leufkens: Four Clubs. I don't like it, but I can't just go to Six Diamonds. I wouldn't bid 4NT without prior agreements. At least we get to clubs if it's right. Partner can even have a strong 2-2-5-4!

David also thinks this is the best problem of the set:

Bird: Four Clubs. This is the best problem of the set. Clubs, diamonds or no-trumps could be right. We might easily have a slam too. There seems to be no good answer and I am going to risk bidding Four Clubs, despite the poor quality of the suit. I don't like Four Spades too much with just two spot-cards in diamonds. Nor can I risk bidding only 3NT after my unimpressive underbidding on the previous problems.

Alder: Four Clubs. 3NT, no doubt the choice of some panellists, seems too cautious to me. Partner's hand cannot be all Emmental.

For the uninitiated, Emmental is a Swiss cheese full of holes.

We have two lone voices. Iain for double:

Sime: Double. This hand might not be as good as it first appears, but it looks a tad too much to bid 3NT. We may belong in clubs or NT, so I will not lock into diamonds. And if it all goes sour, I can ask partner why we didn't take the money!

Ho ho!

Bobby clearly believes in overcalling only on good

suits!

Wolff: Four Spades. And raise Five Diamonds to six.

This hand also comes from the Senior US trials via John Swanson. At the table the player who faced this auction bid the panel's 3NT which, of course, ended it. Partner tabled ♠x ♥Qx ♦AQxxxx ♣AQJx. As can be seen, Seven Clubs is on the diamond finesse. This was tested empirically in the other room and when it lost that was 13 IMPs in. Nice work if you can get it.

PROBLEM 8

IMPs. Dealer East. All Vul.

| | | | |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| ♠ — | | | |
| ♥ AQ543 | | | |
| ♦ 98652 | | | |
| ♣ AK2 | | | |
| West | North | East | South |
| — | — | 1♣ | 1♥ |
| Pass | Pass | Double | Pass |
| Pass | Redble* | Pass | 1♠ |
| ? | | | |
| Redble | | For rescue | |

| Bid | Marks | No. of Votes |
|----------------|-------|--------------|
| Two Spades | 10 | 14 |
| Three Spades | 8 | 2 |
| Three Diamonds | 7 | 1 |
| Pass | 4 | 0 |
| Two Diamonds | 3 | 0 |
| 3NT | 1 | 0 |

This auction had a certain inevitability about it. We passed One Heart awaiting the re-opening double, which to no one's surprise came, but equally, to no one's surprise, the bad guys were able to scramble into their nine-card spade fit (at least). So, what now? One question which the panel correctly addresses is

whether Pass here is forcing? My own view is that it is not – what are you supposed to do with ♠xx ♥KJ109x ♦xxxx ♣xx which would pass One Heart doubled for lack of anything else to do. There is certainly an argument that it should be, however, since letting the opponents play in a known fit at the one level is never winning bridge. Notwithstanding that, by the equal largest majority of the set, 14 panellists simply cue-bid their way to game, hoping to sort everything out. This certainly shows a hand that is not prepared to defend One Spade Doubled, but which has game going values – not a bad effort at describing our hand therefore!

Carruthers: Two Spades. Whatever the subtleties of Pass, then a pull of Partner's Double to Two Spades differing from this immediate bid of Two Spades, are, perhaps someone can enlighten me. By my unwillingness to defend One Spade doubled, Partner will infer that I have (a.) a hand suitable for play in three suits and (b.) a game force. That seems to be what I have. A contract of 3NT is not out of the question here, although the hand may belong in a minor suit, depending on Partner's spade quality.

Fair enough! By a careful reading of John's answer, I believe he thinks passing One Spade is forcing. Not so Michael, Paul and Ben:

Byrne: Two Spades. Since I have no intention of defending One Spade Doubled no matter how much the table shakes when partner puts a red one on it I see no reason to make a (forcing?) pass, and indeed I don't think pass is forcing, as I sometimes pass One Heart Doubled on a whim with nothing better to do eg ♠xx ♥KJ109x ♦xxxx ♣xx (sure I have seen that hand mentioned before ☺). I could bid Three Diamonds but I don't know what that means, and even if I did I don't think five grotties fits the bill. Partner will probably bid 2NT over

Two Spades and I can then bid Three Clubs/Diamonds and see what happens. We could be cold for Six/Seven Clubs (another slam!) ♠Qxxx ♥x ♦AKQ ♣QJ10xx or game could be the limit: ♠KQJx ♥x ♦KJx ♣QJxxx. I don't know but hope to find out.

Bowyer: Two Spades. I'd probably have done the same (Pass One Heart), although the above outcome is predictable. I'm not going to defend One Spade Doubled, so I have to bid Two Spades at this point and see where that leads. Incidentally, FWIW, I don't think Pass is forcing as your hand could consist of a fistful of hearts and nine-tenths of naff-all.

Green: Two Spades. Pass would not be forcing, and I have a hand that wants to force to game. So, I'll start with Two Spades and see what partner does. Over Three Clubs I would be happy to bid Four Spades which I think shows a three card splinter as with a four card splinter I would have bid directly over One Heart or over One Spade I could bid Three Spades. If partner bids Three Diamonds I would try exclusion keycard and if partner bids 2NT I can bid Three Clubs.

Smith: Two Spades. In addition to showing no interest in defending a low-level spade contract, this must show that my pass was not just on KQxxxx hearts and nothing else. I have game values plus a decent fit if partner has real clubs (highly likely since he is short in hearts), so let's try to leave some room for investigation, as slam is not out of the question.

Rigal: Two Spades. In my system file this is described as...who am I kidding! I think it does show a good hand and spade shortage so it is a good start.

Robson: Two Spades. Obviously can't penalise them in a nine-card fit at the one-level so little choice. Two Hearts could be interpreted as natural.

Not only could, but should IMHO. Indeed, I have bid it at the table without discussion and partner passed it without a flicker. I made game, but it could be called a little lucky since KJ1098xx opposite a void played for one loser.

Bird: Two Spades. I have no intention of defending spades at a low level and will bid a simple Two Spades to show my strength. Partner cannot expect any better club support after I was happy to defend against One Heart.

Cannell: Two Spades. A clear forcing cue-bid in an effort to get to the right level and strain. Will this work? Who knows. I am fine with my two previous passes.

Lawrence: Two Spades. This sequence is disgusting but OK. What else? Fortunately, the auction has provided us with a perfect bid – Two Spades. Game forcing with good hearts, not great clubs since I didn't bother showing them, and likely this kind of diamond suit. If I had ♠ – ♥AQ764 ♦KJ984 ♣K87 my first bid would have been Two Diamonds. The Two Spade bid pulls the mess together.

Also fair enough.

Sime: Two Spades. OK, they appear to have successfully escaped. Let's settle for finding our best contract.

Wolff: Two Spades. Here I think better to ask, rather than tell.

Alon and Enri would actually have bid their "suit" last time:

Apteker: Two Spades. I would have bid Two Diamonds the first time round given that the opponents are known to have at least a nine card spade fit which was always likely to be found following this bidding sequence. We will end up in 3NT from the correct side, game or slam in a minor and I need to learn more from partner.

Leufkens: Two Spades. This is impossible. I don't

like Pass on first round (naive) but no idea what the best alternative would be. Probably I would have bid Two Diamonds in the end. Now North has indicated diamond length, so probably not a good trump suit anymore. Either 3NT or Five/ Six Clubs can be on, I suppose. I don't promise club support but imply at least secondary support.

And somewhat to my surprise Phillip jumps in it this time:

Alder: Three Diamonds. I am happy with my inactions so far. Now I wish I could make a forcing Pass (for which there is a case, but I would not risk it undiscussed), but I will try to finish describing my hand and hope partner can work out what to do.

Is Three Diamonds much of a description?

Two panellists bid Three Spades, arguing that this must show a "three card splinter" since they would otherwise have shown a splinter on the last round. Is that necessarily correct when One Club could be a two card suit? I am far from sure about that.

Teramoto: Three Spades. This should be a splinter bid and also showing a penalty pass of One Heart. It shows something like 1-5-4-3 shape.

Tim is in the Pass is forcing camp:

Cope: Three Spades. Happy to pass first time round for penalties, now we need to show a real hand. Whilst I agree Pass should be F1 here, we cannot show the real values unless we act now. Two Spades is another possibility but at least Three Spades describes the hand valiantly and allows partner to make the last mistake.

Partner held ♠QJ8x ♥xx ♦AKJ ♣Q10xx so all roads lead to 3NT.

A mixed bag of problems this month, with a couple of heavy majorities, but also some problems with plenty of panel bids and a dead tie for first place on one problem. The marks are spread more than usual this month, with best in show shared between Andrew

Robson and Marc Smith on 79, with Alon Apteker and David Bird just behind on 78.

I have one final announcement to make this month. It is with regret that this will be my last article in Bidding Battle. After, to my great surprise, an unbroken run of 66 articles (exactly 5 and a half years) I have decided to hang up my keyboard – or at least do other things with it. After this set, the inestimable, indescribable, unbelievable (something ending "able" anyway) Brian Senior will be taking over as moderator. I shall do what all ex-moderators do – revert to being a panellist, so you can all have a good laugh at my efforts in future months. So, this is Alan Mould, last surviving member of the star freighter Marks and Comments, signing off.



Marc Smith

SET 5 – THE PANEL'S BIDS & MARKS



Andrew Robson

| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | Total |
|------------------|--------------|------|-----|------|------|------|-----|------|----|-------|
| Andrew Robson | England | 4♥ | 5♣ | 4♥ | 3NT | 2♣ | 4♠ | 3NT | 2♠ | 79 |
| Marc Smith | England | 4♥ | 4♥ | 4♥ | 4♥ | 2♣ | 4♠ | 3NT | 2♠ | 79 |
| Alon Apteker | South Africa | 5♣ | 4♠ | 4♥ | 3NT | 2♣ | 4♣ | 3NT | 2♠ | 78 |
| David Bird | England | 5♣ | 4♥ | 4♥ | 4♥ | 2♣ | 4♠ | 4♣ | 2♠ | 78 |
| Michael Byrne | England | 4♥ | 4NT | 4♥ | 3NT | 2♣ | 4♣ | 3NT | 2♠ | 77 |
| Drew Cannell | Canada | 4♥ | 4♥ | Dble | 3NT | 2♣ | 4NT | 3NT | 2♠ | 77 |
| John Carruthers | Canada | 4♥ | 4♣ | 4♥ | 3NT | 2♣ | 4♣ | 3NT | 2♠ | 76 |
| Iain Sime | Scotland | 4♥ | 4♥ | Dble | 3NT | 2♣ | 4♠ | Dble | 2♠ | 76 |
| Tim Cope | South Africa | 5♣ | 4♣ | Dble | 3NT | 2♣ | 4♣ | 3NT | 3♠ | 75 |
| Enri Leufkens | Netherlands | 5♣ | 4♥ | 4♥ | 3NT | 2♣ | 5♠ | 4♣ | 2♠ | 75 |
| Mike Lawrence | USA | 5♣ | 4♠ | Dble | 4♥ | 1NT | 4♠ | 3NT | 2♠ | 74 |
| Paul Bowyer | England | Pass | 5♦ | 4♥ | 3NT | 2♣ | 4♠ | 3NT | 2♠ | 73 |
| Barry Rigal | USA | 5♣ | 4♠ | Dble | Dble | 2♣ | 4♠ | 3NT | 2♠ | 73 |
| Tadashi Teramoto | Japan | 4♥ | 3NT | 4♥ | 3NT | Pass | 4♣ | 3NT | 3♠ | 71 |
| Bobby Wolff | USA | 5♣ | 4♥ | Dble | 4♥ | Pass | 4♥ | 4♠ | 2♠ | 71 |
| Phillip Alder | USA | 4♥ | 5♣ | 6♥ | 3NT | 2♣ | 4♥ | 4♣ | 3♦ | 70 |
| Ben Green | England | 5♣ | 5♦ | 4♥ | Dble | 2♣ | 4♣ | 3NT | 2♠ | 70 |



Master Point Bidding Battle Competition – Set 6

Open to All – Free Entry

PROBLEM 1

IMPs. Dealer East. None Vul.

| | | | | | |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|--|--|
| ♠ | K43 | | | | |
| ♥ | 3 | | | | |
| ♦ | A6 | | | | |
| ♣ | AQJ10962 | | | | |
| West | North | East | South | | |
| – | – | 2♦* | Pass | | |
| ? | | | | | |
| 2♦ | Weak two | | | | |

PROBLEM 2

IMPs. Dealer West. All Vul.

| | | | | | |
|-------------|------------------|-------------|--------------|--|--|
| ♠ | 932 | | | | |
| ♥ | J2 | | | | |
| ♦ | K93 | | | | |
| ♣ | A10975 | | | | |
| West | North | East | South | | |
| Pass | Pass | 1♥ | Pass | | |
| 1NT* | Pass | 2♥ | Pass | | |
| Pass | 2♠ | 3♣ | Pass | | |
| ? | | | | | |
| 1NT | Playing 2-over-1 | | | | |

PROBLEM 3

IMPs. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

| | | | | | |
|-------------|---------------------|-------------|--------------|--|--|
| ♠ | 9 | | | | |
| ♥ | A | | | | |
| ♦ | AQJ1043 | | | | |
| ♣ | AQ543 | | | | |
| West | North | East | South | | |
| – | – | 2♦* | Pass | | |
| ? | | | | | |
| 2♦ | Weak two in a major | | | | |

PROBLEM 4

IMPs. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

| | | | | | |
|-------------|------------------|-------------|--------------|--|--|
| ♠ | Q753 | | | | |
| ♥ | AQ82 | | | | |
| ♦ | A543 | | | | |
| ♣ | 7 | | | | |
| West | North | East | South | | |
| – | – | 1♦* | 2NT* | | |
| ? | | | | | |
| 1♦ | Four-plus cards | | | | |
| 2NT | Hearts and clubs | | | | |

PROBLEM 5

IMPs. Dealer East. None Vul.

| | | | | | |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|--|--|
| ♠ | AQ105 | | | | |
| ♥ | K4 | | | | |
| ♦ | 7654 | | | | |
| ♣ | A92 | | | | |
| West | North | East | South | | |
| – | – | 1♥ | Double | | |
| Redouble | 3♣* | 4♥ | Pass | | |
| ? | | | | | |
| 3♣ | Pre-emptive | | | | |

PROBLEM 6

IMPs. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

| | | | | | |
|-------------|------------------------------------|-------------|--------------|--|--|
| ♠ | AK62 | | | | |
| ♥ | – | | | | |
| ♦ | AQJ9742 | | | | |
| ♣ | A8 | | | | |
| West | North | East | South | | |
| – | 2♥* | Pass | 4♥ | | |
| ? | | | | | |
| 2♥ | Weak, five hearts, four-plus minor | | | | |

PROBLEM 7

IMPs. Dealer West. None Vul.

| | | | | | |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|--|--|
| ♠ | 6 | | | | |
| ♥ | AK97 | | | | |
| ♦ | AKQ95 | | | | |
| ♣ | AJ7 | | | | |
| West | North | East | South | | |
| 1♦ | 1♠ | 3♦* | 3♠ | | |
| ? | | | | | |
| 3♦ | Pre-emptive | | | | |

PROBLEM 8

IMPs. Dealer West. E/W Vul.

| | | | | | |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|--|--|
| ♠ | AQ8 | | | | |
| ♥ | K | | | | |
| ♦ | AJ103 | | | | |
| ♣ | AQ1065 | | | | |
| West | North | East | South | | |
| 1♣ | Pass | 1♥ | Pass | | |
| 2♦ | 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 Acol 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
June 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. None Vul.

♠ AQJ82
♥ K75
♦ AK632
♣ —

North opens 1♣ (any balanced hand including any other 5-card suit) and South bids 1♦ showing 4+♥. North rebids 2♣ if possible. If allowed South bids 3♠ to show a fit for clubs. North bids 5♣.

Hand 2. Dealer South. N/S Vul.

♠ AK6
♥ A1073
♦ 52
♣ AJ94

Hand 3. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ KQ8
♥ Q7654
♦ AJ85
♣ A

Hand 4. Dealer South. E/W Vul

♠ K82
♥ AQ972
♦ J10862
♣ —

South opens 1♣ (any balanced hand including any other 5-card suit) and rebids 3♣

Hand 5. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

♠ 5
♥ QJ9
♦ A8543
♣ AK108

Hand 6. Dealer South. Both Vul.

♠ —
♥ KQ65432
♦ 10
♣ AKQ86

South opens 2♦, Multi

Hand 7. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

♠ AJ103
♥ AQ872
♦ Q
♣ Q76

Hand 8. Dealer South. Both Vul.

♠ K542
♥ AQ54
♦ 5
♣ AJ75

MASTER POINT BIDDING BATTLE



Results - Set 4

There was a triple tie for first place: **Rodney Lighton, Michael Prior** and **Alex Athanasiadis** all scored 75 points. There was also a tie for fourth, with **Nick Simms, Frank Turton** and **Dominic Connolly** on 74. Rodney receives the first prize of a £40 Gift Certificate, Michael gets the £30 voucher, and Alex gets £20. Nick is the lucky fourth with £10.

Other Good Scores

71 *Nigel Guthrie, Dudley Leigh, Dominic Cooke*

70 *Mark Bartusek, Colin Brown, Norman Massey, Lars Erik Bergerud, Carles Acero, Philippe Guichard*

69 *Olga Shadyro, José Eduardo de Souza Campos Filho, James Carpenter*

Grand Prix standings:

There are currently 27 readers who have sent in answers to all our sets of problems. Since only the five highest monthly scores will count towards the final result, nothing is lost to any other competitor. The top eleven scorers currently are:

| | |
|---------------|-----|
| Mark Bartusek | 288 |
| Stuart Nelson | 281 |
| Mike Ralph | 280 |
| Michael Prior | 277 |
| Andrew King | 276 |
| Nigel Guthrie | 275 |
| Dudley Leigh | 273 |
| Peter Barker | 270 |
| Bill Linton | 269 |
| Colin Brown | 268 |

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.

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- Light lunch on Saturday 10th NOV'18
- Social programme (bookable through Intertours)

Pre- and post-tournament side events

- 1st Nov – 9pm | National Simultaneous Pairs
- 2nd– 3rd Nov – 4.30pm | IMP Pairs
- 5th Nov – 9pm | Warm-up Pairs
- 12th Nov – 9pm | Cool-down Pairs

Main tournament programme

- 5th Nov – 6pm | Welcome cocktail
- 6th– 8th Nov – 4.30pm | Open Pairs
- 9th– 11th Nov | Open Teams
- Start times: 9th Nov - 8.30pm
- 10th Nov - 11.30am and 3.30pm
- 11th Nov - 3pm

| PRICES | DOUBLE (2) ROOM B&B | SINGLE ROOM B&B | PRICES (1) OTHER HOTELS | DOUBLE (2) B&B | SINGLE B&B |
|--|------------------------|--------------------|---|-------------------|---------------|
| Early booking (1) (by 31 st July) | € 637.50 | € 928.00 | Price per person for 7-night package | € 463.00 | € 603.00 |
| Extra nights (per person per night) | € 49.50 | € 91.00 | | | |
| Standard bridge rate (1) (bookings from 1 st August) | € 708.00 | € 1030.00 | (1) Package price per person, 7 nights (2) Minimum occupancy 2 persons | | |
| Extra nights (per person per night) | € 55.00 | € 101.00 | For other accommodation options please contact Intertours. | | |

For more information and FAQs visit www.bridge-madeira.com

Please check the tournament website for changes to the programme.

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Associação de bridge da madeira



madeira islands



Secretaria Regional de Educação
Direção Regional de Juventude e Desporto



EAST

Hands for the
June 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. None Vul.

♠ K9653
♥ 432
♦ Q1098
♣ 3

North opens 1♣ (any balanced hand including any other 5-card suit) and South bids 1♦ showing 4+♥. North rebids 2♣ if possible. If allowed South bids 3♠ to show a fit for clubs. North bids 5♣.

Hand 2. Dealer South. N/S Vul.

♠ J97
♥ 9
♦ AQJ4
♣ K10732

Hand 3. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ AJ
♥ J8
♦ KQ94
♣ KQJ87

Hand 4. Dealer South. E/W Vul

♠ Q4
♥ K
♦ AK753
♣ A9763

South opens 1♣ (any balanced hand including any other 5-card suit) and rebids 3♣

Hand 5. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

♠ A32
♥ AK102
♦ KJ96
♣ 42

Hand 6. Dealer South. Both Vul.

♠ KQ87
♥ A
♦ AQJ72
♣ J93

South opens 2♦, Multi

Hand 7. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

♠ 2
♥ K954
♦ AK10
♣ AJ843

Hand 8. Dealer South. Both Vul.

♠ —
♥ KJ762
♦ AKJ1084
♣ 64

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.

It is possible to make a donation by credit card – just go to the appropriate page on the web site. A number of readers are making regular donations by bank transfer.

If you would like to discuss any of the above contact me at: editor@newbridgemag.com

Ask not what A New Bridge Magazine can do for you –ask what you can do for A New Bridge Magazine.