

A NEW BRIDGE MAGAZINE

The Right Stuff

Letter From Germany

The Abbot's Testing Session

EDITION 7
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A NEW BRIDGE MAGAZINE

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Europe is Coming

The 54th edition of the European Team Championships was packed with drama, the race for the Open title on the final day being one of the most thrilling on record. There will be a full report in the August issue, but meanwhile we salute the new Champions, Norway in the Open Teams, Poland in the Women's Teams and France in the Seniors. Next year 24 teams will travel to Sanya (12 from England, Netherlands, Norway & Sweden who qualified all their teams) with their eyes on a World Title.

Meanwhile, the European Bridge League has announced that following the decision of the World Bridge Federation to include a World National Mixed Team Championship in Sanya. the first European National Mixed Team Championships will take place in Lisbon, Portugal, 22- 28th February 2019 at the VIP Executive Entrecampos Hotel & Conference.

The Swedish Connection

The popular Chairman's Cup starts in Örebro on 27 July and the closing stages of this famous event will be broadcast on BBO.

Oh Yeh!

The 2018 Yeh Bros Cup starts on 1 July and as usual features some of the world's top players. You can see the list of participants at:

<http://www.ccba.org.cn/Tour/TourTeamItemInfo-ListFlag.aspx?tourid=11874&itemid=19086>

Juniors on Parade

The spotlight will be on Europe's rising stars, as the 14th European Youth Pairs Championships take place in Opatija, Croatia, 11-18 July. You can follow the event on the EBL website or at the EBL's Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/europeanbridge?ref=hl>



Across the Pond

On 9 July the ACBL presents the IMG Summer Instant Matchpoint Game. A new feature will see a video presentation where Daniel Korbel and Sylvia Shi discuss their 10 favourite deals after the event. For a preview go to:

http://www.acbl.org/clubs_page/summer-instant-matchpoint-game/

The Summer Nationals start in Atlanta on 26 July and there will be BBO coverage of the Grand National Teams starting on 27 July and the Spingold, from 31 July.

Wiki Leaks

While working in Ostend editing the Bulletins of the European Bridge Championships the President of the International Bridge Press Association, Barry Rigal, showed me an email he had received from a shareholder at Bridge Winners, Eugene Hung. It said that an EBU employee, Michael Clark, was claiming that by using material from Wikipedia

I was guilty of plagiarism. I immediately contacted Wiki, who confirmed that (as I already knew): In principle, all text in Wikipedia is subject to the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike License (CC-BY-SA) and may be used free of charge for any purpose.

However, what I had not noticed was that under the terms of the Licence, Wiki like you to include a link. When I suggested to Wiki that it would be possible to add a link retrospectively they said it would be a nice idea and arrangements are in hand for links to be added.

Meanwhile, Mr. Clark had also found a small number of quotes from other Internet sites which were not attributed. I have contacted the parties concerned, and received very cordial messages, asking that if possible an attribution be added.

Then came something even more extraordinary; a claim by Mr. Hung & Mr. Clark that the articles by Larry Cohen and Kit Woolsey that appear in A New Bridge Magazine were being reproduced without their permission.

I was able to disprove that allegation by providing copies of the relevant emails and the magazine's Solicitors are currently considering if we should bring an action for defamation against Bridge Winners, Mr. Hung and Mr. Clark.

Mr. Hung plans to publish something on Bridge Winners – at the time of writing I have not seen the piece, but I cannot help but recall something that Ewart Kempson wrote whilst Editor of Bridge Magazine: 'We make a soft woollen cloth in Yorkshire – it's called flannel.'

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Test Your Technique

with Christophe Grosset

see Page XXX

Dealer West. E/W Vul.

♠ J
 ♥ AJ742
 ♦ A1032
 ♣ Q104

♠ AQ6
 ♥ 1096
 ♦ K7
 ♣ K9652

West	North	East	South
1♠	Double	3♠	3NT
All Pass			

Playing a challenge against Funbridge artificial intelligence “Argine”, you are trailing by 5 IMPs going into the last board. To create some action, North decides to double instead of bidding 2♥. You are now in 3NT from South’s hand, in a contract that will probably not be the same at the other table. You need to make it and hope they go down in 4♥ or miss game at the other table. What’s your plan after the ♠3 lead from West, dummy’s jack winning the trick while West follows with the ♠5?

The Right Stuff

The Editor reports on the 2018 USBF Trial.

The Editor takes an in depth look at the final of the 2018 USBF Trial to select USA 1 for the 2019 Bermuda Bowl in Sanya, China.

The United States Bridge Federation was formed in 2001, for the primary purposes of selecting and supporting United States teams in International Competition and supporting the World Bridge Federation in its efforts to obtain Olympic recognition for bridge. 21 teams travelled to Houston for the 2018 trials. Here they are in seeding order:

Fleisher	Martin Fleisher (Cap.) Chip Martel Eric Greco Geoff Hampson Joe Grue Brad Moss – Bye to Round of 8
Nickell	Nick Nickell,(Cap.) Ralph Katz Bobby Levin Steve Weinstein Jeff Meckstroth Eric Rodwell – Bye to Round of 8
Rosenthal	Andrew Rosenthal,(Cap.) Aaron Silverstein Robert Hamman David Berkowitz Eldad Ginossar Chris Wilenken – Bye to Round of 16
Lall	Reese Milner Hemant Lall Justin Lall Kevin Bathurst Zia Mahmood Jacek Pszczola Petra Hamman(NPC)
Borker	Jay Borker,(Cap.) Michael Rosenberg Roger Lee Daniel Korbel
Morris	Michael Levine Eddie Wold Mike Passell Marc Jacobus Greg Hinze David Grainger
Mahaffey	Jim Mahaffey, (Cap.) Sam Lev John Schermer Neil Chambers Billy Cohen Gary Cohler
Gupta	Vinita Gupta,(Cap.) Billy Miller Huub Bertens Ron Smith Oren Kriegel
Fireman	Paul Fireman,(Cap.) Gavin Wolpert John Kranyak Vincent Demuy Joel Wooldridge John Hurd
Robinson	Steve Robinson,(Cap.) Peter Boyd Bart Bramley Kit Woolsey Mark Feldman Ross Grabel

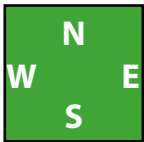
Meltzer	Rose Meltzer,(Cap.) Nik Demirev Steve Garner Owen Lien Kevin
Harris	Martin Harris,(Cap.) Jacob Morgan Matthew Granovetter Pam Granovetter Miriam Harris-Botzum John Botzum
Ozdil	Melih Ozdil,(Cap.) Brian Glubok Drew Casen Jim Krekorian
Lo	Ai-Tai Lo,(Cap.) William Pettis Alex Kolesnik Bob Etter Ira Hessel Dan Morse
Juster	Jeffrey Juster Franklin Merblum Adam Grossack Zachary Grossack Howard Weinstein Adam Wildavsky
Doub	Doug Doub,(Cap.) John Stiefel Karen McCallum Geoffrey Brod Vic King
Molson	Janice Seamon-Molson, (Cap.) Tobi Sokolow Kerri Sanborn Stephen Sanborn Beth Palmer Sylvia Shi
Lewis	Paul Lewis,(Cap.) Linda Lewis Danny Sprung JoAnn Sprung Robert Cappelli Robert Bitterman
Schireson	Max Schireson,(Cap.) Debbie Rosenberg Geeske Joel William Watson
Sam Dinkin NPC	Tom Reynolds Lance Kerr David Pelka William Hall
Cohen	Seth Cohen,(Cap.) Howard Einberg James Glickman Bill St Clair

The 18 teams without a bye would play a round-robin to determine who would join Rosenthal in the Round of 16 and thereafter all matches would be over 120 deals.

The last four teams standing were Fireman, Lall, Nickell and Juster. Lall edged out Fireman 225-210 while Nickell, after a slow start, powered past Juster 345-234.

Here are a couple of deals from the semi-finals:

Board 62. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ 107642 ♥ 4 ♦ J64 ♣ 10974		♠ AKQ5 ♥ AK92 ♦ Q5 ♣ J62	♠ — ♥ J10653 ♦ 1098732 ♣ 53
		♠ J983 ♥ Q87 ♦ AK ♣ AKQ8	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wooldridge</i>	<i>Milner</i>	<i>Hurd</i>	<i>Lall</i>
–	–	3♦	3NT
Pass	6NT	All Pass	

I think you would expect to lose 13 IMPs having missed the grand slam.

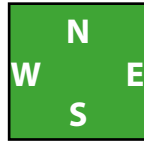
Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Zia</i>	<i>Demuy</i>	<i>Pzsczola</i>	<i>Kranyak</i>
–	–	2♦*	Double
Pass	3♣*	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♥*	Pass	4NT*
Pass	5♣*	Pass	5♦*
Pass	6♣*	Pass	6♥
Pass	7♠	All Pass	

- 2♦ Multi, bad in either major
- 3♣ Artificial force
- 4♥ Agrees spades
- 4NT RKCB
- 5♣ 3 key cards
- 5♦ ♠Q?
- 6♣ Yes
- 6♥ Grand slam try

This unlucky contract cost Fireman 17 IMPs.

Board 79. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

♠ 7642 ♥ KJ97 ♦ A ♣ AKQ9		♠ KQ8 ♥ 6532 ♦ QJ43 ♣ 74	♠ AJ95 ♥ AQ ♦ K106 ♣ J1052
		♠ 103 ♥ 1084 ♦ 98752 ♣ 863	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Weinstein</i>	<i>Weinstein</i>	<i>Wildavsky</i>	<i>Levin</i>
–	–	–	Pass
1♣	Pass	1♠	Pass
4♦*	Double	Pass	Pass
4♠	Pass	4NT*	5♥
Pass*	Pass	5♠	All Pass

- 4♦ Shortage
- 4NT RKCB
- Pass 2 key cards

If 5♥ had been doubled was South planning to run to 6♦? Either way the penalty would have been astronomical. Declarer took the diamond lead in dummy and played a spade to the jack, +680.

(I suspect that the operator may have missed a Pass and it was West who bid 5hx - don't you?)

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Katz	Merblum	Nickell	Juster
–	–	–	Pass
1♣	Pass	1♠	Pass
4♠	Pass	4NT*	Pass
5♥*	Pass	6NT	All Pass
	4NT	RKCB	
	5♥	2 key cards	

♠ KQ8			
♥ 6532			
♦ QJ43			
♣ 74			
♠ 7642			♠ AJ95
♥ KJ97			♥ AQ
♦ A			♦ K106
♣ AKQ9			♣ J1052
			♠ 103
			♥ 1084
			♦ 98752
			♣ 863

Ideally you would like to play in 6♣, but in the modern era that is not so simple. Maybe East can bid 6♣ over 5♥ planning to convert 6♠ to 6NT (in case the missing key card is the ♠K).

South led the ♦9 and having won performe in dummy declarer played a spade to the nine. South won with the ten and exited 'safely' with a club. (Only a spade will prevent what now followed.)

Declarer won in hand, unblocked the ♥AQ, cashed the ♦K and went back to dummy with a club to play winners, arriving at this position:

	♠ KQ		
	♥ –		
	♦ Q		
	♣ –		
♠ 76		♠ AJ	
♥ J		♥ –	
♦ –		♦ 10	
♣ –		♣ –	
	♠ –		
	♥ –		
	♦ 872		
	♣ –		

When declarer cashed the ♥J North had no answer—he pitched the ♦Q and declarer took the last two tricks with the ♠A and the ♦10.

Everyone hoped for an exciting final.

Set 1 Board 1-15

Nickell scored on every one of the first five deals to lead 19-0.

Board 6. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

	♠ AQ105		
	♥ 32		
	♦ K1098		
	♣ AK10		
♠ 4			♠ J82
♥ A1084			♥ Q976
♦ AQJ642			♦ 3
♣ J5			♣ Q9873
			♠ K9763
			♥ KJ5
			♦ 75
			♣ 642

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Levin	Pszczola	Weinstein	Zia
–	–	Pass	Pass
1♦	1NT	Pass	2♣*
Pass	2♠	Pass	4♠
All Pass			
	2♣	Stayman	

East led the ♦3 and West took the ace and returned the jack. As Edgar Kaplan was want to say, 'Up went the king and down went the contract'. East ruffed and returned the eight of spades and declarer could not avoid the loss of two more tricks, -50.

If declarer withholds the ♦K and subsequently plays East for the ♥Q he will lose only three tricks, a losing club going on the master diamond.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Milner	Rodwell	Lall	Meckstroth
–	–	Pass	Pass
1♦	1NT	Pass	2♥*
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠
All Pass			
	2♥	Transfer	

East led his diamond and West won with the ace and switched to the ♣J. Declarer won with the ace, drew trumps and played a heart to the jack for +420 and 10 IMPs, 29-0 to Nickell.

Lall got on to the scoreboard with an extra undertrick on Board 7.

Board 8. Dealer West. None Vul.

♠ AK106 ♥ 7 ♦ QJ1072 ♣ A109		♠ 985 ♥ KQJ863 ♦ 4 ♣ J64	♠ — ♥ A1094 ♦ A8653 ♣ Q532
--------------------------------------	--	-----------------------------------	-------------------------------------

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Levin</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Weinstein</i>	<i>Zia</i>
2♠	Pass	3♠	Double
All Pass			

North led the ♥7 and South won with the ace and Switched to the ♣5, North winning with the ace and returning the ten for the jack, queen and king. The queen of spades was taken by North's ace and he cashed the ♣9 before playing the ♦Q. South won with the ace and returned the ♥9 for North to ruff. There were still two trump tricks to come, four down, -800.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Milner</i>	<i>Rodwell</i>	<i>Lall</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>
2♠	2NT	3♥	Double
Pass	4♦	Pass	4♠
Pass	5♦	All Pass	

Meckstroth indicated that his double was for penalties but Rodwell, perhaps sensing there might be more than a game available introduced his diamonds. (You might get 800 from 3♥ but it's not simple – if South leads a low club North must put in the nine, maintaining communications to ensure that South gets a ruff and a trump promotion.)

East led the ♥K and declarer won in dummy, ruffed a heart and ran the ♦Q, claiming eleven tricks when it lost, +400 and a loss of 9 IMPs.

For a little light relief see if you can work out how you can make 6♦ if East leads a spade?

Board 9. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

♠ 2 ♥ KJ104 ♦ A1052 ♣ QJ76		♠ KQJ5 ♥ A76 ♦ KJ9 ♣ K94	♠ 7643 ♥ Q32 ♦ Q87 ♣ A52
-------------------------------------	--	-----------------------------------	-----------------------------------

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Levin</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Weinstein</i>	<i>Zia</i>
–	Pass	1NT	Pass
Pass	Double*	Pass	2♣
Double	All Pass		

Double 4M + 5m

West led the ♣2 and East put in the nine, declarer winning with the ten and playing a heart to the ten. When that held he played the ♠2 and East went up with the king, declarer winning with the ace and playing the ♥9 for the queen, king and ace. East returned the ♣4 and the defenders played

two rounds of the suit, East exiting with the ♠J. When declarer refused to ruff East played a heart and declarer claimed seven tricks, one down, -100.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Milner</i>	<i>Rodwell</i>	<i>Lall</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>
–	1♦	1NT	Pass
2♣*	Pass	2♠	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♠	Double
All Pass			

♠ 7643	♠ 2	♠ KQJ5
♥ Q32	♥ KJ104	♥ A76
♦ Q87	♦ A1052	♦ KJ9
♣ A52	♣ QJ76	♣ K94
		♠ A1098
		♥ 985
		♦ 643
		♣ 1083

Which action do you prefer – Milner's 2♣ or Levin's Pass? It can be right to bid a thin game when you know where most of the missing high cards are located but not on this occasion.

South led the ♦3 and North took the ace and returned the two. Declarer won with dummy's queen and played a spade for the king and ace, South switching to the ♥9. Declarer won with the ace and tried the ♠J but when North discarded it was clear he was going three down, -800 and a 14 IMP loss.

Board 14. Dealer East. None Vul.

♠ 98765	♠ 2	♠ KQ4
♥ J32	♥ KJ104	♥ KQ106
♦ 9753	♦ A1052	♦ AK84
♣ K	♣ QJ76	♣ 62
♠ AJ1032		♠ –
♥ 8		♥ A9754
♦ J		♦ Q1062
♣ AQ9875		♣ J1043

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Levin</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Weinstein</i>	<i>Zia</i>
–	–	Pass	1NT
2NT*	Pass	3♦	Double
3♠	Pass	4♣	Pass
5♣	All Pass		

It looks as if 2NT promised a big two suited hand and the BBO operator reported that Levin suggested at some point that the partnership were in 'uncharted waters'. If that was the case they reached a safe harbour.

South led the ♣2 and with a nod to the Rabbi declarer went up with dummy's ace and cross-ruffed spades and diamonds, soon claiming 12 tricks and +420. Had he pitched a diamond on the ♠A he could have taken all 13.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Milner</i>	<i>Rodwell</i>	<i>Lall</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>
–	–	Pass	1♣*
2♣	Pass	4♣	All Pass

1♣ RM Precision

E/W were playing Mathe against a strong 1♣ and there is no way in which to show a strong black two-suiter. West might have bid 4♠ but he was not expecting his side to be able to make a game.


My view is that the West hand is too good for immediate action. After 1♣-(Pass)-1♦-(Pass)-1NT West can use his defence to 1NT, promising a good hand (the partnerships methods are that 2♠ would show spades and a minor, while a double would promise a four-card major and a longer minor).

Missing the game cost 7 IMPs and left Nickell ahead 50-15.

You can replay these deals [here](#) or <https://tinyurl.com/y7ejp7vs>

Set 2 – Boards 16-30

Board 16. Dealer West. E/W Vul.

♠ J8754 ♥ AK64 ♦ 87 ♣ Q8	♠ 6 ♥ Q852 ♦ QJ10 ♣ A7632 	♠ AQ1092 ♥ J7 ♦ 954 ♣ 1094 ♠ K3 ♥ 1093 ♦ AK632 ♣ KJ5	
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Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Katz</i>	<i>Lall</i>	<i>Nickell</i>	<i>Bathurst</i>
Pass	Pass	Pass	1♦*
Pass	1♥	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♣	All Pass	

1♦ 2+♦, 10-15

East led the ♦4 and declarer won with the queen, cashed the ace of clubs and played a club, putting up the king when East followed with the ♣9. He drew the outstanding trump, cashed the diamonds getting rid of a spade and a heart and played the ♥10, going up with the queen when West followed with the ♥6 – a cool +150.

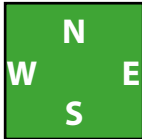
Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Lall</i>	<i>Weinstein</i>	<i>Milner</i>	<i>Levin</i>
Pass	Pass	Pass	1NT*
Pass	2♣*	Pass	2♦*
Pass	3♣*	All Pass	

- 1NT 15-17 (may be good 14) may have 5M or 6m
- 2♣ Stayman
- 3♣ Non-forcing

The same lead saw declarer win, cash the ♣A and play a club. Here declarer put in dummy's jack and West won and switched to the ♥4. That gave declarer a reprieve, but he did not take it, following with the five allowing East to win with the jack, cash the ♠A and then play a heart for one down, +50 and 5 IMPs for Lall.

Board 24. Dealer West. None Vul.

♠ Q6 ♥ A964 ♦ K986 ♣ AJ9	♠ AJ109752 ♥ Q2 ♦ Q ♣ Q63 	♠ K43 ♥ 85 ♦ AJ1072 ♣ 1042 ♠ 8 ♥ KJ1073 ♦ 543 ♣ K875	
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Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Katz</i>	<i>Lall</i>	<i>Nickell</i>	<i>Bathurst</i>
1♦	3♠	All Pass	

1♦ promised at least three cards.

East led the ♥8 and West took the ace and returned the four, declarer overtaking with dummy's king and playing a spade to the jack and king. East switched to the ♣10 covered by the jack and queen and after drawing trumps declarer played a club to the seven and was one down when West produced the nine, -50.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Lall</i>	<i>Weinstein</i>	<i>Milner</i>	<i>Levin</i>
1NT*	3♠	3NT	All Pass
	1NT	14-17	

With a good five-card suit and a spade stopper East had an easy raise to game.

North led the ♠10 and declarer won with the queen and played the ♦9. When her majesty appeared he won in dummy, returned to hand with a diamond and played a spade, +400 and 8 IMPs to Lall, now trailing 29-59.

♠ AJ109752		♠ K43
♥ Q2		♥ 85
♦ Q		♦ AJ1072
♣ Q63		♣ 1042
♠ Q6	♠ N	♠ 8
♥ A964	♥ W	♥ KJ1073
♦ K986	♦ E	♦ 543
♣ AJ9	♣ S	♣ K875

East led the ♣3 and declarer played dummy's seven, taking West's jack with the king and playing a heart for the jack and queen. West, who had seen his partner follow to the heart with a 'Smith Echo' two, switched to the ♠J and the defenders took four tricks in the suit and the ♣A for two down, -200.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Lall</i>	<i>Weinstein</i>	<i>Milner</i>	<i>Levin</i>
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♥*
Pass	2♠	Pass	3♥
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

2♥ Game forcing

The play started the same way, but here East played the ♥10 at trick two (and according to the Bulletin that was also 'Smith') but at trick three West switched to the ♣5. East won with the ace and cashed the ♠A, but declarer was assured of nine tricks, +600 and 13 IMPs – the only major swing of the set, which saw the teams share 44 IMPs making the score 72-37 in favour of Nickell.

Board 28. Dealer West. N/S Vul.

♠ J2	♠ N	♠ AK108
♥ Q763	♥ W	♥ 102
♦ Q1074	♦ E	♦ J83
♣ J54	♣ S	♣ A963
	♠ 9	
	♥ AKJ984	
	♦ A962	
	♣ 107	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Katz</i>	<i>Lall</i>	<i>Nickell</i>	<i>Bathurst</i>
Pass	1♠*	Pass	2♥*
Pass	2♠	Pass	3♥
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

1♠ 10-15
2♥ Game forcing

Set 3 – Boards 31-45

Board 40. Dealer East. Both Vul.

♠ A93	♠ N	♠ J1076
♥ 73	♥ W	♥ J962
♦ 1098742	♦ E	♦ J5
♣ J9	♣ S	♣ 853
♠ KQ8542		♠ —
♥ 854		♥ AKQ10
♦ AQ		♦ K63
♣ K4		♣ AQ10762

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Katz	Lall	Nickell	Bathurst
–	–	Pass	1♣*
1♠	Double*	2♠	3♣
3♠	Pass	Pass	Double
Pass	3NT	All Pass	
	1♣	Precision	
	Dble	5-7	

♠ A93	♠ KQ8542	♠ J1076
♥ 73	♥ 854	♥ J962
♦ 1098742	♦ AQ	♦ J5
♣ J9	♣ K4	♣ 853
	♠ –	
	♥ AKQ10	
	♦ K63	
	♣ AQ10762	

East led the ♠J and declarer won and ran the jack of clubs for a fast three down, -300.

If North passes the double of 3♠ and leads a club South can win and cash three hearts, allowing North to pitch a club. A club ruff then produces -500.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Zia	Meckstroth	Pszczola	Rodwell
–	–	Pass	1♣*
1♠	Double*	3♠	Double*
4♠	5♦	All Pass	
1♣	RM Precision		
Dble	5-7		
Dble	Takeout		

East led the ♠J and declarer won with the ace and ran the ♦7. West won with the queen, cashed the ace and exited with the ♠K, locking declarer in dummy for one down, -100, still 5 IMPs to Nickell.

Doubling 4♠ would have collected 800. There are ways to make 5♦. For example declarer could win the spade lead with the ace, ruff a spade, cash two top hearts, ruff a heart, ruff a spade and exit with the ♦K. That's pretty much double dummy, as it may allow the defenders to score three trump tricks if the player with the ♦A started with four hearts.

This was the quietest set of the match, Nickell winning it 17-9 to go further ahead at 89-46.

You can replay the deals [here](#) or <https://tinyurl.com/y8fnschs>

Set 4 – Boards 46-60

Board 49. Dealer South. N/S Vul.

♠ QJ53	♠ K94
♥ AK5	♥ 8632
♦ KQ104	♦ –
♣ KQ	♣ J108532
♠ A10876	♠ 2
♥ 107	♥ QJ94
♦ A63	♦ J98752
♣ 974	♣ A6

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Levin	Lall	Weinstein	Bathurst
–	–	–	Pass
Pass	2NT*	Pass	3♣*
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♦
Pass	5♦	All Pass	
2NT	19-20		
3♣	Stayman		

There were two aces to lose, +400.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Zia	Meckstroth	Pszczola	Rodwell
–	–	–	Pass
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♣*
Pass	3♦*	Pass	3♠*
Double	3NT	All Pass	
3♣	Modified Puppet Stayman		
3♦	No five-card major		
3♠	4♥		

East led the ♠4 and West won with the ace and returned the six. This was the critical moment. If declarer plays low East wins, but the spade suit is blocked. When declarer put up the queen East could win and return the nine, West overtaking it with the ten and subsequently getting in with the ♦A to cash the long spades, +50 and 10 IMPs to Lall.


Given that West was a passed hand it was impossible for him to have started with a five-card spade suit headed by the AK and the ♦A – and that is the only time playing a spade honour at trick two is required.


As in the previous session there was only one double figure swing and like set 2 this one also resulted in a tie, 18-18, which meant Nickell could sleep on a lead of 107-64.

You can replay these deals [here](#) or <https://tinyurl.com/ya3cx2nh>

Set 5 – Boards 61-75

Board 62. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ KQ4 ♥ A1087652 ♦ 76 ♣ 5		♠ A32 ♥ 3 ♦ AQ1082 ♣ KQ98
♠ 1065 ♥ QJ ♦ 943 ♣ A10764		♠ J987 ♥ K94 ♦ KJ5 ♣ J32

♠ A10876 ♥ 107 ♦ A63 ♣ 974		♠ QJ53 ♥ AK5 ♦ KQ104 ♣ KQ ♠ K94 ♥ 8632 ♦ — ♣ J108532 ♠ 2 ♥ QJ94 ♦ J98752 ♣ A6
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Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Weinstein</i>	<i>Lall</i>	<i>Levin</i>	<i>Milner</i>
–	–	1♦	Pass
1NT	2♥	3♣	3♥
4♣	4♥	Pass	Pass
5♣	All Pass		

East's 3♣ promised a good hand, which encouraged West to save. 5♣ doubled would have been -500 but South surprisingly left his red card at home.

South led the four of hearts and North won with the ace and switched to the ♠K, three down, -150.

Closed Room


West	North	East	South
<i>Zia</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Rodwell</i>
–	–	1♦	Pass
1NT	2♥	Double	Pass
3♣	Pass	Pass	3♥
Pass	Pass	4♣	Pass
Pass	4♥	Double	All Pass

The Biltcliffe Coup in action!

<http://community.dur.ac.uk/bridge.club/POOR/42.html>

Declarer was soon claiming his contract, +790 and 12 IMPs for Nickell, 119-66.

Board 65. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

♠ — ♥ 84 ♦ 109743 ♣ AKJ1075		♠ J95 ♥ QJ1065 ♦ AJ ♣ 984	♠ A1063 ♥ 92 ♦ 8652 ♣ Q62
♠ KQ8742 ♥ AK73 ♦ KQ ♣ 3			

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Weinstein</i>	<i>Lall</i>	<i>Levin</i>	<i>Milner</i>
–	Pass	Pass	1♠
3♣	3♠	4♣	4♠
Double*	5♣*	Pass	5♠
All Pass			

Double I want to bid on but am happy if you want to save

Chip Martel, commentating on BBO described 3♣ as ‘kind of wimpy opposite a passed hand’.

West led the ♣K and continued with the ace, declarer ruffing and claiming, +650.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Zia</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Rodwell</i>
–	Pass	Pass	1♣*
4♣	Double*	5♣	Double*
Pass	5♥	Pass	Pass
6♣	Double	All Pass	

Double OK to bid

Double PDI (pass/double inversion) where Dbl = want to bid and Pass would request Dbl for defence (or slam try)

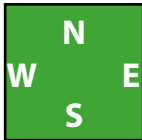
When Rodwell asked Zia about his 4♣ bid he simply spread his hands wide.

Had Zia passed out 5♥ East would have had two chances to defeat the contract – one by leading the ♠A, the other by starting with the ♣Q after which it would have been easy enough to switch to spades (Zia would have dropped the ♣J).

The defenders cashed their red suit winners for three down, -500 but 4 IMPs for Lall.

Zia asked his partner what he would have led if he had doubled 5♥. He then added he was trying to get N/S to bid six and Meckstroth said, ‘that’s what we thought – I played with you once didn’t I?’ which resulted in laughter.

Board 72. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ Q62 ♥ 1087 ♦ A1086 ♣ KJ10		♠ A10975 ♥ K9532 ♦ K ♣ Q7	♠ 3 ♥ J4 ♦ QJ5432 ♣ 5432
♠ KJ84 ♥ AQ6 ♦ 97 ♣ A986			

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Weinstein</i>	<i>Lall</i>	<i>Levin</i>	<i>Milner</i>
Pass	1♠	3♦	4♦*
Double	4♠	All Pass	

4♦ Spade support

East led the ♦Q and West took the ace and returned the ♥8, declarer winning with dummy’s queen, cashing the king of spades and running the jack for +650.

Notice it was not necessary to get the spades right for eleven tricks, as West could always be endplayed to lead away from the ♣K.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Zia	Meckstroth	Pszczola	Rodwell
Pass	1♠	3♦	4♠
5♣	Double	Pass	Pass
5♦	Double	All Pass	

♠ A 10975	♥ K9532	♦ K	♣ Q7
♠ Q62	♥ 1087	♦ A1086	♣ KJ10
♠ 3	♥ J4	♦ QJ5432	♣ 5432
♠ KJ84	♥ AQ6	♦ 97	♣ A986

Note Zia's 5♣ bid, designed to help partner judge what to bid/lead if the opponents bid on to 5♠.

South led the ♠8 and North won with the nine and switched to the ♥3, South winning with the queen, cashing the ace and then playing the ♣6. When declarer played dummy's ten North won with the queen, returned a club to partner's ace and then ruffed the next club for four down, -800 and 4 IMPs for Nickell.

If declarer guesses to rise with dummy's ♣K he can ruff a spade, cross to the ♦A, ruff a spade, cross to the ♦10, ruff a heart and exit with a club, end-playing whoever wins and going only two down. To counter this South does best to switch to a low club at trick three, keeping the defenders communications open. Then three down is a certainty and four down still possible.

Board 73. Dealer North. All Vul.

♠ 8643	♥ Q2	♦ K94	♣ AK93
♠ A2	♥ AK1074	♦ 8765	♣ J6
♠ J1097	♥ 93	♦ Q1032	♣ 854
♠ KQ5	♥ J865	♦ AJ	♣ Q1072

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Weinstein	Lall	Levin	Milner
–	1♣	Pass	1♥
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♦*
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

2♦ Game forcing

East led the ♠10 and West took dummy's king with the ace and switched to the four of hearts for the two, nine and jack. That would have been the perfect defence if East's red queen had been in hearts, but here it more or less compelled declarer to make the contract as he could not afford to play for spades to break as he would lose at least two spades and three hearts. He came to hand with the ♣K and played a diamond to the jack, claiming his contract as soon as the clubs broke, +600.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Zia	Meckstroth	Pszczola	Rodwell
–	1♦*	Pass	1♥
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♣*
Pass	2♥*	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

1♦ RM Precision, 2+♦

2♣ Game forcing

2♥ 3♥, 4-3 minors or 4441

West led a cunning 'fourth best' ♥4 and expecting hearts to be 4-3 declarer fatally followed the natural line of playing dummy's two. East's nine forced out the jack and when declarer crossed to dummy with a club and played a spade to the queen West won with the ace and cashed his hearts for -100 and 12 IMPs that made the score 132-88 in favour of Nickell.

Board 75. Dealer South. N/S Vul.

♠ A853 ♥ 85 ♦ Q10874 ♣ 54	♠ QJ ♥ AK642 ♦ A6 ♣ AK32 <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 60px; height: 60px; margin: 0 auto; display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> N W S E </div>	♠ 106 ♥ J1097 ♦ K32 ♣ QJ96 ♠ K9742 ♥ Q3 ♦ J95 ♣ 1087
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Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Weinstein</i>	<i>Lall</i>	<i>Levin</i>	<i>Milner</i>
–	–	–	Pass
Pass	2♣*	Pass	2♦*
Pass	2♥*	Pass	2♠*
Pass	3♣*	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

- 2♣ Strong
- 2♦ Waiting
- 2♥ Kokish
- 2♠ Forced
- 3♣ ♥+♣

East led the ♥10 and declarer won with the ace and played the ♠J which held the trick, East contributing the ♠10. Declarer continued with the ♠Q and West won and returned the ♥8 to dummy's queen. Declarer pitched his losing diamond on the ♠K and East ruffed and exited with the ♦2, ensuring the contract was one down, -100.

Note that if East exits with a trump declarer wins and plays two more rounds of the suit. East is forced to keep his clubs and declarer then cashes the ♦A and exits with a low club to endplay East.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Zia</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Rodwell</i>
–	–	–	Pass
Pass	1♣*	Pass	1♦*
2♦	Double*	3♦	4♠
All Pass			
1♣	RM Precision		
1♦	0-7		
Dble	Takeout		

West led the ♦7 and East won with the king and returned the three, declarer winning with dummy's ace and playing the ♠J. When that held he continued with the ♠Q and West ducked for a second time. It made no difference, declarer playing three rounds of hearts to dispose of his remaining diamond and claiming ten tricks, and 12 IMPs.

Nickell had taken the set 37-24 – at 144-88 the fat lady was not yet breaking into song but she was certainly gargling.

You can replay the deals [here](#) or <https://tinyurl.com/ya2mmbxx>



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Set 6 – Boards 76-90

Board 79. Dealer South. N/S Vul.

♠ QJ96 ♥ 97 ♦ AJ4 ♣ 10965		♠ 7543 ♥ J1043 ♦ 109 ♣ AQ7	♠ A2 ♥ AKQ2 ♦ Q5 ♣ K8432
		♠ K108 ♥ 865 ♦ K87632 ♣ J	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Katz	Milner	Nickell	Lall
–	–	–	2♦
Pass	Pass	2♥	All Pass

With an awkward hand to describe East opted for a simple overcall.

South led the ♣J and North followed with the seven, allowing declarer to win with the king. Declarer took three rounds of trumps and exited with a club, North winning and returning the ♠3, the defenders scoring a spade and the master trump, so +140.

Terence Reese maintained that Qx was a good holding for no-trumps – perhaps East should risk 2NT?


Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Bathurst	Weinstein	Lall	Levin
–	–	–	Pass
Pass	Pass	1♣*	1♦
1NT	Pass	2♣	Pass
3♣	Pass	3NT	All Pass

1♣ Precision

North led the ♦10 and declarer played dummy's queen, ducking when South covered with the king. He won the next diamond with the ace and played the ♣10, putting up dummy's king and exiting with a club. North won with the ace and exited with a spade but declarer won with dummy's ace and forced out the ace of clubs for nine tricks, +600 and 10 badly needed IMPs for Lall, still down 99-144.

Board 81. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

♠ 103 ♥ AK86 ♦ 9432 ♣ A107		♠ J9862 ♥ 752 ♦ AK8 ♣ 94	♠ 5 ♥ J4 ♦ QJ65 ♣ KQJ853
		♠ AKQ74 ♥ Q1093 ♦ 107 ♣ 62	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Katz	Milner	Nickell	Lall
–	Pass	Pass	1♠
Double	2NT*	4♣	4♠
Pass	Pass	5♣	Double
All Pass			

2NT Limit raise or better

South led the ♠K and North followed with a discouraging two (which also suggested an odd number). When South played a second spade the defenders possible ruff had vanished, just one down, -100.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Bathurst	Weinstein	Lall	Levin
–	–	2♣*	2♠
Double*	4♠	4NT*	Pass
5♣	Double	All Pass	
2♣	10-15,6+♣		
4NT	Two places to play		

South led the ♠K and switched to the ♦10, two down, -300 and 5 IMPs to Nickell.

Board 83. Dealer South. All Vul.

	♠ 965	
	♥ AQ975	
	♦ A 10	
	♣ Q 106	
♠ K83		♠ AQ72
♥ KJ1062		♥ –
♦ J9642		♦ K85
♣ –		♣ AJ8542
	♠ J104	
	♥ 843	
	♦ Q73	
	♣ K973	



Open Room

West	North	East	South
Katz	Milner	Nickell	Lall
–	–	–	Pass
Pass	1♥	Double	2♥
Pass	Pass	3♣	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

North led a heart and declarer won and played a diamond. North went up with the ace and switched to the ♣10 for the jack and king, back came a club for the queen and ace. The defenders took two more clubs, a diamond

and two hearts for three down, -300.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Bathurst	Weinstein	Lall	Levin
–	–	–	Pass
Pass	1♥	Double	2♥*
Pass	Pass	Double	All Pass
2♥	Weak raise (2♦ = good raise)		

East led the ♣A and continued with the eight, West ruffing and switching to the ♠K. The defenders took three tricks in the suit and West then ruffed a third club and exited with a diamond. Declarer took the ace and exited with the ♦10 taken by East's king. Declarer was known to be down to just five hearts at this point so if East exits with a club declarer will have to ruff and play a trump. West wins and exits with a diamond and must get another trump for -1100. However, East exited with a diamond and declarer ruffed and exited with a trump. West won and could play a diamond, but declarer could win with dummy's ♥8 and collect West's trumps, down three, -800, still 15 IMPs for Lall, 114-150.

Board 86. Dealer East. All Vul.

	♠ AQ7	
	♥ J73	
	♦ KQ7	
	♣ Q 1092	
♠ 532		♠ KJ1096
♥ 652		♥ K
♦ 92		♦ AJ53
♣ J7653		♣ AK4
	♠ 84	
	♥ AQ10984	
	♦ 10864	
	♣ 8	



Open Room

West	North	East	South
Katz	Milner	Nickell	Lall
–	–	1♠	Pass
1NT*	Pass	2♣*	2♥
Pass	3NT	Double	4♥
Pass	Pass	Double	All Pass
1NT		Semi forcing	
2♣		Gazilli	

♠ AQ7	♠ KJ1096
♥ J73	♥ K
♦ KQ7	♦ AJ53
♣ Q1092	♣ AK4
♠ 532	♠ 84
♥ 652	♥ AQ10984
♦ 92	♦ 10864
♣ J7653	♣ 8

West led the ♦9 and when declarer played dummy's king East ducked, declarer dropping the ♦10. A heart to the king and ace was followed by the ♣8 which ran to East's king. Endplayed in three suits, East cashed the ♦A and exited with a diamond, West ruffing and playing the ♠2. Declarer went up with dummy's ace, ruffed a club, went to dummy with a heart and ruffed a club, claiming ten tricks and +790.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Bathurst	Weinstein	Lall	Levin
–	–	1♣*	2♥
Pass	2NT	Double	Pass
3♣	Pass	Pass	3♦
Pass	3♥	All Pass	

West led the ♦9 and East took dummy's king with the ace, cashed the ♣A and exited with the ♥K. Declarer won, cashed the ♥9, crossed to dummy with the ♥J and played the ♣9 pitching a spade, +140. That gave Lall 12 IMPs, getting ever closer at 129-150.

Board 89. Dealer North. All Vul.

♠ A632	♠ KJ4
♥ J652	♥ Q103
♦ –	♦ A108642
♣ AJ1062	♣ 7
♠ Q987	♠ 105
♥ 7	♥ AK984
♦ KQ95	♦ J73
♣ Q983	♣ K54

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Katz	Milner	Nickell	Lall
–	Pass	Pass	1♥
Pass	2NT*	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

2NT Heart support

The BBO operator indicated that North had forgotten that 2NT denied a void.

West led the ♥7 and declarer took East's ten with the ace and played a club to the jack. When that held he played a heart to the eight, drew the outstanding trump, cashed the ♣K and claimed twelve tricks, +680.

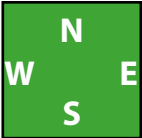
Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Bathurst	Weinstein	Lall	Levin
–	1♣	1♦	1♥
3♣*	3♥	4♦	4♥
5♦	Pass	Pass	Double
All Pass			

3♣ Diamond support

South led the ♥K and continued with the four, declarer ruffing in dummy, cashing the ♦K and then playing a club. South won with the king and returned a club (as good as anything) declarer ruffing, ruffing the ♥Q, drawing the outstanding trump and claiming ten tricks, -200 but another 10 IMPs – 139-150.

Board 90. Dealer East. None Vul.

♠ 3 ♥ A ♦ AJ9532 ♣ 109632		♠ 972 ♥ J97652 ♦ 864 ♣ A
♠ AJ854 ♥ KQ83 ♦ Q7 ♣ 54		♠ KQ106 ♥ 104 ♦ K10 ♣ KQJ87

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Katz</i>	<i>Milner</i>	<i>Nickell</i>	<i>Lall</i>
–	–	Pass	1NT*
Pass	2NT*	Pass	3♣*
Pass	4♣	Pass	4♦
Pass	5♦	All Pass	

1NT 14-17
 2NT Diamonds

I suspect 3♣ suggested South liked diamonds.

A club lead and a spade switch would allow East to ruff a second club – in your dreams – and declarer won the heart lead, played a diamond to the king and a diamond and claimed, +400.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bathurst</i>	<i>Weinstein</i>	<i>Lall</i>	<i>Levin</i>
–	–	2♥	Double
4♥	4NT*	Pass	5♣
Pass	5NT*	Pass	6♣
All Pass			

4NT Two places to play


Not expecting his partner to hold an aceless hand North made a general try with 5NT. West led the ♠A eliminating all danger, -50 and another 10 IMPs.

What a transformation! Milner had outscored Nickell 60-6 to reduce the gap to just two IMPs, 150-148.

You can replay the deals [here](#) or <https://tinyurl.com/y8n5ekch>

Set 7 – Boards 91-105

Board 91. Dealer North. None Vul.

♠ 865 ♥ KQJ1092 ♦ 102 ♣ J4		♠ A9742 ♥ A ♦ A974 ♣ 1075
♠ KJ3 ♥ 5 ♦ 863 ♣ KQ8632		♠ Q10 ♥ 87643 ♦ KQJ5 ♣ A9

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Katz</i>	<i>Pzsczola</i>	<i>Nickell</i>	<i>Zia</i>
–	3♥	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

East led the ♠A and switched to the ♦A followed by a club. That meant declarer could ditch a club on the third round of diamonds, one down, -50.

Do you think East should have bid over 3♥? If you double and partner bids 5♣ what should North lead? Keep that in mind as we move to the other table.

♠ KJ3	♠ 865	♠ A9742
♥ 5	♥ KQJ1092	♥ A
♦ 863	♦ 102	♦ A974
♣ KQ8632	♣ J4	♣ 1075
	♠ Q10	
	♥ 87643	
	♦ KQJ5	
	♣ A9	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bathurst</i>	<i>Rodwell</i>	<i>Lall</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>
–	2♥	Double	3♣*
Double	Pass	Pass	4♥
Double	All Pass		

3♣ Diamonds

5♣ would have had no chance at this table – North would have led a diamond – but 4♠ by East can only be defeated by the lead of the ♦5!

East led the ♣5 making two down a certainty, -300 and the lead had changed hands for the first time, Lall 154-150.

Board 92. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ —	♠ A10987432	♠ KJ
♥ 1084	♥ J	♥ A52
♦ J764	♦ 92	♦ AQ853
♣ AK10983	♣ 52	♣ QJ4
	♠ Q65	
	♥ KQ9763	
	♦ K10	
	♣ 76	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Katz</i>	<i>Pzsczola</i>	<i>Nickell</i>	<i>Zia</i>
–	–	1NT	Pass
2♠*	3♠	Pass	4♠
5♣	Pass	Pass	Double

All Pass

2♠ Minor suit Stayman

North led the ♥J and when declarer played dummy's two South won with the queen and returned the king, North ruffing and exiting with the ♦9. Declarer took his shot at making by playing low, but South won and gave his partner another heart ruff for two down, -300.


Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bathurst</i>	<i>Rodwell</i>	<i>Lall</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>
–	–	1♣*	1♥
2♣	2♠	2NT	3♠
Pass	Pass	3NT	All Pass

1♣ Precision

South led the five of spades and declarer had his ninth trick, +400 and 12 IMPs to Lall, 166-150.

Board 99. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

♠ K72 ♥ 76 ♦ 8732 ♣ AKJ5		♠ 5 ♥ AJ ♦ KQ10954 ♣ 10963	♠ A109643 ♥ KQ ♦ AJ ♣ 874
		♠ QJ8 ♥ 10985432 ♦ 6 ♣ Q2	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Katz	Pzszczola	Nickell	Zia
–	1♦	1♠	Pass
2♦*	3♦	Double	3♥
Pass	Pass	3♠	All Pass

2♦ Spade support
Dble Game try

South led his diamond and declarer won with the ace, cashed the top spades, played a club to the ace and a heart, finishing with ten tricks, +170.


Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Bathurst	Rodwell	Lall	Meckstroth
–	1♦*	1♠	2♥*
3♥*	Pass	4♠	All Pass

1♦ 2+♦
2♥ Non forcing
3♥ Spade support

The same ten tricks gave Lall 10 IMPs, 177-154.

Board 100. Dealer East. All Vul.

♠ 82 ♥ 8 ♦ KJ6 ♣ AKQ10953		♠ 976 ♥ QJ962 ♦ 54 ♣ 764	♠ AKQJ53 ♥ A5 ♦ A1092 ♣ 2
		♠ 104 ♥ K10743 ♦ Q873 ♣ J8	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Katz	Pzszczola	Nickell	Zia
–	–	4♦*	Pass
4♥*	Double	Pass*	Pass
Redouble*	Pass	4♠	All Pass

4♦ Strong with spades

The partnership's agreement about 4♦ (which they started playing a couple of years ago) is that it shows a good hand with some defence. 4♥ was a slam try, promising about 2.5+ useful cards. Pass could be looking for a heart control, but was not discussed in this auction and East might simply have wanted West to play the hand. Redouble promised a heart control.

With a near solid suit and every suit controlled 4♦ may not have been the best choice. +710 did not look promising.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bathurst</i>	<i>Rodwell</i>	<i>Lall</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>
–	–	1♣*	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♠	Pass
3♣	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♦*	Pass	4NT*	Pass
5♣*	Pass	5NT	Pass
6♣	Pass	7♠	Pass
7NT	All Pass		

- 1♣ Precision
- 4♦ Cue-bid for spades
- 4NT RKCB
- 5♣ I key card
- 5NT We have all the key cards
- 6♣ Good clubs

♠ 976		♠ AKQJ53
♥ QJ962		♥ A5
♦ 54		♦ A1092
♣ 764		♣ 2
♠ 82		♠ 104
♥ 8		♥ K10743
♦ KJ6		♦ Q873
♣ AKQ10953		♣ J8
	W N E S	

Meckstroth, who remarked that he was ‘looking for my bullet here’ led the ♠10 and declarer was soon inscribing +2220 onto his scorecard – it proved to be worth 17 IMPs, Lall cruising at 194-154.

Board 101. Dealer South. None Vul.

♠ AK1087		♠ 6
♥ 84		♥ J97632
♦ K53		♦ A86
♣ 954		♣ J103
♠ J543		
♥ 10		
♦ J107		
♣ AKQ82		
	W N E S	
♠ Q92		
♥ AKQ5		
♦ Q942		
♣ 76		

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Katz</i>	<i>Pzsczola</i>	<i>Nickell</i>	<i>Zia</i>
–	–	–	1♦
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♠
3♣	3♦	Pass	3♠
All Pass			

East led the ♣J and West won with the queen and switched to the ♥10. Declarer won with the ace, played a spade to the ace and a spade. When East showed out he drew trumps via the marked finesse and played a diamond to the queen for nine tricks, +140.

What do you make of North’s bid of 3♦? In my view it was cautious. Once spades have been supported the fifth spade becomes important and the ♦K should be useful. I would be happy to take my chances in 4♠.

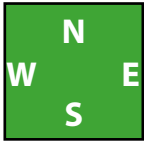
Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bathurst</i>	<i>Rodwell</i>	<i>Lall</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>
–	–	–	1♦*
2♣	2♥*	4♣	4♠
All Pass			
1♦	2♦		
2♥	5♠		

West led the ♣Q and when East followed with the jack he continued with the king and ace, declarer ruffing. If declarer now decides that East’s jump to 4♣ with only three-card trump support suggests a distributional hand he might get the trumps right, but he cashed the ♥A and then played a diamond for the king and ace and East returned a heart for West to ruff, which meant declarer had to go two down, -100 and another six IMPs, Lall 200-154.

Meckstroth’s comment was, ‘sorry, should have made that’.

Board 102. Dealer West. N/S Vul.

♠ KQ982 ♥ 53 ♦ AKJ1097 ♣ —		♠ 75 ♥ KQJ7 ♦ 4 ♣ AQJ874	♠ A10643 ♥ 9 ♦ Q852 ♣ 652
♠ J ♥ A108642 ♦ 63 ♣ K1093			

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Katz	Pszczola	Nickell	Zia
1♦	2♣	3♦	3♥
3♠	4♦*	4♠	4NT
6♦	Double	Pass	6♥
Pass	Pass	6♠	Pass
Pass	Double	All Pass	

4♦ Heart support, diamond shortage

If 4NT was asking for keycards North's double looks like it promised two. North led the ♣A so declarer made an overtrick, +1310.

N/S have a very cheap save against 6♠ – but were West to go on to 7♠ North would have a nasty lead to find.

Closed Room

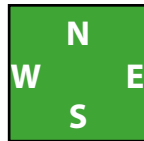
West	North	East	South
Bathurst	Rodwell	Lall	Meckstroth
1♦*	2♣	Pass	2♥
3♠	4♦*	6♠	All Pass

1♦ 2+

4♦ Heart support with a shortage in diamonds

What a brilliant bid by East, inferring a club void with West. North led the ♦4 so declarer was +1010 for a loss of 7 IMPs.

Board 103. Dealer North. All Vul.

♠ KJ4 ♥ 9 ♦ QJ10985 ♣ 942		♠ Q8752 ♥ 10762 ♦ A4 ♣ A10	♠ 6 ♥ K854 ♦ K63 ♣ KQJ73
♠ A1093 ♥ AQJ3 ♦ 72 ♣ 865			

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Katz	Pszczola	Nickell	Zia
–	Pass	1♣	Double
1♦	4♠	All Pass	

East led the ♣K and declarer won with the ace and ran the queen of spades, West winning with the king and switching to the ♦Q. Declarer had to lose another three tricks to finish one down, -100.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Bathurst	Rodwell	Lall	Meckstroth
–	Pass	1♦*	Double
3♦	4♠	All Pass	
1♦	2+		

East led the ♣Q and played the ♠8 to dummy's ace followed by the ♠10. West took the king and exited with the ♦Q, declarer winning, drawing the outstanding trump and then playing the ♥10 (the ♥2 also works). He

took East's king with the ace, cashed the queen and claimed, +620 and 12 IMPs to Nickell, still in the game at 173-200.



Given that you expect to lose a trump trick you will need the ♥K to be with East (more than likely after the opening bid). Other considerations aside, the odds line in the spade suit is to start with the ace, giving you four tricks 82.78% of the time.

Lall had taken this set 57-24 and Nickell now trailed 174-205.

You can replay these deals [here](#) or <https://tinyurl.com/ycgkhp8y>



Set 8 – Boards 106-120

Board 109. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

♠ 987632 ♥ A3 ♦ 4 ♣ KJ72		♠ Q4 ♥ J94 ♦ Q10932 ♣ A94	♠ AJ5 ♥ KQ102 ♦ AK7 ♣ 1083
			♠ K10 ♥ 8765 ♦ J865 ♣ Q65

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Meckstroth</i>	<i>Pzszczola</i>	<i>Rodwell</i>	<i>Zia</i>
–	–	–	Pass
Pass	1NT	Pass	Pass
2♠	Pass	Pass	Double
Pass	3♥	All Pass	

♠ KJ4 ♥ 9 ♦ QJ10985 ♣ 942		♠ 6 ♥ K854 ♦ K63 ♣ KQJ73	♠ Q8752 ♥ 10762 ♦ A4 ♣ A10
			♠ A1093 ♥ AQJ3 ♦ 72 ♣ 865

East led the ♠Q and declarer won with dummy's king and played a heart. West went up with the ace and switched to his diamond, but declarer won, cashed a top heart, crossed to the ♠10, returned to hand with a heart and pitched a club on the ♠A claiming nine tricks, +140.

If West had switched to a club a trick three the defenders could have played four rounds of the suit, promoting East's ♥J into the setting trick.

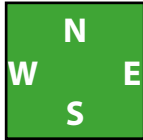

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bathurst</i>	<i>Levin</i>	<i>Lall</i>	<i>Weinstein</i>
–	–	–	Pass
Pass	1NT	Pass	Pass
2♦*	Pass	2♥*	Pass
2♠	All Pass		

2♦ Multi Landy
 2♥ Pass or correct

North led the ♥K and declarer lost a heart, a diamond and three spades, +110 and 6 IMPs to Lall, 212-177.

Board 111. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

♠ K92 ♥ J854 ♦ AK10875 ♣ –		♠ AQ7654 ♥ AK ♦ – ♣ K10843	♠ 108 ♥ Q106 ♦ J6432 ♣ 965
			♠ J3 ♥ 9732 ♦ Q9 ♣ AQJ72

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Meckstroth	Pszczola	Rodwell	Zia
-	-	Pass	1♣
2♠	3NT	All Pass	

East led the ♠4 and West took the ace and returned the ten. He came in with the ♣A and cashed his spades for three down, +150.

♠ KJ	♠ 654
♥ 1076	♥ KQ5432
♦ AK82	♦ 54
♣ Q1096	♣ 43
♠ A1098732	♠ 654
♥ 98	♥ KQ5432
♦ 1076	♦ 54
♣ A	♣ 43
♠ Q	
♥ AJ	
♦ QJ93	
♣ KJ8752	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Bathurst	Levin	Lall	Weinstein
-	-	Pass	1♣
2♠	3NT	All Pass	

East led the ♥4 and a grateful declarer won with dummy's jack and knocked out the ♣A for eleven tricks, +460 and a 12 IMP pick up, 223-190.

Board 114. Dealer West. None Vul.

♠ 953	♠ AKQ874
♥ KJ10874	♥ 93
♦ 106	♦ Q3
♣ K4	♣ A85
♠ J1062	♠ AKQ874
♥ A6	♥ 93
♦ J75	♦ Q3
♣ Q973	♣ A85
♠ -	
♥ Q52	
♦ AK9842	
♣ J1062	

N	E
W	S

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Meckstroth	Pszczola	Rodwell	Zia
Pass	2♥*	2♠	3♥
3♠	Pass	4♠	5♥
Double	All Pass		
2♥	Constructive weak two		

4♠ would probably have been defeated, South cashing a top diamond and then switching to a heart.

East led the ♠K and declarer ruffed in dummy and played three rounds of diamonds, ruffing with the ♥J, East discarding the ♠7. A spade ruff was followed by a diamond. If declarer ruffs this high he can ruff a spade and then run the ♣J for one down. However, declarer ruffed with the ♥8 and the roof fell in. East overruffed with the ♥9 and returned his remaining trump. West won and played a spade and East won and played another spade. Declarer had to lead away from his ♣K4 so that was three down, -500.

Kit Woolsey suggested that declarer had tied to make the contract, but even if the ♥9 and ♥6 are exchanged the defenders will have the last word. Declarer will be able to score a third spade ruff, but when he plays the ♣J West covers and East wins and returns a club (having already pitched one club on a diamond). Declarer wins in dummy, ruffs club with the ♥7 and plays the ♥K but West wins and plays a club, promoting East's ♥6.

5♥ would be makeable if West had started with the ♥A96 – unless East leads a trump at trick one.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Bathurst	Levin	Lall	Weinstein
Pass	2♥	2♠	4♦*
4♠	All Pass		
4♦	Fit jump		

South led the ♦A but when his partner followed with the ten he cashed the ♦K. Now he had to play a third diamond to stop the potential discard on the ♦J. North ruffed with the ♠5 and declarer overruffed with the ♠8, drew trumps, cashed the ♣A and then ran the ♣8. North won with the king and returned the ♥10 and declarer had to lose another trick, -50.

Do you see how declarer could have made 4♠?

After drawing trumps he crosses to dummy with a spade and plays a club to the eight. South wins, but declarer can now score three tricks in clubs. He knew North's shape was 3-6-2-2, so this was the indicated line.

There was some byplay at the end of the deal, Levin suggesting to declarer that he didn't even try to make 4♠. His partner pointed out that if he had split his club honours he would have made it.

Whatever, Nickell had 11 IMPs, 225-201.

Board 115. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

♠ 874 ♥ 9542 ♦ KQ109 ♣ A4	<div style="border: 2px solid green; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ 103 ♥ Q763 ♦ A4 ♣ QJ963	♠ KJ2 ♥ 10 ♦ J8753 ♣ K1087
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Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Meckstroth</i>	<i>Pzsczola</i>	<i>Rodwell</i>	<i>Zia</i>
–	Pass	Pass	Pass
1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♥	Pass	3♥	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

North led the ♦K and declarer won with dummy's ace, took the spade finesse, cashed the ♠A, ruffed a spade, drew trumps and claimed, +620.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bathurst</i>	<i>Levin</i>	<i>Lall</i>	<i>Weinstein</i>
–	Pass	Pass	Pass
1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♥	All Pass		

North led the ♥5 and declarer won with the jack, cashed the ♠A and exited with a spade, subsequently ruffing a spade in dummy, but he had only eight tricks, +110 and those back to back 11 IMP swings made it 225-212.

Board 116. Dealer East. All Vul.

♠ AK63 ♥ K9864 ♦ – ♣ J1086	<div style="border: 2px solid green; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ 109 ♥ J ♦ AKQ976 ♣ K543	♠ J ♥ Q1072 ♦ J10843 ♣ 972
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Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Meckstroth</i>	<i>Pzsczola</i>	<i>Rodwell</i>	<i>Zia</i>
–	–	1♦*	1♠
Pass	4♦*	Double	4♠
All Pass			
1♦	2+♦		
4♦	Splinter		

If South had bid 4♥ over East's double North might have risked 5♦, but simplest would be for South to pass over the double when North can redouble to show first round control in diamonds. (Later on in the match N/S

indicated to the BBO operator that this would have been the strongest action – but they were not on solid ground.)

West led the $\heartsuit J$ and declarer ruffed, cashed the $\spadesuit A$ and played a club to the queen, claiming all the tricks when it held, +710.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bathurst</i>	<i>Levin</i>	<i>Lall</i>	<i>Weinstein</i>
–	–	1 \heartsuit^*	1 \spadesuit
Double*	4 \heartsuit^*	Double	4 \heartsuit^*
Pass	5 \heartsuit^*	Pass	6 \spadesuit
All Pass			
1 \heartsuit	2+ \heartsuit		
Dble	Tactical		
4 \heartsuit	Splinter		
5 \heartsuit	Void		

North did well to bid 5 \heartsuit and the cold slam was reached. Here West led a heart, but declarer won in hand drew trumps and took the club finesse, +1460 and 13 IMPs that meant the match was tied – 225-225.

Board 117. Dealer South. None Vul.

\spadesuit Q9842		\spadesuit 1053
\heartsuit Q86		\heartsuit AK102
\diamondsuit A5		\diamondsuit 98
\clubsuit 952		\clubsuit 8743
\spadesuit AJ6	\spadesuit K7	
\heartsuit 95	\heartsuit J743	
\diamondsuit 1072	\diamondsuit KQJ643	
\clubsuit KQJ106	\clubsuit A	

\spadesuit AK63	\spadesuit 109
\heartsuit K9864	\heartsuit J
\diamondsuit –	\diamondsuit AKQ976
\clubsuit J1086	\clubsuit K543
\spadesuit J	\spadesuit Q87542
\heartsuit Q1072	\heartsuit A53
\diamondsuit J10843	\diamondsuit 52
\clubsuit 972	\clubsuit AQ

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Meckstroth</i>	<i>Pzsczola</i>	<i>Rodwell</i>	<i>Zia</i>
–	–	–	1 \heartsuit
2 \clubsuit	Double*	3 \clubsuit	4 \heartsuit
All Pass			

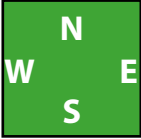
West led the $\clubsuit Q$ and declarer won and played the $\spadesuit 7$ to dummy's queen. When it held he cashed the $\heartsuit A$ and played two more rounds of the suit, pitching a club as East ruffed and returned the $\spadesuit 3$. West won with the ace and now does best to play a club, which should lead to three down. Instead he played the $\spadesuit J$ and declarer ruffed and played a diamond. That looks like it should lead to two down, but the result is recorded as three down -150.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bathurst</i>	<i>Levin</i>	<i>Lall</i>	<i>Weinstein</i>
–	–	–	1 \heartsuit
2 \clubsuit	Double	4 \clubsuit	4 \heartsuit
Pass	Pass	Double	Pass
Pass	4 \spadesuit	Double	All Pass

East led the $\heartsuit K$ and continued with two more rounds of the suit, West ruffing and exiting with the $\clubsuit 6$. Declarer won, played a spade to the queen, ruffed a club and pitched a club on the $\heartsuit J$. A diamond to the ace and a spade gave him eight tricks, -300 and 4 IMPs to Lall – back in front 229-225.

Board 118. Dealer West. N/S Vul.

♠ 1032 ♥ K42 ♦ A865 ♣ K74		♠ J84 ♥ AQ965 ♦ K10 ♣ AQ9	♠ AKQ765 ♥ 108 ♦ J93 ♣ J5
♠ 9 ♥ J73 ♦ Q742 ♣ 108632			

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Meckstroth</i>	<i>Pzsczola</i>	<i>Rodwell</i>	<i>Zia</i>
Pass	1NT	All Pass	

East started with the ♠Q followed by the ace and king and cashed three more tricks in the suit. Declarer came down to ♥AQ9 ♦K10 ♣AQ and West to ♥K4 ♦A8 ♣K74, so exiting in either minor would have led to two down. The situation was unclear and when East played the ♥10 declarer could cash three hearts and then play the ♦K. One way or another he got to take the club finesse, so he was one down, -100.

Closed Room


West	North	East	South
<i>Bathurst</i>	<i>Levin</i>	<i>Lall</i>	<i>Weinstein</i>
1♦*	1♥	2♥*	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♠	All Pass
1♦	2+♦		
2♥	6+♠		

North led the ♠4 and declarer won in dummy, drew trumps and now had to find the idea of running the ♣J to endplay North. He tried a diamond to the ace and North unblocked the king (not essential, but good technique).

Declarer continued with a diamond for the ten, jack and queen and South tabled the ♥J, ensuring the demise of the contract, -50 and Nickell had recovered the IMPs lost on the previous deal, 229-229.

On the penultimate deal both teams took nine tricks in a heart part score.

Board 120. Dealer East. None Vul.

♠ 96 ♥ Q32 ♦ Q10654 ♣ 942		♠ AKQJ1084 ♥ 9 ♦ 3 ♣ AJ105	♠ 752 ♥ AK1074 ♦ J97 ♣ Q7
♠ 3 ♥ J865 ♦ AK82 ♣ K863			

Open Room

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

- 3♣ Multipurpose game force, ♠ or ♠+♥ or ♠+♣
- 5♦ Cue-bid
- 5♥ Cue-bid

East led the ♥K and switched to the ♦7. Declarer took dummy's ace, played five rounds of trumps and a club to the king. He pitched a club on the ♦K and played a club to the ten, one down, -50.

Having taken the diamond switch in dummy, suppose declarer immediately throws a club on the remaining top diamond, ruffs a diamond high

and then plays trumps to reach this position:

♠ —	♠ 4	♠ —
♥ —	♥ —	♥ A10
♦ Q	♦ —	♦ —
♣ 942	♣ AJ10	♣ Q7

♠ —	♠ —
♥ J	♥ —
♦ 8	♦ —
♣ K8	♣ —

N
W E
S

When declarer plays the last spade East pitches the ♥10 and the ♥J is thrown from dummy, forcing West to part with a club, at which point declarer will probably draw the inference that the clubs are now 2-2.

This is by no means the only way to play the hand – there is an excellent discussion on Bridgewinners: <http://bridgewinners.com/article/view/nickell-vs-lall-last-board/>

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bathurst</i>	<i>Levin</i>	<i>Lall</i>	<i>Weinstein</i>
–	–	1♥	Pass
1♠*	4♠	All Pass	

1♠ Equivalent to a forcing 1NT

East led the ♥K and continued with the ace, declarer ruffing, drawing trumps, crossing to dummy with a diamond, pitching a club on a diamond and then ruffing a heart, claiming twelve tricks when the ♥Q appeared, +480, 11 IMPs and tickets to Sanya for Nickell & Co.

Eric Kokish observed that the team could hardly credit what had happened. Such was their reaction that one might have imagined it was their first big victory.

Perhaps that helps to explain why they do it so often.

You can replay these deals [here](#) or <https://tinyurl.com/yaq2xl62>

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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="background-color: green; width: 60px; height: 80px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center; margin: 0 auto;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">N</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">E</div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 60px; margin: 0 auto;"> W S </div>	♠ 96432
♥ QJ654		♥ 102
♦ 10954		♦ AKQ3
♣ J104		♣ A2
		♠ 87
		♥ A987
		♦ J8762
		♣ K8
		♠ 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



♠ A73
♥ J1082
♦ 96
♣ KQ42

♠ 6542
♥ K7
♦ AJ7543
♣ 7

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.

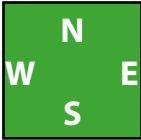
Deals that Caught My Eye

David Bird looks at the final of the Michael Seamon Under-26 USA2 Bridge Championships

The cards ran high in the final of the under-26 trials for the 2nd USA team to compete in the 2018 World Youth Championships in Shanghai. Dhir faced Wei and I will concentrate on the most spectacular swings. (Any admirers of ‘interesting 2♦ contracts’ should skip a few pages and try their luck elsewhere.)

This was the biggest swing in the first 15-board set of four:

Dealer South. Both Vul

♠ K982 ♥ Q10763 ♦ 4 ♣ 973		♠ 73 ♥ 8 ♦ Q1097 ♣ AKQ1084	♠ J654 ♥ AKJ952 ♦ 63 ♣ 2
	♠ AQ10 ♥ 4 ♦ AKJ852 ♣ J65		

West	North	East	South
<i>Si</i>	<i>Dhir</i>	<i>Fan</i>	<i>Zhu</i>
–	–	–	1♦
Pass	2♥	3♣	Double
All Pass			

Arjun Dhir’s 2♥ response showed a limited hand with 4 spades and 5+ hearts. Perhaps he would have made the same response, holding the West cards. William Zhu doubled the 3♣ intervention, a somewhat risky move although he could expect all the side suits to be well covered by the defenders.

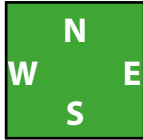
They say that when the Great Dealer awards you an ace-king combination

you should not look elsewhere for your opening lead. Zhu led the ♦A, only to find that it was the only lead to let the contract through. He switched to his singleton heart at trick 2, North winning with the ♥9 and returning a trump. Yewen Fan won with the ace and led the ♦9, which was covered by the jack and ruffed. He then drew trumps, played a spade to the king and claimed the contract, setting up a ninth trick with his ♦Q-10 against South’s ♦K-8.

No record is available from the other table but North made an overtrick in 4♠, a contract apparently destined to go down. That was 16 IMPs to Wei.

We will fast-forward to session 3 and see what happens on this borderline slam deal:


Dealer South. Both Vul.

♠ AQJ652 ♥ – ♦ 654 ♣ J985		♠ 97 ♥ 5 ♦ QJ10832 ♣ K1062	♠ K843 ♥ 9863 ♦ K7 ♣ AQ4
	♠ 10 ♥ AKQJ10742 ♦ A9 ♣ 73		

West	North	East	South
<i>Wei</i>	<i>Snowden</i>	<i>Liu</i>	<i>Herman</i>
–	–	–	1♥
2♠	3♠	Pass	4♠
Pass	5♣	Pass	6♥
All Pass			

North's 3♠ showed a sound raise to 4♥, with no reference to a spade control. Gregory Herman then bid Kickback RKCB (saving space by using the bid one higher than game in the chosen suit). When he heard of one key-card he bid 6♥. What lead would you have chosen from the West hand?

Wei cannot be faulted for his choice of the ♠A but a club lead would have defeated the slam. Some players would have doubled the Five Clubs cue-bid with the East cards.

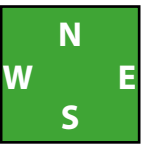
♠ AQJ652		♠ 97
♥ —		♥ 5
♦ 654		♦ QJ10832
♣ J985		♣ K1062
		♠ 10
		♥ AKQJ10742
		♦ A9
		♣ 73

West	North	East	South
<i>Dhir</i>	<i>Si</i>	<i>Zhu</i>	<i>Fan</i>
–	–	–	1♣
2♠	2NT	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♣	Pass	4♦
Pass	4♥	Pass	4NT
Pass	5♣	Pass	5♥
All Pass			

Fan opened with a strong club and discovered one key-card with his 4NT bid. The kibitzers were surprised when he then bid only 5♥. Against this contract West did find the ♣5 lead. Declarer rose with the ace and drew trumps, scoring +650 for a loss of 13 IMPs.

We move now to the eventful last set of 15 boards. The score stands at Wei 102, Dhir 95 and the winners will receive the trip of a lifetime to Shanghai. Good luck, lads!

Dealer North. Neither Vul.

♠ AKJ62		♠ 9
♥ AKQ95		♥ J103
♦ 7		♦ 10963
♣ QJ		♣ A10973
♠ 1087543		♠ Q
♥ 876		♥ 42
♦ 5		♦ AKQJ842
♣ 842		♣ K65

West	North	East	South
<i>Dhir</i>	<i>Yin</i>	<i>Zhu</i>	<i>Shen</i>
–	1♣	1NT	2♦
Pass	2♠	Pass	3♦
Pass	3♥	Pass	4♦
Pass	4♥	Pass	6NT
All Pass			

The auction was launched with a strong 1♣ and concluded with a splendid leap to 6NT. Well done. When West led the ♥8, Che Shen won and led the ♣Q to guard against a 5-0 diamond break (East's 1NT had shown the minors). That was +990 for North-South.

West	North	East	South
<i>Wei</i>	<i>Amer</i>	<i>Liu</i>	<i>Herman</i>
–	1♠	Pass	2♦
Pass	2♥	Pass	3♦
Pass	3♥	Pass	3NT
Pass	6NT	Pass	7NT
Pass	Pass	Double	All Pass

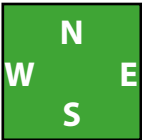
With a source of extra tricks, Herman spent a while deciding whether partner would hold three aces and enough winners for a grand slam. The VuGraph operator informed kibitzers on *Bridge Base Online*: “Zac Grossack is telling

me that Herman is bumping.” Was he, indeed? Maybe USA readers of this magazine will know what that means.

Anyway, a mouth-watering trip to Shanghai might now depend on West’s choice of opening lead against 7NT doubled. What would he choose? Wei led the ♠4, judging from the Lightner Double that East’s ace would be in North’s first-bid suit. It was a difficult lead and I’m beginning to think that East should not have doubled. We will never know whether West would have led a club then. It was a 13-IMP gain for Dhir.

Just two boards later we had a board of similar proportions.

Dealer South. East-West Vul.

♠ AK1072 ♥ — ♦ QJ1072 ♣ KQ9		♠ Q86 ♥ 9864 ♦ A54 ♣ AJ7	♠ 543 ♥ AQJ10752 ♦ 3 ♣ 82
♠ J9 ♥ K3 ♦ K986 ♣ 106543			

West	North	East	South
<i>Dhir</i>	<i>Yin</i>	<i>Zhu</i>	<i>Shen</i>
–	–	–	Pass
1♠	4♥	4♠	Pass
5♥	Double	6♦	Pass
6♠	All Pass		

I will need some persuading that North’s double of 5♥ was a worthwhile contribution to the auction. Anyway, East-West reached a splendid slam and North led the ♦3. Not a great admirer of defensive ruffs, Dhir called for dummy’s ♦A and drew trumps to record +1430.

You will guess from the inclusion of this deal in my article that a big swing occurred. Would East go high or low at the other table? Place your bets.

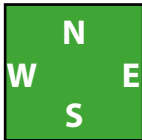
West	North	East	South
<i>Wei</i>	<i>Amer</i>	<i>Liu</i>	<i>Herman</i>
–	–	–	Pass
1♠	4♥	4♠	Pass
6♦	Pass	7♠	All Pass

North led the ♥A, ruffed by declarer. An eventual diamond finesse failed and the grand slam was one down for a loss of 17 IMPs. Who do you blame for bidding so high?

As I see it, East is blameless as the driven snow. Whatever partner’s 6♦ was supposed to mean, he could hardly fail to bid 7♠ with two aces and the trump queen. It seems that West decided to bid a small slam and 6♦ was merely offering a choice of suits. Some kibitzers on BBO do not like it when the voice commentators are critical of junior players’ efforts. (I was commentating with Marc Smith at the White House Juniors event a week ago and Marc had just expressed his full opinion of some wayward auction. A kibitzer sent me a disapproving message: ‘What if their parents are watching them for the first time?’) Well, I will bear this homely piece of advice in mind and merely say that I don’t regard West’s bid of 6♦ as one of his finer efforts.

Is the big action in the final set over? No, we have two more swing boards to examine

Dealer East. Both Vul.

♠ AQJ ♥ AKQ753 ♦ 62 ♣ J8		♠ 9 ♥ 984 ♦ AJ10853 ♣ AQ5	♠ K10752 ♥ J1062 ♦ 7 ♣ K74
♠ 8643 ♥ — ♦ KQ94 ♣ 109632			

West	North	East	South
Dhir	Yin	Zhu	Shen
-	-	1♦	Pass
1♥	1♠	Double	3♠
4NT	Pass	5♥	Pass
6♥	Pass	Pass	Double
All Pass			

♠ K 10752			
♥ J1062			
♦ 7			
♣ K74			
♠ AQJ			♠ 9
♥ AKQ753			♥ 984
♦ 62			♦ AJ10853
♣ J8			♣ AQ5
			♠ 8643
			♥ -
			♦ KQ94
			♣ 109632

Dhir was sufficiently encouraged by East's Support Double (showing three hearts) to bid RKCB at his second turn and a small slam was reached. South made a Lightner

Double for a diamond lead and the ♦7 was soon on the table.

Dhir won with the ace and crossed to the ♠A. He led the ♠J, not covered and ruffed in the dummy. A trump to the ace saw South show out, a depressing moment for declarer, and was followed by the ♠Q, covered and ruffed. He could have escaped for one down now by leading a diamond and then ruffing South's diamond continuation low. A low club to the jack would also work, since North would have no diamond to play. Dhir chose to play ace and another club and ended two down, losing 500. Not the best of luck for his team.

West	North	East	South
Wei	Amer	Liu	Herman
-	-	1♦	Pass
1♥	1♠	Double	4♠
Double	All Pass		

After the same start, South raised to 4♠ and Wei's double closed the auction. Declarer ruffed the ♥9 lead in dummy and played the ♦K to East's ace. East cashed the ♣A next, which was OK, but a trump switch was then needed to collect 800. He played a second club instead and declarer escaped for two down. Collecting 500 at both tables was still worth 14 IMPs to the Wei team.

Wei led by 147-140 as the last board was placed on the table. Would it be some lame part-score to end a thrilling encounter? No.

Dealer East. Neither Vul.

		♠ K972	
		♥ J4	
		♦ 52	
		♣ 87643	
♠ J1084			♠ AQ3
♥ AK982			♥ 5
♦ Q7			♦ AKJ1084
♣ J2			♣ AKQ
			♠ 65
			♥ Q10763
			♦ 963
			♣ 1095

West	North	East	South
Dhir	Yin	Zhu	Shen
-	-	2♣	Pass
2♦	Pass	3♦	Pass
3♥	Pass	3NT	Pass
6NT	All Pass		

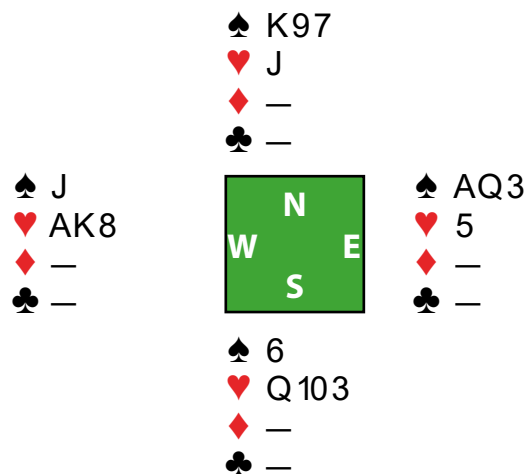
South led the ♠6 and Zhu immediately claimed an overtrick, for +1020. If Wei and Liu could duplicate this result, they would win the match. Let's see.

West	North	East	South
Wei	Amer	Liu	Herman
-	-	2♣	Pass
2♦	Pass	3♦	Pass
3♥	Pass	3NT	Pass
4♦	Pass	4NT	Pass
5♣	Pass	5♥	Pass
5NT	Pass	6♠	Pass
7♦	All Pass		

Liu used RKCB to discover the ♥A and ♦Q opposite. He then made a grand slam try of 6♠ (with 6NT as the bail-out). Wei accepted and North led a trump against the grand slam in diamonds.

Declarer won the trump lead with his queen and immediately ran the

rest of the trump suit. He continued with dummy's three top clubs to reach this end position



Wei crossed to his ♥A and cashed the ♥K, North showing out. He now knew that he could make the contract if he guessed right at trick 12. If North held the ♠K a spade finesse would be the winning play. If instead South held the ♠K, it would be ready to drop; South had been forced to discard a spade to retain his heart guard.

The spade finesse was the percentage play, since North was known to have started with four spades to South's two. The seconds ticked by. West then led the ♠J and called for dummy's ace. The appearance of a humble six-spot from South meant one down.

Aware of several potentially losing boards at his table, Wei may have deliberately played against the odds on the final board, attempting to retrieve the situation. As it was, with his team in fact leading before the final board, the chosen play cost his side their tickets to Shanghai. The final set had been a sumptuous treat for the kibitzers



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Letter from Germany – The Five Level Belongs To Us

Martin Cantor

The German Bridge Trophy

The German Bridge Trophy is the best event in Germany. It's held in Berlin which is a great city, lively, welcoming, diverse, cultured and cultural and, for a capital city, relatively inexpensive. Taking place in early May the weather is usually warm and sunny. The Maritim hotel venue offers a great room rate that includes one of the best breakfast buffets you'll find anywhere. The playing conditions are excellent, spacious and comfortable. A top class international team of tournament directors deliver a smoothly run event with an IT system providing real-time information on the event as a whole and your personal results. Screens for all tables would be a welcome improvement (there were screens at 38 of 67 tables this year). And the format, while complicated at first glance, ensures that every team has something to play for right through to the end, not least because of the generous and widely distributed prize money: €4,000 for the winners, 10 teams getting their entry money back, and 11 others getting sums somewhere in between. Full details can be found at <http://www.german-bridge-trophy.de/>.

The international field saw the 27 German teams joined by 28 teams from Austria, Belarus, Bulgaria, Denmark, Greece, Latvia, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Sweden and the USA, plus 12 transnational teams. It's a shame that the event always clashes with England's Spring Fours, limiting British participation, although there were a few Brits in the transnational teams, including two of my own teammates Dave Robinson and Warner Solomon.

On to some bridge. As my title suggests, the five level played a big role for my partner Silvia Klasberg-Brawanski and me. Several times we explored slam and stopped at the five level, sometimes rightly others wrongly. Others were sacrifices (or not, as events turned out). Feel free to bid them with your favourite partner and see how many you get right.

Swiss Round 4, Board 31. Dealer South. N/S Vul.

♠ AQJ873 ♥ 9853 ♦ A6 ♣ 9		♠ K 10952 ♥ 1064 ♦ K2 ♣ A62	♠ 6 ♥ AKJ72 ♦ Q5 ♣ KQJ83
♠ 4 ♥ Q ♦ J1098743 ♣ 10754			

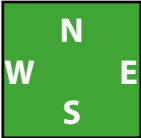
West	North	East	South
–	–	–	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♥	Pass
3♥	Pass	4♣	Pass
4♦	Pass	4NT	Pass
5♥	All Pass		

- 2♥ game forcing unless responder bids 3♥ at next turn
- 3♥ minimum 3+♥
- 4♣ non-serious slam try (I thought this was enough, partner having shown a minimum)

As you can see, 6♥ is a pretty good slam. Barring extreme distributions, if diamonds aren't led, or the hand with the king of diamonds is on lead (especially if you can get the contract played by West), then you just need to bring the trumps in for no loser (*a 57.9% chance, Editor*). Otherwise you have the option of a direct or a ruffing finesse in spades to discard your diamond loser. As the cards lie the slam can't be made by East on a diamond lead, because while you can set up a spade for the diamond discard, you end

up with two club losers. Played by West it can't be beaten, but I don't see any normal way to get there. In real life, missing an ace and the queen of trumps, and with only an eight card fit guaranteed, I decided, rather reluctantly, to honour the adage that discretion is the better part of valour. The lead of the ♠4 let me make an easy 12 tricks, for a 1 IMP gain when the other table unambitiously played 4♥+1 on the same lead.

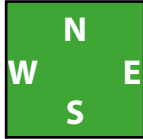
Swiss Round 6. Board 14. Dealer East. None Vul.

♠ 64 ♥ A852 ♦ 10752 ♣ AQ5		♠ 108732 ♥ 3 ♦ AJ ♣ J10762	♠ AQ5 ♥ KQJ10976 ♦ — ♣ 984
		♠ KJ9 ♥ 4 ♦ KQ98643 ♣ K3	

West	North	East	South
<i>Silvia</i>		<i>Martin</i>	
—	—	1♥	2♦
3♦	Pass	4♦	Pass
4♥	Pass	4♠	Pass
5♣	Pass	5♦	Pass
5♥	All Pass		

This time slam is less good, but in fact once again it can always be made if played by the right hand - this time East, to protect against a spade lead. The play isn't straightforward, but can be found on the bidding, endplaying South in diamonds to lead into the spade tenace or concede a ruff and discard. Playing in five I ruffed the diamond lead, drew trumps in one round finessed in spades, ruffed the next diamond, spade ace, spade ruff, trump to the 8, diamond ruff and led the ♣9 for a classic endplay on North. The other room also played 5♥ on the same lead, so no swing.

Swiss Round 7. Board 22. Dealer East. E/W Vul.


♠ K1062 ♥ K6 ♦ AJ10542 ♣ Q		♠ Q954 ♥ 874 ♦ 86 ♣ 9653	♠ AJ87 ♥ QJ1095 ♦ K3 ♣ AK
		♠ 3 ♥ A32 ♦ Q97 ♣ J108742	

West	North	East	South
<i>Silvia</i>		<i>Martin</i>	
—	—	1♣	Pass
2♦	Pass	2♥	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♦	Pass	4♠	Pass
4NT	Pass	5♥	Pass
5♠	All Pass		

- 1♣ Polish: weak NT or 5+♣ 15+HCP or any 18+
- 2♦ natural GF
- 2♥ natural
- 2♠ semi-natural, can be stopper showing
- 3♠ 4+♠
- 4♦ control, confirming spades
- 4NT keycard
- 5♥ 2 without trump queen

With the diamond queen outside slam makes in three denominations. Top spot is 6NT, and 6♦ is also an easy make. 6♠ takes good luck - or is it good views - in the trump suit, especially after an opening ace of hearts and a heart continuation. In the other room opponents also reached 5♠, and both declarers made 11 tricks, again no swing.


Groups Round 6. Board 12. Dealer West. N/S Vul.

♠ J872 ♥ 52 ♦ AQ10742 ♣ K		♠ AQ93 ♥ J10973 ♦ — ♣ J874	♠ — ♥ AK86 ♦ J9863 ♣ AQ63
------------------------------------	---	-------------------------------------	------------------------------------

West	North	East	South
<i>Silvia</i>		<i>Martin</i>	
Pass	Pass	2♥	Double
3♠	4♦	Pass	5♦
All Pass			

System worked for us here. 2♥ showed both majors at least 4-4 and 4-11 HCP. Silvia's jump to 3♠ jammed the opponents' auction, and with no clear agreements over the opening bid they settled quite reasonably for the game. (*South might have bid 4♠ over 4♦. Editor*) In the other room teammates had a simpler time after North opened, and they reached the small slam you want to be in when the grand is on a finesse. 12 welcome IMPs to us after another 5 or 6 decision.

Groups Round 2. Board 10. Dealer East. All Vul.

♠ 973 ♥ K2 ♦ Q93 ♣ KQ1064		♠ AQ1065 ♥ AJ76 ♦ 6 ♣ A92	♠ K42 ♥ 54 ♦ 107542 ♣ 873
------------------------------------	---	------------------------------------	------------------------------------


West	North	East	South
–	<i>Martin</i>		<i>Silvia</i>
Pass	–	Pass	1♥
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♦
Pass	4NT	Pass	5♣
Pass	5♥	All Pass	

2NT 3+♥, invitational or better
 3♦ long-suit game try

No huge interest in this board which was flat, just another instance where my hopes of slam were raised, to be dashed by partner's RKCB response, coupled with probable wasted diamond values. Mind you, looking at just the North South cards, slam is on one of two finesses if you can avoid a club lead. But looking at the West cards you're unlikely to lead anything else.

And finally:

Groups Round 7. Board 18. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ 9 ♥ AQ97 ♦ AJ ♣ AKQ942		♠ QJ742 ♥ KJ102 ♦ 1092 ♣ J	♠ 653 ♥ 3 ♦ KQ874 ♣ 10853
		♠ AK108 ♥ 8654 ♦ 653 ♣ 76	

West	North	East	South
<i>Silvia</i>		<i>Martin</i>	
–	–	Pass	Pass
1♣	1♠	Pass	2♠
Double	Pass	2NT	3♠
4♣	Pass	5♣	All Pass

1♣ 11-14 balanced or ♣ 15+ or any 18+
 2NT Lebensohl

I got this one wrong, to my continuing regret. Silvia clearly had a very big hand with six or more clubs, four hearts and a singleton or void spade. So slam was certainly a possibility, in fact the grand might be there with the red aces and a spade void (or singleton ace). I discounted the grand since she might have bid 4♠ with all that, so I thought I had to decide between game and small slam. As there are enough hands where slam has no play, including 1-4-1-7, I settled for game. On reflection I might have bid 4♦, to be followed by 5♣. We lost 12 IMPs on the board when teammates went 4 down doubled in 4♥ on an auction I preferred not to enquire about, but I guess was some sort of two suited interference to a strong opening.

An undistinguished performance by our team, to say the least, but still a hugely enjoyable event. I strongly recommend you consider playing in it next year.

15th World Bridge Series Marriott World Center, Orlando, Florida September 21 – October 6, 2018



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OPENING CEREMONY	FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 21
WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP EVENTS	START DATE
ROSENBLUM OPEN TEAMS* (2 days Qual. to KO round of 64)	SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 22
MCCONNELL WOMEN'S TEAMS* (2 days Qual. to KO stage)	SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 23
RAND SENIOR TEAMS* (2 days Qual. to KO stage)	SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 23
OPEN PAIRS (7 days playthrough; A & B final)	MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 24
WOMEN'S PAIRS (6 days playthrough; A & B final)	TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25
SENIOR PAIRS (6 days playthrough; A & B final)	TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25

* Players eliminated from the KO stages of the Teams, up to and including the semi-finals, will be eligible to drop into the Pairs events.
 * Players eliminated from any team qualifier or Rosenblum round of 64, can play in one-day Swiss event for free.

MIXED TEAMS** (2 days Qual. to KO stage)	MONDAY, OCTOBER 1
MIXED PAIRS (4 days playthrough; A & B final)	WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 3

** Players eliminated from the KO stages of the Teams, up to, but not including the semi-finals, will be eligible to drop into the Mixed Pairs.

YOUTH TRIATHLON EVENT (6 days; Teams, Pairs, Individual)	SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 22
SENIOR WORLD TRIATHLON (4 days; Teams, Pairs, Individual)	MONDAY, OCTOBER 1

In addition, there will one- and two-day Pairs and Swiss events (see schedule online)

Check the WBF website, www.worldbridge.org for full Schedule, entry fees, conditions of contest and online registration.

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Highlights and New Features

Do you know the Funbridge blog?

I am sure you all know about the Funbridge app available on smartphones, tablets and computers that allows you to play bridge online whenever you want (If not, don't wait any longer and download it for free at www.funbridge.com!).

But have you heard of the Funbridge blog?

Since the launch of the app in 2003, the Funbridge team has regularly updated its blog about... bridge of course!

You can find various categories of articles there:

News: All the latest news about the Funbridge app (mainly enhancements made through the app updates).

Events: All bridge events, including those sponsored by Funbridge.

Let's talk about bridge: Deals analysed by Jérôme Rombaut (2017 World Vice-Champion) and Christophe Grosset (2009 World Champion). The deals they select have been played either on Funbridge or during championships in which they took part.

Testimonials: This is the "interview" section of the blog where the Funbridge team asks questions of famous bridge players or of the best Funbridge players.

Partners: Funbridge has signed a partnership with a new bridge federation? You will find all the relevant details in this section.

Videos: Funbridge has launched its own YouTube channel for a few months only. Bridge champions Christophe Grosset and Milan Macura film themselves playing tournaments on Funbridge (that you can play too). Then they debrief in a video, which allows you to compare your play to two great bridge players. We highly recommend you to watch these videos as they can help you make progress.

Interested in these topics? Feel free to visit our blog at www.funbridge.com/en/blog.

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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!

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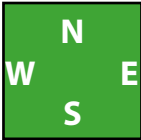
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DEFEND WITH JULIAN

POTTAGE

The Questions

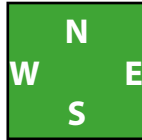
1

♠ 3 ♥ J654 ♦ K8642 ♣ Q98	♠ QJ1072 ♥ AQ7 ♦ 107 ♣ A103		
WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
–	–	–	1♠
Pass	2NT*	Pass	3♣*
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

2NT Game-forcing spade raise
 3♣ Minimum opener

You lead the four of diamonds to the queen and ace. Declarer leads a low trump to the queen and ace. Partner returns the three of diamonds; you capture the jack with the king. How should you continue?

2

♠ AQ5 ♥ J73 ♦ Q ♣ 1076532	♠ J7 ♥ AK109 ♦ A8653 ♣ QJ		
WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
–	–	–	3♠
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

You lead the queen of diamonds, won by the ace, East playing the ten and South the two. Now the jack of spades runs to your queen. What are your plans?

Book Review

by Martin Cantor

LAST BOARD: Everything Depends On It. Mark Horton

Master Point Press £14.95 US\$22.95 CD\$ 26.95 - E-Book US\$18.99

I enjoyed this book. A lot. It starts with the fabulous 1971 Bridge World article by Ron Klinger that inspired the book, and which is almost worth the price on its own. It then proceeds to relate 56 tales of occasions from 1957 through to 2016 when the final board was decisive in a match or tournament.

You can't help but be impressed by the depth of research that has gone into finding, not just the deals, but also the personalities and the stories around and behind them. On top of which many chapters include several of the deals that build up to the climax of the final one.

It's not a book you should try to read through in one or two sittings, though it's tempting to do so as the excitement of the narratives carries you forwards. I did in fact read through it in a couple of sessions, but I'll be re-reading it at a more leisurely pace in the near future. Probably more than once.

The chapter titles are apposite and often creatively chosen, and while it is the drama that predominates in the telling, there are often significant points of bridge technique and judgment to instruct alongside the entertainment. As you would expect, many of the deals feature



slam, or game, or doubled contracts. But there are also many where a humble part-score making or failing proves decisive, or even a single additional over- or under-trick

Do I have any criticisms? Yes (else I couldn't call myself a book critic could I?) Well, some quibbles anyway. Most of the chapters run over two or three pages, so it would be good to have the hand diagram repeated on each page, especially as this is an e-book. A more thorough proof-reading would have picked up the occasional typos and score discrepancies that annoy pedants like me. While it's hard to avoid certain clichés in bridge writing I got pretty tired of reading 'by the time the last board settled on the table'. And with blank pages between the chapters, only somewhere around 200 of the listed 242 pages contain text.

The events are reported in chronological order, so there is ample opportunity for a second and expanded edition in the future. I have no doubt that the author will be delighted to receive accounts of example hands for inclusion either there or in the pages of this magazine.



Test Your Technique

with Christophe Grosset

see Page 4

Dealer West. E/W Vul.

♠ J
♥ AJ742
♦ A1032
♣ Q104

██████████

♠ AQ6
♥ 1096
♦ K7
♣ K9652

West	North	East	South
1♠	Double	3♠	3NT

All Pass

Playing a challenge against Funbridge artificial intelligence “Argine”, you are trailing by 5 IMPs going into the last board. To create some action, North decides to double instead of bidding 2♥. You are now in 3NT from South’s hand, in a contract that will probably not be the same at the other table. You need to make it and hope they go down in 4♥ or miss game at the other table. What’s your plan after the ♠3 lead from West, dummy’s jack winning the trick while West follows with the ♠5?

The general plan should be to try making 2 spades, 4 hearts, 2 diamonds and 1 club. In order to do this, you will have to lose the lead twice: once in hearts (opponents have ♥K and ♥Q) and once in clubs (they have the ace). The main risk is that E/W will be able to establish spades before you establish your nine tricks. To prevent this, declarer wants West to be on lead first because the defence can’t play spades from his side as you still have ♠AQ in hand.

Playing on hearts first will work when West has both K and Q of hearts while playing on clubs will work... almost every time! Indeed, by playing a small club at trick one:

If West had the ace, well, you succeed in putting him on lead first.

If East has the ace and takes it, your clubs are likely to be good and you will make 9 tricks with 2♠ 1♥ 2♦ and 4♣.

If West had the ace and doesn’t take it, you win with the king of clubs and can now start working on the hearts.

At the other table, South decided to pass and scored +100 in 3♠ going down 1. If you play clubs at trick two, you score +400 for a 7 IMP gain and the victory in the challenge.

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Rory Egan ☎ 086 819 2765

Oh Brave New World

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

Dorothy, the Tin Man, the Lion and the Scarecrow had progressed to the third round of the Ozian Cup, the national knockout teams championship. The Tin Man had shown an ambivalent attitude towards the event. When Dorothy had persuaded him to enter, he had made it abundantly clear that, with the Scarecrow in the team, he expected one match only. However, when they had managed to beat the witches and subsequently won the second round against a team from Poppyfield, he had been upset at the narrow margin in the final score.

With the field reduced to sixteen teams they knew that they would be up against strong opposition this time. On the face of it, they had a decent draw in that they had avoided any of the remaining seeds. Their opponents were to be the current Ozian Under-25 team.

Nominally, the Scarecrow was their captain, but, when it became clear that organising their next match was not going to be straightforward, Dorothy had stepped in. The Tin Man's prediction that they would be out by Christmas had proven wrong: it was April, which seemed to be a difficult time to make contact with junior bridge players, perhaps due to the demands of academic life.

The opposition seemed to be impossible to reach by phone, email or even Facebook. Dorothy suspected that they communicated via some social media channel that would immediately be deserted by young people as soon as someone older than 21 had heard of it. Fortunately, she had a passing acquaintance with their team coach, a woman she knew slightly through business trips to the Emerald City. Erica had quickly taken matters in hand, communicating Dorothy's list of available dates to the juniors and coming back a couple of days later with a Saturday that suited all concerned. Given the distance between Munchkinland and the Emerald City it was agreed that they would play at a halfway venue. And so it was that for the second round in a row they found themselves in the Poppyfield Bridge Club.

Dorothy had seen quite a lot of their opponents on BBO where they had been representing the Land of Oz in international competition. They had recently won a three-way competition against the Kingdom of Ix and the

ever-strong Land of Ev. She knew this was a good team, and even ignoring the obvious handicap the Scarecrow represented, her team would have an uphill task to win this match. Positive as ever, she was certainly not going to regard the match as hopeless, however pessimistic her partner might be.

'Don't be put off by their bidding,' she had warned the Lion. 'They will come into the auction at the drop of a hat and can easily be in game before you know it is your hand.' As she looked at the Lion, she wondered to herself if there would be a single hand where the Lion's bidding resembled the auction they would face. 'Of course, she continued, 'that will give us some chances to pick up scores. The good news is that by playing our normal style we will often be at odds with them so there will be swings coming our way.'

The Lion's tried to produce a moderately menacing growl, but it came out as more of a whimper. He was feeling anxious about the match, seeing the potential to be beaten heavily. The best wishes of his adoring Munchkin fans had been most enjoyable at the time but he was now feeling the pressure. He also knew that he may have inadvertently misled some people by omitting the second word when saying the phrase 'Ozian Junior International Team'. He had prefixed it with 'an' rather than 'the' to appease his conscience.

Dorothy had also discussed the forthcoming match with the Tin Man. 'They play and defend consistently well: just remember that they may have fewer high cards than the bidding would suggest. They can have the odd disaster too – more system than sense sometimes. I saw them playing in One Diamond redoubled on a 3-1 fit against the team from Ix. They lost 1000, but still won the set. They must have nerves of steel.'

The Tin Man snorted. 'At least you and I won't simply be rabbit bashing this time. It should be worth playing regardless of the outcome. Let's see what the youth of today has to teach us.' Dorothy smiled. She knew that her partner expected his teammates to be taken apart and the match to be very one-sided, but she had assiduously schooled him in the advantages of not telling the Lion and the Scarecrow this to their faces. Not that she expected him to understand, but hopefully he would follow her forcibly expressed instructions.

The Lion drove Dorothy and the Tin Man to the venue. They arrived at the club half an hour before the agreed start time, having set off at a time that the Tin Man considered to be ridiculously early. Aware of his tendency to express his opinions, negative or otherwise, Dorothy had reminded him that these margins were necessary with the Lion at the wheel. As they arrived, she harked back to that discussion, pointing out that only once during the journey had the Lion exceeded 50 miles per hour, and that had been on a steep downhill section of the motorway.

The Scarecrow had been out of town and was going to make his own way by train. He had expected to be there well in advance but was nowhere to be seen. The Lion phoned him and discovered that he had made it to Poppyfield but had got lost. ‘I took a wrong turn,’ he explained.

‘But there are no turns. The bridge club is on the same street as the railway station!’

‘Yes,’ lamented the Scarecrow. ‘That’s how I know it was a wrong one.’


The Scarecrow was able to give a good enough description of his location for the Lion to go out to pick him up. ‘That’s a shame,’ the Tin Man’s face creased into what expert observers would recognise as his version of a smile. ‘I was beginning to be hopeful that we might have to bring in someone from the Poppyfield beginners’ class as a reserve.’

Meanwhile their opponents had turned up. Slightly to the Tin Man’s disappointment they proved to be sensibly dressed and with hair that even their mothers would not be ashamed of. ‘They were polite too, introducing themselves and shaking hands. ‘The young ain’t what they used to be,’ muttered the Tin Man, while instantly forgetting their names.

As in previous rounds, the match was to be played in two sets of sixteen boards, switching at half time. Since the teams had never played before, choice of opponents was irrelevant. The Tin Man chose to sit West and was followed to the table by two young men whose width had yet to catch up with their height.

It would be fair to say that the Scarecrow’s team were unclear how the match was going at either table. Their youthful opponents were playing about two thirds of the hands both North-South and East-West. A lot of undertricks were being scored, but some thin games were getting home, especially against the Scarecrow and the Lion. The Lion was starting to feel under pressure when, as South, he picked up another big hand and yet again heard the opposition open in front of him.

Dealer North. N/S Vul.

♠ 95 ♥ AQ65 ♦ 1042 ♣ A875	♠ 743 ♥ J1082 ♦ J976 ♣ 93		♠ A10862 ♥ K743 ♦ 853 ♣ 6
	♠ KQJ ♥ 9 ♦ AKQ ♣ KQJ1042		

East’s 2♥ opener showed a weak hand with both majors. ‘A minimum of 5-5?’ the Lion asked.

‘I would say at least 5-4, either way round. Shouldn’t really be 4-4 in second seat,’ the Lion was assured by West. ‘But at this vulnerability,’ West continued with a smile, ‘he has been known to take fliers in the past.’

The Lion felt very uncomfortable. Three Clubs didn’t really do justice to the cards he held, but he could think of nothing else to do. The experts tended to double with this sort of hand, but as they hadn’t discussed any defence to this opening bid, he knew the Scarecrow wouldn’t know what to do. He might even think it showed four cards in spades. Even worse, it increased the chances of his erratic partner playing the hand. Shuddering, he pulled out the Three Clubs bidding card.

Sensing that the Lion was in difficulties, West decided to apply some pressure with a jump to Four Hearts. The Scarecrow passed happily, as did East. The Lion felt cornered, painfully aware that it was likely he was being robbed blind. He had over half the pack, practically a ten playing trick hand, and once again the opponents had bid game. He could imagine what the Tin Man would say if he simply allowed the opponents to play in Four Hearts non-vulnerable, picking up a few 50s when the hand surely belonged to them. Five Clubs required little more than an ace in partner’s hand. Even Five Diamonds might be the right spot. He decided to double to give the

last decision to his partner – this might not be a winning strategy with the Scarecrow opposite but it was all that he could bring himself to do.

The Scarecrow started to reach for the Four Spades card but then remembered that this was one of the opponent's suits. Seeing little prospect of making Five Clubs opposite even one of the Lion's Three Clubs overcalls he decided to pass, hoping that his hearts would cause the opponents some trouble. This was the full auction:

West	North	East	South
-	Scarecrow		Lion
4♥	Pass	2♥	3♣
All Pass	Pass	Pass	Double

The Lion led the ♦A and the young declarer in the East seat muttered audibly but incoherently at the sight of dummy. 'A flat ten count with two aces,' he said, more clearly. 'Why should they have anything on?'

His partner looked unperturbed. 'Standard practice at these colours,' he replied. 'Got to give them the last problem.'

'Last in the bidding, perhaps,' said East. 'Might be one or two in the play.'

'Stop encouraging the opponents,' snapped West. 'A confident 'Thank you, partner' and then play the hand. That's what the coach said.'

With a sour look, East called for a small diamond from the dummy.

The Lion took his three diamond winners then switched to the ♠K to set up a fourth trick. Declarer ducked this and won the club continuation with dummy's ace. A spade to the ace was followed by a spade ruff in the dummy. Declarer visibly relaxed when the suit broke 3-3. 'Minus 100 might be okay. Top heart, please.' Then when the Lion showed out on the ♥Q he shrugged and put his cards back in the board as West gathered up the dummy.

The Lion sat looking at his cards, unsure what was happening. Declarer removed his cards again and showed them to the Lion. 'Two off. Your partner has a trump trick. I just play three trumps then play winning spades.'

The Lion folded his cards and entered the score.

'Nothing on for them,' said East. 'Well, Four Clubs. 5 IMPs out if we are lucky. All games are hopeless.'

The auction was very different at the other table.

West	North	East	South
Tin Man		Dorothy	
-	Pass	Pass	1♣
Pass	1♦	1♠	3NT
All Pass			

South's One Club was strong, showing sixteen or more points and North's One Diamond was a negative. Over Dorothy's One Spade overcall, South jumped straight to Three Notrump, confident that he would get a spade lead, and that he was unlikely to have five heart losers given that both opponents had passed up two chances to bid them at the one level.

The Tin Man led the ♠9, ducked to South.

Declarer flashed out a small club to dummy's nine, then a second back to the ten and the Tin Man's ace, Dorothy discarding a discouraging diamond. The Tin Man played his second spade and after Dorothy won her ace, this was what she could see:

♠ 7	
♥ J1082	
♦ J976	
♣ —	
<div style="display: inline-block; border: 1px solid black; background-color: #4CAF50; padding: 5px; text-align: center; width: 30px; height: 30px; margin: 5px;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> W N E </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: center; align-items: center; margin-top: 5px;"> S </div> </div>	♠ 1086 ♥ K743 ♦ 85 ♣ —

She tried to construct possible hands for declarer. KQJ of spades were known, and she was confident that he had KQJ10xx in clubs. That gave him four red cards, most of them honours. If he had both aces then he had nine tricks, so she had to play the Tin Man for one of them.

If declarer had something like AQ of hearts and Kx of diamonds then the contract was doomed as long as the defence did not allow declarer to take the heart finesse. Perhaps she should clear spades and sit back and wait for declarer to play away from his honours. No! If she did that then declarer would run his clubs before exiting with a diamond. The Tin Man would be able to take his two tricks in that suit but would then have to either give a trick to dummy ♦J or play a heart round to the AQ. Her mind made up, she switched to a diamond through, hopefully, to her partner's honours,

knowing that he would have a safe club exit.

‘Ten,’ said declarer as he nonchalantly tabled his hand, keen that the opponents realised that they had five top tricks.

‘Sorry,’ said Dorothy. ‘It seemed like a guess, and I didn’t play him for a singleton.’

The Tin Man considered for a few seconds. ‘I think that you are probably right about the end position. A diamond was likely to be the best try.’ Dorothy breathed a sigh of relief.

‘Yes,’ her partner continued. ‘The defence went wrong at trick one. Or I should say card three of trick one.’

He let that sink in for a few seconds. ‘Were we ever going to set up and run spades? No. Clearly not. You were always going to have one chance to decide to play on hearts or diamonds. What was important was to take that chance as early as possible so that we could eliminate one suit from our enquiries. Win the ace of spades at trick one and switch to a high diamond. When declarer wins and I discourage, then we will both know that hearts is the only suit that we can hope to provide us with the setting tricks. When I win the ace of clubs I will switch to one.’

Dorothy’s table finished first. Normally the Tin Man was quick to provide an estimate of what he thought their card was worth, and a second one of what it would actually score opposite their teammates. This time he simply shrugged and said ‘who knows? Somewhere between plus and minus 50 IMPs, I would guess.’

The +300 scored by the Lion and the Scarecrow was an unexpected bonus, holding the loss from Dorothy’s misdefence of Three Notrump to 8 IMPs. When one of the upsides of a card is a loss of 8 IMPs then you are unlikely to be winning. So it proved to be here. When they totted up the score the Over the Rainbow Bridge Club team found that they were trailing by 33 IMPs, having lost the set by 40 to 73.

For once, the Tin Man had little to say. ‘We can find out how you missed your contracts later, but if your opponents are anything like ours then I’m sure you were put under a lot of pressure.’

‘With the scoreboard ticking along at just over 7 IMPs a board there is plenty of scope to get this back,’ said Dorothy, hopefully.

For the second half the juniors switched tables, the Scarecrow’s team remaining where they were.

Things started quite brightly for Dorothy and the Tin Man. He judged the psychology well, as he later explained, in confidently bidding a hopeless game, and thus provoking the opponents into a phantom sacrifice which cost 800.

A couple of hands later Dorothy judged well to bid a slam on thin values, and made it doubled. Even if the contract was the same the Tin Man was confident that his teammates would avoid the red card.

At the other table things were not going so well. The Lion felt that the deficit had increased, probably substantially, before this deal came up.

Dealer South. Both vul.

♠ AQ876 ♥ 94 ♦ 853 ♣ A98		♠ 95 ♥ 652 ♦ AK104 ♣ QJ73
♠ 1043 ♥ Q10873 ♦ QJ92 ♣ 2	♠ KJ2 ♥ AKJ ♦ 76 ♣ K10654	

The Lion considered downgrading the South hand to a fourteen count because of the poor diamond holding. He eventually concluded that he had better open it a strong no-trump, as he did have a decent five-card suit, and it would improve the chances of his partner not becoming declarer. The Scarecrow managed to work out that they had game values, transferred into spades, then bid 3NT, which his partner, the Lion corrected to Four Spades.

West	North	East	South
–	<i>Scarecrow</i>	–	<i>Lion</i>
Pass	2♥	Pass	2♠
Pass	3NT	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

The Lion was relieved to have the opponents passing throughout for one hand. Was this the first time in the match this had happened? Based on what he had seen so far, he found it difficult to imagine any pair of hands where the members of this team wouldn't be able to find a bid. He was sure they could find reasons to justify action on a 4-3-3-3 Yarborough!

West led the ♣2 and the Lion saw, with pleasure, that he had a good chance of eleven tricks by way of five spades, two hearts and four clubs. On the surface, he had three losers: two diamonds and a club, but the more the Lion looked at dummy, the more uneasy he became. The opening lead was likely to be a singleton, or if it was from a four-card suit then East had a singleton. If he drew trumps then he would have not two but three diamond losers. If he tried to set up a diamond ruff in hand then the defence were going to be able to take club ruffs.

He decided to hope that it was West who had the four clubs and not East. He called for a low club from the dummy and beat the jack with the king. He drew trumps in three rounds then played a club towards the dummy. When West showed out he went up with the ace and tried the heart finesse. West produced the queen and the defence quickly took two diamonds and a club for one down.

The Lion shrugged his shoulders. 'I combined my chances as best I could,' he announced.

'Not easy,' said West, who was not yet experienced enough to know that no-one likes to be told how they could have played better.

'Okay, tell me then. If you don't, my teammate will,' the Lion sighed. 'And probably less pleasantly too,' he added.

'So you win the first trick, as you did, but then just play two rounds of trumps, ending in hand. Now you play a club towards the dummy. If I ruff then you have no club loser, and you'll just lose two diamonds. If I discard then you win the ace and play a third club. My partner can win and play a fourth club but you'll be able to overruff me in the dummy and you'll still have the fifth club to pitch one of dummy's diamonds on. It would have been a nice one if you had got it right.' He paused, then remembered to say 'Of course you were very unlucky that clubs were four-one and the heart finesse was wrong.'

The rest of the set drifted away from the Lion and the Scarecrow. For Dorothy and the Tin Man early promise quickly stalled. The Tin Man could

say no better than that the second half might be fairly even at their table. The scoring up quickly became no more than an administrative task.

'That Four Spades is a shame,' said the Tin Man, to the Lion's surprise. 'I knew that we could not win on the board and might well lose.' In truth, his money had been on the Lion and the Scarecrow stopping in a partscore.

At their table South had upgraded his hand to a Strong Club. Over his partner's One Spade, showing four plus spades and eight plus points, he had rebid One Notrump. North had bid straight to Three Notrump.

West	North	East	South
<i>Tin Man</i>		<i>Dorothy</i>	
-	-	-	1♣
Pass	1♠	Pass	1NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

The Tin Man led a heart and declarer quickly wrapped up ten tricks.

'What would Two Clubs by you mean over 1NT?' South asked his partner.

We must have stopped playing checkback without me noticing or you would surely have bid it.'

'It pays to bid game quickly,' replied North, who was inexperienced enough still to believe that he knew everything. 'Besides, everyone leads a heart on that sequence nowadays since the Bird-Anthias book, so they were never going to take five diamond tricks.'

'Right. Because you were totally ready for a heart lead with that crucial nine doubleton.'

And so their Ozian Cup adventure was over, but it had left its mark on the Scarecrow's team. The final margin was 48 IMPs, which the Lion felt was acceptable. The Tin Man was less sure. 'We don't play decent opponents enough,' he told Dorothy. 'It makes us sloppy. We should play in this event again,' he went on, 'but with better teammates. Do you know if that Australian friend of the Scarecrow has a team? He's pretty good. Mind you, if he was to join us he would probably insist on playing with the Scarecrow.' He shuddered and lapsed in to silence. Dorothy felt strangely pleased with herself. Her partner had come a long way since she had had to talk him into playing in the event at all.

Answers to “Defend With Julian Pottage”

1

♠ 3 ♥ J654 ♦ K8642 ♣ Q98	♠ QJ1072 ♥ AQ7 ♦ 107 ♣ A103	♠ A6 ♥ 982 ♦ Q953 ♣ K762
-----------------------------------	--------------------------------------	-----------------------------------

♠ K9854 ♥ K103 ♦ AJ ♣ J54

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
-	-	-	1♠
Pass	2NT*	Pass	3♣*
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

2NT Game-forcing spade raise
 3♣ Minimum opener

You lead the four of diamonds to the queen and ace. Declarer leads a low trump to the queen and ace. Partner returns the three of diamonds; you capture the jack with the king. How should you continue? Partner’s return of the three of diamonds combined with the crashing of the jack and ten strongly suggests that both opposing hands are now void in the suit. If you play a third round, that would concede a ruff and discard. This cannot be best – you must attack a rounded suit. A heart switch risks finding partner with the king and nine of hearts, in which case there is a better chance of making two tricks if you leave the suit alone. A club switch risks finding partner with the king but not the jack, when it blows a trick outright. It also risks finding no honours opposite, in which case it spares your opponent from guessing a two-way finesse. On balance, a heart switch is better. It protects partner, if holding K10x, from a possible endplay (if declarer can strip the black suits and lead a heart to the seven). It is also a safe exit if declarer holds the king of hearts.

2

♠ AQ5 ♥ J73 ♦ Q ♣ 1076532	♠ J7 ♥ AK109 ♦ A8653 ♣ QJ	♠ 4 ♥ Q542 ♦ K1097 ♣ K984
------------------------------------	------------------------------------	------------------------------------

♠ K1098632 ♥ 86 ♦ J42 ♣ A

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
-	-	-	3♠
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

You lead the queen of diamonds, won by the ace, East playing the ten and South the two. Now the jack of spades runs to your queen. What are your plans? You can see two trump tricks in your hand. The ten of diamonds at trick one, an encouraging signal, means you can place the king of diamonds opposite. A fourth trick can come easily if partner holds the ace of clubs. The king of clubs is useless, of course, because it will be subject to a finesse. Can you picture a layout that enables you to succeed even when declarer holds the ace of clubs? If the ace is singleton or if partner has a second spade, declarer might have started with three diamonds. These will surely include the jack because partner would hardly signal with the ten if holding the jack as well. If you do nothing about it, your opponent will just draw trumps and lead a diamond towards the jack. To thwart this you must lead a heart now and a second heart after getting in with your second trump trick. If declarer then tries leading a diamond to the jack, you score a ruff; if not, partner will score two diamonds at the end.

Bridge with Larry Cohen

www.larryco.com

Hand Evaluation

This is a voluminous topic, for which this is just a quick summary.

Points for Honours

It is well known that Aces and Kings (A=4 and K=3) are undervalued by the 4-3-2-1 count. Also, Queens and Jacks (Q=2, J=1) are overvalued. Probably 6=4=2=1 would be more accurate, but nobody wants to overhaul things that much.

Some teachers like adding 1/2's and subtracting 1/4's. Too complicated. I like this simple approach: "When your hand is prime (mostly aces/kings), take the higher road. When you are very queeny/jacky, take the lower road." In other words, upgrade a bit when you have aces/kings and be pessimistic when you are full of mostly queens and jacks.

Spot Cards

What about 10's and 9's? When stray (such as 10xx or 9xxx), I don't pay much attention. But, when they are in conjunction with higher honours, such as A109x or J109x, then I upgrade. I "bid one more" when in doubt.

Short Suits/Long Suits

The age-old question: Do I count for these and how? The quick answer is: Not too much until after you've heard some bidding. When you first pick up your hand and have to decide if you should open, the Rule of 20 is a decent enough guideline. Add your HCP and 2 longest suits and if that is 20, open the bidding. I recommend opening most 12 counts (if 4-3-3-3 and vulnerable and it is junky/queeny/jacky then I can live with a pass).

Long suits are definitely worthwhile in no-trump contracts. Add for five cards or longer (rule of thumb is to add one for each card starting with the fifth card). If opening 1NT, add for a five-card suit. If responding to 1NT, do the same. However, if partner opens One Heart, for example, and you have:

♠Q32 ♥2 ♦J32 ♣AQ6543,

I wouldn't go crazy adding points for those long clubs. Those extra clubs will often be completely useless, especially if partner is short in clubs.

Long suits that get raised are surely worth extra. If you open One Spade holding KJ876 and get raised to two, life is good. Picture partner with Qxx. Now, your side is likely to take four spade tricks. Contrast that with if partner responded 1NT, maybe with x. Now, you are nowhere near four spade tricks. So, clearly add points for long suits that get raised.

Short suits are nice, but really worthwhile when supporting partner. If you are dealt, say Qxx and a singleton heart and partner opens the bidding with One Heart, your singleton is actually a negative. Not good at all. But, if partner opens One Spade, then your singleton heart is great. Add 2 points for a singleton, and 1 for a doubleton (and 3 for a void). If you have more than 3-card trump support, add even more. Exact numbers aren't important, but a decent guideline for counting shortness when supporting partner is as follows: "Subtract your shortness from your trump support and count accordingly." Example: 3-card support and a singleton is 3-1=2 points (what you are already used to). 4-card support and a singleton is 4-1 = 3 points. 5-card support and a void is 5-0=5 points.

I Feel Good

This is one of my favourite teaching examples:

♠4 ♥KJ654 ♦32 ♣A8765.

Should you add for the five-card suits? Should you count the singleton and doubleton? Answer: Not yet. Listen to some bidding first. Partner opens with One Spade. You respond 1NT and partner's rebid is Two Diamonds. How are you feeling? Ugh. Your long suits and short suits all seem worthless. You pick up the same hand the next day and again partner opens 1♠. You respond 1NT, but this time, partner's rebid is Two Hearts! Do you know the iconic James Brown song, "I Feel Good?" Don't you? Now, your

five-card heart suit is golden. Your short suits are ruffing values. You'd raise all the way to a heart game. You Feel Good!

There is much more to this topic (I hope some of you readers will join me for live lessons – one of my favourites is on hand evaluation). Meanwhile, you can try these four deals to finer hone your hand evaluation:

1 What 14?

2 The Only Chance

3 7-0

4 I Never Met a 5-Card Suit I Didn't Like



First meeting of Women's Bridge Co-ordinators (WBC)

The idea to have a 'person from each NBO to look after Women's Bridge' started in Belfast at the EBL Seminar in February and the first meeting of this group has taken place at the championships in Ostend naming this 'person' as a WBC, a Women's Bridge Co-ordinator. 26 NBOs now have a WBC and one of the goals of the EBL Women's Committee is to have a WBC in each of the 46 NBOs.

Anna Maria Torlontano, founder of the Women's Committee had a vision that 'women would have full participation in the sport of bridge and be active on Bridge executives throughout Europe'. Happily the number of women on the EBL Executive has doubled after the elections in Ostend – there are now 2 women on the Executive! Our Chairman Sevinç Atay from Turkey was re-elected and has been joined by Kari-Anne Opsal from Norway.

Next comes the full participation by women in the sport of bridge and the WBC's who met here last week discussed goals and strategies for the future with due consideration to the financial and societal issues around women's bridge and because we like having men around we think there is a place for more mixed championships.

It is hoped that the WBC with a Women's Database to hand will in turn coordinate with the Youth, Senior and PR within their NBO and plan a strategy for development of the game to a high international level, planning friendly matches online and sharing ideas and issues with other WBCs while making plans for the future.

Watch this space!

Mary Kelly-Rogers

From The Archives – The Art of Being Lucky Part 1

by Brian Senior

Have you noticed that some players seem to be luckier than others? Well, perhaps they truly are lucky, but more likely they make their own luck—some of those opposing players who make ‘stupid’ mistakes against them may have been the only players to be given an opportunity to make those mistakes.

There are a whole host of psychological or deceptive plays that have been pretty well documented by various authors. To look at just one situation, suppose that you have a side-suit of K432 in dummy and QJ doubleton in hand. We all know that if we need to steal a trick without losing one the best chance is to lead the jack from hand. If left-hand-opponent does not hold the ten, he may think we are about to take a finesse to his partner’s queen, so may duck the ace.

Now, suppose that we want two winners and no loser in the suit. There is a chance again, but this time it is no good to lead from hand. Rather, declarer should lead low from the dummy, putting in the queen. If that scores, go back to dummy to lead a second low card towards the jack. Right-hand-opponent may duck again, hoping to find his partner with the jack. You don’t think so? Excellent! If you are a player who would never dream of ducking the second round, then you are ripe to be caught when declarer actually holds Qx small doubleton in hand. Again, he leads low to the queen and, when that scores, crosses to dummy to lead low away from the king once more. If RHO holds the ace but not the jack, he has a problem—maybe you lose a trick, but you win two when you were entitled to only one.

Opportunities to create problems for opponents come up more often than opportunities for technical brilliance. It takes a different attitude of mind, but the effort is certainly worthwhile. Both the following deals came from tournament play.

Dealer East. All Vul.

♠ 32 ♥ AK83 ♦ 82 ♣ J8764	♠ 104 ♥ J765 ♦ AJ106 ♣ AK10		♠ AJ9765 ♥ Q2 ♦ 754 ♣ 92
♠ KQ8 ♥ 1094 ♦ KQ93 ♣ Q53			

West	North	East	South
–	–	2♠	Pass
Pass	Double	Pass	3NT
All Pass			


West led the three of spades to East’s ace and back came the ♠7. This looks to be the flattest board of the day—nine top tricks, no more and no less. Is there any prospect of a tenth trick?

Were the weak two bidder on declarer’s left, there might be some possibility of leading hearts from dummy in the hope that the actual heart position would be reversed and East might go in with both ace and king, thereby crashing West’s doubleton queen. But there is no prospect for that with the actual position.

The one thing that declarer must not do is to play on hearts early. That would tell the defence what was going on in that suit and there would be little prospect of a subsequent error. Declarer simply cashed four rounds of diamonds. It was lucky to find East with the diamond length, as that meant that West was the one who had to find two discards. He chose two

hearts – after all, what use were the small cards? Now when declarer played on hearts the suit broke two-two and he had his tenth trick. Lucky? Certainly, but the more often you give yourself the chance to get lucky the more often it will happen.

Dealer West. None Vul.

♠ 83 ♥ Q1095 ♦ 1063 ♣ AJ103		♠ KJ106 ♥ K742 ♦ A94 ♣ 65
♠ AQ972 ♥ A83 ♦ Q82 ♣ 94		

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	1♦*	1♠
Double	1NT	2♥	Double*
Pass	2♠	All Pass	

1♦ Better minor
 Double Extra values, take-out

West led the ten of hearts, ducked, followed by a heart to the jack, king and ace. A club was led towards dummy and West rose with the ace to play a diamond to the jack and ace. Back came a diamond to dummy's king.

Declarer has no side losers – he just needs to ruff his remaining heart – so his only problem is to limit his trump losers to the minimum. The bidding and defence to date strongly suggest that the distribution is the actual one – East should be 4-4-3-2 for his better-minor 1♦ opening as West's carding and failure to lead a diamond at trick one both suggest three diamonds.

Declarer could have simply ruffed a heart then played a spade to the queen, ♠A, and a third spade. Instead, he cashed the king of clubs then continued with the queen, as though he wanted to discard a diamond loser

from hand. East ruffed in with the jack and declarer over-ruffed, took the heart ruff, and led dummy's remaining trump. East had to split the ♠K10 so he won with the ace and returned the ♠9, pinning West's doubleton eight.

The overtrick was worth a lot of matchpoints. Lucky again? Well, yes, because the position in the diamond suit doesn't quite add up if East stops to think about it, but he made an instinctive play and was punished.

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THE BRIDGE PUBLISHER



TRICK ONE

by David Bird

The Right First Move

With 125 instructive deals, David Bird covers all aspects of the first card played from dummy, the first move by the defender in third seat and the card chosen by declarer from his hand.

Perfect your cardplay at trick one and you will be difficult to beat!

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

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

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

players and to increase your knowledge.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

A few figures

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Kit's Corner

by World Champion Kit Woolsey

World Champion Kit Woolsey reveals how an expert thinks, using real deals from major events. Sit beside the master and compare his thoughts with your own.

A Ruffing Finesse

In a Rosenblum match, you pick up a big minor 2-suiter in second seat.

As North, you hold:

Dealer West. None Vul.

♠ A
♥ 10
♦ AQJ875
♣ KJ1097

1♦ would be 11-15, 2+ diamonds, 13-15 if balanced. When followed by a jump to 3♣, that would show a maximum with at least 5-5 in the minors.

Your choice?

When playing Precision, the opening bid determines captaincy. If you open 1♣, you are the captain. If you open anything else, partner is captain. This is logical, since it is generally right for the stronger hand to be in control of the auction.

Do you want partner to be captain? You will be able to describe a maximum 1♦ opener with at least 5-5 in the minors, but partner won't be able to picture a hand which can make 5 of a minor opposite one working card or a slam opposite two working cards. He isn't likely to be able to make the right decision.

Do you want to be captain? It will be a while before you can get both suits into the auction, but with this hand you are willing to compete to 5 of a minor vs. an enemy 4M contract if need be. If partner has enough strength to make a positive response you won't mind getting to game, and there may be room to find what you need to make a winning slam decision. If partner makes a negative response you may have to make a good guess later in the auction, but you are better placed to make that guess than partner.

It looks like opening the strong 1♣ will work out better than the 1♦ opening.

You open 1♣. The bidding continues:

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♣	Pass	1♦
Pass	1?		

1♣ Strong, artificial, 16+

1♦ 0-8 points, any shape

Bids which you might consider are:

2♦: Natural, non-forcing, denies a major

3♦: Natural 1-suiter, highly invitational, denies a major

3♥: At least 5-5 minors, game-forcing

Your choice?

While 3♥ showing both minors is a fine description of your shape, this hand simply isn't worth driving to game on its own. Partner needs at least one working card for game to be decent. He has 0-8 points, and is likely to have some wastage in the majors. The fact the opponents have been silent vs. your strong club with you 1-1 in the majors is an indication that partner has major-suit length and the hands may not fit well.

The invitational 3♦ call has the same problem. Partner won't know which cards are good and which aren't. In addition, this leaves the club suit on the shelf, and if partner has a singleton diamond and club support you belong in clubs.

The simple 2♦ call is fine here. Partner has already severely limited his hand, so he will strain to bid something. If he passes 2♦, you are almost certainly high enough. If he bids, you can then show your club suit.

You bid 2♦. The bidding continues:

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♣	Pass	1♦
Pass	2♦	Double	3♦
3♥	1?		

Your call?

Partner should have something for the 3♦ call, but if that something is kings and queens in the majors 5♦ won't be a very good contract. Also, it may be important to prepare if the opponents compete in a major. 4♣ covers both bases. It is a game try at least, since with no game interest you would simply have bid 4♦. It also shows something in clubs, which may help partner with any decisions he might face.

You bid 4♣. The bidding continues:

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♣	Pass	1♦
Pass	2♦	Double	3♦
3♥	4♣	Pass	4♦
Pass	?		

Are you worth one more?

Partner has clearly rejected your game try. Do you want to be in game in spite of this rejection?

What can partner have? He would have to like either ace, particularly the ace of clubs, or the king of diamonds. If he has just one of these cards with nothing else of value he might have bid more than 4♦, and game probably would be on a finesse at best. Keep in mind that entries to his hand might be limited. Add in the queen of clubs with one of the key cards and game will be fine, but with that he certainly would have bid game. If he doesn't have an ace or the king of diamonds you don't want to be in game. You might not be able to get to his hand for a diamond finesse.

If you had to make the final decision yourself after partner's 3♦ call you would bet on game. But you don't have to make that decision all by yourself. You were able to make a descriptive invitation, and partner rejected. He could have wasted stuff in the majors for his 3♦ call, and now he knows those cards are probably wasted. Looking at the hands with which partner would reject your invitation indicates that stopping here is best.

You choose to bid 5♦, which ends the auction.

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♣	Pass	1♦
Pass	2♦	Double	3♦
3♥	4♣	Pass	4♦
Pass	5♦	All Pass	

LHO leads the ... oh, wait. Partner bid 1♦, so he is declarer. Over you go to partner's seat to see if you can make what you bid.

West leads the ♠3 (3rd and 5th leads, upside-down count and attitude signals) and this is what you have:

♠ A
 ♥ 10
 ♦ AQJ875
 ♣ KJ1097

 ♠ Q10975
 ♥ 8743
 ♦ 432
 ♣ 6

You win the ace of spades, East playing the ♠6. What do you play, and what are you hoping for?

♠ —
 ♥ 10
 ♦ AQJ875
 ♣ KJ1097

 ♠ Q1097
 ♥ 8743
 ♦ 432
 ♣ 6

You have your work cut out. A club and a heart must be lost. You will need to pick up the trump suit, and you will also have to find a way to negotiate setting up the clubs without losing a second trick there.

You will not be able to get to your hand other than by ruffing clubs, which means that you are limited to one trump finesse. Thus, West will

need to have the king of diamonds singleton or doubleton. If you determine that West has 3 diamonds, then you will be forced to play East for the singleton king.

Clearly you will have to play a club off dummy at trick 2 to get started. If both club honours are in the same hand it won't matter which club you play, but if the club honours are split it might make a difference. After losing the first club trick, you have the potential to take out the remaining club honour either by a ruffing finesse or by ruffing it out.

Suppose the diamonds behave, the clubs split 4-3, and the club honours are divided. There are four possibilities:

If East has ♣Axxx, leading the jack won't work. That loses to the queen. You will then be able to take a ruffing finesse against the ace of clubs, but that won't help you. East can duck the second and third round of clubs, and you will wind up with a second club loser. However, leading the king succeeds. The queen of clubs will then ruff out with 2 ruffs, and you can take the winning diamond finesse with your third trump.

If East has ♣Axx, leading the king clearly fails. But leading the jack works. If East ducks, the later ruffing finesse takes out his ace of clubs. If he takes his ace, you can simply ruff 2 clubs before cashing the king.

If East has ♣Qxxx, leading the king fails for the same reason that leading the jack fails when East has ♣Axxx. However, leading the jack succeeds, since if he wins his queen the ace gets ruffed out, while if he ducks you just ruff 2 clubs to set up the suit.

If East has ♣Qxx, leading the king succeeds while leading the jack fails, by the same logic as if East has ♣Axx.

Who is more likely to have 4 clubs? West's 3♥ call was probably on a 5-card suit. The diamonds are presumably 2-2 for you to have a chance. If East had 5 spades and wanted to compete he would have overcalled 1♠. Thus, East's likely distribution is 4-3-2-4, so East is more likely to have the club length.

Who is more likely to have the ace of clubs? East is assumed to have a balanced hand with no king of diamonds for you to have a chance. He wouldn't be entering the auction with such a hand unless he had enough strength to think it might be their hand. This makes it more likely that he has the ace of clubs. In addition, if West has the ace of clubs along with his presumed king of diamonds and 5-card heart suit he might have overcalled

1♥, also increasing the chances that East has the ace of clubs.

The above analysis indicates that your best bet is to play East for ♣Axxx. That makes leading the king of clubs the correct play.

Is there a chance that East will misdefend and take his ace of clubs prematurely if he holds ♣Axxx? If he doesn't have the king of diamonds, which is your only chance, he will see that going up on the first round of clubs is a concession. He will also know to duck the second round. You would not be playing the clubs this way if you had the king of diamonds as an entry to your hand, so if you have two small clubs his partner will score the king of diamonds on an overruff anyway. East will not misdefend if he has ♣Axxx. You should make the technically best play of the king of clubs.

You choose to lead the jack of clubs. This rides around to West's queen. West strangely continues spades rather than shifting to a heart. You discard dummy's heart, as this can't lose. East wins the king of spades, and leads the ace of hearts which you ruff. You lead the king of clubs. East ducks his ace, and you discard a heart, West following small.

How do you think the clubs are divided?

```

♠ —
♥ —
♦ AQJ87
♣ 1097
██████████
♠ Q109
♥ 87
♦ 432
♣ —
    
```

Unfortunately, you can be sure that East has the long clubs. If he started with ♣Axx, he would never have ducked the second round. He knows you would take the ruffing finesse if you have a singleton club. You might have played this way with a doubleton club and no entry to your hand. However, as discussed, if East started with ♣Axxx ducking is quite safe. Even if you have a doubleton, West will be able to overruff the third round.

What do you do now?

There is no gain in repeating the ruffing finesse, since you won't be able to get to your hand anyway. Better is to simply ruff the ♣7. If West overruffs

you can later cash the ace of diamonds and follow with a ruffing finesse in clubs. If West follows, you can cash the queen of spades and then decide what to do.

You lead the ♣7 and ruff it. Both opponents follow small. It can't hurt to cash the queen of spades and discard a club, so you do so. East drops the jack.

Now what do you do?

♠ —
 ♥ —
 ♦ AQJ87
 ♣ 10

██████████

♠ 109
 ♥ 87
 ♦ 43
 ♣ —

If East started with king-doubleton of diamonds, you do best cashing the ♠10 and discarding dummy's last club, since you can later drop his king of diamonds. But if West has the king of diamonds, you do better leading a diamond.

As noted, East's duck of the jack of clubs with ♣Axxx was correct if he has nothing in diamonds. But if he has king-doubleton of diamonds, he would never duck the setting trick when you might have stiff queen. You can be quite sure that West has the king of diamonds.

In addition to the diamond king definitely being onside, it is still possible to make the hand. West's shape might be 4-5-1-3 with the stiff king of diamonds. You can play a diamond to the king and ace, and then ruff your last club. In fact, considering West's 3♥ call and East's duck of the ace of clubs this is what the hand figures to be. Clearly you should lead a diamond.

You foolishly lead the ♠10 and pitch your last club. East ruffs, and exits with a heart. The king of diamonds doesn't drop, and you are down 2. The full hand is:

♠ A		♠ KJ6									
♥ 10		♥ AK92									
♦ AQJ875		♦ 109									
♣ KJ1097		♣ A832									
♠ 8432	<table border="1" style="display: inline-table; text-align: center; width: 40px; height: 40px;"> <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		♠ Q10975
	N										
W		E									
	S										
♥ QJ65		♥ 8743									
♦ K6		♦ 432									
♣ Q54		♣ 6									

Surprisingly enough West had only 4 hearts for his 3♥ call. Why West continued spades instead of shifting to a heart is a mystery. He was fortunate that you didn't hold the king of spades.

Should partner have bid 3♦?

If East had passed, partner certainly would have passed 2♦. Once East entered the auction with a double, partner knew he would be competing to 3♦ over 2♥ or 3♣, so it might be better to show the support now before things get out of hand. If partner had a stronger hand, he could have redoubled. When you have limited your hand to 8 points, you can take a lot of liberties. Still, maybe passing is better.

The 3♦ call, combined with your questionable 5♦ bid, led to a pretty bad game. Yet, the contract could and should have been made. I must confess that I was the declarer who mangled the play. Obviously at the end I completely lost it and went down an unnecessary extra trick as well as giving up on a legitimate chance to make the hand. In the early play, I was blinded by the ruffing finesse in clubs. This ruffing finesse is actually an illusion. If dummy's clubs had been ♣KJxxx I would have known that I would have to play somebody for either ♣Axx or ♣Qxx, and quite possibly might have gotten it right. With the club spots in dummy, I didn't think my play in the club suit would matter.

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8th KIBIC BUDAPEST BRIDGE OPEN
AUGUST 23-26, 2018



LE FESTIVAL LE MIEUX DOTÉ DE FRANCE
ARBITRAGE : Henri DEFRANCHI assisté de Jean-François CHEVALIER et Patrick GRIBE

LE PROGRAMME

PAIRES MIXTES 3 séances	PATTON 3 séances	BOARD A MATCH 1 séance	OPEN PAR PAIRE 4 séances
Vendredi 17 Aout - 16H Samedi 18 Aout - 16H Dimanche 19 Aout - 14H30 <small>* Les paires dames sont accueillies</small>	Lundi 20 Aout - 14H30 (2 séances à suivre) Mardi 21 Aout - 14H30	Mardi 22 Aout - 14H30	Jeu 23 Aout - 16H Vendredi 24 Aout - 16H Samedi 25 Aout - 16H Dimanche 26 Aout - 14H30
2200€ à la tête paire	2200€ à la tête équipe	1000€ à la tête équipe	3500€ à la tête paire
Montant total des prix en espèce : 14200€	Montant total des prix en espèce : 9000€	Montant total des prix en espèce : 3900€	Montant total des prix en espèce : 20400€





The Abbot's Testing Session

by David Bird

‘What happened to you last week?’ enquired the Abbot, as Brother Cameron arrived at the table and dropped heavily onto the South chair. ‘Tenth place? You were only one place ahead of Aelred and Michael.’

Brother Cameron laughed. ‘Not so good, you’re right,’ he replied. ‘We did OK the week before.’

‘That attitude won’t get you very far,’ persisted the Abbot. ‘Consistency, that’s what you should aim for. Not wild overbidding that pays off one week when the cards lie well and gives you a hopeless result the following week.’

Brother Cameron showed no sign of absorbing this valuable advice. He leaned forward and extracted his cards for this board:

Dealer East. Both Vul.

♠ 8			
♥ A			
♦ J109643			
♣ J10954			
♠ 7	N	♠ AQ6432	
♥ Q1085432	W	♥ J	
♦ 52	E	♦ AK87	
♣ 832	S	♣ A7	
		♠ KJ1095	
		♥ K976	
		♦ Q	
		♣ KQ6	

West	North	East	South
Brother Xavier	Brother Damien	The Abbot	Brother Cameron
–	–	1♠	Pass
Pass	3♦	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

The Abbot saw no need to double the final contract. If the undisciplined novices went two or three down undoubled, it would be a near-top score for East-West anyway. Brother Xavier led the ♠7 and down went the dummy.

‘Good gracious!’ exclaimed the Abbot. ‘You play weak jump overcalls in fourth seat?’

Brother Cameron nodded. ‘Seems to work OK,’ he replied.

The Abbot won with the ♠A. It was typical of these youngsters to think they knew better than the hordes of professionals around the world, not one of whom would contemplate playing such a hopeless method. There was no future in spades and he switched to the ♥J, removing an entry to dummy.

Brother Cameron won with the ace and called for a low club. The Abbot, who had no wish to be endplayed on the second round of clubs, rose with the ace of clubs. Brother Cameron unblocked the ♣Q and the Abbot exited safely with his remaining club, won with the ♣K.

Brother Cameron’s next move was to lead the ♦Q. The Abbot sat back in his chair. If he won this trick and exited with a spade, Brother Cameron would finesse successfully, play three club winners in dummy and lead another diamond. After winning the trick, the Abbot would have to present two tricks to dummy or declarer.

The Abbot allowed the diamond queen to win but this made little difference. Declarer played dummy’s three club winners, reducing the Abbot to ♠Q6 ♦AK. He was thrown in with a diamond and declarer scored the last two tricks in spades for a total of nine.

‘Good one for weak-jumps,’ observed Brother Cameron.

‘An extremely fortunate one, you mean,’ retorted the Abbot. ‘There was nothing I could do. If I take the ♦Q with the ace, you make it just the same.’ ‘Yes,’ agreed Brother Cameron. ‘It was difficult for you.’

The Abbot peered to his left. ‘Difficult?’ he said. ‘What do you mean?’

‘Perhaps you could cash the ♦A when you win with the ♣A,’ Brother Cameron continued. ‘I can only throw you in once then. I think you make a spade at the end.’

The Abbot shook his head dismissively, pointing for the next board to be brought into position. He would look at the deal later. If Brother Cameron's analysis was incorrect, as was usually the case, he would let him know in no uncertain terms.

Not long afterwards, the Abbot faced Brother Zac and Brother Sextus. The Abbot prided himself on his memory but he failed to recall the last occasion when the useless Brother Sextus had become the declarer. For some indiscernible reason, the more competent Brother Zac always ended at the helm. If the Great Dealer saw this as some unwarranted test of the Abbot's tolerance, surely he should have called an end to it by now. Or perhaps directed it at some more deserving target.

The Abbot watched as Brother Zac eased himself into the South seat. South was always the declarer in bridge books and magazines, it was well known. Surely in real life becoming declarer was shared equally in all four directions. This was the deal before them.

Dealer South. E/W Vul.

♠ 8652 ♥ 109853 ♦ J6 ♣ 85		♠ 9 ♥ A4 ♦ Q1054 ♣ QJ7432
♠ AK743 ♥ 762 ♦ 93 ♣ AK10	♠ QJ10 ♥ KQJ ♦ AK872 ♣ 96	

West	North	East	South
Brother Xavier	Brother Sextus	The Abbot	Brother Zac
-	-	-	1NT
Pass	2♥	Pass	2♠
Pass	4NT	Pass	6♠
All Pass			

North's 4NT was a limit bid and Brother Sextus was then happy to bid a small slam in spades. The ♥10 was led and down went the dummy. 'That's the first hand you've played tonight, isn't it?' queried Brother Sextus.

'Yes, I thought you deserved a rest after the last few rounds,' Brother Zac replied.

The Abbot shook his head at this exchange. He won with the heart ace and returned a heart. Brother Zac won with the king and drew two rounds of trumps with the queen and jack, the Abbot discarding a club on the second round.

The black-bearded declarer paused for thought. There were eleven tricks on top and a club ruff would bring the total to twelve. Could anything go wrong? West had shown up with four trumps and had perhaps led from a sequence in hearts. Suppose his shape was 4522. When the club ruff was taken with a high trump, West would be able to throw a diamond. The only route back to dummy, to draw the last trump, would be to cash two diamonds and ruff the third round. Yes, and West would then beat him to the tape by ruffing the second diamond honour!


Pleased that he had taken the time to plan his continuation, Brother Zac cashed the ace and king of diamonds. Only then did he play the two top clubs and ruff a club. West could only discard a heart and a third round of diamonds allowed declarer to enter dummy, draw the remaining trumps and claim the contract.

'It's very good for us,' announced Brother Sextus, peering at the result sheet from a distance of a few inches. 'Mind you, one good board won't make up for the string of unlucky ones that I played.'

The Abbot's next opponents were two novices who had been improving rapidly in the last few duplicates. While the Abbot was pleased to think that his weekly instructional sessions were bearing fruit, this did not extend so far as to hope the youngsters would score well against him.

This was the first board of the round:

Dealer North. E/W Vul.

♠ A92 ♥ J952 ♦ 865 ♣ J53		♠ KJ ♥ KQ106 ♦ J104 ♣ A1064 ♠ 5 ♥ A873 ♦ AKQ92 ♣ KQ8	♠ Q1087643 ♥ 4 ♦ 73 ♣ 972
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West	North	East	South
Brother Xavier	Brother Jake	The Abbot	Brother Kyran
–	1♣	Pass	1♦
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♥
Pass	3♥	Pass	6♥
All Pass			

Brother Kyran, a 17-year-old who was already close to six-foot tall, arrived in 6♥. Brother Xavier led the ace of spades and continued passively with another spade to dummy's king. All now depended on declarer picking up the trump suit for no losers. 'King of hearts, please,' he said.

Brother Xavier was familiar with the situation and lost no time in dropping a smooth ♥9. The novice surveyed the spot-cards that had appeared. 'Six of hearts, please,' he said.

When the Abbot discarded a spade, declarer faced his cards. 'I can pick up the trumps now and make the rest.'

Brother Xavier inserted the score in his card with an air of disappointment. 'You did well to guess the trumps right,' he said. 'Did you see my nine on the first round?'

Brother Kyran nodded. 'I had to play with the odds,' he replied.

'With the odds?' queried Brother Xavier. 'What do you mean?'

'Brother Cameron was explaining it to me the other day,' the novice continued. 'When you're playing against someone who will always drop the 9 from J9xx, the odds are 3-to-1 against the 9 being a singleton.'

Brother Jake nodded his agreement. 'Brother Cameron made another point, too,' he said. 'A player who leads an ace against a slam is often hoping to make a trump trick. If you're missing four to the queen, for example, you should finesse that defender for the queen.'

'I feared the worst when you led that ace,' remarked the Abbot.

'I looked at the other spot-cards too,' continued Brother Kyran. 'The Abbot played the ♥4. That wasn't a very likely card if he held J542.'

'There's no sense in that,' declared the Abbot. 'Any expert defender would play a random spot-card. You youngsters have a lot to learn about the game. There are better sources of information than Brother Cameron, I can assure you.'

Brother Jake entered the result on the scoresheet. 'It's good for us,' he reported. 'Everyone made twelve tricks but some were in Six Diamonds.'

'If I don't drop the nine, declarer's forced to play me for the length,' said Brother Xavier. 'I expect none of the other Wests even thought of it.'

The last round of the evening saw a meeting of the monastery's two top pairs.

'I see they made Six Hearts against you,' said Brother Lucius, pulling back the South chair. 'Did you miss the play of the 9 from J-9-x-x?'

'Of course not,' replied Brother Xavier. 'I might as well not have bothered. Brother Kyran picked up the trumps without even thinking about it.'

Brother Paulo laughed. 'Unlucky for you,' he said. 'West played a low trump against us, of course. Declarer can't go wrong.'

The players drew their cards for this board:

Dealer North. N/S Vul.

♠ 107632 ♥ 73 ♦ 103 ♣ J982	<div style="background-color: #008000; color: white; padding: 10px; width: 60px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ Q4 ♥ K10952 ♦ K52 ♣ K75 ♠ AJ85 ♥ 64 ♦ AJ97 ♣ Q104 ♠ K9 ♥ AQJ8 ♦ Q864 ♣ A63
-------------------------------------	--	---

West	North	East	South
<i>Brother Xavier</i>	<i>Brother Paulo</i>	<i>The Abbot</i>	<i>Brother Lucius</i>
–	Pass	1♦	1NT
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♥
Pass	3NT	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

A transfer auction made Brother Lucius the declarer in a heart game and the ♦10 was led. He studied the dummy for a few moments. The potential losers were two in diamonds and one in each black suit. What could be done?

Play the king,’ said Brother Lucius.

The Abbot won with the ace and considered his next move. It was barely possible that the opening lead was a singleton after declarer’s play of the king from dummy. The most that Xavier could hold was one jack. Ah well, he would return the ♣Q and hope for the best. If declarer held ♣A-J-x, the club queen was dead anyway.

Brother Lucius won the ♣Q with the ace and drew trumps with the ace and king. ‘Low diamond, please,’ he said.

The Abbot was ready for this. It was pointless to split his ♦J9 if declarer had begun with Q8xx. He followed smoothly with the 7, hoping for the

best, but Lucius took no time to play the ♦8 from his hand. He soon had ten tricks pointing his way, for the loss of only a spade, a diamond and one club.

‘Any lead but a diamond and he must go down,’ declared the Abbot.

‘You opened One Diamond,’ Xavier replied. ‘It was the obvious lead.’

Brother Paulo inspected the scoresheet. ‘Most have gone down,’ he reported.

‘What opening lead did they get?’ asked the Abbot.

‘Two declarers went down on the ♦10 lead,’ Paulo replied. ‘At the other tables a trump was led, the 4 or the 6.’

‘North played it?’ exclaimed the Abbot. ‘I would have an obvious trump lead in that case. Declarer would have no chance.’

Brother Paulo nodded his agreement. ‘I would normally open on my hand, it’s true,’ he said. ‘I don’t know why, I decided not to on this occasion.’



The Auction Room

Mark Horton

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

This month we take a look at the Teltscher Trophy - the 'Senior Camrose' competition which took place in Mold, in Wales.

This is how the teams lined up:

Scotland	Iain Sime, John Matheson, Gerald Haase, John Murdoch, James Forsyth, Nigel Guthrie (NPC: Anne Perkins)
England	Sandra Penfold, Norman Selway, Tony Forrester, David Kendrick, Brian Senior (NPC: Derek Patterson)
Ireland	Enda Glynn, Gay Keaveney, Micheal O'Briain, Padraig O'Briain, BJ O'Brien, Ranald Milne (NPC: Peter Goodman)
Wales	Chris Rochelle, Simon Gottschalk, Gary Jones, Paul Lamford, Nick Forrest, Steve Jarvis (NPC: Barry Wennell)
N.Ireland	Ian Hamilton, Hastings Campbell, Sam Hall, Ian Lindsay, Michael Coffey, John Lavery (NPC: Diane Greenwood)
WBU	Gilly Clench, David Birt, Bob Pitts, Barry Lloyd Jones, Tony Disley, Philip Felman (PC: Tony Disley)

Match Manager: Alan Stephenson. Hospitality: Jean Hand. BBO: Eric Cummings. TD: David Stevenson. Scoring: Fearghal O'Boyle.

England were without the services of John Holland, who was still recovering from an illness that had had caused his team to withdraw from the Schapiro Spring Fours earlier in the month.

The Hands

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

Hand 1. Dealer West. Both Vul.

♠ QJ853		♠ AK72
♥ AKJ		♥ Q42
♦ —		♦ AK765
♣ 108753		♣ 4

West	East
Murdoch	Haase
2♠*	4♠
Pass	

2♠ Spades and clubs, 7-11

West's decision to open 2♠ did not work well.

North's hand was ♠1096 ♥853 ♦1092 ♣K962 so there was no way to prevent declarer taking twelve tricks.

West	East
Penfold	Selway
1♠	2NT*
3♣	4♣*
4♥*	4NT*
5♦*	5♥
6♥	6♠
Pass	

- 2NT Spade support
- 4♣ Cue-bid
- 4♥ Cue-bid
- 4NT RKCB
- 5♦ 1 key card
- 5♥ ♠Q?
- 6♥ Yes,+♥K

North led the ♦10 and instead of winning in dummy and playing a club, planning to ruff two clubs in dummy, declarer ruffed in hand, played a spade to the ace and ruffed a diamond. When she now played the queen of spades the contract was in danger. She exited with a club and all North had to do was rise with the king and play a trump. When he followed with the two South won and played the ♦Q but declarer ruffed, crossed to dummy with a heart and drew the outstanding trump for a fortuitous +1430.

West	East
Campbell	Hamilton
1♠	4♣*
4♠	Pass
4♣	Splinter

Despite his minimum hand the knowledge that partner held at most one club and four card spade support should have been enough for West to look for a slam. 4♦ followed by 5♥ over partner's 4♠ would surely see East bid 6♠.

West	East
M O'Briain	P O'Briain
1♠	2NT*
4♦*	4♠
2NT	Spade support
4♦	Shortage

The knowledge that West was short (void?) in diamonds was not what East wanted to hear, but he might have tried a Last Train 4♥ rather than signing off in 4♠.

Recommended auction: Playing ANBM Standard: 1♠-2NT*-3♦*-3♠-4♥-6♠ is one possibility, 3♦ having indicated a shortage.

Marks: 6♠10, 4♠ 5.

Running scores: England 10 (13) Scotland 5 (0) N. Ireland 5 (0) Ireland 5 (0) Wales 5 (0) WBU 5 (0)

Hand 2. Dealer North. None Vul.

♠ 7	<table border="1" style="width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ AJ5
		N									
W			E								
		S									
♥ A976532	♥ K108										
♦ A3	♦ KQJ										
♣ Q43	♣ KJ76										

South overcalls 2♠

West	North	East	South
Murdoch	Kendrick	Haase	Forrester
-	-	1♣*	2♠
4♥	All Pass		
1♣	Natural, only 3♣ if 4♠-3-3-3		

West could have bid 3♦ as a transfer to hearts. Assuming 4♥ promises a seven-card suit you probably only need West to hold two aces for 6♥ to be no worse than a finesse.

South's overcall was on ♠KQ9832 ♥J ♦642 ♣1098 so there was nothing to the play.

West	North	East	South
Penfold	Sime	Selway	Matheson
-	Pass	1♣	2♠
3♥	Pass	3NT	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

Facing a strong balanced hand the West hand looks full of potential. That suggests bidding something other than 4♥ - perhaps 4♦ or 4♠ - over the latter North could ask for key cards.

West	North	East	South
Campbell	Glynn	Hamilton	Keaveney
-	Pass	1♣	1♠
2♥	2♠	3♠*	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

3♠ was alerted—if it showed a liking for hearts West must be worth more than 4♥.

West	North	East	South
M O'Briain	Hall	P O'Briain	Lindsay
-	Pass	1♣*	2♦*
2♥	Double	4♥	Pass
4NT*	Pass	5♥*	Pass
6♥	All Pass		

- 1♣ 16+
- 2♦ One major
- Dble Pass or correct
- 4NT RKCB
- 5♥ 2 key cards

Recommended auction: After 1♣-(2♠)-3♥-3NT I would risk 4♠ with the West hand. Then East can ask for key-cards before settling for 6♥.

The WBU picked up 11 IMPs by stopping in 4♥ – Wales had soared to 7♥ in the other room.

Marks: 6♥10, 4♥ 5.

Running scores: England 15 (13) Scotland 10 (0) N. Ireland 10 (0) Ireland 15 (11) Wales 5 (0) WBU 10 (11)

Hand 3. Dealer North. Both Vul.

♠ 63	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> N E </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> W S </div>	♠ AQ85
♥ A8		♥ KQ1062
♦ KQJ10932		♦ A64
♣ J10		♣ 3

North opens 1♣ and South bids 1♠

West	North	East	South
Kendrick	Hasse	Forrester	Murdoch
–	1♣	Double	1♠
3♦	Pass	3♥	Pass
3♠*	Pass	4♦	All Pass

The North hand was ♠J♥J95♦75♣AKQ7542 so twelve tricks were easy. East must have assumed that 3♠ was game forcing, but even so West's decision to pass 4♦ is extraordinary. On the other hand East might have bid 4♣ over 3♠, intending to bid 4♠ over 4♦.

West	North	East	South
Sime	Selway	Matheson	Penfold
–	1♣	1♥	Pass
2♦	3♣	3♦	3♠
5♦	All Pass		

The BBO commentator suggested that Matheson was a strong advocate of overcalling and then doubling to show extras. He might have doubled 3♣ here.

West	North	East	South
Glynn	Hamilton	Keaveney	Campbell
–	3NT*	Double	4♣
5♦	All Pass		

West	North	East	South
Hall	P O'Briain	Lindsay	M O'Briain
–	2♣*	Double	2♠
5♦	All Pass		

2♣ Precision

Recommended auction: There is nothing to choose between starting with 1♥ or a double. After (1♣)-Dble-(1♠)-3♦-3♥-3♠ East might do best to bid 4♣. Then after 4♦-4♠ West could ask for key cards.

Marks: 6♦ 10, 5♦/4♥ 5, 4♦ 2.

Running scores: England 17 (13) Scotland 15 (0) N. Ireland 15 (0) Ireland 20 (11) Wales 10 (0) WBU 15 (11)

Hand 4.. Dealer West. Both Vul

♠ AK63	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> N E </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> W S </div>	♠ Q
♥ AQJ4		♥ 102
♦ KJ54		♦ AQ863
♣ 2		♣ AJ1087

West	East
Bob Pitts	Lloyd Jones
1♦	5♦
Pass	

I confess I'm not sure what to say about this auction.

West	East
Kendrick	Forrester
1♥	2♦
4♣*	4NT*
5♣*	5NT
7♦	Pass

4♣ Splinter

4NT RKCB

5♣ 3 key cards

5NT Grand slam try

South led the ♦7 from his ♠542♥K8763♦7♣Q954 and declarer won with dummy's jack, played a club to the ace, ruffed a club, played a spade to the queen, ruffed a club, pitched a heart on the ♠A, ruffed a spade, ruffed a club, cashed the ♥A, ruffed a heart and claimed.

West	East
Jones	Lamford
1♦	3♠*
4NT*	5♠*
6♦	Pass

3♠ Splinter

4NT RKCB

5♠ 2 key cards +♦Q

Not a convincing sequence - East was unlimited and might have held even more.

West	North
<i>B J O'Brien</i>	<i>Milne</i>
1♥	2♦
4NT*	5♠
5NT*	6♦*
Pass	
4NT	RKCB
5♠	2key cards +♦Q
5NT	Kings?
6♦	No

This was better, but still wide of the mark.

Both pairs bid a small slam in the remaining match, but Hall & Lindsay were in 6NT, which is not as good as 6♦.

Recommended auction: If West opens 1♦ and you don't play inverted minors then the hand is not straightforward. In ANBM standard the auction might go 1♦-2♦*-2♥-3♣-3NT-4♣-4♦-4♠-5♣-5♦-5♥-7♦. One thing is certain - using Blackwood is not the answer on this deal.

Marks: 7♦ 10, 6♦ 7, 6NT 6, 5♦/3NT 3.

Running scores: England 27 (30) Scotland 22 (0) N. Ireland 21 (2) Ireland 27 (11) Wales 17 (0) WBU 18 (11)

Hand 5. Dealer East. Both Vul.

♠ K973	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> N </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> W E </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: center; align-items: center; margin-top: 5px;"> S </div> </div>	♠ QJ10864
♥ AK43		♥ 52
♦ 1075		♦ AK
♣ 92		♣ 853

West	East
<i>Jones</i>	<i>Lamford</i>
-	1♠
3♠	4♠
Pass	

Meckstroth's Law in action - 'If your partner freely raises your six-card

major, bid game'.

West	East
<i>B J O'Brien</i>	<i>Milne</i>
-	1♠
3♠	Pass

West	East
<i>Bob Pitts</i>	<i>Lloyd Jones</i>
-	1♠
3♠	Pass

West	East
<i>Kendrick</i>	<i>Forrester</i>
-	2♦*
2NT*	3♥*
4♠	Pass

- 2♦ Multi
- 2NT Relay
- 3♥ Maximum with ♠

Recommended auction: 1♠-3♠-4♠. If this hand illustrates anything, it is the power of concentrated honour strength. Move West's ♥K into the club suit and you get the idea.

Marks: 4♥10, 3♠ 5.

Running scores: England 37 (40) Scotland 32 (10) N. Ireland 26 (2) Ireland 32 (11) Wales 27 (10) WBU 23 (11)

Hand 6. Dealer West. Both Vul.

♠ QJ10984	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> N </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> W E </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: center; align-items: center; margin-top: 5px;"> S </div> </div>	♠ A765
♥ AK6		♥ 97
♦ AJ3		♦ 10654
♣ Q		♣ J98

North overcalls 1NT and South jumps to 3NT.

West	East
<i>Sime</i>	<i>Matheson</i>
1♠	3♠
4♠	Pass

North's hand was ♠2 ♥J432 ♦KQ982 ♣K102 and naturally he led the ♦K. Declarer won in hand, played the ♠Q and put up the ace, claiming ten tricks.

Were North to lead a heart declarer would win in hand and have little reason not to run the ♠Q. South wins and switches to a diamond and declarer cannot take more than ten tricks.

West	North	East	South
Penfold	Haase	Selway	Murdoch
1♠	1NT*	2♠	3NT
4♠	Pass	Pass	Double
Pass	4NT	All Pass	

1NT 15-16

North's 1NT which remember was based on ♠2 ♥J432 ♦KQ982 ♣K102 was, well shall we say questionable. It seemed obvious to West that he was going to run to 5♣ if doubled (but why hadn't South bid that already?).

East led the ♠5 and declarer must have been mildly pleased to see dummy's king hold. A club to the king was followed by the ♣10, East following with the ♣9 & ♣8 (did he really execute a Grosvenor) declarer naturally playing dummy's ace, his last trick, -700.

Everyone else played in 4♠.

Recommended auction: 1♠-3♠-4♠ or 1♠-2♠-4♠.

Marks: 4♠/4NT(N) 10, 3♠

Running scores: England 47 (42) Scotland 42 (10) N. Ireland 36 (2) Ireland 42 (11) Wales 37 (10) WBU 33 (11)

Hand 7. Dealer East. None Vul.

♠ AK2		♠ Q83
♥ 10		♥ AK6
♦ AQ10654		♦ KJ9
♣ J98		♣ A542

South overcalls 1♥ if possible. If East opens 1NT South bids 2♣ (Majors)

West	North	East	South
Jarvis	Forrester	Forrest	Kendrick
-	-	1♣	1♥
2♦	Pass	2NT*	Pass
3♣*	Pass	3NT	Pass
4♦*	Pass	4♠*	Pass
6♦	All Pass		

2NT Strong balanced

3♣ Relay

4♦ RKCB

4♠ 3 key cards

West	North	East	South
Selway	Lamford	Penfold	Jones
-	-	1♣	1♥
2♦	Pass	2NT	Pass
3♣	Pass	3NT	All Pass

Both might have done more - East can bid 3♦ rather than 3NT and West might bid 4♥ over 3NT.

South's overcall was on ♠J1094 ♥QJ543 ♦2 ♣KQ7. In the play North pitched two hearts on the diamonds so declarer took all the tricks via a squeeze on South.

West	North	East	South
Keaveney	Matheson	Glynn	Sime
-	-	1♣	1♥
2♦	Pass	2NT	Pass
3♥	Pass	3NT	All Pass

West	North	East	South
Hasse	P O'Briain	Murdoch	M O'Briain
-	-	1♣	1♥
2♦	Pass	3NT	Pass
4♥*	Pass	4NT*	Pass
5♠*	Pass	6♦	All Pass

4♥ Cue-bid

4NT RKCB

5♠ 2 key cards +♦Q

Recommended auction: Given a free run, 1NT-2NT*-3♦*-3♥* is a good start,

West having shown diamonds and a heart shortage, East a fir for diamonds. If East now asks for key cards West replies 5♠ and East can now look for a grand slam with 5NT. Give West the ♣K and a seventh diamond and its cold.

If South overcalls 1NT with 2♣ then one way to get to 6♦ is for West to bid 3♣, a transfer to diamonds with at least invitational values. Then bidding 3♥ over East's 3♦ should set E/W on their way, but even if East bids 3NT West can continue with 4♥.

Marks: 6♦/6NT 10, 5♦/3NT 5.

Running scores: England 52 (42) Scotland 52 (19) N. Ireland 46 (2) Ireland 47 (11) Wales 47 (19) WBU 43 (13)

Hand 8. Dealer South. Both Vul.

♠ AKQJ	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ 8
♥ A98		♥ Q
♦ –		♦ KQ87432
♣ Q86542		♣ AK73

South opens 2♦ Multi. If West doubles North bids 3♥ 'Pass or correct'.

West	North	East	South
Hall	Kendrick	Lindsey	Forrester
–	–	–	2♦*
Double	3♥*	6♦	All Pass

Not exactly a triumph.

In general doubling a Multi promises 13-15 balanced or various stronger hands. It was not the best move with West's cards. Of course East was a little unlucky - the auction had left him with no suit to cue-bid. He might have tried 4NT over 3♥, but he would not be out of the woods if West then bid only 5♣.

South's opening bid was on ♠10952 ♥KJ7543 ♦5 ♣J9 so all the tricks were there.

West	North	East	South
Penfold	Coffey	Senior	Lavery
–	–	–	2♦*
3♣	3♥*	4♥*	Pass
4♠	Pass	5♣	All Pass

- 2♦ Multi
- 3♥ Pass or correct
- 4♥ Cue-bid

Having cue-bid in support of clubs East felt it was enough to bid 5♣ and leave the next move to his partner. Luck was on their side.

West	North	East	South
Forrest	B J O'Brien	Jarvis	Milne
–	–	–	Pass
1♣	Pass	1♦	2♦*
Double	Pass	4♣	Pass
4NT	Pass	6♣	All Pass

2♦ Unbid suits

I suspect 4♣ was Minorwood, the response promising 2 key cards and the ♣Q. With no way to find out about the diamond void East could do no more than bid 6♣.

I asked Eric Kokish about responses to Minorwood:

If you wish to show the void, it's via Step 5, so 5♣ over the 4♣ minorwood ask. With odd numbers and a void, if confident enough to show the void with 1 key card, bid higher than Step 5 after agreeing whether you show the void sequentially or via replacement-bid technique.

West	North	East	South
M O'Briain	Gottschalk	P O'Briain	Rochelle
–	–	–	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♦	Pass
3♣	Pass	3♥*	Double
Pass	Pass	4♣	Pass
6♣	All Pass		

3♥ Game forcing

West had a strong 1♣ available, but preferred what appears to be a canapé sequence. Jumping to 6♣ looks precipitate.

Recommended auction: If South starts with a Multi I much prefer Sandra Penfold's approach of overcalling 3♣. You would like a better suit, but you do have a good hand and you will be better placed should North (as here) be able to bid 3♥. Brian Senior's 4♥ set up a game force agreeing clubs – had he bid 4NT on the next round the 5NT response would have shown two key cards and a void, enough for him to bid 7♣.

Marks: 7♣ 10, 6♣ 8, 5♣/3NT 5.

Running scores: England 60(60) Scotland 52 (19) N.Ireland 46 (2) Ireland 55(11) Wales 55 (19) WBU 51 (30)

Although England won this edition of the Auction Room they had to bow the knee to Scotland where it mattered. The Scots were in magnificent form, winning all ten matches to total 147.67, well clear of England's 131.71 with Ireland a distant third on 89.33.

For the detailed results go to: [here](#)

You can play through the deals mentioned in this article.

Just follow the links:

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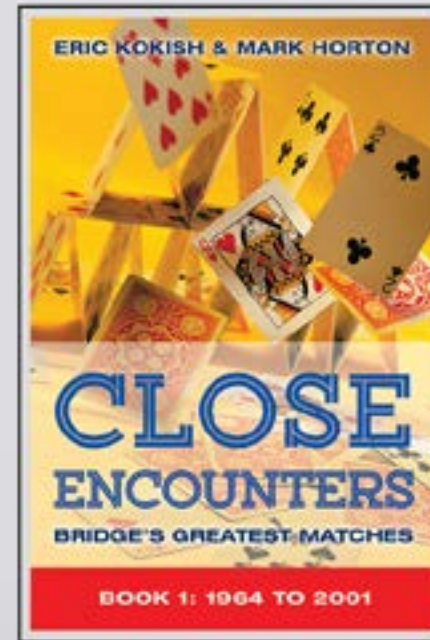
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Set 6

Moderated by Brian Senior

Greetings. I am your new torturer in chief. I hope to add a few new names to the panel as I settle into the job – possibly as permanent members, possibly as guests. For this first article I welcome two new panellists, Nikica Sver and Pablo Lambardi.



**Brian Senior - your new Moderator -
universally and affectionately known as
Mr. Grumpy**

Nikica is a current World Ladies Pairs Champion, having tied for first in Lyon last year in partnership with her Croatian partner, Marina Pilipovic. As well as being a Ladies World Champion, Nikica has been a member of the Croatian Open team on many occasions.

Pablo Lambardi is from Argentina and has been

THE BIDS & MARKS

Bid	Marks	No. of Votes	Bid	Marks	No. of Votes
1. Three Clubs	17	10	5. Four Spades	13	10
Two No Trump	2	6	Five Clubs	3	8
Pass	2	4	Four No Trump	2	6
2. Four Hearts	10	10	Pass	3	5
Three Hearts	4	7	6. Double	10	10
Three Spades	2	6	Five Diamonds	7	9
Pass	5	6	Six Diamonds	4	8
3. Three Diamonds	21	10	Four No Trump	1	7
Two No Trump	0	4	7. Four Clubs	10	10
4. Double	10	10	Double	5	8
Three Clubs	8	9	Four Spades	3	7
Four Clubs	3	5	Four Hearts	1	6
Three Hearts	0	0	Five Diamonds	1	5
			Six Diamonds	1	5
			8. Pass	10	10
			Four No Trump	7	8
			Four Spades	2	6
			Five Hearts	2	6

a member of their Open team for many years. He is also perhaps my favourite partner. We have played together just three times, several years ago now, always in the NEC Festival in Yokohama, Japan. Pablo played Acol, a system which he had never used previously (and possibly never again since), as we won the tournament twice then lost to the eventual winners at the semi-final stage in our third attempt.

I hope Nikica and Pablo will become regular panellists but, if not, thank you for your efforts this month and I hope we will at least see you again occasionally. I guess that I should treat them gently.

PROBLEM 1

IMPs. Dealer East. None Vul.

♠ K43
♥ 3
♦ A6
♣ AQJ10962

West	North	East	South
–	–	2♦*	Pass

?
2♦ Weak two

Bid	Votes	Marks
3♣	17	10
2NT	2	6
Pass	2	4

We start with the pessimists:

Bird: Pass. With so many losing cards in my hand, I would need a special fit to make 3NT, 5♣ or 5♦. I don't buy lottery tickets and I won't respond on this hand.

Smith: Pass. We seem to have a choice between passing, bidding a game forcing Three Clubs, or a 2NT inquiry. Even if we give partner a better

than average hand for his weak two, something like ♠Qxx ♥xx ♦KQJxxx ♣xx or ♠xx ♥Qxx ♦KQJxxx ♣xx, no game is likely to be making. Indeed, give him what looks to be the perfect hand, ♠xx ♥xx ♦KQxxxx ♣Kxx and even then game is only a 50% shot. Are you, perhaps worried that the opponents might be able to bid and make game? Perhaps, then, you might consider a defensive raise to Three Diamonds.

This was the popular choice:

Cannell: 3♣. A natural one-round force. I am doing this because we may have a game in clubs when partner has the right hand, or this may get the right lead from partner if North intervenes, and eventually plays in a major-suit contract. Even 3NT may make our way if partner is able to bid Three Hearts after my Three Club advance. Though, that is very problematic.

Lawrence: 3♣, Forcing. I'm not ready to commit to five of either minor. 3♣ should help me judge. I expect North may compete and that will perhaps get me a useful bid from my partner. If they do compete to 4♥, I'm not saving unless I have learned something in the meantime.

McGowan: 3♣. Sounds forcing to me. If he has a club fit we can try game; if not we might get the best lead.

Byrne: 3♣. Natural and forcing I hope, preparing the way for partner to compete if the opponents get busy in hearts, which seems likely.

Teramoto: 3♣. NAT and Forcing. It should be constructive. I will pass if he rebids 3♦ to show a minimum.

Rigal: 3♣. I play this as a mild game try in diamonds but I'm assuming we use it as clubs forcing to 3♦. No idea who can make what but showing clubs and a good hand can't be a bad idea.

Quite so. Interesting use for 3♣ as a diamond

game try but, playing natural methods, how can we go wrong by bidding clubs? Not everyone thinks that 3♣ is forcing:

Robson: 3♣. Natural and constructive.

Rosen: 3♣. Constructive but non-forcing as I play it. Clearly concerned about opponents getting together in hearts here so want to sound fairly strong. Don't mind if it is forcing! Might try 2NT I suppose...

And several more don't seem to care, bidding clubs whether forcing or not:

Brook: 3♣. Don't really care whether it is forcing or not. I must be missing something.

Alder: 3♣. I might bid 5♣, but perhaps partner would think that was Voidwood in favour of diamonds!



Phillip Alder

Cope: 3♣. So much depends on partnership methods. Over weak twos from partner I play that a bid of a new suit at the two level is natural and forcing (and asking for further description) whilst a bid of a new suit (non-jump) at the three level is natural and invitational opposite a fit, so this seems to fit my hand well.

Lambardi: 3♣. Clubs will play better than diamonds even if – especially if – partner has a singleton. Game is unlikely – though not impossible. I would even make a deal with opps that I would pass 2♦ – giving up on game – if they would only promise not to come in. But in real life I need to set up the stage for when/if the hearts (or even the spades) show up. Plan to bid 4♣ (Non-forcing) if the bidding comes back at 3♥ and Double at 4♥. That must be take-out as 1) Opponents have jumped or raised to the game level, showing

some confidence in making it (they wouldn't save against a dubious 4♣ and they know 4♥ would not prevent me from bidding 5♣ if I am so minded).

Green: 3♣. Want to get a club lead in and if partner has a fit they should raise in competition. 5♣ could be cheap versus 4♥.

Carruthers: 3♣. We might make anything from eight to 11 tricks in clubs and/or diamonds. Partner's next bid, if it is Three Diamonds, may inform me that eight tricks is the limit.

Kokish: 3♣. Unfriendly not to have a footnote to let us know whether this is forcing, but I am intending it as F1, Lots of strategies could work here (4♣, 5♣, a 2NT inquiry even a diamond raise), aiming to make it harder for the opps to find their nine- or ten-card heart fit, but it may just be our hand for a club part-score or game with North unable to bid safely.

Mould: 3♣. Well that rather depends on who I am sitting opposite doesn't it... If it is our conductor, I might be opposite ♠xxx ♥xxxx ♦Jxx ♣xxx (do you want to tell everyone the full story of that hand Brian?). If I am sitting opposite John Holland he might have ♠Ax ♥xx ♦KQxxxx ♣xxx and slam be on a hook. I could do just about anything here from a psyche of 3NT to a wild Five Clubs to a gentle Three Diamonds and just about anything could be right. I will start with Three Clubs and judge in my usual style (pause for obvious brickbats....) later on.

Actually, while I remember very well that I opened 2♦ on the hand Alan gives above, the only thing that I remember beyond that is that the jack of diamonds was the key to his making his contract – obviously, then, excellent judgement on my part to show diamond values!

Sver: 3♣. In favourable vulnerabilities I guess I'd bid 5♣ immediately, a double shot of either

making a game or pre-empting them from their game in a major, or both. At this vulnerability I'm trying to achieve the same goal but a bit more carefully.

Yes, a more tactical effort might well be appropriate at favourable vulnerability. 5♣ could work in a number of ways.

Alon and Enri prefer a 2NT inquiry, though in Enri's case it appears that his preferred methods prevent his bidding clubs in a natural sense.

Apteker 2NT. Got too much playing strength to not make a move and tactically, may impede opponents finding their heart fit. Over a minimum 3♦ response, I will pass but after 3♣ or 3♠, I will bid 5♣ and after 3♥ I will bid 3NT.

Leufkens: 2NT. Wow, this is impossible to start with. Chances for 3NT are slim and trying for it (2NT) will get it in the wrong hand (or right hand if our spades are more vulnerable). Even if partner has a heart stopper, you need nine tricks immediately, which is not a given. But 2NT also has some destructive value, although on the long run they won't be able to make 4♥ in my view. The big issue with this problem is of course that I can't bid any number of clubs (3♣ asking for singleton and 4♣ RKCB): as destructive, lead director, and possibly even getting to a good save or even make.

Not the most exciting of problems with which to begin my reign, I'm afraid. I think the passers are making life too easy for the opposition, who could have a major-suit game if they can get together. Three Clubs, if natural, looks right. The kind of bid we make whether it is forcing or not because the alternatives are all worse even if our judgement is that 3♣ is an under- or over-bid.



Nikica Sver

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

Bid	Votes	Marks
4♥	10	10
3♥	4	7
3♠	2	7
Pass	5	6

The panel showed a varied judgement as to the value of this hand, ranging from those who did not think their hand worth another bid at all through those happy to give false preference to hearts and to others who were happy to jump to game. Let's start with the pessimists:

Rigal: Pass. The logic is that partner is short in diamonds since the opponents haven't raised spades. With four decent clubs any competent partner would rebid 2♣ not 2♥ so I'm assuming 2-6-1-4 with weakish clubs. 3♣ looks to be enough now.

Bird: Pass. Partner has shown a weak 6-4 type. With the sort of hand I need to make game, he would have rebid 2♣. Since North/South have not gone to 3♠, it is likely that partner has 2-6-1-4 shape and my ♦K is useless.

Apteker: Pass. Perhaps conservative at teams VUL. I am expecting something like 2-6-1-4 shape given the bidding so, while my hand has improved with

the auction, it looks like I have three certain losers outside the rounded suits with the king of diamonds not pulling its weight. I would have an easy bid of 4♥ if the king and ace in the minors were switched. Pity I cannot make an in between bid, seems like I have to either bid game or pass as 3♥ is not invitational now and 4♣ will never get 4♥ from partner. I will bid 4♥ if the opponents bid 3♠.

Leufkens: Pass.

Smith: Pass. Converting Three Clubs to Three Hearts seems to be taking the concept of false preference to a ridiculous extent. So if we are not going to pass which game are we thinking of bidding? To see why bidding any game is likely to be a losing proposition, ask yourself how many spades partner is likely to hold. North, who could not open a weak two, is likely to have only five spades, and South could not muster a competitive raise to the three-level, so partner has at least two spades and quite possibly three. Our king of diamonds is facing a singleton or void, so how good is our hand really likely to be? I pass and hope the opponents don't belatedly find their best fit.

But others thought it correct to convert to hearts
Cannell: 3♥. I expect partner has seven hearts and four clubs. I do not expect partner has a very good hand with regard to HCPs, but is offensive oriented. It is troubling that N/S are not bidding to Three Spades, so I expect my diamond king is not working. Still, I am close to bidding Four Hearts.

Most were not so optimistic as to expect the seventh heart, and I think some seven-four hands in this sort of range might have opened 4♥. The popular view was that partner has some kind of limited six-four hand.

Lawrence: 3♥. Odd situation. If they bid 3♠, I will follow with 4♣.

Byrne: 3♥. This is a very interesting problem.

In classical bidding this showed a weak 6-4, but that's not consistent with the opponents' silence. Perhaps partner has six good hearts four average clubs? ♠x, ♥AK109xx, ♦Qx, ♣Qxxx? And yet if he has that hand, why have the opponents not done more bidding? Given that I should have raised 2♥ to 3♥ anyway I think I had better bid hearts now, leaping to 4♥ is on the cards but I am sure the absence of a 3♠ bid suggest partner is 2614 in which case the ♦K is not working. I think 3♥ is enough although I only have myself to blame if we miss game.

I think Michael is converting to hearts just in case partner can go on to game, while Tim bids 3♥ more for competitive reasons:

Cope: 3♥. Not as easy as it might look. We can assume that partner is showing a 6-4 hand in the lower range or with very good hearts and poor clubs. So the first question is, do we have prospects for game? The lack of a spade raise over 3♣ by our RHO tends to suggest that partner is 2-6-1-4 with maybe a hand such as ♠Jx ♥AKxxxx ♦x ♣KJxx. If we are right on that score then game does not appear good and technically 3♣ may be the safer IMP contract. However, if we are right about the hand type and the shape, depending on where the A♦ is located the opposition may have a good shot at 4♠. So if I pass 3♣ I let my LHO have another crack at bidding again – maybe they have a 5-3-4-1 shape and bid 3♦ which might encourage their partner with a diamond fit to review again prospects in spades. By bidding 3♥ we take away that option and should be able to buy the hand in that contract.

The plurality simply jumped to game, choosing hearts where they can afford three losers rather than play in clubs.

Robson: 4♥. May even be a save.

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Mould: 4♥. OK, so partner has a weak 6-4 hand. I have never ever understood this style whereby you open light because you have distribution and then refuse to show it, but it does still seem to be very popular. What can partner have? ♠x ♥AQxxxx ♦xx ♣KQxx is an excellent game; ♠xx ♥AQxxxx ♦x ♣KQxx not so good (as in no play) but give her the ♥10 and it is OK. What about ♠Ax ♥KQxxxx ♦x ♣Kxxx? Not great but acceptable. I think there are too many hands here where I can make a vulnerable game not to just bid it, so I shall bid Four Hearts, since Five Clubs is a long way away. If I had ♦Axx and ♣Kxxxx I think it is clear, this less so. Since I have now leapt to Four Hearts, I think I must also have a club fit, so partner should know what is going on (not that it will help her much).

Carruthers: Four Hearts. I don't even know what East has and I hate his bidding – presumably some 6-4 with hearts he felt compelled to rebid, even at IMPs. His bidding illustrates the folly, with 6-4, of showing partner six of your cards, with Two Hearts, instead of the nine that Two Clubs would have shown. Thank you, opponents.

McGowan: 4♥. Not one I have come across before. No-one bid spades earlier, so I guess he is something like ♠Kx ♥AKxxxx ♦– ♣Jxxx. It's a vulnerable game at IMPs....

Brock: 4♥. We are vulnerable, after all.

Alder: Four Hearts. It is too tempting to bid game, and 5♣ could well have three losers (and, yes, Four Hearts might have four!).

Kokish: 4♥. Clearly based on a club fit, so the intricacies of bids like 3♠ (COG) and 4♦ (fit) can be left for some other deal. We won't be able to determine whether East is short in spades, diamonds, or both suits in time for it to help us.

Sver: 4♥. Though I don't like bidding a game after a push as if we hadn't been capable of doing it without a help ☺, this seems to be a classical example of making your points and distribution suddenly so much more valuable.

Teramoto: 4♥. Partner showed at least 6-4, 4♥ has good chance to make.

Green: 4♥. this must be based on a club fit and vulnerable at IMPs I'm happy to give this a go. Opposite AKQxxx and Kxxx clubs I am on a two-two club break for game or a club guess (and game may be better if partner has a doubleton diamond). I might also make opposite AQ109xx in hearts and KQxx in clubs, although that looks like more of a 2♣ bid than the first example. I considered 3♠. as a good raise but that leaves hearts out of the equation.

As Alan suggests, ♦A and ♣K would make the game bid clearcut. As it is, several panellists note the failure of South to compete and worry that this means partner is likely to be 2-6-1-4, when the ♦K will be of little or no value. That is certainly a sound point, yet nearly half the panel votes for a game bid. We are, after all, vulnerable, and partner has bid three times. Game may well come down to something as vague

as whether or not he holds the ten in his (probably) strong heart suit.

There are two panellists who believe that they are worth a move but are unwilling to commit to hearts:

Rosen: 3♠. Let's go for the dubious 3♠ bid....

Lambardi: 3♠. I would probably Pass at the table but must bid 3♠ here. Partner has shown a weakish 6-4 (otherwise he would have probably chosen 2♣ and not 2♥ over 1NT). By the non-raise of spades I would place them 5-3 unless RHO is trap-passing with a heart stack. If so, partner will have a singleton diamond and my king is wastepaper. Yet I can envisage a couple of hands where game is laydown or has good chances: ♠Kx ♥KQ10xxx ♦x ♣KJxx – nothing to write home about and yet game is good. ♠AQ ♥Q1098xx ♦x ♣KQxx or ♠Kx ♥A1098xx ♦x ♣KJxx. I do have a creepy sensation about RHO passes (and LHO reopening on weakish spades) but it may be just one of my frequent misapprehensions. 3♠ must imply strong clubs (my sudden return to life after passing 2♥ must mean SOMETHING) and tolerance for hearts – with a singleton or two low I would just bid 4♣. If partner can know I have the Jx we are on our way to the races. If I didn't have a bit of something I would need partner's hearts to be solid and, if so, he could always bid them himself over 4♣. If we are not good enough for game partner should know to convert to 4♣ where we are not likely to be doubled. It has been a surprising bidding to tell the truth. In the circles I frequent nowadays it would not be impossible that somebody had a card miss-sorted and the ♦K may win a trick after all. Passing 3♣ is probably the reasonable thing to do but I fear by now the opponents (both) are weird and not incapable of introducing diamonds anyway.

Four Clubs is certainly more likely to make than

is 4♥, so a club raise has some merit. However, I am not convinced that the suggestion that a 3♠ cue-bid implies heart tolerance is anything more than wishful thinking—can it not just be a stronger club raise than a simple 4♣? Three Spades does not rule out a heart contract, however, as partner with very strong hearts may try 4♥ on the way to 5♣.

In real life, partner did have six strong hearts and four clubs to the king. He was 2-6-1-4 so there were three quick losers but the clubs were two-two and 10 tricks rolled in. Five Clubs, of course, was off on top.

I doubt that partner will often be able to go on to game if we give preference to 3♥. While not wishing to punish him for his enterprise, I have a marginal preference for the jump to 4♥. It may be very good or it may be no-play, but I think it is up to us to go for the vulnerable game bonus.



Alan Mould

PROBLEM 3

IMPs. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

♠ 9
♥ A
♦ AQJ1043
♣ AQ543

West	North	East	South
–	–	2♦*	Pass
?			
2♦	Weak two in a major		

Bid	Votes	Marks
3♦	21	10
2NT	0	4

Well, this one was a bit of a damp squib, with only one vote for anything other than 3♦, and that was due to a panellist being used to an artificial method which precluded him from making the popular call. Most panellists assumed a 3♦ response to be natural and forcing and looked no further than bidding just that. Those who prefer 3♦ to be constructive but non-forcing bid it anyway on the grounds that any other approach could surely lead to a very messy auction concluding with a guess.

We won't waste much time on this one then, just take a quick look at the panel's comments then move on to something more interesting.

Cannell: 3♦. A 2NT response would ask for partner's major, and I assume that Four Clubs would ask partner to bid one under the major, and Four Diamonds would ask partner to bid the actual major. That would be fairly standard Multi Two Diamond structure of responses. So, it follows that Three Diamonds would be a natural one-round force. I will bid Four Clubs next if partner bids a major.

All sounds very reasonable.

Robson: 3♦. Natural and constructive.

Rigal: 3♦. We need to know if 3♦ is the right response (natural and forcing). If so do we really have a second choice?

Green: 3♦. I hope to get both my suits in and I'll start with my longest. Not clear whether this is forcing but I'll bid 3♦ either way.

Mould: 3♦. Thanks pard! So wanted to hear about your weak two. At this vul partner is expected to have a decent hand (or at the very least a decant suit), so I shall push the boat out with Three Diamonds. What am I am going to do over the inevitable 3♥/♠? Ah, well, you didn't ask me that....

Bird: 3♦. Partner's hand may be useless but if I pass again, the new director might give me an Idi Amin award. (I am currently re-reading Keith McNeil's excellent book. He was a caustic director of the Australian bidding panel for many years, famed for insulting panellists' efforts.) Even if partner does not hold the ♠A, as little as ♦9-x ♣J-10 might give me a play for 5♦.

Carruthers: 3♦. Assuming this to be natural and forcing. Holding a weak two in a major does not prevent partner from having a fit with one of my minors and/or a minor-suit king.

McGowan: 3♦. Forcing. Shall bid clubs next time. Maybe 4NT should show this hand but partner might not agree.

I would be terrified of jumping to 4NT. As you say, partner may well not agree that it shows this type of hand.

Brock: 3♦. This surely depends on methods. I play that 3♦ is a forcing hand with either diamonds or spades. Partner has to bid 3♥, then 3♠ shows spades and everything else shows diamonds. So here I could follow up with an unambiguous 4♣. Again, a real partnership would know whether 3♦ was forcing or not, but I bid it anyway.

And I assume that a 3♣ response would also be two-way, this time showing hearts or clubs? Looks like a very sensible method. Anyway, the 'standard' agreement is that 3♦ is natural and forcing, I think, making this problem as simple as the panel make sit appear.

Rosen: 3♦ again constructive but non-forcing in my book...

Which we all await with varying degrees of eagerness.

Apteker: 3♦. Without a multi in the system notes, I assume natural and forcing. I will bid 5♣ next.

Alder: Three Diamonds. How are we supposed to answer this when we do not know what our responses are above 2NT? I play 3♦ as natural and forcing, so this seems best!

Cope: 3♦. using the same philosophy as problem 1 – bidding a suit at the three level as INV opposite a fit.

Smith: 3♦. This is not a method that I play, so I am unsure of all the ramifications but I assume that this diamond raise is at least invitational since I could have passed Two Diamonds. With game in diamonds good facing as little as ♠QJxxxx ♥xxx ♦xx ♣Kx, I have to make some try. Partner can presumably work out that I am not interested in either major, and judge the worth of his hand based on that information,

Byrne: 3♦. Natural and forcing (I hope!). Facing some of my partner's first at red weak twos I would be thinking of a slam (♠AJ10xxx ♥xx ♦Kxxx ♣x) but the first step must be right to show my suit. I assume partner will raise with a fit and show his suit otherwise, or leap to game if his suit is of the KQJ10xx variety.

Kokish: 3♦. If this is either NF or ART, I would bid 2NT (if that needn't promise support for both majors) or 5♦. Please be more forthcoming

with system information if you want everyone to respond sensibly.

OK. Multi isn't part of NBM Standard, but we have all surely played against it often enough to have a pretty good idea what the popular continuations are, even if we don't actually play it ourselves.

Sver: 3♦. My first impulse was to pass to keep myself in a plus score, but in these vulnerabilities I'd say I'd lose a game too often (or a slam even ☺) so I'd bid 4♥ over my partner's 3♥ and 4♣ over his 3♠.

Lambardi: 3♦. Assuming it is natural and forward-going. We may make a game or slam in either of the minors, or equally well go down at the four level. Partner is not SUPPOSED to be 6-4 in the majors so he will have at least four cards in the minors. Over 3♦ partner is likely to bid his suit. Now 4♣ from me will show a powerful two-suiter. I would have to Pass his correction to 4♦ if I trusted his judgment (which I don't) or 5♣. With two good cards (♠A, ♦K, ♣K) he should become active. Cue 4♠ – even if his suit! – or bid 4NT as a strong raise in my minors with no major ace.

Teramoto: 3♦. I don't know systems, I would like to bid 3♦ as constructive NF.

Leufkens: 2NT. I assume 3♦ is invite for game in partner's major, so that's out. No idea how to bid this but let's see what partner will respond. We might have a good game (e.g. 4♥ opposite ♠Kxx ♥KQJxxx ♦x ♣xxx) but needs some good guessing later.

Now that is an unusual method, and I have changed Enri's vote to 3♦ as it seems clear that is what he would have bid had he been allowed by system to do so. Which gives us a unanimous, if somewhat grumpy, panel.

In real life responder started with 2NT despite having a forcing 3♦ available, and – surprise,

surprise – got into a mess. Opener showed what he'd got, responder continued with 4♦, and that was read as a cue-bid for the major. The final contract was not a success.

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		

Bid	Votes	Marks
Double	10	10
3♣	8	9
4♣	3	5
3♥	0	0

Poor Alan! After suffering/enjoying having him in charge of this feature for several years, I wonder if any panellists will feel sympathy for this:

Mould: Three Clubs/Hearts. My first problem for the new conductor ☺. Some annotations as to what the Hell our methods are would have been nice! I find that denying primary support never ever works for me, so I am not starting with double. I shall show a good raise in diamonds and some pairs use Three Clubs for that and some use Three Hearts (which is why an annotation would have been nice). I reject the splinter of Four Clubs as it could so easily be right to play this hand in 3NT when partner has a WNT with some club stops (mind you, then we should probably have been

doubling for penalties ☺). Next choice would be to do whatever I need to do to make a take-out double of clubs, which has attractions as it gets the spades in and leaves open clubs doubled as an option. For some pairs double and double is take-out and for others pass and double is takeout. Close between those two options IMHO.

So some people play 3♣ to show a constructive raise to 3+♦ and some use 3♥ for the same purpose do they? I'm so sorry that I failed to annotate so that you would know which way round we play the bids. I had hoped and (apparently foolishly) expected that everyone would have been able to work out that using a 3♥ bid to describe a hand worth a constructive raise to 3+♦, such that opener might wish to sign-off in 3♦ in response, would only appeal to someone who was, shall we say, a few sandwiches short of a picnic. It comes under the heading 'Bleeding Obvious' that 3♣ must be the bid to show the diamond raise, and 3♥ to show the spade force.

Three Clubs was a popular choice.

Smith: 3♣. The most sensible method is that the lowest available cue-bid of one of the opponents two suits shows a limit raise or better in partner's suit. (It wouldn't make much sense to have to bid Three Hearts here to show a raise to Three Diamonds or better, would it?) If all partner can do is sign off in Three Diamonds, I'll make one more try with Three Hearts but I'll let him out at the four-level if he cannot bid game over that. The alternative is, presumably, a splinter of Four Clubs, but that seems to ignore the fact that 3NT could easily be our best spot.

Rigal: 3♣. This shows a diamond raise, limit or better, and at our next turn we can if legal bid 3♥/♠. If they compete to 4♣ I guess I bid my major, if to 5♣ and partner does not double (this is a forcing pass position) I suppose 5♦?

Byrne: 3♣. Nice choice here between double, looking to take a penalty, and 3♣ to show a good diamond raise. Since partner never has enough clubs to make it worthwhile and we rate to hold a nine-card fit anyway I think I will show a raise, carrying on with 3♥ over 3♦ to probe for no trumps.

Green: 3♣. It would be helpful if double showed four spades but since this isn't part of ANBMS I will show a good raise and then either bid my spades later (thereby showing four of them) or bidding 3♥ showing a stopper and hoping partner can introduce a spade suit.

Bird: 3♣. I will indicate a sound diamond raise economically and continue with 3♥ over 3♦ to show the heart stopper. The hand is not strong enough for a 4♣ splinter bid, which would take us past 3NT anyway.

Carruthers: 3♣. Being a simple soul, I play this as forcing in diamonds. I avoid the splinter as spades could still be a playable spot and I'd like to give partner as much room as possible while telling him I have a good hand.

Cope: 3♣. Partner's suit – Unusual versus Unusual where the cue in the lower suit shows a good raise or better in the partner's suit. Will follow up with 3♥ over 3♦ if I get the chance to show the heart values.

Brock: Double. Please can I say that this seems to be the third problem in four where most partnerships have a proper agreement. I don't think there is a right or wrong answer. Here I would double, which for me shows four or more spades and invitational plus values. Next time, I plan to bid diamonds. If the opponents are going to bid strongly, it rates to be in clubs, so I should be able to introduce diamonds easily enough.

Most partnerships play Unusual over Unusual, which takes care of the meaning of everything except

double (or pass then double), and discussing what that should mean is part of the object of the exercise.

The following seem to share your preference for double being more looking for a spade fit than actively seeking a penalty:

Lawrence: Double. I may later volunteer 3♠ which should show something like this hand. Hopefully, partner will like knowing it

Rosen: Double. Again not standard I'm sure, but I like to play this as negative rather than penalty seeking. 3♣ of course should be a diamond raise, which we might bid here – but wanted to try double out to see what our panel thinks of such things!

Kokish: Double. Defined as general strength with at least two cards in partner's suit. Typically, it could be called a negative double, to help us find a four-four fit in an 'unshown' major, as here. With a pure PEN DBL of both their suits, I'd pass first and double later. I am not pretending that reversing the meanings of pass and double does not have its followers, but we're aiming for truth in advertising in this feature, so put me down for double.

Lambardi: Double. Cues of the opps' suits are usually played as some sort of raise in diamonds or forcing with spades, as opposed to a direct non-forcing 3♠. 4♣ could be the winning choice should it show this good a hand and should partner have the right hand-type to benefit from it. But there are too many possibilities to explore yet to make such a committed bid. We could belong in 3NT, 3♣ doubled or 3♥ doubled, 4♠, 5/6♦. I am not particularly keen on finding spades – I do notice that all the pips are sadistically low – but would be happy to raise partner if HIS pips will withstand the bad break.

Teramoto: Double. It shows cards and try to find a spade fit.

However:

Leufkens: Double. Indicating strength and potentially eager to double them. I'm not sure that I want to double 3♥, as South must have a big hand (vul vs not), but possibly criteria are different in UK.

Which implies that for Enri double expresses interest in taking a penalty. A lot of UK players are a little bit over-aggressive with their two-suited overcalls. I would certainly not rule out there being a useful penalty to be collected.

Sver: Double. I double them in 3♥ and bid 3♦ over 3♣. I think it is easier to find out about stoppers for 3NT this way, than bidding immediately 3♣ as forcing with diamond fit.

Cannell: Double. A willingness to penalize them in context. At least this way we can catch them in either hearts or clubs if appropriate. I will respect a double of a club contract if partner does that. Many things may happen after this double, and we will have to see how the auction proceeds from here.

Apteker: Double. While the four-card diamond suit is a negative, double at these colours seems like a good place to start.

So we have a number of votes for double being the start of a penalty hunt and a number of votes for its being more concerned with our constructive bidding. However, in most auctions it will serve equally well in both cases and does appear to be the most flexible option open to us.

Should double then double be penalty with pass then double for take-out, or should pass then double be the penalty-seeking option? I suspect that a fair number of pairs have not fully thought this through and it is certainly important to do so.

A number of panellists have mentioned the 4♣ splinter before rejecting it. However, for a few of our happy band 4♣ was the bid of choice.

Robson: 4♣. Hate to miss a splinter.

McGowan: 4♣. Splinter. Hate 4-4-4-1

distributions.

Alder: 4♣. This might miss 4♠ or 3NT, but maybe 5♦ diamonds is best (and its IMPs). Also, if we have a diamond slam, this bid will surely facilitate the auction.

That is true. When we belong in diamonds the splinter should help us to find the right level—5♦, 6♦ or 7♦. Nonetheless, I agree with those who say that it is too early to commit to diamonds facing what could be a weak no trump. 3NT or 4♠, defending 3♣ doubled or 3♥ doubled, are all ruled out by a splinter.

I think it's close between double—the most flexible action—and the 3♣ cue-bid, agreeing diamonds and after which we can still get to no trump or diamonds and maybe spades.

PROBLEM 5

IMPs. Dealer East. None Vul.

♠ AQ 105
♥ K4
♦ 7654
♣ A92

West	North	East	South
—	—	1♥	Double
Redouble	3♣*	4♥	Pass
?			
3♣	Pre-emptive		

Bid	Votes	Marks
4♠	13	10
5♣	3	8
4NT	2	6
Pass	3	5

This is a strange one. Our redouble showed strength but did not encourage him to go leaping around in hearts, so he must have a self-supporting suit. Why then did he not open 4♥? Presumably a bit too

strong—though I like my 4♥/♠ openings to be quite wide-ranging—let all three opponents have a problem. Or simply not distributional enough for a 4♥ opening. Some hands containing ♥AQJxxxx might open 4♥ if 1-7-4-1, but not if 2-7-2-2 or 2-7-3-1.

Had North bid at the two level, East would have had a forcing pass available to him and all immediate bids would have shown shape but only limited high-card strength. Are we still in a forcing situation after the pre-emptive 3♣ bid?

Carruthers: Pass. Immediate action by him after my Redouble shows extra distribution, but not high cards. With a better hand in terms of HCP, he should pass, then pull (if I doubled). The principle is the same as: 1♥ – (Dble) – Rdbl – (1♠) – 2♣/2♦/2♥ shows a weak distributional hand, whereas passing, then pulling, shows a good distributional hand. I hope we do not have to discuss this principle after his claiming 13 tricks after my dummy goes down. On this auction, the best he should have would be something like ♠xx, ♥AQJ10xxx, ♦KQ, ♣xx. He definitely should not have two outside aces/kings.

Yes, says John, pass would have been forcing. But, no, says Sally, who takes the same action (or inaction) anyway.

Brock: Pass. I don't think pass would be forcing from partner after the jump, so he is quite wide range, but I have no certainty at the five level. We could easily lose the first three diamonds, so I settle for the coward's pass.

Alder: Pass. Partner ought to have seven or eight strong hearts and a limited hand. Maybe 1=7=4=1. If 4♠ is definitely a control-bid, please change my answer. But we could easily be losing two diamonds, or one diamond and one club.

Well, you are obviously not confident so presumably would not risk it at the table, so I'll stick with

your original answer.

The rest all move towards slam with varying degrees of optimism.

Lawrence: 4NT. Simple bids are sometimes best.
Byrne: 4NT. I don't think I've ever had this sequence before but every attempt to construct partner's hand leads me to conclude he has a high diamond, that double tenace in spades calls out to me. As little as ♠Jx ♥AQJxxxx ♦Axx ♣x makes six odds on (in fact I think we will make seven if the cards are lying as expected) and I am sure a leap to game shows a bit more in the context of a redouble that often delivers shortage in hearts.

4NT is indeed the simple approach, but the popular choice was 4♠.

Robson: 4♠. 6♥ about to make on the double spade finesse, I imagine.

Green: 4♠. Slam could be cold and the spade finesse rates to be right so I will start cue-bidding. I think 4♠ here should (in theory at least) also promise a club control as how else can I be making a slam try without a control in their suit.

You might have strong diamonds and weak clubs and bid 4♠, surely? You would be eager to give partner an opportunity to show that he has the essential club control.

Mould: 4♠. So pard has a hand better than a preempt. I am assuming that Pass of Three Clubs would not be forcing, but that is not 100% relevant here. If pard has ♠KJx ♥AQJxxxx ♦x ♣xx slam is cold; ♠KJx ♥AQJxxxx ♦xx ♣x we can stop in five and ♠KJx ♥AQJxxxx ♦xxx ♣ – I had better pass Four Hearts! Using the usual rule about whether it is more likely to go down in five than make six I think I am worth this advance. If partner has both minors controlled RKCB should sort things out; if only clubs we can hopefully get away with Five Hearts and if only diamonds partner will bid

Five Diamonds and I will bid the slam. I cannot see the upside in just punting it as South is very likely to have at least two of the top diamonds if we are off those and so will lead one.

Bird: 4♠. If there is any reason not to make the cheapest cue-bid, I cannot see it. If partner cue-bids 5♦, I will bid 6♥ next.

McGowan: 4♠. Cue – I can hardly have a suit good enough to fight with his. If he has ♠xx ♥AQJxxxx ♦Axx ♣x there is play for 6♥ and he might be better than that.

Rosen: 4♠. Provided partner treats this as a cue-bid (surely my ox couldn't get this wrong?!)

Apteker: 4♠. The five level may not be safe but I have just a bit too much to pass with three key-cards and well placed spade honours so I need to make one move. Opposite ♠Jxx ♥AQJ10xxx ♦Kx ♣x, the slam should make if either spades break or on the diamond/spade squeeze.

Smith: 4♠. A cue-bid agreeing hearts – Five Clubs should surely deny a spade control. I am not at all a fan of the redouble which, for me, shows an interest in penalizing at least two of the opponents suits (which I clearly don't have here) and strongly suggests a shortage in partner's suit. Despite thinking I have that sort of hand, partner has still leapt to game in his suit. I now have a very slam-suitable hand with, presumably, 'the' missing trump honour, first round control of North's suit and an excellent spade holding over South's likely honour(s) there. Second choice Six Hearts (which is where I expect to end up).

Kokish: 4♠. With a spade suit I'd have bid 1♠. With no club control I might not risk going past 4♥, so East should not be overly worried about clubs, although it is a good bet that he is short there. East doesn't need much for slam, e.g. ♠Jxx ♥AQJ10xxx ♦Ax ♣x with the ♠K almost certainly

onside.

Sver: 4♠. With my spade holding like this we certainly have at least six if we don't lack AK of diamonds which is not completely improbable after the double, so I'd better start finding out.

Teramoto: 4♠. It is a cue-bid and slam try in hearts.

Cannell: 4♠. Partner's Four Heart bid shows an awful lot of hearts, but not a great high-card strength leap since Three Hearts would be a game-force after the Three Club intervention. My Four Spades is a cue-bid in support of hearts, and definite slam interest. I am hoping for either 4NT = RKCB, or a Five Diamond cue-bid from partner. I will answer three key-cards if 4NT, or bid Six Clubs after a Five Diamond advance.

Leufkens: 4♠. Partner indicates extra strength (3♥ would not have been forcing) and will probably have short clubs, plus spade finesses are likely to be working. Can be slam on minimal value (♠Jx, ♥AQxxxx, ♦Axx, ♣x).

Four Spades does look obvious, doesn't it – lowest cue-bid and all that – but a minority think it more helpful to show the club control.

Cope: 5♣. Worth a slam try with any spade finesse if needed likely to be right, and leaving room for partner to show the ♦ control.

Rigal: 5♣. I think one slam try is sufficient here, and cue-bidding their suit looks best rather than 4♠, when partner might fear we had no club control.

Lambardi: 5♣. Not (too) worried about the five-level and as little as ♠Jxx ♥AQxxxx ♦Kx ♣x gives us a fair shot at 12 tricks, with some good card-reading in the five-card ending. ♦A and ♠K likely to be with RHO. Can partner have both ♥AQ AND ♦A AND controls in both minors? Not in my book but an eight-card suit + ♠J will do the trick – provided he has the diamond control, of course. What about stiff ♣Q after the underlead of ♣K? If his

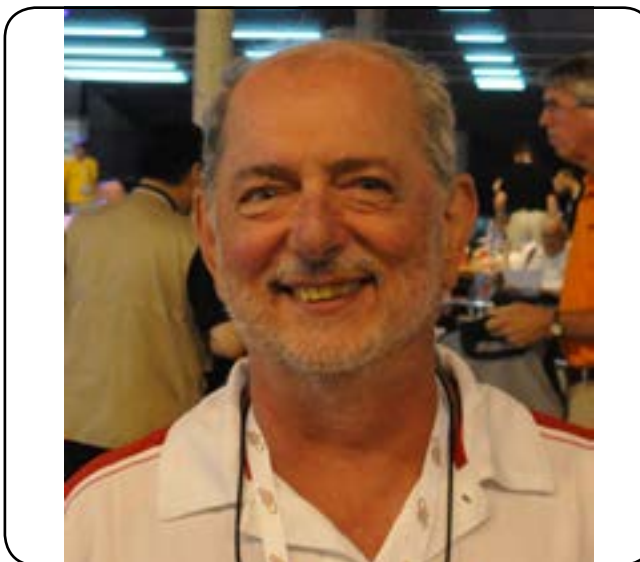
hearts are something like ♥AJxxxxx he must have some bits and pieces to justify his choice of 1♥ rather than 4♥ as opening.

So we have a number of issues. Firstly, is pass still forcing when the opposition bid to the three level? If the 3♣ bid was constructive, as would have been the case without the redouble, I could understand pass not being forcing. But why should a pre-emptive jump take away all our agreements? We may regret it once in a while, but it looks right to continue to play pass as forcing. We surely will have a fit somewhere so should not get in too much trouble.

Then we have the issue of whether 3♥ is forcing or not. Well, if pass is forcing and 3♥ is therefore a limited distributional hand, I don't see why it should be forcing—certainly encouraging partner to raise to game, but that is all.

If 3♥ is non-forcing then a hand that wishes to play game facing any old nine-count without a fit needs either to pass then bid or jump to 4♥ over the opposing 3♣. Presumably again, the immediate jump to 4♥ is limited and shapely with a good suit, the delayed bid promising better high-card values. Exactly what hand opener can hold will depend on what type of hand he would be more inclined to open at the four level. I would, for example, consider ♠x, ♥AQJ10xxx, ♦Kxxx, ♣x to be a routine down-the-middle 4♥ opening. Likewise any 7-4 hand with a good main suit and minimum opening values. I would be inclined therefore, in my personal style, to think that partner was more likely to be 7-(3-2-1) than 7-(4-1-1).

So are we worth a move towards slam? The panel is 85% in favour of some move, with Phillip also wanting to go on if he could be sure that 4♠ would be a cue-bid. I think it must be. Any hand containing a spade suit worth bidding naturally in this auction would surely have started with 1♠ over the double. Please don't tell me that you play that as non-forcing.



John Carruthers

That is a truly horrible agreement to have.

The majority go for the obvious 4♠ cue-bid, but we have a minority vote for 5♣. In so many situations, bypassing 4♠ would deny a spade control, but is it likely that we would be able to bid on with nothing in spades? We surely cannot have much club strength so would have to have very good diamonds—and that would leave partner with weak diamonds and unable to drive to slam, so we should be safe in cue-bidding clubs rather than spades. Meanwhile, suppose that we bid 4♠ and partner cue-bids 5♣, no doubt a shortage. That seems a very likely scenario, and what is West to do now with his four little diamonds? After all, partner's 5♣ would be a pretty automatic cue-bid, the sort made whenever he has a club control without giving much thought to the rest of his hand. There is definite merit in bidding 5♣ rather than 4♠, but of course you cannot do it if your partnership has hard inflexible rules which would mean that 5♣ denied a spade control.

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		

Bid	Votes	Marks
Double	9	10
5♦	7	9
6♦	4	8
4NT	1	7

Isn't that just typical—the best hand we've picked up all weekend and the bidding has reached the four level before we can even get started to describe it.

A couple of panellists recognize where the hand came from:

Lawrence: Double. Isn't this hand from the Dallas Nationals, around 1995? Slam in diamonds requires a deep intra-finesse in spades if the defense leads hearts, not clubs. Anyway, I double. All bids have risks.

Rigal: 5♦. At any other vulnerability this might be a double. If I'm Helgemo I bid 6♦ and plan the intra-finesse, if my memory from Dallas 1997 serves me well. (facing ♠97x ♥xxxx ♦K10xx ♣xx). Well remembered Barry, but trust me—you aren't Helgemo.

Carruthers: Double. Hoping to hear (see) Four Spades, but willing to convert Five Clubs to Five Diamonds. More of a problem with the minor-suits reversed.

Cannell: Double. This feels like the most flexible

call at the moment. How many panellists will use that word ‘flexible’? :) Our next bid will be the real problem, if there is a next bid. Partner may pass, or bid Four Spades, or bid 4NT, or bid Five Clubs, etc.

Rosen: Double – hope partner bids!

McGowan: Double. If he bids 4♠ I shall run to 5♦ – must show this hand surely? (He won’t dare pass....)

Robson: Double. Only just restraining myself from potting 6♦.

Leufkens: Double. Hate to lose spades. Partner is supposed to take-out take-out doubles. Alternative would not be 5♦ (as 4♥ will go down probably if partners doesn’t bid so has three-plus spades) but 6♦. That’s too much for me.

Green: Double. If it goes all pass then it could be a blood bath for them and if partner bids 4♠ then I am well placed to make a move towards slam. 5♦ will end the auction almost all of the time.

Byrne: Double. I have to get to a spade fit where one exists, and I can convert clubs to diamonds if needs be, it also lets partner pass when he has Q108x trumps and nothing else (which isn’t that uncommon when 2♥ only shows five, people often raise it like a weak two). Double is a bit of a two-edged sword since partner may well pass with ♠Qxx, ♥Jxx, ♦Kxx, ♣Kxxx and collecting 100 or 300 against our lay-down grand will be disappointing. However, it pays to be cautious after these two-suited things since every suit breaks badly.

Several panellists mention the possibility of partner passing a double, with Ben being the only one who is really comfortable with the notion. Partner will pass with a lot of balanced hands – pretty well any containing fewer than four spades for a start, and that means with some diamond length. The penalty could be quite inadequate, so double is a bit of a gamble – great if

partner bids spades and we can move towards slam, possibly with a very disappointing outcome if partner passes and we collect a small penalty.

So a vocal minority prefer to bid the long and quite imposing diamond suit.

Mould: 5♦. I think I have seen this hand (or one very similar) in the SBU magazine recently. I bid Five Diamonds then and scored almost nothing for it. Learning nothing, I bid Five Diamonds again. If partner has (say) ♠xxx ♥xxx ♦Kxxx ♣xxx they will pass Four Hearts doubled for want of anything better to do. If diamonds are 2-0 that is cold with us cold for Five Diamonds.

No, probably not the SBU magazine, but you may well have seen it before.

Bird: 5♦. I dare say a testosterone-fuelled bidding panel will venture 6♦, claiming ‘North/South will go to 6♥ anyway’. But 300 or 500 against 6♥ may be a poor return.

Apteker: 5♦. Double as the main alternative, allowing for partner to pass and keeping spades in the picture may result by default as all pass without sufficient compensation at these colours. 5♦ has the advantages that partner could raise to slam or the opponents may still bid 5♥ which partner may then double or pass my double or if partner has spades, 5♦ should then make anyway.

Smith: 5♦. Of course, it could be right to double, bid Six Diamonds or bid Four Spades (or Six Spades), but they are all shots in the dark. As the Irishman replied when asked for directions, ‘Well, I wouldn’t start from here.’ Forget trying to get the best possible result and settle for the action that will get you the best result possible. The opponents have made you start bidding at the four-level, so guessing that partner will have the two or three key cards needed to make slam decent just seems like too big a position. Indeed, even Five Diamonds

could go for 800, but passing is just too much of a pessimistic position.

Sver: 5♦. 60% 5♦, 40% Double. With double I will end up in 4♥ doubled always with his balanced hand when our diamonds are surely a better contract, while with 5♦ I will end up one down when we had 500. It depends also who my opponents are ☺

Teramoto: 5♦. It may lose slam, but 6♦ is an overbid.

Five Diamonds looks to be a very sound choice but, as mentioned, could lead to a missed slam. Some prefer to guess high:

Brock: 6♦. Let’s go for it!

Alder: 6♦. Let’s go for it! If I double, partner is likely to pass, for better or for worse.

Cope: 6♦. A bit pushy but if we bid it confidently enough they may take the push to 6♥. We need so little in so many possible places to make slam and we cannot expect partner to realise that ♠QJxxx is enough for slam.

Lambardi: 6♦. Can see no way of finding spades if that is where we belong. Double risks a pass from partner when we make a game/slam our way and 5♥ would leave me guessing even if partner does bid spades. Would that not show a two-suiter where 5♠ only guarantees three cards? Could I go on to 6♦ then to show strong diamonds with secondary spades?. Might try it at the table if the result didn’t matter and I felt peculiarly mean towards partner at that point. Bidding 6♦ will work both if it makes and if opponents take a phantom save.

And finally:

Kokish: 4NT. Although a case could be made for playing this as natural or even Blackwood, there is more money in using it to introduce a number of hands unwilling to have partner pass a take-out double with random weakness. Will East know

to raise my 5♦ over her 5♣ when we can make a slam? Or to convert to spades when that is right? Tune in tomorrow night for the next episode of ‘As the stomach turns’.

I would expect Eric to have some interesting ideas in many situations and sure enough he comes up with one here. I'm not sure how often 4NT followed by 5♦ over 5♣ is going to solve our problem, but it's certainly an interesting idea. I would think that the 'standard' meaning of 4NT would be a genuine minor two-suiter. In that case, would 4NT followed by 5♦ over 5♣ be a way to show a strong 5♦ bid? That is sort of what Eric is implying, though the difference would be in regard to whether the sequence implied any spade length or was only about diamonds.

PROBLEM 7

IMPs. Dealer West. None Vul.

♠ 6
♥ AK97
♦ AKQ95
♣ AJ7

West	North	East	South
1♦	1♠	3♦*	3♠
?			
3♦	Pre-emptive		

Bid	Votes	Marks
4♣	10	10
Double	5	8
4♠	3	7
4♥	1	6
5♦	1	5
6♦	1	5

Sver: Double. No other bid.

Well, the panel managed to find no fewer than five alternatives, but you did have significant support from:

Leufkens: Double. If partner has a spade stopper, I want to be in 3NT. Otherwise probably 5♦. Partner won't pass without a very suitable hand to defend in my book.

Cope: Double. I am on my way to 5♦ anyway, but as partner has already pre-empted maybe they can find a 4♣ bid with ♠xx ♥xx ♦Jxxx ♣KQxxx that will get us to slam.

Kokish: Double. Buy some time rather than guess between 5♦, 6♦, and 4♣ (whether 4♥ should be 6-5 NF or a NAT slam try is not one every partnership has had time to discuss). And might we not do best defending 3♠ doubled if East passes?

Rosen: Double. Maybe partner can essay 3NT.

This next was the popular choice:

Green: 4♣. Long suit game try, playing opposite Brian 4♦ may be high enough! I considered double but I think that may be penalty in BMS.

Of those who address this issue most seem not to think so, and certainly double is the most flexible option.

Robson: 4♣. ♠xxx ♥xx ♦xxxx ♣Kxxx is a playable slam. Let's test partner's reaction to this naturalish bid, a game try as it stands.

Rigal: 4♣. Initially a game try but if partner co-operates I may (will?) bid slam.

Lawrence: 4♠. I need something useful in clubs and 4♠ is the only bid that is likely to get that information. If partner does bid 5♣, I will bid 6♦.

Carruthers: Four Clubs. Just on the off-chance he has a club fit with me. If not, I'll settle for Five Diamonds and hope to make it doubled. On a very bad day, he'll have a 1=3=5=4 Yarborough. Nevertheless, I've got to go to at least the five level: how can he tell that a 2=2=5=4 Yarborough gives me a decent play for game, more so if he has the ten of clubs or better?

Alder: 4♣. A sort-of game-try. If partner bids 4♦

I will raise to five. If he jumps to game, I will venture 6♦.

But, if it is a game try, does it necessarily promise clubs—or is it the only game try available below 4♦, in which case it says nothing about clubs?

Cannell: 4♣. Cue-bid in an attempt to leave as much room as possible for partner. If N/S remain silent, and partner bids Four Diamonds I will continue with Four Hearts. If partner then cue-bids Five Clubs or Four Spades I will try Six Diamonds. I will pass Five Diamonds if that is all partner is able to do. If North bids Four Spades it will be more difficult unless partner is able to cue-bid Five Clubs there as well.

Mould: 4♣. I will start here and see what that gets me. If Five Diamonds I will bid a slam, if Four Diamonds I will carry on with Four Hearts and my ox may get the idea I have a good hand. I doubt any of this will get me anywhere as it seems unlikely I can identify what I need. Maybe I should just bid Six Diamonds as a Landy slam try, but as Brian will know, that ain't my style.

Bird: 4♣. With five or six diamonds headed by the jack, partner will bid 3♦ whether or not he has useful cards in hearts and clubs. I will 'make an effort' with 4♣, without much hope of hearing anything useful.

Apteker: 4♣. I am going to game but will explore slam along the way. If partner bids 4♦, I will bid 4♥. If partner bids 5♣, I will bid 6♦ but will pass a jump to 5♦. I considered doubling as a strength showing game try but I am not clear that any follow up sequences will give me a better picture than the 4♣ route and I will not leave in 3NT.

Byrne: 4♣. This is a pretty pointless bid since I am sure I am going to end up punting a slam anyway, but it rarely hurts to start with the cheapest bid. I think double in this sequence just shows a

good hand (basically saying I would have liked to cue-bid 3♠ to ask for a stop) but I don't really want to risk partner passing (admittedly unlikely) when I have so much. Holding the full 21, I think everyone must be shapely, and given that partner doesn't appear to have a singleton spade he rates to hold five diamonds and a few working points, either ♠xxx, ♥QJx, ♦Jxxxx, ♣xx will do or ♠xx, ♥xx, ♦xxxxx, ♣KQxx will be plenty as well.

Well then:

Brock: 6♦. Did it work on the previous board? I could get into a habit with this!

But:

Smith: 5♦. Give him as little as ♠xx ♥Qxx ♦Jxxxx ♣Kx and we are cold for Six Diamonds, but give him an equally reasonable Three Diamond bid of ♠xx ♥xxx ♦Jxxxx ♣Kxx and Five Diamonds may go one down. I don't see how I can find out when partner has exactly two hearts or short clubs, so I take the middle position. The problem with bidding Four Spades now is that if he then cue-bids Five Clubs I still won't be much wiser.

Then there were a couple of other definite slam tries:

McGowan: 4♥. Another chance to torture partner. Then I can berate him for not cueing clubs with ♠xxx ♥Qx ♦Jxxxx ♣Kxx.

Lambardi: 4♠. I seem to be feeling very slammish today. 4♣ would tend to show a second suit and I do not want partner to feel happy about his ♣Q. Plus, there may be some confusion later about the spade control (especially if the opponents bid 4♠ themselves). Will continue to 6♦ over partner's 5♣. Should he bid 5♣ with a singleton and 4NT with ♣K? Or would that show ♥K? I would much prefer the king, as a singleton club might leave me with a third-round heart loser. Partner is likely to be either 3-2-5-3 or 3-3-5-2. If he has only four diamonds

we may go off in 5♦ but since I was going to bid it no matter what it makes no difference. Would he know to raise to six with ♥Q if I bid 5♦ over 5♣? He knows I would not expect him to hold the ace but would he fear I need the king, with, e.g. ♠Jxx, ♥Qxx, ♦Jxxxxx, ♠x? After a positive move from him (5♣), 5♦ could not possibly be a sign-off.

Teramoto: 4♠. It is a cue-bid and slam try.

I would not want to commit to slam, nor would I feel comfortable just bidding game without giving partner a chance to show something which would convince me to bid 6♦. He should co-operate quite aggressively as his 3♦ promised almost nothing, so a couple of good cards outside spades should wake him up and we will be off to the races. Of course, facing three low hearts we could still have two unavoidable losers, as suggested by Marc.

I think, simply because it leaves the maximum space to explore, that 4♣ would be my choice, even though it is initially only a game try.

PROBLEM 8

IMPs. Dealer West. E/W Vul.

♠ AQ8
♥ K
♦ AJ103
♣ AQ1065

	West	North	East	South
	1♣	Pass	1♥	Pass
	2♦	Pass	4♥	Pass
	?			

Bid	Votes	Marks
Pass	10	10
4NT	7	8
4♠	2	6
5♥	2	6

Green: 4NT. Partner didn't bid 4♥ over 1♣ so must have something more than a pre-empt. Opposite ♠Kx ♥AQJxxxxx ♦xx ♣x, I'm cold for 7NT so I think I must make a move and keycard seems the obvious choice.

Mould: 4NT. OK, so partner has more than a Four Heart response over One Club, but curiously not enough for a Three Heart jump over Two Diamonds. It is thus hard to work out what partner is showing. Is partner trying to show long bad hearts in an otherwise reasonable hand? Say ♠Kx ♥Jxxxxxx ♦KQx ♣x. If so that is too deep for me (and why should Four Hearts be right on that hand opposite a minor suit reverse anyway?). I shall let Blackwood do the walking and bid hearts at the appropriate level (probably six).

I'm not convinced by the argument that partner has a hand that was too good for an immediate 4♥ response. Such a hand would have too much slam potential and could surely have jumped to 3♥ over 2♦, leaving space for exploration. I would expect the actual sequence to be a hand with self-supporting hearts which only became good enough for game when opener showed extras via the reverse. It seems that I am in good company or, at least, plenty of it.

Cannell: Pass. Good luck partner. Since both Two Hearts and Three Hearts are forcing, this Four Heart bid is a ton of hearts and a very bad hand in context.

Cope: Pass. The best hand I might hope for is ♥AQJ10xxx, the worst ♥QJ10xxxxx – opposite the first we may have play for slam on the spade finesse, on the second I do not feel safe at the five level – so cowardice is the better part of valour here.

Smith: Pass. Four Hearts is not in any way encouraging, since he had both Two Hearts and, presumably, Three Hearts, available as forcing bids. For this jump to Four Hearts I expect something like

♠xxx ♥QJ109xxxx ♦xxx ♣–. Yes, we could still be old for slam, but we're not favourites.

Lambardi: Pass. If both 2♥ and 3♥ would be forcing, 4♥ should show a truly hopeless hand. Trumps are likely to be threadbare as with a semi-solid suit he would be content with a lower bid. Even if we did have seven trump tricks we would still have only ten in total – two more would need to be found in the side suits. An unsuccessful first-round finesse on the lead may leave us stranded in dummy after the obvious heart return. Coming back with a ruff would deprive us of one of our options. On a bad day even 5♥ could be in jeopardy if we lose two tricks in trumps. With 3-7-2-1 and almost any quality in hearts he should bid 4♥ after all.

Teramoto: Pass. He knows I made reverse. He doesn't have a hand that is too good.

Leufkens: Pass. Easy. There should be alternative bids if partner is stronger than minimal. I expect QJ10xxxx and a king.

Kokish: Pass. Do we want to gamble that we will have time to develop two extra tricks if the opening lead gives us a tempo? Would East respond 4♥ to 1♣ with ♥AQJ10xxx and out, or is he showing that suit with his delayed jump to 4♥? Or does he have QJ10 to eight with perhaps a side jack? In real life this is one we would have discussed, perhaps in the context of 1♣ – 1♥; 2♦ – 3♥ showing at worst a one-loser suit (opposite a void).

While the above convinces me, there are plenty of voices in favour of the alternative belief that responder is stronger than had he jumped to 4♥ at his first turn.

Carruthers: 4NT. Not Five Hearts, which he'd pass with queen-jack-to-eight hearts and an outside king. Since he did not bid Four Hearts directly over One Club, I presume that he's showing a better

hand than that would have shown. He could have queen-jack to eight to bid Four Hearts directly over One Club.

Lawrence: 4NT. I expect that if partner shows one key card, I can continue with a queen ask which should find a king as well, allowing me to choose between 6♥ and 7♥.

Robson: 4NT. Six or Seven Hearts. Let's find out in the simple way.

Rigal: 4NT. Keycard, then onwards and upwards.

Alder: 4NT. This is slightly risky, but seems tolerable to me – if not to partner!

Well, yes, if we believe partner to have a good hand then 4NT is the simple way forward, but some prefer a less committal approach:

Bird: 4♠. Partner could have bid a forcing 2♥ or a forcing 3♥. What am I to make of 4♥? I don't really know. I will hedge my bets with a spade cue-bid, hoping that 5♥ will not be too high.

Byrne: 4♠. I owe partner one try given my heart is the king and I have loads of controls, plus the ♦10 is a nice card. I am at a bit of a loss to work out what partner has when he presumably could have bid 4♥ over 1♣, my guess is he has a weaker suit. Maybe ♠J9xx ♥QJ109xxx ♦K ♣x? Hopefully we won't play a slam facing that, but we will if he has ♠Kxx, ♥QJ109xxxx, ♦xx, ♣– or similar.

Or perhaps a more general try:

Sver: 5♥. Having quite a few HCP and a king of hearts more than promised, I think my hand deserves one more bid.

McGowan: 5♥. Last torture. 'Must' show all the controls so if he has an extra king he should bid on.

Yes, 5♥ as an 'all the controls' bid is quite convincing. We do have a spare king, but might we also bid 5♥ with the ♦K and a small singleton heart if we believe partner's hearts to be self-supporting?

My sympathies, as you will have gathered, are with

the group who say that responder is weaker than an immediate 4♥ response, and that leads me to favour a Pass, with 5♥ my choice if I did bid on. However, I cannot remember ever having this sequence, though I suppose that in 45 years of bridge I probably have had it at some point. It is understandable, therefore, that a number of panellists are unsure as to just what to expect.

A tight battle with Drew Cannell and Ben Green tying on 77, a point ahead of Alan Mould and Tadashi Teramoto. Well done to them. How did you get on at home?



Drew Cannell

SET 5 – THE PANEL'S BIDS & MARKS



Ben Green

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
Drew Cannell	Canada	3♣	3♥	3♦	Dble	4♠	Dble	4♣	Pass	77
Ben Green	England	3♣	4♥	3♦	3♣	4♠	Dble	4♣	4NT	77
Alan Mould	England	3♣	4♥	3♦	3♣	4♠	5♦	4♣	4NT	76
Tadashi Teramoto	Japan	3♣	4♥	3♦	Dble	4♠	5♦	4♠	Pass	76
Eric Kokish	Canada	3♣	4♥	3♦	Dble	4♠	4NT	Dble	Pass	75
John Carruthers	Canada	3♣	4♥	3♦	3♣	Pass	Dble	4♣	4NT	74
Neil Rosen	England	3♣	3♠	3♦	Dble	4♠	Dble	Dble	Pass	74
Nikica Sver	Croatia	3♣	4♥	3♦	Dble	4♠	5♦	Dble	5♥	73
Andrew Robson	England	3♣	4♥	3♦	4♣	4♠	Dble	4♣	4NT	73
Alon Apteker	South Africa	2NT	Pass	3♦	Dble	4♠	5♦	4♣	Pass	71
Michael Byrne	England	3♣	3♥	3♦	3♣	4NT	Dble	4♣	4♠	71
Enri Leufkens	Netherlands	2NT	Pass	3♦	Dble	4♠	Dble	Dble	Pass	70
Barry Rigal	USA	3♣	Pass	3♦	3♣	5♣	5♦	4♣	4NT	70
Tim Cope	South Africa	3♣	3♥	3♦	3♣	5♣	6♦	Dble	Pass	70
Pablo Lambardi	Argentina	3♣	3♠	3♦	Dble	5♣	6♦	4♠	Pass	69
Mike Lawrence	USA	3♣	3♥	3♦	Dble	4NT	Dble	4♠	4NT	68
Sally Brock	England	3♣	4♥	3♦	Dble	Pass	6♦	6♦	Pass	68
Liz McGowan	Scotland	3♣	4♥	3♦	4♣	4♠	Dble	4♥	5♥	67
Phillip Alder	USA	3♣	4♥	3♦	4♣	Pass	6♦	4♣	4NT	66
David Bird	England	Pass	Pass	3♦	3♣	4♠	5♦	4♣	4♠	64
Marc Smith	England	Pass	Pass	3♦	3♣	4♠	5♦	5♦	Pass	63



Master Point Bidding Battle Competition – Set 7

Open to All – Free Entry

PROBLEM 1

IMPs. Dealer East. None Vul.

♠ AQ
♥ 98632
♦ 10643
♣ J8

West	North	East	South
–	–	1♣	Pass
1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass
1NT	Pass	2♠	Pass
?			

PROBLEM 2

IMPs. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

♠ AQ7
♥ KQJ9854
♦ J62
♣ –

West	North	East	South
–	2♠*	3♦	3♠
?			
2♠	Weak		

PROBLEM 3

IMPs. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

♠ J87
♥ AQ1053
♦ 107
♣ K86

West	North	East	South
–	–	–	2♦*
Pass	2♥*	4NT*	Pass
5♣	5♦	Double	Pass
Pass	5♥	Double	5♠
?			

2♦ Mult; 2♥ Pass or correct
4NT Minors

PROBLEM 4

IMPs. Dealer West. E/W Vul.

♠ KQJ87
♥ AKQ98
♦ 4
♣ Q8

West	North	East	South
1♠	5♦	Pass	Pass
?			

PROBLEM 5

IMPs. Dealer East. None Vul.

♠ 7
♥ 10876
♦ 94
♣ AQ9753

West	North	East	South
–	–	1♥	Double
?			

PROBLEM 6

IMPs. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ A2
♥ AJ873
♦ 82
♣ A987

West	North	East	South
–	–	1♦	Pass
1♥	Pass	3NT*	Pass
?			

3NT Based on long and strong, but not necessarily solid, diamonds

PROBLEM 7

IMPs. Dealer East. None Vul.

♠ KQ7
♥ J6543
♦ AJ1097
♣ –

West	North	East	South
–	–	1♣	Pass
1♥	Pass	2♥	3♣
?			

PROBLEM 8

IMPs. Dealer North. All Vul.

♠ 85
♥ AQ98
♦ 10
♣ KQ9732

West	North	East	South
–	3♠	Double	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
July 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 West. Both Vul.

♠ QJ853
♥ AKJ
♦ —
♣ 108753

Hand 2. Dealer North. None Vul.

♠ 7
♥ A976532
♦ A3
♣ Q43

South overcalls 2♠

Hand 3. Dealer North. Both Vul.

♠ 63
♥ A8
♦ KQJ10932
♣ J10

North opens 1♣ and South bids 1♠

Hand 4. Dealer West. Both Vul

♠ AK63
♥ AQJ4
♦ KJ54
♣ 2

Hand 5. Dealer East. Both Vul.

♠ K973
♥ AK43
♦ 1075
♣ 92

Hand 6. Dealer West. Both Vul.

♠ QJ10984
♥ AK6
♦ AJ3
♣ Q

North overcalls 1NT and South jumps to 3NT.

Hand 7. Dealer East. None Vul.

♠ AK2
♥ 10
♦ AQ10654
♣ J98

South overcalls 1♥ if possible. If East opens 1NT South bids 2♣ (Majors)

Hand 8. Dealer South. Both Vul.

♠ AKQJ
♥ A98
♦ —
♣ Q86542

South opens 2♦ Multi. If West doubles North bids 3♥ 'Pass or correct'.

MASTER POINT BIDDING BATTLE



Results - Set 5

This was the last set arranged by Alan Mould. Several readers noticed this and sent messages of thanks to Alan.

This month's winner was **Mike Perkins** with 76 points. He receives a voucher of £40. A triple tie on 75 points was resolved by lot to give **Alan Sant** £30, **Jeff Callaghan** £20 and **David Barnes** £10.

Other Good Scores

74 Tony Poole

73 Michael Prior, Mark Bartusek

72 Dominic Connolly, Nigel Guthrie, Rodney Lighton

70 Alex Athanasiadis, Norman Massey, James Carpenter

Grand Prix standings:

There are currently 22 readers who have sent in five sets of answers. In the months ahead we will see changes at the top of the table as bad scores are eliminated. The top eleven scorers currently are:

Mark Bartusek	361
Michael Prior	350
Stuart Nelson	350
Mike Ralph	349
Nigel Guthrie	347
David Barnes	342
Andrew King	340
Peter Barker	337
Bill Linton	334
Colin Brown	331
Dudley Leigh	330

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.

XXI MADEIRA INTERNATIONAL BRIDGE OPEN

VIDAMAR RESORT HOTEL MADEIRA

1ST – 12TH NOVEMBER 2018

PRE-TOURNAMENT EVENTS:

1ST - 3RD NOVEMBER

MAIN EVENTS: 6TH - 11TH NOVEMBER

WARM-UP: 5TH NOVEMBER

COOL-DOWN: 12TH NOVEMBER



A grand slam of pleasures

Since the seeds of tourism were sown in the early 19th century, Madeira has grown famous as a holiday destination. The temperate climate, the natural beauty of the island and the lush landscapes ... combine these with Madeira's cosmopolitan and welcoming people and it's an unforgettable experience for visitors. It is in this wonderful setting that the Madeira Bridge Association is hosting the 21st Madeira International Bridge Open, in partnership with the VidaMar Resort and Intertours.

Do you love playing against good opponents?

Then today's your lucky day: some top players will once again be in Funchal for the 21st Madeira International Bridge Open.

Come and enjoy good bridge in a hotel that measures up to the occasion.

VidaMar's rooms all have sea views.

Natural daylight floods the public areas and the playing-rooms. The VidaMar Resort Hotel Madeira offers many leisure and sports facilities, including restaurants and bars, indoor and outdoor swimming pools, a sauna, a whirlpool and a fitness centre. It is also home to the sensational Thalasso Sea Spa.

VidaMar Resort Hotel Madeira

Estrada Monumental 175 - 177
9000-100 Funchal - Madeira
Tel: (+351) 291 768 447 | Fax: (+351) 291 768 449
E-mail: sales@madeira.vdm.pt
Website: www.vidamarresorts.com

INTERTOURS: RESERVATIONS

Tânia Cruz or Rosana Pereira
Tel.: (+351) 291 208 906 (direct) or
(+351) 291 208 900 Fax: (+351) 291 225 020
E-mail: groups@intertours.com.pt
Website: www.intertours.com.pt

Bridge package includes:

- 7 nights' stay including breakfast
- Entry fees for both main events (Pairs and Teams)
- Airport transfers
- Welcome cocktail party
- Prize-giving and gala dinner
- 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
Early booking (1) (by 31 st July)	€ 637.50	€ 928.00
Extra nights (per person per night)	€ 49.50	€ 91.00
Standard bridge rate (1) (bookings from 1 st August)	€ 708.00	€ 1030.00
Extra nights (per person per night)	€ 55.00	€ 101.00

PRICES (1) OTHER HOTELS

Price per person
for 7-night package

DOUBLE (2) B&B

€ 463.00

SINGLE B&B

€ 603.00

- (1) Package price per person, 7 nights
- (2) Minimum occupancy 2 persons

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
July 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 West. Both Vul.

♠ AK72
♥ Q42
♦ AK765
♣ 4

Hand 2. Dealer North. None Vul.

♠ AJ5
♥ K108
♦ KQJ
♣ KJ76

South overcalls 2♠

Hand 3. Dealer North. Both Vul.

♠ AQ85
♥ KQ1062
♦ A64
♣ 3

North opens 1♣ and South bids 1♠

Hand 4.. Dealer West. Both Vul

♠ Q
♥ 102
♦ AQ863
♣ AJ1087

Hand 5. Dealer East. Both Vul.

♠ QJ10864
♥ 52
♦ AK
♣ 853

Hand 6. Dealer West. Both Vul.

♠ A765
♥ 97
♦ 10654
♣ J98

North overcalls 1NT and South jumps to 3NT.

Hand 7. Dealer East. None Vul.

♠ Q83
♥ AK6
♦ KJ9
♣ A542

South overcalls 1♥ if possible. If East opens 1NT
South bids 2♣ (Majors)

Hand 8. Dealer South. Both Vul.

♠ 8
♥ Q
♦ KQ87432
♣ AK73

South opens 2dx Multi. If West doubles North bids
3hx 'Pass or correct'.

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.