

A NEW BRIDGE MAGAZINE



Enterprising Tales
Letter From Germany
Deals That Caught My Eye

EDITION 10
October 2018

A NEW BRIDGE MAGAZINE

Editor:

Mark Horton

Advertising:

Mark Horton

Photographers:

Ron Tacchi

Francesca Canali

Proofreaders:

Danny Roth

Monika Kummel

Herman De Wael

Typesetter:

Ron Tacchi

A NEW BRIDGE Magazine is published monthly.

Views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the Editor. Editorial contributions will be published at the Editor's discretion and may be shortened if space is limited.

No parts of this publication may be reproduced without the prior express permission of the publishers. All rights reserved. ©2018

Advertisements: Although staff of A New Bridge Magazine take all reasonable precautions to protect the interests of readers by ensuring as far as practicable that advertisements in the pages of A New Bridge Magazine are bona fide, the magazine cannot accept any undertaking in respect of claims made against advertisers. Legal remedies are available if redress is sought, and readers who have complaints should address them to the advertiser. Readers should note that prices advertised may not be accurate due to currency exchange rate fluctuations or tax changes

Across the Pond

The attention of the bridge world is currently focused on Orlando, the location of the 2018 World Bridge Championships. One of the main events, the Rosenblum Cup made its first appearance in New Orleans in 1978 where it attracted an entry of just 15 teams. Four years later it moved to Europe and 129 teams lined up in Biarritz. Ever since then it has usually alternated between North America and Europe, and one cannot help but notice that the number of entries is always better in Europe. Miami 1986 had only 25 teams, Geneva 1990 179. Albuquerque 1994 got 119 but four years later Lille drew 233. Montreal 2002 pulled in 160 but that was still short of the 173 who went to Verona in 2006. Philadelphia totalled 144 before a first time trip to Sanya, China, saw 123 teams line up.

Bridge players are lucky that the major championships are played in such wonderful places, but from a the point of view of numbers the message seems to be clear - staging events in Europe is more popular.

Andrew Robson, Alexander Allfrey, Tom Paske & Ed Jones made it through to the semi-finals of the Rosenblum, the Open World Teams Championship. Although they lost to the powerful Lavazza squad, they can be proud of their achievement. In the quarter-final they defeated a team that consisted of five French players and England's Tony Forrester.

In the Women's event, the McConnell Cup, England has gone one better. Sally Brock & Fiona Brown are playing on the team captained by Lynn Baker of the USA, and they will face Nicola Smith's team in the final. Nicola is playing with

Yvonne Wiseman and Scotland's Paula Leslie is also a member of the team. This fantastic performance makes the English selectors decision not to include Nicola and Yvonne in the team that took part in the European Championships in Ostend appear even more misguided.



Expect a detailed report in the next issue.

England Calling

The English Bridge Union are inviting players to compete for places in the Teltscher & Lady Milne Trophy events.

The Seniors event is due to take place in Scotland over the weekend of 5-7 April 2019.

In order to be eligible, players must have been born in 1958 or earlier.

The trials will be staged 15-16 December at the West Midlands Bridge Club in Solihull.

Those wishing to compete must send their application to dawn@ebu.co.uk by 15 October. The entry fee is £340 per team.

The 2019 Lady Milne will be staged in Ireland a week later, 12-14 April.

There will be a pairs pre-trial (for which all applications will be accepted) at the Young Chelsea Bridge Club, 11-13 January 2019 with the main trial being staged at the same venue 1-3 February, when the qualifiers will be joined by pairs exempted by the Selection Committee.

The closing date for entries is 24 October and

the entry fee is £120 per player. Applications to dawn@ebu.co.uk

The EBU is also looking for BBO Operators. In order to provide coverage of forthcoming events they need more operators for competitions at various times during the year in London and the West Midlands (including International trials, the Camrose Trophy, the Premier League, Crockfords Cup, and the Schapiro Spring Foursomes).

Although the work is unpaid, the EBU do make a token payment of 0.80p per board.

If you are interested, please contact gordon@ebu.co.uk for more details.

Champion!

Our Layout Editor Ron Tacchi somehow finds time to make the occasional foray to the table. Last month he was at the headquarters of the French Bridge Federation in Paris to contest the national final of Division 2 of the Interclubs Team competition, involving 24 qualified teams who played an eight round Swiss. Ron's team won all eight matches to finish 16 VP clear of the field. He played in all eight matches. In the last round Ron's screen-mate was none other than one of our proof-readers, Monika Kummel, who is currently doing the layout for the main Bulletins in Orlando.

The UBid Auction Room

This month we welcome UBid to our pages, as sponsors of the Auction Room. They have developed a fantastic bidding ap that will be of immense benefit to partnerships at every level. We will have all the details next month.

Stop Press

Lynn Baker's Team won the McConnell final 232-166.



L'Equipe Gagnante
Yves Capelier, Jean-Paul Géré, Claude LeProvost,
Jean Maze-Sencier et Ron Tacchi



In This Issue

- 4 **FUNBRIDGE** — Test Your Technique
- 5 **Mixed Emotions** — The Editor reports on the EBU Mixed Teams Qualifications
- 23 **FUNBRIDGE** — Misplay These Hands With Me
- 25 **Deals That Caught My Eye** — David Bird looks at the USA Grand National Finals
- 31 **Enterprising Bridge Tales: The Original Stories** — Marc Smith
- 38 **Defend With Julian Pottage**
- 39 **Book Review** — Martin Cantor
- 40 **From Our French Correspondent** — Ron Tacchi
- 43 **FUNBRIDGE** — Test Your Technique solution
- 44 **Funny Girl** — Alex Adamson & Harry Smith with another tale from the Over The Rainbow Bridge Club
- 49 **Letter From Germany** — Martin Cantor
- 52 **Enterprising Bridge Tales: The Next Generation** — Marc Smith
- 55 **Defend With Julian Pottage** — The Answers
- 56 **Bridge With Larry Cohen**
- 57 **From The Archives** — Brian Senior
- 61 **Kit's Corner** — Kit Woolsey
- 64 **The Abbot's Final Contribution** — David Bird
- 68 **Book Review** — Martin Cantor
- 69 **The uBid Auction Room** — Mark Horton
- 74 **Master Point Press Bidding Battle** — Moderated by Brian Senior
- 90 **Master Point Press Bidding Battle Competition** — Set 10
- 93 **Hands for This Month's Auction Room**
- 94 **Comments on Bidding Battle 8** — Brian Senior



Test Your Technique

with *Christophe Grosset* see Page 43
IMPs . Dealer North. All Vul.

♠ K74
 ♥ K109752
 ♦ K432
 ♣ —

♠ Q52
 ♥ AJ6
 ♦ 8
 ♣ K109732

West	North	East	South
–	1♥	Double	Redouble
1♠	2♥	Pass	4♥
Double	All Pass		

After an aggressive 1♥ opening, you (North) end up in 4♥ doubled. The lead is the ♣6 (3rd and low). When you play the ♣10 from dummy, RHO thinks for a bit and plays the jack. Plan the play.

Mixed Emotions

The Editor takes a look at the EBU Mixed Teams Qualification

In 1962 the British team of Nico Gardener, Fritzi Gordon, Boris Schapiro and Rixi Markus won the World Mixed Teams Championship in Cannes. It was only in 1972 that it appeared again, and the USA won, a feat they repeated two years later. After another interval the event returned in 1996 but in a Transnational format and Great Britain again had players on top of the podium, as Heather Dhondy & Liz McGowan joined forces with Iceland's Jón Baldursson, Björn Eysteinnsson, Aðalsteinn Jörgensen and Ragnar Hermannsson to win in Rhodes. The event was discontinued after the 2004 Olympiad, but it returns in 2019. In order to qualify teams from Europe must contest a new championship event in Lisbon in February and the EBU organised a trial for that, which attracted a star-studded entry:

Teams

Catherine Seale, David Gold, Claire Robinson, John Atthey
Frances Hinden, Graham Osborne, Sally Brock, Barry Myers, Michael Byrne, Fiona Brown
Sarah Bell, Mike Bell, Alex Hydes, Yvonne Wiseman, Heather Dhondy
Sandra Penfold, Brian Senior, Kay Preddy, Norman Selway, Nicola Smith, Tony Forrester
Anita Sinclair, Peter Crouch, Helen Erichsen, Espen Erichsen, Simon Cope, Marion Robertson
Janet de Botton, Thor-Erik Hoftaniska, Heather Bakhshi, David Bakhshi, Marilyn Malinowska, Artur Malinowski
Debbie Sandford, Gad Chadha, Sandy Davies, Tom Gisborne
Catherine Curtis, Paul Fegarty, Cath Jagger, Jonathan Mestel
Abbey Smith, James Thrower, Hannah Cornfield, Andrew McIntosh
Nathalie Shashou, Nick Sandqvist, Alex Birchall, Niall Igoe
Tracy Capal, David A Sherman, Liz Commins, David Stevenson
Margaret Nygren, Martin Nygren, Chris Duckworth, Brian Callaghan
Kath Stynes, David Muller, Qian Li, Richard Bowdery
David Kendrick, Carina Negreanu, Derek Oram, Celia Oram
Kitty Teltscher, Ed Scerri, Jacqui Tobias, Nevena Senior, Kiril Delev
Karen Pryor, Malcolm Pryor, Maria Budd, Simon Budd

These 16 squads would play a complete round robin at the end of which the top four would advance to the final weekend.

Join me now for the best (and sometimes worst) of the action.

Round 1 Sinclair v Seale

Two of the favourites clashed immediately. With Seale ahead 8-7, this was the last board:

Board 10. Dealer East. All Vul.

♠ KQ1062		♠ J3									
♥ A82		♥ 10976543									
♦ AK6		♦ 32									
♣ K2		♣ 43									
	<table border="1"> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td>N</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>W</td> <td></td> <td>E</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>S</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		N		W		E		S		
	N										
W		E									
	S										
♠ 954		♠ A87									
♥ KQJ		♥ –									
♦ J10975		♦ Q84									
♣ 76		♣ AQJ10985									

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Seale	Sinclair	Gold	Crouch
–	–	Pass	1♣*
Pass	1♥*	Pass	2♦*
Pass	4NT*	Pass	5NT*
Pass	6♣	Pass	6♠
Pass	7♠	All Pass	

1♣	2+♣
1♥	Spades
2♦	14+ unbalanced, fewer than three hearts
4NT	RKCB
5NT	2 key cards and a void

A purist would argue that the best slam is 7NT, but bidding a grand slam is not always easy.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>E Erichsen</i>	<i>Atthey</i>	<i>H Erichsen</i>	<i>Robinson</i>
-	-	2♦*	3♣
3♥*	6♣	All Pass	
	2♦	Weak Multi	
	3♥	Pass or Correct	

♠ 954	♠ KQ1062	♠ J3
♥ KQJ	♥ A82	♥ 10976543
♦ J10975	♦ AK6	♦ 32
♣ 76	♣ K2	♣ 43
	♠ A87	
	♥ —	
	♦ Q84	
	♣ AQJ10985	

Don't you just love East's opening bid.

North's jump to 6♣ was precipitate and it cost 13 IMPs and the match, Sinclair winning 20-8, 14-6 VP.

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

Round 2 Bell v de Botton

Another matchup between two of the bookies favourites.

Board 13. Dealer North. All Vul.

♠ 87653	♠ J1094	♠ K
♥ A1082	♥ 74	♥ K9653
♦ K3	♦ A76	♦ J10985
♣ 86	♣ KJ97	♣ Q3
	♠ AQ2	
	♥ QJ	
	♦ Q42	
	♣ A10542	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Malinowska</i>	<i>M Bell</i>	<i>Malinowski</i>	<i>S Bell</i>
-	Pass	2♥*	Double
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♣
Pass	3♠	Pass	3NT
All Pass			
2♥	5♥/4+m NV; 5/5 V (5-10)		

West's (subtle) inactivity appeared to have backfired when East led the ♦J, but when declarer played dummy's queen West produced the king and after winning with the ace declarer played the ♣J, overtaking it with dummy's ace and then finessing against the queen on the next round. East won, cashed his diamonds and then switched to hearts, leaving declarer six tricks short of his target.

Given that declarer needs to find East with the ♠K he should tackle that suit first. When East turns up with a singleton king the natural line is to play East for the ♣Q.

For what it's worth, I suspect most players would have raised hearts with West's cards.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Dhondy</i>	<i>D Bakhshi</i>	<i>Hydes</i>	<i>H Bakhshi</i>
-	Pass	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♣*	Pass	2♦*
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♦*
Pass	3NT	All Pass	
2♣	Puppet Stayman		
2♦	Denies a five-card major		
3♦	Denies a four-card major		

When West led the ♠7 declarer won, cashed the top clubs and had ten tricks, +630 and 15 IMPs en route to a 36-7 win, 17.68-2.32 VP.

You can replay the deals [here](https://tinyurl.com/y7qc58mr) or <https://tinyurl.com/y7qc58mr>

Round 3 Penfold v Seale

Another big match up in which the BBO operator forgot to name the players in the Open Room.

Board 22. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

♠ KJ10 ♥ A6 ♦ K9853 ♣ AQ7		♠ 943 ♥ J82 ♦ 42 ♣ K10982	♠ A6 ♥ KQ97543 ♦ QJ ♣ 53
		♠ Q8752 ♥ 10 ♦ A1076 ♣ J64	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Seale</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Penfold</i>
-	-	1♥	1♠
2♦	2♠	3♥	Pass
3♠*	Pass	4♥	Pass
5♥	Pass	5♠*	Pass
6♥	All Pass		

When West invited a slam with 5♥ East cue-bid the ♠A en route to 6♥. A club lead would have forced declarer to locate the ♠Q but South's overcall had already resolved that particular problem and South's choice of the ♠5 merely served to speed up the play, declarer winning with the ace, drawing trumps and playing diamonds.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Selway</i>	<i>Athey</i>	<i>Preddy</i>	<i>Robinson</i>
-	-	1♥	1♠
2♦	2♠	3♥	Pass
3♠*	Pass	3NT	Pass
4♣*	Double	4♥	All Pass

When East showed her spade stopper West continued with a cue-bid in clubs which gave North the chance to double for the lead. That was enough to deter West so Seale pocketed 13 IMPs.

Board 25. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

♠ KQ875 ♥ Q9 ♦ 1095 ♣ 985		♠ 963 ♥ J65 ♦ AKQ7 ♣ AJ6	♠ J42 ♥ 87432 ♦ 62 ♣ KQ4
		♠ A10 ♥ AK10 ♦ J843 ♣ 10732	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Seale</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Penfold</i>
-	1NT	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

East led the ♥3 and when declarer innocently put in the ten West won with the queen and returned the nine. There were only eight tricks now, -50.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Selway	Athey	Preddy	Robinson
-	1NT	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

East led the ♥7 and declarer won with dummy's ace, cashed four rounds of diamonds ending in hand and having see East part with two hearts continued with a heart to the king for +400 and 10 IMPs.

♠ 963		♠ J42
♥ J65		♥ 87432
♦ AKQ7		♦ 62
♣ AJ6		♣ KQ4
♠ KQ875	W N E	♠ A 10
♥ Q9	W S E	♥ AK 10
♦ 1095		♦ J843
♣ 985		♣ 10732

Board 27. Dealer South. None Vul.

♠ 53		♠ AQ6
♥ K107		♥ 4
♦ KJ10863		♦ AQ97
♣ 92		♣ J7654
♠ J10842	W N E	♠ K97
♥ A983	W S E	♥ QJ652
♦ 2		♦ 54
♣ AKQ		♣ 1083

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Seale	Senior	Gold	Penfold
-	-	-	Pass
6♠			

Obviously the auction did not go like this – the BBO operator was having a problem so just put in the final contract. You might care to speculate how the slam was reached – with a free run perhaps after 1♠-2♣-2♥-3♦*-4♣-4♦*-4♥ East asked for key cards. I suspect North will have bid diamonds, which will have aided declarer in the play.

North led the ♦6 and declarer took twelve tricks – in order to do so he must have put in dummy's queen. After that one possible line is to come to hand with a club and play a spade to the queen. If that holds declarer cashes the ♠A and then plays on clubs. He cashes the ♥A, ruffs a heart, pitches a heart on the ♦A and then plays the ♣J.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Selway	Athey	Preddy	Robinson
-	-	-	Pass
1♠	3♦	4♦*	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

West's spades were poor, but he did control both the unbid suits. Should he have bid 4♥? Even then he would have to take another bid over East's 4♠. It was 11 IMPs to Seale who won 37-13, 16.78-3.22 VP.

You can replay the deals here or <https://tinyurl.com/y7pjh35v>

Round 4 Sashou v Curtis

This proved to be one of the spectacular matches of the event.

Board 2. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

♠ 10		♠ Q984
♥ A1076		♥ 852
♦ J876		♦ A
♣ 8654		♣ A10732
♠ A632	W N E	♠ KJ75
♥ K93	W S E	♥ QJ4
♦ Q10952		♦ K43
♣ 9		♣ KQJ

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Jagger	Igoe	Mestel	Birchall
-	-	Pass	1NT
Pass	Pass	2♦*	Pass
2♠	Double*	All Pass	
	2♦	Spades and another suit	
	Dble	Takeout	

♠ 10			
♥ A 1076			
♦ J876			
♣ 8654			
♠ A632			♠ Q984
♥ K93			♥ 852
♦ Q10952			♦ A
♣ 9			♣ A10732
			♠ KJ75
			♥ QJ4
			♦ K43
			♣ KQJ

North found the only lead to put declarer under pressure – the ♠10 –

which was covered in turn by the queen, king and ace. Declarer played a club to the ace, ruffed a club, crossed to the ♦A, ruffed a club, ruffed a diamond and played the ♣10. South accurately ruffed with the ♠7 and switched to the ♥Q. When it held he continued with the ♥J. When that held South fatally played a third heart and North won with the ace and played his last heart. Declarer's ♠6 was in the game now and he claimed eight tricks, +470.

South's mistake was in not cashing the ♠J at some point. As the play went declarer should have covered the ♥J, which would have ensured the contract.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Shashou	Curtis	Sandqvist	Fegarty
-	-	Pass	1NT
All Pass			

West led the ♦10 and East won with the ace and switched to the ♠Q, covered by the king and ace. Declarer won the spade return, with the jack, cashed the ♦K and played the ♥Q covered by the king and ace. A club to hand was followed by a diamond and that was eight tricks, +120 and 11 IMPs for Curtis.

Board 5. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

♠ AK			
♥ 75432			
♦ AQ9			
♣ KJ7			
♠ J10964			♠ Q85
♥ Q109			♥ 6
♦ 6			♦ K108743
♣ A942			♣ Q86
			♠ 732
			♥ AKJ8
			♦ J52
			♣ 1053

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Jagger	Igoe	Mestel	Birchall
-	1NT	3♦	Double
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

East led the ♣6 and West took the ace and switched to the ♦6. Declarer put up the ace and cashed dummy's top hearts, but when the queen failed to drop there were only nine tricks, -100.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Shashou	Curtis	Sandqvist	Fegarty
-	1NT	Pass	2♣*
Pass	2♥	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

East led the ♦4 and declarer won with the nine, played a heart to the ace, cashed the top spades, played a heart to the king, ruffed a spade and exited with a heart. West won and exited with the jack of spades (a low club would have been more testing as declarer must play the king and exit with a club) allowing declarer to pitch the ♦Q and ruff in dummy for 12 IMPs.

Leading away from a king into a strong no-trump is no way to make a living.

Board 6. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

♠ 96 ♥ J10953 ♦ 109875 ♣ 3	<table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="padding: 5px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 5px;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 5px;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S	♠ QJ5 ♥ AK84 ♦ J32 ♣ AKJ	♠ 73 ♥ Q76 ♦ 64 ♣ Q109864
N						
W E						
S						

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Jagger</i>	<i>Igoe</i>	<i>Mestel</i>	<i>Birchall</i>
-	-	1♥	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♦*	Pass	4NT*	Pass
5♣*	Pass	7NT	All Pass
4♦	Cue-bid		
4NT	RKCB		
5♣	3 key cards		

Nicely done as Barry Rigal would say, +2220.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Shashou</i>	<i>Curtis</i>	<i>Sandqvist</i>	<i>Fegarty</i>
-	-	1♣*	Pass
1♠	2NT*	Double	3♥
4♦*	Pass	4♥*	Pass
4♠	Pass	6♠	All Pass
1♣	2+♣		
2NT	Red suits		
4♦	Cue-bid		
4♥	Cue-bid		

East jump to 6♠ was a little surprising, but after something like 5♣-5♦-5♥-6♦ it is not totally clear to bid 7NT, as West does not have to have a six-card suit. It cost 13 IMPs.

Board 8. Dealer West. None Vul.

♠ A102 ♥ K1094 ♦ 1074 ♣ AK6	<table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="padding: 5px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 5px;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 5px;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S	♠ KQ8763 ♥ 5 ♦ J6 ♣ J973	♠ — ♥ AQ72 ♦ AQ32 ♣ 108542
N						
W E						
S						

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Jagger</i>	<i>Igoe</i>	<i>Mestel</i>	<i>Birchall</i>
1NT	2♦*	Pass	4♦*
Pass	4♠	4NT*	Pass
5♣	All Pass		
2♦	Multi Landy, one major		
4♦	Bid your major		
4NT	Bid Your Minor		

North led the ♥5 and declarer took South's jack with the king and played three rounds of clubs, North winning with the jack and switching to the jack of diamonds. Declarer went up with dummy's ace, drew the outstanding trump and claimed, +400.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Shashou</i>	<i>Curtis</i>	<i>Sandqvist</i>	<i>Fegarty</i>
1♣*	2♠	Double*	3♠
4♥	Pass	6♥	All Pass


Declarer ruffed the spade lead in dummy, came to hand with a club and ruffed a second spade. She cashed dummy's top hearts, but when the suit failed to break the slam was doomed. Declarer came to hand with a club and played a third round of the suit, North winning and returning the ♦6. Declarer put in dummy's queen and South won and exited with a spade, declarer winning, crossing to the ♦A and playing the ♣10, neutralising South's trumps for one down. That was another 10 IMPs and at the end the scoreboard read 55-0 in favour of Curtis, 20-0 VP.

You can replay the deals [here](#) or <https://tinyurl.com/ycvga2co>

Round 5 Hinden v Capal

Hinden also had Brock and Brown as the distaff side of their team and that was more than enough to make them the favourites.

Board 11. Dealer South. None Vul.

♠ K53 ♥ KQ2 ♦ 75 ♣ AQ1065		♠ AQ1098 ♥ A106 ♦ AK2 ♣ K9
♠ J762 ♥ 9 ♦ QJ10864 ♣ 73	♠ 4 ♥ J87543 ♦ 93 ♣ J842	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sherman</i>	<i>Brock</i>	<i>Capal</i>	<i>Myers</i>
-	-	-	2♦*
Pass	3♥*	All Pass	
2♦	Weak, 0-8 with a major		
3♥	Pass or correct		

What should East do over 3♥?

The obvious move is to bid 3NT. That would have worked, and on this

layout bidding 3♠ or doubling should lead to a game contract.

East led the ♦K and when West played the queen she continued with the two, West winning with the ten and switching to clubs, the contract going one down, -50.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hinden</i>	<i>Commins</i>	<i>Osborne</i>	<i>Stevenson</i>
-	-	-	Pass
Pass	1NT	Double	Redouble*
2♦	Pass	2♠	Pass
4♠	All Pass		


No doubt South's redouble was a scramble, perhaps promising a five-card suit.

South led the ♦9 and declarer won with dummy's queen and advanced the ♠J, taking all the tricks for 10 IMPs in a match Hinden won 12-6, 11.18-7.82VP (there was a 1VP penalty).

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

R6 Seale v Nygren

Board 1. Dealer North. None Vul.

♠ Q ♥ 10832 ♦ A105 ♣ AQ864		♠ J87632 ♥ K ♦ KQ72 ♣ 75
♠ K ♥ QJ9764 ♦ J986 ♣ 103	♠ A10954 ♥ A5 ♦ 43 ♣ KJ92	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>Atthey</i>	<i>Duckworth</i>	<i>Robinson</i>
-	1♣*	1♠	2NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	
	1♣	2+♣	

West led the ♥6 and declarer took East's king with the ace, played the nine of clubs to dummy's ace and ran the ♠Q. West won, cashed the ♥J and switched to the ♦6. East won with the queen, but then exited with a club, allowing declarer to establish the game going trick in spades, +400.

Whatever the arguments for East to continue with diamonds (they seem clear enough) West could have avoided that possibility by switching to the ♦J.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Seale</i>	<i>Nygren</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Nygren</i>
-	1♣*	1♠	2♠*
Pass	3♣	Pass	3NT
All Pass			
1♣	2+♣		

West led the ♥Q and declarer won with the ace and appeared to be in clover – she could return a heart set up a ninth trick. Instead she played the nine of clubs to dummy's queen and ran the ♠Q. West won and switched to the ♦6 and East won and returned the ♦2, ensuring the demise of the contract – 10 IMPs to Seale.

♠ K	♠ Q	♠ J87632
♥ QJ9764	♥ 10832	♥ K
♦ J986	♦ A105	♦ KQ72
♣ 103	♣ AQ864	♣ 75
♠ A10954		
♥ A5		
♦ 43		
♣ KJ92		

Board 10. Dealer North. All Vul.

♠ 9843	♠ J1052	♠ AKQ6
♥ 32	♥ AK84	♥ Q
♦ AQ105	♦ 82	♦ J9743
♣ A64	♣ KQ8	♣ 953
	♠ 7	
	♥ J109765	
	♦ K6	
	♣ J1072	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>Atthey</i>	<i>Duckworth</i>	<i>Robinson</i>
-	-	1♦	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♠	Pass
2NT	Pass	3♠	All Pass

2NT was clearly some kind of game try.

North led the ♥K and when South followed with the jack he continued with the four. Declarer ruffed in dummy, cashed two top spades and then played the ♦9 for the king and ace. Declarer continued with diamonds and was assured of ten tricks, +170.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Seale</i>	<i>Nygren</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Nygren</i>
-	-	1♦	2♥
3♥*	4♥	All Pass	

When West led the ♦A declarer was handed the contract on a plate, +620 and 13 IMPs to Nygren, who won 25-22, 10.77-9.23 VP.

You can replay the deals [here](#) or <https://tinyurl.com/y9blustb>

Round 7 Bell v Hinden

Although the round-robin was not yet at the half-way mark this was already an important match between two of the main contenders.

Board 11. Dealer South. None Vul.

♠ AKJ974 ♥ A2 ♦ J1042 ♣ 10	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ 63 ♥ J8764 ♦ 83 ♣ K974
♠ Q1052 ♥ 95 ♦ Q95 ♣ QJ63		♠ 8 ♥ KQ103 ♦ AK76 ♣ A852

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brock</i>	<i>Wiseman</i>	<i>Myers</i>	<i>Hydes</i>
-	-	-	1♣
Pass	1♠	Pass	1NT
Pass	3♠	Pass	3NT
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

Declarer won the diamond lead with dummy's ace and ran the ♠8, finishing with eleven tricks when she did not finesse in hearts.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>S Bell</i>	<i>Brown</i>	<i>M Bell</i>	<i>Byrne</i>
-	-	-	1♦
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♥*	Pass	2NT
Pass	3♦	Pass	3♥
Pass	3♠	Pass	3NT

Pass	4♣*	Pass	4♦
Pass	4NT*	Pass	5♦
Pass	5♥*	Pass	6♦*

All Pass

2♥	Fourth suit forcing
4♣	Cue-bid
4NT	RKCB
5♦	3 key cards
5♥	♦Q ask
6♦	No ♦Q

West led the ♠2 and declarer won with dummy's ace, ruffed a spade and cashed the top trumps, claiming when the suit divided, +920 and a well merited 10 IMPs.

Board 17. Dealer North. None Vul.

♠ Q10975 ♥ Q2 ♦ J ♣ 108532	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ 432 ♥ A1063 ♦ Q2 ♣ Q976
♠ K ♥ KJ854 ♦ AK7654 ♣ A		♠ AJ86 ♥ 97 ♦ 10983 ♣ KJ4

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brock</i>	<i>Wiseman</i>	<i>Myers</i>	<i>Hydes</i>
-	Pass	Pass	1NT*
Double	2♣	Double	Pass
2♦	Pass	2NT	Pass
3♥	Pass	4♥	All Pass
1NT	9-14		

North led the ♠10 and South won and returned the six, declarer ruffing, crossing to dummy with a heart and playing a heart to the jack, +450.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>S Bell</i>	<i>Brown</i>	<i>M Bell</i>	<i>Byrne</i>
-	Pass	Pass	1♠
2♠*	4♠	5♥	Pass
6♥	All Pass		

2♥ Spades and a minor

South led the ♦10 and declarer won with the queen and cashed the ace of hearts. he finessed on the next round of the suit and North won and played a spade for 11 IMPs.

Was declarer playing North for singletons in both red suits, or did he simply think North's ♦J was a falsecard?

Board 18. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

	♠ A543		
	♥ J10984		
	♦ A3		
	♣ 32		
♠ J10962		♠ Q87	
♥ 62		♥ AQ	
♦ 75		♦ KQJ964	
♣ AKQJ		♣ 94	
	♠ K		
	♥ K753		
	♦ 1082		
	♣ 108765		



Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brock</i>	<i>Wiseman</i>	<i>Myers</i>	<i>Hydes</i>
-	-	1♦	Pass
1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♦*	Pass	2♠	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

2♦ Checkback

North led the ♥J and declarer put up dummy's ace and tried three rounds of clubs ditching dummy's queen of hearts when North ruffed the third

round. The heart exit was ruffed in dummy and South won the next trick with the ♠K and played another club, North ruffing with the ♠A and exiting with a spade. The ♦A was the setting trick, +50.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>S Bell</i>	<i>Brown</i>	<i>M Bell</i>	<i>Byrne</i>
-	-	1NT	Pass
2♥*	Double	2♠*	3♥
4♠	All Pass		
2♠	3+♠		

South led the ♥K – and found he had handed over the contract, +420 and 10 IMPs, not enough to prevent Hinden winning 30-16, 14.54.-5.46 VP.

You can replay the deals [here](#) or <https://tinyurl.com/ya7ceus6>

Round 8 Seale v Shashou

Board 25. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

	♠ K		
	♥ K7		
	♦ Q953		
	♣ A87532		
♠ A1042		♠ QJ863	
♥ Q1042		♥ J653	
♦ 106		♦ 42	
♣ 1094		♣ QJ	
	♠ 975		
	♥ A98		
	♦ AKJ87		
	♣ K6		



Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Birchall</i>	<i>Atthey</i>	<i>Igoe</i>	<i>Robinson</i>
-	1♣*	Pass	1♦
Pass	2♦	Pass	3NT
All Pass			
1♣	2+♣		

West led the ♠2 and declarer must have been relieved to see dummy's king hold. That was +430.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Seale</i>	<i>Sandqvist</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Shashou</i>
-	1♣*	Pass	1♦
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♥
Pass	3♣	Pass	3♠
Pass	3NT	All Pass	
	1♣	2+♣	

♠ A1042	♠ K	♠ QJ863
♥ Q1042	♥ K7	♥ J653
♦ 106	♦ Q953	♦ 42
♣ 1094	♣ A87532	♣ QJ
	♠ 975	
	♥ A98	
	♦ AKJ87	
	♣ K6	

East led the ♠3 and the defenders had the first five tricks along with 10 IMPs.

What do you make of the auctions?

After 1♣-1♦-2♦ I don't care for 2NT, as the spade suit could be wide open. 2♥ showing a stopper in hearts must be a better bid. Now, should North bid 2♠ as fourth-suit or, given that 1♣ might be short, prefer his actual choice of 3♣? When South then bids 3♠, asking for a stopper, should North gamble and bid 3NT?

I raise these points not just because 6♦ is virtually laydown.

Board 26. Dealer East. All Vul.

♠ 8	♠ J94	♠ K5
♥ 1085	♥ AKQJ432	♥ 76
♦ K109643	♦ -	♦ AQJ75
♣ AQ2	♣ K73	♣ J865
	♠ AQ107632	
	♥ 9	
	♦ 82	
	♣ 1094	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Birchall</i>	<i>Atthey</i>	<i>Igoe</i>	<i>Robinson</i>
-	-	1♦	3♠
5♦	5♥	Pass	5♠
All Pass			

West led the ♦9 and declarer ruffed in dummy and played three rounds of hearts, pitching a club from hand on the second round and then overruffing East's ♠K, taking all the tricks.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Seale</i>	<i>Sandqvist</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Shashou</i>
-	-	1♦	3♠
5♦	6♥	All Pass	

In the television show *The Great British Bake Off*, judge Paul Hollywood will shake the hand of a contestant who he considers has performed outstandingly (it doesn't happen very often). I'm pretty sure he would have awarded that accolade to Nick Sandqvist for his 6♥ bid.

Declarer ruffed the diamond lead, drew trumps and played spades for 13 IMPs, reducing Seale's winning margin to 14 IMPs, 14-54-5.46 VP.

You can replay the deals [here](#) or <https://tinyurl.com/y8y7b3qj>

Round 9 Seale v Stynes

Board 1. Dealer North. None Vul.

♠ J43 ♥ 9 ♦ KQ7642 ♣ J86	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ 1098 ♥ K7642 ♦ 93 ♣ 1032	♠ A65 ♥ J ♦ AJ105 ♣ AK954
♠ KQ72 ♥ AQ10853 ♦ 8 ♣ Q7			

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bowdery</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Seale</i>
–	Pass	1♣*	1♥
Pass	3♥	Pass	4♥
All Pass			
1♣	2+♣		

West led the ♦K and continued with the two, declarer ruffing, playing a heart to the king and a spade, East taking the ace and cashing two clubs for one down.

You will have noticed that E/W will probably make 6♦.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Robinson</i>	<i>Stynes</i>	<i>Atthey</i>	<i>Muller</i>
–	Pass	1♣*	1♥
3♦	4♥	6♦	6♥
Pass	Pass	Double	All Pass
1♣	2+♣		

That was the obvious three down, -500, a great save – but 10 IMPs away as Seale won 18-1, 15.29-4.71 VP.

You can replay the [deals](https://tinyurl.com/y7h47ez8) here or <https://tinyurl.com/y7h47ez8>

Round 10 Seale v Hinden

Board 14. Dealer East. None Vul.

♠ 3 ♥ A873 ♦ AKQ8 ♣ Q943	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ A72 ♥ – ♦ 964 ♣ AJ107652	♠ QJ8 ♥ KQ1094 ♦ J1072 ♣ 8
♠ K109654 ♥ J652 ♦ 53 ♣ K			

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Osborne</i>	<i>Atthey</i>	<i>Hinden</i>	<i>Robinson</i>
–	–	Pass	Pass
1♦	3♣	3♥	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

North's overall was in theory weak, but even though his partner was a passed hand it looks dubious.

South led the ♣K and North overtook it and returned the ten, ruffed in dummy with the ♥9 and overruffed by South who switched to the five of diamonds. Declarer won with dummy's ace, cashed the ace of hearts and then played a spade, North taking the ace and exiting with the ♣7. Declarer ruffed with the ten of hearts and played the queen of spades, covered and ruffed, at which point declarer could claim.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Seale	Brock	Gold	Myers
-	-	Pass	2♦*
Pass	2♥*	Double	2♠
Double*	4♠	Pass	Pass
4NT	Double	5♥	Double
All Pass			

♠ A72			
♥ -			
♦ 964			
♣ AJ107652			
♠ 3			♠ QJ8
♥ A873			♥ KQ1094
♦ AKQ8			♦ J1072
♣ Q943			♣ 8
♠ K109654			
♥ J652			
♦ 53			
♣ K			

Having passed initially East doubled to show his good suit. The rationale behind West's double is less clear.

South led the ♠10 and North won with the ace and switched to the ♣A. She continued with the ♣7 and declarer ruffed with the ♥K, South pitching the three of diamonds. Declarer cashed the ♥Q and continued with the ♥10. When that held he drew trumps and eventually lost a spade to go one down which cost 11 IMPs.

Having ruffed with the ♥K declarer can get home by running the ♥10. He then runs the nine and follows that with the ♠Q, establishing an eleventh trick. You might think that declarer was unlucky, but it was long odds that South's double was based on his holding all the missing trumps.

I'm surprised North didn't introduce her clubs at some point, although after an initial club lead North does best not to overtake (unless she is planning to switch to a diamond). Then South can play anything except the ♥J. If South had led the ♠K at trick one, declarer would have had no winning line.

Hinden scored a narrow win, 20-17, 11.50-8.50 VP.

You can replay the deals [here](#) or <https://tinyurl.com/yctm9juz>

Round 11 Bell v Curtis

Board 1. Dealer North. None Vul.

	♠ 108642		
	♥ 962		
	♦ K		
	♣ 8542		
♠ Q5			♠ AK93
♥ QJ74			♥ K
♦ A876			♦ QJ109532
♣ QJ7			♣ K
	♠ J7		
	♥ A10853		
	♦ 4		
	♣ A10963		

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Curtis	Hydes	Fegarty	Wiseman
-	Pass	1♦	2NT*
Double*	4♣	5♦	All Pass
2NT	Hearts and clubs		

South cashed the ace of clubs, then the ace of hearts and exited with a heart. Declarer ruffed, advanced the ♦Q and went up with the ace - +400.


Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Bell	Mestel	Bell	Jagger
-	Pass	1♦	2NT*
3NT	4♣	4♥*	Pass
4NT	Pass	5♣	Pass
5♦	Pass	7♦	Double
All Pass			
2NT	Hearts and Clubs		
4♥	Shortage		

If 4NT was asking for keycards 5♣ presumably showed 1/4. If that is right why East went on to 7♦ is a mystery.

Declarer got the trumps right, -300 and a 12 IMP loss.

Board 3. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

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

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Curtis</i>	<i>Hydes</i>	<i>Fegarty</i>	<i>Wiseman</i>
-	-	-	1♣*
Pass	1♥*	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♠	Pass	3♥
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♣*
Pass	4♥*	Pass	4NT*
Pass	5♠*	Pass	6♠

All Pass

- 1♣ Strong
- 1♥ 8-11, not five spades
- 4♣ Cue-bid
- 4♥ Cue-bid
- 4NT RKCB
- 5♠ 2 + ♠Q

West led the ♦K and declarer won perforce and immediately played a heart to the ace followed by a heart to the king. West ruffed and in due course the ♣K was the setting trick.

Declarer was unlucky, but there was no need to be. She can draw two rounds of trumps, claiming if the suit divides. If trumps are 3-1 declarer now plays to ruff two hearts in dummy, using a diamond ruff and the ♣A as the entries need to ruff the fourth heart and draw the last trump.

She then gives up a club and claims.


Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bell</i>	<i>Mestel</i>	<i>Bell</i>	<i>Jagger</i>
-	-	-	1♠
2♣	3♣*	Pass	3♥
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

3♣ Unassuming cue-bid

That was a fortuitous 11 IMPs for an undistinguished sequence.

Board 10. Dealer East. All Vul.

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

♠ 4
 ♥ 8 7 6 4
 ♦ J 9 8 5 2
 ♣ J 8 6

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Curtis</i>	<i>Hydes</i>	<i>Fegarty</i>	<i>Wiseman</i>
-	-	1♣*	Pass
1♦*	1♠	Double	Pass
2♠*	Pass	2NT	Pass
4NT	All Pass		

1♣ 2+♣
 1♦ Hearts

It is possible East's double showed three-card heart support. South led the ♠4 and when declarer played low from dummy North took

the ace and returned the six. Declarer claimed eleven tricks at this point – as you can see there is a relatively easy non-simultaneous double squeeze for 12 tricks.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bell</i>	<i>Mestel</i>	<i>Bell</i>	<i>Jagger</i>
-	-	1♣*	Pass
1♦*	2♠	Pass	Pass
Double	All Pass		
	1♣	2+♣	
	1♦	Hearts and diamonds	

East led the ♦K and switched to a club. West won, returned a club, ruffed the next round, cashed two hearts, and then played the ♦A which East matched with the ♥A. A heart was ruffed and overruffed and West ruffed the club return with the ♠K. Declarer could overruff, but could score only one more trick, six down, -1700 and a 14 IMP loss that saw Bell win 38-29 – they had scored 37 IMPs over the last four deals for 13.14-6.86 VP.

You can replay the [deals](https://tinyurl.com/y8p745j7) here or <https://tinyurl.com/y8p745j7>

R12 Hinden v de Botton

Board 19. Dealer South. All E/W.

♠ KQ95		♠ A
♥ AKQ532		♥ 109
♦ 9		♦ K1076543
♣ K4		♣ Q62
♠ J864		
♥ 64		
♦ AJ		
♣ J10753		
	♠ 10732	
	♥ J87	
	♦ Q82	
	♣ A98	

♠ K8	♠ AJ9632	♠ Q1075
♥ KQJ3	♥ 52	♥ A109
♦ AQ763	♦ 104	♦ K
♣ A9	♣ Q107	♣ K5432
	♠ 4	
	♥ 8764	
	♦ J9852	
	♣ J86	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hoftaniska</i>	<i>Hinden</i>	<i>de Botton</i>	<i>Osborne</i>
-	-	-	Pass
Pass	1♥	2♦	2♥
Double*	4♥	All Pass	

Dble Takeout with diamond tolerance

East cashed the ace of spades and when West followed with the eight she switched to the ♦10, West winning with the ace and returning the ♠6. East ruffed declarer's king, but that was the last trick for the defence, +420.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Byrne</i>	<i>Malinowska</i>	<i>Brown</i>	<i>Malinowski</i>
-	-	-	Pass
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠
Pass	4♦*	Pass	4♠
Pass	5♣*	Pass	5♠
All Pass			
4♦	Splinter		

Having splintered in support of spades North pressed on with 5♣. It's aggressive, but how would South have bid looking at just the two black aces?

West led the ♣J and declarer won in hand and played a spade to the king and ace (even if declarer starts by running the ♠10 the defenders can prevail as long as they play two rounds of diamonds forcing dummy to ruff) East switching to the three of diamonds, West winning with jack and continuing with the ace. That ensured one down and when declarer ruffed in dummy, cashed the ♠Q and then, with no knowledge that the diamonds were 7-2, played a heart to the jack. He had to go two down giving Hinden 11 IMPs and the match, 20-7, 14.28-5.72 VP.

You can replay the deals [here](https://tinyurl.com/y6u2dj32) or <https://tinyurl.com/y6u2dj32>

Round 13 Sinclair v Bell

Board 21. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

♠ 6 ♥ AKQJ96 ♦ AK643 ♣ K	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S	♠ KQJ104 ♥ 54 ♦ 5 ♣ 108642	♠ A98732 ♥ 1073 ♦ Q10 ♣ 93
N						
W E						
S						
♠ 5 ♥ 82 ♦ J9872 ♣ AQJ75						

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hydes</i>	<i>Sinclair</i>	<i>Wiseman</i>	<i>Crouch</i>
–	Pass	Pass	Pass
1♣*	1♠	Pass	Pass
2♠*	Pass	3NT	Pass
4♦	Pass	4♥	Pass
5♥	Pass	6♥	All Pass

1♣ Strong

East's jump to 3NT was understandable – she wanted to show some values, but bidding 2NT would have left more room to manoeuvre. Still, 6♥ was a good contract. Unfortunately it was doomed by the bad break in diamonds.

South led the ♣A and switched to the five of spades. Declarer won with the ace, took two rounds of trumps and then played diamonds, conceding one down when North discarded on the second round.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Erichsen</i>	<i>Bell</i>	<i>Erichsen</i>	<i>Bell</i>
–	2♠	Pass	Pass
Double	Pass	Pass	2NT*
Double	3♣	Pass	Pass
4♥	All Pass		
2NT	Scrambling		

No points in the bidding for E/W – but they got them where it mattered – on the scoreboard to the tune of 11 IMPs, Sinclair going on to win 25-17, 12.83-7.17 VP.

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

Round 14 Hinden v Sandford

Board 2. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ A62 ♥ AJ32 ♦ QJ10 ♣ 1086	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S	♠ 10943 ♥ 86 ♦ 8653 ♣ AJ2	♠ KQJ75 ♥ KQ7 ♦ AK9 ♣ 43
N						
W E						
S						
♠ 8 ♥ 10954 ♦ 742 ♣ KQ975						

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Davies</i>	<i>Brown</i>	<i>Gisborne</i>	<i>Byrne</i>
–	–	1♠	Pass
4♦*	Pass	4NT*	Pass
5♥*	Pass	6♠	All Pass

The convention card indicates that 4♦ promised 2+aces (it also says that

4♥ would be balanced, which looks a good description of the West hand). There were twelve tricks, but South had a natural lead and the ♣K ensured a rapid one down.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Myers</i>	<i>Chada</i>	<i>Brock</i>	<i>Sandford</i>
-	-	1♠	Pass
3♣*	Pass	4♠	All Pass
3♣	3-card limit raise		

Always a pleasant surprise to pick up 11 IMPs on a deal like this.

Board 4. Dealer West. All Vul.

♠ J752											
♥ K752											
♦ 98											
♣ K98											
♠ KQ94		♠ 103									
♥ AQ1096		♥ J3									
♦ 4		♦ AKQJ52									
♣ AJ6		♣ Q102									
	<table border="1" style="width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 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		
	N										
W		E									
	S										
		♠ A86									
		♥ 84									
		♦ 10763									
		♣ 7543									

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Davies</i>	<i>Brown</i>	<i>Gisborne</i>	<i>Byrne</i>
1♥	Pass	2♦*	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♣*	Pass
3NT	Pass	4NT	Pass
6NT	All Pass		

North led the ♦9 and declarer won in dummy and cashed five more tricks in the suit, discarding two spades, a heart and two clubs. When North came in with the ♥K she returned a club to the singleton ace so South could return a club to her king when he got in with the ♠A for two down.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Myers</i>	<i>Chada</i>	<i>Brock</i>	<i>Sandford</i>
1♥	Pass	2♦	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♦	Pass
3NT	Pass	4NT	All Pass

Declarer won the diamond lead in dummy and ran the ♥J – he could always force an entry to dummy in clubs. North won and returned a diamond, declarer winning in dummy and running the ♣Q, unblocking the jack. North won and played a spade, +630 and 13 IMPs to Hinden who won easily, 46-2, 19.44-0.56.

You can replay the deals [here](#) or <https://tinyurl.com/yd5p89sj>

Round 15 Seale v Bell

Seale was already safe, but Bell was not quite guaranteed a spot in the last four.

Board 15. Dealer South. N/S Vul.

♠ AKJ65432											
♥ -											
♦ KQ65											
♣ 8											
♠ Q7		♠ 109									
♥ AQ4		♥ KJ8732									
♦ A1094		♦ 73									
♣ AJ75		♣ Q96									
	<table border="1" style="width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 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		
	N										
W		E									
	S										
		♠ 8									
		♥ 10965									
		♦ J82									
		♣ K10432									

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hydes</i>	<i>Atthey</i>	<i>Wiseman</i>	<i>Robinson</i>
-	-	-	Pass
1♣*	4♠	Double*	All Pass
1♣	Strong		
Dble	Takeout		

East led the ♠10, but declarer won and cashed five more spades on which West pitched two diamonds, thereby surrendering an overtrick, +990.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Seale</i>	<i>Bell</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Bell</i>
–	–	–	Pass
1NT	4♠	5♥	Pass
6♥	Pass	Pass	Double
All Pass			

♠ AKJ65432	♥ –	♦ KQ65	♣ 8
♠ Q7	♥ AQ4	♦ A1094	♣ AJ75
♠ 109	♥ KJ8732	♦ 73	♣ Q96
♠ 8	♥ 10965	♦ J82	♣ K10432

How would you describe West's raise to 6♥? Optimistic is one word that springs to mind.

South led the ♠8 and North took two tricks in the suit before switching to the ♦K, which ensured two down – but saw 12 IMPs appear on the opponents scorecard.

Seale won 35-2, 18.30-1.70 VP which meant a nervous wait for Bell until the remaining results were posted.

You can replay the deals [here](#) or <https://tinyurl.com/y9ojt9e3>

When Shashou could only manage 17.51 VP in their match Bell was home by 1.54 VP – leaving these four teams advancing to the last weekend:

Frances Hinden, Graham Osborne, Sally Brock, Barry Myers, Michael Byrne, Fiona Brown	198.73
Catherine Seale, David Gold, Claire Robinson, John Atthey	195.17
Anita Sinclair, Peter Crouch, Helen Erichsen, Espen Erichsen, Simon Cope, Marion Robertson	179.87
Sarah Bell, Mike Bell, Alex Hydes, Yvonne Wiseman, Heather Dhondy	174.40

MASTER POINT PRESS

THE BRIDGE PUBLISHER

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS

BRIDGE'S GREATEST MATCHES

ERIC KOKISH AND MARK HORTON

BOOK 1

1964 TO 2001



BOOK 2

2003 TO 2017



AVAILABLE FROM A BRIDGE RETAILER NEAR YOU



Misplay These Hands With Me

Routine Assignment

During a Swiss Teams event at a Regional in Sante Fe I pick up this hand with both sides vulnerable:

♠ AJ
♥ K73
♦ KJ642
♣ A54

When East, the dealer, passes I open 1NT. West enters from the wings with 2♣ which is alerted and explained as showing both majors. Partner considers for a while before bidding 3NT which leaves us with this auction:

West	North	East	South
-	-	Pass	1NT
2♣*	3NT	All Pass	

West leads the queen of hearts and I get a fair dummy:

♠ K63
♥ A62
♦ Q9
♣ K8732

♠ AJ
♥ K73
♦ KJ642
♣ A54

There are only six winners on top, but I have chances of developing the extra tricks in both clubs and diamonds.

I duck the opening lead as a matter of routine and when West continues with the nine of hearts I win in hand (East having followed with the eight and four) and play a diamond to the queen. When that holds I turn my attention to the club suit, playing a club to my ace. When West discards the five of spades I go back to diamonds, playing the king from my hand. West wins with the ace as East follows with an ominous looking ten.

I take West's heart return in dummy and cross to hand with the ace of spades to play the jack of diamonds. When East discards a club the game is up and I concede one down.

The full deal looked like this:

♠ Q1095	<div style="display: inline-block; border: 2px solid green; padding: 5px;"> <table style="border-collapse: collapse; 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> </div>		N		W		E		S		♠ 8742
		N									
W			E								
		S									
♥ QJ1095		♥ A62	♥ 84								
♦ A875	♦ Q9	♦ 103									
♣ -	♣ K8732	♣ QJ1096									
	♠ AJ										
	♥ K73										
	♦ KJ642										
	♣ A54										

Post mortem

Declarer missed more than one chance to bring home the contract. At trick three the correct play is a diamond to the nine. East wins with the ten, but is out of hearts and declarer has plenty of time to force out the ace of diamonds, giving three diamond tricks to go with two in each of the other three suits.

As it went, after a diamond to the queen it costs declarer nothing to play dummy's king of clubs. When West shows out declarer continues with the nine of diamonds and when East plays the ten declarer ducks.

At double dummy West leads the five of hearts and if declarer ducks East's eight, a spade switch dooms the contract.

Premature Ruff

Having travelled to the South coast of England to play in her local club with a World Champion who has retired from serious competition I pick up a promising looking hand:

♠ AKJ8532
♥ AJ4
♦ KQ
♣ J

With both sides vulnerable West is the dealer and after two passes East opens 4♥. When I overcall 4♠ West doubles, leaving us with this auction:

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	4♥	4♠
Double	All Pass		

West leads the eight of hearts and dummy has a few useful cards:

♠ 7
♥ 10
♦ J109542
♣ A10874



♠ AKJ8532
♥ AJ4
♦ KQ
♣ J

East plays the queen of hearts and I win with the ace.

I daresay West has all the missing spades, but perhaps I can arrange some sort of endplay. It must be right to try to shorten my trumps. If West started with a singleton heart there is little I can do but at trick two when I play a heart, West follows with the two, so I ruff, then cash the ace of clubs and ruff a club. When I play the ace of spades I am pleased to see East follow with the four.

I play the queen of diamonds, hoping West will duck, but he goes in with the ace and exits with the eight of diamonds. I win in hand and play a low spade and West wins with the nine and returns the nine of clubs. I ruff and play the king of spades and a spade, hoping West will have to give a trick to dummy's jack of diamonds, but when he produces

the queen of clubs I have to ruff and give a heart trick to East's queen. Time to see the full deal:

	♠ 7											
	♥ 10											
	♦ J109542											
	♣ A10874											
♠ Q1096		<table border="1" style="width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 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		♠ 4
	N											
W			E									
	S											
♥ 82		♥ KQ97653										
♦ A87		♦ 63										
♣ Q952		♣ K63										
	♠ AKJ8532											
	♥ AJ4											
	♦ KQ											
	♣ J											

Post mortem

Declarer was in too much of a hurry to try and ruff a heart in dummy. At trick two he should cross to dummy with the ace of clubs and ruff a club. Then after ruffing a heart declarer ruffs a second club and plays as before. The difference is that one of West's exit cards has been extracted and when he is eventually thrown in for the last time he will have to give dummy a diamond trick.

West did well to go in with the ace of diamonds - ducking would have given declarer the tempo to get home.

Notice that if West leads a trump declarer scores a cheap trick, but West can win the first diamond and switch to a club, leaving declarer a trick short.

Deals that Caught My Eye

David Bird looks at the final of USA's Grand National Teams

Each district of the ACBL enters one team in the Grand National teams. District 9 (Florida: David Berkowitz, Gary Cohler, Warren Spector, Jeff Meckstroth, Eric Rodwell) faced District 17 (Las Vegas: Joshua Donn, Roger Lee, Sylvia Shi, Daniel Korbelt).

We will take a look at some of the biggest swings. As always, we will try to make a fair assessment of whether these swings were due to luck, great bidding or play, or (oh, no!) a mistake somewhere.

Set 1. Board 5. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

♠ KJ1093 ♥ J92 ♦ 742 ♣ 54	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ 6 ♥ A7 ♦ Q93 ♣ AKJ9873	♠ A542 ♥ KQ6 ♦ J6 ♣ Q1062
------------------------------------	--	-----------------------------------	------------------------------------

commentary on BBO. He knows all the players' systems and I would certainly be floundering here without his explanations. 1♠ showed at least 2 controls (A=2, K=1). 2♣ showed at least 5-5 in the red suits. 3♦ showed 3-5-5-0 shape and 3NT a minimum. If you are anxious to adopt this bidding system, look up 'TOSR Relay' on the internet.

Meckstroth led ace and another spade, Sylvia Shi ruffing the second round. After ruffing a low club, she played the ace and queen of trumps and ruffed another club, all following. It remained only to cross to the ♥A and enjoy the established clubs, making an overtrick. Nice work!

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Spector</i>	<i>Lee</i>	<i>Cohler</i>	<i>Donn</i>
-	Pass	1♣	Pass
1♥	1♠	3♣	3♠
Double	Pass	5♣	Double
All Pass			

Donn doubled 5♣ and led the ♥K. Cohler won, played two top trumps and turned to diamonds, hoping to ditch a loser. Not today. South ruffed the third round and declarer lost 300 for a swing of 12 IMPs.



It was not so easy to defeat 3NT on this deal:

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Korbelt</i>	<i>Rodwell</i>	<i>Shi</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>
-	Pass	1♣	Pass
1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♦	Pass
2♠	Double	Pass	Pass
3♦	Pass	3♥	Pass
3NT	Pass	5♦	All Pass

It was lucky indeed that the great Al Hollander was doing written

Set 1. Board 8. Dealer West. None Vul.

♠ A6 ♥ A6 ♦ AKQJ94 ♣ K75		♠ K32 ♥ J84 ♦ 3 ♣ AQJ932	♠ Q10875 ♥ KQ53 ♦ 765 ♣ 8
			♠ J94 ♥ 10972 ♦ 1082 ♣ 1064

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Korbel</i>	<i>Rodwell</i>	<i>Shi</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>
Pass	1♣	2♣	Pass
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

Shi chose an excellent lead, the ♠2. Dummy's ♠9 was covered by the 10 and ace. Hoping for something to happen, Rodwell ran his diamond suit. Korbel came down to ♠Q875 and ♥KQ; Shi kept ♠K3 ♥J and ♣AQJ. Rodwell cashed the ♥A and played a spade. Shi won with the ♠K and returned the ♠3 for one down. A neat defence.

Closed Room


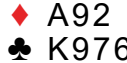
West	North	East	South
<i>Spector</i>	<i>Lee</i>	<i>Cohler</i>	<i>Donn</i>
Pass	2♣	3♣	Pass
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

Cohler chose a different opening lead, the ♥J. Lee won with the ♥A and returned the ♥6, aiming to build a heart trick. Spector won with the ♥Q and had the first chance to switch to a spade. Of course he preferred to lead a club. Lee false-carded the ♣7, hoping to look like a man with only ♣K7. Cohler won with the ♣J and could still prevent the ship from sinking with a spade switch. He chose the ♥8 to West's ♥K and this set up

dummy's ♥7 as a ninth trick. Spector returned a diamond and declarer claimed the contract for a gain of 10 IMPs. Donn led 37-30 after the first 15 board set.

This vaguely humorous lay-out provided the only worthwhile swing of the second set:

Set 2. Board 8. Dealer East. Bothr Vul.

♠ AQ84 ♥ AKQ98 ♦ KQ ♣ 104		♠ 1096 ♥ 7643 ♦ J1083 ♣ 53	♠ KJ2 ♥ 52 ♦ 7654 ♣ AQJ8
			♠ 753 ♥ J10 ♦ A92 ♣ K9762

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Donn</i>	<i>Rodwell</i>	<i>Lee</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>
-	-	Pass	Pass
1♥	Pass	2♥	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

Donn won the trump lead and played a second trump. He then advanced the ♦Q, Rodwell's ♦4 showing reverse-count. Meckstroth took his ace immediately and switched to the ♣6. Declarer played the ♣4 and Rodwell won with the ♣J. To take the contract two down, North has to read partner for ♣K and underlead the ♣A now, for a spade switch. He banked his second club trick and exited with a diamond. Donn then led the ♠Q to endplay North for one down.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Spector	Korbel	Cohler	Shi
-	-	Pass	Pass
1♥	All Pass		

North led the ♦5 to South's ace and the ♠5 was returned. Spector played low and North won with the ♠J. A second round of diamonds went to declarer's king and he drew trumps in two rounds.

The Great Dealer had found it amusing to give declarer no trump entry to dummy. Spector tried his luck with the ♠8. Bulls-eye! North played low and dummy's ♠9 won the trick. Away went two clubs on the ♦J-10 and declarer scored four overtricks to gain 7 IMPs. 'You couldn't find a raise with four trumps, partner?'

After a low-scoring second set, Donn led by 54-39.

Set 3. Board 6. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

♠ K85		♠ 1072
♥ 73		♥ AKQ65
♦ J106		♦ AQ
♣ KQJ92		♣ 753
	♠ Q9	
	♥ J108	
	♦ K843	
	♣ A1086	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Rodwell	Donn	Meckstroth	Lee
-	-	1NT	Pass
2NT	Pass	3♥	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

♠ AQ84		♠ 1096
♥ AKQ98		♥ 7643
♦ KQ		♦ J1083
♣ 104		♣ 53
	♠ 753	
	♥ J10	
	♦ A92	
	♣ K9762	

1NT was 14-16 and 2NT was 5-card Stayman. What would you lead from the South hand?

The only winning lead is the ♠Q. If this is covered with the king North must duck, playing an encouraging card. It is difficult but not impossible to find this lead. West will hold three spades to justify his 5-card Stayman bid. East cannot hold four spades, alongside his five hearts, so North is marked with five (or six) spades.

South led the ♦3 and Meckstroth played dummy's ♦J and the ♦Q from his hand. Two rounds of clubs were ducked by South, North showing out on the second round. Declarer crossed to the ♥K and led a third club. In with the ♣A, Lee played another diamond. Meckstroth won and scored four more heart tricks for his contract.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Korbel	Cohler	Shi	Berkowitz
-	-	1NT	Pass
2♠	Double	Pass	Pass
3♣	All Pass		

Korbel's 2♠ showed clubs and East's Pass denied a good fit. 3NT would not have been a success after North's spade-showing double. 3♣ was made with an overtrick, for a loss of 10 IMPs.

Set 3. Board 11. Dealer South. None Vul.

♠ K9		♠ J75
♥ QJ75		♥ 84
♦ 854		♦ AJ10963
♣ J1096		♣ K4
	♠ Q86	
	♥ AK632	
	♦ 2	
	♣ A872	
	♠ A10432	
	♥ 109	
	♦ KQ7	
	♣ Q53	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Rodwell	Donn	Meckstroth	Lee
-	-	-	1♠
Pass	2♥	Pass	2♠
Pass	4♦	Double	4♠
All Pass			

♠ K9	♠ Q86	♠ J75
♥ QJ75	♥ AK632	♥ 84
♦ 854	♦ 2	♦ AJ10963
♣ J1096	♣ A872	♣ K4
	♠ A10432	
	♥ 109	
	♦ KQ7	
	♣ Q53	

Rodwell led the ♦4. If 4♦ was a splinter bid, as I assume, a diamond lead does not figure to be dynamic. Meckstroth won with the ♦A and, with one eye on dummy's threatening hearts, switched to the ♣K. Declarer won in dummy, played a trump to the 10 and king and won the club return. That was ten tricks for +420.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Korbel	Cohler	Shi	Berkowitz
-	-	-	1♠
Pass	2♥	Pass	2NT
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

Korbel made the more taxing lead of the ♣J. To make the contract now, declarer needs to rise with dummy's ♣A and play a trump. When he ducked, East won with the king and returned a club to declarer's queen (West playing the 10). Berkowitz led a trump towards dummy, West rising with the king and giving partner a club ruff. The ♦A was then cashed for one down. 10 IMPs to Donn.

Set 3. Board 15. Dealer South. N/S Vul.

♠ K3	♠ K3	♠ 4
♥ AK542	♥ AK542	♥ J103
♦ A4	♦ A4	♦ KJ10753
♣ AQ98	♣ AQ98	♣ 643
	♠ J1072	
	♥ Q976	
	♦ 82	
	♣ J105	
	♠ AQ9865	
	♥ 8	
	♦ Q96	
	♣ K72	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Rodwell	Donn	Meckstroth	Lee
-	-	-	1♠
Pass	2♥	Pass	2♠
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT
Pass	5NT	Pass	6♠
All Pass			

Donn bid a pick-a-slam 5NT and they arrived in 6♠. After the ♣J lead declarer had two discards available for the diamond losers. The 4-1 trump break held him to +1430.


Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Korbel	Cohler	Shi	Berkowitz
-	-	-	1♠
Pass	2♥	Pass	2♠
Pass	3♣	Pass	3♦
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠
Pass	4NT	Pass	5♣
Pass	5♦	Double	Pass
Pass	Redouble	Pass	6♣
Pass	7♠	All Pass	

Berkowitz's 6♣ showed the ♠Q and the ♣K, after which Cohler was happy to venture a grand slam. West led the ♦2 and there were only 12 tricks there when the trumps divided poorly. That was 17 IMPs to Donn, who now led by 82-63.

In so many matches Meckstroth and Rodwell have participated in a last-set deluge of IMPs into their plus-column. Would it happen again? Their team was back in the lead after just three boards.

Set 4. Board 1. Dealer West. E/W Vul.

♠ K 1098643 ♥ — ♦ Q9 ♣ Q763		♠ A ♥ AJ10643 ♦ A104 ♣ 1092	♠ J752 ♥ K872 ♦ J5 ♣ K85
--------------------------------------	---	--------------------------------------	-----------------------------------

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Berkowitz</i>	<i>Lee</i>	<i>Cohler</i>	<i>Donn</i>
1♦	3♠	4♥	4♠
5♥	Pass	6♥	All Pass


A hard-to-find club lead would have beaten the slam. Cohler won the spade lead and crossed to the ♦K to run the ♥9. South ducked the first round of trumps, won the second and returned a trump. When diamonds broke 2-2, declarer could ditch his club losers and collect +1430.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Korbel</i>	<i>Rodwell</i>	<i>Shi</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>
1♦	3♠	4♥	4♠
5♥	All Pass		

East let partner's 5♥ lie, making +680 for a loss of 13 IMPs. There was a fair amount of luck involved in this deal. Would you have bid a sixth heart on those East cards?

Set 4. Board 3. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ AKQ82 ♥ KJ3 ♦ QJ54 ♣ Q		♠ 94 ♥ 754 ♦ AK9 ♣ J9763	♠ 5 ♥ AQ10962 ♦ 8732 ♣ AK
-----------------------------------	---	-----------------------------------	------------------------------------

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Berkowitz</i>	<i>Lee</i>	<i>Cohler</i>	<i>Donn</i>
–	–	Pass	1♥
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♥
Pass	4♣	Pass	4♦
Pass	4NT	Pass	5♠
Pass	6♥	All Pass	

South's 4♦ was the famed Last Train slam try, which shows extra values but does not guarantee a diamond control. The method was invented by Jeff Meckstroth. (Perhaps he was hoping that his opponents would encounter problems handling it.)

On this deal North would have been better off playing traditional cue-bidding methods. He hoped for the best in diamonds and advanced to the slam. This went two off on a diamond lead and a ruff.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Korbel	Rodwell	Shi	Meckstroth
–	–	Pass	1♥
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♥
Pass	2♠	Pass	2NT
Pass	3♣	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

Meckstroth's 1♥ was limited because he had not opened 1♣. Rodwell's 2♠ was artificial game-force and 3♣ showed a raise in hearts. Whatever 3♥ means, it dampened any slam ambitions and they stopped safely in 4♥. That was +620 and another 13 IMPs.

The Spector team from California steam-rolled their opponents 58-5 in the last set, winning the final by 121-87. Our congratulations to them!



BRIDGE SHOP.com

London Bridge Centre

Books | Equipment | Tables | Cards | DVDs | Software | Gifts



ENTERPRISING BRIDGE TALES

THE NEXT GENERATION

Marc Smith

To boldly go where no bridge players have gone before...

An Honors Book from Master Point Press

MASTER POINT PRESS

THE BRIDGE PUBLISHER

ENTERPRISING BRIDGE TALES

THE NEXT GENERATION

by Marc Smith

AVAILABLE FROM A BRIDGE RETAILER NEAR YOU

Visit our central London Store:

Chess & Bridge Shop

44 Baker Street, London, W1U 7RT

www.bridgeshop.com

0207 486 7015 | info@bridgeshop.com

Enterprising Bridge Tales: The Original Stories

by Marc Smith

To celebrate the republication of Marc Smith's first book and its sequel we are publishing its first chapter. Marc is also writing some special one-off stories exclusively for A New Bridge Magazine. You will find the first one on later pages of this magazine.

CHAPTER ONE

APPROACHING EARTH

The Federation starship U.S.S. Competitor slipped through space at warp speed seven. Numerous crew members were relaxing on the observation deck as they headed for their first shore leave in six months. The 2,936th Summer Universal Tournament was to be played on Earth for the first time in over 2.3 stardates, and excitement had been building steadily amongst the crew's bridge players since it was announced that their schedule would allow them to participate. For some, this would be the first time they had attended a major tournament. Indeed, many of them had played only social bridge before coming aboard. Around the starship, players could be heard arguing over misplayed hands, discussing bidding systems or modifying their defensive signaling methods in anticipation of the forthcoming competition.

Over 100 crew members were planning to play in one or more of the many events, but probably only Captain Quirk's team would dare to enter the Spingold, the major teams event which was restricted to Galactic Masters and above. The Captain and his team were spending as much time as possible fine-tuning their game in an attempt to be at their best when the competition began in earnest. Quirk had arranged a private practice for his team with less than 48 hours before the big tournament got under way.

Whilst awaiting the arrival of Doctor DeKoy, First Officer Sprock was pedantically explaining sequences following Roman Key Card Gerber in Stayman auctions. The Captain could not understand the necessity for special bids to ask for jacks and key tens, but Sprock insisted that they were an integral part of the Vulcan Variable Pass system.

As Captain, Quirk had his choice of partners. Before Sprock joined the crew, he had been heralded as one of the finest young players ever to come from his native Vulcan. They had formed a steady partnership and Quirk had improved his game tremendously under Sprock's subtle guidance. Of course, Sprock never actually taught, at least not so that the Captain noticed.

Being partially human, Sprock understood the emotional problems involved in developing a partnership with the Captain. For a start, Quirk considered himself the best player on board. Indeed, he often wondered whether he would have been an automatic inductee to the Bridge Hall of Fame if he had not devoted so much time to becoming a starship captain. Even one of his best friends, Doctor DeKoy, had once described him as 'a legend in his own mind' on an occasion when Quirk was being particularly obstinate over some hand that he had (mis)played. Quirk, of course, had simply thanked the Doctor for his kind words.

By comparison, Mr. Sprock was an accomplished player with a computer-like mind. An expert declarer, he could analyze a hand almost instantaneously. He had been accused of hustling opponents as he was able to think and play so quickly, but he failed to understand the complaint, let alone acknowledge it. The flaw in Sprock's game was in the area of 'deceptive play'. Mr. Sprock seldom even thought of skulldugery as an option, since he would view the problem from the defender's viewpoint and conclude that no self-respecting Vulcan could fall for such a trap. As a result, he would mentally construct the defensive hands in such a way that a legitimate line of play could succeed, no matter how unlikely the lie of the cards.

Sprock had been a member of the committee which developed the Vulcan Variable Pass system, now used almost exclusively on his home world and nearby planets with intelligent lifeforms. When Sprock had first played with Quirk, he could not follow the logic behind the Captain's insistence that they play the Green Heart. After all, the greatest minds on Vulcan (and hence the Universe) had developed the ultimate system. Sprock failed to see why anyone would consider playing something less

efficient. Eventually, Quirk had agreed to try out the ‘new-fangled idea’ and they had been playing it ever since.

The other half of the ship’s senior team comprised Doctor Leonard DeKoy and Chief Engineer Montgomery Splot, fair players but never likely to win ‘the big event’. They had played a basic, natural system which relied more on good judgment than sophisticated bidding machinery. However, Quirk had recently persuaded them to try out the Vulcan Variable Pass and, much against DeKoy’s better judgment, they had agreed to try it. Still unconvinced, however, they now tended to vacillate between their two systems, often switching from one to the other during a session.

Doctor DeKoy was an unimaginative player who rarely erred as a result of a lapse in concentration. However, he almost never tried to pressure the opponents into mistakes. Chief Engineer Splot, on the other hand, would rather hoodwink his opponents than defeat them legitimately. Splot’s bidding bordered on the unsound, and when considering lines of play he was always on the lookout for subtle false cards or blatant deceptions.

“It always annoys the opposition so much,” he once explained to Sprock, who could not understand why that was an advantage.

DeKoy and Splot were a sociable pair who seldom argued about a hand, except perhaps after one of Splot’s random five-card preempts went wrong.

The Doctor never ceased to amaze Quirk, concentrating more of his time on medical matters than on making sure that he understood his system or keeping up with the latest card-play theories. Although Splot and DeKoy had been Quirk’s closest friends for many years, they were not exactly the most harmonious of teammates. Most of the disputes, of course, stemmed from the Captain, although he certainly did not see it that way. Quirk had often considered playing with other pairs in various events, but had never actually gotten around to it.

“I was under the impression that the game was at eight o’clock,” observed Quirk, obviously agitated at having been left to discuss system with Sprock for longer than he had intended. “It’s already nearly ten after.”

“An ensign arrived with a ruptured spleen,” explained DeKoy apologetically.

“That’s why you have two highly-trained nurses,” said Quirk, dealing the first hand. “They’re supposed to take care of medical emergencies that arise when you are unavoidably detained on important matters.”

This was the first deal of the evening:

Dealer South. Love All.

♠ A5 ♥ 9642 ♦ KJ72 ♣ Q63	♠ Q10 ♥ J1083 ♦ 10943 ♣ AK4	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 60px; height: 60px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td style="text-align: center;"> </td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ 864 ♥ KQ75 ♦ 65 ♣ 10872
	N											
W		E										
	S											
♠ KJ9732 ♥ A ♦ AQ8 ♣ J95												

West	North	East	South
<i>DeKoy</i>	<i>Sprock</i>	<i>Splot</i>	<i>Quirk</i>
—	—	—	1♣*
Pass	1NT*	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

- 1♣ 12-16 Unbalanced, any distribution.
- 1NT 8-11 Balanced.
- 3♠ 15-16 and six spades.

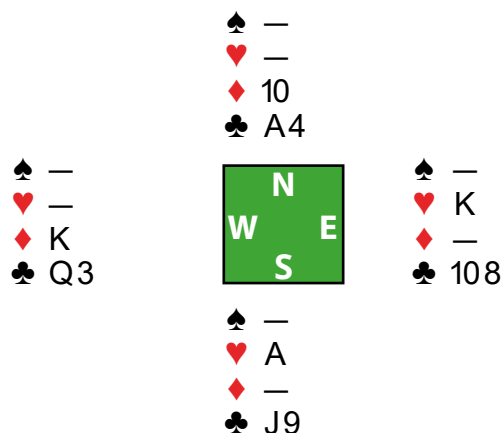
Sprock understood the Vulcan Variable Pass system perfectly. Quirk, although a convert, often had trouble with the subtle ramifications. Even the Captain, though, had no trouble on the first round of the auction. An opening Pass shows either 17+ points or 0-7 (any distribution in either case), one of a major is 8-11 and natural, One Diamond 8-13 balanced or 8-11 with a long minor, One Club 12-16 unbalanced and an opening One No-trump 14-16.

Sprock might have bid Three No-trumps, which would have made easily. Four Spades, though, was the logical bid, with the known eight card fit and a questionable diamond stopper.

DeKoy had endured numerous discussions with Splot about their lead methods and he had reluctantly agreed to lead second and fourth highest from all holdings except honour sequences. The Doctor whistled tunelessly as he pondered his opening lead, and finally opted for the ♣6.

Quirk won dummy's club king and played a diamond to the eight and jack. DeKoy began to regret not leading a falsecard ♣3. If he continued with the three now, declarer would know he did not hold a doubleton and play him for the queen. If he had led the three at trick one, declarer might have won the second club in dummy and taken another losing diamond finesse.

The Doctor eventually concluded that it was safe to exit with a diamond: either Splot had the queen or he would be able to ruff the third round. Quirk won with the diamond queen and played a trump, but DeKoy hopped up with the ace and gave Splot his diamond ruff. The lack of the club nine meant that Splot now had to exit with a major suit, and he chose a trump. The Captain reeled off his spades (discarding dummy's hearts) to leave this end position:



When Quirk cashed the ♥A, DeKoy nonchalantly parted with his low club. However, at this early stage in the evening declarer was wide awake, and he had been following the play sufficiently to discard dummy's diamond. A club to the ace brought down DeKoy's queen and the Captain claimed the ♣J as his tenth trick.

West would have fared no better on an initial heart lead: the defenders cannot attack clubs and declarer can eventually establish the ten of diamonds for a club discard.

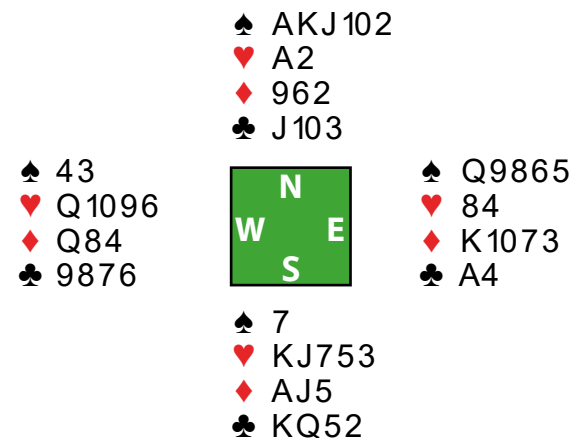
"Three No-trumps had an easy nine tricks", observed Quirk, pointedly as Mr. Sprock entered the result onto his impeccably neat scorecard.

"Yes," agreed Sprock. "But Four Spades had an easy ten tricks and it scores twenty points more!"

The hours passed, the cards fairly evenly distributed between the two pairs. The clock had just ticked past four o'clock. "Another four hands and then I must go to sleep," announced Quirk, much to everyone's relief.

The scores were close as Engineer Splot dealt this collection:

Dealer West: Love All:



West	North	East	South
<i>Splot</i>	<i>Quirk</i>	<i>DeKoy</i>	<i>Sprock</i>
Pass	1♣*	Pass	1♥*
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♣*
Pass	2♦*	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

- 1cx 12-16 Unbalanced, any distribution.
- 1hx 10+ Natural
- 2cx Natural and forcing
- 2dx Fourth-suit forcing

In view of the suit quality, Quirk elected to treat his hand as unbalanced with spades. Neither of his alternatives, One Diamond (a balanced 8-13) nor a 14-16 One No-trump opening, felt quite right.

Splot knew his partner must hold at least four spades and some values, and his failure to double the final contract enabled the Engineer to eliminate a spade lead from consideration. Not that anything looked particularly promising, and it was thus more in hope than expectation that Splot eventually produced the ♣6.

The protracted pause was not lost on declarer. Having surveyed dummy

for all of three seconds, Sprock called for the club jack. DeKoy's thought processes were somewhat slower and, from declarer's point of view, it took an eternity for him to win with the club ace and return the ♦10. On any other return, declarer has nine easy tricks via three spades, two hearts, one diamond and three clubs. The rather unfriendly diamond switch, however, provided Sprock with a number of alternatives to consider.

A finesse in one of the majors was one possibility. If he won the third diamond, cashed the ace of hearts and took a losing heart finesse, though, Splot could return a spade. Declarer would then have to guess between taking the spade finesse and playing for hearts to break. Sprock decided that there must be a better line. Assuming that DeKoy held either K10xx or Q10xx in diamonds, Sprock saw endplay possibilities.

If West's held the diamond king, then ducking the first round of the suit and playing the ace on the second would leave Splot with a choice of losing options. If he kept the king then he could be endplayed to concede a third heart trick to go with three clubs, one diamond and two spades. Alternatively, he could unblock, thus endplaying his partner to lead into dummy's spade tenace.

For the endplay to work, though, the defender to be endplayed would first have to be stripped of his doubleton in the other major. If the Engineer had begun with the queen of diamonds, the defenders will be able to choose which of them wins the third round of diamonds.

Suppose declarer cashed the ♥AK, eliminated the clubs, and played a third diamond for the endplay. If West can win that trick, though, he will be able to cash the queen of hearts. Declarer's heart jack will be set up but a spade exit would leave him unable to reach it, and dummy would be forced to concede a trick to the queen of spades at trick thirteen.

After what, for him, was an inordinately long pause, Sprock covered the ten of diamonds with his jack. Splot won his queen and immediately returned the four of diamonds, on which dummy played small and the Doctor's seven was captured by the ace. Sprock was now in command and returned to his normal lightning-quick tempo. He cashed the ace of spades and followed with three rounds of clubs to leave the following ending:

♠ 4	♠ KJ10	♠ Q9															
♥ Q1096	♥ A2	♥ 84															
♦ 8	♦ 9	♦ Q3															
♣ —	♣ —	♣ —															
<table style="border-collapse: collapse; margin: auto;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">♠ —</td> <td style="padding: 5px;"> <table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center; width: 60px; height: 60px;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table> </td> <td style="padding: 5px;">♠ KJ753</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">♥ KJ753</td> <td></td> <td style="padding: 5px;">♥ —</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">♦ 5</td> <td></td> <td style="padding: 5px;">♦ —</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">♣ —</td> <td></td> <td style="padding: 5px;">♣ —</td> </tr> </table>			♠ —	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center; width: 60px; height: 60px;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S	♠ KJ753	♥ KJ753		♥ —	♦ 5		♦ —	♣ —		♣ —
♠ —	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center; width: 60px; height: 60px;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S	♠ KJ753												
N																	
W E																	
S																	
♥ KJ753		♥ —															
♦ 5		♦ —															
♣ —		♣ —															

Sprock now cashed the top hearts and exited with his third diamond. DeKoy peered disgustedly at the nine of diamonds in dummy and calmly followed with the three. The Doctor claimed the king of diamonds and the queen of spades at the end.

"I'm not prepared to be endplayed by a damned Vulcan," snorted Doctor DeKoy, much to his partner's amusement.

"I hope you'll pay closer attention once the tournament gets started," reprimanded Quirk, gruffly. The Captain had not been following the play, and was under the impression that Doctor DeKoy had pulled the wrong card at the end, thus allowing the diamond nine to score declarer's game-going trick.

"A gallant effort; the ten of diamonds," added Splot, nodding.

Much to everyone's relief, the last hand of the session had arrived. The clock was fast edging towards five a.m., and the Doctor was not looking forward to his seven o'clock surgery. Having sorted his hand, though, he was sufficiently aroused by his collection of high cards to make one final effort to concentrate. This was the full deal :

Dealer West. N/S Vul.

♠ A84 ♥ AK ♦ KJ63 ♣ AK64		♠ K1097 ♥ 9542 ♦ 94 ♣ Q85	♠ Q6 ♥ 876 ♦ AQ105 ♣ 10732
-----------------------------------	--	------------------------------------	-------------------------------------

West	North	East	South
<i>Quirk</i>	<i>DeKoy</i>	<i>Sprock</i>	<i>Spot</i>
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♦
Pass	2♥	Pass	2♠
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♣
Pass	3♦	Pass	3NT
Pass	4NT	Pass	5♦
Pass	5NT	Pass	6♦
All Pass			

“Seven rounds of bidding!” snorted Quirk. “You’re always telling us how natural your system is. It’s far too late for long, tedious explanations, so tell me quickly so we can all go to bed. Don’t you have a surgery in the morning?”

“Two Clubs was strong” began DeKoy calmly.

“That much I worked out,” interrupted Quirk, facetiously.

“My other bids were all relays,” continued the Doctor, patiently. “Spot’s Two Diamonds was 7-11 points and any distribution, Two Spades showed a balanced hand and Three Clubs denied a four-card major. Three No-trumps showed two four-card minors. Five Diamonds promised one of the six key cards (four aces and the two minor-suit kings). The Six Diamond response admitted to one major suit king or one minor suit queen.”

“Is it my lead?” asked Quirk, making little attempt to stifle a yawn.

There was only a momentary pause before the ♥Q hit the table, and

DeKoy proudly tabled his picture gallery. Spot quickly realized that there were insufficient trumps for an elimination and endplay. His chances were remote barring an unlikely doubleton QJ of clubs.

“Perhaps a partial elimination and a misdefense,” thought Spot, glancing at Quirk, who appeared to be dozing off. “If I ‘think’ for another five minutes, that should do wonders for the Captain’s concentration.”

Declarer eventually cashed dummy’s second top heart, led a trump to his hand, ruffed his third heart in dummy, and played a second trump. Next came the two top clubs to leave this position with dummy on lead:

♠ J532 ♥ J ♦ 8 ♣ —		♠ A84 ♥ — ♦ J ♣ 64	♠ K1097 ♥ 9 ♦ — ♣ Q
-----------------------------	--	-----------------------------	------------------------------

♠ Q6 ♥ — ♦ Q10 ♣ 107

Spot led a third round of clubs to Sprock’s queen, Quirk discarding a spade with no apparent thought. Sprock considered his options. A heart would allow declarer to discard his second spade as dummy ruffed. It was possible that declarer had begun with the ace-queen of diamonds plus the spade jack to make up his 7-11 HCP, in which case the Captain had the queen of spades. Indeed, that seemed the only chance left for the defense, so Sprock exited with a low spade. The Engineer rose hopefully with the queen and, when it held, he turned in Quirk’s direction and laid down the queen of trumps, beaming from ear to ear.

“What’s so funny?” demanded Quirk, tallying the scores. “There was nothing we could do to beat it.”

“We is a collective term,” observed Sprock, wryly, “although it is indeed true that there was nothing I could do to beat the contract.”

“I could have led a spade, but a heart from QJ10 seemed normal from my hand,” submitted Quirk, convinced that even Sprock would not be able to find a good reason for a spade lead from J532.

“Quite so,” explained Sprock, patiently, “but if you had ruffed the third round of clubs, I would not have been endplayed. Instead of getting a club trick, we would have made one diamond and one spade. I believe that two tricks would have been sufficient for us to have recorded a plus score on the deal.”

“How can I possibly tell that I should ruff your winner?” spluttered Quirk, rising defensively from the table.

“What were you saving the trump for,” enquired Sprock, much to the amusement of DeKoy and Splot, “Breakfast?”

BARON BARCLAY BRIDGE SUPPLY

ENTERPRISING BRIDGE TALES

THE ORIGINAL STORIES

Marc Smith



To boldly go where no bridge players have gone before...

An Honors Book from Master Point Press

MASTER POINT PRESS

THE BRIDGE PUBLISHER

ENTERPRISING BRIDGE TALES

THE ORIGINAL STORIES

by Marc Smith

AVAILABLE FROM A BRIDGE
RETAILER NEAR YOU

Books, Learning Materials,
Duplicate & Rubber Bridge
Supplies, Gifts, Games & More.

WWW.BARONBARCLAY.COM
800.274.2221



Highlights and New Features

You thought you knew everything about bridge?

Test your knowledge with Funbridge Quiz 4!

Developed by the Funbridge team, this new version of the Funbridge Quiz app includes 500 new quiz questions divided into 5 main themes:

- The right bid
- The right hand
- Card play
- Forcing or not forcing?
- Defending a contract

Make progress at your own pace with the many features offered by Funbridge Quiz 4:

- Get statistics and see how you progress day by day in all bridge areas.
- Look up bridge words in the glossary included.
- Learn from your mistakes thanks to corrections provided at the end of each question.

Don't wait any longer and test your knowledge now!

Download Funbridge Quiz 4 from the App Store, the Google Play and the Amazon Appstore.

If you haven't updated your Funbridge version yet, you will be asked to do so the next time you will launch the app.

And if you don't have the Funbridge app yet, go to www.funbridge.com, the App Store or the Google Play Store to download it for free. What's more, you will get 100 deals for free. Enjoy!

DEFEND WITH JULIAN

POTTAGE

The Questions

1

♠ AQ64
 ♥ AJ102
 ♦ A
 ♣ K984

	N		♠ J7
W		E	♥ K5
	S		♦ 1087
			♣ J106532

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
-	-	-	1♠*
Pass	4♦*	Pass	4♠
Pass	6♠	All Pass	

1♠ 5-card majors and strong NT
 4♦ Splinter

Partner leads the seven of clubs. What is your plan?

2

♠ J10
 ♥ 985
 ♦ 642
 ♣ AJ963

	N		♠ 6
W		E	♥ Q432
	S		♦ KJ85
			♣ K1042

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Pass	Pass	Pass	1♠
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♦
Pass	2♠	All Pass	

West leads the five of clubs, won by the ace (eight on your left). Declarer leads a heart to the jack and ace, ruffs the club continuation and then plays ace followed by another diamond, West playing the seven and queen. What do you do?

Book Review

by Martin Cantor

The Blue Team in the History of Bridge : Translated by Maurizio Di Sacco ; Edited by Mark Horton

Master Point Press 384pp. US\$ 25.95 GBE 15.95

This is a monumental book. Quite literally. It celebrates and immortalises great men and great deeds. It is large and imposing. And it is vainglorious.

The Italian Blue Team can lay claim to being the greatest in bridge history, and their record in winning successive World and European titles is unlikely ever to be matched. Carl'Alberto Perroux was the non-playing captain of that team from the time of its first successes almost to the time of its dissolution.

As readers may or may not be aware, there have been persistent rumours and several allegations that this success was, at least in part, due to illicit signalling between some of the partnerships, and in a book published in September 2018 Avon Wilsmore sets out what he claims is (and at first sight seems to be) convincing evidence in support of those allegations. Whatever the truth or otherwise of those allegations, Perroux's memoir from deep inside the team's achievements, its problems, its tantrums and its joys are an important historical record, first published in Italian in 1960 and now translated into English for a wider audience.

So, what in this book is good? I found much of interest, and of use, in the author's depiction of his actions as a non-playing captain. Selection problems of course (he is not a fan of selection by trials), but more importantly the things he had to do to keep his players happy or even available, let alone on top form. The strictures he imposed on them about practising, about lifestyle, about behaviour. Players and captains alike could benefit from reading the long letter he sent to the team the first time he acted as coach, and which is reproduced here in full. I found his discussion of the rights and wrongs of professionalism in bridge, particularly the question of sponsors, interesting given how limited that was then, and how widespread it is now. The story of how the team slowly declined is illuminating, including how he himself felt the need to withdraw from the captaincy, although it does not perhaps give enough attention to

how the Blue Team's challengers improved, notably of course the creation of the Dallas Aces team. His take on the Reese-Schapiro Buenos Aires cheating accusation is fascinating.

And what is bad about the book? Well firstly I have to say that the language does not make it an easy read. Italian is generally much more florid than English, and the author's style is at the extreme end of that, verging on the orotund. It is erudite, but unfortunately overly so, necessitating a large number of footnotes to explain references to ancient mythology or Italian dialect. And I'm sorry to say that the translation is very clearly by a non-native English speaker with words misused, arcane words frequent, idioms mistranslated or misapplied. Like most autobiographical records it is to some degree self-serving, but to be fair less so than many. And unfortunately it has dated somewhat, simply because it assumes a degree of background knowledge of the players and the bridge events which, while reasonable to assume at the time of writing, can no longer be expected of today's readership. For me it would have been improved by including bridge hands more regularly into the narration; mostly they are few and far between, until you come to Chapter 15 which has tens of them from the 1964 Olympiad, one after the other.

In summary, it's a good book for students of bridge history and for those interested in the psychological and captaincy aspects of improving a bridge team's performance. Less so for those who want to see challenging deals. And anyone who wants to read good prose should go to the original Italian version.

From Our French Correspondent

Ron Tacchi reports from the other side of 'La Manche'

I have suddenly realised that burning litres of midnight oil producing a free bridge magazine is not going to allow me to live the life of luxury to which I wish to become accustomed. So I am going to try a new tack – 'product placement'. My hope is that senior management of the companies that produce the articles which I shall plug will be so enamoured with the positive advertising they will shower me with countless Euros. In forthcoming missives you will hear of 'Bent Banani', 'Gentle Grips' and 'Fitbit' to name but three. Of course I am open to offers to push any product for the right price – you know how to contact me.

Of Dice and Men

Today is Friday and as you will know if you have followed the previous reports that means I go into town and visit a local bar and play dice with the natives. I have had countless requests (perhaps that is a touch of poetic licence, but I firmly believe that one should not allow the facts to interfere with a good story) to describe the game. The bar is called 'Le Boeuf Couronné' (product placement has already struck gold – I have been given a free beer when I said that I would be mentioning the bar in this illustrious journal) and the patron's name is David and in spite of his name he is very French. There is one constant other player called Didier, whom I have now known for over twenty years, and there is a pool of other players who may or may not be in the bar between 18.30 and 20.00. The game is quite simple, it is called '*cinq mille*' (five thousand) and, surprisingly, the goal is to reach a score of precisely five thousand. However it is not winning that is important, it is not losing as the person who comes last, i.e. has the lowest score when someone has reached the 5000 target, buys a round of drinks.

The game is played on a circular '*piste*' about 50 cms in diameter into which one throws the dice of which there are five. The scoring dice are ones and fives, each being worth one hundred points and fifty points respectively. You can also score by throwing a '*suite*' (the five dice in a run of one to five or two to six), also three of a kind scores. The *suite* scores

500 and the three of a kind scores the number multiplied by 100, e.g. three threes are worth 300, the exception being that three ones counts as a '*mille*' (thousand). The first action is to determine who throws first and this is simply done by each player throwing a die and the lowest number starts. If possible this is not what you want to do as there is considerable advantage in being the player to throw last at the end of the game as everyone gets to throw the same number of times.

A couple of supplementary rules are that should you throw five ones or five fives at any time that immediately counts as a score of 5000, i.e. you have attained the goal of the game (I have done this three times this year – statistically unlikely, much to the chagrin of the natives). Should you throw five of another number then that counts as the number being multiplied by 1000, the exception being the sixes as obviously 6000 is more than 5000 so it scores 600 for three of the dice. Should your score plus the current value of your hand exceed 5000 then your turn is terminated and the score reverts to that prior to the throw. However, to be able to count your score you must first attain 750 points in a single turn.

The first player throws all five dice, should he unfortunate enough to score no points then the assembled crowd will shout '*velo*', which is short for velocipede. I have still to determine why shouting 'bike' should denote failure at throwing dice other than it could be something to do with the success of the French cycle teams relative to the English teams. This activity is done in various loud manners accompanied by gestures, some less politically incorrect than others. Having determined that the throw is not a *velo* then it is the responsibility of the following player to pick up the scoring dice and announce the score unless all five dice score whereupon he merely utters the value of the throw. Until the player has fulfilled the condition of amassing 750 points in a single turn he must continue to throw until that requirement is met. He must also throw again if all five of his dice scored. For example if he threw three fives an one and a three the following player would pick up the fives and the one and say 'six hundred' (though of course he would say it in French), The

thrower would then pick up the remaining die and throw and hope for a one or a five. Should he succeed then he would take all five again and throw them. If the resulting score total was equal to or greater than 750 he would accept the score gratefully.

After opening when it is a player's turn he throws the dice and at any time he can take his score, except, of course, if all five dice have scored, when he must throw again. An example might be he throws a five, a one, two twos and a three. That is a score of 150, the following player would pick the one and the five and normally the thrower would continue with the remaining three dice. Supposing he threw two fives and a six giving him a score of 250 he could take this score or he could take the one in three chance of attaining a one or five. Of course if he failed he would score nothing. When one player reaches the target of 5000 exactly then play continues until everyone has had the same number of throws. The person with the lowest score then buys a round of drinks. That is all there is to it.

The title of this piece refers to three earlier works on bridge originally published in *Bridge Universal Magazine*, this was the second one and related the story of two lowly guys who both developed a system for evaluating the value of a bridge hand. One was much superior to the other and the inventor to save his friend embarrassment and shame from promoting the inferior method shot him. The third article was entitled 'Of Dyson Men' which was about a family that made a fortune by reinventing household appliances and had so much money that they could afford to sponsor a bridge team. They cleverly took the route of buying up all the good players and running their own trials to see which team would have the best chance of bringing home triumphs in the bridge world. The catch was that if you were paid by them then only the team they selected could go forward to the selection process of the governing body. This considerably lessened the chance of the organising body failing to choose the best team. The very first piece was about how playing cards were originally made from porcelain and it was entitled 'Of Meissen Men'.

After last week's duplicate I was chatting to Watson and asked him if he would like to have a go at playing a hand that came up in a competition in which I partook the previous week. Of course he replied in the affirmative else, as they say, there would be no story.

♠ AJ10752

♥ A7

♦ 8

♣ KQ104



♠ 6

♥ K854

♦ A942

♣ AJ87

'Well Watson, on this occasion I was North and in spite of me opening the bidding with spades we found our club fit and bid the slam. Now can you make it on the lead of the nine of clubs?'

'It looks a good contract. My initial reaction is to ruff some spades and hopefully set them up.'

'Seems an acceptable plan to me. Tell me how you are going about it. East plays a small club on the first trick.'

'Well, I will win the lead in hand with the jack and immediately lead a spade to the ace and play another and ruff it low.'

'Do you want to know what happened on this trick?'

'Of course.'

'East dropped the queen on the second round of spades.'

'So now I cross to dummy with the ace of hearts and ruff another spade.'

'Unfortunately East shows out and when the clubs prove to be 4-1 the hand disintegrates as you lose trump control. Have another go.'

'A bit stumped.'

'Well here are a couple of questions for you. Firstly are you playing at the seven-level? Secondly, if not can you afford to lose a trick?'

'I think by now I can ignore those sarcastic questions and take heed of what they are suggesting.'

'Watson, you are beginning to know me.'

'I still think I need to establish the spades.'

'Indeed you are right.'

'Maybe if when I cross to the ace of hearts I can lead the jack and duck it, that will establish the suit and retain trump control.'

'Smart thinking – what will you do if East ruffs the jack of spades?'

'Why do you always make things difficult? Let me think. I can overruff'

and still retain control by giving up a spade.’

‘Tell me the exact cards you are going to play.’

‘Ah, I catch your drift, thanks for the unintended tip. I must overruff with the ace and cross to dummy by overtaking my small trump and exiting with a spade. Dummy is now high and I have one more trump than East so can reenter dummy by ruffing a red card and still maintain trump control.’

‘Well done Watson, I shall have to start finding harder hands for you to analyse.’

‘As an aside if when you had ruffed the spades the first time no honour had appeared. What would you estimate the chances of the suit being divided 3-3?’

‘I think we have had this question before. As we have ruled out all the 5-1 and 6-0 splits the odds are roughly three chances in seven.’

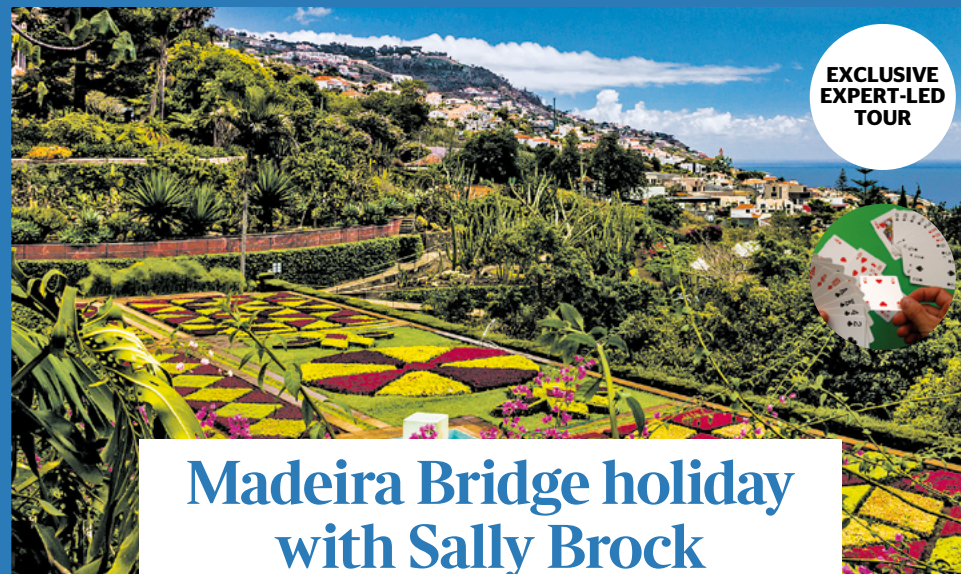
‘Wrong - but why are you wrong?’

‘I have no idea, please enlighten me.’

‘The reason is you have not only eliminated those breaks you mentioned but also any 4-2 split which contains an honour. There are 15 possible doubletons (if you don’t know why, check your elementary combination theory hand-book) of which nine contain at least one honour. So we have ruled out two thirds of the 4-2 splits which now means roughly the 3-3 break is twice as likely as the 4-2 break.’

‘Strange thing statistics, not sure I will ever understand them.’

THE TIMES Expert Traveller



Madeira Bridge holiday with Sally Brock

You could find yourself surrounded by all the natural beauty of Madeira as you immerse yourself in a varied bridge programme, including sessions from master of bridge, Sally Brock. Indulge in the five-star Vidamar Resort's superb leisure facilities which boast panoramic views across Funchal and the ocean.

Price includes

- Seven night half-board stay in a side sea view room at the five-star Vidamar Hotel
- Return British Airways flights from Gatwick with transfers
- Daily duplicate bridge with Masterpoints and prizes awarded

Exclusively with



Departs October 18, 2018

SEVEN NIGHTS FROM
£1,199* per person

TO BOOK CALL
0330 160 5037

QUOTE code KM163

thetimes.co.uk/bridge-tour

*One piece of hold baggage per person. This holiday is organised and operated by Arena Tours Limited. Subject to availability. Single supplements apply. Standard landline charges apply. KM163.



Test Your Technique

with Christophe Grosset

see Page 4

Dealer North. All Vul. IMPs

♠ 9863 ♥ Q83 ♦ Q106 ♣ AJ4	♠ K74 ♥ K109752 ♦ K432 ♣ —	♠ AJ10 ♥ 4 ♦ AJ975 ♣ Q865
	♠ Q52 ♥ AJ6 ♦ 8 ♣ K109732	

West	North	East	South
–	1♥	Double	Redouble
1♠	2♥	Pass	4♥
Double	All Pass		

After an aggressive 1♥ opening, you (North) end up in 4♥ doubled. The lead is the ♣6 (3rd and low). When you play the ♣10 from dummy, RHO thinks for a bit and plays the jack.

Plan the play.

It seems that RHO has the ace and jack of clubs (3rd if you trust the lead) & the queen of hearts. He also has 4 spades for his 1♠ bid. So that's either 4 hearts and 2 diamonds or 3 hearts and 3 diamonds. The later is a bit more likely as East, with 3=0=6=4 might have bid 2♦.

If hearts are 4-0 then there is no winning line. After winning with the ♣Q East can return a club or another low diamond and you can't get up to 10 tricks.

Where hearts are 3-1 (most likely) you can play a low diamond at trick two. That threatens a cross-ruff so East will probably win and switch to a trump. Say you win in hand, ruff a diamond, ruff a club and play a spade. It does not help East to take the ace, so you win with dummy's king and ruff a club. Now you can exit with the ♠K. East wins and can cash a spade, but then has no good move. Playing the diamond ace establishes your king, and a low diamond allows you to score the king and cross-ruff. A club is clearly no better.

No other defence is better for East.

However, this line only works because East has the ♠AJ10. Give East ♠AJ8 say and he can unblock the ♠J on the first round and put West in on the third round when a trump exit will be fatal.

You can avoid this by crossing to dummy with a heart after ruffing the second club. Then you ruff a club, establishing the suit, draw the outstanding trump and play a spade.

One final point - if East leads his trump at trick one then there is no winning line.

Finding this line of play seems really double dummy ... but after the bidding, the lead and the hesitation from RHO, you had all the clues after the lead! Did you find this line?

Funny Girl

Alex Adamson & Harry Smith Give Us More Tales From The Over The Rainbow Bridge Club

The social area of the Over the Rainbow Bridge Club was starting to fill up ahead of the Wednesday evening pairs. Almira Gulch was having a conversation with Shy the Munchkin. It was the type of discussion she rather enjoyed. Shy had yet to say a word.

Ada and Cissie were at the next table. Irritation was clear to read on Almira's face. 'You would think she had the crown jewels in that bag, holding it so tightly.' Shy recoiled slightly as he saw Cissie glare at their table. Almira's lips curled upwards, taking Shy's movement to show how intently he was listening.

Encouraged, she looked to the table beyond. The Unpleasant Witch of the North and the Irritable Witch of the South were glaring at each other. She could hear some of what the Irritable Witch was saying, the word 'cretin' standing out clearly. At the other side of the same table, the Lion was chatting to Almira's own partner. Professor Marvel had excelled himself this evening, wearing a multi-coloured jacket, yellow cords and an enormous green cravat. She decided to wear her dark glasses during the game that evening to make her feelings known.

A change came over Miss Gulch as she composed a delightful witticism. Speaking in what she obviously thought was a lowered tone of voice, she leaned over to Shy. 'Quite a table we have there. The Lion, the witches and the wardrobe.' She gave a refined titter. She knew that not everyone had the sophistication to follow the subtleties of her sense of humour but could rely on herself as an appreciative audience.

Behind her she could hear Munchkin Bob. The Chairman of the Lollipop Guild was being regaled with stories as to how long it took different types of people to change a light bulb. 'What drivel. Astonishing what passes for a joke these days,' Almira announced to Shy. She had little time for the crass humour of the plebeian classes.

The Scarecrow was sitting by himself at the table nearest the door. As the Tin Man came in, he beckoned him over.

'Deep Finesse says that declarer can make ten tricks in that Three No-trumps I went down in last night when we were playing against you. I still can't see how to do it.'

'I suggest you read chapter two of 'A Beginner's Guide To Bridge,' the Tin Man responded, his steely voice resounding around the room. 'You'll find reference there to something called a finesse. That would have taken you fairly comfortably to nine tricks. You needn't worry about the tenth. It would come from a routine end-play, but that's probably towards the middle of the book.'

Almira could hear all this and chortled. She might not appreciate other people's sense of humour but hearing a good put-down always amused her.

'Interesting to talk to, that Shy,' said Almira as she met up with her partner, the Professor, to go to their starting table. 'Good sensible chap.'

The Lion held the door to the card room open for Glinda. 'Your hair is looking particularly nice tonight,' he mumbled.

'Oh thank you so much,' Glinda gave him an endearing look, 'I was at the hairdresser just this afternoon. I haven't had time to look over my system. I do hope my partner won't be upset if I'm a bit rusty.' The Lion smiled, thinking that no one could possibly be upset with Glinda. His smile withered somewhat when he remembered she was playing with the Wicked Witch of the West.

After three hours of bridge and 24 boards, Almira's good mood had evaporated.

'Fetch me a coffee!' Almira Gulch made no attempt to hide her feelings as she swept into the social area.

'Any milk or sugar?' The Professor's voice was muted.

'Don't you know by now?' Almira barked. 'Milk. No sugar.'

'I suggest you add at least three spoonfuls,' Munchkin Bob whispered to the Professor. 'Though I doubt if even that would sweeten her up. She's worse than normal; what's happened?'


'I think she may need some time to recover from the last hand we played.' The Professor added the milk, but decided against taking any risks with the sugar. 'Come over to our table with your coffee, and I'll tell you about it. If I could only bottle that Scarecrow's luck I could make a fortune.'

Bob's curiosity overcame his reluctance to be anywhere near Almira

Gulch. He and his partner Shy the Munchkin took their seats, Miss Gulch managing the difficult feat of simultaneously smiling condescendingly at Shy and glaring at Bob.

The Professor pointed at board three on the hand record.

Dealer South. E/W Vul

♠ 1043 ♥ QJ6432 ♦ 4 ♣ QJ2		♠ K8762 ♥ A ♦ QJ96 ♣ 973	♠ Q9 ♥ 875 ♦ K10853 ♣ 1064
♠ AJ5 ♥ K109 ♦ A72 ♣ AK85			

‘I’m not sure I want to discuss this one,’ said Bob. The Professor thought he saw a nod of assent from Shy.

‘I was sitting in the West seat,’ Bob continued, overriding his own objections on the grounds that telling a sad story was better than listening to anyone else’s. ‘Dorothy opened the South hand One Club and my Two Heart overcall at this vulnerability might not be to everyone’s taste.’

Almira Gulch’s expression clearly showed that her taste buds disapproved.

‘The Tin Man on my left doubled for take out, and Dorothy made a good decision to leave it in. Perhaps she’s seen my overcalls before.’ Munchkin Bob chortled. ‘Or my card play.’

Miss Gulch glared at him. ‘A routine pass by any competent South,’ she sniffed. ‘Especially with you as declarer,’ she added. ‘I presume you took five tricks and lost 800. Well, I am very sorry to say that you didn’t get the complete bottom you deserved.’ With a wave of her hand she signalled to the Professor to continue. Shy nodded. Bob grinned at the thought of two more matchpoints than he had estimated.


‘Like Bob, I was West. I had the Scarecrow on my right, in the South seat. I had to wait for a while to bid as he was struggling to arrange his

hand and count his points,’ the Professor started. ‘I actually saw where it went wrong. Halfway through what to him was a complex exercise in arithmetic, he realised that he only had four suits in his hand. So one of his aces managed to appear twice in his reckoning, and having promoted his hand to a 23-count, he opened Two Clubs.’ He wrote down the full auction.

West	North	East	South
<i>Prof Marvel</i>	<i>Lion</i>	<i>Miss Gulch</i>	<i>Scarecrow</i>
-	-	-	2♣
Pass	2♦	Pass	2NT
Pass	3♥	Pass	3♠
Pass	3NT	Pass	4♠
Pass	4NT	Pass	5♦
Pass	6♠	All Pass	

‘We nearly escaped injury when the Lion bid 3NT.’ Professor Marvel shook his head. ‘However when the Scarecrow showed support for his spades, even the Lion felt he had to go on. He checked for key cards and then bid the spade slam. Not a single other table in the room was in it, needless to say.’

‘I led the queen of hearts, won by dummy’s ace, of course. He took the spade finesse and then pulled the outstanding trumps, finishing in dummy. Next he ran the queen of diamonds, covered by the king and ace. Pleased with himself at managing two successful finesses in a row, he played another diamond. He just stopped himself in time from playing the nine from dummy when I showed out. That left this situation.’

♠ — ♥ J643 ♦ — ♣ QJ2		♠ 87 ♥ — ♦ 96 ♣ 973	♠ — ♥ 87 ♦ 108 ♣ 1064
♠ — ♥ K10 ♦ 2 ♣ AK85			

‘He now played a club to his ace, and I carefully dropped the queen to avoid the end play,’ the Professor sighed. ‘This, however, gave him the idea of a finesse that only he could imagine. He ruffed his ten of hearts in dummy and ran the nine of clubs. His face fell visibly when I won this trick, and it was a total surprise to him when he found he had the rest. I played back a club, a heart is no better, and dummy’s two diamond losers went on the winning heart and the thirteenth club. As my partner saw, it wouldn’t have done any good for her to put in the ten of clubs as he will take his king and I can either give up our club trick or allow myself to be endplayed.’

‘It’s a horrible contract, only needing two finesses and a 3-3 split,’ Miss Gulch hissed. ‘And when his partner pointed out he only had a nineteen-count, he apologised profusely to HIM, but didn’t think what he had done to US.’

The Tin Man had been standing next to them sipping his coffee, waiting for the results. He invited himself into the conversation. ‘You weren’t the only ones to suffer against the Scarecrow tonight. He took a clear top off us on the previous round. It was board fifteen. I was in the West seat and held a good fifteen-count second in hand.’

♠ A965
♥ AK
♦ 10985
♣ KJ9

‘Straw-for-brains sat in the South seat and opened One Heart, playing five-card majors. I overcalled 1NT as any sane person would.’ The Tin Man was in assertive mood. ‘His partner, the Lion, sitting North, wriggled for a full minute while he built up the courage to raise to Two Hearts. The Scarecrow then raised him to the game, bidding Four Hearts.’ The Tin Man paused.

‘I strongly imagine you doubled,’ said Munchkin Bob with a sly grin. ‘With three certain tricks and the Scarecrow at the helm, normally worth another two, it’s routine. You would reckon that no-one else will be

♠ —	♠ 87	♠ —
♥ J643	♥ —	♥ 87
♦ —	♦ 96	♦ 108
♣ QJ2	♣ 973	♣ 1064
	♠ —	
	♥ K10	
	♦ 2	
	♣ AK85	

bidding game so if it makes he has a top anyway, and if he goes down you want to overtake as many plus scores as you can your way.’

The Tin Man turned to Bob appreciatively. ‘That’s exactly what happened. The Scarecrow jumped and started pointing at my bidding cards, stuttering that he hadn’t seen the 1NT and wouldn’t have bid on if he had known. Once we had got him to stop wittering I led the top trump, also routine, and saw this dummy.’

♠ KQJ84
♥ 1043
♦ J3
♣ 1065

██████████

♠ A965
♥ AK
♦ 10985
♣ KJ9

‘I cashed the other top trump,’ the Tin Man continued in full flow, ‘and then switched to the ten of diamonds. My partner had followed to both rounds of trumps and then played the two of diamonds on the third trick, dummy having played the jack.’

‘Declarer now cashed two more rounds of diamonds winning the ace and king in hand, my partner following both times. He then played a spade to his king, which I ducked, and continued with the queen of spades on which he threw a small club.’

These cards were left:

♠ J84
♥ 10
♦ —
♣ 106

██████████

♠ 95
♥ —
♦ 9
♣ KJ9

The Tin Man looked around at his audience, and grated on. ‘Consider the situation. He had used up his only dummy entry outside trumps, the

jack of diamonds, and then set up the jack of spades. It follows that he must have all the remaining trumps. We know that he has the queen of diamonds, so declarer has revealed himself to be 1-6-4-2. He will enter dummy with the ten of hearts to discard a losing club on the master spade. Of course I switched to a club as the only chance to beat the contract.'

He looked round for sympathy, focussing on Shy, and avoiding Miss Gulch. 'Declarer, that incompetent Scarecrow, won the queen of clubs, played the ace of clubs and then threw his three hearts on the table and finally the queen of diamonds. He had no more idea than I had that another trump was outstanding, and it was pure luck that he played the cards in that order.'

This was the full hand:

Dealer South. E/W Vul

♠ A965 ♥ AK ♦ 10985 ♣ KJ9	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S	♠ KQJ84 ♥ 1043 ♦ J3 ♣ 1065	♠ 1072 ♥ J95 ♦ 762 ♣ 7432
N						
W E						
S						
	♠ 3 ♥ Q8762 ♦ AKQ4 ♣ AQ8					

'You got just what you deserved, playing the Scarecrow for at best a fourteen-count on this bidding.' Almira Gulch's voice was unforgiving. 'A speculative double, followed by a foolish lead, and compounded by a misdefence.'

'Speculative double! Foolish lead!' The Tin Man's blood pressure was clearly reaching critical level.

'Well it may surprise you to learn that it was also bid against us, but my partner didn't double. He also found a much better lead,' continued



Almira, enjoying the Tin Man's discomfiture. 'He led the ten of diamonds.'

The Tin Man paused and turned to Professor Marvel. He felt only contempt for Miss Gulch, but he did respect her partner, at least in the play of the cards. Professor Marvel decided that the best way to defuse the situation would be for him to take up the story.

'I might have doubled, but with the Irritable Witch of the South as declarer, it wasn't as clear-cut as your situation,' he said in his most soothing voice to the Tin Man. 'I ducked the first spade as you did, and took the second round as she discarded the eight of clubs. I now played another diamond, and while she could get rid of

her club losers, she had no way of stopping me clearing the diamonds when in with the first top trump, and giving my partner a ruff when in with the next one to take her one down.'

'I bet the Unpleasant Witch of the North, had a few words to say about that,' Munchkin Bob chipped in. 'I received a diamond lead and as far as I can see the contract cannot be beaten. I don't know why these good players don't just take their tricks!' He chuckled away to himself. 'I won the diamond in hand and played a spade. West must duck, as otherwise I'll win the diamond return in dummy and play three more rounds of spades discarding clubs and then overruffing East.'

'After West ducked, I ruffed a spade, went over to the jack of diamonds, and ruffed another spade. Now I played my top diamonds discarding clubs from dummy, and when East ruffed the last one this was the situation.' Bob quickly scribbled the six-card end-position.

♠ A	♠ QJ	♠ —
♥ AK	♥ 1043	♥ J9
♦ —	♦ —	♦ —
♣ KJ9	♣ 10	♣ 7432

	♠ —	
	♥ Q87	
	♦ —	
	♣ AQ8	

	N	
W		E
	S	

Munchkin Bob was clearly pleased at his play, and a rare opportunity to recount a good board rather than a funny story. Shy nodded as Bob continued. ‘I have won six tricks so far and East is faced with Hobson’s choice. If he leads a club, I win the ace, ruff a club, ruff a spade and ruff another club for my tenth trick. If he plays a trump, his partner is end-played either to set up my last spade in dummy or lead a club into my tenace.’

‘Indeed,’ Professor Marvel looked impressed. ‘Well played! With South as declarer, it can’t be beaten on any lead.’

Munchkin Bob smiled contentedly, seeing no need to tell his audience that while he had made ten tricks, he had been playing in Two Hearts rather than game.

Almira Gulch had been listening intently. She wasn’t used to doing that when Bob was speaking. She stood up. ‘I must tell the Irritable Witch of the South how she misplayed the hand.’ She paused. ‘On second thoughts I’ll tell her partner’. That should provoke a fireworks session.’

Her sense of humour had been re-ignited.

NEW FROM
MASTER POINT PRESS
 THE BRIDGE PUBLISHER

A SIMPLER BLUE CLUB MISSISSAUGA STYLE

DAN BERKLEY



AVAILABLE FROM A BRIDGE RETAILER NEAR YOU

Letter from Germany

The German Championship Week : Martin Cantor

The German Championship week, held this year in late July in Berlin, consists of four events: the Mixed Teams and the Mixed, Seniors and Open Pairs Championships. There is also a German Ladies Pairs Championship (and, by a vote, those eligible to play in it chose to be Damen rather than Frauen), but it is held separately later in the year. For reasons that aren't obvious to me there are no Ladies, Seniors or Open Teams Championships, though we do have the Teams Bundesliga (but then we also have a Pairs Bundesliga).

All the pairs events have the same format: two 22 board qualifying sessions, after which the top 20 pairs contest an all play all final of 38 boards, the remaining pairs also playing a further 38 boards. There is a carry over of 50% from the qualifying rounds. This format is by no means universally popular, with several players complaining they would prefer more boards, and / or no cut. I have to say that I have some sympathy with the Deutscher Bridge Verband in that whatever they do some players are likely to be dissatisfied.

Other commitments meant I could only play in the Seniors and Open, both of them with Silvia Klasberg-Brawanski. We were consistent in the sense that we scored poorly in the first of each of the paired sessions, then did much better in the second of each pair. In consequence we made the cut in the Seniors and finished tenth overall, a result we weren't too unhappy with. In the Open we just missed the cut because of a disastrous penultimate board where we turned an outright top into a bottom, but at least we finished 5th in the remainders' group, which brought us a little prize money.

At matchpoint pairs you can usually find something of interest in 80-90% of the boards, and that was the case here, but there was a distinct lack of the spectacular that is the meat and drink for bridge journalists. This deal though certainly generated some fireworks. Try it first as a lead problem. Partner deals and passes with everybody vulnerable, and your RHO opens 1♥. You pass, LHO bids 2♠, partner passes and RHO now bids 6♥ and there it ends. You ask about the 2♠ bid which was alerted, and

are told it is strong with spades. What would you lead from this hand?

- ♠ 10983
- ♥ A3
- ♦ J5
- ♣ K8752


My thinking was that opener surely has at least KQJ to seven or more hearts, likely a void for the failure to ask for keycards, and likely a second suit, most likely diamonds given my club holding. It looks as if we need to establish our second trick while still in trump control. So spades and hearts were ruled out, and clubs looked better than diamonds as declarer wouldn't be keen to finesse at trick 1. I chose the 8, hoping to suggest no honour, while just as likely as any other to be a singleton. This did not turn out well (5/43 matchpoints) as you can see:

Board 7. Dealer South. All Vul.

♠ — ♥ KQJ986542 ♦ KQ74 ♣ —	N W E S	♠ 10983 ♥ A3 ♦ J5 ♣ K8752	♠ AKQJ6 ♥ 7 ♦ 1093 ♣ AQJ4
♠ 7542 ♥ 10 ♦ A862 ♣ 10963			

I've said before in these pages that it's always nice when one of those 'fancy' coups that occur so often in books happen in real life. So I enjoyed this one:

Board 16. Dealer West. E/W Vul.

♠ AQ8 ♥ K98 ♦ A65 ♣ KJ107		♠ KJ97 ♥ AJ542 ♦ J98 ♣ 9	♠ 6543 ♥ Q63 ♦ 102 ♣ 8543
------------------------------------	---	-----------------------------------	------------------------------------


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

- 2♣ Majors, at least 5-4
- 2♦ Equal length in majors

Silvia, sitting South, led a very revealing ♦10. Very revealing because we lead strictly second (or fourth) highest (but J from J10x), so it had to be a singleton or doubleton. A singleton was unlikely as declarer would then have 4-5-4-0 shape. With the expected ♦J9x in declarer's hand there was the obvious danger of spades being discarded there, and that meant we needed to both take out the ♣A entry and play three rounds of diamonds before trumps were drawn. When I ducked the ace declarer played a spade from dummy, I went up with the ace and played the ♣K into the ten-ace for a Merrimac Coup (clever me!). Now when Silvia got in with the ♥Q she could play a second diamond for me to take that ace and kill the suit with a third round for her to ruff - and nearly all the matchpoints.

I'm quite a big fan of 4 card overcalls at the one level, especially at pairs, but the suit has to be decent and I like to follow Larry Cohen's advice of having length in opponent's opened suit. I like them because it can help partner with a lead, it can allow partner to compete (true, sometimes they over-compete), and it can keep opponents out of a making 3NT. Two such hands from the Seniors' Pairs produced very different results for the overcaller - both hugely to our benefit. Firstly this one from the qualifying:

Board 8. Dealer West. None Vul.

♠ 64 ♥ KQJ4 ♦ AJ63 ♣ Q75		♠ AKQ3 ♥ 753 ♦ Q97 ♣ 864	♠ J1075 ♥ 108 ♦ K854 ♣ AJ2
-----------------------------------	---	-----------------------------------	-------------------------------------

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

This wasn't one of my overcalls, rather it was the opponents', though I have to say I would certainly have been tempted. And it's hard to blame South for the raise, despite my 1NT bid. But it turned out horribly for them when we defended to the maximum (for a change), with a diamond lead and a trump switch leading to two down and 52 out of 52 matchpoints.

And then this one, from the final:

Board 8. Dealer West. None Vul.

♠ A654	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ 82
♥ AKQ9		♥ 108
♦ 5		♦ Q1094
♣ K954		♣ QJ1063
	♠ J107	
	♥ J765	
	♦ AK632	
	♣ 8	

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

I confess that this time I was the perpetrator, even though this hand was much less well suited than the one above, and in retrospect I don't know what prompted me to do it unless it was some table feel. Facing a constructive 2♦ bid from partner I would have bid 3♦ at my second turn without West's double, but knowing that Silvia would have another chance to bid I chose discretion over valour. Silvia was now worried that she hadn't shown her spade support, and with her shapely hand reasonably competed further. In theory this shouldn't have been bad for us even if opponents had doubled, since they can make 5♣ and 3♠ is only two down. In practice not many East/West pairs reached game, so -300 would have been 5/13 matchpoints. Undoubled it was 17/1, sharing the top with a N/S pair in 3♦ minus two.

Congratulations to all the medal winners, but especially to the four sets of German Champions:

- Mixed Teams: Marie Eggeling, Susanne Kriftner, Raffael Braun, Jörg Fritsche
- Mixed Pairs: Claudia Vechiatto & Hartmut Kondoch
- Senior Pairs: Waltraud Vogt & Loek Fresen
- Open Pairs: Fikret Dogan & Cumhuri Kirdemir

Bridge at the 5* Amathus Beach Hotel, Rhodes

3 - 10 Oct 2018, 7 nights half board
excl. flights from £799 per person

We will be joined by David Bird, who will give three interesting & amusing bridge seminars. Eddie and Kathy Williams will direct our duplicate bridge sessions.

TWO FABULOUS EXCURSIONS INCLUDED

- City tour of Filerimos - Discover the Ancient stadium, temple of Apollon and enjoy a guided tour of the old Town of Rhodes
- Half day trip to Lindos - visit the Acropolis of Athena Lindia



Quote 'BRIDGEMAGRHODES' at the time of booking to receive a free signed book by David Bird!*



Call **01473 660 802** or visit www.firstforbridge.com for more information

*Applicable to new bookings only



Enterprising Bridge Tales: The Next Generation

Marc Smith

A *New Bridge Magazine* is pleased to present a series of custom-written adventures featuring the characters from the much-awaited sequel to “*Enterprising Bridge Tales: The Original Stories*”. These articles are a continuation of the new book, which was published by Master Point Press in September 2018.

Captain’s log, stardate 21314.1. Although the Universal Championships are still almost four weeks away, we are already heading for the southern edge of Federation territory, where the big event is to be held on Armstrong III, which orbits Theta Octanis in the Octans system. We are making use of the journey to this remote system to visit Saturn South, the only inhabited planet orbiting Delta Octanis, an orange giant known to early astronomers as the Pole Star of Saturn. The Southern Saturnians became associate members of the Federation shortly after an earlier incarnation of the USS Competitor visited this part of space almost a century ago. We are now charged with progressing negotiations to launch a joint operation to assess mining opportunities on the uninhabited planets orbiting both Delta Octanis and Beta Octanis.

It is now two weeks since it was announced that the *USS Competitor* would be visiting the Octans system to coincide with the Universal Championships. In that time, it has been almost impossible to sit quietly in Ten Forward, the starship’s main social spot, without hearing people at the next table discussing systems, biddings sets of hands, or discussing recently played deals. Attendance at the weekly ship-wide duplicate has also been higher than at any time in the starship’s 18-month long mission.

Many crew members are attending the weekly duplicate primarily for a chance to play against young Daniel Prussia, the 16-year old son of Doctor Prussia, and Lieutenant-Commander Dieter, the ship’s android Science Officer. The ship’s visit to the championships has come about as a direct result of their heroic performance in a high-level Starfleet operation to neutralize the threat posed by The Borg. So successful were they that their team on that mission, which also included two Vulcans

and two Romulans, has been installed as short-priced favorites to win the Universal Bowl at the upcoming championship.

Curiously, it was only a quirk of fate that threw together the starship’s two best players (a fact now probably accepted even by Captain Jonathan Pillar). The formation of this partnership, though, has left two players in need of new partners: Captain Pillar, who previously partnered Dieter, and the ship’s Chief of Security, Lieutenant Dorg, who has sat opposite Daniel for the past year. Whilst the Captain seemed satisfied with the first trial outing of these two as a partnership, to say that the volatile Klingon was left feeling frustrated would be something of an understatement.

As a result, the starship’s other leading partnership, Lieutenant-Commander DeVil and Counselor Diane Roma, are splitting up for this evening’s session in the hope of creating a more settled foursome. Roma’s renowned calm temperament will perhaps prove more immune to the inevitable ups and downs of sitting opposite the Captain, whilst the experienced DeVil and the solid Dorg should, in theory, be a reliable pairing.

Daniel and Dieter find a sizeable gallery of kibitzers surrounding their table when they take their seats. Even more crew members are watching the action on the VuGraph screens dotted around the ship. There is little action of note on the early deals, but the arrival of Roma and Captain Pillar heralds a board with more potential. This is the layout:

Dealer South. Both Vul.

♠ 75 ♥ AK10965 ♦ 1065 ♣ Q4		♠ AQ1093 ♥ — ♦ AQ843 ♣ AK6	♠ 832 ♥ J3 ♦ KJ972 ♣ J95
	♠ KJ4 ♥ Q8742 ♦ — ♣ 108732		

West	North	East	South
<i>Pillar</i>	<i>Dieter</i>	<i>Roma</i>	<i>Daniel</i>
2♥	4♦	Pass	4♠
Pass	5♥	Pass	6♠
All Pass			

Dieter’s four-level overcall of the Captain’s weak two opening is Leaping Michaels, showing at least 5-5 in spades and diamonds. Daniel just gives simple preference but, when Dieter then continues with a cue-bid, he decides that his trump honours justify accepting the slam try.

East’s diamond holding means that Daniel starts as a big underdog amongst those watching on VuGraph. Indeed, Roma hesitates briefly before her final pass, considering a Lightner double. In the end, though, she decides that she does not want to deter the Captain from leading a trump, so she passes. Roma’s famed Betazoid telepathic powers have no effect on this occasion: The Captain has been reminded often enough that the Great Dealer does not give you an ace-king so that you can lead a trump from a low doubleton. He opens the ♥K with little apparent thought.

Dieter’s dummy would win prizes for neatness, with each suit perfectly aligned and each card overlapping the next by an identical amount. Daniel, though, is more concerned with the lack of tricks: he has just three winners in the side suits. Even if he can score all eight trumps he is still a trick short. “Perhaps the jump to slam was a tad too ambitious,”

he thinks.

There’s nothing to be done about that now, though, and after ruffing the heart lead in dummy Daniel ruffs a diamond in his hand. He then crosses to the ♣K and ruffs a second diamond. A club to West’s queen and dummy’s ace then allows Daniel to score a third diamond ruff with his last trump. He can now see a way home as long as the cards behave.

Daniel re-enters dummy once more by ruffing a heart. He then draws three rounds of trumps and exits with the third round of clubs. Forced to win with the ♣J, Roma finds herself endplayed to lead into dummy’s ♦AQ at trick twelve. There is a smattering of applause from the kibitzers sitting around the table, quickly stymied by an annoyed glare from Captain Pillar.

“Anyone would think we were on a TV game show,” he comments, addressing no one in particular.

Daniel notes that Roma simply returns her cards to the board without comment. The only person in the vicinity who may not have noted the effectiveness of a trump lead is therefore left in blissful ignorance and partnership harmony is maintained.

“So you two are going to play together, with DeVil and Dorg, on Armstrong III?” asks Dieter, as the players wait for the end of the round to be called.

Roma nods. “That would seem best for team morale...” she begins

“I haven’t made a final decision yet,” interjects the Captain. “We’ll have to see how these sessions leading up to the event go. Who knows if those two will get along as a pair?”

For the final round of the evening, the huge Klingon and the starship’s second-in-command fight their way through the throng.

“We were wondering who was sitting at this table,” comments DeVil, tongue in cheek. “After all, there is surely considerable interest in seeing how the Captain does with his new partner.”

“Captain Pillar’s table often has quite a few kibitzers,” observes Dieter.

“That’s because he makes attendance compulsory for students from his beginners’ class,” points out the Commander.

“Ah...” says Dieter, who evidently had not known one of the ship’s worst-kept secrets.

The first deal is uneventful, but the final board produces the kind of fireworks the crowd came to see. This is the layout:

Dealer North. N/S Vul.

♠ 63 ♥ Q72 ♦ QJ65 ♣ AJ94	♠ K104 ♥ AK5 ♦ A742 ♣ Q73		♠ A ♥ J10943 ♦ K10983 ♣ 85
	♠ QJ98752 ♥ 86 ♦ — ♣ K1062		

West	North	East	South
<i>Dorg</i>	<i>Daniel</i>	<i>DeVil</i>	<i>Dieter</i>
–	1NT	2♥	4♠
4NT	Double	5♦	5♠
All Pass			

Commander DeVil’s Two Heart overcall shows a two-suited hand with hearts and a minor. After Dieter’s jump to game, Dorg takes advantage of the favourable vulnerability to sacrifice in his partner’s minor at the five-level. Daniel doubles to show an interest in defending, but the android overrules him, deciding that his hand is too offense-oriented to defend profitably at these colors.

Lieutenant Dorg opens the ♦Q, and the general consensus amongst the VuGraph audience is that defending at the five-level was a better option for the ship’s star pair. With a spade and two clubs to lose, it certainly looks as if the usually-logical android has made the wrong decision.

Playing low from dummy, Dieter ruffs the diamond lead in his hand and plays a trump to dummy’s ten and East’s ace. Not wanting to assist in declarer’s trump reduction, DeVil switches to the ♥J. Declarer wins in dummy, ruffs another diamond, and plays a trump dummy’s king. Now comes the ♦A and a third diamond ruff, eliminating that suit. A heart to the ace and a heart ruff then voids declarer and dummy of red cards. For the coup de grace, Dieter now leads the ♣K from his hand.

What can West do? Dorg takes his ace with a resigned air. He quickly

returns a club, but he knows declarer is not going to misguess now. Dieter wins the trick with the ♣10 and claims his contract, oblivious to the applause from the large VuGraph crowd watching in the crew lounge at the other end of the deck.

With play for the evening done, the crowd around the table begins to disperse noisily.

“How has your evening been?” Daniel asks.

“Far less ups and downs than last week,” confirms his former mentor.

“So you’ll play in this lineup on Armstrong III?”

“I think I speak for myself and the Commander when I say that would be our preference,” agrees Dorg, “but we might yet be outvoted.”

“By either of our teammates,” adds DeVil, smiling ruefully.



MASTER POINT PRESS
THE BRIDGE PUBLISHER

**A SIMPLER
BLUE CLUB SYSTEM**
MISSISSAUGA STYLE

by Dan Berkley

AVAILABLE FROM A BRIDGE
RETAILER NEAR YOU

Answers to “Defend With Julian Pottage”

1

♠ AQ64
 ♥ AJ102
 ♦ A
 ♣ K984
 ♠ K8
 ♥ 9743
 ♦ Q96432
 ♣ 7
 ♠ J7
 ♥ K5
 ♦ 1087
 ♣ J106532
 ♠ 109532
 ♥ Q86
 ♦ KJ5
 ♣ AQ



WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
-	-	-	1♠*
Pass	4♦*	Pass	4♠
Pass	6♠	All Pass	

- 1♠ 5-card majors and strong NT
- 4♦ Splinter

Partner leads the seven of clubs. What is your plan?

The opening lead has to be a singleton. If you can score the king of hearts and give partner a club ruff, this will defeat the contract. The trouble is that the king of hearts is not a fast entry. Surely, declarer can draw trumps before playing on hearts. Can you see anything you can do to stop this from happening?

If declarer holds the king of spades, which is entirely possible, you can indeed do nothing to stop your opponent from drawing trumps and taking the heart finesse (or double finesse if partner holds the queen).

You need to hope that partner holds the king of spades (but not the ten or nine). In this case declarer will start trumps by finessing the queen. If you drop the jack smoothly, pretending to hold a singleton, your opponent will surely attempt to return to hand with a club in order to run the ten of spades to pick up the trump suit without loss. This way partner gets the ruff.

2

♠ J10
 ♥ 985
 ♦ 642
 ♣ AJ963
 ♠ K7432
 ♥ A107
 ♦ Q7
 ♣ Q75
 ♠ 6
 ♥ Q432
 ♦ KJ85
 ♣ K1042
 ♠ AQ985
 ♥ KJ6
 ♦ A1093
 ♣ 8



WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Pass	Pass	Pass	1♠
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♦
Pass	2♠	All Pass	

West leads the five of clubs, won by the ace (eight on your left). Declarer leads a heart to the jack and ace, ruffs the club continuation and then plays ace followed by another diamond, West playing the seven and queen. What do you do?

The bidding and the play to date gives you a fairly good idea of 5-3-4-1 shape on your left – 6-2-4-1 is just about possible instead, although the chance of defeating the contract in that case appears slim.

If you allow the queen of diamonds to hold, partner can lead a trump. However, when you get in with the third round of diamonds, you will have no trump to lead. Nor will you have a quick way to put partner on lead – the hoped for ten of hearts opposite is only a third-round winner. Your opponent will get to ruff the fourth round of diamonds in dummy, which may well be a vital trick.

You need to overtake the diamond to lead a trump from your side. Even if declarer guesses right, going up with the ace, your side succeeds. Partner ruffs the third round of diamonds and cashes the king of spades to draw dummy’s remaining trump. This way your side gets to make a trump, two hearts, two diamonds and a ruff to defeat the contract by a trick.

Bridge with Larry Cohen

www.larryco.com

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

Balancing on the 1-level

When the auction starts as follows:

West	North	East	South
1♣/♦/♥/♠	Pass	Pass	?

we try not to pass. As South, we are considered to be in the “balancing seat.” That means, “if we pass, the auction is over.” Usually, it is not right to sell out so easily without competing at least for the part-score.

Accordingly, the guidelines for bidding in this position are relaxed a bit. The general approach is to take action with a king less than you would have in the direct seat (which would have been North in the above auction). Since an overcall in direct seat usually contains at least 9 or so HCP, an overcall in the balancing seat can be made with as few as 6 HCP. A direct-seat takeout double is usually a hand worth 13 points – in balancing seat it can contain only 10 (counting distribution). Overcalling 1NT in direct seat shows 15-18, so in balancing seat it shows approximately 12-15. In summary, here are the balancing seat auctions:

West	North	East	South
1♣/♦/♥/♠	Pass	Pass	?

Overcall = 6+, 5+ card suit

West	North	East	South
1♣/♦/♥/♠	Pass	Pass	?

Double = takeout with approximately 10+ points counting distribution

West	North	East	South
1♣/♦/♥/♠	Pass	Pass	?

1NT = 12-15 balanced and a stopper(s) in the suit opened

After all of these balancing actions, the partner (North in the diagram) must tread lightly. He has to “subtract a king” in all of his follow-up actions (in other words, he needs more than usual to raise or look for

game). After the 1NT balance, he should use Stayman and transfers.

What if the player in balancing seat has a regular 1NT opening (15-17) with the opponent’s suit stopped? He is too strong for 1NT (12-14), so he must double and then bid notrump. Doubling followed by bidding (in balancing seat) shows a “big” hand in context. Not the usual 18+, but more like 15+.

Note: When it goes 1NT-Pass-Pass it is also usually a good idea to balance. Again, the standards are relaxed. In this case, though, there is also the matter of which methods you and your partner play against 1NT opening bids.

Advanced note: Believe it or not, jumps in the balancing seat are *not* preemptive. It makes no sense to pre-empt if you can just pass to end the auction. Accordingly, a jump in balancing seat shows a good hand. A jump in a suit (such as 1♣-Pass-Pass-2♥) shows a good 6+ card suit and at least a full opening bid. A jump to 2NT in balancing seat is not the Unusual Notrump. It shows 19-21 balanced with a stopper(s) in the opponent’s suit. So, 1♥-Pass-Pass-2NT is something like:

♠AQ ♥KQ10 ♦KJ87 ♣AJ92

Here are 4 practice deals for balancing on the one-level:

Play 4 Free Practice Deals:

To play on a PC, MAC or iPad [click here](#).

To play on a smart phone [click here](#)

From The Archives – Syrian Squeeze

by Brian Senior

Young Ducks

As I write this the 2018 World Youth Team Championships are coming to an end in China and this brought to mind a previous championship, the 2008 World Championships, also held in China. Beijing 2008 saw the biggest ever entry to a World Youth Championships. This had much to do with the very generous sponsorship that enabled even small NBOs to send teams. The highly successful Youth Championships, held alongside the Open, Women's and Senior World Championships but in a different nearby venue, featured the usual mix of good, bad and indifferent bridge. The good included these two tricky contracts, both of which were made courtesy of a trick one ducking play.

No self-respecting junior will ever rely on a finesse when there is the possibility of a squeeze. This deal came from the Swiss stage of the Under 28 Championship.

Board 12. Dealer West. N/S Vul.

<p>♠ K 108 ♥ J 32 ♦ QJ 1098 ♣ 52</p>	<p>♠ A93 ♥ A6 ♦ AK7 ♣ AKQ43</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto; display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> N </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> W E </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: center; width: 100%;"> S </div> </div> <p>♠ Q642 ♥ KQ1087 ♦ 5432 ♣ –</p>	<p>♠ J75 ♥ 965 ♦ 6 ♣ J109875</p>
--	---	--

When Poland met Egypt at the top table, both North/South pairs overreached to a poor 6NT. The Polish declarer won the club lead and led a low spade to the queen. When that lost to the king he was one down for – 100.

The Egyptians had the following auction:

West	North	East	South
	<i>Sherif</i>		<i>Kamal</i>
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♦
Double	2♥	Pass	2♠
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♦
Pass	3♥	Pass	3♠
Pass	3NT	Pass	4♦
Pass	4♥	Pass	6♦
Pass	6NT	All Pass	

Ahmef Kamal's 2♦ response was a relay and Hussein Sherif's 2♥ rebid was two-way, either natural or strong and balanced, with 2♠ a second relay and 2NT confirming the balanced hand-type. Three Diamonds was a transfer, 4♥ a cue-bid, and 6♦ offered a choice of slams. West's double of 2♦ made it easy to choose to play in no trump.

The Polish East led the jack of clubs. Sherif had the option of winning the club and playing the same line as his Polish counterpart, but he saw a better option. It seemed that the hearts pretty well had to come in for there to be twelve tricks. If so, there would be eleven on top and a twelfth could come from a well-placed king of spades, an even club break, or a squeeze.

Sherif ducked the opening lead. If clubs were four-four five heart tricks would make the contract. East continued with a second club which Sherif won, of course. He had thrown two diamonds from dummy and now cashed the other two club winners, pitching spades. As clubs had not broken, the remaining chance was a diamond/spade squeeze. This would work whenever West held the king of spades, as he was marked with the diamond length for his double of 2♦. Sherif cashed the ace of spades, the Vienna Coup. then played on hearts, sighing with relief when the suit behaved. The last heart squeezed West who, needing to guard the spade, had to come down to a doubleton diamond, permitting declarer's ♦7 to win the final trick; +1440 and 17 IMPs to Egypt.

Of course, for a junior, the fact that the last trick was won with the seven of diamonds, the beer card, was an added bonus.

This next play comes from the Under 26 event and features Canada's Daniel Lavee against the Netherlands.

Board 13. Dealer North. All Vul.

♠ 874		♠ K109
♥ 103		♥ 652
♦ KQ1042		♦ AJ95
♣ 965		♣ Q87
♠ AJ65		♠ Q32
♥ AKQ97		♥ J84
♦ 3		♦ 876
♣ 1043		♣ AKJ2

Lavee was declarer in 4♥ after an artificial auction in which he had shown a minimum opening with five hearts and at least three clubs but had left the spades unrevealed. North led the king of diamonds.

Given an even heart split, the contract appears to depend on finding the queen of spades. The simple line is to win the diamond, draw trumps and play on spades. However, Lavee found an imaginative shot that would not have occurred to many players but which greatly improved his chance of success – he ducked the opening lead!

Lavee saw that the auction would make it very difficult for North to find a club switch and, even if he did, there were club positions where this would prove fatal to the defence. Meanwhile, a spade switch would solve declarer's problem in that suit and a diamond continuation would give two diamond winners, which would provide two club discards. At worst, North might switch to a trump, leaving declarer no worse off than he would have been had he won the first trick.

In real life, North switched to a spade and Lavee had ten tricks and, as the Dutch East/West stopped in part-score at the other table, 10 IMPs for his team.

That was nicely played.



2018 Book of the Year

*“The ABTA wishes to award its first-ever Newcomer Book of the Year Award to **Jeff Bayone** for his amazing work, *A Taste of Bridge*.”*

It’s magic how much they know when they finish without realizing just how much they learned.”

Betty Starzec, ABTA President.

*“If I could recommend just one book for beginning players it would be *A Taste of Bridge*.”*

Barbara Seagram.

“I’m reviewing your book and I absolutely love it.”

Chip Dombrowski, ACBL Bulletin editor.

“This is the only beginner book I know that begins by concentrating almost 100% on card play. I like this approach.”

Phillip Alder.

A Taste of Bridge is fun, but it is only half of the Honors Bridge Club beginner course. The amazing Israeli online teaching site, **bestebriidge.com**, is the other half. Teacher and student notes, along with all the example hands your beginners will ever need, are included in the program. Contact sally@masterpointpress.com and ask that she send you a complimentary e-book, course material, and free access to BeB.

This fun combination of *A Taste of Bridge* and **bestebriidge.com** work wonders. Together they helped, and continue to be instrumental, in building Honors into the largest bridge club in the world.

Jeff Bayone



Play bridge wherever and whenever you like!

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

A few figures

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

Over 150 countries represented

50,000 active players every day

1 million deals played every day

Download Funbridge

To download Funbridge (free), just open your favourite application store (App Store or Google Play Store) and enter “Funbridge” in the search bar or go to our website www.funbridge.com.



The app that takes you to the right contract in a split second.

Fit to bid!

We are looking for testers!

Join us and register at www.bid72.com



FUNBRIDGE.com

Play bridge wherever and whenever you like!





iPhone, iPad, Mac, PC, Android, Amazon

Compare yourself to thousands of players

Challenge players in one vs one matches

Improve your skills

WWW.FUNBRIDGE.COM

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.

Fancy Falsecard

In a Round of 16 match in the Open Trials, you have to find the best approach on a minimal hand with wastage.

As North, you hold:

Dealer West. Both Vul.

♠ K92
♥ K876
♦ K9874
♣ K

West passes.

Your 1NT opening range vulnerable is 14-16.

If you open 1♦ (11-15, 2+ diamonds) and partner responds 1♠, you can then bid 2♥ which systemically shows this exact shape.

If partner responds 1♥, you can bid 3♥ which shows 4-card support, minimum, and shortness in one of the black suits. If you bid 2♥, that shows 11-13, 4-card support, balanced hand.

Your call?

The stiff king doesn't pull full values, but it is still a king. Not only might it be a trick or might help produce a trick, but it is a card which partner doesn't have. That means that the cards partner does have are likely to be working. If the stiff king were a stiff small card then partner might have the king of clubs, in which case that card would be largely wasted but he would not know that and would probably overbid if you opened the bidding. Your expected minimum opening bid is 11 points. It looks right to open 1♦. If partner responds 1♥, you can decide whether to treat the hand as balanced or unbalanced.

You open 1♦. The bidding continues:

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

Double would be a support double showing 3-card heart support, and also showing shortness in the enemy suit.

Your call?

One nice thing about playing a limited system is that partner isn't going to play you for the world's fair when you open and take another bid. He knows the limit on your hand.

Your hand is minimal to begin with, and the 3♣ call makes it likely that your king of clubs really is wasted on offense. On defence, your king of clubs is likely to score a trick. This factor argues for passing.

On the other hand, you do have a singleton and decent 4-card support. If you pass partner might be frozen out, and your side could easily have a 9-card heart fit while the opponents have a 9 or 10-card club fit. Partner will be playing you for another working card if you bid 3♥, but nothing more than that. It is not clear, but on balance it is better to bid than to pass when you have something to say, and your Kxxx of hearts is something to say.

You bid 3♥ ending the auction.

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♦	Pass	1♥
3♣	3♥	All Pass	

Over you go to try your luck playing what you bid.

West leads the ♦2.

♠ K92
♥ K876
♦ K9874
♣ K

864
♥ Q532
♦ Q105
♣ A102

What is your plan?

The lead looks like it could easily be a singleton. You might as well play the $\spadesuit 9$ from dummy. It can't cost, and that is what you would do if you had a singleton small diamond. You are hoping East inserts the jack from his likely $\spadesuit AJxx$, in which case you can win your queen and figure out what to do. However, East might be playing the ace. You need to be prepared for that. Are you ready?

If East does play the ace of diamonds from $AJxx$, it will be because he thinks his partner has led a singleton, as well as the possibility that you have a singleton queen. This could be grisly if East also has the ace of spades. You can picture diamond ruff, spade through, another diamond ruff, two more rounds of spades, and yet another diamond possibly promoting another trump trick.

Is there anything you can do about this? How about the fancy falsecard of the queen of diamonds under the ace. East is going to have no reason not to believe this is an honest card, and he will certainly shift to a club. You can win this in dummy, shove a small heart through his hoped-for ace, and then discard a spade on the ace of clubs. You will have to lose a second diamond trick, but that is better than West scoring two diamond ruffs. This looks like the best way to minimize the damage.

Can this cost if the diamonds aren't 4-1? No, it can't. If East started with Ax , you can always finesse West for the jack later. East cannot have started with AJ doubleton, since he would always be playing the jack from that holding.

East plays the ace of diamonds. You cleverly play the queen. East returns the $\spadesuit 5$ to West's jack and dummy's king. What do you do now?

$\spadesuit 92$
 $\heartsuit K876$
 $\diamondsuit K874$
 $\clubsuit K$

$\spadesuit 84$
 $\heartsuit Q532$
 $\diamondsuit 105$
 $\clubsuit A102$

So your ruse worked. However, it is now clear that West has the ace of spades, since there is no way East would have shifted to a spade away from the ace. This almost certainly places the ace of hearts in East's hand.

It looks best to unblock the king of clubs and lead a heart towards your queen. If East takes his ace, he takes air. Otherwise, you will be able to discard a spade on the ace of clubs. That may not help since it doesn't necessarily increase your winner count, but it does cut down on the tricks the opponents can take off the top.

You unblock the king of clubs, and lead a heart towards your hand. East plays the $\heartsuit 4$, and West plays the $\heartsuit 9$ under your queen. You cash the ace of clubs discarding a spade, both opponents following small. What next?

$\spadesuit 9$
 $\heartsuit K87$
 $\diamondsuit K874$
 $\clubsuit -$

$\spadesuit 84$
 $\heartsuit 532$
 $\diamondsuit 105$
 $\clubsuit 10$

This is the last time you will be in your hand for quite a while. It must be right to lead the $\diamondsuit 10$. If West is out of diamonds, as you think he is, he will either have to ruff your loser or allow you to score the king of diamonds now.

You lead the $\diamondsuit 10$. West discards a club, and you win your king of diamonds. What next?

$\spadesuit 9$
 $\heartsuit K87$
 $\diamondsuit 874$
 $\clubsuit -$

$\spadesuit 84$
 $\heartsuit 532$
 $\diamondsuit 5$
 $\clubsuit 10$

West certainly has 7 clubs for his vulnerable $3\clubsuit$ call. He figures to have at least 3 spades, since with AJ doubleton he would have won the ace and returned a spade. His shape is either 3-2-1-7 or 4-1-1-7. His failure to open $3\clubsuit$ as dealer indicates that he might be 4-1-1-7, with the 4-card

spade suit being the reason he didn't open 3♣.

If the hearts are 3-2, you need to lead a trump if you want to prevent the opponents from scoring their trumps separately. Even if West failed to unblock the jack of hearts from J9 doubleton, which he should do, this won't gain anything. West can win, and play ace and a spade. When you ruff in dummy and lead a diamond, East wins, cashes the ace of hearts, and leads the last spade. You will have to give West the last trick in clubs.

Since you have to go down 2 even if the trumps are 3-2, you should guard against a 4-1 trump split. You can do this by knocking out the jack of diamonds. This leaves you in control, and all the defence will be able to take is their spade trick, the jack of diamonds, and 3 trump tricks for down 2. That is the best you can ever do.

You choose to lead a spade. East wins the queen, and plays ace and jack of hearts. You win the king, and play a diamond. East wins the jack, draws your remaining trumps, and leads a spade. West's hand is good, and you are down 3. The full hand is:

♠ K92 ♥ K876 ♦ K9874 ♣ K	<table style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S	♠ Q105 ♥ AJ104 ♦ AJ63 ♣ 87	♠ 864 ♥ Q532 ♦ Q105 ♣ A102
N						
W E						
S						
♠ AJ73 ♥ 9 ♦ 2 ♣ QJ96543						

It turns out that the fancy false card was not a success. With the ace of spades onside and West having only 1 trump, the diamond ruff would not have hurt you and you could have scrambled out for down 1.

How was the defence?

East couldn't be sure about the diamond suit. He knows West has 3+ spades since declarer responded 1♥ rather than 1♠, but West could be 3-1-3-6. Still, the spade return looks like it can never be wrong.

West did well to put in the jack of spades. This couldn't cost, and retaining communication might be important. Declarer can't have a stiff

spade, since East didn't overcall 1♠. West followed the good defensive principle of not winning the trick unless you want to win it or you have to win it. Otherwise it is best to duck and see what is going on.

At the end, East did well to work out the position. He was happy to sacrifice a trump trick for the gain of not letting declarer score trumps separately.

What do you think of the E/W bidding?

It looks reasonable. Opening 3♣ with a 4-card spade suit could easily lead to a missed spade game. Once East doesn't overcall or make a takeout double there doesn't figure to be a game, and the 3♣ call does as much damage as possible.

At the other table, East chose to make a strange-looking takeout double of the Precision 1♦ opening. West invited in spades, and they got to 3♠ which made.

As declarer, it is vital to make your contingency plans in advance. While one could debate whether or not the queen of diamonds false card was a good play, it would certainly be a bad play if declarer had to think before making the play. It was necessary for declarer to plan in advance that if East plays the ace, declarer will drop the queen, and this plan must be made before calling a card from dummy. If declarer calls from dummy before having this contingency plan ready, it will be too late for the deception to succeed.



The Abbot's Final Contribution

by David Bird

The Abbot had not played a match or a duplicate pairs session of any consequence for several weeks. He sighed wearily as he took his seat for the fifth and final encounter in the St Titus summer league. The opponents would be Brother Aelred's team of no-hopers. What a total waste of his Bermuda-Bowl talents to have to play 16 boards against such a moderate team. Their bidding was scarcely better than that of some four-year-old non-bridge-player who had just been taught how to extract a bunch of cards from the bidding box without dropping any of them.

'I've been looking forward to this,' declared Brother Aelred, taking the West seat. 'We had a practice session yesterday evening and – believe it or not - we all played rather well.'

'I'm pleased to hear it,' the Abbot replied. Such an extraordinary event might happen once every 20 years. Twice in 20 years? He didn't think so.

Dealer West. N/S Vul.

♠ 93 ♥ AKJ1053 ♦ J6 ♣ J74		♠ K1062 ♥ 972 ♦ Q54 ♣ AK3	♠ 75 ♥ 84 ♦ K10973 ♣ 9852
		♠ AQJ84 ♥ Q6 ♦ A82 ♣ Q106	

West	North	East	South
Brother Aelred	Brother Xavier	Brother Michael	The Abbot
2♥	Pass	Pass	2♠
Pass	3♥	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

Brother Aelred led his two top hearts, nodding happily when the ♥Q fell from declarer. Excellent! Now it would be safe to play the ♥J.

The Abbot ruffed the third round of hearts and played the ♦A, three lowly spot-cards appearing. He drew trumps in two rounds and continued with three top clubs, everyone following. These cards remained:

♠ — ♥ 1053 ♦ J ♣ —		♠ — ♥ — ♦ K109 ♣ 9	♠ 106 ♥ — ♦ Q5 ♣ —
		♠ QJ ♥ — ♦ 82 ♣ —	

Without much hope, the Abbot reached for the ♦2. He could scarcely believe his good fortune when Brother Aelred produced the ♦J. 'Play the five,' he said.

Brother Michael followed with an encouraging ♦10 and looked disappointed when his partner switched back to hearts. The Abbot ruffed in the dummy and disposed of his last diamond. The game had been made.

'Did you see my ten of diamonds, partner?' enquired Brother Michael. 'I intended it as a come-on signal.'

'I only had hearts left,' Brother Aelred replied. 'There was nothing I could do, I assure you. It should be a flat board.'

It might be flat in some parallel universe, thought the Abbot. In the real world, Lucius or Paulo would find it automatic to unblock the diamond jack under the ace. East would then score two diamond tricks at the end.

'I think we can beat it at double-dummy,' continued Brother Michael. 'After two rounds of hearts, you need to switch to the jack of diamonds.'

‘I probably would have done,’ said Brother Aelred. ‘I can hardly switch to a different suit when you’ve given me a come-on in hearts. Seven or higher is a come-on and you played the eight.’

At the other table, Lucius and Paulo faced the veteran pair of Brother Sextus and Brother Fabius.

‘This is the best quality match we play all year,’ announced Brother Sextus. ‘We always look forward to it.’

Brother Lucius tried to recall the result of their previous encounter, some twelve months ago. Had Brother Sextus’s team not lost by nearly 60 IMPs? It was sad indeed if they had nothing better to look forward to than a defeat of that magnitude.

‘Yes,’ agreed Brother Fabius. ‘By the Law of Averages, we can’t do as badly as last year. I noted at the time that we’d been really unlucky on 5 boards out of 16.’

‘That’s right,’ said Brother Sextus. ‘I put a big ‘U’ in my scorecard when there was nothing we could do about some big swing. According to the Law of Averages, the Abbot’s team should have 5 unlucky boards this year.’

The players drew their cards for this deal:

Dealer East. Neither Vul.

♠ 983 ♥ 53 ♦ Q973 ♣ 9842		♠ 652 ♥ Q984 ♦ 10 ♣ KQJ106
♠ AK4 ♥ KJ1076 ♦ 642 ♣ 73	♠ QJ107 ♥ A2 ♦ AKJ85 ♣ A5	

West	North	East	South
Brother Sextus	Brother Paulo	Brother Fabius	Brother Lucius
-	-	1♦	1♥
Pass	4♥	Double	All Pass

Brother Sextus led the ♦3 and down went the dummy. ‘Not too much for you,’ observed Brother Paulo. ‘Sorry, partner. Perhaps this is one of the 5 unlucky boards that we’re due.’

Brother Fabius won with the ace of diamonds and switched to the spade queen, Lucius won with the ace and noted that he would lose a trick in every suit if he played a trump next. When he played a club to the king, Brother Fabius won with the ace. He persevered with the jack of spades, not thinking much of his luck when Lucius produced the spade king.

A club to the queen was followed by the jack of clubs, East ruffing with the ♥2. Lucius overruffed, returned to dummy with a diamond ruff and called for the ♣10. Brother Fabius ruffed with the ♥A, not looking too happy about it, and Lucius ditched his last spade. It was then a simple matter to ruff the next spade, draw trumps and claim the remaining tricks for +590.

Brother Sextus glared at Brother Paulo. ‘I don’t call that unlucky for you,’ he said.

Brother Fabius leaned forward. ‘My double could hardly be faulted, partner,’ he declared. ‘I had 19 points plus one length-point in diamonds and two tens!’

‘Could we have beaten it?’ asked Brother Sextus.

Brother Lucius shook his head. An opening spade lead would have worked well, as it happened, but it was not his style to point this out. ‘It was just a good fit for us,’ he said.

After 8 boards, the Abbot’s team led by 34 IMPs. No refreshments were deemed necessary for such a short match. Opponents were switched and the players took their seats.

‘I was hoping that our bad boards might turn out to be flat,’ Brother Sextus informed the Abbot. ‘That happens quite often for some teams. There’s such a lot of luck in the game.’

The Abbot nodded his agreement. Some players could count themselves truly unfortunate. With no talent for the game whatsoever, they rarely achieved any good results.

Dealer South. Neither Vul.

♠ J952 ♥ 10 ♦ QJ107 ♣ 10842	<div style="border: 2px solid green; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ Q6 ♥ J98654 ♦ A4 ♣ QJ6	♠ K873 ♥ 2 ♦ K9652 ♣ 973
♠ A104 ♥ AKQ73 ♦ 83 ♣ AK5			

West	North	East	South
<i>Brother Lucius</i>	<i>Brother Michael</i>	<i>Brother Paulo</i>	<i>Brother Aelred</i>
–	–	–	1♥
Pass	4♥	Pass	4NT
Pass	5♦	Pass	6♥
All Pass			

Brother Lucius led the queen of diamonds and down went the dummy. Brother Aelred did not like what he saw. There was a certain loser in both diamonds and spades. His own hand couldn't possibly be better after opening with a one-bid; he was surely worth one slam try. The fault must lie with his partner. With only 10 points he should have bid 3♥.

'Do you want the ace?' asked Brother Michael.

'I suppose so,' Brother Aelred replied.

Trumps were drawn in one round and Brother Aelred played his three winners in clubs. What should he do next? Leading towards the queen of spades was no good. Even if Lucius held the king, there would be two tricks to lose. Perhaps it would be better to lead the queen of spades from dummy. If Paulo made the mistake of not covering with the king, the slam would be there. It was an unfortunate moment to have such an expert in the East seat. Paulo surely knew about always covering an honour with an honour.

Suddenly inspiration struck and Brother Aelred sat upright in his

chair. Why not give them a diamond trick? Yes, there must be at least a chance that they would play another diamond. That would give him a ruff-and-discard!

When Brother Aelred led the ♦8, Brother Lucius won with the ♦10 and switched to the ♠2. Another avenue had opened for declarer. 'Queen, please,' said Brother Aelred. His hopes were dashed when East produced the spade king and the slam went one down.


'Another unlucky one for us,' Brother Aelred declared. 'I played it rather well. I would have made it if Lucius held the king at the end.'

Lucius and Paulo shared a glance. If Brother Lucius held the king of spades, it would have been obvious for East to win the second round of diamonds. He could then play spades from his side of the table.

'I don't mind going down when I play badly,' Brother Aelred continued. 'It's a bit aggravating to find a really clever play and then be defeated by the lie of the cards.'


'Ah well, never mind,' said Brother Paulo. 'Perhaps the Abbot will bid the slam. The cards will lie wrongly for him too and it will be a flat board.'

On the other table the Abbot was sorting through his cards for the penultimate board, pleased to see that he held 21 points. Winning the summer league had become a certainty some while ago, but it would still be agreeable to finish with some memorable piece of cardplay. This was the lay-out:



Fit to bid!

The app that takes you to the right contract in a split second.



We are looking for testers!

Join me and register at www.bid72.com

Dealer South. Both Vul.

♠ 9652 ♥ J10973 ♦ — ♣ A543	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td style="text-align: center;"> </td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ 843 ♥ 62 ♦ KJ7654 ♣ 86
	N										
W		E									
	S										
♠ AK ♥ AKQ ♦ Q83 ♣ QJ1097	♠ QJ107 ♥ 854 ♦ A1092 ♣ K2										

West	North	East	South
<i>Brother Sextus</i>	<i>Brother Xavier</i>	<i>Brother Fabius</i>	<i>The Abbot</i>
–	–	–	2NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

Brother Sextus led the jack of hearts and the Abbot won with the ace. If the diamond ace was singleton or doubleton, he would have five tricks in the suit and move into overtrick territory. If a defender held ♦A-x-x, he could hold up the ace twice to cut off the diamonds. Yes, but it would do him no good because declarer could then turn to the club suit. However they defended, sadly, the game appeared to be cold. There would be no late chance to display his skills.

The Abbot led a low diamond from his hand and West showed out, throwing a club. Brother Fabius won dummy's king with ace and switched to the queen of spades. The Abbot won with the king and paused to recalculate. He had seven top tricks on view two spades, three hearts and two diamonds. He could play on clubs to set up some more tricks but the defenders would surely get the spades going and beat him to the tape. Could he have done anything about it?

When the Abbot led the queen of clubs from his hand, Brother Fabius won with the king and played another spade. Brother Sextus won the next round of clubs and the defenders cashed two spade tricks for one down. 'Excellent defence, partner!' exclaimed Brother Sextus. 'If you continue

hearts, he makes it.'

'That's not right, is it?' queried Brother Xavier. 'The Abbot needs to knock out both clubs and by then you would have two hearts, two clubs and a diamond.'

'That may be true as the cards lie,' replied Brother Sextus, 'but I still think my partner's spade switch was a nice play.'

'Perhaps it works better if you lead the queen of diamonds instead of a low one, Abbot?' suggested Brother Xavier. 'Yes, if East wins and returns one of the majors, you can duck the second round of diamonds. Four diamond tricks are enough for game.'

The Abbot studied the scores on his card, pretending not to hear.

'And if he ducks the ♦Q,' continued Brother Xavier, 'you can switch to clubs and establish three tricks there before they can set up anything in the majors.'

The Abbot looked across the table in disbelief. 'Are you still chatting about the last hand?' he asked. 'Unless I'm mistaken, we have another board to play.'



Book Review

by Martin Cantor

Enterprising Bridge Tales : The Original Stories & The Next Generation

by Marc Smith

Master Point Press US\$ 23.95 GBE 12.95

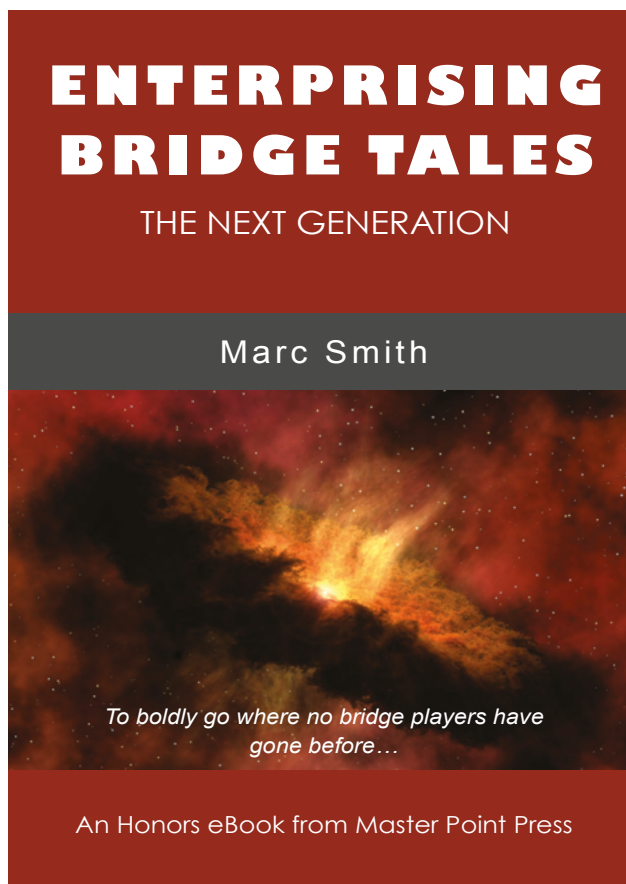
Almost thirty years ago Marc Smith wrote about bridge in the 23rd Century aboard the USS Starship Competitor. Now, at last, we have the sequel, describing the bridge and space adventures of the Starship under a new commander in the 24th Century. And the original book, with revisions, has been republished alongside it.

There is much to enjoy in both these books, even if you're not a Star Trek fan (I'm not), but I imagine it will add to the enjoyment if you are. The hands are interesting and often instructive, the stories in which they are set are well constructed, and the characters are lifelike, whether caricatures of the standard bridge characters we all know and love/loathe (à la Menagerie or Monastery), or thinly veiled versions of real-life bridge stars.

Some features are common to both books. With a continuous narrative they read more as novels than as a collection of discrete stories, although each chapter could quite happily stand alone. The boards are well found or constructed. The descriptions of aliens and of alien worlds are imaginative. And, as I sadly all too often have to note in my reviews, the proof reading could have been better. *(Honors books are published by MPP, but they are not subject to editorial control, which includes proofreading. Editor)*

But there are some differences of emphasis and impact between the two.

In the first book a high proportion of the hands have their interest



in squeezes, while in the second the techniques are more varied with more unblocks, endplays, entry-creating or entry-destroying manoeuvres. On the other hand most of these ploys will be familiar to any regular reader of bridge literature, but that is perhaps a consequence of the fact that the newer book is more instructional, supported by frequent 'over the shoulder' descriptions of a player's train of thought. Fans of highly artificial systems might be disappointed to discover that the Vulcan Variable Pass, in common use in the 23rd century, seems to have gone completely out of fashion a hundred years later.

The storyline and the individual tales in the second are stronger, but the characters, while reasonably developed in themselves, have less of the parodic quality of the first, where we are amused by the gentle mockery of their foibles. As is to be expected with the passage of time, it is harder to identify the real life players in the earlier book.

It's no surprise that a book written in 1990 didn't foresee bridge in the 23rd century being played with tablets rather than pasteboard hold-in-the-hand cards, but a 21st century book about the 24th century might have given us this, or per-

haps the use of force field screens. But maybe the author is saving those developments for a further, 25th century sequel, which I hope we can look forward to in the not too distant future.

The uBid Auction Room

Mark Horton

Welcome to the Auction Room, where we examine bidding methods from recent events. This month we pay a visit to the Final of Crockfords Cup.

Crockfords Cup, the English team championship, made its debut in 1946 and has been going strong ever since. Privately played matches reduce the field to 8 teams who contest an all-play-all final. These were the ones vying for the title:

De Botton	Janet De Botton, Artur Malinowski, Thor Erik Hoftaniska, Tom Townsend, Dror Padon, David Bakhshi
Byrne	John Holland, Alan Mould, Michael Byrne, Kieran Dyke
Senior	Brian Senior, Nevena Senior, Sandra Penfold, Tom Paske, Ed Jones
Black	Andrew Black, Gunnar Hallberg, Phil King, Andrew McIntosh, Derek Patterson, Willie Whittaker
Callaghan	Chris Duckworth, Brian Callaghan, Joe Fawcett, Gillian Fawcett, Jane Moore, Ian Payn
Barton	Hugh McGann, Tom Hanlon, Mark Moran, Rory Boland, John Carroll, Tommy Garvey
Hughes	Miles Cowling, Richard Hyde, Steve Preston, Dave Huggett, Bob McRobert, Andy Hughes
Jagger	Jon Cooke, Paul Barden, Ian Pagan, Julian Wightwick, Chris Jagger, Jonathan Mestel

The Hands

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

Hand 1. Dealer West. N/S Vul.

♠ Q107		♠ J8
♥ A32		♥ Q8
♦ Q6542		♦ AJ10873
♣ J8		♣ K96

If East bids diamonds South doubles and if West raises diamonds North

doubles and South bids hearts.

West	North	East	South
Carroll	Dyke	Garvey	Byrne
Pass	Pass	1♦	Double
Redouble	2♦*	3♦	Pass
Pass	Double	Pass	3♥
3NT	Double	Pass	Pass
4♦	All Pass		

Having bid 2♦ to show interest in the majors North, who was looking at ♠AK43 ♥10765 ♦9 ♣10743 made a competitive double. His next double was for penalties, but no-one felt inclined to bid over 4♦. Declarer managed eight tricks for -100.

West	North	East	South
Holland	Moran	Mould	Boland
Pass	Pass	2♦	Double
5♦	Double	All Pass	

West led a spade and East won and switched to a heart, declarer finishing three down, -500.

You will have noticed that N/S cannot make ten tricks in a major. Despite the fact that West held five card support for his partner the rest of his hand was defensive in nature and by bidding 5♦ he offered his opponents fielder's choice - they could bid on or take the money. In mitigation he could point to the fact that his partner was heavy for his weak two, but I'm not sure the jury would be sympathetic.

Recommended auction: If East opens 1♦ and South doubles West can choose between 3♦ and 2NT to show a good raise. There is no reason for E/W to think of saving over four of a major.

Marks: Defending 10, 4♦ 4, 5♦ 1.

Running score: Crockfords Teams 5/20

Hand 2. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ 87	<div style="display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> N E </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> W S </div> </div>	♠ KQJ3
♥ AK9		♥ Q2
♦ AK10743		♦ 952
♣ K4		♣ AJ103

West	East
<i>Paske</i>	<i>Jones</i>
-	1♣
1♦	1NT
2♦*	2♠
3♦	3♠
4♣*	4♠ (Dble)
Pass	5♣*
6♦	Pass

2♦ Forcing checkback

How to interpret this auction?

Having shown four spades East was short of moves over 3♦, and rebid his spades, emphasising their quality. When West cue-bid in clubs he did the same in spades and then cue-bid in clubs. West knew the ♠A was missing and settled for 6♦.

North held ♠962 ♥108753 ♦QJ6 ♣Q5 so the contract was one down.

West	East
<i>G Fawcett</i>	<i>J Fawcett</i>
-	1♣
1♦	1NT
3♦	3♠
4♥*	5♣*
6♦	Pass
4♥	Cue-bid
5♣	Cue-bid

Recommended auction: I don't think you can fault anyone. Both auctions are fine and turn the ♥Q into a diamond and the 46.34% chance of the diamond suit playing for no loser improves somewhat.

Marks: 6♦/6NT 10, 5♦/3NT 9.

Running score: Crockfords Teams 25/40

Hand 3. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

♠ AQ10943	<div style="display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> N E </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> W S </div> </div>	♠ 875
♥ A865		♥ K1042
♦ 10		♦ QJ83
♣ A9		♣ 102

North opens 1♦

West	East
<i>Byrne</i>	<i>Dyke</i>
- (1♦)	Pass
Double	1♥
1♠	1NT
4♥	4♠
Pass	

North, Gunnar Halberg, was looking at ♠KJ ♥73 ♦AK654 ♣KJ85. He led the ♦A and switched to the ♥7. Declarer won with the ace and cashed the ♠A on which North dropped the king! Declarer crossed to dummy with a heart and ran the spade seven. North won with the jack and now had to find a club switch. When he exited with the ♦6 declarer could pitch a losing club (the play record suggests declarer played dummy's eight and that South did not cover with the nine, a scenario I'm inclined to doubt).

West	East
<i>King</i>	<i>McIntosh</i>
- (1NT)	Pass
2♣*	2♥
2♠	Pass

2♣ Majors

By bidding 2♠ West showed a good hand, but East, rightly in my opinion, saw no reason to take another bid.

North led the ♦A and switched to the ♣5, declarer winning with the ace and cashing the ♠A. had he been in 4♠ he could now have crossed to the ♥A and pitched a club on the ♦Q, eventually coming to ten tricks. At the table he settled for nine.

Recommended auction: If North opens 1NT then King/McIntosh is one of many possibilities. Stopping short of game if North opens 1♦ is problematical, but perhaps West could bid a restrained 3♥ over 1NT.

Marks: 3♠/3♥ 10, 4♠/4♥ 4.

Running score: Crockfords Teams 39/60

Hand 4. Dealer South. None Vul.

♠ Q1094 ♥ J874 ♦ KQJ5 ♣ K		♠ A ♥ AQ106 ♦ A7 ♣ J108753
------------------------------------	---	-------------------------------------

South opens 2♦ (Multi). If West passes North bids 2♥. If East passes South bids 2♠.

West	North	East	South
<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>G Fawcett</i>	<i>Padon</i>	<i>J Fawcett</i>
-	-	-	2♦*
Double	Redouble*	Pass	2♠
Pass	Pass	3♠*	Pass
3NT	Pass	4♣	Pass
4NT	All Pass		

2♦ Multi
 Rdbl Bid your suit
 3♠ Good hand

West's decision to double caught his partner with a hand that was too good to let 3NT go. North held ♠K5 ♥953 ♦86432 ♣A96 and led the ♦6. Declarer won with dummy's ace, played a club to the king and six and ran the ♥J, repeating the finesse when it held. South won and returned the ♦10. Declarer won, cashed another diamond, crossed to dummy with a heart and played the ♣J. North won and exited with the ♠5, ensuring one down.

West	East
<i>Duckworth</i>	<i>Callaghan</i>
-	-
1NT	2♦*
2♥	3♣
3♠	4♥
Pass	

4♥ was in no danger and declarer emerged with eleven tricks.

Recommended auction: It is easy to see how one might go overboard on this deal. 1♦-2♣-2NT 3♥-4♥ is one way to stay low. After 1♦-1♥-2♥-3♣-3♥-3♠-4♥ East should probably accept that enough is enough.

Marks: 4♥/3NT 10, 4NT/5♥ 5.

Running score: Crockfords Teams 54/80

Hand 5. Dealer East. Both Vul.

♠ 10 ♥ AK10752 ♦ A962 ♣ K9		♠ KQ82 ♥ 9 ♦ 73 ♣ AJ10873
-------------------------------------	---	------------------------------------

West	East
<i>J Fawcett</i>	<i>G Fawcett</i>
-	Pass
1♥	1♠
2♦	2NT
3♣	5♣
Pass	

East's decision to pass on the first round meant her side was in no danger of getting too high.

North held ♠J542 ♥83 ♦KJ1054 ♣52 so there was no realistic hope of the diamond lead that was required to defeat the contract being found. South won the spade lead with the ace and switched to a diamond but declarer won, cashed two hearts to get rid of a diamond and claimed.

West	East
<i>Townsend</i>	<i>Hoftaniska</i>
-	1♣
1♥	1♠
2♦*	3♣
4♣	4♠*
4NT*	5♦*
6♣	Pass

2♦ Fourth-suit forcing

South led the ♦Q and declarer won with dummy's ace, cashed the top hearts pitching a diamond and played the ♠10, which ran to South's ace. Declarer ruffed the diamond return, ruffed a spade, cashed the ♣K and

ruffed a diamond with the ♣10, South's overruff representing the setting trick.

Recommended auction: 1♣-1♥-1♠-2♦*-3♣-4♣-5♣. Having opened with a minimum hand I don't think East should cue-bid.

Marks: 5♣10, 3NT 4, 6♣ 2.

Running score: Crockfords Teams 66/100

Hand 6. Dealer West. None Vul.

♠ KQ743		♠ 1095
♥ K		♥ AQJ9
♦ AQJ8543		♦ K7
♣ —		♣ A983

West	East
------	------

<i>Jones</i>	<i>Paske</i>
1♦	1♥
1♠	2♣*
2♠	3♠
5♣*	5♥*
5♠	6♦

Pass

- 2♣ Fourth-suit forcing
- 5♣ Exclusion Blackwood
- 5♥ 1 or 4 key cards

When West signed off in 5♠ East went on - his ♦K was a huge undisclosed asset.

West	East
<i>King</i>	<i>McIntosh</i>
1♦	1♥
1♠	3NT
6♦	Pass

Short and sweet, but not totally perfect, as East's high cards might have been located so as to deliver an easy grand slam.

North held ♠J86 ♥8742 ♦6 ♣KJ1065 so there were no problems in the play.

Recommended auction: I prefer the first auction - don't you?

Marks: 6♦/6NT 10, 5♦/3NT 5.

Running score: Crockfords Teams 86/120

Hand 7. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

♠ J		♠ Q65
♥ AQ43		♥ J985
♦ AJ1076		♦ —
♣ AK5		♣ QJ976

South opens 1♠ and North raises to 4♠

West	North	East	South
<i>Pagan</i>	<i>Paske</i>	<i>Wightwick</i>	<i>Jones</i>
–	Pass	Pass	1♠
Double	4♠	Pass	Pass
Double	Pass	5♣	All Pass

South held ♠A10874 ♥K76 ♦92 ♣1084 and led the ♠A followed by the ♣4. Declarer won in hand with the six, ruffed a spade, ruffed a diamond, ruffed a spade, ruffed a diamond and drew the outstanding trumps, pitching diamonds from dummy. When a heart to the queen held declarer had eleven tricks.

West	North	East	South
<i>Senior</i>	<i>Cooke</i>	<i>Penfold</i>	<i>Barden</i>
–	1♦	Pass	1♠
Double	3♠	4♣	4♠
5♣	Pass	Pass	Double
All Pass			

I will leave you to form your own judgement as the merit of North's choice of bids.

South led the ♦9 and declarer won with dummy's ace pitching a spade, cashed the ♣A and ducked a spade, West winning and returning a club. Declarer won, ruffed a spade, ruffed a diamond, cashed the ♣Q and played a heart to the queen and ruffed a diamond. The South hand was counted out as 5-3-2-3 so the indicated play was the ♥J which would have secured an overtrick. Declarer did not get it right, so just a 4 IMP swing.

Recommended auction: If West keeps doubling 5♣ ought to be reached. If N/S remain relatively silent then E/W will reach 4♥, perhaps via 1♦-1♥-(1♠)-3♠-4♥.

Marks: 5♣ 10, 4♠ X 9.

Running score: Crockfords Teams 106/140

Hand 8. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ J6
♥ 962
♦ K75
♣ K9854



♠ A8
♥ KQJ75
♦ J102
♣ AQ3

West	North	East	South
<i>Pagan</i>	<i>Paske</i>	<i>Wightwick</i>	<i>Jones</i>
-	-	1♥	Pass
2♥	2♠	3♣	Pass
3♦	Pass	4♥	All Pass

South led the ♠K from his ♠K754 ♥1084 ♦8643 ♣J6 and declarer won and played the ♥J. With North holding the ♥A and the clubs breaking declarer was soon claiming.

West	East
<i>Senior</i>	<i>Penfold</i>
-	1♥
1NT	3NT
Pass	

North led the ♠10 and the contract was dead in the water, declarer finishing with just six tricks.

Recommended auction: You see how playing four and five card majors can influence the result on any given deal. To be able to cope with hands like this you need to be able to make a conventional rebid over West's 1NT. Given a free run with five-card majors E/W might bid 1♥-2♥-3♣-4♥.

Marks: 4♥ 10, 3NT 3.

Running score: Crockfords Teams 119/160

Jagger scored 89 VPs, enough to take the trophy with De Botton finishing second 6 VP behind followed by Byrne, a further 4 VP back.

You can play through the deals mentioned in this article.

Just follow the links:

Hand 1 [here](https://tinyurl.com/ybrffxv8) or <https://tinyurl.com/ybrffxv8>

Hand 2 [here](https://tinyurl.com/ya69kp5w) or <https://tinyurl.com/ya69kp5w>

Hand 3 [here](https://tinyurl.com/y7w57vxp) or <https://tinyurl.com/y7w57vxp>

Hands 4 & 5 [here](https://tinyurl.com/y9nln9sq) or <https://tinyurl.com/y9nln9sq>

Hand 6 [here](https://tinyurl.com/y7v85t3o) or <https://tinyurl.com/y7v85t3o>

Hands 7 & 8 [here](https://tinyurl.com/ybzowfmh) or <https://tinyurl.com/ybzowfmh>



The Master Point Press Bidding Battle Set 9

Moderated by Brian Senior

This month we welcome two new panellists, both Norwegian, Tommy Sandsmark and Leif-Erik Stabell.

Tommy is a very strong player, a grand master and multiple national championship winner, but is best known for his journalism, having been editor of various Daily Bulletins and bridge magazines for many years during his illustrious career. He has also been an officer of the IBPA (International Bridge Press Association) for many years.

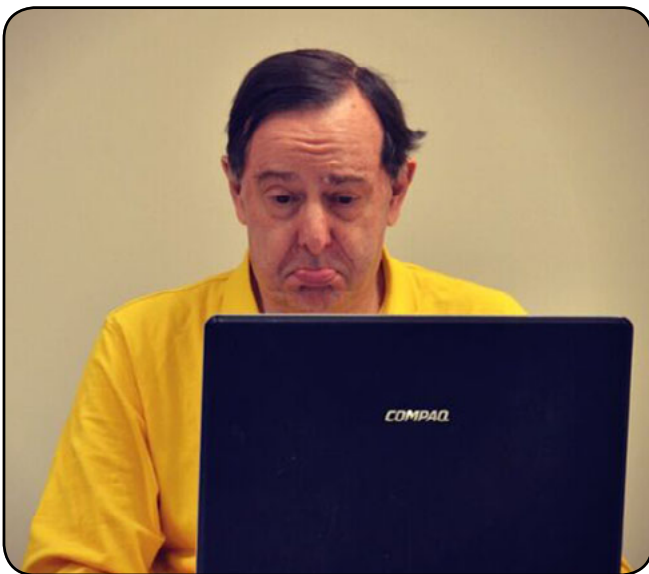
Leif-Erik played international bridge for Norway many years ago, in a highly successful partnership with Tor Helness. However, for many years he has lived and worked in Zimbabwe, meaning that opportunities to play at the highest level have been very limited. Leif-Erik has won more than 10 national championships in both Norway and South Africa and is considered by many to be the strongest player in Africa.

We welcome both Tommy and Leif-Erik and hope to see them here as regulars in the future.

Before we continue, apologies to Phillip Alder, whose score was incorrectly calculated last month. Phillip actually scored 72 and not the 66 with which he was credited.

THE BIDS & MARKS

	Bid	No. of Votes	Marks		Bid	No. of Votes	Marks
1.	Pass	10	10	5.	Pass	10	10
	3♦	5	7		Double	4	6
	2♦	3	6		2NT	2	3
	1♥	1	3		3♥	2	3
2.	Double	11	10	3♣	1	2	
	2NT	6	8	6.	4♦	11	10
	3NT	1	3	Pass	8	8	
3.	Pass	1	2	7.	3NT	14	10
	4♠	10	10	Pass	2	4	
	Pass	5	6	4♣	1	3	
4.	4NT	4	7	4♥	1	3	
	4♥	7	10	4♠	1	2	
	4♠	5	8	8.	3♦	8	10
	Pass	4	5	2NT	4	7	
	3NT	1	2	3NT	3	6	
	4♦	1	2	4♦	3	6	
	4NT	1	6	2♥	1	2	



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

PROBLEM 1

IMPs. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ 754
♥ 83
♦ 8765
♣ Q974

West	North	East	South
–	–	1♦*	Double
?			
1♦	4+ cards		

Bid	Votes	Marks
Pass	10	10
3♦	5	7
2♦	3	6
1♥	1	3

The options are to go quietly due to the weakness of our hand, to take some bidding space away from the opposition, or to psyche to try to confuse their auction. We start with those who see no merit in their hand so say nothing:

Lawrence: Pass. Not tempted at all to bid with this. No matter what it is that I might choose, I have a partner who may hang himself with my noose.

Teramoto: Pass. Even in this situation, I have too little to bid 2♦. If more points or more cards, I may raise.

Rigal: Pass. No need to distort my hand here. I don't want a diamond lead and can't obstruct my opponents. Let my partner bid again if we need to compete here.

Well, you can certainly take some space away from your opponents and, while that should not prevent them from getting to game, it may make it harder to reach the right game or, possibly, slam.

Bird: Pass. Any flight of fancy (such as 1♠) would be risking a lack of support from the panel and therefore one of your threatened punitive awards of 2 points. It would be hard to recover after such a poor start, so I will settle for the lame but obvious Pass.

McGowan: Pass. You may address me as Wet, but what good will it do to call? Why should I tell them about our eight-plus card fit when 5♦ is likely to go for 500/800 if they have game on. Something imaginative will probably backfire when partner takes me seriously. Let it Be.

Lambardi: Pass. A save can only be profitable if partner is very shapely and can bid again, even over a direct game bid by LHO. Otherwise too weak to hope I can take away bidding

space; showing a fit usually helps rather than hinders opponents. A psyche with a safety valve (1♠ e.g.) may be a winner as opponents may not have an agreement in place as to what is a cue and what a natural suit bid, but it is not my style.

In so many situations the most important thing is to stay true to your style. Not only will you be more comfortable doing what you believe in, but you will surprise partner less often.

Sandsmark: Pass. There is a limit to how active one should be. Partner surely expects far more than nothing when he is faced with a sacrifice dilemma on this board. No doubt, some people on the panel will jump to 3♦, but I think that will be more than just a little bit deceptive, since you only hold a 12-loser hand. Partner is going to make the wrong decision if you 'help' him in this way!

Technically, you have only an 11-loser hand, as you only count a maximum of three losers per suit and have only two heart losers – assuming, of course, that the final contract is in either clubs or diamonds. However, I take your point.

Sver: Pass I may well bid 3♦ at the table depending on general 'atmosphere' in the match, however I'd prefer to have at least a singleton when I might encourage my partner to do some action after their game.

Yes, I think 3♦ would be automatic if we were 3-1-4-5, for example, rather than 3-2-4-4.

Smith: Pass. The only sensible alternative seems to be a raise to 2♦, and I cannot see the point of that. After all, partner will surely expect us to contribute something if he judges to compete and/or sacrifice, and with this shape it is not clear that we will.

Carruthers: Pass. Sorry to disappoint you, but this hand has nothing to recommend it for a psychic action or a pre-emptive one. Yes, you can bid and dine out on its success, should it do so. More likely, you'll get partner excited. The only bid I'd consider is 2♦.

A minority of the panel do more than just consider the single raise:

Robson: 2♦. Gentle raise to rob the opponents of a little space and occasionally lead to a profitable save.

Sime: 2♦. Enough with this garbage. Bidding 3♦ deserves to lose 1100 and 10 IMPs in 5♦.

Stabell: 2♦. 3♦ is simply too much, since a sacrifice could be very expensive despite the vulnerability. Partner should not really expect more than this.

They are right of course – we don't really want to see partner save over an opposing game as partner will surely expect a little more than this. What we hope for is that a pre-emptive raise will see the opposition reach the wrong contract often enough to at least balance the odd large penalty we concede.

Cannell: 3♦. Weak jump raise. A bit out there, but I think Brian may approve. :) I am using the vulnerability to take some room from the opponents.

I always have something between sympathy and admiration for bold pre-emptive actions and this one is no exception. However, I suspect that the more cautious souls have the right of it in this case.

Green: 3♦. Happy to push the boat out at this vul. I prefer Pass or 3♦, as 2♦ would misrepresent this hand. It would be nice if I had a 0-6 raise (3♦) as well as a 7-9 raise (3♣) then partner

would not take me too seriously.

Well, in a regular partnership you would have an agreement about how weak the pre-emptive raise could be. It would be nice to have both pre-emptive and Mixed raises available to you. Without one of those options, you should know which you do have and that can decide whether you can afford to bid 3♦ on this hand or not. My own approach would be to pre-empt aggressively to the three level but promise some values for a simple 2♦ raise. Of course, some partnerships prefer to give up on the very weak raise and play 3♦ here as, effectively, a Mixed raise.

Apteker: 3♦. At these colours I wish to put maximum pressure on the opponents and allow partner to consider sacrificing at the five level if the opponents bid to game in one of the majors. Pass could obviously work out better when partner has the 18-19 balanced hand and now bids 3NT but it is much more likely that he has 12-14 balanced and they have likely game on or partner has an unbalanced hand which could compete over their major game.

Leufkens: 3♦. No fancy bids like 1NT after which North has many more options to differentiate. Haven't done many psyches and don't want my partner suspect I'll start doing it from now.

Mould: 3♦. Were we here last month as well? I shall be boring and so this again. Would bid 2♦ at other vuls. Don't mind Pass on the grounds that he gives them no information. You cannot bid 1M these days. Sorry to be so boring.

In the event we had just one vote for a psychic response in a major. I fear that we are all getting old – 25 years ago there might have been more

than one such action from the panel.

Brock: 1♥. Looks like a hand to psych on. It's just a question of which major to bid.

If you are going to psyche, 1♥ is somewhat safer than 1♠, as partner is far less likely to save in 5♥ over 4♠ than in 4♠ over 4♥, should you have the misfortune to hit a suit in which he has four-card support.

Much as I admire the 3♦ bidders, I think that the more cautious bidders and passers carry the day this time. 3♦ really could see partner misjudge badly and us go for a substantial penalty.

PROBLEM 2

IMPs. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

♠ 10963
♥ 842
♦ J87
♣ 984

West	North	East	South
–	–	2♣	Pass
2♦	2♠	Pass	Pass
?			

Bid	Votes	Marks
Dble	11	10
2NT	6	8
3NT	1	3
Pass	1	2

McGowan: Pass. 12 losers this time. Still Wet.

Disappointing – after your first answer I was expecting each subsequent one to be completed by a different Beatles song title. Oh well. (Sorry, Oh Well was of course by Fleetwood Mac.) More seriously, I wonder if Liz misread the question

as we are in a forcing situation, are we not, after partner's 2♣ opening?

Pablo was tempted by Pass even so:

Lambardi: Double. Whatever it means. Very, very tempted to pass as it seems very unlikely we can make something; might even try it at Pairs – and be ready to apologise. What would double from partner have meant? For some it is a super take-out, then Pass is neutral and would be balanced or semi-balanced.

And so is Leif-Erik.

Stabell: Double. Tempting to break discipline and pass, but partner's pass must be 100% forcing. With a strong balanced hand with no source of tricks, I hope he will manage to pass the double.

Teramoto: 2NT. I am not sure if Pass by partner is forcing or not.

Enri is in no doubt.

Leufkens: 2NT. As 2♣ is game-forcing, East's pass is forcing. I expect a strong NT opposite. As left opponent won't have solid spades (with this vulnerability), I suppose 2NT makes most sense. 3♣ only if I've got additional agreements.

Bird: Dble. I regard East's Pass as forcing. Since I have no wish to make any sort of positive statement about this apology of a hand, I will have to double.

Mould: Double. Depends what both partner and my double is. John Holland and I play it as take-out from both sides. If that is the agreement then this seems a bit odd as spades is my longest suit, but what am I supposed to do? If we are playing the now out of vogue method that pass shows a balanced hand then double is presumably penalties by me which is fine.

The other question is what is 2NT by me here? I have no idea, but I bet the Koach does.

Sadly, just when we need him, Eric is absent from the panel this month.

Carruthers: 2NT. I suppose I'm expected to bid here. Partner shows a minimum balanced hand (with no spade stop?) for his Pass. I hope he realises that 2NT by me means that I'd have passed his 2NT rebid in the absence of competition. Better we should play that my Double is a puppet to 2NT.

If Pass shows a minimum balanced hand, does that mean that he has to jump to 3NT every time he has 25+? I'm not sure that I like that very much. Or does he double with 25+ balanced? In which case, what does he do with a take-out hand?

This is not a well-discussed situation – I am pretty sure that I have never discussed it. There is logic to the notion that bidding 2NT here means that we would have passed had partner been the one to bid 2NT, else how do we ever stop out of game? And I like the idea that our double could ask partner to bid 2NT – over which we could have our usual range of Staymanic and Transfer bids. Except that we still have the problem that either partner has to do more than bid 2NT with game values, or we have to commit to game even facing 23-24. This is really rather awkward.

Cannell: Double. We are in a forcing auction in my view. Partner's pass may portray a balanced non-directional hand as double would be take-out. Since I have no clear direction I will double showing some action/competitive inclination.

Sandsmark: Dble. Since partner holds an extremely strong hand, and I have absolutely nothing to contribute, the only way in which I

can help him, is to double, in case this is what he needs when applying a forcing pass.

Sver: 3NT. Since I don't think we can stop before a game and pard has something similar to a balanced hand I think this describes my hand the closest.

Cannot partner have a balanced 23 or so? I agree that we will need to have some agreements in place to be able to stop lower, but I fear that partner may think that a jump to 3NT shows some values, and I see no reason why he cannot be unlimited and has just passed to see what we would do.

Smith: Double. Partner's pass is surely forcing, so we have to take some action. I would expect partner to be relatively balanced, so there is a good chance that defending is our best option. Second choice 2NT, since we at least provide a spade stop facing something like singleton queen.

Brock: Double. My best guess if partner is balanced. Presumably this is a penalty double but partner would have bid already with an unbalanced hand.

Ben appears to have the most comprehensive agreements:

Green: Double. The way I play this sequence partner bids over 2♠ with a single-suiter (would 3♠ be natural for you?) and would pass with either a balanced hand, a penalty pass or a two-suiter. I am expected to double on most hands that are not too distributional. This would also be the way to reveal a psyche just in case North is fooling around at the vulnerability. In the context that partner can have a big two-suiter I can't stomach passing. I do what I'm told and see what partner does next.

Apteker: 2NT. Partner's pass should be forcing with a likely balanced hand that could not bid 2NT due to a lack of stoppers or because he has positionally judged to try give me a chance to bid the 2NT.

Rigal: 2NT. This by contrast is an under-discussed area of modern bidding. I think this is natural and Double is take-out but will be prepared to listen to alternative points of view. Either way, I expect a bad score – from the panel and in real life. But I always do. It's being so cheerful as keeps me going.

You and me both, Barry.

Robson: 2NT. I don't remotely see an alternative, unless I want to end a beautiful friendship (I pass).

Lawrence: Double. I expect partner has some 24-point balanced hand, likely with two spades. Since he didn't bid a suit, this distribution is implied. I hate bidding but I hate passing a forcing bid even more. Double is the only bid that keeps us low.

Sime: Double. More or less mandatory with flat hands. Failure to double allows North to bid 2♠ on all sorts of hands, for example a three-suiter with short spades.

That looks right to me. If partner wants to pass for penalties he can do so, while if he bids 2NT we can pass that – he may struggle to make it of course, as that suggests that his spades are not that great and that is the suit which will be led, but what else can we do? However, with no firm agreements in place, to bid 2NT rather than double can hardly be too far off the mark.

The balanced hand range issue is a major one and cannot be resolved without agreements. So

here is a suggestion. If opener has balanced game values he bids 2NT, forcing, over the 2♠ overcall, and we have our normal methods at hand. Pass followed by 2NT in response to a double shows 23-24, or whatever is our non-GF range. We can now play John's idea that responder's double asks opener to bid 2NT – he can of course pass if he has good spades and fancies defending opposite a bust. And responder can double as a relay to 2NT then follow through with Stayman etc as in an uncontested auction.

I would think that opener's double of 2♠ is take-out and that he passes with a penalty double and hopes for a reopening double, which he will pass. An immediate suit bid is a single-suiter, while if opener passes then bids a suit in response to responder's double that shows a two-suiter, a la Ben.



Mike Lawrence

In the actual auction, opener's pass was of course forcing, and responder doubles, asking opener to bid 2NT with 23-24 balanced (unless he has enough trump tricks to prefer to pass). Which leaves responder's 2NT bid. Do we want that to be natural and GF, catering to holdings such as ♠Qx, to right-side 3NT? Or do we want 2NT to be some kind of Lebensohl or maybe a take-out bid to cater to hands that would not like to leave partner the option of passing a double with 23-24 balanced? To at least partially answer my own question, presumably the hands that want to right side 3NT can simply bid 3NT rather than 2NT?

PROBLEM 3

IMPs. Dealer West. None Vul.

♠ 5
♥ K 106
♦ A93
♣ AQ8753

West	North	East	South
1♣	3♠	4♥	Pass
?			

Bid	Votes	Marks
4♠	10	10
Pass	5	6
4NT	4	7

Partner has bid under pressure so his bid is much wider-ranging than we would like. Still, our hand has a lot of potential. Should we pass in case he has stretched to bid 4♥, should we cue-bid to invite him to help to make the decision, or should we take control and ask for key cards?

We start with the pessimists (realists?):

Teramoto: Pass. Partner's hand is wide-ranging. It feels necessary hold a little more to move.

Brock: Pass. I know I have a good hand but partner may well have bid some of it already.

Mould: Pass. Close to going on but partner's range is huge here. I want my partner to bid 4♥ on ♠xx ♥AQJxxxx ♦xxx ♣x. Could easily miss a grand.

Always the optimist, our Alan.

Carruthers: Pass. Bidding on would be the equivalent of fashioning a noose for partner. He'll often have had to stretch a bit. I have him covered on that account, but not to the extent that even the five level is safe.

Green: Pass. 4♥ could be the limit when partner has stretched (imagine ♠Kxx ♥AQJxxx ♦xxx ♣x), or we could be cold for a grand slam. I have to guess and this time I'm going low. If I did bid then I think 4♠ is clear.

Which leads us nicely into:

Leufkens: 4♠. Sure, 4♥ might be a stretch, but it can be much more. The five-level is not 100% safe, but chances are much better we make 6♥ than we go down in Five.

Rigal: 4♠. Enough to keep going while sending messages of good cheer. This is unequivocally agreeing hearts while 4NT is at best unilateral and partner will be forced to answer as opposed to using judgment. Is that a bad thing? Depends on partner.

Stabell: 4♠. I hope I am not punishing partner for getting us to game, but since ♥AQxxxx and a minor-suit king makes the slam good, I think I have to make a try. Will continue with 5♦ over 5♣ and pass 5♥.

Sandsmark: 4♠. This is a case of hand



Liz McGowan

evaluation. This hand may be worth a lot in a heart slam, especially if East has something like: ♠42, ♥AQ98542, ♦Q, ♣K109. I believe we have enough to play at the five level, so if partner applies RKCB, or cue-bids 5♣, I will know that I am on the right track. It will be cowardly to pass here!

Smith: 4♠. We have a great hand in support of hearts. As little as ♥AQxxxx and the ♣K may be enough for slam, so it would seem rather timid not to make at least one try.

Apteker: 4♠. While partner may have stretched, I have too much to simply pass so choose to make a try for a slam.

Sime: 4♠. Obvious to bid on, and showing the

spade control allows partner most latitude. If partner has the club king and the missing key cards we have thirteen tricks (at least). If we are missing the club king we probably need to slow down.

Bird: 4♠. The prospect of a slam, facing a good heart suit, is too blinding to escape my attention. I will cue-bid 4♠, leaving room for partner to ask for key-cards.

McGowan: 4♠. With ♥AQxxxxxxx he should cue a minor-suit king if he has one. Expect some spade length when South did not raise

Good point.

Cannell: 4♠. Partner was under some pressure after the 3♠ overcall, but my hand has some fine features. I will let him know that I have some slam interest with this cue-bid. I do not have enough for 4NT = RKCB. Partner will have to do the heavy lifting from here.

But a significant minority are willing to simply take control:

Lawrence: 4NT. I Can't make a sensible slam try so I'm willing to make that decision myself. Facing AQxxxx of hearts and out, slam is a favourite.

I'm not sure what is wrong with 4♠ as a slam try.

Robson: 4NT. I'm going for slam, believing us more likely to make Six (even Seven) than go down in Five. And I may as well go for it via RKCB as that is really what I want to find out.

Sver: 4NT. The points and the finesse prospect look, so promising that even if he had been forced to bid 4♥ with very weak hand I can't think of one which would have no chance of making a slam.

Lambardi: 4NT. Aware that partner may have been pressed to overbid in this position but too good to pass. Will bid 5♦, queen-ask, over 5♣ (assuming 1430 (Yes, that is the ANBM system)) and 5NT over 5♠. Clubs may play better than hearts with ♥AQxxx and ♣Kxx, so will try 6♠ as a choice-of-grand if all key cards and ♣K are in.

I'd be surprised if partner held only ♥AQxxx, but I suppose it is possible.

The cue-bidders seem to have the best of the argument. 4NT is upgraded in the marking over Pass as there is a clear majority in favour of bidding on.

PROBLEM 4

IMPs. Dealer West. E/W Vul.

♠ A1064
♥ AJ7
♦ A109753
♣ –

West	North	East	South
1♦	Pass	1♥	3♠
Pass	Pass	Double	Pass
?			

Bid	Votes	Marks
4♥	7	10
4♠	5	8
Pass	4	5
3NT	1	2
4♦	1	2
4NT	1	6

Tadashi makes it sound so very simple:

Teramoto: 4♥. At this vulnerability, I prefer to play.

But it is actually very tough, as explained by Enri:

Leufkens: 4♥. This is too tough. You want to indicate strength, hearts, many diamonds and short clubs. No guarantee you know the fit or the level. Then just get passive and hope this is right. Not pass with possible extra club fit for opponents (even with my aces).

Rigal: 4♥. Oh dear, oh dear. A truly impossible problem and the best I can do is support with support. But I'm not happy – and partner may not be either.

Bird: 4♥. Since my pass was not forcing, it seems inconsistent to head for a slam when partner keeps the bidding alive. The chance of him holding at least five hearts are better when my hand suggests he's very short in spades.

Smith: 4♥. We seem to have endplayed ourselves here. Our hand looks far too good to simply bid 4♥, but none of the alternatives are particularly attractive either. I confess I would have bid 4♥ on the previous round, since partner is highly likely to hold five once South makes a pre-emptive spade bid, although he could, of course, be 1-4-3-5 or similar. The problem is that if we belong in diamonds the only way to find out (other than me just guessing to bid 5♦ now) is via something like 5NT, which rates to get us too high much of the time.

I don't mind stretching to support partner, but I do like to have four-card support, so to bid 4♥ on the previous round is a bit rich for me. While we do have a serious problem now, it is generally easier to add to values already expressed rather than bid values we don't have then try to subtract them as the auction progresses.

Apteker: 4♥. A tough problem where South's pre-empt has truly fixed us! I am unable to show heart support and make a slam try below game while it is not even certain that this is our best strain as partner may only have four small hearts. I could show the extra length in diamonds but 4♦ is not forcing, I think. If the colours were reversed, I would probably pass.

Brock: 4♥. Very difficult. Choices are Pass, 3NT or 4♥, I guess. Pass is very unilateral and could lead to an extremely inadequate penalty when we are cold for slam; 3NT could be equally ludicrous. 4♥ doesn't figure to be so bad even if it is not best.

Yes, if nothing is ideal look for something that should be OK most of the time.

The alternative is to invite partner's help in choosing the strain and, by implication, show slam interest all in the same bid.

Lambardi: 4♠. Too good for 4♥. Partner rates to be 1534 or similar with 10 HCP + so I'll risk the five level as a few extras will make slam playable.

Mould: 4♠. No idea again! I could Pass, I could bid 4♥, I could bid 5NT, etc. I will bid 4♠ and over 5♣ bid 5♦ claiming that this must ask partner to choose between the red suits as I have not bid 4♦ over 3♠ or 5♦ over Double. Can we have some easier problems please Brian, these are too tough for me.

5NT is a bit extreme when more than half the panel are settling for game or a possibly inadequate penalty. 4♠ followed by 5♦ over 5♣ does sound like the red suits though.

I somehow doubt that many of the panellists you tortured over the years will have much sympathy with your finding the problems too tough.

Lawrence: 4♠. How can I have more than this? Don't know which direction partner is going but if we can find our best fit, we should have a slam. *Absolutely, you can't have much more than this.*
Sver: 4♠. After passing 3♣ I think 4♠ clearly shows a great distributional hand with uncertainty about the trump suit, which is exactly what I have.

Yes it is.

Carruthers: 4♠. I arrived here by process of elimination. Since I cannot bid 3NT or 4♣ and 4♦ and 4♥ would be inadequate, here we are. *Then there were the lone wolves:*

Robson: 4NT. Ostensibly minors but will remove 5♣ to 5♦. My hand is ginormous – I really fancy 6♦ facing three-card support.

I'm not sure that this has any advantage over bidding 4♠, but it should get the same job done. Could the difference be 4♠ shows the ♠A, 4NT denies it, or is 4♠ more slam-orientated than 4NT – which may be much the same thing?

Sandsmark: 4♦. Difficult problem. On the one hand, you have defensive values, and on the other hand, you know that partner has few spades, but holds good additional values. If these are all in clubs, it may be stupid to launch a slam initiative. If none of these are in clubs, it will be stupid to go down in 3NT. He is, however, bound to have four clubs, some diamond support, and at least five hearts. Thus, a red slam should be within reach, and therefore I bid 4♦ to clarify my distribution. If he then bids 4NT, diamonds will be trumps, and if he says 4♥, I will bid 4NT with hearts as trumps

I don't see why partner has to have five hearts – 2-4-3-4, for example. More seriously,

are you sure that 4♦ is forcing? Because if partner passes there seems to be a big risk of a missed game at the very least.

McGowan: 3NT. No surprise that partner doubled... but still no idea what to do. Can't see us getting rich from 3♠ doubled, though I agree that 3NT does not come with any guarantee.

But there is a significant minority vote for the pass.

Cannell: Pass. Very close. I am fairly certain we have a sure plus versus 3♠ doubled so I will go after that. Partner's reopening double does not have to include a five-plus card heart-suit so any advance may get us to the wrong level and/or strain.

Green: Pass. I don't think 3♠ is making. I have no idea what we are making, 4♥, 5♦, 6♥ perhaps? Who knows? If I do pull the double to 4♥ will partner ever play me for this much playing strength? Probably not, so I think slam will not be bid most of the time. So when evaluating game prospects versus the possible penalty I would rather just go plus by defending. Imagine partner has a 2425 11-count where we can't make game and 3♠ is a blood bath.

Sime: Pass. The penalty pass might not be the winning call on this hand, but it will keep the opponents honest for the rest of the match. Even if they win 8 IMPs (300 for a game, but which one?) they will learn that non-vulnerable pre-empts don't enjoy immunity.

They won't mind that if they pick up 8 IMPs – indeed, such an outcome would encourage me to pre-empt again. Of course, if the wrong game is reached and goes down at the other table, our +300 will look rather better. That is certainly a

possible outcome. The plurality vote is for 4♥, and it is quite possible for that to be a four-three fit.

Stabell: Pass. Partner probably expects me to bid 3NT with a spade stopper, but if he has good clubs, we will be better off defending. If he has ♥KQxxx and ♦KQx, I have obviously done the wrong thing.

True. If that is all partner has we could be taking a very small penalty in lieu of our choice of slams. Mind you, we still haven't got to slam if we bid something, but at least we get a vulnerable game bonus.

4♥ gets the top award but is closely followed by 4♠ and 4NT, the latter being upgraded as it is so similar in effect to 4♠.

PROBLEM 5

IMPs. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

♠ –
 ♥ QJ873
 ♦ 983
 ♣ AK1084

West	North	East	South
–	1NT*	Pass	2♣
Double	2♠	Pass	Pass
?			
1NT 12-14			

Bid	Votes	Marks
Pass	10	10
Double	4	6
2NT	2	3
3♥	2	3
3♣	1	2

As we will see, plenty of panellists dislike our

previous bidding, which is to a large degree the cause of our current predicament. However, this was the problem sent in to us and, while I of course do not include our illustrious panel in this, even the best occasionally make an ill-judged bid then have to dig themselves out of a self-created hole.

Sime: 3♣. South is probably three-suited with short clubs, and can have up to a soft ten-count. Defending 2♠ doubled could be fraught, even if partner has five trumps. If South is upper range, we may chase them into 3♠, or even 4♠. If lower range, partner may have a stab at 3NT. I would have bid 2NT if it showed a two-suiter, but I prefer double then 2NT is very strong balanced.

But we already showed clubs so partner, who is marked with decent values, could have bid 3♣ in front of us with support. If we are going to bid, surely we should show a second suit?

Lawrence: 3♥. I've timed this very poorly. 2♥ then 3♣ would be head and shoulders better than what I'm faced with here. There's a big danger that South has four hearts but there's a big danger that passing will be expensive.

Sandsmark: 3♥. It would be too dangerous to double, for you only have feeble defensive values, and you know that partner is likely to pass 2♠ doubled. On the other hand, you know that partner probably holds 8-12 HCP, and that his distribution is too weak to interfere over 1NT. However, distribution is your strength, and the only way to tell him that is to bid 3♥, which will show at least 5-5 in hearts and clubs, and must surely be forcing for one round, mustn't it?

I cannot imagine why 3♥ would be forcing, still less why I should want it to be so.

Rigal: Pass. I would not have doubled 2♣ since I

think that shows a good hand not clubs. Here, if we are agreed double was simply lead directing and not value showing, I might consider bidding; but my partner's pass suggests staying out of things. 3♥ will surely show a better hand. I pass and await further and better particulars with interest.

Bird: Pass. Partner reckons to have 8+ points and has not spoken. I have already mentioned my club suit and the heart 'fit' may be only 5-2 (even 5-1), particularly as South has suggested at least three hearts with his weak Stayman response. Anyone bidding 3♥ now will probably hear partner bid 3NT and end with something unpalatable in our minus column. I will let North struggle in 2♠ against a bad trump break.

Stabell: Pass. My double obviously showed clubs, but another double now (which partner is surely going to pass) must show a better hand. Since the chance of a heart fit opposite is remote (otherwise, what was South planning to do over 2♥ from North?), I pass and hope that the opponents have done the wrong thing

Leufkens: Pass. So Double was for clubs (you might play it for take-out after NT-openings up to 12-14). I assume South has hearts, so nothing to bid from my side. Partner can have five spades, but not necessarily. Would his double of 2♠ be penalties?

Yes, double was obviously showing clubs and, yes, I would normally play it as showing a penalty double of 1NT if 1NT was weak. Likewise for doubles of a transfer. So, as this is not currently defined in the system notes, let's say that, where there is no footnote to the contrary, in future double of Stayman or a Transfer shows a penalty double of a weak NT, but shows the suit and some



David Bird

values if 1NT was strong. And let's define weak as up to 15, and strong as 14+.

The point that South presumably has some heart length is a good one. Coming to the same conclusion but from a different angle is:

Smith: Pass. Very tricky, particularly as common practice is to play a double of Stayman as a penalty double of 1NT when the opponents are playing weak NT (*But that is obviously not the agreement in place in this case.*). The alternative here is probably 2NT (two places to play), but with partner likely to hold five spades there might be some guessing to be done after such a bid. For example, if partner bids 3♦ do I pass, playing him for 5-2-5-1, or correct to 3♥, hoping he is 5-3-4-1 or 5-4-3-1? If partner is 5-4-2-2

will he not bid 3♣ over 2NT anyway, so we still miss our heart fit. Double is very dangerous, as it will surely end the auction, and there is no guarantee that we can beat it.

Green: Pass. Am I allowed to abstain? I have created this problem by not bidding 2♥ on the first round and then following it with 3♣ showing 5-5 (with 6-4 I would bid 2♥ and then 2NT to show a four-card minor). Now if I bid 2NT partner will probably play me for six clubs and a four-card red suit (perhaps he will play me for 6♣ and 4♦ as I didn't reopen with a double) and if I bid 3♥ I might be forcing us to an uncomfortable level without any guarantee of a fit. If you put a gun to my head then I would pass,



Alon Apteker

assuming trumps are breaking very poorly for them and that South has some length in hearts for his Stayman bid. Doubling is far too scary for me with a void spade.

No, you are not allowed to abstain. You know how I would hate to deprive you of the 10 points you will score by passing.

Sver: Pass I don't think there is a high probability of our game, after South's bidding 2♣, which most likely shows hearts as well, and though 2♠ doubled might score some points, most probably playing versus five trumps with East, I don't want to risk in teams to play this contract against nine trumps and 23 points, which is possible.

Brock: Pass. Maybe I'm chicken! It doesn't sound as partner has much length in hearts or clubs, so there doesn't seem to be much merit in playing in either of those suits. If partner had, say, 15 or so HCP, surely he would have done something at the vulnerability, even if he has huge spades. So the only thing I might be missing is a big penalty that we might get if I doubled. I'm prepared to risk missing that.

Apteker: Pass. I would have bid 2♥ the first time round anticipating a 2♠ response from North and planning to bid 3♣ if all passed back to me. While I do not think we have game on and our upside is limited, I would like to compete given that the opponents may have a nine-card fit. Perhaps we can get them to 3♠ doubled by partner. But partner probably does not have club support or else he might have bid it already, and he is unlikely to have heart support as South was presumably ready to pass a 2♥ response from North. So while I could take a stab at 3♥

or bid 2NT showing two places to play, I am not sticking my neck out and am going quietly given the poor first initial action.

I too would have bid 2♥ the first time then competed with 3♣ over 2♠. It sounds as though we may not have an eight-card fit, in which case our bad initial action may have worked out luckily, if we accept that we have fixed ourselves and now pass.

Cannell: Pass – I believe that a double of 2♠ by partner would be punitive in nature. Therefore, I have worries about entering this potential minefield. Colour me chicken.

Lambardi: 2NT. He will surely be able to work it out from his spade holding. Double could be a winner but he could have doubled himself if he wished and I have no extra defensive tricks. 2♠ by opener over my double shows a fit and RHO could be decent when the NT is 12-14.

They are clear that partner could have doubled 2♠ for penalty had he so desired. There seems to me to be a real danger that we have no fit and that partner, buoyed by an impression that we have good values, will make a penalty pass if we double, and that his trumps may not be up to the task.

McGowan: 2NT. This shows a two-suiter with clubs and a red suit, I have decided. No desire to defend 2♠ doubled, so no double.

But some are willing to double:

Mould: Double. I know it will end the auction and I hope it goes off, but I cannot bring myself to go quietly here. 2NT is the minors and even if I then correct to 3♥ that will show a way better hand, so it is Pass or Double. I think I probably ought to pass but I haven't yet conceded – 670 in this set. I also would not have started from here. I wouldn't have doubled 2♣ even if I could

(I cannot as that would be a double of a weak NT for me), I would have bid 2♥.

Teramoto: Double. This should be for take-out. To bid 3♥ may find 4♥, but this hand is not enough.

Robson: Double. A bit dangerous with a void but I can't bring myself to pass (and 3♥ is too buccaneering when dummy rates to have four hearts, so there's no fit). Perhaps partner has the nuts in spades and we can get 300 on defence.

Carruthers: Double. Partner has cards, otherwise the opposition would be in game. I hope he is the understanding sort. He can Pass with QJ1098, but not, I hope, with 65432 in spades. The model for South's hand on this auction is 4=4=5=0, but sometimes he'll have 3=4=5=1 or the like. If South has 4=3=5=1, the danger is that we'll miss a good 4♥ game. Bidding is

dangerous, but so is Pass.

But this time I fear that bidding will prove to be more dangerous than passing.

If partner has his fair share of the missing high cards, he is unlikely to be 5-2-4-2 or similar, as he could have overcalled 2♠, spades and a minor. He will not have three clubs as he could then have competed with 3♣. Meanwhile, South's use of Stayman suggests that partner will not have three hearts. Any action we take runs the risk that we have no fit and that the opposition have the balance of strength, in which case we could be in trouble. I'm with the passers.

PROBLEM 6

IMPs. Dealer West. E/W Vul.

♠ 7
♥ AKJ
♦ AKJ854
♣ A103

West	North	East	South
1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass
3♣	Pass	3♦	Pass
3♥	Pass	3NT	Pass
?			

Bid	Votes	Marks
4♦	11	10
Pass	8	8

After some very tough problems, this one comes as blessed relief, being a straightforward decision whether to pass or try for slam.

Mould: 4♦. Tell me Brian, was this hand concocted just to see if the people last month who bid 3♦ can now get themselves out of it?

Partner's sequence shows doubt about 3NT, either not the right strain or not the right level. In either case I should not Pass. Let's say what trumps are. If I get 4♠ we are off to the races, ditto 5♣.

It might have been. I'm saying nothing.

Cannell: Pass. I have no compelling reason to remove 3NT despite the previous 3♦ call. If I were playing with EOK I would expect a possible singleton small diamond for the 3♦ bid!

Yes, you would, as we saw not long ago.

Let's leave the panel to battle it out.

Leufkens: 4♦. Partner didn't bid 3NT right away, while he's only four hearts. As he knows about short spades the doubt is not about spade quality, but it should be because of extra strength/diamond fit. I do have some extra values, so let's see where this will lead to.

Carruthers: Pass. Hope he makes it. He knows a lot more about my hand than I do his. He certainly could have ♠QJxx ♥xxxx ♦xx ♣Kxx, and I have what I said I have. Surely I don't need to tell him that again.

You wouldn't have just bid 3NT over 3♣ with this hand?

Lambardi: 4♦. Partner hasn't bid 3NT over 3♣ and it was not the hearts he was after so he was expressing doubt as to strain. He cannot have a good spade stopper unless his hand is also good for suit purposes. With ♠Q9xx ♥Qxxx ♦Qxx ♣xx he would surely have bid 3NT straightaway. ♠Qxx ♥Qxxx ♦Qxx ♣Kxx gives us twelve top tricks in diamonds.

Sver: Pass I've pretty much described my hand; maximum singleton spade and maximum hand, and if he decided to bid 3NT after that, I trust



John Carruthers

his judgement. Besides, with his good stopper in spades, minimum hand and most probably something like 4432 or 3433 or similar there is not enough to make a slam and we might easily lose three tricks in 5♦ whereas 3NT is cold.

Teramoto: 4♦. 4♦ should be better than an immediate 5♦. I can expect partner has three or more diamonds because he would not bid 3♦ with spades stopped and fewer than three diamonds.

So much for any hope of your having a world-beating partnership with EOK.

Apteker: Pass. A bit conservative but partner has wasted values in spades in a likely 4-4-2-3 or perhaps 4-4-3-2 and has judged that his cards are not worth any encouraging move towards slam with a good picture of my hand.

Rigal: 4♦. I don't know what partner has but this is a good enough hand and good enough suit to move forward. Would 4♣ be agreeing hearts, diamonds or clubs? I don't care to linger and find out.

McGowan: Pass. Back to form. I told him what I have, he told me his values are in spades. If there is a better spot he will apologise.

Stabell: 4♦. Partner is probably short in clubs, so passing must be wrong. Will pass 4♥ but bid slam over 4♠/5♣ from partner

Sime: Pass. I think that I have told my story. Partner's story is that he has spades covered and no interest in slam.

Sandsmark: 4♦. A slam initiative. Even if partner holds a spade stopper, 3NT may be a lousy contract. You should go towards 5♦, and if he has the right cards there might even be a diamond slam here, e.g. ♠Q1042 ♥Q872 ♦Q93 ♣K6.

Lawrence: Pass. I've pretty much shown my shape and partner hasn't really shown a good hand for diamonds. Would not be surprised to see KQ95 of spades and whatever else my partner has.

Whatever else he holds is the point. Why did he bid 3♦ with such a strong spade holding? Must he not have interest in greater things?

Smith: 4♦. It might be correct to pass, if partner has something like ♠Kxx ♥10xxx ♦Qxx ♣xxx, and he hasn't promised any more (or even as much) as that. However, would he not also bid this way with something like ♠Axx ♥Q10xx ♦Qxx ♣xxx, when 6♦ has 12 top tricks? Hamman's second



Marc Smith

rule notwithstanding, I'll take the chance that 5♦ is as good as 3NT on the off-chance that we can find a good slam.

Bird: Pass. Partner can picture a spade singleton in my hand and has nevertheless suggested 3NT. If the diamonds come in this may be OK., possibly with the red-suit games failing. I don't see that it's right to think of a slam. Partner may have been forced to find his three bids on some hopeless six-count, with spade values that are useless except in 3NT.

Then why didn't he bid 3NT a round earlier?

Brock: 4♦. I'm better than I might be. Partner has been a bit encouraging (or a bit diffident about his spade stopper) by bidding 3♦ last time rather than 3NT immediately. If he really wants to play no-trumps he can rebid 4NT now.

Yes he can, as if he really wants to play NT he should have extra values – shouldn't he?

Green: 4♦. 3♦ didn't necessarily promise any diamond support, but if partner had a 4423 with decent spades hand he would have just bid 3NT. I think he has genuine diamond support and therefore diamonds rates to play well. 6♦ could easily be the top spot or 5♦ a safer place than 3NT so I think it's right to move.

Robson: 4♦. One more pop at slam.

Put me with the majority, albeit a narrow one. If partner does not have some slam interest then he obviously has a different style to mine. The delayed 3NT expresses doubt. If because of a tenuous spade stopper, I have reason to be worried. If because of some slam potential, I have reason to be interested. Simples, as everyone's favourite meerkat would say (that should confuse all the non UK players who are unfamiliar with our TV ads).

PROBLEM 7

IMPs. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

♠ –
♥ AK983
♦ A62
♣ J10532

West	North	East	South
–	3♦	3♠	Pass
?			

Bid	Votes	Marks
3NT	14	10
Pass	2	4
4♣	1	3
4♥	1	3
4♠	1	2

Another straightforward problem. Though there were five different choices from our panel, over 70% went for the same action.

We'll start with the majority then see if the odd ones out can convince us that there is something better available.

Leufkens: 3NT. Possibly not best but probably the best chance to reach a sensible contract. Alternative 4♥ aims at a smaller target: heart fit. Sure, diamond holding is not ideal, but they're non-vul versus vul.

Lambardi: 3NT. Can be very wrong but so can 4♥ and at least leaves the room open for an unlikely 4♣ or 4♥ by partner. He may even contribute a second stopper as pre-empts go these days. If partner bids on to 4♠ I will be happy to lay down my dummy, with ♦A and two quick heart tricks.

Rigal: 3NT. It is all about getting the best result

possible not the best possible result. Yes we could be cold for slam but we might also not be able to make anything higher than NT or go down in slam if we look for it.

Mould: 3NT. I think a man has a saying about this.

Cannell: 3NT. Very difficult. I guess I will go with R. Hamman's first rule.

Mr Hamman does get blamed a lot.

Sime: 3NT. May not make, but neither might 3♠, and 3NT comes with a vulnerable game bonus. I may have another decision if South doubles. Hope we have agreed what redouble means.

Lawrence: 3NT. Ugly. Very.

Green: 3NT. Not with much confidence and hoping that partner won't correct to 4♠. I might pass but I feel a bit strong for that. 4♥ is an option too but it is likely to buy the dummy whatever partner has in hearts so this feels like a complete guess. This looks remarkably like a hand from the Gold Cup final a few years ago but I may be imagining it.

Sorry, I don't know where it comes from.

Teramoto: 3NT. It is not clear that we should commit to hearts or clubs.

No, either could be right, but they are very committal.

Brock: 3NT. Can't really think of anything else.

Carruthers: 3NT. Ugh. Brutal. I just cannot bring myself to Pass, although it could well be the winner. Thanks for the two low diamonds so I can at least hold up.

Apteker: 3NT. It is this or 4♥. I have the right stopper for 3NT and two possible sources of tricks. If I bid 4♥, partner will often have to pass with a weak doubleton or even a singleton

when bad breaks are likely.

McGowan: 3NT. Oh Joy! Is there a better spot than 3♠? Probably. Is this it? Who knows. Will partner show a second suit if he has one? Probably not. I am fixed, but Pass is too big a view even for me.

Stabell: 3NT. Hoping against hope that partner won't pass. Anyway, if 3NT is the right contract, we only have this one chance.

Yes we do, and if partner does bid on let's hope it's a second suit, as we wouldn't be particularly thrilled to see 4♠ at his next turn.

Sver: 4♥. I have no idea about this one. I had to choose one, but it seems to me that all of 4♥, Pass and 3NT could be winning bids, but also complete disasters in other cases where you might go down in a game where a slam is made in another suit, or pay – 1100. I'd like to bid 4♦ as a 'pick some other suit' bid but I'm afraid it would be understood as a good raise in spades.

4♥ is certainly the most likely alternative to 3NT, but it is very committal. The hearts are good and a five-two fit may be OK though. I actually thought there might be more than one vote for 4♥.

Robson: 4♣. Seems to cater to most things including 6♣, although admittedly not 5-3 hearts.

Partner is more likely to bid 4♥ over 4♣ than 5♣ over 4♥. For a start, 4♣ is forcing while 4♥ is not. That means that 4♣ does not necessarily preclude a heart contract, though partner will need to have four of them. So, up to a point, 4♣ is more flexible than 4♥, but does that make up for the missed heart contracts on five-three or, occasionally, five-two fits? And how often will it lead to a hopeless club game given the weakness

of our clubs?

Sandsmark: 4♠. Partner is long and strong, and even though I am void in his suit, I have other qualities in my hand, which will be advantageous for him in 4♠. If he had been strong enough for me to make a slam try, he would for sure have doubled before bidding 3♠ or 4♠.

I can only assume that Tommy has answered these problems in one sitting and has exhausted himself on the previous six. How else to explain raising what could be a five-card suit on a void? I thought there was a well-known rule that if a void was good enough trump support then partner could probably rebid the suit himself?

And Lastly:

Smith: Pass. Do we really fancy our chances in 3NT? 4♥ might be the best spot, but even opposite something like a 6-3-2-2 shape we still have lots of minor-suit losers to deal with, and the odds surely are that partner will not hold as many as three hearts.

Bird: Pass. Yes, partner might have 16 points or so, but what game are we making? Any of 4♠, 4♥ and 3NT could be playable games, but I would have to guess which one to bid.

You could be right, but I would have more sympathy with this pessimistic effort if there was any guarantee that 3♠ was making. If we are to go down, let's at least try for something worth having – a game bonus – then we could say that we were winning the board whenever the other table guessed to play the wrong game. Partner normally has opening values and so do we. Between us we have three long suits, any of which might produce several tricks. Let's try 3NT and see what happens.

PROBLEM 8

IMPs. Dealer West. E/W Vul.

♠ J7
♥ J9
♦ AKQ6
♣ AKQ98

West	North	East	South
1♣	Pass	1♦	Pass
?			

Bid	Votes	Marks
3♦	8	10
2NT	4	7
3NT	3	6
4♦	3	6
2♥	1	2

Let's start by agreeing that there is no good bid for this hand – at least if playing standard methods.

First, there were those unwilling to stop short of game:

Teramoto: 2♥. This is GF. I intend to bid 3♦ next if possible.

Well, it gets us to game, which is probably what we want to achieve, but it is always a little scary to jump in a high-ranking suit. The rest looked for an alternative misdescription.

Stabell: 3NT. Could be an absurd contract, but since the right 3343 four-count is enough, I cannot risk partner passing 3♦ and cannot bypass 3NT myself.

Sime: 3NT. I know that I am showing a different hand (club based) but I have backed myself into this corner by not opening 2NT. Both 2NT and 3♦ risk missing a vulnerable game. Phony splinters carry a different risk.

Carruthers: 3NT. Showing good clubs and stops in the majors. Oh well, I have two of the three ... one of the three ... really, none of the three? I'd have opened 2NT. I have learned from bitter experience not to reverse or jump shift into a higher-ranking suit and none of 3♣, 3♦ or 2NT is adequate. Some of my acquaintances used to play 1♣ – 1♦ – 2♦ as a reverse, forcing for one round. Not that that would solve this problem if partner gave preference to clubs or attempted to sign off in 3♦. Dreadful set of problems.

I'll take that last as a compliment.

We should be clear that we do play the common way that a 3NT rebid here is based on a strong six-card club suit, too strong for a 3♣ rebid. That does not necessarily mean that 3NT is not the least bad option open to us, just that we should be aware of what we are doing.

Cannell: 2NT. I should have opened 2NT! Argh! I think this is a least of evils rebid as my second choice of 2♥ has problems written all over it.

Drew also mentions opening 2NT. Fair enough, but would we really be happy to open 2NT with two jack-doubletons? Maybe next month we should have a problem where we do so and partner drives to a major-suit slam?

Sver: 2NT. Not happy about it but at least I have the two jacks in the majors and it gives the most space if partner wants to show any signs of life apart from 3NT.

Mould: 2NT. No idea again. What options have I got here? This seems to be the best of a bad job to me. 3♦ is a huge underbid, anything about that takes us past 3NT. I don't like it at all, but I just cannot see anything else half rational. Just put me at the bottom of the list in the marking again.

But 2NT is also a substantial underbid – showing 18-19 when we have 20 and such good suits.

Leufkens: 2NT. Impossible. How can we bid 1♣ – 1♦ with non-vul opponents who both pass? Partner must have quite something in the majors. So I'm not going to risk 3♦ with my two jacks.

That is a good point, and one also brought up by Pablo, though he comes up with a different solution.

Lambardi: 3♦. Unlikely bidding. The non-appearance of the majors seems to place partner with a good hand, either with 5♦ or with a hand unsuitable for NT: If he does have diamonds I have underbid slightly – although my opening of 1♣ with four diamonds suggests I was preparing a reverse and allowance should be made for extra strength given that I cannot bid over 3NT. **McGowan:** 3♦. Heavy, but can't go past 3NT. I suppose I could invent a Splinter, but which major?

Rigal: 3♦. A vast underbid but I'm tired out by the other problems and can't think of anything else to do!! I like the 1♣ opener by the way, expecting a reverse sequence that would have allowed me to get those extras across.

Robson: 3♦. Gross underbid but what else? Maybe I should have opened 2NT.

Smith: 3♦. Yes, it's an underbid, and we'll miss game in diamonds when partner has something like ♠Axx ♥xx ♦Jxxxx ♣Jxx, but the only sensible alternative seems to be 2NT, which will not get us to 5♦ either, but to 3NT off five cashing tricks. If partner bids on over 3♦, say 3NT, we can advance with 4♣ on our way to 5♦ to enable us to get to slam when he has something like

♠Axx ♥KQx ♦Jxxxx ♣Jx. Yes, we could try 2♥ or 2♠ now, but it will be hard to convince me that we'll know what to do on the next round when partner bids, say, 3NT.

Lawrence: 3♦. Some play that even 2♦ shows a good hand. I'm inclined towards feeling that 3♦ is forcing so, if this flies, it's clearly the best bid.

Bird: 3♦. Well, this is a good problem! I can't imagine that rebidding 2NT or 3NT is a good idea, even if the opponents' silence suggests that partner will hold enough in the majors for 3NT to succeed. We would miss a diamond slam too often. My plan (a cunning one, you must admit) is to underbid for the moment and then advance with 4♣ over partner's expected 3NT.

Green: 3♦. The silent opponents make me think that partner has some decent values. I don't want to go past 3NT (which seems to be our most likely game) by bidding 4♦ and I think it is very risky to jump rebid into a two-card suit. So my choices are 3♦, 2NT or 3NT. 3NT would suggest long clubs with stoppers in the unbid suits, 2NT also suggests more than I have in the majors and 3♦ is an underbid, but if you took away the queen of diamonds then most of us would bid 3♦ (I would think). So a tactical underbid for now. If partner bids 3M, showing doubt about the other major, then I will be happy to bid 4♦ (as long as that is definitely forcing). I would have opened 2NT to start with as I think reverses (when not holding both majors) should show an unbalanced hand.

To me this hand is unbalanced. You might convince me that the same distribution was balanced if the hand had two strong doubletons, but not when 90% of the strength is in the two long suits.

Ben mentions 4♦ before rejecting it but we have three panellists who choose that action.

Brock: 4♦. Does this show this? I hope so. I can't have a splinter or would have bid it, so I must have a huge 2245. If 3NT is our last making spot, so be it, but partner did not bid 1NT over 1♣. The problem is that I don't really have any alternatives – maybe 2NT is least bad, but I am (a) too good, and (b) have no major-suit stopper.

Sandsmark: 4♦. I do not believe in fake cue-bids, nor in fake splinters. Let's call a spade a spade and tell him what you really have: clubs and diamonds and a super-strong hand with no interest for NT. What will happen after that is partner's problem, not mine. If he cue-bids a major, I will, however investigate via RKCB.

Apteker: 4♦. I am not exactly sure what 4♦ should show, but I suspect it should be something like this, i.e. no splinter and more than your typical 18-19 balanced hand.

There is a big majority for not going past 3NT. It is easy to see how 4♦ could lead to 5♦ off three top tricks, which should always be cashed. But 3NT need not be making either if partner is minimum. 3♦, or 2NT could be the last sure plus scores. However, remember the point made by Pablo, Enri, Ben and David, all of whom commented on the opposition's silence. That could be explained by no one having a five-card suit to bid. It could also be explained by partner having a decent hand. Ace of one major and king-queen of the other makes 6♦ very good, and the 4♦ bidders will be the only ones to get there. Just one ace could make 5♦ or 3NT, meaning that both 2NT and 3♦ are losing actions.

John mentioned that he knew of people who played 1♣ – 1♦ – 2♦ as a reverse, so a one-round

force. That would solve this problem, although there might still be a problem caused by our not having a biddable fragment in either major at our third turn. I have also come across the idea that for some pairs, 2♦ showed substantial extra values and 3♦ was forcing. Many players will open 1♦ with 4♦ and 5♣. If we are willing to do so, we could agree to open 1♦ and rebid 2♣ with good diamonds, open 1♣ and rebid 2♣ with good clubs. If we have that agreement, and open 1♦ with four-four in the minors, then we can play that 1♣ – 1♦ – 2♦ does indeed show extras and 3♦ is forcing. (Yes, alright, six clubs and four diamonds is still a problem.)

Congratulations to this month's winner, Barry Rigal, with 78, with Marc Smith second on 74.



SET 9 – THE PANEL'S BIDS & MARKS

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
Barry Rigal	USA	Pass	2NT	4♠	4♥	Pass	4♦	3NT	3♦	78
Marc Smith	England	Pass	Dble	4♠	4♥	Pass	4♦	Pass	3♦	74
Enri Leufkens	Netherlands	3♦	2NT	4♠	4♥	Pass	4♦	3NT	2NT	72
David Bird	England	Pass	Dble	4♠	4♥	Pass	Pass	Pass	3♦	72
Alon Apteker	South Africa	3♦	2NT	4♠	4♥	Pass	Pass	3NT	4♦	69
Ben Green	England	3♦	Dble	Pass	Pass	Pass	4♦	3NT	3♦	68
Pablo Lambardi	Argentina	Pass	Dble	4NT	4♠	2NT	4♦	3NT	3♦	68
Leif-Erik Stabell	Zimbabwe	2♦	Dble	4♠	Pass	Pass	4♦	3NT	3NT	67
Drew Cannell	Canada	3♦	Dble	4♠	Pass	Pass	Pass	3NT	2NT	67
Mike Lawrence	USA	Pass	Dble	4NT	4♠	3♥	Pass	3NT	3♦	66
Sally Brock	England	1♥	Dble	Pass	4♥	Pass	4♦	3NT	4♦	65
Alan Mould	England	3♦	Dble	Pass	4♠	Dble	4♦	3NT	2NT	64
John Carruthers	Canada	Pass	2NT	Pass	4♠	Dble	Pass	3NT	3NT	62
Tadashi Teramoto	Japan	Pass	2NT	Pass	4♥	Dble	4♦	3NT	2♥	62
Iain Sime	Scotland	2♦	Dble	4♠	Pass	3♣	Pass	3NT	3NT	57
Andrew Robson	England	2♦	2NT	4NT	4NT	Dble	4♦	4♣	3♦	56
Nikica Sver	Croatia	Pass	3NT	4NT	4♠	Pass	Pass	4♥	2NT	56
Liz McGowan	Scotland	Pass	Pass	4♠	3NT	2NT	Pass	3NT	3♦	55
Tommy Sandsmark	Norway	Pass	Dble	4♠	4♦	3♥	4♦	4♠	4♦	53



Master Point Bidding Battle Competition – Set 10

Open to All – Free Entry

PROBLEM 1

IMPs. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

♠ J843
♥ K6
♦ A972
♣ Q54

West	North	East	South
–	–	1♥	1♠
1NT	2♠	3♣	Pass
?			

PROBLEM 2

IMPs. Dealer East. None Vul.

♠ 6
♥ AQJ76
♦ J108
♣ AQ97

West	North	East	South
–	–	1♣	3♠
?			

PROBLEM 3

IMPs. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ AJ9763
♥ 4
♦ K108
♣ A72

West	North	East	South
–	–	1♦	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♦	Pass
?			

PROBLEM 4

IMPs. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ 7
♥ AKJ106
♦ 8632
♣ Q94

West	North	East	South
–	–	3♣	Pass
?			

PROBLEM 5

IMPs. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

♠ 764
♥ Q
♦ K1085432
♣ A7

West	North	East	South
–	1NT*	Double	2♠
?			
1NT 12-14			

PROBLEM 6

IMPs. Dealer North. All Vul.

♠ AK6
♥ 642
♦ QJ8
♣ 9764

West	North	East	South
–	1♥	Double	Pass
?			

PROBLEM 7

IMPs. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

♠ KQ87
♥ J109732
♦ A10
♣ 8

West	North	East	South
–	1♦	1♠	Pass
?			

PROBLEM 8

IMPs. Dealer North. None Vul.

♠ AJ32
♥ –
♦ QJ109853
♣ K6

West	North	East	South
–	1♣	Double	1♠
?			

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

Reverses are forcing for one round after a one-level

How to Enter

Send your chosen bid in each of the eight problems, by email to biddingbattle@newbridgemag.com or enter via the website www.newbridgemag.com. Entries must be received before the end of the month. Include your name, email address and number of the set which you are entering.

response. The lower of 2NT and 4th suit encompasses all weak hands, responder's rebid of own suit is F1 but not necessarily strong, all other bids are FG.

All high reverses are game-forcing.

Jumps when a bid of the suit one level lower is forcing are splinters, as are four-level responses in a lower-ranking suit to 1♥/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
October 2018 The uBid 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. N/S Vul.

♠ Q107
♥ A32
♦ Q6542
♣ J8

If East bids diamonds South doubles and if West raises diamonds North doubles and South bids hearts.

Hand 2. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ KQJ3
♥ Q2
♦ 952
♣ AJ103

Hand 3. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

♠ AQ10943
♥ A865
♦ 10
♣ A9

North opens 1♦

Hand 4. Dealer South. None Vul

♠ Q1094
♥ J874
♦ KQJ5
♣ K

South opens 2♦ (Multi). If West passes North bids 2♥. If East passes South bids 2♠.

Hand 5. Dealer East. Both Vul.

♠ 10
♥ AK10752
♦ A962
♣ K9

Hand 6. Dealer West. None Vul.

♠ KQ743
♥ K
♦ AQJ8543
♣ —

Hand 7. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

♠ J
♥ AQ43
♦ AJ1076
♣ AK5

South opens 1♠ and North raises to 4♠

Hand 8. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ J6
♥ 962
♦ K75
♣ K9854

MASTER POINT BIDDING BATTLE



Results - Set 8

Bill Linton was the winner this month, with a score of 75. **Rodney Lighton** and **Lars Erik Bergerud** came second with 74, **Mark Bartusek** and **Simon Hill** were fourth with 71

Bill receives a voucher of £40, Lars Erik gets £30, Rodney £20 and Simon receives the final voucher of £10.

Other Good Scores

69 *Stuart Nelson*

66 *Claus Jensen*

65 *Dudley Leigh, Peter Barker*

63 *Mike Ralph*

62 *Colin Brown*

61 *George Willett, Mike Perkins*

Grand Prix standings:

The top twenty scorers currently are:

Alex Athanasiadis	367
Rodney Lighton	367
Mike Ralph	364
Mark Bartusek	363
Michael Prior	359
Stuart Nelson	357
David Barnes	354
Peter Barker	350
Bill Linton	349
Nigel Guthrie	348

Dominic Connolly	346
Lars Erik Bergerud	345
Colin Brown	344
Andrew King	340
Bill Gordon	340
Dudley Leigh	338
Derek Markham	337
Jeff Callaghan	335
Simon Hill	335
Mike Perkins	334

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.

Comments on Bidding Battle Set 8

Brian Senior examines the responses of the readers and compares them against those of the panel.

OK, let's take a look at those bids chosen by readers but not by any of the panellists.

PROBLEM 1

Bid	Votes	Marks	Readers
2♥	12	10	10
3♦	2	6	1
2♦	1	4	9
2NT	1	4	4
3NT	1	4	2
2♠	0	0	2
3♠	0	4	3
4♠	0	2	1

Fourteen of the panel were willing to commit to game and nobody was signing off in partscore. That being the case, I don't feel able to award points to a simple 2♠ rebid. Yes, if we play weak jump overcalls 2♠ suggests close to opening values, but in reality it will almost always be passed, and this hand is simply too good for that.

A jump to 4♠ is an overbid, but is closer to the panel's feelings than is 2♠ so I am convinced to award two points. Best of the spade bids, however, is surely the invitational jump rebid of 3♠. That seems to be about the right judgment of the hand's value for a spade contract. Hence it gets four points, the same as the only clearcut invitation chosen by a panelist of 2NT.

PROBLEM 2

Bid	Votes	Marks	Readers
3♦	12	10	23
4♦	4	8	5
5♦	1	4	3
2♦	0	2	1
1NT	0	2	0

PROBLEM 3

Bid	Votes	Marks	Readers
4♦	7	10	2
3♦	7	9	19
2♥	1	4	5
3♥	1	4	1
4♣	1	2	0
2♦	0	2	2
3♣	0	0	1
5♦	0	2	1
Pass	0	0	1

Pass has the merit of not tipping off the opposition regarding our huge diamond fit, but it leaves them so much space to explore that this benefit looks to me to be irrelevant and if slam is in the offing they will have plenty of time to discover that they do not have much in the way of wasted diamond values.. Likewise, a simple raise to 2♦ simply doesn't take away enough space. At the other extreme, a leap to 5♦ would be a very reasonable choice were the vulnerabilities switched, but vulnerable against not we could easily lose twice the value of an opposing game with no hope of their making slam.

One reader voted for 3♣. This is defined in the system notes as a Mixed Raise, around 6-9 HCP with four-card support. While it is true that five-card support and ruffing values might make the hand worth about that in terms of playing strength, a Mixed Raise is supposed to have some defense as well as offense, and is normally played as a different hand to this one, which is all about offense. Partner's judgment will never take into account our holding our actual hand if we bid 3♣

PROBLEM 4

Bid	Votes	Marks	Readers
4♦	9	10	6
5♥	3	6	5
4♣	1	5	1
6♥	1	4	0
4♥	2	2	19
4NT	1	2	1

PROBLEM 5

Bid	Votes	Marks	Readers
3NT	13	10	23
3♦	2	6	0
3♥	1	2	7
3♠	1	2	1
4NT	0	0	1

The only bid chosen by a reader but not by a panelist, and not even mentioned by any panelist, was 4NT. I am not concerned that 4NT might be misunderstood – anyone who would consider bidding it would surely be playing with a partner who would understand it as natural, with any hand that wanted to explore a club slam simply making a forcing raise to 4♣ to set trumps. However, while the 3♣ rebid showed game values, we have a serious misfit with little help for partner in either minor, and partner must be short in one or both of our suits also. Unless partner has an absolutely huge hand, with which he might bid on over our 3NT, it is hard to see how slam can be good. If a 1-3-5-4 20-count takes our 4NT seriously and raises to 6NT, that contract is likely to be doomed. Likewise if a 5-5 hand jumps to 6♣ over 4NT, partner will need something very special indeed to be successful.

PROBLEM 6

Bid	Votes	Marks	Readers
3♥	7	10	14
2♦	4	10	9
Dble	4	7	4
4♥	2	4	1
2♥	0	0	3
3NT	0	0	1

The panel all make invitational or stronger bids, or start with 2♦ with the intention of going on with an invitational bid. That being the case, they all clearly think that 2♥ is insufficient – quite apart from the fact that 2♥ shows five hearts and a four-card or longer minor according to the system notes. Well, why should a reader be aware of that when half the panel is not, you may well ask. In all conscience, I cannot award points to a call that is so off in both judgment and meaning.

PROBLEM 7

Bid	Votes	Marks	Readers
Pass	10	10	18
4♣	6	8	6
3♣	1	2	5
2♥	0	0	1
5♣	0	2	2

The reader who voted for 2♥ obviously misread the question. The other bid chosen by a couple of readers but by no panelist was 5♣. With six panelists voting for the invitational jump to 4♣, it can hardly be said to be absurd to go one level higher and bid 5♣ instead. Still, 5♣ is an overbid. Opener does not always have club support for the reopening double. Most would double with 1-6-4-2 shape, for example, and normal sound values. So I see 5♣ as a plausible option, about on a par with Barry's choice of 3♣, which is of course at the other extreme.

PROBLEM 8

Bid	Votes	Marks	Readers
2♣	6	10	6
4♣	4	8	8
5♠	4	7	11
4♦	1	5	0
6♠	1	3	1
5♣	1	2	0
2♦	0	0	1
4♥	0	3	1
4♠	0	3	1
5NT	0	2	2
6♥	0	2	1

The panel found six possible answers and the readers another five. This being something of a freak hand, I am more than usually inclined to be generous and make minor awards because, let's face it, nobody really knows how to bid these hands.

I am not going to give an award to 2♦, because while it may be possible to play that as an artificial game-force, it is definitely not so in NBM methods and the reader who voted for it had no right to imagine that it would be. 4♥ and 4♠ are both underbids but if partner has weakish spades then four of a major could be the limit so either bid could be the winner. 5NT, I suppose, is the old grand slam force. It risks getting to slam off the ace-king of trumps and, unless the right agreements are in place, to a grand slam off a trump trick. 6♥ too risks getting to an impossible contract but, up to a point, both these bids are merely the reverse side of the 4♥/♠ coin – they could work well so are entitled to a modest award.

We received two comments from readers.

Dudley Leigh “A very good tough set of problems. I'll be lucky to get 40!” (*he scored 65 - Herman*)

Thank you for that – I'll take the description of 'tough' as a compliment.

Bill Linton “It really is not good enough that so few of the panel know the system or can be bothered to look it up. It's not difficult to print off a copy and keep it to hand, or just consult any old copy of the magazine online. I presume they get paid for their contributions,

but even if they don't, writing (repeatedly) “I bid x, but if that's not part of the system please change my bid to y” is an insult to the readers - try saying that at the table and see where it gets you! The bid (x) should stand and be marked accordingly.”

I sympathise with this view. It is frustrating at times when a panellist does not know the system. I could add copious footnotes to every auction, but in many cases the system is not defined and what I want to see is as much discussion of what good methods would be in a particular situation as the judgment of what bid to actually make. And, yes, I think both panellists and readers could look at the system once in a while.

Just to clarify, the panellists are not paid. Top domestic and international stars give their time and opinions free of charge and we are both lucky to have them and very grateful to them for so doing so.

I'd like to take this opportunity to ask for readers' opinion on something.

Currently, I calculate the panellists' scores and put them in ranking order and this is published in the magazine. I have received a suggestion that it would be better if the panel was not involved in a competition in this way so that all panellists are more likely to give their answers without thinking about how they will score on a particular problem or whether they will win or come bottom this month. The suggestion was simply that the panellists should still have their answers and scores published but in alphabetical order rather than in a ranking list.

Does it matter, and do the readership care one way or another?

Stop Press

Next month's competition will be using an updated A New Bridge Magazine Bidding System which will be published next month.

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.

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

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.

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.

BRIDGE MADEIRA CONTACTS

Miguel Teixeira
Tel.: (+351) 965 477 574 | E-mail: migtei@netmadeira.com
Carlos Luíz
Tel.: (+351) 914 440 580 | E-mail: cluiz57@gmail.com
José Júlio Curado
Tel.: (+351) 937 951 515 | E-mail: j.curado@yahoo.com
Website: www.bridge-madeira.com



madeira islands



Secretaria Regional de Educação
Direção Regional de Juventude e Desporto



Associação de bridge da madeira



EAST

Hands for the
October 2018 The uBid 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. N/S Vul.

♠ J8
♥ Q8
♦ AJ10873
♣ K96

If East bids diamonds South doubles and if West raises diamonds North doubles and South bids hearts.

Hand 2. Dealer East. All Vul.

♠ 92
♥ AK954
♦ A3
♣ A842

Hand 3. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

♠ 875
♥ K1042
♦ QJ83
♣ 102

North opens 1♦

Hand 4.. Dealer South. None Vul

♠ A
♥ AQ106
♦ A7
♣ J108753

South opens 2♦ (Multi). If West passes North bids 2♥. If East passes South bids 2♠.

Hand 5. Dealer East. Both Vul.

♠ KQ82
♥ 9
♦ 73
♣ AJ10873

Hand 6. Dealer West. None Vul.

♠ 1095
♥ AQJ9
♦ K7
♣ A983

Hand 7. Dealer North. EW Vul.

♠ Q65
♥ J985
♦ —
♣ QJ976

South opens 1♠ and North raises to 4♠

Hand 8. Dealer East. NS Vul.

♠ A8
♥ KQJ75
♦ J102
♣ AQ3

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.