

A NEW BRIDGE MAGAZINE

McConnell Final
Another Hand from the Pub
The uBid Auction Room

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A NEW BRIDGE MAGAZINE

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Top of the World

As you know by now (if you read last month's Stop Press) England's Fiona Brown and Sally Brock have won another world title. They were members of the team that won the McConnell Cup, at the World Bridge Series in Orlando.

The result of the final was sure to give cause for British celebrations, as the champions defeated a team which included Nicola Smith, Yvonne Wiseman, and Scotland's Paula Leslie.

Sally went on to collect a silver medal in the Mixed Teams and in the World Bridge Federations current ranking list she is now the number one player, her total of 2591 MP putting her ahead of Nicola Smith's 2580. However, Nicola stays way in front on the all-time list, her total of 59.5 PP leaving her ahead of Lynn Deas's 50.5 and Sally's 50.

In the Rosenblum Cup, Andrew Robson, Alexander Allfrey, Tom Paske & Ed Jones delivered an outstanding performance to take the bronze medals.

Promotion

The European Bridge League has announced revised standings in the 2014 European Championships. Monaco become the Champions, England move into second place and Poland are third. England's team was Tony Forrester & Andrew Robson, David Bakhshi & David Gold, Jason Hackett & Justin Hackett, NPC Simon Cope, and coach Ben Green.

System Changes

Alterations have been made to the ANBM Bidding System that is used in the Master Point

Press Bidding Battle. All competitors (and panellists!) should read, mark, learn and inwardly digest.

We will be making some changes to the competition itself in 2019 which will be announced in the January edition, but meanwhile I would like to encourage you to compete – don't forget there are prizes to be won every month!



The Hot Ticket

The 2019 Yeh Bros Cup will take place from 9-13 April-2019 at the Dongjiao State Guest Hotel in Shanghai. That's the same venue that was used in for the 2015 edition. 28 invited teams will take part.

Watching Brief

If you enjoy watching the experts play you might like to see if anyone can overtake Janet de Botton's team in the final weekend of the Premier League on 3/4 November. Her squad (Janet de Botton, David Bakhshi, Espen Erichsen, Glyn Liggins, Artur Malinowski & Tom Townsend) have a lead of 10.28 VP.

The last seven matches will be shown on BBO, starting with Round 15 at 09.45 on Saturday.

Practice makes Perfect

Dutch bridge club 't Onstein celebrates its 20th anniversary in 2019. To mark the occasion, 't Onstein is making it possible for the Dutch Open and Women's teams to practice against strong opponents.

The Open team is scheduled to play:

Norway (January)

England (Easter weekend)

Israel (May)

The Women will meet:

France (early December)

England (February)

Poland (April)

Sweden (May)

All matches will be played in 't Onstein's own clubhouse, a completely refurbished farmhouse in the village of Vorden, in the east of the Netherlands. Every match will be fully covered on BBO.

With this new series of international contests, 't Onstein is continuing a long and rather successful tradition. Mr. Hans Melchers, founder and president of the club, supports both the Open and Women's teams to enable them to practice against the strongest opponents possible. In the past, Mr. Melchers has been instrumental in The Netherlands winning the Bermuda Bowl in 1993 and 2011. This time not only the open but also the women's team will benefit from his support.

And the Winners are

In Orlando Kit Woolsey was announced as the winner of the Master Point Press IBPA Book of the Year Award for The Language of Bridge.

The Alan Truscott Memorial Award for 2018 went to Bridge Baron, competitor in the 2017 Computer Bridge World Championship, its developer Stephen Smith, and the author of the article on that Championship, our own Ron Tacchi.

Awards Night

The Hainan Bridge Association hosted the International Bridge Press Association's Annual awards ceremony in Sanya on 25 October and will continue to do so for the next five years.

A full report of this spectacular event will appear in the December issue.

**BARON
BARCLAY**
BRIDGE SUPPLY



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Test Your Technique

with *Christophe Grosset*

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Dealer North. E/W Vul.

♠ A87653		<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 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	♠ KJ4
N						
W E						
S						
♥ AK6			♥ Q42			
♦ 7			♦ Q1096			
♣ K97			♣ 542			

West	North	East	South
–	1♦	Pass	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♠	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

North leads the ace of diamonds (South playing the 3, giving standard count) and switches to the 10 of hearts, how do you play ?

McConnell Final

The Editor takes a look at the final of the McConnell Cup

The final of the McConnell would be between two teams packed with World Champions, Baker (Lynn Baker, Sally Brock, Fiona Brown, Irina Levitina, Karen McCallum, Kerri Sanborn, Beth Palmer) and Smith (Katharine Bertheau, Jessica Larsson, Paula Leslie, Solvi Remen, Nicola Smith, Yvonne Wiseman).

In a short match anything can happen, but over 96 deals Baker had to be the favourite.

Set 1

Some typical over pressing by the opponents had given Smith a 13-11lead when this little gem settled on the table:

Board 6. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

♠ A1032 ♥ J1076 ♦ J2 ♣ 976		♠ Q7654 ♥ K3 ♦ KQ5 ♣ K82	♠ 9 ♥ Q982 ♦ 98 ♣ AQJ1054
		♠ KJ8 ♥ A54 ♦ A107643 ♣ 3	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brown</i>	<i>Larsson</i>	<i>Brock</i>	<i>Bertheau</i>
-	-	Pass	1♦
Pass	1♠	2♣	Double*
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

Dble Spade support


East led the ♥9 and declarer won with the king and played a spade to the jack, continuing with the king when it held. West took the ace and switched to the ♣9, continuing with the seven when it held. Declarer ruffed in dummy, came to hand with a diamond and played the queen of spades and a spade to West's ten. When West proved to have a third club that was one down.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wiseman</i>	<i>McCallum</i>	<i>Smith</i>	<i>Baker</i>
-	-	Pass	1♦
Pass	1♠	Double	Redouble
2♥	4♠	All Pass	

Here too East led the ♥9 and declarer won with the king and played a spade to the king. Taking East's nine at face value she played three rounds of diamonds and West ruffed as East pitched the ♣10. West's ♣9 was covered by the king and ace and declarer ruffed the club continuation in dummy and played a diamond. West ruffed with the ♠10 but declarer overruffed, ruffed a club and played a diamond for a beautifully played ten tricks and 10 IMPs.

Board 7. Dealer South. All Vul.

♠ 82 ♥ J7652 ♦ K53 ♣ 742		♠ KQJ9753 ♥ A 10 ♦ 9 ♣ J105	♠ A4 ♥ Q98 ♦ AQ864 ♣ AQ8
		♠ 106 ♥ K83 ♦ J1072 ♣ K963	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brown</i>	<i>Larsson</i>	<i>Brock</i>	<i>Bertheau</i>
-	-	-	Pass
Pass	1♠	Double	Pass
2♥	2♠	Double*	Pass
3♥	Pass	Pass	3♠

All Pass

Dble Game try

East led the ♥4 and when West played low declarer won with the ten, unblocked the ace and played the ♠3. When dummy's ten held she pitched her losing diamond on the ♥K and took eleven tricks, +200.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wiseman</i>	<i>McCallum</i>	<i>Smith</i>	<i>Baker</i>
-	-	-	Pass
Pass	1♠	Double	Pass
2♥	2♠	Double	Pass
3♥	3♠	Pass	4♠
Pass	Pass	Double	All Pass


When her partner bid spades for a third time South made a well-judged

raise to game.

East started with two round of spades and declarer won in hand and advanced the ♣J, finishing with eleven tricks and 13 IMPs when East did not cash the ♦A.

The match had a new leader.

Board 13. Dealer North. All Vul.

♠ A93 ♥ A974 ♦ 106 ♣ 10542		♠ J4 ♥ K852 ♦ 97542 ♣ J6	♠ 852 ♥ QJ106 ♦ AQJ ♣ 973
		♠ KQ1076 ♥ 3 ♦ K83 ♣ AKQ8	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brown</i>	<i>Larsson</i>	<i>Brock</i>	<i>Bertheau</i>
-	Pass	Pass	1♠
All Pass			

West led the ♦10 and East won with the ace and switched to the ♠5, West winning and returning a spade. Now declarer had time to play towards the ♥K and set up a diamond discard for ten tricks, +170.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wiseman</i>	<i>McCallum</i>	<i>Smith</i>	<i>Baker</i>
-	Pass	Pass	1♠
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♠	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

Here too West led the $\spadesuit 10$ and the defence went down the same route, handing declarer +620 and 10 IMPs.


To hold declarer to nine tricks, East must withhold the diamond ace – then the defenders should always score four tricks.

At the end of the first session Baker led 43-28.

You can replay the deals [here](#) or <https://tinyurl.com/y7z9t mrb>

Set 2

Board 22. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

\spadesuit J8 \heartsuit AJ109 \diamondsuit 984 \clubsuit Q632		\spadesuit A106 \heartsuit 6542 \diamondsuit K10 \clubsuit AJ94	\spadesuit KQ53 \heartsuit KQ \diamondsuit AQJ763 \clubsuit 8
\spadesuit 9742 \heartsuit 873 \diamondsuit 52 \clubsuit K1075			

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sanborn</i>	<i>Leslie</i>	<i>Levitina</i>	<i>Remen</i>
–	–	1 \diamondsuit	Pass
1 \heartsuit	Pass	1 \spadesuit	Pass
1NT	Pass	3 \diamondsuit	Pass
3 \heartsuit	Pass	4 \heartsuit	Pass
5 \diamondsuit	All Pass		

South led the $\clubsuit 7$ and North won with the ace and returned a club, declarer ruffing and playing a spade to the jack and ace. She ruffed the club continuation, overtook the $\heartsuit Q$ with dummy's ace, took a diamond finesse, cashed the $\spadesuit K$ ruffed a spade and played a diamond for a well-deserved +600.

The key to the auction was West's 3 \heartsuit bid, emphasising her good suit


and at the same time expressing doubt about the prospects of the nine trick game.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bertheau</i>	<i>McCallum</i>	<i>Larsson</i>	<i>Baker</i>
–	–	1 \diamondsuit	Pass
1 \heartsuit	Double	1 \spadesuit	Pass
1NT	Pass	3 \diamondsuit	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

North led the $\clubsuit 4$ and South won with the king and returned the ten, sealing the fate of the contract and giving her side 12 IMPs.

Board 23. Dealer South. All Vul.

\spadesuit QJ9653 \heartsuit AKQ1082 \diamondsuit – \clubsuit 6		\spadesuit AK4 \heartsuit 43 \diamondsuit AKQ3 \clubsuit KQ74	\spadesuit 10 \heartsuit J75 \diamondsuit 109765 \clubsuit J1085
		\spadesuit 872 \heartsuit 96 \diamondsuit J842 \clubsuit A932	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sanborn</i>	<i>Leslie</i>	<i>Levitina</i>	<i>Remen</i>
–	–	–	Pass
1 \spadesuit	Double	Pass	2 \clubsuit
4 \heartsuit	Double	All Pass	

Declare ruffed the diamond lead and played a spade, North taking the ace and returning a trump. Taking no risks, declarer won, ruffed a spade with the $\heartsuit J$ and drew trumps, +790.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bertheau</i>	<i>McCallum</i>	<i>Larsson</i>	<i>Baker</i>
–	–	–	Pass
1♠	Double	Pass	2♦
3♥	4♦	All Pass	

West cashed two hearts and then switched to the ♠Q, declarer winning with dummy's ace and cashing the ♦A. When West discarded the ♠3, declarer does best to cash a top club and then play the ♠K. East will ruff and probably exit with the ♦10. Declarer wins in dummy, plays a diamond to the eight and exits with a spade to endplay West for a ninth trick. That's not easy to see and when declarer missed it she was two down and 11 IMPs the poorer.

♠ AK4 ♥ 43 ♦ AKQ3 ♣ KQ74	<table style="margin: auto; border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <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	♠ 10 ♥ J75 ♦ 109765 ♣ J1085	♠ 872 ♥ 96 ♦ J842 ♣ A932
N						
W E						
S						

Board 24. Dealer West. None Vul.

♠ Q10972 ♥ – ♦ J862 ♣ 9873	<table style="margin: auto; border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <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	♠ K8 ♥ KJ7543 ♦ A103 ♣ 62	♠ J53 ♥ 986 ♦ Q7 ♣ AK1054
N						
W E						
S						
		♠ A64 ♥ AQ102 ♦ K954 ♣ QJ				

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sanborn</i>	<i>Leslie</i>	<i>Levitina</i>	<i>Remen</i>
Pass	1♥	Pass	2NT*
Pass	3♥	Pass	4♥
All Pass			
2NT	Heart support		

East cashed two clubs and exited with a spade, declarer taking ten tricks.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bertheau</i>	<i>McCallum</i>	<i>Larsson</i>	<i>Baker</i>
Pass	1♥	Pass	2NT*
Pass	3♥	Pass	4NT*
Pass	5♠*	Pass	6♥
All Pass			
4NT	RKCB		
5♠	2 key cards +♥Q		

Obviously South's use of Blackwood was unsound and it deservedly handed back the 11 IMPs garnered on the previous deal.

Board 26. Dealer East. All Vul.

♠ K8743 ♥ 1096 ♦ 1087 ♣ 86	<table style="margin: auto; border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <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	♠ 102 ♥ QJ54 ♦ KQ653 ♣ 42	♠ 6 ♥ K732 ♦ 942 ♣ K10973
N						
W E						
S						
		♠ AQJ95 ♥ A8 ♦ AJ ♣ AQJ5				

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sanborn</i>	<i>Leslie</i>	<i>Levitina</i>	<i>Remen</i>
–	–	Pass	2♣*
Pass	2♦*	Pass	2NT
Pass	3♣*	Pass	3♠*
Pass	4♦	Pass	4♥
Pass	5♦	Pass	6♦
All Pass			

- 2♣ Strong
- 2♦ Waiting
- 3♣ Puppet Stayman
- 3♠ 5♠

East led the ♠6 and when declarer played low from dummy West won and returned the ♠4 for East to ruff.

If declarer goes up with dummy's ♠A she can get home. She cashes dummy's ♦A, overtakes the jack, draws trumps and gives up a spade. Now with East holding both kings there is no losing line.

♠ K8743	♠ 102	♠ 6
♥ 1096	♥ QJ54	♥ K732
♦ 1087	♦ KQ653	♦ 942
♣ 86	♣ 42	♣ K10973
	♠ AQJ95	
	♥ A8	
	♦ AJ	
	♣ AQJ5	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sanborn</i>	<i>Leslie</i>	<i>Levitina</i>	<i>Remen</i>
-	-	Pass	Pass
Pass	1♦	Pass	1NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

West led the ♣J covered by the queen and ace and East switched to the ♠Q, followed by the jack when it held. When that also scored she went back to clubs and declarer won with the king, played a diamond to the ace and a diamond to the jack. She cashed the ♠A and played four rounds of hearts, endplaying East to lead into dummy's diamond tenace. Not the only way to get home, but certainly the prettiest.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bertheau</i>	<i>McCallum</i>	<i>Larsson</i>	<i>Baker</i>
-	-	Pass	2♣*
Pass	2♠	Pass	3♣
Pass	3♦	Pass	3NT
All Pass			
2♣	23+ bal or 8.5 playing tricks		
2♠	Any good 5+ suit with two of the top three honours		

West led the ♠3 and declarer won with dummy's ten and took a club finesse, finishing with 12 tricks and 13 IMPs.

With Baker ahead 83-45 along came:

Board 30. Dealer East. None Vul.

♠ 96	♠ K10742	♠ QJ8
♥ AKQ6	♥ 875	♥ J1092
♦ AK1085	♦ -	♦ Q964
♣ Q3	♣ J10974	♣ A6
		♠ A53
		♥ 43
		♦ J732
		♣ K832

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bertheau</i>	<i>McCallum</i>	<i>Larsson</i>	<i>Baker</i>
-	-	Pass	Pass
2♦*	Double	3♥*	Pass
3♠	Double	Pass	4♣
Pass	4♦	Pass	5♦
All Pass			


When South decided she could not bid 3NT it was inevitable that there would be a swing.

East led the ♠Q and declarer's task was impossible. She finished with nine tricks and Smith recovered 11 IMPs and trailed 61-85 at the end of 32 deals.

You can replay the deals [here](#) or <https://tinyurl.com/y76u3vvf>

Set 3

Board 34. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ J9764 ♥ AQ6532 ♦ QJ ♣ —	♠ KQ ♥ 4 ♦ 10762 ♣ KJ10982		♠ 53 ♥ KJ97 ♦ AK3 ♣ AQ53
♠ A1082 ♥ 108 ♦ 9854 ♣ 764			

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sanborn</i>	<i>Leslie</i>	<i>Levitina</i>	<i>Remen</i>
–	–	1NT	Pass
2♣*	Double	2♥	Pass
3♠	Pass	3NT	Pass
4♣	Pass	4♠	Pass
5♣	Pass	5♦	Pass
6♥	All Pass		

- 2♣ Stayman
- 4♣ Cue-bid
- 5♣ Cue-bid

A great deal for one of those debates about how to apportion the blame. South led the ♣4 but declarer had to lose two spades.


Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Smith</i>	<i>Brown</i>	<i>Wiseman</i>	<i>Brock</i>
–	–	1NT	Pass
3♦*	Pass	4♣*	Pass
4♦*	Pass	4♥	All Pass

3♦ looks like a transfer to hearts, with 4♣ being a cue-bid and 4♦ a retransfer.

It delivered 11 IMPs, putting Smith right back in the match.

Board 39. Dealer South. All Vul.

♠ AQ7 ♥ 10974 ♦ A32 ♣ 1086	♠ 53 ♥ KQ6532 ♦ 6 ♣ J954		♠ K1098642 ♥ — ♦ KJ74 ♣ 32
♠ J ♥ AJ8 ♦ Q10985 ♣ AKQ7			

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sanborn</i>	<i>Leslie</i>	<i>Levitina</i>	<i>Remen</i>
–	–	–	1♦
Pass	1♥	2♠	Double
3♠	4♥	All Pass	


Declarer took the obvious tricks, +650.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Smith</i>	<i>Brown</i>	<i>Wiseman</i>	<i>Brock</i>
–	–	–	1♦
Pass	2♥*	2♠	4♥
4♠	Pass	Pass	Double
All Pass			
2♥	Weak		

4♠ doubled was untouchable, so +790 and a massive 16 IMPs that saw Smith regain the lead at 97-87.

Board 44. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ A85 ♥ KJ87 ♦ Q64 ♣ 863		♠ Q976 ♥ AQ102 ♦ K93 ♣ 75	♠ KJ104 ♥ 93 ♦ 105 ♣ QJ1094
		♠ 32 ♥ 654 ♦ AJ872 ♣ AK2	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sanborn</i>	<i>Leslie</i>	<i>Levitina</i>	<i>Remen</i>
Pass	Pass	Pass	1♦
Pass	1♥	2♣	Double*
Pass	3♦	All Pass	

Dble Support double

West led the ♣3 and declarer took three rounds of the suit, ruffing in dummy, cashed the ♦K and played the nine of diamonds covered in turn by the ten, jack and queen. West switched to the ace of spades and a spade and declarer ruffed the third round, played a heart to the queen and ran the ♠7 pitching a heart. West's ruff was the last trick for the defence, +110.


Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Smith</i>	<i>Brown</i>	<i>Wiseman</i>	<i>Brock</i>
Pass	1♣*	Pass	1♦
Pass	1NT	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

East led the ♣Q and declarer won with dummy's ace and went after the diamonds. East followed with the ten then the five and West took the trick with the queen. It looks as if East was making a 'Smith Peter'

saying she liked clubs, but when West played a second round of the suit declarer could win in dummy, play a heart to the ten (phew!) then cash dummy's diamonds and play a heart to the queen for a 10 IMP swing and a 1 IMP lead for Baker.

Board 47. Dealer South. N/S Vul.

♠ Q10 ♥ J84 ♦ J105 ♣ AKQ93		♠ J3 ♥ KQ75 ♦ AQ9742 ♣ 8	♠ 9854 ♥ 32 ♦ 63 ♣ J10762
		♠ AK762 ♥ A1096 ♦ K8 ♣ 54	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sanborn</i>	<i>Leslie</i>	<i>Levitina</i>	<i>Remen</i>
-	-	-	1♠
2♣	2♦	4♣	Pass
Pass	Double	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

West led the ♣A but that was the only trick for the defence.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Smith</i>	<i>Brown</i>	<i>Wiseman</i>	<i>Brock</i>
-	-	-	1♠
2♣	Double*	4♣	4♥
Pass	5♣*	Pass	5♦*
Pass	6♥	All Pass	

5♣ Cue-bid
5♦ Cue-bid

North's double worked like a charm when South had enough to come in over 4♣. When South was subsequently able to cue-bid in diamonds North had heard enough.

There was nothing to the play and Baker added 13 IMPs.

Board 48. Dealer West. E/W Vul.

♠ 8 ♥ Q106432 ♦ A98 ♣ A108		♠ QJ1065 ♥ A7 ♦ Q7 ♣ KJ94	♠ K9732 ♥ 985 ♦ 53 ♣ Q73
♠ A4 ♥ KJ ♦ KJ10642 ♣ 652			

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sanborn</i>	<i>Leslie</i>	<i>Levitina</i>	<i>Remen</i>
1♥	1♠	2♥	3♦
All Pass			

West led her spade and scored a ruff when declarer took the wrong view in clubs. However, that still left declarer with nine tricks.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Smith</i>	<i>Brown</i>	<i>Wiseman</i>	<i>Brock</i>
1♥	1♠	2♥	3♦
3♥	3NT	All Pass	

East led the ♥8 for the jack, queen and ace and declarer ran the ♠Q and then forced out the ♦A for nine tricks and 7 IMPs which meant Baker would enjoy an overnight lead of 122-98.

You can replay the deals [here](#) or <https://tinyurl.com/y9trhxw9>

Set 4

Board 49. Dealer North. None Vul.

♠ — ♥ A10753 ♦ A109753 ♣ J10		♠ J ♥ 62 ♦ K42 ♣ A975432	♠ 1076432 ♥ J984 ♦ J6 ♣ 6
♠ AKQ985 ♥ KQ ♦ Q8 ♣ KQ8			

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brown</i>	<i>Smith</i>	<i>Brock</i>	<i>Wiseman</i>
-	3♣	Pass	4♠
4NT*	Pass	5♥	Double
All Pass			

Team Baker lost 300 in 5♥ doubled – South led a top spade and declarer ruffed with dummy's heart seven. After two rounds of diamonds South won, cashed a club and played another spade. Declarer ruffed with the ♥10 and played a diamond, but South could overruff dummy and play another spade, putting North's ♥6 into the game.

However, at the other table the contract was 5♣ doubled and East had to find a lead after this auction:

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Larsson</i>	<i>Levitina</i>	<i>Bertheau</i>	<i>Sanborn</i>
-	3♣	Pass	3♠
4♣*	Pass	4♥	4♠
Pass	Pass	Double	5♣
Double All Pass			

Notice that here too South was content to bid 3♠.
When East led the ♦J it was all over, +550 and 6 IMPs to Baker.

Board 54. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

♠ 9865 ♥ Q7 ♦ Q10983 ♣ 94		♠ KJ10 ♥ A109 ♦ J6 ♣ KJ1075
♠ A732 ♥ KJ632 ♦ 752 ♣ Q	♠ Q4 ♥ 854 ♦ AK4 ♣ A8632	

Open Room

	West	North	East	South
	<i>Brown</i>	<i>Smith</i>	<i>Brock</i>	<i>Wiseman</i>
	–	–	1♣	Pass
	1♥	Pass	1NT	Pass
	2♣*	Pass	2♦*	Pass
	2♠	Pass	4♥	All Pass
1♣	2+♣			
2♣	Checkback			

At the World Championships in Lyon 1♥ would have been a transfer to spades – here it appears to be natural.

North led the ♦10 and South played three rounds of the suit forcing dummy to ruff. Declarer played a club off dummy and South rose with the ace and exited with a club which declarer ruffed. She played a heart to the ten, cashed the ace, returned to hand with the ♠A and drew the outstanding trump for +620.

Closed Room

	West	North	East	South
	<i>Larsson</i>	<i>Levitina</i>	<i>Bertheau</i>	<i>Sanborn</i>
	–	–	1♣	Pass
	1♥	Pass	1NT	Pass
	2♣*	Pass	2♦*	Pass
	2♥	Pass	4♥	All Pass
2♣	Checkback			

North led the ♣9 and South won with the ace, cashed the ♦AK and exited with a spade. Declarer won with dummy's ten and played South for the ♥Q – one down and another 12 IMPs into Baker's locker.

Board 64. Dealer West. E/W Vul.

♠ K65 ♥ AJ109 ♦ 4 ♣ AJ543		♠ 1097 ♥ Q543 ♦ KJ7 ♣ Q76
♠ A83 ♥ K82 ♦ A10983 ♣ 98	♠ QJ42 ♥ 76 ♦ Q652 ♣ K102	

Open Room

	West	North	East	South
	<i>Brown</i>	<i>Smith</i>	<i>Brock</i>	<i>Wiseman</i>
	1♣	Pass	1♦	Pass
	1♥	Pass	1♠*	Pass
	1NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

North led the ♠10 and declarer ducked, won the next spade in dummy and ran the ♣8.

She won the spade return, played the ♥J, overtaking when North followed smoothly and played a club to the jack, +600 when the clubs behaved.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Larsson	Levitina	Bertheau	Sanborn
1♣	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♦*	Pass	2NT	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

♠ 1097			
♥ Q543			
♦ KJ7			
♣ Q76			
♠ K65		♠ A83	
♥ AJ109		♥ K82	
♦ 4		♦ A10983	
♣ AJ543		♣ 98	
	♠ QJ42		
	♥ 76		
	♦ Q652		
	♣ K102		

South led the ♠2 and declarer won with ace and played the ♣9. When South put up the king declarer played dummy's three. She ducked the ♠Q, won the next spade, played a heart to the king and the ♣8 covered by the ten, jack and queen. When North switched to the ♦7 declarer won and took the losing heart finesse. That should have been three down, but South forgot to overtake the ♦J so just -200, still a 13 IMP loss.

With just 32 deals remaining Baker held a commanding lead 182-123

You can replay the deals [here](https://tinyurl.com/yaf7grtj) or <https://tinyurl.com/yaf7grtj>

Set 5

Board 69. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

♠ Q972			
♥ J42			
♦ QJ3			
♣ AK3			
♠ K1063		♠ J85	
♥ 3		♥ Q865	
♦ 109864		♦ K752	
♣ 984		♣ Q7	
	♠ A4		
	♥ AK1097		
	♦ A		
	♣ J10652		

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Brown	Smith	Brock	Wiseman
-	1♣	Pass	1♦*
Pass	1♥	Pass	2♦
Pass	2♥	Pass	2♠
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♦
Pass	4♠	Pass	6♥
Pass	6♠	Pass	6NT
All Pass			

1♦ Transfer

West led the ♣9 which looked like a great start for declarer. She won with dummy's ace and ran the ♥J. When it held she played a heart to the nine and tabled the ♣J. When she ran it to East's queen she paid West a considerable compliment – and could no longer make the contract.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Wiseman	Levitina	Smith	Sanborn
-	1♣	Pass	1♥
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♦*
Pass	2♥	Pass	3♣
Pass	3NT	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

West led the ♠3 and declarer won with dummy's queen and played a heart to the ten. When it held she cashed the ♥A unblocking dummy's jack, crossed to dummy with club, drew trumps and played the ♣J, going up with dummy's ace to collect all the tricks and 13 IMPs – a body blow for Smith.

Board 71. Dealer South. All Vul.

♠ AK432 ♥ J532 ♦ J10 ♣ 87	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ 10987 ♥ A6 ♦ Q962 ♣ Q42	♠ Q ♥ KQ1084 ♦ 854 ♣ AJ109
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Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brown</i>	<i>Leslie</i>	<i>Brock</i>	<i>Remen</i>
-	-	-	1♥
Pass	3♥	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

West led the ♦K, cashed the ace and fatally switched to a spade. Declarer won with the queen and played the ♥Q, East winning and returning a spade. Declarer ruffed, drew the outstanding trumps, ruffed a diamond and pitched three clubs on dummy's spades, +620.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wiseman</i>	<i>Levitina</i>	<i>Smith</i>	<i>Sanborn</i>
-	-	-	1♥
Pass	3♥	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

West led the ♦A and when East encouraged with the nine she continued with the three. East won and switched to the ♣2 ensuring one down and 12 IMPs.

Board 75. Dealer South. None Vul.

♠ — ♥ A865 ♦ AQJ872 ♣ 1032	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ 98 ♥ KJ83 ♦ 105 ♣ AKQ87	♠ J76542 ♥ Q ♦ K643 ♣ J6
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♠ AKQ103 ♥ 10942 ♦ 9 ♣ 954

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brown</i>	<i>Leslie</i>	<i>Brock</i>	<i>Remen</i>
-	-	-	1♠
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♥
Pass	3♥	Pass	4♥
All Pass			


West made the excellent lead of the ♣J and East played four rounds of the suit, declarer pitching a spade, overruffing West's ♥Q with dummy's ace and playing a heart to the ten. She then tried to cash three rounds of spades and East ruffed and still had two trumps to come, -300.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wiseman</i>	<i>Levitina</i>	<i>Smith</i>	<i>Sanborn</i>
-	-	-	Pass
2♠	Double	All Pass	

North led the ♦A and continued with the queen, South ruffing, cashing two trumps and then playing a heart. North won, gave her partner a ruff and cashed the master trump, two down, -300 and 10 IMPs to Baker, cruising at 220-140.

Board 76. Dealer West. N/S Vul.

♠ K743 ♥ 3 ♦ K852 ♣ Q952		♠ 1098 ♥ Q975 ♦ A3 ♣ KJ106	♠ QJ6 ♥ 1086 ♦ Q94 ♣ 8743
♠ A52 ♥ AKJ42 ♦ J1076 ♣ A			

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brown</i>	<i>Leslie</i>	<i>Brock</i>	<i>Remen</i>
Pass	Pass	1♣*	1♥
Pass	1♠	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

East led the ♣J and declarer won perforce with dummy's ace and ran the jack of diamonds, East winning with the ace and exiting with the ♠9. Declarer ducked West's jack, ruffed the club return in dummy, cashed the ♠A, played a diamond to the king, cashed the ♠K and played a heart to the jack. When it held she pitched two clubs on the top hearts and exited with a diamond, establishing a tenth trick for a well played +620.


Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wiseman</i>	<i>Levitina</i>	<i>Smith</i>	<i>Sanborn</i>
Pass	Pass	1♣	Double
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♥
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

East led the ♣6 and declarer won with dummy's ace and ran the ♦J, East winning with the ace and returning the ♠10, for the two, jack and king.

A heart to the jack held and declarer cashed the ace and then played the ♦10, covered by the queen and king. West won the next diamond with the nine and played a club, East winning and exiting with the ♥Q. Declarer had to lose the last two tricks, one down and 12 IMPs to Smith.

Board 78. Dealer East. None Vul.

♠ AQ8 ♥ A1073 ♦ K632 ♣ J5		♠ K976 ♥ K985 ♦ Q84 ♣ K3	♠ J103 ♥ Q64 ♦ A5 ♣ AQ1094
			♠ 542 ♥ J2 ♦ J1097 ♣ 8762

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brown</i>	<i>Leslie</i>	<i>Brock</i>	<i>Remen</i>
-	-	1♣*	Pass
1♥	Pass	2♥	Pass
3NT	Pass	4♥	All Pass
1♣ 2+♣, unbalanced with clubs or 11-14/18-19 balanced without a five-card major			

North led the ♠J and declarer won with the queen and played the ♣5. North took the ace and exited with the ♠3, declarer winning in hand, playing a club to the king, cashing the top hearts ending in hand and then playing a spade. After cashing two tricks in the suit she exited with a heart, knowing that whoever won would have to open up the diamonds. North chose to surrender by playing a club and declarer ruffed in dummy pitching a diamond from her hand and claimed, +420.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wiseman</i>	<i>Levitina</i>	<i>Smith</i>	<i>Sanborn</i>
-	-	1♣	Pass
1♥	Pass	2♥	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♥	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

Declarer won the spade lead, cashed two hearts and then played three rounds of spades pitching a club. When her next move was a diamond to the king she had to go down.

As the last deal of the set settled on the table Baker led 232-152.

♠ J103			
♥ Q64			
♦ A5			
♣ AQ1094			
♠ AQ8			♠ K976
♥ A1073			♥ K985
♦ K632			♦ Q84
♣ J5			♣ K3
			♠ 542
			♥ J2
			♦ J1097
			♣ 8762

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wiseman</i>	<i>Levitina</i>	<i>Smith</i>	<i>Sanborn</i>
Pass	1♥	Double	3♥
3♠	4♣	4♠	Pass
Pass	5♥	Pass	Pass
5♠	All Pass		

North cashed the ♥K and switched to the ♣Q, declarer winning in hand, taking two rounds of trumps and playing a diamond to the ten. When it held she returned to hand with a trump and played the ♦7 for the queen, king and ace, which was worth 14 IMPs.

That made the score 232-166, a difference of 66 IMPs. At this point Smith decided to concede, which was mildly surprising. However, you don't overturn that sort of margin very often, and they were playing a team in form. Looking at the deals from the sixth set I doubt they would have had any chance to turn the match around.

Herman de Wael reports that Kerri Sanborn now has nine World titles: two Venice Cups (1989, 93), two McConnells (2002, 18), one World Games (2016), two Women Pairs (1990, 2006) and two Mixed Pairs (1978, 2014). Karen McCallum has won seven world titles: three Venice Cups (1989, 93, 2009), two McConnells (2014, 18) and twice the Women Pairs (1990, 2002). Sally Brock has won six titles: two Venice Cups (1981, 85), two World Games (2008, 12), two McConnell, (2014, 18). Fiona Brown previously won the 2012 Olympiad.

Irina Levitina also has six world titles: a Venice Cup (2007), a World games (1996), two McConnells (2002, 18) the Mixed Transnationals (2000) and Women Pairs (2006); or seven if you count the 1984 Chess Olympiad – still the only person to win world titles at chess and bridge (only one other person holds world titles at two Mind sports – Pierre Ghestem at bridge and draughts). Lynn Baker won the McConnell for the second time, after 2014.

You can replay the deals [here](#) or <https://tinyurl.com/ycfu8agx>

Board 80. Dealer West. E/W Vul.

♠ 6			
♥ AKQ87			
♦ Q4			
♣ QJ1065			
♠ AJ854			♠ KQ102
♥ 543			♥ 10
♦ J72			♦ K10653
♣ K8			♣ A94
			♠ 973
			♥ J962
			♦ A98
			♣ 732

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brown</i>	<i>Leslie</i>	<i>Brock</i>	<i>Remen</i>
Pass	1♥	Double	3♥
3♠	4♣	Pass	4♦
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

East led the ♠K and when her partner followed with the four, she switched to the ♦5. That meant declarer could win with the queen, draw trumps and play on clubs for ten tricks.



Misplay These Hands With Me

Promotion Allowed

In a short knock out match I pick up the following hand as dealer:

♠ AJ76542
♥ 843
♦ 93
♣ A

With both sides vulnerable I decide to open 1♠. Partner responds 2♦ so I rebid my suit and when partner continues with 3♣ I bid spades for the third time. No doubt with a mental shrug of the shoulders partner goes on to 4♠ leaving us with this auction:

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	1♠
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♠
Pass	3♣	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

West leads the five of hearts and when dummy is revealed I see 4♠ is not exactly a laydown:

♠ K
♥ QJ
♦ AQ 1065
♣ QJ 1094



♠ AJ76542
♥ 843
♦ 93
♣ A

East wins the first trick with the king of hearts, cashes the ace and after some thought plays a third round. That's annoying, as I was hoping East would switch to a club. West contributes the ten of hearts and I ruff with the king of spades, come to hand with a club and play the ace of

spades, followed by a low spade. East, who has followed with the ten of spades on the first round, wins with the queen and plays a fourth heart, which promotes West's nine of spades. The diamond finesse is right, so I finish one down.

The full deal:

♠ 983	♠ K	♠ Q10
♥ 1065	♥ QJ	♥ AK972
♦ K82	♦ AQ1065	♦ J74
♣ K732	♣ QJ1094	♣ 865

	♠ N	
♥ W		♥ E
♦ S		♦

♠ AJ76542
♥ 843
♦ 93
♣ A

Post mortem

Declarer missed a difficult chance. Instead of ruffing the third heart he should discard from dummy. Say West continues with a diamond. Declarer takes the finesse, cashes the king of spades, comes to hand with the ace of clubs and cashes the ace of spades, claiming when the queen appears.

They reached 4♠ at the other table and West led a heart. On the second round West had the wit to unblock the ten and East continued with the nine. Declarer found the play of not ruffing with dummy's king, but East played a fourth heart. West's ruff forced out dummy's king and East's trump trick meant a flat board.

Over Hasty

Towards the end of a two session pairs event which we appear certain to win I pick up the following collection as dealer:


♠ A76
♥ Q5
♦ AKJ97
♣ QJ10

At favourable vulnerability I open 1NT and partner responds 2♦, promising a heart suit. I dutifully bid 2♥ and partner continues with 2♠. When I bid 2NT partner introduces a third suit with 3♣.

It looks as if partner is 4-5-0-4 or perhaps 4-5-1-3. Without four cards in either black suit I must decide between 3♥ and 3NT. With so much in diamonds I opt for the latter and partner now jumps to 6NT giving us this sequence:

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	1NT
Pass	2♦*	Pass	2♥
Pass	2♠	Pass	2NT
Pass	3♣	Pass	3NT
Pass	6NT	All Pass	


West leads the seven of clubs and partner puts down a decent hand:

♠ KQ102
♥ AK1086
♦ 2
♣ A96

♠ A76
♥ Q5
♦ AKJ97
♣ QJ10

I doubt West is leading from the king and when I play low from dummy East wins and switches to the eight of diamonds. He would do that from almost any holding in diamonds, but as one extra trick in the suit will not necessarily be enough I win with the ace and turn my attention to the heart suit.

The best chance for five tricks, albeit by a small margin (51.67%) is to cash the queen and then play a heart to the ace. Alas, East discards a club on the second round. With no miracles happening I finish up with just ten tricks.

This was the full deal:

♠ 5 ♥ J9743 ♦ Q10654 ♣ 72		♠ KQ102 ♥ AK1086 ♦ 2 ♣ A98 ♠ J9843 ♥ 2 ♦ 83 ♣ K6543	♠ A76 ♥ Q5 ♦ AKJ97 ♣ QJ10
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Post mortem

Declarer was in too much of a hurry to tackle the heart suit. After winning with the ace of diamonds a spade to the queen followed by a spade to the ace sees West pitch a diamond.

Now declarer takes his club tricks - and sees West throw a second diamond on the third round. A spade to the king forces West to throw a heart and declarer comes to hand with the queen of hearts and cashes the king of diamonds, throwing dummy's ten of spades, East following suit.


The play in the black suits has revealed that East started with five spades and five clubs and he has already produced three red cards. When declarer plays a second heart it is safe to finesse the ten of hearts.

Deals that Caught My Eye

David Bird looks at the 2018 Asian Games men's teams final

Hong Kong faced Singapore in the 48-board final of the men's teams. There was a five-trick discrepancy on this 3NT contract.

S1. Board 8. Dealer West. None Vul.

♠ K10932 ♥ J9 ♦ QJ106 ♣ A5		♠ 7 ♥ KQ5 ♦ A732 ♣ QJ1087	♠ Q54 ♥ A87632 ♦ 984 ♣ K ♠ AJ86 ♥ 104 ♦ K5 ♣ 96432
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Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Fong</i>	<i>Zen</i>	<i>Zhang</i>	<i>Wan</i>
1♠	2♥	3NT	All Pass

The Hong Kong South led the ♥10. When the jack was played from dummy, North ducked and declarer overtook with the ♥Q to run the ♣Q. North won with the bare king and played the ♥A. To beat the contract, he needed to switch to spades. The defenders would then make two spades, one heart and the minor-suit kings.


When North returned a heart instead, declarer won and crossed to the ♣A. The diamond finesse lost to the safe hand and it seemed that declarer would shortly be entering +600 on his card. When South switched to the ♠8, Zhang unaccountably called for dummy's ♠9 rather than the ♠K. Presumably he could not believe that North would have overcalled 2♥ without the spade ace. North won with the ♠Q and scored three heart winners, followed by a spade to the ace. The contract was four down.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Fai Mak</i>	<i>Hua Poon</i>	<i>Kit Lai</i>	<i>Choon Chou</i>
1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♦	Pass	3NT	All Pass

South led the ♣6 and declarer was off to a good start when dummy's ace dropped North's king. Chou ran the ♦Q to the king and covered the ♠6 switch with the ♠9 (correctly, after this start to the play). North won and tried his luck with the ♥6, declarer winning with the king and clearing a second heart trick. The contract was secure and a heart return allowed him to make an overtrick. It was 12 IMPs to Hong Kong.

S1. Board 10. Dealer East. Both Vul.

♠ 2 ♥ 543 ♦ K4 ♣ AQ109652		♠ AKJ4 ♥ K109 ♦ 652 ♣ 743 ♠ 9765 ♥ AQ862 ♦ Q3 ♣ K8	♠ Q1083 ♥ J7 ♦ AJ10987 ♣ J
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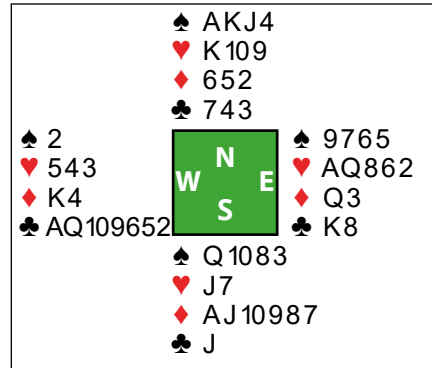
Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Fong</i>	<i>Zen</i>	<i>Zhang</i>	<i>Wan</i>
-	-	1♥	2♦
4♥	Double	All Pass	

Wan matched his partner's light two-level overcall on Board 8, and Fong

produced a Meckwell-style raise to 4♥. North's double closed the auction and the ♣J was led. Zhang won with dummy's ♣A, unblocking the ♣K from his hand. A finesse of the ♥Q proved successful and all followed to the ♥A.

North had to follow to two more rounds of clubs and declarer was able to ditch his last diamond on the fourth club, ruffed by North. The ♠A was the defenders' last trick and declarer scored +990 for his overtrick.

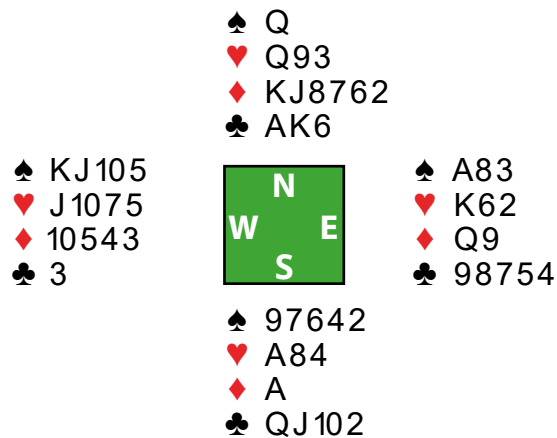


Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Mak</i>	<i>Poon</i>	<i>Lai</i>	<i>Chou</i>
-	-	2♥	Pass
3♣	All Pass		

A 'server error' removes any chance of me explaining the 2♥ opening. A 130-sized nibble was taken out of the 990 and Singapore collected 13 IMPs.

S2. Board 20. Dealer West. Both Vul.



Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Mak</i>	<i>Poon</i>	<i>Lai</i>	<i>Loo</i>
Pass	1♦	Pass	1♠
Pass	3♦	Pass	3NT
All Pass			


Mak decided to lead a spade, despite South's bid in the suit. A lead of the ♠J would have been costly, but his choice was the ♠5. East won with the ace and returned the ♠8, covered with the 9 and 10. To beat the contract now, West needs to switch to the ♥J. He preferred to take his two spade winners before switching to the ♥J. When the ♦Q fell subsequently, declarer had four clubs, three diamonds, a heart and the long spade for the contract.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Fong</i>	<i>Ng</i>	<i>Zhang</i>	<i>Lau</i>
Pass	1♦	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♦	Pass	2NT
3NT	All Pass		

West led the ♥5, and declarer would need to play low from dummy to score two heart tricks for the contract. Understandably, he called for the ♥Q, covered with East's king. Declarer won the second round of hearts and unblocked the ♦A. He then crossed to the ♣A and scored the ♦K and ♦J. After three more club tricks, he conceded one down and Singapore gained 12 IMPs.

S2. Board 27. Dealer South. None Vul.

♠ AQ108 ♥ J7 ♦ KJ62 ♣ KQ6		♠ J74 ♥ 1032 ♦ 8 ♣ AJ10874	♠ 9 ♥ A854 ♦ Q1097543 ♣ 2
		♠ K6532 ♥ KQ96 ♦ A ♣ 953	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Mak</i>	<i>Poon</i>	<i>Lai</i>	<i>Loo</i>
-	-	-	1♠
1NT	2♠	Double	All Pass

East's take-out double (to show his hearts) was ill advised, as I see it. He should have bid the diamonds, either directly or via some Lebensohl device. West was surely entitled to pass the double for penalties, and the play then went badly for East/West.

Loo won the ♣K lead in dummy and played a trump to the 9, king and ace. West continued with the queen and 8 of trumps, won in the dummy. Declarer then played a heart to the king, followed by a second club. West won and switched to the ♥J, East winning with the ace. Loo then claimed two more heart tricks for his contract. It was +470 for Hong Kong.

Closed Room


West	North	East	South
<i>Fong</i>	<i>Ng</i>	<i>Zhang</i>	<i>Lau</i>
-	-	-	1♠
1NT	2♠	3♠	Pass
3NT	Pass	5♦	All Pass

3NT would have been defeated by a club lead (or a heart). Zhang preferred

to play in 5♦ and this contract, too, depended on the opening lead. The defenders need to claim their club trick before it disappears on dummy's spades. When Lau led the ♥K, Zhang won and finessed the ♠Q. Away went the club loser on the ♠A and the game was made. Another 400 to Hong Kong gave them 13 IMPs.

With two of the three sets played, Singapore led by 73-35

S3. Board 40. Dealer West. None Vul.

♠ J762 ♥ — ♦ 10764 ♣ KQ984		♠ K5 ♥ AJ652 ♦ A95 ♣ A62	♠ Q ♥ Q10984 ♦ QJ83 ♣ J107
		♠ A109843 ♥ K73 ♦ K2 ♣ 53	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Poon</i>	<i>Ng</i>	<i>Loo</i>	<i>Lau</i>
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♥
Pass	2♠	Pass	4♠
Pass	6♠	All Pass	

South had a four-level transfer available on a hand with no slam interest. His chosen sequence was therefore a mild slam try. Only the state of the match could justify North's skywards leap, and the contract duly went two down.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Wan	Zhang	Zen	Fong
Pass	1NT	Pass	4♥
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

Fong chose the 'no slam interest' route and his apparently mundane +420 yielded a surprise 11 IMPs for Singapore.

♠ K5			
♥ AJ652			
♦ A95			
♣ A62			
♠ J762		♠ Q	
♥ —		♥ Q10984	
♦ 10764		♦ QJ83	
♣ KQ984		♣ J107	
		♠ A109843	
		♥ K73	
		♦ K2	
		♣ 53	

S3. Board 43. Dealer South. None Vul.

♠ K10			
♥ AQJ10			
♦ 752			
♣ K963			
♠ Q74		♠ 9865	
♥ K7		♥ 98763	
♦ AKJ983		♦ 104	
♣ J10		♣ Q8	
		♠ AJ32	
		♥ 54	
		♦ Q6	
		♣ A7542	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Poon	Ng	Loo	Lau
–	–	–	1♣
1♦	Double	Pass	1♠
2♦	Double	Pass	3♣
Pass	3♦	Pass	3NT
Pass	5♣	All Pass	

South's diamond stopper was insecure and a ♦K lead, asking for unblock or count, would have dispatched 3NT. Ng chose 5♣ as the final spot, and East followed with the ♦10 on the ♦K lead. A third round of diamonds was uppercut with the ♣Q and the diamond game was one down.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Wang	Zhang	Zen	Fong
–	–	–	1♦
1NT	Double	2♥	Pass
Pass	Double	2♠	Double
All Pass			

Fong opened a Precision 1♦ and struck lucky when this triggered 1NT from West, doubled by North. East ended in 2♠ doubled and a low trump lead from South would have collected 2000 for a full eight down! The actual ♥5 lead reduced the penalty to 1100. At trick 8, Fong did not find a low trump from ♠A-J-3 ♣5-4-2, preferring to give a ruff-and-discard. This shrank the penalty to 800. It was still a further 13 IMPs to Singapore, who won by a handsome 108-52.

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Another Hand From The Pub

by Jim Mason

I recently had to spend 24 hours with a blood pressure monitor fitted to my arm. I was concerned that the chosen day coincided with one of our pub bridge sessions, because I imagined that a few boards opposite Mad Dick would overload the machine – much like the fate that befell Professor Frink’s Sarcasm Detector in an episode of “The Simpsons”. In fact, it was the hands on which I partnered Simon the Sloth that generated the highest readings. I submit that waiting for Simon to emerge from one of his trances would try the patience of Saint Monica of Hippo, or even Job...

Anyway, this is all by the by, as he was dummy on the following hand, a role which he performs at almost the same speed as anyone else. The contract was 3NT with South as the declarer:

♠ K764
♥ 6
♦ QJ83
♣ AQ52

♠ A
♥ KJ1083
♦ K74
♣ K1063

The auction had been revealing. South kicked off with 1♥, and West overcalled 1♠. North made a takeout double and East raised his partner to 2♠. North/South subsequently located their club fit, but decided that the nine trick no-trump game offered a better chance of success than any of the suit alternatives.

The opening lead was the ten of spades, and when East contributed the 2, it was clear that West started with Q109xx, giving East Jxx. Declarer won the first trick perforce, with his singleton ace.

There wasn’t enough time to develop the hearts, so it looked as if seven tricks were required in the minor suits. clubs would provide four of those unless West had the length, and diamonds would yield the other three whenever the suit divided 3-3, or in some cases where they split 4-2

with a favourable doubleton. One heart trick would be needed otherwise.

At the second trick, declarer sought to take advantage of a possible doubleton (or even singleton) ace of diamonds in the West hand, by leading up to dummy’s queen. Had this held the trick, he intended to come back to hand with clubs and lead another diamond up to the jack. However, East won the first round of diamonds with the ace and played back the spade jack, which West overtook with the queen. Declarer ducked this, and won the spade continuation with dummy’s king, throwing small hearts from hand on each occasion.

So, a 3-3 diamond break would still furnish three tricks, as would A10 or A9 doubleton in the East hand, by cashing the king and then taking a third round finesse – but this line risked going down whenever East held A109. Declarer felt that a decision could wait until the clubs had been tested.

Consequently, he cashed dummy’s ace and queen of clubs. West followed to the first round and discarded a low heart on the second. This meant that East’s Jxxx could be neutralised by taking a finesse, so declarer played a club to his ten and then cashed the king. West parted painlessly with another heart on the first of these, but time then stood still while he considered his third discard. Eventually he emerged with a winning spade! Interesting...

Declarer reviewed the information regarding West’s hand. He was a virtual certainty to hold the ace of hearts, as he had little enough for an overcall with it, and nothing like enough without it. (We tend not to psyche in the Pub Bridge game, as the idea is to develop bidding systems and improve judgement in a realistic match environment). So, the West hand originally contained exactly five spades and exactly one club, while it was also known to have at least three hearts to the ace and at least one diamond. The most likely scenario seemed to be that West started out with a 5341 shape, and he couldn’t discard a diamond (or the ace of hearts) without conceding the contract immediately.

But, were West’s diamond’s 10xxx, 9xxx or 109xx? In the first two cases, the winning line was to cash the king of diamonds, felling East’s

doubleton honour, and then finesse dummy's 8 on the third round. However, if West held both the 10 and the 9 of diamonds it would be necessary to throw him in to force him to open up the diamonds himself. If he then exited with a high card, declarer would be able to win that in hand and finesse the third round in dummy as before. Even if West exited with a low diamond from 109xx (hoping that his partner held the 7), declarer would be able to win the trick with the 7, cash the king and exit with a heart to West's ace, using him as a neat stepping stone to concede the final trick to dummy's high diamond.

At the end of these deliberations, declarer realised that there was a simple solution that catered for all of the above diamond layouts. In order to keep four diamonds, West had not only been obliged to discard a master spade; he had been forced to bare his ace of hearts as well. So, all that remained was to exit with a heart. West was welcome to win and cash his spade, but declarer would take the last three tricks via two diamonds and a heart, thereby fulfilling his contract.

With a satisfied nod, declarer exited with a heart. West took the trick with the queen, cashed the ace of hearts and then the master spade to defeat the contract. diamonds were 3-3 all along!

Here is the hand in full:

♠ K764		♠ J82
♥ 6		♥ 972
♦ QJ83		♦ A106
♣ AQ52		♣ J974
♠ Q10943		♠ A
♥ AQ54		♥ KJ1083
♦ 954		♦ K74
♣ 8		♣ K1063

	♠ N	
♥ W		♠ E
	♠ S	



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Dealer North. None Vul.

♠ Q6
♥ 72
♦ KQJ54
♣ KJ32

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
-	Pass	1♦	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♥	Pass	?	

Tim Verbeek (European and Junior World Champion)

2♠ obviously. With a three card in spades I would 3♠. Therefore 2♠ gives the flexibility to exchange more info on a relatively low level.

Jan van Cleeff (National Champion and co-founder bid72)

3♥. No clear direction. Usually supporting 4th suit shows length in that suit. Not here, as I could have bid no-trump with values or length in hearts.

Sally Brock (European and World Champion)

2♠. In my view with a minimum and a 3-1-5-4 distribution you should raise spades immediately. So that to bid 3♠ here is 3-1-5-4 with extras, and 2♠ never more than honour doubleton.

Simon de Wijs (European Champion and Bermuda Bowl Winner)

2♠. The bid shows exactly honour-small in spades and no heart stopper. With a minimum hand and 3-1-5-4 I would bid 2♠ directly. With a maximum hand I would bid 2♣ first and jump to 3♠ afterwards.

This is the first contribution in a series of bidding articles offered to you by bid72, the revolutionary app on bidding. Check www.bid72.com for more info.

Your bid please: 3♥, 3♦, 2♠ or 2NT?

dealer North vulnerability None

East

♠ Q 6

♥ 7 2

♦ K Q J 5 4

♣ K J 3 2

West	North	East	South
Ducky	Pass	1♦	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♥	Pass	2♥	

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DEFEND WITH JULIAN

POTTAGE

The Questions

1

♠ 106
 ♥ Q8
 ♦ QJ732
 ♣ K972

♠ 2
 ♥ K10942
 ♦ A9
 ♣ 108653

	N		
W			E
		S	

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
-	-	-	1♠
Pass	1NT	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

You lead the ten of hearts. Partner wins with the ace and returns the three, covered by the jack. You win with the king, switching to a club headed by the jack and ace. Now declarer leads the king of diamonds. What is your plan?

2

♠ K984
 ♥ Q6
 ♦ J2
 ♣ AKQ42

♠ J1063
 ♥ -
 ♦ 109764
 ♣ J975

	N		
W			E
		S	

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
-	-	3♥	3NT
Pass	6NT	All Pass	

You lead the ten of diamonds, covered by the jack, queen and ace. Declarer leads a low heart to the queen and ace (low diamond from you). Partner returns the five of diamonds, won by the ace. Declarer cashes two top clubs (low heart from partner on the second) and then the king followed by the jack of hearts. What is your discard plan?

Örebro 2018

Christopher Chambers

I first heard about the Örebro Bridge Festival several years ago but its late-July/early-August timing always clashed with other plans – until this year when it fell well. The Spring Fours team in which I’ve played in recent years, Mike Ash, Paul and Alex Gipson, were all keen. The Gipsons usually play the US Summer Nationals but decided against Atlanta – it would be “too hot”. As it turned out, Sweden would experience forest fires as far north as the Arctic Circle, and Florida would win the thermometer stakes by a single degree Celsius.

Örebro has the reputation of being one of the best organised events in the calendar, was that merited? How would the weather effect the bridge and the experience? More about that after some situations to consider; take the South seat in each, all from teams events.

1. None Vul. Dealer West

♠ A2
♥ KJ96
♦ –
♣ AKJ10975

West	North	East	South
3♦	Double	5♦	?

2. North-South Vul. Dealer North

♠ QJ10762
♥ J2
♦ 87642
♣

West	North	East	South
–	1♣*	1♦	1♥*
5♦	5♠	Pass	??

- 1♣ Clubs or balanced 12-14/18-19
- 1♥ 4+ Spades, not 4 hearts (unless 5+♠ and 4+♥ at least invitational)

3. East-West Vul. Dealer South.

♠ J105
♥ J53
♦ A87652
♣ 3

♠ K964
♥ K86
♦ 103
♣ A872

West	North	East	South
–	–	–	Pass
1♦*	Pass	3♦*	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

- 1♦ Three cards only if 4-4-3-2
- 3♦ Pre-emptive

North led the club jack (promising the ten, denying the queen, may have ace or king), three, ace, four. What next?

4. North-South Vul. Dealer South.

♠ 87
♥ A106
♦ KQ72
♣ KQ106

♠ AK64
♥ KQ82
♦ A8643
♣ –

You arrive in 6♦ after relays expose your exact shape. Partner had bid a

non-forcing 3NT but, with extras, you made another move with 4NT and found yourself in slam. Despite the revealing nature of the auction, left-hand takes his time to lead a first-third-fifth heart four. You try low from dummy and capture the nine with the king. On your next lead of a low diamond, left-hand discards an encouraging club. What's your plan now?

5. Both Vul. Dealer East.

♠ AJ10432
♥ —
♦ Q3
♣ K10953

♠ K87
♥ AQ6
♦ A986
♣ Q76

Another slam to play – or perhaps more accurately, to guess. With opponents silent you open a 14-16 no-trump, partner transfers to spades, bids clubs and, after your mild encouragement of 3♠ then 4♦ over his 4♣, drives to 6♠.

West leads the heart seven (fourth from honours, second-highest without), diamond from dummy, jack from East, queen: where are the key black honours?

6. None Vul. Dealer East



♠ K865
♥ A5
♦ 98762
♣ 105

♠ Q2
♥ KJ10986
♦ A
♣ J942

West	North	East	South
–	–	1♥	Pass
2♠*	3♣	3♠	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

2♠ Weak jump response, six cards, 5-8 HCP

Opponents bid an aggressive game, partner leads the club king and you give count with the ten, declarer following with the six. North decides on a second top club, which declarer ruffs and leads to the heart eight, North following with the two indicating odd count. Do you duck this?

Let's say you do; declarer takes the diamond ace, ruffs a club, ruffs a diamond, ruffs a club and ruffs a second diamond. Dummy is reduced to five hearts – what are your last five cards?

The Festival

Örebro is a city of over 100,000 inhabitants situated in the administrative county of the same name. It is in the centre of Sweden, at the same latitude as Stockholm but inland and in the Lakeland region, that fragmented area on the physical map. Some weeks before in Ostend, I sat next to a Swede at a press lunch; naturally I mentioned I was on the way to his country and received a pronunciation guide; "Err-reh-brow". But you have to say it with the Swedish musical lilt, that sounds to foreigners doing it, very like a pastiche. Fortunately the locals are very tolerant.

Örebro has a number of visitor attractions, a moated castle in the centre of the city and two railway stations. It is easy to get to and quite compact, the venue is central. There are many restaurants and coffee shops a short walk from the playing area, likewise with hotel accommodation. There were many nationalities present, Scandinavia as you would expect but also many participants from England and Scotland as well as Poland, Latvia, Ireland, France – those only the flags I recognised.

2018 was the 24th Örebro Festival. The bridge runs from Friday, 27th July this year, to Sunday next (5th August). The central event is the Chairman's Cup, qualifying on the first weekend with knockout stages beginning on Monday leading to a final on Thursday. But the Chairman's Cup isn't allowed to dominate and there is always a significant side-event in play; Veterans, Bronze and Silver stratifications of every flavour, pairs, teams, 'IMP-over-field'. Even at its 157-team fullest, the 'CC' occupied only half the tables in play. For all events, except the CC

which requires pre-entry, are unit-priced and paid for at game-time with tokens bought from a central desk.

We started with a warm-up of IMP-över-fältet. The most striking thing about my first cards played in Scandinavia, was that we all played the same boards at the same time. That meant 53 copies of the deals, dealt and caddied to the table. As dealer for local clubs I was acutely aware of the effort involved. Moreover, this competition used wallets (modern, stay-flat) rather than flip-open boards. That entails extra handling, removing the cards from the machine and inserting them into the wallet. I inquired: there were “10 to 12” machines on site, dealing during each day – and night – for the next. Wallets were used simply because otherwise there would not have been enough sets.

Both N/S and E/W moved to a new table, boards arrived, play, repeat. After two two-board rounds recap sheets appeared with frequencies and cumulatives. This is a player-centred experience but there are benefits for organisers too, not least that they don’t have to worry about movements as numbers vary – and they can accept entries right up to the off. And as every played board is a dead board, security is much less a worry.

Mike and I mount a sort-of challenge (the leaders pull inexorably away) but falter significantly when we bid these two hands to six spades:

♠ K10942		♠ AQ6
♥ K9		♥ A6
♦ A		♦ J9532
♣ Q10532		♣ K74

Relay methods show less well when location of honours is key. West was known to be 5-2-1-5 with 8 ZZ points (A=3, K=2, Q=1). But when South appeared to help out by doubling an artificial 4♦, it persuaded East that all West’s cards were working. Slam was hardly horrible, but spades were jack-fourth with North and I also lost to his other black jack (doubleton) for down two and a shedload of IMPs away. I would later reflect on this deal when problem five occurred.

The venue itself is a conference centre of the aircraft hangar type, a huge rectangular-sided box fortunately climate controlled in the unusually hot weather. Display screens are used to great effect: all events (and breaks) are clearly timed. With no excuses, players respect this and everything starts and finishes on time. Ample gaps between rounds (and knowledge of restarts) allow players to schedule coffee/water/comfort

breaks. Rankings are projected but wide-screen TVs show travellers, cross-IMPs etc.

The respect for start-times is a little culture-jolt; the boards are out a few minutes before the clock ticks down but players do not begin. Quite the contrary, it is frowned upon to start early and, removing our cards as a Pavlovian response to board-arrival, on several occasions we are admonished and sheepishly return them. Another cultural surprise; winners of headline events – at all levels – receive a presentation during play. That includes their national anthem for which all stand.

At start-time ‘order sheets’, which double as score-cards, are on each table listing the details of teams and scoring. In the head-to-head matches, each table has its own set of boards which are therefore played in order. Capture of scores is, as you’d expect, electronic. One aspect I hadn’t seen before, to ensure proper attribution of cross-IMPs (and masterpoints?) each team was numbered 1-4 (1-6, etc.) and at start, these single digits are entered for each seat. The order-sheets naturally list names and IDs.

I could go on; it is impressive and everything focuses on the playing experience. Wednesday saw their largest single field ever, of 486 pairs; with other events, there were comfortably over 300 tables in play at the time. What of its reputation as one of the best run events in the world? By all measures it has earned that: all these touches indicate listening to players and arbiters and feeding back into the format, schedule, scoring and administration.

The Chairman’s Cup

The main teams event starts with a 13-round qualifying Swiss over Saturday and Sunday. At the end the top 32 teams compete for the Chairman’s Cup, 33-64 enter the Bonus Cup and the remainder find another event or go home. In the knock-out matches that follow there is a double-elimination element: losers in the CC fall into the BC, being in the BC means you have but one life.

We struggle in the Swiss after starting reasonably; we do not lose many but we win small. No-one seems to be playing badly and morale is good however we are on table 42 entering the last round. But an 16.68 win slots us into 61st; no-one qualifies from a lower table.

“When does it start tomorrow?” captain Paul Gipson is asked.

“I don’t know”



“Can’t you look it up on your phone?”

“My phone is off...” He points up to the metre-plus high clock above our heads ticking down the final three minutes. “It’s still game-time and we can’t afford a 2 VP fine”.

The two-lives feature means that, for example, when the CC and BC play the round-of-32, the 16 losers enter the BC – who play a second round-of-32. R32A is 32 boards for both events but thereafter BC matches are shorter to cope with the second edition of each round. Monday’s BC is a test of stamina with matches of 32, 20 and 20 boards. Thereafter it settles down to two 32-board matches each day while the CC plays 64s.

The Problems

1. None Vul. Dealer West

♠ K1098 ♥ A5432 ♦ A2 ♣ Q3		♠ 6543 ♥ Q107 ♦ 108643 ♣ 2	
♠ QJ7 ♥ 8 ♦ KQJ975 ♣ 864		♠ A2 ♥ KJ96 ♦ — ♣ AKJ10975	
West	North	East	South
3♦	Double	5♦	?



7♣ was obvious. This was R16B when missing the grand slam would be costly or, looking at it the other way, likely to be duplicated if it went down. West led a top diamond and when he showed up with three clubs, the deal began to look like a sure-tricks problem. Unless West held a low singleton spade – consistent with his opening of course – there would be no difficulty.

East didn’t pitch any excess spade length on clubs and the play to isolate the spade guard worked very quickly. Had East held two spades,

there would have been a show-up squeeze running the clubs; if three a simple squeeze; if four the count established for a heart finesse.

At the other table East raised to six diamonds, South bid seven clubs and was again allowed to play: no swing.

2. North-South Vul. Dealer North

♠ — ♥ A964 ♦ QJ93 ♣ 108532		♠ AK83 ♥ KQ103 ♦ 10 ♣ AKJ9	♠ 954 ♥ 875 ♦ AK5 ♣ Q764
			
		♠ QJ10762 ♥ J2 ♦ 87642 ♣ —	

	West	North	East	South
	<i>Tommasini</i>	<i>Ash</i>	<i>Igoe</i>	<i>Chambers</i>
	—	1♣*	1♦	1♥*
	5♦	5♠	Pass	?
1♣	Clubs or balanced 12-14/18-19			
1♥	4+ Spades, not 4 hearts (unless 5+♠ and 4+♥ at least invitational)			

I held the South cards and pondered raising to slam. But I started to worry that North had an unstable black hand (though where were the hearts?) and there might be too much work to do. Perhaps partner was pure in the blacks, ♠AKxx ♥xxx ♦— ♣AKQxxx or even 3-3-0-7. He might be missing both the heart ace and the spade king with solid clubs. And, well, things might just not be as they appear. If partner had a really good hand, there was nothing to stop him bidding a slam. I was fretting.

Colour me yellow, I passed.

East led the diamond ace and when North followed I almost fell off my chair. There is Damon Runyan aphorism that one day someone will bet you that the jack of spades will jump out of a new deck of cards and squirt cider in your ear; “Now son, you do not take this bet, for as sure as you stand there, you are going to wind up with an earful of cider”.

Our teammates were curiously silent East-West and North-South started similarly with one club but then two hearts showing long spades, modest hand. They seemed on solid ground; North's two no-trump enquiry revealed club shortage opposite, but when he rebid four clubs he was left to play there; down five, +500 and +650 was +15 IMPs, we won the match by 14. The result from the other table meant even six spades down one would score 9 IMPs

Interlude: from the open Swiss teams on Thursday.

3. East-West Vul. Dealer South

♠ AQ ♥ AQ102 ♦ KJ94 ♣ Q54	<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="width: 100%; height: 100%; background-color: #008000; color: white; display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> N E S W </div> </div>	♠ 8732 ♥ 974 ♦ Q ♣ KJ1096	♠ J105 ♥ J53 ♦ A87652 ♣ 3
	♠ K964 ♥ K86 ♦ 103 ♣ A872		

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	Pass
1♦*	Pass	3♦*	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

- 1♦ Three cards only if 4=4=3=2
- 3♦ Pre-emptive

North led the club jack (promising the ten, denying the queen, may have ace or king), three, ace, four. What next?

Partner really needs to have good clubs to beat this and returning the suit is obvious – but which card? The deuce is standard from a remaining 872 but if declarer started with Q94 the suit will be blocked. If you want to cater for this South's next card must be the eight- or seven-spot. Both will induce partner to think you had two cards left, 72, 87 or 82. I selected the seven and, as you can see, no harm was done.

I reasoned that if declarer did play the nine, after winning the ten, North would think that declarer remained with Q8 and now had a trick by force. Not cashing might cost a tempo but that was unlikely to cost the contract at that stage. The same inferences are not available if the eight-spot is returned because North might play partner for 87 and switch (declarer doesn't know to pin the seven even with ♣Q964).

I explained this and partner said something along the lines of "why do you make the game so difficult?". No swing.

Back to the knockout teams.

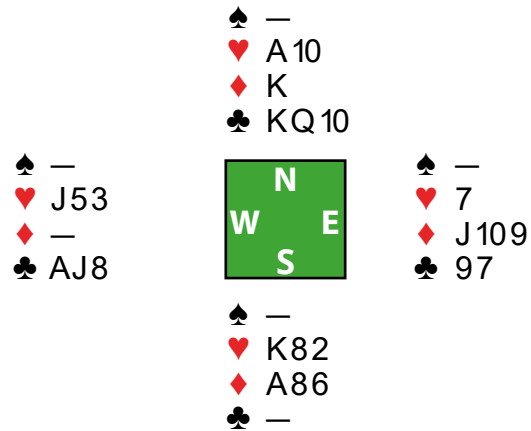
4. North-South Vul. Dealer South.

♠ Q105 ♥ J543 ♦ – ♣ AJ8432	<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="width: 100%; height: 100%; background-color: #008000; color: white; display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> N E S W </div> </div>	♠ 87 ♥ A106 ♦ KQ72 ♣ KQ106	♠ J93 ♥ 97 ♦ J1095 ♣ 975
	♠ AK64 ♥ KQ82 ♦ A8643 ♣ –		

6♦ after relays reveal your 4-4-5-0 shape. West leads a first-third-fifth heart four. You try low from dummy and capture the nine with the king. On your next lead of a low diamond, left-hand discards an encouraging club. What's your plan now?

Facing time-pressure or adhering to a 'simple life' philosophy you might finesse West for the heart jack then ruff two spades in dummy. East would be welcome to overruff the second but at the cost of his trump trick. But West would lead the four from both ♥754 and ♥7543 and hearts might be good from the top. Moreover, even if they are not, there are prospects when East has four spades. Two club ruffs must also be taken along the way. Is this worth more than the heart finesse through the player with 13 vacant spaces?

For the purposes of analysis, let us say it is. Declarer thought so too and began with spade ace-king and a ruff. But then, fatally, he took a club ruff and ruffed his last spade to leave,

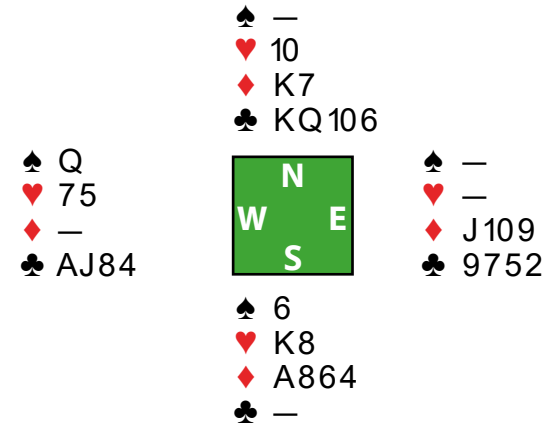


Now when he played ace and another heart East ruffed with his trump trick. He next led a club; South had to ruff but trumps were blocked and he could never enjoy the heart king.

Diamond king first? West discards on the third round of hearts and declarer must lose a heart and a trump. Passing the heart ten has to be done before any club ruffs – in effect, declarer must not force himself too soon so he can draw trumps and cash his side-winners if East ruffs. Note that East can never usefully discard a spade on the third heart for one ruff will promote South’s fourth card (he then ruffs his heart).

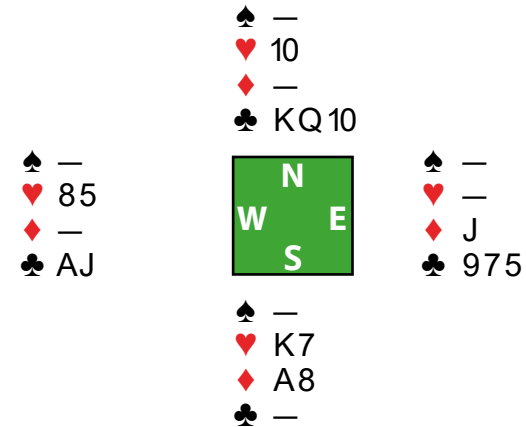
The best time to take the heart ace is as soon as the trump split is disclosed. That also discovers East’s ♥J9 doubleton when there may be different considerations. On the lie, which is typical for success, East discards a club and South wins, takes spade ruff, club ruff, spade ruff and declarer has easy play.

If East’s doubleton heart jack appears declarer must be careful. Because he has to mind the fourth round of spades he must not allow East to ruff a heart even with a trump winner. Thus after the heart ace drops the jack, declarer ruffs a spade reaching this position, lead in North:



Again, if declarer ruffs a club then ruffs his last spade, diamonds are blocked. East will overruff dummy and force with a club. In the position above, the diamond king is an essential play. Then club ruff, spade ruff, declarer is in control: if East discards declarer can force with hearts.

As posed declarer holds the heart eight and so, having dropped East’s J-9, he can afford to squash dummy’s ten. East doesn’t know the location of the eight and seven of hearts so will probably overruff the spade and return a club forcing South to ruff, hoping to exploit a blockage in the heart suit (I’ve swapped the eight and seven):



South ruffs with the diamond eight, West discards the club jack but when South draws the last trump West is squeezed...

Three no-trumps at the other table, making 11, a 13 IMP loss. This was from the first 16 of R32A but fortunately we had enough elsewhere to take a 31 IMP lead into half-time.

5. Both Vul. Dealer East.

♠ Q95 ♥ K10753 ♦ K72 ♣ A8	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 60px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ 6 ♥ J9842 ♦ J1054 ♣ J42
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 60px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	
	♠ K87 ♥ AQ6 ♦ A986 ♣ Q76	

South opened a 14-16 no-trump, North transferred to spades, bid clubs and, after opener's mild encouragement of 3♠ then 4♦ over 4♣, drove to 6♠.

West leads the heart seven (fourth from honours, second-highest without), diamond from dummy, jack from East, queen: who has the key black honours?

Declarer allowed his surprise at the thinness of dummy to show but quickly moved on to spade king and low to the ten. After the ace of spades drew trumps he ran the club ten; 12 tricks, -1430 for us and a 13 IMP loss.

That was from R8A; we lost by 8 IMPs to Palma, a team named after Palma de Mallorca where they'd all been on a training camp. At least that's what I thought they said.

The Swedish declarer apologised for their "sick slam" (something may have been lost in translation). I was West and when South led spade king, I followed with the spade five but that lifted the next in the suit, the nine, half a card. I tucked it back in and played it next. South said I did that just a bit anxiously, that's why he finessed in trumps. "What about clubs" I asked, he just shrugged.

All through the event the behaviour at the table was excellent, both socially and ethically. There was a general ambience of cordiality, as mentioned before, play was prompt and timings respected which I think carried over. The directing team didn't seem to have much to do and there were no stories on the grapevine as there sometimes are.

6. None Vul. Dealer East.

♠ AJ10974 ♥ 73 ♦ J1053 ♣ 6	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 60px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ Q2 ♥ KJ10986 ♦ A ♣ J942
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 60px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	
	♠ K865 ♥ A5 ♦ 98762 ♣ 105	

West	North	East	South
-	-	1♥	Pass
2♠*	3♣	3♠	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

2♠ Weak jump response, six cards, 5-8 HCP

West ruffed the second club and led a heart to the eight. Without a great deal of time I had decided to duck and did so when partner played the standard-count deuce. Declarer took stock and eventually decided upon diamond ace, club ruff, diamond ruff, last club ruffed, second diamond ruff. Dummy is reduced to five hearts – what are your last five cards?

I hope you managed to 'uselessly' ruff a club (and be overruffed). I didn't and reached this position, with the lead in East.

♠ AJ10 ♥ 3 ♦ J ♣ -	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 60px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ - ♥ KJ1096 ♦ - ♣ -
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 60px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	
	♠ K865 ♥ A ♦ - ♣ -	

It was humiliating: I won the defence's second trick with the ace of hearts and led a spade. West won the ten, exited a diamond which I had to ruff and lead a second spade for him to finesse; 10 tricks, -420 and a 7 IMP loss.

In the diagrammed position I should have 'discarded' a trump and reduced to ♠K86 ♥A ♦9 ♣—, retaining a diamond 'loser'. Then, after taking the heart ace, I can give North a diamond ruff and will always come to a fourth defensive trick by way of the spade king.

I had the underruffing play dimly forming but I didn't see the position exactly and was loathe to tip off what I hoped was the bad trump break as declarer went busily about his cross-ruff. I'll take a timeout next time.

Speaking of which there have already been murmurs to play Örebro next year. It is a fine event and I will certainly be going back.

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with Christophe Grosset

see Page 4

Dealer North. E/W Vul.

♠ A87653 ♥ AK6 ♦ 7 ♣ K97	♠ 92 ♥ 103 ♦ AK842 ♣ AQ103 <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto; text-align: center;"> N W E S </div>	♠ KJ4 ♥ Q42 ♦ Q1096 ♣ 542 ♠ Q10 ♥ J9875 ♦ J53 ♣ J86	
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West	North	East	South
–	1♦	Pass	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♠	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

North leads the ace of diamonds (South playing the 3, giving standard count) and switches to the 10 of hearts, how do you play ?

With North having opened the bidding, they are most likely to have the ace of clubs. The only way to make this contract then is to get rid of a club loser by either forcing North to play clubs, give you a ruff and discard or to establish a diamond trick in dummy.

In order to achieve this, declarer must find the spades 2-2 so as to preserve a trump in dummy and thus keep the ruff and discard menace alive. So the first step is to play the spades from the top and not to finesse the queen.

Once this works, cash two more rounds of hearts, finishing in dummy, and play the queen of diamonds from dummy and when South furnishes a small card, discard a club. You are now home as:

If North plays a club you will make your king

If he plays a heart you ruff in dummy and discard a club loser from your hand.

If he plays a diamond, this will establish a diamond trick in dummy on which you will pitch one of your club losers.

The Invisible Man

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

‘AND PARTNER!’ Like a rusty machine forced to turn over for the first time in years, the Tin Man’s squealing howl filled the large playing room in the Emerald City Bridge Centre.

He ignored the stares from other tables. This was too much: the ultimate insult in a day of indignities!

There had been no omen, no ‘red-sky-in-the-morning’ moment to tip the Tin Man off.

It was a Saturday, and earlier that day, he had taken the train to Emerald City in the company of Auntie Em, Uncle Henry and Professor Marvel to play in the semi-final of the National Pairs. The top third of the field would qualify for the final, to be held on Sunday, with a consolation Swiss pairs for the others.

The Tin Man had high hopes for the weekend. Over this last year, he and Dorothy had been playing in a number of national events in pursuit of the blue points that would take him to the rank of National Master. It had been the shock of finding that Miss Gulch had crossed the threshold to this rank that had spurred him into action. He could not bear the thought that she might be seen as the pre-eminent player in Munchkinland.

Now he was closing in. If his enemy faltered, then a good finish in the semi-final should gain him the points he needed to overhaul her total. He sat back in his chair in the railway carriage and dreamed. If they could get into the top few places in the final, then the blue point allocations were huge. That would really put some clear blue water between him and Almira Gulch. He looked up at the cloudless blue sky. Yes, it was an omen. Blue was what this weekend was about.

Auntie Em sitting across from him jumped. That looked like a smile crossing his face, a most unusual event.

It was a pleasant enough journey. The Professor could be quite entertaining, as long as he kept his quackery to himself, and didn’t talk about bidding. He was playing with Almira Gulch who, like Dorothy, had travelled on ahead to the Emerald City.

The Tin Man was pleased he had travelled this way. The Lion had

offered to drive him. He and the Scarecrow had failed to qualify, but with Glinda playing in the closing stages of a national event for the first time ever, he had felt she needed some moral support, and had suggested driving her and her partner, the Wicked Witch of the West. He had offered a place in the car to the Tin Man, not for his own pleasure, but because he thought it would be rude not to, and was relieved when the Tin Man declined. For his part, the Tin Man couldn’t bear the thought of several hours watching the Lion reliving his adolescence with Glinda. The Lion’s subsequent offer to give a lift to each of the others had been politely declined when they learnt they would be in the company of the Wicked Witch.

Dorothy had taken advantage of the event to arrange a number of business meetings in the city on the Thursday and Friday, rounded off by an enjoyable meal with Erica, a fellow bridge player whom she had met through her work. Erica was deeply involved with the coaching of the Ozian Junior Team and had been of great help in finding a date for Dorothy’s Ozian Cup encounter against some of her protégés earlier in the season. She had invited a few of them along, including some that Dorothy recognised from that match.

Dorothy was sitting by herself enjoying a coffee when the Tin Man arrived. Time spent with the Tin Man was never relaxing, and she had savoured the quiet and calm of these previous twenty minutes.

‘Have you checked which section we’re playing in?’ Tension was clearly building in the Tin Man. Dorothy sighed in the realisation that her few moments of peace were over.

They went over to check the list, queuing behind two vaguely familiar looking men in their early forties. Dorothy thought that she might have seen their faces in bridge magazines.

The one on the left was in a grumpy mood. ‘You would think they would have found a better way of doing this than having one copy of the list. Typical lazy organisation!’

The one on the right peered over the shoulder of the man in front of him. ‘So much for balancing the draw! Section A has almost all the

good players.’

‘Yes,’ grunted his companion, ‘Section B has a couple of players, a few juniors and the rest is a real ‘who’s he?’ of Ozian bridge.’

They moved off and Dorothy and the Tin Man were able to look at the lists. ‘Where are we?’ The Tin Man was furiously looking through sections A and B. He found their names at table twelve of section B.

The Tin Man’s undeniable pleasure at being in the weaker section was outweighed by the affront to his dignity. ‘Who’s he?’ These know-it-all nobodies! He would show them.

His dignity affronted, his mind churning, he went to the table distinctly unsettled. Some uncharacteristic overbids in the early rounds proved costly, but slowly he managed to calm himself and they started to claw their way back to average.

Near the end of the first of the two 24 board sessions they came across Erica, playing with Bill, one of the players in the Ozian Girls Team.

‘Nice to see pairs coming from Munchkinland,’ said Erica. ‘Although we have been seeing quite a lot of your Almira Gulch of late.’

The Tin Man stiffened. What did this mean?

Erica went on, ‘She did well in the Quadling Blue Point Congress last weekend. She came third in the teams with three professionals.’

Dorothy retained a calm expression. The Tin Man seethed inside. How dare that woman do this to him? To win points by one’s own ability was acceptable, but to do so by effectively buying them was something else altogether! He would have to find out what she had won. This threw out all his calculations!

With all vulnerable, the Tin Man picked up a decent hand:

♠ 42
♥ QJ8
♦ AJ
♣ KJ10875

An off-centre weak no-trump flickered across his mind before discipline asserted itself and he opened One Club.

Bill, (what a name for a girl, he reflected) doubled, Dorothy passed and Erica bid One Heart. The Tin Man passed. Bill seemed to be slightly puzzled by this mundane auction. After a hesitation she bid Two Clubs, to which Erica responded Two Hearts. This seemed to cause Bill even greater difficulties. Emerging from thought, she jumped to Six Hearts.

The auction had been:

West	North	East	South
<i>Tin Man</i>	<i>Bill</i>	<i>Dorothy</i>	<i>Erica</i>
1♣	Double	Pass	1♥
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♥
Pass	6♥	All Pass	

What to lead? There seemed to be a lot of merit in the ♦A, getting a trick in the bank and a look at dummy. This was the full hand:

Dealer West. All Vul

	♠ AKQ1075	
	♥ AK103	
	♦ K9	
	♣ A	
♠ 42		♠ 963
♥ QJ8		♥ 742
♦ AJ		♦ Q86532
♣ KJ10875		♣ Q
	♠ J8	
	♥ 965	
	♦ 1074	
	♣ 96432	

Erica looked at dummy without any sign of concern, thanked her partner, and won the diamond continuation with dummy’s king. She called for a low spade, successfully finessing by putting in the ♠8, and then played a heart towards dummy. When the Tin Man put in the jack she won with the king. Back she came to hand with the ♠J to play a second trump. With the suit three – three and the finesse working she quickly wrapped up twelve tricks.

‘My apologies,’ she said to her opponents.

‘Double heart finesse, hearts splitting, spade finesse and the spades breaking. What a contract!’ the Tin Man exclaimed.

‘I didn’t know what to do,’ said Bill. ‘I thought that even four hearts to the queen would give it good play.’

‘Yes, a difficult one. It will be interesting to talk about this with the squad. You caught me with a very awkward hand.’

‘Looking at my cards it’s hard to imagine that you are going to need to lead up to my hand three times.’

‘Three times? Twice, surely,’ the Tin Man corrected her.

‘Twice after the diamond lead,’ Bill conceded, oblivious of Erica’s attempts to hush her. ‘Without that, declarer is going to be stuck in dummy unable to lead towards the king.’

‘Perfectly normal lead, of course,’ said Erica, trying to limit the damage.

The Tin Man went into the break in a foul mood, even by his standards. The scoresheets did not help. Miss Gulch and Professor Marvel were on 55%, and comfortably inside the top third, while he and Dorothy were on 53% and just on the right side of qualification.

The second session was no more promising than the first. Twice declarer tried to make a contract by playing for the Tin Man to have mis-defended. He was not used to this insulting behaviour, and felt slighted, even if it resulted in two good scores for him and Dorothy. Coming into the last set of two boards the Tin Man reckoned that they were likely to be on about 52%. A good finish and he would feel confident; a bad finish and he would feel despondent. It was at this point that the incident occurred.

They were joined at the table by two young men whom the Tin Man recognised as having been in the team of juniors that had knocked his team out of the Ozian Cup. Dorothy realised they had been part of Erica’s restaurant party on the previous evening.

They sauntered to the table with pleasant smiles on their faces.

‘Ah,’ said the taller one. ‘So we are finishing with Dorothy and partner.’

‘AND PARTNER!’ The Tin Man’s voice was heard across the room. ‘The best player in Munchkinland for at least thirty years and I have reached the heights of ‘and partner!’ To make matters worse, he was sure he detected a smirk on the face of the shorter one. Clearly, being the best player in Munchkinland did not impress in the big city.

‘I’m sorry,’ said the taller one. ‘We got to know Dorothy a bit last night, but I’m afraid I can’t remember your name.’

‘Is it the Thin Man?’ asked the shorter, studying his opponent and searching his brain.

‘The Heartless Man?’ asked the taller without any obvious interest in being right.

‘Oh let’s just go with ‘and partner’, shall we?’ the Tin Man steamed.

‘Now, now, Tin Man’ said Dorothy. ‘We played these lads in the Ozian Cup. I don’t suppose you can remember their names either.’

‘The Tin Man gave an exaggerated shrug. ‘Today, this year’s juniors; next year, yesterday’s juniors.’

The young men laughed. ‘Well there we are, all as bad as each other’ said the taller one. ‘I’m Trevor Small and this is Ben Cook. Pleased to meet you.’

With the Tin Man sitting South, this was the first board of the set:

Dealer West. None Vul.

♠ A984 ♥ 76 ♦ A6 ♣ KQ764	♠ Q1052 ♥ KQJ942 ♦ 82 ♣ 2		♠ 3 ♥ A83 ♦ KJ97543 ♣ A10
	♠ KJ76 ♥ 105 ♦ Q10 ♣ J9853		

The confident auction was over in less than half a minute despite there being five rounds of bidding.

West	North	East	South
<i>Ben</i>	<i>Dorothy</i>	<i>Trevor</i>	<i>Tin Man</i>
1NT	2♥	3♣	Pass
3♦	Pass	3♥	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♣	Pass
4♠	Pass	4NT	Pass
5♥	Pass	6♦	All Pass

Ben leant over and talked them through the sequence. ‘1NT was fifteen to seventeen. Three Clubs was a transfer to diamonds. Three Hearts was initially looking for a stop but may have been a cue-bid. Four Clubs and Four Spades were both cues. 4NT was Roman Keycard Blackwood, and I showed two without.’

Dorothy decided to lead the ♣2, obvious to all as a singleton. Continuing at a fast pace, Ben won the ♣A, crossed to the ♦A and, without much thought at this late time of the day, played a second trump to the jack and South's queen.

The Tin Man switched to the ♥10, won by dummy's ace. Declarer rattled off three more rounds of trumps to reach this position:

	♠ Q 10 5 2	
	♥ K Q	
	♦ —	
	♣ —	
♠ A 9	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ 3
♥ —		♥ 8 3
♦ —		♦ 5 4
♣ K Q 7 6		♣ 10
	♠ K J	
	♥ —	
	♦ —	
	♣ J 9 8 5	

On the lead of a further trump from dummy, the Tin Man had to abandon spades in order to hold all his clubs. Declarer pitched a club and Dorothy, a spade. Now came two rounds of clubs. With the lead in the West hand, they were down to:

	♠ Q 10	
	♥ K	
	♦ —	
	♣ —	
♠ A 9	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ 3
♥ —		♥ 8
♦ —		♦ 4
♣ 7		♣ —
	♠ K	
	♥ —	
	♦ —	
	♣ 9 8	

Another round of clubs finished Dorothy off. Discarding her ♥K would set up dummy's eight, while a spade would promote declarer's ♠9. Ben spared her from playing or conceding by claiming.

'Nice non-simultaneous squeeze,' nodded Trevor. 'More fun than just dropping the queen of diamonds and claiming.'

'The finesse seemed decent odds, and there would always be lots of squeeze chances if it lost.' Ben looked happy with life.

'Of course,' mused Trevor, 'If South switches to a low heart then I think they can always beat it. That ten of hearts is critical. Keeping it means they both have a control in each of the majors'

'True,' said Ben. 'Or play back the jack of clubs. That ruins my entries. Maybe my squeeze chances weren't so great after all.'

'Actually, even a spade would be good enough,' Trevor continued. 'I think you took a poor line. It's much better to take a spade ruff, and then another when in with the ♦A. Now it's cold if the trumps split, and if North has the protected trump queen, you will know she has no black cards left, and you have an easy squeeze in clubs and spades against South.'

The Tin Man felt his blood pressure building. While these two carried on with their inane double dummy chatter, he was on the point of being eliminated from the event! When would they realise that nobody wants to have their hands raked over with 20 - 20 hindsight? And there he was with a poor score, despite declarer seriously misplaying the hand, he mused angrily to himself, conveniently ignoring his own deficiencies in defence.

'In fact,' said Trevor with a self-satisfied smirk, 'that ten of hearts was just about the only card in his hand that let you make!'

The Tin Man banged the last board down on the table, just missing Trevor's outstretched hand. He had taken a particular dislike to this young man. While failing to cause injury, the Tin Man's action did succeed in curtailing the analysis.

All he wanted was one last chance to control his own destiny!

Dealer North. N/S Vul.

♠ AKQ974 ♥ Q83 ♦ A ♣ J87	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ — ♥ 102 ♦ Q98543 ♣ AKQ94
♠ J1082 ♥ J9 ♦ 1076 ♣ 10532	♠ 653 ♥ AK7654 ♦ KJ2 ♣ 6	

Dorothy opened the North cards One Spade and East overcalled Two Notrump showing a shapely hand with the minors. The Tin Man bid a confident Three Hearts. West's 'only for juniors' Four Clubs improved Dorothy's hand, as her partner was now likely to be short in that suit. She cue – bid Four Diamonds, after which the Tin Man checked for key cards and bid the heart slam, pleased to have dummy under his control.

After two passes, East doubled. The Tin Man's heart sank. Clearly this was a Lightner double, looking for an unusual lead. On that auction it could be nothing else. He must have a spade void. These young terrors were sure to find the lead and Six Hearts would go down. 6NT was hopeless. But what about Six Spades? Maybe.

He bid Six Spades and that ended the auction.

West	North	East	South
<i>Ben</i>	<i>Dorothy</i>	<i>Trevor</i>	<i>Tin Man</i>
–	1♠	2NT	3♥
4♣	4♦	Pass	4NT
Pass	5♠	Pass	6♥
Pass	Pass	Double	6♠
All Pass			

Trevor, in the East seat, led the ♣A and followed it with a diamond. Dorothy considered the hand. The spade situation was clear after that double: she had to cross twice to finesse against West's J-10-8-2. She ruffed a club in the dummy and led a spade to the ♠10, ♠Q and a diamond discard,

she crossed to the ♥A and repeated the trump play, picking up the suit. Dorothy was soon filling the score into the bridgemate. 'We were lost as soon as they bid the slam,' observed Trevor. 'The double made no difference since without it you don't lead a spade and they make Six Hearts.' 'I guess we'll never know,' his partner replied.

Within a few minutes play was complete around the room and the results were being displayed on the large screen. Dorothy and the Tin Man had grabbed the last qualifying spot on the final board. Even better, Miss Gulch and Professor Marvel had collapsed into the lower reaches. The Lion could be seen consoling Glinda, while the Wicked Witch of the West had stormed out of the building in a fury. Aunty Em and Uncle Henry had also failed to make the cut leaving Dorothy and partner as the only representatives of the Over the Rainbow Bridge Club in the event.

'We must go and celebrate!' the Tin Man addressed his club mates. 'I know an excellent restaurant that I always like to visit when I'm in the area. Good portions, very good value. You'll vouch for it, won't you Henry.'

Dorothy's uncle started to look hopeful. 'I don't see what we have to celebrate, and I don't see that it's worth taking years off my husband's life,' glowered Aunty Em. 'His stomach wasn't right for days after you took him to the Emerald City Swiss Teams last year.' She steered her husband and niece away to a more suitable venue.

The Tin Man turned next to Professor Marvel, who had been dropped by Almira Gulch as usual. 'How about you?' he asked. 'After all, we are staying at the same guest house.'

'Do they have a good vegetarian range?' the Professor enquired.

'I don't know. It's never been an issue. I'm sure it will be fine.' The Tin Man looked surprised at the question, but was determined to entice the Professor along with him for the evening. He needed an audience.

The Tin Man waved a cheery good bye to the rest of the party. 'See you all in the morning!' His recollection of the day's events had mysteriously morphed from the malign to the magnificent. 'Mmm. Red sky at night, I see. A good omen for tomorrow!'

Enterprising Bridge Tales: The Next Generation

Marc Smith

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 21314.23. We are in the Octans system, where the Universal Championships are scheduled to begin in just a few days. We have spent the past two weeks with the representatives of Saturn South, the only inhabited planet orbiting the orange giant, Delta Octanis, which was known to early astronomers of Earth as the Pole Star of Saturn. Together we have been assessing mining prospects on the uninhabited planets in this system and the neighboring Beta Octanis. Negotiations between the South Saturnians and the Federation to establish a joint venture to exploit these massive space rocks are now almost complete.

With the championships just around the corner, Captain Pillar has noticed an uncharacteristic level of distraction in the past few days, both amongst his own crew and the South Saturnians. More than 40 pairs from the starship crew have entered at least one event during the two weeks of the championships. Many are scheduled to play in both the two main events, the Universal Bowl and the Galactic Pairs. Others are entering the three-day UMP Pairs or the championship’s opening event, the Mixed Pairs.

With the formal business of the visit almost done, the Saturnians have organized an UMP Pairs event for this evening, and many of the starship’s pairs will be participating. The crew have dubbed the friendly species that live on this barren planet “The Little Men”. Almost entirely hairless with disproportionately large eyes, the mole-like creatures inhabit huge underground cities deep beneath the desert terrain. When they emerge onto the surface, though, they stand upright on their hind legs, like four-foot tall meercats.

The venue for this evening’s event is a huge tent-like structure erected on the planet’s surface. When the starship’s crew beam down in groups of four or six, it is still uncomfortably warm. The enormous orange sun

has almost completed its journey across the claret sky, and as it dips towards the distant horizon the ghostly outlines of two pale moons can already be seen.

When the players take their assigned seats for the first round of the evening, Captain Pillar and Counsellor Roma find themselves sitting with the leader of the Saturnians, Cardinal Steven Dobinson, and his partner, Peter Floyd. Casual conversation whilst they await the arrival of the boards uncovers that Dobinson and Floyd are one half of the Saturnian team that represents their best hope for a strong showing in the Universal Bowl, an event in which they have previously twice reached the latter stages. Play is soon underway and a spirited first auction sees the Counselor on lead on this layout:

Dealer West. N/S Vul.

	♠ AJ95		
	♥ 9		
	♦ J73		
	♣ AQ1083		
♠ 83		♠ 6	
♥ AJ10852		♥ KQ3	
♦ 10		♦ AQ8652	
♣ 7642	♣	KJ5	
	♠ KQ10742		
	♥ 764		
	♦ K94		
	♣ 9		
West	North	East	South
Roma	Floyd	Pillar	Dobinson
2♥	Double	4♥	4♠
All Pass			

Diane Roma leads ♦10. The Captain wins with the ace and Cardinal Dobinson follows smoothly with the ♦K. The Captain reasons that his

partner is almost certainly 2-6-3-2, as she would probably have led a singleton club if she was 3-6-3-1. Worried that he may get endplayed in clubs, Pillar studiously cashes the ♥K and then exits with his trump.

The Captain is somewhat confused when declarer wins in dummy, then cashes the ♣A and ruffs a club. A second round of trumps returns the lead to dummy, and another club ruff brings down the Captain's king. It is now straightforward for Dobson to ruff a heart to dummy, discard his two diamond losers on the club winners, and crossruff the remainder.

"Just the ten?" asks Floyd, who has not been following the play closely.

"Eleven, I think," corrects Dobinson. "I just lost a trick in each red suit."

"A dull flat board to start with then," continues Floyd.

"Perhaps," agrees the Cardinal, stealing a glance at Roma, who impassively removes her cards for the second deal of the round.

Later in the evening, Lieutenant Daniel Prussia and Commander Dieter, one third of the combined Federation/Romulan team who are the bookies' favorites to win the Universal Bowl, come head-to-head with the other half of the strongest Saturnian team, Kit Flossey and Ed Munderfeld. Flossey, who has an enormous pair of thick-rimmed spectacles balanced precariously on his nose, is a renowned bidding theorist in this part of the universe. He helped to develop, and has written numerous books about, the Saturnian Standard system that is played almost universally throughout this sector.

♠ 83	♠ AJ95	♠ 6
♥ AJ10852	♥ 9	♥ KQ3
♦ 10	♦ J73	♦ AQ8652
♣ 7642	♣ AQ1083	♣ KJ5
	♠ KQ10742	
	♥ 764	
	♦ K94	
	♣ 9	

Dealer South. All Vul.

♠ 10863	♠ KQ4	♠ J752
♥ K7	♥ Q95	♥ 42
♦ J2	♦ AQ75	♦ 109643
♣ Q9654	♣ 873	♣ K2
	♠ A9	
	♥ AJ10853	
	♦ K8	
	♣ AJ10	

West	North	East	South
<i>Daniel</i>	<i>Munderfeld</i>	<i>Dieter</i>	<i>Flossey</i>
-	-	-	1♥
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♦
Pass	4♥	Pass	4NT
Pass	5♥	Pass	5♦
Pass	5♠	Pass	6♥
All Pass			

Two Clubs is an artificial game force, the Two Diamonds rebid is artificial showing extra values, and Munderfeld's jump to game suggests a minimum with three-card heart support. Blackwood then reveals that North holds one of the missing key cards, along with the trump queen and the king of spades. The auction suggests an attacking lead may be needed, so Daniel opens the ♣5.

Declarer takes East's king with the ♣A. Loathe to bank everything on the trump finesse, Flossey cashes three rounds of spades, discarding one of the club losers from his hand. He then repeats the process in diamonds, but this time West ruffs the third round with the ♥7. Daniel now continues with a fourth round of spades, giving declarer a useless ruff-and-discard.

Had Flossey viewed Daniel as a young kid who knew little about the game, he might now have been faced with a guess in trumps, but the young lieutenant's reputation has preceded him across the universe. It

is, therefore, not difficult for the Saturnian to realize that Daniel would have exited safely with a club, locking declarer in his hand, if the trump finesse was working. The only explanation for the spade exit is to provide declarer with an entry to dummy so that he can take a losing finesse.

Declarer leads a trump to his ace and claims when Daniel's king comes tumbling down.

"Sorry," says Flossey, addressing both his partner and the opponents. "I should really have cashed the ace of trumps once three rounds of spades stood up."

"No harm, no fowl," observes Munderford, entering the score neatly onto his scorecard.

The round is called and the players stand, ready to move on.

"Good luck," comments Kit Flossey, "but I hope we don't see you again too soon."

"At least, not before the final of the Universal Bowl," adds Munderford.

"Nice people," says Daniel to Dieter as they move along to their next table.

"I'm not sure that would have been the Captain's reaction to having his king dropped," muses Dieter.



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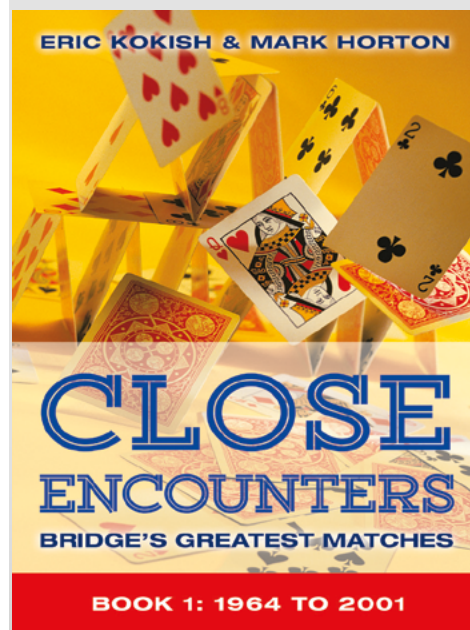
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Answers to “Defend With Julian Pottage”

1

♠ 2 ♥ K10942 ♦ A9 ♣ 108653	♠ 106 ♥ Q8 ♦ QJ732 ♣ K972 <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ K8 ♥ A763 ♦ 10654 ♣ QJ4 ♠ AQJ97543 ♥ J5 ♦ K8 ♣ A
-------------------------------------	--	---

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
-	-	-	1♠
Pass	1NT	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

You lead the ten of hearts. Partner wins with the ace and returns the three, covered by the jack. You win with the king, switching to a club headed by the jack and ace. Now declarer leads the king of diamonds. What is your plan?

The play in the heart suit tells you that the opponents each started with a doubleton. You have made two tricks already and are in an easy position to take a third with the ace of diamonds. The setting trick will need to come from the trump suit or possibly via a club ruff if partner started with a singleton.

Whatever the club position, declarer has no losers to discard – so why play diamonds before trumps? If a finesse position exists in trumps and partner did not start with three clubs, it would have been normal to win the club switch with the king.

The natural conclusion is that a finesse position does exist in trumps and that the ace of clubs was singleton. This being the case, it is crucial to hold up the ace of diamonds so that the queen of diamonds does not serve as an entry to dummy. You then exit with a club after winning the second round, hoping declarer has to ruff.

2

♠ J1063 ♥ – ♦ 109764 ♣ J975	♠ K984 ♥ Q6 ♦ J2 ♣ AKQ42 <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ 52 ♥ A1097532 ♦ Q53 ♣ 8 ♠ AQ7 ♥ KJ84 ♦ AK8 ♣ 1063
--------------------------------------	---	--

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
-	-	3♥	3NT
Pass	6NT	All Pass	

You lead the ten of diamonds, covered by the jack, queen and ace. Declarer leads a low heart to the queen and ace (low diamond from you). Partner returns the five of diamonds, won by the ace. Declarer cashes two top clubs (low heart from partner on the second) and then the king followed by the jack of hearts. What is your discard plan?

You must find two (more) discards. One, a diamond is painless. What can the other be?

The clubs on view in dummy tell you that a club discard will cost two tricks, enabling the club suit to provide five tricks rather than three. This cannot be right.

Partner might have kept back the eight of diamonds, in which case you can spare your last diamond. While this may be so, if declarer has the eight of diamonds, that card will be a further winner to squeeze you again. You would have to hope that partner had something useful in spades, the queen most probably.

Once you think about it, the safest suit to abandon is spades. Even if the spades then run for four tricks, surely dummy will win the fourth round, in which case there is no second squeeze – you can afford to discard the nine of diamonds on the last spade knowing that declarer cannot get to hand to cash the eight.

Bridge with Larry Cohen

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

Two-Over-One GF and Forcing 1NT

In its simplest terms, the “system” described as 2-over-1 game-forcing refers to the following 6 bids:

- 1 Diamond – 2 Clubs
- 1 Heart – 2 Clubs
- 1 Heart – 2 Diamonds
- 1 Spade – 2 Clubs
- 1 Spade – 2 Diamonds
- 1 Spade – 2 Hearts

When responder uses a game-forcing “2-over-1” bid he is informing opener that he, too, holds at least opening-bid values. Accordingly, the partnership may leisurely proceed to the optimum contract without fear of being dropped below game. Opener then should show his “shape,” without implying # of HCP.

As opener, what do you rebid?

You	Opponent	Partner	Opponent
1♥	Pass	2♣	Pass
?			

(All answers/reasons given at the end)

- | | | | |
|---|---|--|---|
| A
♠ 5 4
♥ K Q 10 8 7 4
♦ A J 3
♣ K 4 | B
♠ 3 2
♥ Q J 10 8 7
♦ A 4
♣ A Q 5 4 | C
♠ A K J 2
♥ A Q 8 7 6
♦ A 5 4
♣ 2 | D
♠ A Q 3
♥ K J 8 7 6
♦ 5
♣ K Q 10 2 |
| E
♠ Q J 2
♥ Q 9 7 6 4
♦ Q 9 2
♣ A Q | F
♠ A 2
♥ A K Q J 9 8
♦ K 7 6
♣ 5 2 | | |

Answers

- A) 2♥ Repeat the 6-card suit
- B) 3♣ Forcing, of course – until at least game is reached
- C) 2♠ Natural again – and just coincidental that you have extras
- D) 3♦ Splinter bid – no need to ever jumpshift naturally into a new suit
- E) 2NT Natural – also, not promising extras
- F) 3♥ An unnecessary jump should show a solid suit

Partner	Opponent	You	Opponent
1♥	Pass	2♦	Pass
2NT	Pass	?	

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

K

♠ K Q J
♥ 10 3
♦ A Q 10 8 4
♣ A Q 5

As responder, what do you bid?

Answers

- G) 3NT
- H) 3♥ Forcing, of course
- I) 3♦ No need to rush into Blackwood
- J) 4♥ Most players use this jump to show a minimum with all the pictures in the suits bid
- K) 4NT Quantitative

Two-Over-One GF and “forcing” 1NT

An important feature of the 2/1 GF system is to employ a 1NT bid (by an unpassed hand) in response to a major-suit opening bid as forcing (or

semi-forcing) for one round. Unlike Standard American, this bid is not limited to 6 to 9 HCP. Normally, it shows 6 to 12 HCP.

If 1NT is totally forcing, opener cannot pass! If he has nothing special to say, he must invent a bid, typically in a 3-card minor.

For example, after 1♠ 1NT, if opener holds the following hand:

♠AJ1082 ♥973 ♦A2 ♣KJ2, the appropriate rebid is 2♣. Opener cannot rebid his major since this would show a 6 card suit. He cannot make a 2♥ call because a rebid of the other major shows at least a 4-card suit. Lastly, he can't pass if 1NT is forcing, and he cannot bid 2♦, a 2-card suit. (Personally, I prefer to use 1NT as “semi-forcing”—so that opener can pass with a hand like the one above.)

Opener's Rebids after 1NT forcing:

2 minor – at least a 3-card suit (note: 2♣ can be exactly 4=5=2=2 if not strong enough to reverse)

2 new major – at least a 4-card suit (if reverse, shows extras)

2 same major – at least a 6-card suit, NF

2NT – more than a strong no-trump, balanced

3-level – same as over a normal 1NT response

Examples for opener after 1♠ – 1NT:

L	M	N	O
♠ A Q 9 8 2	♠ Q J 10 6 5 2	♠ A K Q 5 2	♠ A J 5 4 2
♥ A 5 2	♥ A 5 2	♥ A K Q 10 2	♥ A K 2
♦ Q J 2	♦ Q J 2	♦ 10 5 2	♦ K 2
♣ 7 3	♣ A	♣ —	♣ K 8 3

P

♠ A Q J 10 5 4 2
♥ A J 2
♦ K 2
♣ 3

Answers

- L) 2♦ But pass if playing 1NT as semi-forcing
- M) 2♠
- N) 3♥
- O) 2NT
- P) 4♠

Responder's actions after 1NT forcing:

New suit on 2-level : Non-forcing

Preference to opener's Major: Typically weak, usually 2-card support

Raise of opener's second suit: Invitational, natural

2NT: Invitational, Natural

Jump Raise of opener's major: 3-card limit raise

Examples for responder after 1♠-1NT-2♣:

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

Answers

- Q) 3♣ Invitational
- R) 3♠ This sequence is used to show a 3-card limit raise
- S) 2♠ This could be a very bad 3-card raise, but is usually a hand like this – a “false-preference”
- T) 2NT
- U) 2♥ Natural, non-forcing

General notes:

2-over-1 is game-forcing as long as responder is not a passed hand and there is no interference bidding (so, in competition, 2/1 is NOT game forcing). Some partnerships may choose to play that if responder rebids his original suit, the game-forcing feature is off.

The 2/1 Game Forcing system is really an outgrowth of Standard American and 5-card Majors and many of the methods and conventions employed are alike. There are many more details – this mini-lesson is intended only as a brief overview of the principles.

A 2-over-1 game force is not alertable.

The 1NT response is announced (by the opener) as “Forcing” or “Semi-forcing” – whatever the partnership has agreed.

If you want to take a closer look at this topic, you can listen to Larry's audio presentation to the American Bridge Teachers Association at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SAhYDNwFMBO> and/or get a copy of his 2/1 Game forcing workbook.



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The Big One

In a round-robin match in the trials, your strong 1♣ opening gives you an unusual opportunity.

Dealer West. Both Vul. As West, you hold:

♠ 6
♥ Q1092
♦ 1072
♣ AJ1073

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	1♣*	Pass
?			

1♣ 16+ artificial

If you were an unpassed hand, the range for the negative 1♦ response would be 0-8 points. As a passed hand the upper limit is dropped a point, so the range is 0-7. Your alternative to 1♦ with this shape would be to make a positive 2♣ response, which is natural (5+ card suit) and game-forcing.

Your choice?

If your 5-card suit were a major, it might be right to stretch a point to make a positive response. With a minor suit, there is no need to stretch. You don't have to worry about missing a game, since you can later show that you have a maximum negative if need be. For now, it is more important to limit your hand.

You bid 1♦. The bidding continues:

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

1♦ 0-7 points

If partner had doubled, it would have been a takeout double. His other calls would have been natural, and if not jumps they would have been non-forcing.

Double by you here would also be takeout. Other calls are natural and non-forcing.

Your bid?

You have an ideal takeout double. Maximum 1♦ response, and support for all other suits.

You have a singleton spade, and South didn't raise. Partner has a strong hand, but he could have any distribution. His primary suit just might be spades! As you pull the red card out of the bidding box, you can just feel the ground start to tremble. As we say in the earthquake state of California: This could be the big one.

The bidding continues:

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	1♣*	Pass
1♦*	1♠	Pass	Pass
Double	Pass	Pass	Redouble
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♣
?			

Partner's penalty pass make all future doubles by your side penalties.

Your call?

Of course you double. The opponents are clearly in trouble. They may have a better home in one of the red suits, but you should be able to handle that also. This is the big one!

You double. The bidding continues:

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	1♣*	Pass
1♦*	1♠	Pass	Pass
Double	Pass	Pass	Redouble
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♣
Double	Pass	Pass	2♥
?			

Your call?

They ran from your 5-card suit, but instead of running to your xxx suit they ran to your second best suit. Obviously you have an easy double. You can expect a big number here.

You double, concluding the auction:

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

Your lead? 3rd and 5th leads, upside-down carding after trick 1.

It is often said that when the auction screams for a trump lead you should lead a trump first and then look at your trump holding. This auction couldn't scream more for a trump lead. You have the clubs behind declarer, and partner has the spades behind dummy. Your side has the balance of strength by a lot. The opponents aren't going to have many tricks outside of the trump suit.

Leading a small trump is very safe. Partner has at least 16 HCP. North overcalled in spades. South's primary suit is clubs. It would be hard to imagine that partner doesn't have at least one trump honour.

You lead the ♥2.

♠ 6 ♥ Q1092 ♦ 1072 ♣ AJ1073	♠ KQ1075 ♥ 843 ♦ K63 ♣ 64
--------------------------------------	------------------------------------

Partner wins the ♥A, declarer playing the ♥5. Partner returns the ♥6, declarer plays the ♥J, and you win your ♥Q. What do you do now?

♠ 6 ♥ 109 ♦ 1072 ♣ AJ1073	♠ KQ1075 ♥ 8 ♦ K63 ♣ 64
------------------------------------	----------------------------------



It looks automatic to continue the trump-drawing. Before making a reflex play, you should take stock of the hand.

Declarer figures to have a singleton spade, since with a doubleton spade he probably wouldn't have run from 1♠ doubled. He is known to have 4 hearts. His sequence suggests that his distribution is 1-4-3-5.

Do you need to draw the third round of trumps right now? No, you don't. There is no danger of declarer getting a club ruff in dummy, since you will have a club entry before that happens and you can draw the third trump then. You don't have to worry about declarer scoring a small spade ruff in his hand, since you can overruff. Thus, leading a trump now isn't necessary. It might be correct, but there may be something more important to do.

How will the play go if you continue trumps? Declarer will win and lead a spade to dummy's king and partner's ace. Partner will lead his singleton club through. If it is a small club, that will be fine. But if partner's singleton club is an honour, he will still be on lead and will then have to lead away from one of his tenaces.

It could be important to lead a diamond. This will be valuable if partner has AQ of diamonds. Since partner might have ♦AQJx, you should shift to the ♦10. This will let partner cash 3 diamond tricks before putting his singleton club through. It will also give him a fourth diamond he can lead later on. After that, you and declarer can battle it out in the club suit. Partner is quite likely to have at least AQ of diamonds to have the values for his 1♣ opening.

You choose to lead the ♥10. Partner discards a spade. Declarer wins, and leads the ♠8 to dummy's king and partner's ace. Partner leads the ♣Q, and declarer plays small. Do you overtake?

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

N
W E
S

If you duck, partner will be end-played. There is a temptation to overtake and draw declarer's last trump, reducing the hand to no-trump. However, overtaking presents declarer with a trick he wouldn't get otherwise, and partner will still eventually get end-played. It is better to let partner win the trick.

You duck. Partner now leads the ♠9. Declarer discards a club. What do you do?

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

N
W E
S

It can't gain you anything to ruff this. That will only set up declarer's small trump, and then you would have to break a suit. It is better to force declarer to lead something from dummy. You will welcome anything he plays.

Discarding a club looks best. This keeps your distribution the same as declarer's. Your ♦10 may come into play.

You discard a club. Declarer wins the ♠10, and leads the ♠7. Partner covers with the ♠J. Declarer ruffs, and you overruff. How do you defend from here?

♠ —	♠ Q 5
♥ —	♥ —
♦ 10 7 2	♦ K 6 3
♣ A J 10 7	♣ 6

N
W E
S

Partner is known to have 4 diamonds and 2 spades, with both spades being smaller than dummy's spades. If he has ♦AQJx, you can cash your ♣A and lead the ♦10, taking the last 4 tricks for +1400. If you don't cash the ♣A, you lose it, since after taking four diamond winners partner will have to concede the last 2 tricks to dummy's spades.

What if declarer has the ♦J? Cashing the ♣A sets up declarer's king, but that is okay. You then shift to the ♦10. Partner ducks, allowing declarer to win the ♦J. Declarer can cash his ♣K, but partner discards his other losing spade and the defence gets the rest for +1100. It is worse if you don't cash the ♣A. Whether partner wins the ♦Q or ducks, he will eventually be forced to concede 2 spade tricks to dummy after winning his diamonds, so you will get only 800. It is clear to cash the ♣A and shift to the ♦10.

You mistakenly shift to the ♦10 without cashing the ♣A. Declarer covers with the ♦K. Partner gets 4 diamond tricks, but dummy scores the last 2 tricks and you get only +1100. The full hand is:

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

N
W E
S

♠ 8	♠ 8
♥ K J 7 5	♥ K J 7 5
♦ 9 8 4	♦ 9 8 4
♣ K 9 8 5 2	♣ K 9 8 5 2

Clearly you had +1400 coming with proper defence as the play went. Partner shouldn't have squandered the ♠9, but that didn't make any difference. You had a couple of chances to improve.

How could declarer have done better?

There were a couple of ways declarer could have improved. One would be to not finesse the ♥J on the second round of hearts. If he had played small, he probably would have scored his ♥J later. Also, instead of ruffing East's ♠J, he could have just discarded. East would have to lead up to dummy and give up some trick.

Both declarer and defenders lost concentration on this hand. This is quite common when in some doubled contract going for a big number which apparently won't be matched at the other table. If N/S are in 3NT making, there isn't too much difference between +1100 and +1400. Still, every IMP counts. Also, you never know when there is going to be a similar accident at the other table. It is important to keep focus in these situations even when it isn't likely to matter much.

Do you agree with South's decision to run, and assuming he runs do you like his scrambling approach?

It looks right to get out of the frying pan, even though the fire might be hotter. North didn't open a weak 2, so it is quite likely that N/S have a 5-1 spade fit. East doesn't think 1♠ will make, and he is clearly right. My philosophy is that if two players at the table don't think we are making and I'm one of those players, I run.

I think the initial redouble is right. When North bids 1NT instead of a suit North is known to not have a 4-card suit, since he would certainly bid a second suit if he had one. Therefore, South should stand his ground in 2♣ doubled, since he knows that the partnership has at least as many clubs as hearts. For all South knows, North could have 3 clubs and 2 hearts. There isn't much of an inference to be drawn from West's double of 2♣. N/S are clearly in trouble, and will be probably be doubled in anything. 2♥ is not going to survive undoubled.

Is East's pass of 1NT correct?

Yes, it is. East has already shown 16+ points and a spade stack, and that's all he has. West's takeout double might have been based on shape, not strength. With the hand West has, West will be doubling 1NT of course, but if he is substantially weaker 1NT might be making.

What do you think of the overcall which got N/S into trouble?

The overcall couldn't have worked out any worse. Despite this result, I believe it is clear to overcall. There are many ways the overcall can win IMPs.

1) Lead-directing. This is probably the biggest potential gain. East will often have a balanced hand with which he is about to rebid 1NT or 2NT. A spade lead could be the difference between 3NT making or 3NT down. If this happens the gain is 12 IMPs, just about as much as the cost of going for 1100 or 1400 vs. an enemy game.

2) Space consumption. East may have a 1♥ rebid, after which E/W can use all their fancy gadgetry for their 1♣ auctions to get them to the best contract. The little 1♠ overcall takes all this away from them. Now East must bid his heart suit at the two-level, which will hamper the enemy auction.

3) Competitive value. Just because East opened a strong 1♣ doesn't mean the hand belongs to E/W. Spades is the ranking suit. The overcall may permit N/S to compete to a making partial or to push E/W one trick too high.

Spectacular results such as -1100 or -1400 tend to stick in the memories of players, and these memories cloud their judgment about percentage actions. When the 1♠ overcall leads to going for a big number, as it did here, players are quick to criticize the call. They overlook the many times the overcall gains IMPs against the rare case when the overcall gets nailed. This kind of selective memory distorts the evaluation of actions such as this 1♠ overcall.



Brother Aelred's Guest

by David Bird

The Abbot was not in the best of moods. Without even consulting him, Brother Aelred had invited a French penfriend to visit the monastery. 'I'm sure you'll like him, Abbot,' he had said. 'I know you regard a sense of humour highly and Mathieu is certainly not lacking in that respect. His letters always make me laugh.'

'If I ever find myself laughing at some remark or joke made by a total foreigner, I'll be very much surprised,' the Abbot replied. 'Please tell me he doesn't play bridge.'

'No, you're wrong there, he does play bridge,' said Brother Aelred. 'That's the main reason why I thought it appropriate to invite him. I'll be partnering him in tonight's game.'

The Thursday evening monastery duplicate was about to start. The Abbot took his seat and scanned the players at the other tables. Where was the invader from foreign climes? Ah, yes, in the far corner. Why were so many players gathered round the table, almost as if they were anxious to meet him? Very strange behaviour, as he saw it.

Lucius and Paulo were early visitors to the Abbot's table and they drew their cards for this board:

Dealer South. Both Vul.

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

♠ AKQ 7 4	♠ 9
♥ 9	♥ 10 8 7 3
♦ A 9 8	♦ J 7 6 3 2
♣ QJ 10 5	♣ A 7 2

	N	
W		E
	S	

West	North	East	South
Brother Paulo	Brother Xavier	Brother Lucius	The Abbot
-	-	-	1♠
2♥	2♠	3♥	4♠
All Pass			

Brother Paulo opened the defence with two top hearts. The Abbot ruffed the second round and played the ace and king of trumps, East discarding a diamond on the second round. The Abbot, who could afford to lose a trump, a heart and a club, now switched his attention to clubs.

Brother Lucius won the queen of clubs with the ace and persisted with the forcing defence, leading a third round of hearts. The Abbot ruffed low in his hand and led a second club. If Paulo ruffed this, a further round of hearts could be ruffed in the dummy. Declarer would then be able to reach his hand with the ♦A, draw the last trump and claim the contract. Paulo discarded a diamond and then threw a second diamond on the third round of clubs. These cards remained:

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

	N	
W		E
	S	

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

When the king of clubs was played, Paulo discarded his last diamond. 'Nine of clubs, please,' said the Abbot.

Only now did Brother Paulo ruff. He continued with the ♥Q, which

declarer had to ruff in the dummy. After the three diamond discards from West, the Abbot had no entry to draw West's last trump. Paulo scored his remaining trump with a diamond ruff and the game was one down.

'Interesting deal,' observed Brother Paulo. 'It's quite common to delay a ruff until declarer plays his last card in the suit. Here I needed to hold back for one extra round.'

The Abbot managed a small nod and scribbled a near illegible 100 in his minus column. Deals tended to be more interesting when you had just scored a top on them. If you were unlikely to register a single match-point, it was a different matter.

Halfway through the evening, Brother Aelred arrived with his French guest. The Abbot was not amused to see that he had a full head of black hair, despite being in his late 50s. Would it not make more sense to distribute hair more evenly amongst the world's male population?

'So pleasing to meet you, Abbot,' Matthieu Gosselin declared. 'My good friend here, Brother Aelred, is often writing stories about you in his letters. I feel already I know you very well.'

The Abbot beckoned for the first board of the round to be brought into place. He had never felt comfortable in the company of foreigners and this would be a trying round, whatever happened. It would be doubly taxing if the new partnership managed, by some miracle, to score a good board or two. His mood was mellowed when he picked up his best hand for a while. This was the deal:

Dealer South. N/S Vul.

<p>♠ 94 ♥ QJ10 ♦ J98754 ♣ Q7</p>	<p>♠ 653 ♥ 86542 ♦ K2 ♣ 1094</p>	<table style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		<p>♠ 872 ♥ 973 ♦ 10 ♣ KJ8532</p>
	N											
W		E										
	S											
	<p>♠ AKQJ10 ♥ AK ♦ AQ63 ♣ A6</p>											

West	North	East	South
<i>Brother Aelred</i>	<i>Brother Xavier</i>	<i>Mathieu Gosselin</i>	<i>The Abbot</i>
-	-	-	2♣
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♠
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♣
Pass	4♦	Pass	6♠
All Pass			

Spades were agreed and the Abbot leapt to 6♠ when he heard of a diamond control opposite. He won the queen of hearts lead with the ace and paused to consider his prospects. If diamonds broke 4-3, he would be able to ruff a third round without suffering an overruff. He could improve his prospects by drawing two rounds of trumps before taking the ruff, of course. Was there any additional chance available? This Frenchman seemed very full of himself. It would be good to take him down a peg or two with a piece of top-class dummy-play.

The Abbot drew two rounds of trumps and everyone followed. Before taking his main chance in diamonds, he cashed the remaining heart winner in his hand. A diamond to the king produced the ♦10 from the Frenchman. He was favourite to hold the last trump after the fall of the ♠9 from Brother Aelred in the West seat. The prospects of surviving a third-round diamond ruff without an overruff had just taken a plunge. Perhaps another chance would be more productive.

'Play a heart,' said the Abbot, ruffing with the ten. His spirits rose when the hearts broke 3-3. Now, let's see how the Frenchman would like the look of his next card. Turning slightly to his right, the Abbot led the ♦A. Gosselin could see that ruffing the diamond ace would set up a diamond-ruff entry to dummy and its two good hearts. He chose to discard on the trick and the Abbot continued with the ♦Q, throwing a club from dummy. Again it would not help the defence for East to ruff, and he discarded another club. With the air of a famous artist adding his signature to a masterpiece, the Abbot now played the ♦6, throwing a second club from dummy. He could not be prevented from ruffing a club in dummy subsequently, and the slam was made.

Brother Aelred looked quizzically across the table. 'What happened there, partner?' he asked. 'Did you still have a trump left?'

'One more trump, yes,' Gosselin replied.

‘You could have ruffed the ♦A!’ continued Brother Aelred. ‘The Abbot still had two losers in his hand, didn’t he?’

The Frenchman closed his eyes for a brief moment. Attractive as it was for him to spend a few days in this rather attractive historical building, he was paying a high price for the privilege. Did Brother Aelred not understand the first thing about the game? ‘Declarer established the hearts,’ he replied. ‘There was nothing I could do here, believe me. If you want to beat the slam, lead a club. Or even a diamond.’

In other circumstances the Abbot would have felt somewhat sorry for Brother Aelred. Not now, though. It was entirely his fault, introducing this obnoxious intruder into the St Titus enclave. He would doubtless think more carefully in future.

This was the next board:

Dealer South. N/S Vul.

♠ AK3 ♥ K7 ♦ A9762 ♣ AK3		♠ 65 ♥ 52 ♦ KQ10543 ♣ J84	♠ 842 ♥ AQJ1064 ♦ J ♣ 1072
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West	North	East	South
Brother Aelred	Brother Xavier	Mathieu Gosselin	The Abbot
–	–	–	2♥
Pass	6♥	All Pass	

The Abbot had always taken a somewhat old-fashioned view of vulnerable weak-two bids and Brother Xavier was happy to raise to 6♥. Brother Aelred, who could recognise a solid honour sequence when he saw one, reached for the queen of spades.

‘Ace,’ said the Abbot, after a brief survey of the dummy. When it came

to thanking partner for the dummy, he didn’t always follow the advice he inflicted on the St Titus novices. ‘And the king of trumps.’

The Abbot drew trumps in three rounds, discarding the ♠3 from dummy, and then led the ♦J. When the ♦8 appeared on his left, he paused in his tracks for a moment. ‘Play the two,’ he said.

Gosselin won with the ♦Q and returned a spade to dummy’s king. The Abbot called for dummy’s ♦A, discarding his last spade, and could barely suppress his delight when West showed out. ‘Well, well, partner,’ he said. ‘Your 976 of diamonds look a bit healthier than they did a few moments ago. Play the nine, will you?’

The Frenchman covered resignedly with the ♦10, and the Abbot ruffed. A club to the king was followed by a second ruffing finesse in diamonds, the ♦7 covered with the king. The Abbot ruffed, returned to dummy with the ace of clubs and discarded his last club on the established ♦6. The slam was his.

Gosselin shook his head, unable to hide his aggravation. ‘We can beat it,’ he informed his partner. ‘You must lead the singleton diamond.’

‘Does that make any difference?’ queried Brother Aelred.

‘Of course! If he plays low card from dummy, I win and return a low diamond. He must ruff high and no extra trick comes from the diamond suit.’

Brother Aelred inspected his curtain card. ‘My spades were very good,’ he declared. ‘Give me five spades to the jack instead, and I might well have risked a diamond lead.’

Gosselin was not interested in such lame excuses. Back in the Toulon bridge club, the whole field would have led the singleton diamond. There was only one board left in this round. Could *le bon dieu* not deny his hopeless partner any meaningful participation? Maybe they would then have some chance of a good score.

The final board of the round was placed on the table:

Dealer South Both Vul.

♠ K73
♥ 10643
♦ 86
♣ 10965

♠ 96
♥ K72
♦ K742
♣ AJ82

♠ A542
♥ 985
♦ AQ5
♣ KQ3

N
W E
S

♠ QJ108
♥ AQJ
♦ J1093
♣ 74

West	North	East	South
<i>Brother Aelred</i>	<i>Brother Xavier</i>	<i>Mathieu Gosselin</i>	<i>The Abbot</i>
-	-	-	1NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

Brother Aelred led the ♥3, pleased to see his partner win with the ♥J. When the ♠Q was returned, the Abbot won immediately with the ace and Brother Aelred followed with an encouraging ♠7. Eight tricks were on view and there was an obvious chance of a ninth in the diamond suit. For the moment, playing four rounds of clubs seemed a good idea.

When a third round of clubs was led from dummy, the Frenchman sat back in his chair. There was every chance that his guard in the diamond suit was a valuable asset. Nor was it practical to dispose of his ♥AQ. Rightly or wrongly, he was going to discard a couple of spades. On the last round of clubs, the Abbot also threw a spade. These cards were left in play:

♠ 9
♥ K7
♦ K742
♣ -

♠ K3
♥ 1064
♦ 87
♣ -

♠ J
♥ AQ
♦ J1093
♣ -

♠ 54
♥ 98
♦ AQ5
♣ -

N
W E
S

It seemed to the Abbot that the French guy was keeping a guard in the diamond suit. Why else would he discard spade winners? The queen, 10, 8 and 7 of spades had all been played, so surely East was down to the bare ♠J, ace and another heart, and his diamond guard. ‘Nine of spades, please,’ he said.

Gosselin produced the ♠J and Brother Aelred could not afford to overtake, since this would set up a spade winner in declarer’s hand. The Abbot won East’s ♦J switch with the ace, continuing with the queen and king of the suit. A fourth round of diamonds threw East on lead and he had to concede the game-going trick to dummy’s king of hearts.

Brother Aelred consoled his partner with a smile. ‘It wasn’t easy to see the throw-in play coming,’ he said. ‘The same thing often happens to me. Don’t worry about it.’

The Frenchman’s eyes blackened. ‘There was nothing I could do here,’ he replied. ‘You must keep the seven of spades. Then you can overtake my jack, make a trick with the seven and play through another heart.’

Brother Aelred once more refreshed his memory by reaching for his curtain card. Ah, yes, he’d started with the ♠K73 and Mathieu had switched to the queen of spades. ‘The ♠3 would have been discouraging, the way we play over here,’ he informed his partner. ‘Do you prefer reverse attitude signals where you come from?’

The Frenchman could not disguise his exasperation. ‘It makes no matter what signals we use,’ he declared. ‘In France we like to play good bridge. Is it not the common sense to keep winners and throw losers?’

The uBid Auction Room

Mark Horton

Welcome to the Auction Room, where we examine bidding methods from recent events. This month we take a look at the Final of the Rosenblum Cup from the World Championships in Orlando. It featured the number 1 seeds, Zimmermann, up against the Italian giants, Lavazza, originally seeded fifth.

The Hands

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

Hand 1. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

♠ 10 ♥ QJ983 ♦ 7 ♣ A109742		♠ A753 ♥ A764 ♦ AJ8 ♣ KQ
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North opens 1♠ and South raises to 2♠

West	North	East	South
Gawrys	Bianchedi	Klukowski	Madala
-	1♠	Double	2♠
4♥	Pass	4♠*	Pass
4NT*	Pass	5♦*	Double
6♥	All Pass		

When West jumped to 4♥, East cue-bid in spades which was enough for West to check on key-cards before bidding the slam. North held ♠KQJ64 ♥K52 ♦Q103 ♣53 and declarer took all the tricks.

West	North	East	South
Bocchi	Helness	Sementa	Helgemo
-	1NT*	Double	3♦
4♥	All Pass		

1NT 10-13

With little room to manoeuvre West jumped to 4♥, but East was unwilling to make a move.

Recommended auction: The Polish stars had a fine sequence. With North opening 1NT a bid of 4♠ by East would be ambiguous.

Marks: 6♥/6♣10, 7♥/7♣ 6, 4♥/5♣ 5, 3NT 3.

Running score: Zimmermann10 (13) Lavazza 5 (0)

Hand 2. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ J9764 ♥ AQ6532 ♦ QJ ♣ -		♠ 53 ♥ KJ97 ♦ AK3 ♣ AQ53
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If East opens 1NT and West bids 2♣ North doubles

West	East
Sementa	Bocchi
-	1NT
2♦*	3♣*
3♠	4♣
4♥	5♣
5♥	Pass

2♦ Transfer

3♣ Maximum with heart support

Did West's 4♥ deny a spade control? Probably not (how else can West limit his hand) so East made a further effort. North held ♠KQ ♥4 ♦10762 ♣KJ10982 and led the ♦6, +450.

West	East	
Klukowski	Gawrys	
-	1NT	
2♣*	(Dble)	2♥
4♣*	4♦*	
4♥	4NT*	
5♣*	5♦*	
5♠	6♥	
Pass		
2♣	Stayman	
4♣	Shortage	
4♦	Cue-bid	
4NT	RKCB	
5♣	1 key card	
5♦	♥Q?	
5♠	Yes	

Although South led the ♥8 declarer had to lose two spades.

Once again one has to decide if West's 4♥ denies a spade control.

When he showed one key card East could have settled for 5♥.

Recommended auction: 1NT-2♣*-2♥-4♣*-4♦-4♥ is a good way to start.

If East makes another move West should sign off in 5♥.

Marks: 5♥/4NT10.

Running score: Zimmermann10 (13) Lavazza 15 (11)

Hand 3. Dealer West. N/S Vul.

♠ AQ	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ K1052
♥ KQ52		♥ A98743
♦ KQ4		♦ J5
♣ 9632		♣ K

West	East	
Helness	Helgemo	
1♣	1♥	
3♥	4♣*	
4♦*	4NT*	
5♠*	6♥	
Pass		

- 4♣ Cue-bid
- 4♦ Cue-bid
- 4NT RKCB
- 5♠ 2 key cards +♥Q

East's use of Blackwood was unsound.

South held ♠J93 ♥10 ♦A10763 ♣Q854 and led the ♦A. His partner followed with the two and declarer the five. When he continued with the ♦3 the slam was home.

West	East	
Bilde	Duboin	
1NT	2♣*	
2♥	4♥	
Pass		

Recommended auction: Anything that avoids 6♥. After 1♣-1♥-3♥-4♣-4♦ if East is unwilling to bid 4♥, 4♠ is better than 4NT and should lead to 5♥.

Marks: 5♥ 10, 6♥ 4.

Running score: Zimmermann14 (24) Lavazza 25 (11)

Hand 4. Dealer South. E/W Vul

♠ 54	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ AK6
♥ K732		♥ J9
♦ KQ10864		♦ AJ2
♣ 2		♣ AQ543

North opens 2♠ (5-5 ♠+♦/♣, 6-10) and if East doubles South raises to 3♠

West	North	East	South
Madala	Multon	Bianchedi	Zimmermann
-	-	-	Pass
Pass	2♠*	Double	3♠
4♥	Pass	4NT*	Pass
6♦	All Pass		

When East asked for key-cards West jumped to show his powerful suit.

North led the ♠Q from his ♠QJ1093 ♥Q108 ♦- ♣K10876 and declarer won in dummy and played a heart to the king. When it held he ducked a heart and could ruff both his remaining hearts in dummy.

West	North	East	South
Klukowski	Bilde	Gawrys	Duboin
-	-	-	Pass
Pass	1♠	Double	2♠*
Double*	3♠	3NT	All Pass

2♠ Weaker raise than bidding 2♥.

South led the ♠8 and declarer won, crossed to dummy with a diamond and took the club finesse, finishing with ten tricks.

Recommended auction: After 2♠-Dble-3♠ you can understand why West bid 4♥ rather than 4♦. It was quite something to reach 6♦, but it's not a laydown. If West had bid 4♦ then East would probably have bid 4♠. West could then consider bidding 5♣ and then decide what to do over 5♦.

Marks: 5♦/3NT 10, 6♦ 7.

Running score: Zimmermann 24 (24) Lavazza 32 (23)

Hand 5. Dealer North. Both Vul.

♠ AK98	<table border="1" style="width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ Q63
		N									
W			E								
		S									
♥ AK	♥ QJ8										
♦ AQ6	♦ K874										
♣ AK98	♣ 1075										

West	East
Madala	Bianchedi
	Pass
2♣*	2♦*
2♥*	2♠*
2NT	6NT
7NT	Pass

That looks like a classic Kokish inspired auction, West showing a powerful balanced hand. North held ♠10 ♥107643 ♦10932 ♣Q62 and led the ♥3. Declarer needed some luck but he did not get enough and he had to go one down.

At the time Lavazza was trailing by over 70 IMPs, so bidding the grand slam was an understandable speculation.

West	East
Klukowski	Gawrys
-	Pass
1♣*	1NT
2♦*	2♥
2NT	3NT
5NT	6NT

Recommended auction: 2♣*-2♦*-2♥*-2♠*-2NT*-3♣*-3♦*-6NT

Once West has shown a balanced hand with 25+ East can look for a five-card major before signing off in 6NT. Madala would have passed 6NT had the scores been closer.

Marks: 6NT 10, 7NT 4.

Running score: Zimmermann 34 (41) Lavazza 36 (23)

Hand 6. Dealer south. E/W Vul.

♠ AKJ8	<table border="1" style="width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ Q107
		N									
W			E								
		S									
♥ 82	♥ KQ										
♦ KQ6	♦ AJ87										
♣ A843	♣ QJ109										

West	East
Helgemo	Helness
1NT	3NT
Pass	

West	East
Duboin	Bilde
1NT	4NT
5NT	6♣
All Pass	

Lavazza had reached the point where they needed miracles – here they only required that the ♣K be onside. Alas it was not.

Recommended auction: 1NT-3NT

Marks: 3NT/5♣/4♠ 10, 6♣ 5, 6NT 4.

Running score: Zimmermann 44 (53) Lavazza 41 (23)

Hand 7. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

♠ A97	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto; display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> N E S W </div>	♠ KQ1084	
♥ A9		♥ QJ10652	
♦ AK		♦ Q8	
♣ AKQJ94		♣ —	

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

Madala	Bianchedi
-	1♠
7NT	Pass

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

Klukowski	Gawrys
-	1♥
7NT	Pass

North held ♠J652 ♥83 ♦9643 ♣1053, so there was nothing to the play.

Recommended auction: 1♥-7NT.

Marks: 7NT 10, 7♣ 9, 7♠ 8, 6NT/6♣/6♠ 5.

Running score: Zimmermann 54 (53) Lavazza 51 (23)

Hand 8. Dealer West. E/W Vul.

♠ 10	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto; display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> N E S W </div>	♠ 9872	
♥ AQJ654		♥ K	
♦ AKJ2		♦ Q97643	
♣ 93		♣ A2	

South overcalls 3♣ and North raises to 5♣

West	North	East	South
------	-------	------	-------

Madala	Helness	Bianchedi	Helgemo
1♥	Pass	1♠	3♣
4♥	5♣	Double	All Pass

South's hand was ♠KQJ3 ♥73 ♦10 ♣QJ10754 so 6♦ would have made in a canter.

West cashed the ♦A and switched to the ♠10. East won the first trump, cashed the heart king and gave his partner a spade ruff for -500.

West	North	East	South
Klukowski	Bilde	Gawrys	Duboin
1♥	Pass	1♠	3♣
3♥	3♠	Pass	4♣
Pass	Pass	4♥	5♣
Double	All Pass		

West led the ♦A, but continued with the king, so declarer escaped for two down.

Recommended auction: 1♥-1♠-(3♣)-3♦-(5♣)-5♦ is one way to get diamonds into the picture. Then if you are a gambling man you can venture 6♦ with the West hand.

In the Seniors Final Shen and Shen bid 1♣*-2♦-(3♣)-3♥-(4♣)-Dble-4♦-5♣-6♦ - 1♣ being Precision.

Marks: 6♦ 10, 5♦ 8, 5♣X 5.

Running score: Zimmermann 59 (53) Lavazza 56 (28)

There was not much in it bidding wise, but Zimmermann was a clear winner on IMPs, which reflected the match result of 240-163.

You can play through the deals mentioned in this article.

Just follow the links:

Hand 1: [here](https://tinyurl.com/y7d95yvp) or <https://tinyurl.com/y7d95yvp>

Hands 2 & 3: [here](https://tinyurl.com/yan78grw) or <https://tinyurl.com/yan78grw>

Hands 4 & 5: [here](https://tinyurl.com/y73cx4fz) or <https://tinyurl.com/y73cx4fz>

Hands 6, 7 & 8: [here](https://tinyurl.com/ydfbr25z) or <https://tinyurl.com/ydfbr25z>



The Master Point Press Bidding Battle Set 10

Moderated by Brian Senior

A small panel this month but we welcome a guest panellist in the shape of one of the greats of the modern game, Zia Mahmood. It's nice to have him here and let's hope it won't be just a one-off appearance.

Please note that the Bidding System has been updated for the next round – see page 65 for details.

PROBLEM 1

IMPs. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

- ♠ J843
- ♥ K6
- ♦ A972
- ♣ Q54

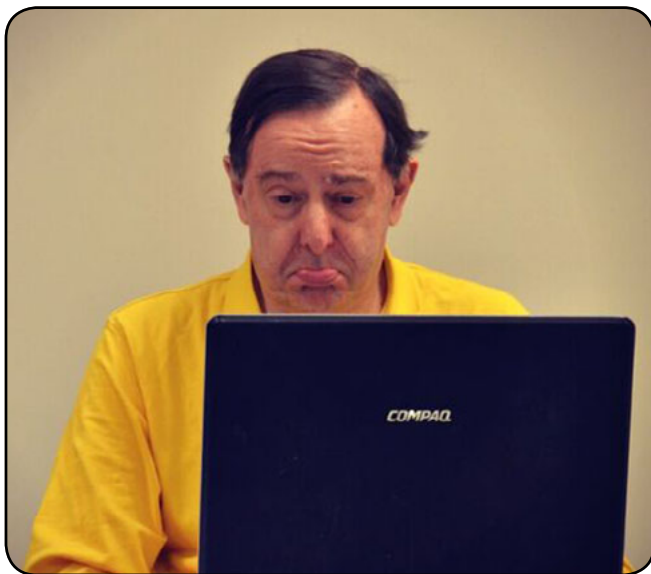
West	North	East	South
–	–	1♥	1♠
1NT	2♠	3♣	Pass
?			

Bid	Votes	Marks
3♠	7	10
4♥	6	9
3♥	2	4
3NT	1	4
4♣	1	4

Rigal: 3♥. Do we play good/bad here as so much of the Young Turk school does? I do and think even if that convention needs to be handled with care then one should still use it after responder doubles or bids NT at his first turn.

THE BIDS & MARKS

	Bid	No. of Votes	Marks		Bid	No. of Votes	Marks
1.	3♠	7	10	5.	3♠	7	10
	4♥	6	9		3♦	6	10
	3♥	2	4		4♦	3	7
	3NT	1	4		Pass	1	2
	4♣	1	4		5♦	0	2
2.	Double	13	10	6.	1NT	4	10
	4♥	4	6		2♣	4	10
3.	3♥	9	10		1♠	3	9
	3♣	6	9		3♣	3	9
	4♥	2	6		2♥	1	6
	3♠	0	2	2♠	1	6	
4.	3♥	9	10	7.	4♣	8	10
	5♣	4	7		2NT	3	7
	4♥	3	6		2♦	2	5
	4♠	1	4		4♠	2	4
	4♣	0	2		3♦	1	2
8.				3♥	1	2	
				Double	7	10	
				5♦	5	8	
				2♣	3	6	
				2♠	1	2	
			3NT	1	2		



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

That still doesn't simplify the problem but does let us know partner has a good hand so makes game closer. I feel like it is worth keeping the auction open facing likely spade shortage.

Alder: 3♥. Since there was no footnote, I assume that if partner had rebid 2NT, it would not have been a good-bad gizmo.

Cope: 4♥. No clarity is given as to whether the 3♣ bid is a good or a bad hand (depending on what 2NT would have meant). But given that partner could have doubled for take-out, I will assume some sort of 5-5 shape and we have four working pieces and can stand one tap opposite a medium hand such as ♠x ♥AQxxx ♦xx ♣AKxxx.

The system states that '2NT is rarely natural in competition', with possibilities including Lebensohl and scramble. Lebensohl in this situation

is pretty much another name for good/bad and, with this not being a scramble position, I would presume that to be what is in use here.

Kokish: 3♠. Though 3NT might still be possible opposite a singleton king or queen of spades, this is a huge hand for a high contract in clubs or perhaps when East has the infinitely more likely singleton or void. With four or five clubs I would raise directly, and if 4♥ were the only target I could bid 3♥ or 4♥. As 3♣ shows a good hand for most serious partnerships with 2NT for lesser hands (or vice versa) it ought to create a game force so there is no need to cue-bid to keep the auction alive.

I'm not sure that those who play good/bad here necessarily play that this makes 3♣/♦ game-forcing, just stronger than going through 2NT.

Different players make different assumptions regarding the methods, but all are convinced that we are worth another rebid.

Robson: 3♠. Good hand for the dreaded good-bad, where we would know whether partner was simply competing with a minimumish 5-5 or not. Absent that, we are surely worth another bid with our prime cards. 3♠ shows a good hand without great spades.

Stabell: 3♠. Since "2NT is rarely natural in competition", I take it that partner had a good/bad 2NT available, so that 3♣ shows a decent hand. 6♣ is not out of the question, but 4♥ looks the most likely game. I intend to bid 4♥ over 3NT and hope that partner gets the message.

Sime: 3♠. Choice of games cue-bid. A slight overbid, but my honours are working, we're vulnerable at teams, and benign opposition bidding indicates even breaks.

Teramoto: 4♣. I expect partner has 5-5, so I invite to 5♣. If he has like 1-5-4-3, he would be doubled for T/O.

Yes, with less than 5-5 he should have doubled for take-out so we should trust him to have at least that much distribution, even if we are slightly less secure regarding his strength.

Cannell: 3♠. This is a choice of game cue-bid. Partner is at least 5-5 plus in the rounded suits. We may easily have a slam so I may as well show some oomph. I think Andrew Robson will be with me on this. He, Tony and Zia used this toy with good effect.

Indeed, as we have seen already, Andrew did indeed go for the choice of games cue-bid.

Lawrence: 3♠. Maximum. Like what you're doing. Rate to have strong heart tolerance. I'm too good to bid 3♥, a nothing bid, and way too strong to pass 3♣. I can choose from 3♠ and 4♥. 3♠ leaves more options.

Yes it does.

Zia: 3♠. Overbidding as usual but looks like a good hand opposite 5/5 or 6/4 etc. I wish 3♦ as a cue-bid /last train.

I would imagine that 3♦ would show a concentration of strength as we can hardly want to play there.

The rest picked a game, usually hearts:

Apteker: 4♥ I have an excellent hand in the context of the bidding and can hardly do less.

Carruthers: 4♥. I could bid my fifth-round spade control, but partner could quite sensibly assume that I had a big hand for clubs. If he thought that I might pass 4♣ (having made a try), he might well bid 5♣. I could hardly have a better hand on this auction, with nothing

wasted in spades, the ace of diamonds and fitting honours in Partner's suits.

Mould: 4♥. This rather depends on whether 3♣ is strictly competitive, invitational or forcing, which is a partnership matter – also partially depending on what 2NT is. In a strong NT system you can more or less do away with a natural 2NT and therefore play 2NT as either Lebensohl or good/bad. But that is rather beyond our methods. Here I seem to have highly working cards in that I have no wasted spade values opposite partner's known shortage. I have denied three hearts already IMHO (certainly when I now reject NTs) so Kx is about the best I can have. If partner does not like that and has for reasons known only to themselves opened ♠x ♥Axxxx ♦x ♣AKxxxx 1♥ instead of 1♣ they will know what to do.

Rather beyond our methods, Alan? But surely you were in charge when '2NT is rarely natural in competition' was decided. Could it really be anything other than Lebensohl/good-bad, unless we wanted to go a step further and play transfers?

McGowan: 4♥. I seem to be extremely suitable, with as much support for partner's first suit as he could hope for. Have I missed a slam? If he has ♠ – ♥AQJxxx ♦xx ♣AKxxx he might risk a cue
Bird: 4♥. Worth a shot when I have three useful cards.

Tommy is the odd man out:

Sandsmark: 3NT! You simply have to chance it! My excellent partner has about 16HCP, and if he has e.g. ♠Qx, ♠10x or anything that resembles something that could give me a spade stopper, 3NT should have a good chance not to be just a long shot. I see no primary suit fit, and have

no idea about where else to land. From time to time you have to make an executive decision, and this must be the time for it, with 10HCP, the ♦A and honours in both partner's suits. I feel confident that some of the experts will show cowardice and pass, but that is a huge underbid with this hand. Others again may surely ask for a spade stopper (3♠), but this is bound to be redundant and to have an unproductive result, as partner will never bid 3NT with only ♠10x!

No cowardice here Tommy, and no company for your choice.

The panel has judged well that we have excellent cards and a big majority are happy that we should drive to game. I like 3♠, but I can certainly live with 4♥.

PROBLEM 2

IMPs. Dealer East. None Vul.

♠ 6
♥ AQJ76
♦ J108
♣ AQ97

	West	North	East	South
	–	–	1♣	3♠
	?			
Bid	Votes		Marks	
Dble	13		10	
4♥	4		6	

This one proved to be reasonably clear cut. No doubt there would have been a different split had we been playing Acol, with 1♣ promising clubs, but under our actual methods to support clubs immediately could be described as eccentric, to say the least.

Zia: 4♥. May get another bite.

Alder: 4♥. I hope to bid 5♣ over 4♠ – and get to a making slam!

Rigal: 4♥. Seems natural; would like to do more but will smile and slap the call on the table to show my extras.

Bird: 4♥. This looks considerably better than a negative double, even though I have left a possible 3NT behind.

But the majority preferred the negative double.

Apteker: Double The most flexible bid keeping the penalty, 3NT, heart and club games or slam contracts in play. 4♥ is too unilateral even though it may be the only way to get there and the best contract opposite three- or even two-card support.

Robson: Double. I'd bid 4♠ in Acol where 1♣ means clubs, but here partner may be 4-3-3-3 with four spades. Double is our cheapest call.

Carruthers: Double. Understating the hearts, perhaps, but 4♥ would overstate them, especially with the tap coming in my hand.. I can hardly bid 4♠ to agree clubs since my boy could be 4-3-3-3.

Yes, he could.

Cannell: Double. Seemingly the most flexible call at the moment. Seeking the right level and strain. My next bid will depend on partner's choice. Though, he may even pass.

Lawrence: Double. This looks like my only chance to get useful information. Don't expect my next bid will be easy either.

Cope: Double. The more flexible call – both 4♥ and a possible 4♠ bid are unilateral – one assumes partner has some hearts and the other that partner has genuine clubs. We may still

have a decision to take if partner bids 3NT on the next round – fortunately we were not asked that problem.

But some panellists answer that question anyway.

Teramoto: Double. I will bid 4♣ when partner bid 3NT. I will try to find the better game or even slam.

Stabell: Dble. Intending to bid 4♥ over 3NT, showing a hand that is also interested in other contracts. Since ♠Axx ♥x ♦KQx ♣Kxxxx gives good play for 6♣ and very little play for 4♥, a direct 4♥ bid must be a mistake.

Sime: Double. This auction seems to have been stopped before the problem arose. *(Perhaps we will see this hand again in the future?)*

Mould: Double. There is another choice? 4♥ is very unilateral, and I cannot agree clubs when partner may have two of them. Why rule out 3NT? If partner passes 3♠ doubled I expect plenty of undertricks.

McGowan: Dble. I believe my system is one where 1♣ does not show clubs.... Not happy about the fifth heart, but 4♥ will probably end the auction and might be hard work. Double may also end the auction, but partner should strain to bid unless his spades are suitable under the Pesky Pre-empt.

Sandsmark: Double! Easy! Children’s bridge! The system caters for negative doubles up to and including 3♠, and even though this is not an ideal bid on a not ideal hand it will nevertheless be forcing, and you will get a response from partner, enabling you to (hopefully) make a wise decision. A) If partner bids 3NT, I will bid 4♣ as a mild slam try (which he can reject with

4NT and accept through a ♦ cue-bid). B) If he bids 4♣, I will for sure cue-bid 4♥ and if C) he should bid 4♥, I will apply good, old “Blackie”. All of these continuations may be dangerous and turn out to be overbids, as East may hold a minimal opening hand with redundant values. But if he does, I will expect him to bid as feebly as possible and pray to the bridge gods that I will understand what he is trying to convey and that my bidding does not create a disaster. We may thus land in 4♥ if he has 3+♥ or else 5♣. D) If, on the other hand, partner cue-bids 4♦, I will for sure be on the right track! Even with a minimum partner’s hand may produce a very good slam indeed if East holds the right values, e.g.

♠ 6	♠ 10432
♥ AQJ76	♥ K32
♦ J108	♦ A
♣ AQ97	♣ KJ108

Kokish: Double. Not because it’s a beautiful bid, but to perhaps buy some time. There is a strong case for playing a simple 4♣ as forcing or for using transfers here, but we’re not getting into those possibilities now. If partner passes the double of 3♠ there’s no reason that has to work badly in standard systems. Yes, it won’t necessarily be easy to find the right level in hearts, but a direct 4♥ or 4♠ almost gives up completely on the other strain. Good problem.

We don’t play transfers in this bidders’ club, but my clone and I would surely do so, as Eric suggests. Not that they would necessarily solve this exact hand, but to be able to show hearts then support clubs to offer a choice of games with slam interest would surely be much easier via transfers than using standard methods and, even if

you don’t wish to do that with this hand, a small alteration would make that a very popular route to take if available.

Under our existing methods, you can put me with the doublers.

PROBLEM 3

IMPs. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ AJ9763
♥ 4
♦ K108
♣ A72

West	North	East	South
–	–	1♦	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♦	Pass
?			

Bid	Votes	Marks
3♥	9	10
3♣	6	9
4♥	2	6
3♠	0	2

Sandsmark: 4♥. This problem is not so different from No. 2. Also here there might be great potentials for a slam even with a minimum holding with East, e.g.:

♠ AJ9763	♠ K4
♥ 4	♥ 8653
♦ K108	♦ AQJ953
♣ A72	♣ J

4♥! There are surely several ways of finding out, but I think the best one would be to Splinter 4♥! With the hand pictured above, East will understand that he has nothing but positive values, that West has a good diamond support

and he can thus follow up with a spade CUE or even RKCB.

The important thing in competitive bridge is to realise the potentials of any hand and not waste any time in concentrating upon limitations and negative things. Thus, for me the glass is always half-full and never half-empty! With a positive attitude to life in general and bridge in particular, you will find a large number of excellent contracts, bid on feeble values but which have a good fit.

But don't you find that such an optimistic approach to life leads to so many disappointments?

Teramoto: 4♥. It is a splinter, showing heart shortage and a diamond fit. We may have slam, and in this case diamonds is usually better than



Barry Rigal

spades.

Kokish: 4♥. Messing around with FSF will find six-two spades but won't always let us show the stiff heart, strong diamond support, and slam-suitable controls. If 3♥ is not INV 5/5 or some other NAT treatment, we'd bid that.

I've changed Eric's bid to 3♥ as I believe it is more normal these days to play 2♥ as F1 so that 3♥ is released for other duties, but of course the previous answers no doubt assumed that 3♥ was not an option.

Others opted for the three-level splinter:

Alder: 3♥. A slight stretch, but best if we can make 6♦. Tougher at matchpoints.

Cope: 3♥. Worth a splinter and will at least give partner clarity of direction and strain. Partner will either have six diamonds (in which case this hand may be going somewhere) or five diamonds and four hearts (in which case 3NT or 4♠ may be our destination).

Rigal: 3♥. Splinter in support of diamonds, a good way to get the slam interest across. Spades can come later, but the real issue may be whether to pass 3NT from my partner.

Sime: 3♥. We have a great hand for diamonds. Slam prospects will diminish if partner bids 3NT.

Lawrence: 3♥. Hoping this is a splinter. My hand has too much potential for diamonds to bid 3♣. I can make a grand facing a few minimum opening bids.

Mould: 3♥. Haven't we seen this one before (or maybe someone else has given it me)? I see no reason not to announce the good fit with a splinter raise. Partner has six diamonds in my world (1-4-5-3 shapes with minimum values

rebid 1NT or even 2♣ if they feel warped) so we have a nine-card fit. I will respect 3NT (why wouldn't I?) and 3♠ over 3♥ for me is a semi-fit so we can still find those. Yes, I may miss 4♠ if partner does not support on ♠xx but anything else misses risking 6♦ opposite ♠K♥Axxx♦AQJxxx♣xx.

McGowan: 3♥. Splinter with three-card diamond support. Problem may come next round after he bids 3NT.

Well, I'm sure that we could have more than three-card diamond support in this auction, but I agree with the bid.

Robson: 3♣. Partner won't have clubs (no 2♣) so this is a safe, fairly cheap way of extracting more information. If partner bids 3♦, I'll try 4♥, splinter.

Apteker: 3♣. Forcing and allowing investigation of best strain. Over 3♦ I will bid 3♠ and pass over 3NT.

Cannell: 3♣. Purports to be a natural force. I think I have too much for an invitational 3♠ advance. Second choice is 3♥ if I was certain it is a splinter.

Bird: 3♣. Alan Mould, the previous director, informed me (to my surprise) that 3♠ was forcing when a weak jump shift was available. Even so, I can play in diamonds (or 3NT) here and will seek more information with 3♣.

It is true that if 1♦ – 2♠ is weak, then 1♠ followed by 2♠ is much more constructive than in traditional methods, and 1♠ followed by a jump to 3♠ can indeed be played as forcing.

Zia: 3♣. Is there any splinter in support of diamonds available? I will bid 4♦ over 3NT.

Stabell: 3♣. I take it that 2♥ from me would

have been non-forcing so a 3♥ splinter is not available here? I try 3♣ followed by 4♦ when partner (as usual) bids 3NT – again showing interest in other contracts. Partner could presumably be 1-4-5-3, but I cannot easily find out when 3NT would be better than 5♦ so will just give up on the NT-game.

So, with the majority vote going to 3♥ and other panellists hankering after a 3♥ splinter, I leave the final word to John, and take his suggestion as an official part of the system for the future. It follows that 1♦ – 1♠ – 2♦ – 2♥ and similar auctions are forcing for one round.

Carruthers: 3♥. If this is not conventionally a splinter, I'd bid 3♣. Let's have a rule: second-round jumps are splinters unless the opening bidder has rebid in no-trumps.

PROBLEM 4

IMPs. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ 7
♥ AKJ106
♦ 8632
♣ Q94

West	North	East	South
–	–	3♣	Pass
?			

Bid	Votes	Marks
3♥	9	10
5♣	4	7
4♥	3	6
4♠	1	4
4♣	0	2

With club support, a strong suit of our own, and

a likely vulnerable game looming for the opposition, we are surely going to bid something, the only question is what?

Some look no further than supporting partner's suit:

Cannell: 5♣. Let them figure out what to do.
Sandsmark: 5♣! Since it is quite likely that the enemy can win 4♠, and since attack is considered the best defense strategy, and since the vulnerability is favourable and it is unlikely that partner has heart support, you should do your best to keep the opposition out of the bidding. North will for sure have a strong and good hand with many spades, but if you put him to the test by bidding 5♣ or even 6♣, he will have to guess whether or not it would be a wise policy to participate in the bidding at that level. Another important thing: when raising to 5♣ you are less likely to be doubled. I think it is relatively unimportant to find contracts that will make. However, you should always try to find good bids which will optimize your chances of getting a good score

The pessimists on the panel may perhaps pass, and some panellists may choose to introduce the heart suit at the three level (forcing) or even to bid 4♥. If so, they deserve multiple minus points, for both these bids leave the scene open for North to bid his spade suit and provides him with reasons to penalize you when you sacrifice later. Even here, 5♣ may win if the sun is in Zenith and you long for home:

♠ 7	♠ J63
♥ AKJ106	♥ Q4
♦ 8632	♦ 9
♣ Q94	♣ AK108652

Once again, Tommy is wrong to suggest that any panellist would pass.

Mould: 5♣. Certainly opposite John Holland – Hell it might make! Entirely a function of what a first in hand 3♣ looks like. If it could be ♠xxx ♥xx ♦xxx ♣Jxxxx of great fame then this is not a sensible idea, but opposite John Holland that would not be the case or even close. I expect 5♣ to be a good save against 4♠ and want to put them under maximum pressure. Obviously other bids are 3♥, 4♥, 4♣, 3♠ or even the old 3NT. I don't expect many marks for this effort but John will approve.

I too sometimes have the pleasure of partnering John Holland. I would not feel too uncomfortable about raising one of his 3♣ openings to game with this hand, but I hope he would feel very uncomfortable about raising one of my 3♣ openings in the same way.

Alder: 5♣. Yes, I might wish I had bid hearts for the lead, but why make it easy for North to bid spades?

Why indeed? That leads a minority to a different game bid, though with different ideas about what to do next.

Teramoto: 4♥. Showing hearts and taking space from them. If they bid 4♠, I will bid 5♣.

Kokish: 4♥. But not with a partner who could have AKJxxxx at green. If this doesn't shut them out, I'm not planning on bidding 5♣. Less dramatic actions (3♥, 4♣) could work, as could a bash at 5♣, but perhaps this is a middle-ground position despite its moderate weirdness.

Of course, 4♥ would be a much more popular choice if it promised a club fit, fit-jump style. No doubt some readers will play it that way, but the

overwhelming expert approach is to play a jump to 4♥/♠ here as based solely on the major, with any club fit purely a bonus.

By the smallest possible majority the panel votes in favour of a simple heart bid, which will get the right lead if we are outbid, and will see partner compete if holding heart length, but making it very easy for LHO to come into bidding.

Carruthers: 3♥. For two good reasons: (i) he may have a fit; (ii) for the lead.

Cope: 3♥. Tell partner the lead when they bid spades and allow them to co-operate in any further auction. Will bid 5♣ later unless partner doubles a 4♠ bid to show heart shortage.

Stabell: 3♥. The opponents will most likely be in a spade contract very soon, and I want to involve partner in deciding whether to sacrifice or not over 4♠ or even 5♠. I will probably bid 5♣ next time and leave the rest (if any) to him.

Apteker: 3♥. Will help partner on lead if North becomes declarer in 5♦ or 5♠ while still increasing the obstructive value of our bidding. North may not know if I am bidding constructively or pre-emptively if he does not have significant extra values over an opening bid. The alternatives of 4♣ or 5♣, while more pressuring on the opponents may not succeed in keeping the opponents from bidding when they know we have a fit. Although highly unlikely, we may even buy the contract in 4♥ if partner raises.

Rigal: 3♥. The choice is to bid 5♣ and boost the auction while not getting the best lead or to simulate GF values (I almost have them while getting the lead). I'm prepared to sell out to

5♠ and don't expect to be punished in 5♣ so a constructive auction seems best.

Both Alon and Barry would appear to be planning to bid 5♣ over 4♠. However:

Robson: 3♥. In a way, I hate that call because you may be giving yourself the last guess. I suppose we are deciding not to bid 5♣ over 4♠ (unilaterally) while attracting a heart lead.

Sime: 3♥. This may be our only chance to secure a heart lead against their spade contract.

McGowan: 3♥. Maybe 5♣ would be more effective, depends how many hearts partner has. I prefer to organize the lead then guess whether to sacrifice in clubs next time...though I am a lousy guesser.

Bird: 3♥. I will need some persuading that this is not best. If N/S bid to 4♠, I will judge (brilliantly) whether to sacrifice in 5♣.

Neither Liz nor David knows what they will do over 4♠.

Back to the jumps to game:

Lawrence: 4♥. A natural bid that may steal the pot.

It might, though I fear that LHO is going to bid 4♠ or double according to his spade length. If you really want to stop them bidding 4♠, perhaps this is the answer – bid it before they do.

Zia: If modern three bid I would bid 4♠ (might buy it). Otherwise 4♥.

You just might buy it. If they double you can run to 5♣ having sown some confusion, while if 4♠ is left undisturbed – 350 or – 400 could be something of a coup. If nothing else, these opponents will remember forever and will have doubts when you make perfectly innocent bids against them in future.

PROBLEM 5

IMPs. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

♠ 764
♥ Q
♦ K1085432
♣ A7

West	North	East	South
–	1NT*	Double	2♠
?			
1NT	12-14		

Bid	Votes	Marks
3♠	7	10
3♦	6	10
4♦	3	7
Pass	1	2
5♦	0	2

Kokish: 3♦. We'd all have some methods in place. I'm going to bid 3♣ as an INV+ TRF to diamonds. If you're not interested in the panel's personal preferences, I'd have to choose between 3♦, 4♦ and 3♠. Ugh!

Once again I have changed Eric's bid because, yes, we are very interested in the panel's personal preferences, but they still have to answer within the framework of the agreed methods. It is reasonable to assume that we play Lebensohl – remember that 2NT is rarely natural in competition – but for sure it would have been specified in the notes had we agreed to play Transfer Lebensohl. Incidentally, as an aside, have you noticed that Lebensohl used to differentiate between competitive and forcing bids, while comments nowadays suggest that some of the panel have given up on the purely competitive bid and prefer everything

to be invitational or better?

Alder: 4♦. I assume we are not using some ilk of Lebensohl here.

Well, I think we are – or certainly will be in future after what we have seen in this set of problems.

Cope: 3♦. Methods are undiscussed here but would assume most partnerships would play some form of Lebensohl – so Pass would be NF, 2NT a weak hand with a long suit that wants to compete, and other bids as natural and showing real values.

Liz considers Pass to be forcing:

McGowan: Pass. Forcing. Double would be take-out, so not an option. Plan to bid 3♦ next time to show something like this. Immediate 3♦ would be much weaker.

But that is surely a minority agreement. I am used to playing that Pass over 2♣/♦ is forcing with T/O doubles, Pass over 2♥/♠ NF with T/O doubles. I know some players who like to extend the forcing passes to 2♥, but not many will do so up to 2♠.

Rigal: 3♦. We do play Lebensohl here don't we, with 3♦ forcing? Of course 3♣ as transfer Lebensohl showing diamonds and Inv+ values would be best. 'We have the moon, don't let's ask for the stars.'

Yes, that is the same agreement Eric asked for and I have sympathy.

Bird: 3♦. This is an obvious Lebensohl situation for me, which makes 3♦ forcing. If Lebensohl is not on the NBM card, I can always hope for a timely email from the diligent new director. *(You can hope...)*

Mould: 3♦. Forcing for me as 2NT = Lebensohl. Would bid it even if not forcing as it just seems



Leif-Erik Stabell

the practical bid.

But some panellists clearly are not used to playing Lebensohl here.

Cannell: 4♦. I have too much for a simple competitive 3♦ bid. The extra length and strength push me to 4♦.

Carruthers: 4♦. Have we discussed this auction? I think not. However, partner should know what to do, whatever North does.

Sime: 3♦. I guess partner is about to bid hearts, so our hand is not as good as it looks. I have assumed double would be take-out and no forcing pass.

A comment which implies that he doesn't intend 3♦ to be forcing.

Teramoto: 3♠. Ask for spade stopper, Long diamonds may bring us enough tricks for game.

Robson: 3♠. Bid 3NT with a stop - what else?

Apteker: 3♠. Forcing to game, intending to pass 3NT otherwise heading to 5♦. I think systematically, 3♦ shows constructive values in context but I do not think it is enough even though partner could have any shape and number of diamonds.

Stabell: 3♠. 3NT looks like a reasonable gamble with a spade stopper on the other side. I take it that this is a Lebensohl-position and that partner will only bid 4♥ with a real suit now.

Zia: 3♠.

Lawrence: 3♠. I have no idea what it means. If partner bids 3NT, I will guess to pass. If he bids anything else, I'll bid 5♦.

Sandsmark: 3♠! Again an extremely easy task. You have to bid 3♠, for you are certainly not going to play 3NT with no spade stoppers. If partner says 3NT, you will happily pass, and if he says anything else, you will go for 5♦. On a sunny day partner may even have a very good hand, and with your glass being half-full, you might even sniff on and land in a potential slam in diamonds:

♠ 764			♠ A52
♥ Q			♥ AKJ103
♦ K1085432			♦ QJ96
♣ A7			♣ 9
West	North	East	South
–	1NT*	Double	2♠
3♠	Pass	3NT	Pass
4♦	Pass	4♥	Pass
4NT	Pass	5♠	Pass
6♦	All Pass		

I will be very astonished and somewhat disappointed if any panellist makes another bid than 3♠! That will be like a gift from heaven for your opponents! Thus the moderator should not give any points to any other bid!

I will be very astonished and somewhat disappointed if Tommy makes a correct prediction about his fellow panellists before the end of this set of problems. He is 0 for 3 at the moment.

More seriously, 3♦ is surely better than 3♠ if we are certain that it is forcing – it will usually get 3NT from partner when that is where we belong. But 3♠ avoids any risk of a misunderstanding if there is any doubt about the forcing nature of 3♦.

PROBLEM 6

IMPs. Dealer North. All Vul.

♠ AK6
♥ 642
♦ QJ8
♣ 9764

West	North	East	South
–	1♥	Double	Pass
?			

Bid	Votes	Marks
1NT	4	10
2♣	4	10
1♠	3	9
3♣	3	9
2♥	1	6
2♠	1	6

This one is impossible and I wouldn't presume to claim that I knew what was correct. That being the case, I will leave the panel to persuade you of

the rightness of their opinions, starting with:

Rigal: 2♣. I can't see any reason to bid more right now; yes it may be the wrong strain and level but I don't see a better way to explore.

Stabell: 2♣. Not worth a jump with a nine-loser hand and no suit to speak of. NT could be better but it tends to show a stopper in the opponent's suit!

Mould: 2♣. Bitter experience has taught me that you should bid 2♣ on these hands. Every time I bid 3♣ partner is 4-2-4-3 or even 4-2-5-2. If partner has short hearts North will bid again and I can double 2♥.

McGowan: 2♣. Vomit-worthy problem. Surely somebody will bid again (vomit-covered fingers crossed), then I can show some strength in context.

Liz nails this problem with the one word – vomit-worthy. She and her supporters meanwhile can claim to have done what was asked of them, bid their longest suit. But perhaps it is necessary to show the strength also?

Apteker: 3♣. Definitely don't love it but nothing else seems better. 1NT seems like the only realistic alternative, perhaps improved by South's silence, but North has not had the chance to rebid his suit so may well run off hearts in NT. This will be even worse if partner raises to 2NT, which I will raise 3NT, or directly to 3NT.

Lawrence: 3♣. Wonderful problem. With no solution. Can't cue-bid. 3♣ is the only value bid that comes close. I'll try that but hate it.

Cannell: 3♣. I hate it, but it feels like a lesser of evils bid. The jump should be something like 8-10 HCPs. Lead directing. :) Second choice is 1NT – "stoppers, we don't need no stinkin'

stoppers."

Which leads us nicely into:

Kokish: 1NT. As 2♣ and 1♠ could be a zero-count and 3♣ on 9xxx is weird even for me and Marc Smith, I'm going to show some values without jumping in my three-card spade suit and hope that this helps partner sort out where we belong. I am unapologetic.

Bird: 1NT. If there is no further bidding, this will be a satisfactory spot. Yes, I did notice the small flaw in this bid. I noted similar flaws in the 2♣, 2♥ and 3♣ alternatives.

Carruthers: 1NT. I am encouraged by South's pass. I shall be less so if North cashes five hearts on the trot.

Alder: 1NT. They have run this problem a few times in The Bridge World. Obviously 1NT suffers from a lack of heart stopper, but at least South did not raise his partner. My bid has the advantage of showing some points, which 2♣ does not.

That is of course the big upside of responding 1NT – the downside is obvious, but I confess to being tempted...

If neither clubs nor NT fit the bill, how about bidding a three-card suit?

Cope: 1♠. No choice here really works but making the lowest bid does at least give partner the most room to bid. We are heavy in points but I cannot bring myself to bid 3♣ on this hand and might as well stay at a lower level. I have been known to play 3-3 fits quite well!

No doubt through long practice.

Teramoto: 1♠. I like 1♠ better than 2♣ with this hand. It is not enough to invite game.

Robson: 1♠. Wrong in every way, but I won't

bid no-trumps without a heart stopper.

Sime: 2♠. Not the smallest lie, but the one with the biggest upside. If partner raises, the Moysian game should have play.

Or even a three-card suit with a jump. The problem with the Moysian fit is that the force is likely to have to be taken in the long trump hand. And if no natural bid makes sense, we could try a non-descriptive bid instead, owing partner a high card instead of a stopper or trump:

Sandsmark: 2♥! A very difficult bid indeed! I definitely don't like 1/2NT without any heart stopper, and 2/3♣ seems bleak and bad, being in a minor and all, 1♠ on a three-card suit is a mockery of good bridge, and pass is absolutely out of the question. Just like Sherlock Holmes, when you rule out the impossible, you are left with the obvious solution, however improbable it may look. The lay-out forces my bid, even if I don't like it! Regardless of what my partner says over 2♠ without a jump, I will pass, since I have already slightly overbid my hand. However, if he makes a jump to a level beneath game, I will raise to game in his suit.

I am sure that cue-bidding then passing the response might work, but it may also irritate partner, who will think that we have promised a further bid. For example, he would expect his 2♠ response to be enough even with a lot of spare strength so as to limit himself to a four-card suit, with a jump to 3♠ showing five cards.

And finally, the best solution by far – if only the opposition will let us get away with it:

Zia: Redouble.

Alas...

PROBLEM 7

IMPs. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

♠ KQ87
♥ J109732
♦ A10
♣ 8

West	North	East	South
–	1♦	1♠	Pass
?			

Bid	Votes	Marks
4♣	8	10
2NT	3	7
2♦	2	5
4♠	2	4
3♦	1	2
3♥	1	2

Kokish: 4♠. Whether 4♥ or 4♣ is a fit bid or a splinter is apparently not important for the problem setter. I'm not going to start low with 2♦ and give opener an easy opportunity to show clubs or rebid diamonds although 4♠ might make it tough for us to reach a good slam. I suppose if I could transfer to hearts I could get more meaningfully involved, but a stiff heart may be as good or better than (say) ace and one.

Rigal: 4♠. I'm not prepared to make a fit jump to 3♥ since it may mislead partner and I would want to bid game over a 3♠ signoff whether it be fast or slow. Maybe a 4♣ splinter is best – assuming that isn't more fit showing?

The system notes state clearly that we play fit jumps but that double jumps are splinters and jump cue-bids show a Mixed Raise. The only

thing that is not specified is the meaning of a 2NT response to a 1♥/♠ overcall. Let's as of now agree that it is a constructive four-card raise, with a cue-bid therefore being either only a raise to the two level or, if a three-level raise, then only showing three-card support.

Alder: 2NT or 4♣, if permitted. I would prefer to advance with 2NT to show at least game-invitational values with four or more spades. If that is not in your methods, is 4♣ a splinter bid? (In my book, it is not; it is a fit-jump. My only splinter in competition is a jump cue.) If neither of those bids is permitted, I will have to cue-bid 2♦.

I'll give you 2NT as Inv+ with four-card support, as discussed above.

Cope: 4♣. Again, no system directive as to whether fit jumps or splinter are in play so will assume the latter. Since a splinter transfers the captaincy to partner – just saying that we have enough for game and the relevant singleton – we can leave the rest of the hard work to partner.

Well assumed.

Carruthers: 4♣. Again I ask, is this a splinter? If we play fit-jumps, then 4♥. Too good for 4♠.

Zia: 4♣.

Mould: 4♣. I am bidding game so may as well try for the superfit slam.

You would almost think that he knows the system!

Lawrence: 4♣. If it is agreed to be a splinter. Otherwise, 3♦. A shapely four card limit raise. Continuations are likely.

Cannell: 4♣. I could bid 2NT as a four-card limit or better raise, but I think the club shortness might be a useful tidbit for partner. Plus, it takes some room from North.

Robson: 4♣. Standard splinter, expect near-unanimous panel.

Sandsmark: 4♣! This one is quite obvious, and again, I doubt if the replies from the panel will have any diversity at all. 4♣ is a mild slam try (a “splinter”: accepting spades as trumps), which tells the whole story, as it is exactly what you have. Partner’s next bid will guide your further actions. If he goes down in 4♠, you will be happy to pass, and should he cue-bid any red suit, you should go on to investigate the slam possibilities. Again, with good distributional hands like this one, partner needs not have very much before a slam is laydown. Suit slams are very seldom depending on a huge number of HCPs, but play very well when the fit is good and you have the crucial honours in the right suits. Even 7♠ would have a good chance here if he holds:

♠ KQ87	♠ A96542
♥ J109732	♥ –
♦ A10	♦ K9
♣ 8	♣ A9753

You really aren’t very good at this prediction business are you – though at least Andrew agreed with you this time.

There were no fewer than four other minority opinions.

Teramoto: 3♥. Fit showing jump, it shows hearts and support. I will go to game this hand.

The shape is fine for a fit jump, but the hearts are very weak so partner may be surprised by the dummy.

Apteker: 2NT. According to system: a four-card raise limit or better. The alternative of 3♥ fit does not have the ideal suit quality in hearts and does not allow partner space to counter try

while I am not clear whether 4♣ systemically is a splinter or fit.

Bird: 2NT. A fit-jump in hearts is out of the question with a jack-high suit. It is between 2NT (showing a strong four-card raise) and a 4♣ splinter. My pile of chips hover half-way between the two bids and... finally land on the square for 2NT!

McGowan: 3♦. Might help if I knew my system.... Is this a Mixed raise? (I plan to bid again....) Would bid 2NT if that was a good four-card raise. Not a fit jump – the heart suit is not a source of tricks. Maybe 4♣ if that were a splinter, but that uses a lot of space and partner will probably sign off without a diamond control.

3♦ is a Mixed Raise – this hand is not.

Stabell: 2♦. This lets North in with a cheap double or club bid, but I have too much for a pre-emptive jump to 4♠ at this vulnerability. A 4♣ splinter is an alternative if available, but I would prefer that to be a fit-jump. And I would still have a problem if partner cue-bids 4♥ over 4♣, since I am not strong enough to bypass 4♠ to show the diamond control.

A point also well made by Iain, who would feel committed to showing the diamond control over partner’s heart cue-bid so refuses to put himself in that situation.

Sime: 2♦. I am going to game, perhaps slam. Bidding 4♣ immediately commits me to the five level over the likely 4♥ cue by partner.

I came to the problem thinking I would splinter, but Leif-Erik and Iain make a compelling point about what to then do over partner’s heart cue-bid. However, I prefer the 2NT Inv+ four-card raise to the 2♦ cue-bid if I am not going to splinter.

PROBLEM 8

IMPs. Dealer North. None Vul.

♠ AJ32
♥ –
♦ QJ109853
♣ K6

West	North	East	South
–	1♣	Double	1♠
?			

Bid	Votes	Marks
Dble	7	10
5♦	5	8
2♣	3	6
2♠	1	2
3NT	1	2

The first question would seem to be, what does double show? Traditionally, it showed four spades and some values, so:

Kokish: Double. Might as well show some values and four spades before trying to find the right level in diamonds or no-trump. Being declarer might be important, but we could really use more information.

Teramoto: Double. It shows four or more spades and some values. The void in hearts suggest partner may have strong hand with hearts. I would like to hear what partner will say next.

Stabell: Double. I will start by showing the spade suit, since South could easily have psyched with long clubs here. This would also allow partner to bid a strong heart hand slowly if everyone is honest. If the bidding continues – (2♣) – 2♥ – (3♣) – 3♦, we should be in a forcing position and might be able to diagnose the degree of

diamond fit.

Cannell: Double. This shows four spades the way I like to play. A Two Spade bid would be a fifth spade. We need this to circumvent the inveterate psychers! Not you, Brian. :) It feels like South has a few hearts. We will see. The auction is a long way from being over. How I get the diamonds involved will prove interesting

Rigal: Double. Partner appears to have a strong hand with hearts, so letting him show that so we can bid diamonds in forcing fashion seems reasonable enough. My double is penalty so when partner bids hearts he will announce what he has and he will be happy to let me play diamonds....yeah right.

Sime: Double. Shows four spades and values, the traditional way to expose a psyche, but no longer universal. We should soon find out who is concealing the hearts.

McGowan: Double. Shows four or more spades. Toyed with leaps to 3NT or 5♦, but I think the softly-softly approach will annoy partner more. Could South have psyched? Don't miss next week's thrilling instalment.

Seven doublers all know what their call means. Alan disagrees:

Mould: 2♣. Double is take-out these days as nobody psyches anymore, not that I would do it even if I could, as I will never convince partner I have seven diamonds and such a good hand. 2♦ and 3♦ are non-forcing, so unless I just want to guess the level (5♦? 6♦?) I do not have much choice but to start with 2♣. God knows where it will end. The missing hearts are somewhat curious... It seems as if opener must be 5-6 in the rounded suits and pard and RHO have four

each. Maybe that is an argument for 5♦ before they find that out.

I don't know what the UK expert community do with double here, but certainly I have seen several slightly lower tournament pairs play it as responsive rather than showing spades. Being a senior as well as a Senior, I still play what is apparently the old-fashioned method of double to show four spades.

Barry has already suggested that partner may be strong with hearts, too good to overcall, so there are two possibilities to explain the lack of heart bidding to date. There were two other 2♣ cue-bidders.

Lawrence: 2♣. 2♠ would be natural. I need to establish a force before trying to untangle this.

Zia: 2♠. If a cue, otherwise 2♣.

And one who obviously plays 2♠ as a cue-bid and not the five-card spade suit as in traditional methods.

Carruthers: 2♠. I plan to get to at least 5♦, perhaps higher. This might also be a good problem for later in the auction: 1♣ – Dble – 1♠ – 2♠ – P – 3♥ – P – ? (a.) Do you agree with 2♠? (b.) What would you bid now?

Apteker: 3NT. Appears that South has at least 5-5 in the majors as there has been no bidding in hearts to date so North, with short spades, will have long clubs. 3♦ is not enough, 5♦ may have too many losers and 2♣ forcing won't really help after partner bids 2♥ followed by 3♦ by me. I want the club lead round to me with my best chance being that partner has either AK of diamonds, or ♦A over the king or the king of diamonds and can stop clubs as well. Hearts may be the opponents' best lead but North won't

know that.

I see where you are coming from, but I'm not sure that 3NT will be so often better than 5♦. And, for sure, 3NT gives up on a diamond slam. This last group all went for the 'practical' bid.

Alder: 5♦. Then hope partner knows what to do! I think I need to be the declarer to avoid an immediate club lead through my king.

Cope: 5♦. Maybe giving up on slam but bidding what my hand is worth as I am not sure that any cute manoeuvres by me will get me the information I might need for slam purposes. I suppose they may have psyched 1♠ but if they have, well done to them for choosing the right time.

Robson: 5♦. Could make an overtrick facing a minimum or an undertrick facing extra values... my best guess.

Bird: 5♦. This is a very good problem. Whether I have given a very good answer, I will find out in due course.

Sandsmark: 5♦! It will be tactically unwise to "small-talk" this board, for anything beneath 5♦ will make it extremely easy for the enemy to find the possible heart sacrifice. Again, they will be guessing at the five level, and it will feel safer for them to land in a spade contract if they decide to participate more. And then you will give them a "Coup de Grace" by doubling. Both 6♦ E/W and 6♥ N/S may be makeable contracts, e.g. if this or something similar to the lay-out of the hand. However, neither North nor South would probably dare to bid after 5♦ from West. A thing all pre-empts have in common, is that they are difficult to handle for the opposition, for when you get uncomfortably high very early, you will have to guess what is right and what

is wrong. And your guess is just as likely to be wrong as right:

♠ 4	♠ 4
♥ AQ108	♥ Q10
♦ 7	♥ J542
♣ AJ108753	♦ AK642
♠ AJ32	♣ 92
♥ –	♠ K98765
♦ QJ109853	♥ K9763
♣ K6	♦ –
	♣ Q4

I am underwhelmed by partner's judgment if he thinks that East hand is a double of 1♣. Even giving him the ♠K instead of the ♠10 leaves him with a 1♦ overcall not a take-out double. Try harder next time, Tommy.

Anyone who jumps to 5♦ is assuming that N/S have a big heart fit. If partner has the big hand with hearts, a diamond slam could easily be on. There is no reason at all why South needs to have any high-card strength if he has either long weak spades or a club fit. I have some sympathy with those who say that if we start with a double it will be impossible to convince partner that we have

this many diamonds, on the other hand partner may never believe that we have these spades if we don't double. Finally, if we start with a 2♣ cue-bid then bid diamonds, then spades, we will know what we are about, but will partner, or will he think the spade bid merely an asking bid? It's all rather messy. For the future, however, can we agree that double is still the traditional spade-showing call, as that is clearly the more common understanding amongst the panel.

Congratulations to Tim Cope and Andrew Robson, who topped the panel this month with 76 points.



Tim Cope

SET 10 – THE PANEL'S BIDS & MARKS

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
Tim Cope	South Africa	4♥	Dble	3♥	3♥	3♦	1♠	4♣	5♦	76
Andrew Robson	England	3♠	Dble	3♣	3♥	3♠	1♠	4♣	5♦	76
Leif-Erik Stabell	Zimbabwe	3♠	Dble	3♣	3♥	3♠	2♣	2♦	Dble	74
Drew Cannell	Canada	3♠	Dble	3♣	5♣	4♦	3♣	4♣	Dble	72
Alan Mould	England	4♥	Dble	3♥	5♣	3♦	2♣	4♣	2♣	72
Mike Lawrence	USA	3♠	Dble	3♥	4♥	3♠	3♣	4♣	2♣	71
Iain Sime	Scotland	3♠	Dble	3♥	3♥	3♦	2♠	2♦	Dble	71
Eric Kokish	Canada	3♠	Dble	3♥	4♥	3♦	1NT	4♠	Dble	70
David Bird	England	4♥	4♥	3♣	3♥	3♦	1NT	2NT	5♦	69
John Carruthers	Canada	4♥	Dble	3♥	3♥	4♦	1NT	4♣	2♠	68
Alon Apteker	South Africa	4♥	Dble	3♣	3♥	3♠	3♣	2NT	3NT	66
Barry Rigal	USA	3♥	4♥	3♥	3♥	3♦	2♣	4♠	Dble	64
Liz McGowan	Scotland	4♥	Dble	3♥	3♥	Pass	2♣	3♦	Dble	63
Zia Mahmood	USA	3♠	4♥	3♣	4♠	3♠	–	4♣	2♣	63
Tommy Sandsmark	Norway	3NT	Dble	4♥	5♣	3♠	2♥	4♣	5♦	61
Phillip Alder	USA	3♥	4♥	3♥	5♣	4♦	1NT	2NT	5♦	59
Tadashi Teramoto	Japan	4♣	Dble	4♥	4♥	3♠	1♠	3♥	Dble	57



Master Point Bidding Battle Competition – Set 11

Open to All – Free Entry

PROBLEM 1

IMPs. Dealer North. All Vul.

♠ QJ42
♥ AKJ2
♦ 75
♣ J52

West	North	East	South
–	Pass	1NT*	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♥	Double*
?			
1NT 12-14			
Dble T/O			

PROBLEM 2

IMPs. Dealer North. All Vul.

♠ J94
♥ AKQJ432
♦ –
♣ K73

West	North	East	South
–	Pass	3♠	Pass
?			

PROBLEM 3

IMPs. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

♠ J3
♥ 96
♦ 6532
♣ AK1097

West	North	East	South
–	1NT*	Pass	4♥*
Pass	Pass	Double	Pass
?			
1NT 12-14			
4♥ Natural			

PROBLEM 4

IMPs. Dealer North. None Vul.

♠ AQ1098
♥ A106
♦ AK2
♣ K9

West	North	East	South
–	2♦*	Pass	3♥*
?			
2♦ Multi: Weak 2M or strong balanced			
3♥ Pass or correct			
If West doubles, that is T/O of hearts			

PROBLEM 5

IMPs. Dealer East. None Vul.

♠ A2
♥ Q105
♦ 1095
♣ KJ1098

West	North	East	South
–	–	1♠	Pass
1NT	3♥*	Double	Pass
?			
3♥ Weak			

PROBLEM 6

IMPs. Dealer South. None Vul.

♠ J10842
♥ A983
♦ 2
♣ AKQ

West	North	East	South
–	–	–	2♥*
2♠	3♥	4♥	Pass
?			
2♥ Weak, frequently five cards when Non-vul			

PROBLEM 7

IMPs. Dealer South. All Vul.

♠ A87
♥ –
♦ Q84
♣ AQJ10985

West	North	East	South
–	–	–	Pass
1♣	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♦*	Pass
?			
2♦ ART GF			

PROBLEM 8

IMPs. Dealer East. None Vul.

♠ 6
♥ AQJ76
♦ J108
♣ AQ97

West	North	East	South
–	–	1♣*	3♠
Double	Pass	3NT	Pass
?			
1♣ 3+ cards and we play 15-17 NT			

Attention

See revised Bidding System on following page

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

Attention!!!

The Bidding System has been modified – please read carefully, this is the system to be used for the Bidding Battle from now on

Basic Method

Natural

Five-card majors

Minors are three cards in length minimum. Always open 1♣ with 3-3 but 1♦ with 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 response 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, next step is a WNT and 2NT is GF with the next step suit; 3m is unbalanced and non-forcing. All other bids are at least quasi-natural and FG.

After, say, 1♣ – 2♣ – 2♦ – 2NT/3♣ are WNT/long

clubs minimum so NF, anything else is GF.

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. 4♣ is RKCB. 2any – 2new = NAT Constructive NF; 2any – 3new = NAT Forcing.

Three-level openings are natural and pre-emptive. Over 3♦/♥/♠, 4♣ is RKCB and over 3♣, 4♦ is RKCB.

3NT opening is Acoll gambling – solid suit and at most a queen outside.

Four-level opening 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 in a suit shows a good suit and a good hand. Where the response was 1NT, 3NT may be a flat 19-count.

After 2NT, 20-22, 3♣ = Stayman with Smolen, 3♦/3♥ = transfers, 3♠ = slam try with both minors. Four level bids are as after 1NT opening.

Reverse Kokish is played after 2♣ opening (2♣-2♦-2♥-2♠-2NT is 23-24 balanced, and 2♣-2♦-2NT is 25+ balanced GF).

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 natural, 3 partner's suit extras with no singleton, 3NT

=18-19 balanced, 4 of new suits are splinters but deny a second suit. 4 of partner's major shows a bad opening. Such as 1M – 2NT – 3♦ – 3M – 4♣ = splinter (3NT is 5M-4♦-2-2).

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 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.

Where responder jumps in a third suit after opener has bid and rebid a suit, that is a splinter, with a non-jump new suit NAT F1.

Sequences such as 1♦ – 1♠ – 2♦ – 2♥ are F1; 1♣ – 1♠ – 2♣ – 2♦ = ART GF, while 2♥ would be NF but opener is can raise. 1♦ – 1♠ – 2♦ – 3♥ = splinter in support of ♦.

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. 4NT followed by 5NT is for specific kings.

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 normally denies a control in that suit, except that a player may revert to traditional cue-bidding, e.g. spades are trumps, cue-bidding 4♦ then 5♣ with 1st-round ♦, 2nd-round ♣ if he feels that to be appropriate and he is happy to commit to the five level.

Exception: a shortage control in partner's suit is not shown immediately.

The default for 5NT is "pick a slam" unless following on from 4NT by the same player.

Competition:

Responsive and competitive doubles through 4♦ – after that, doubles are value-showing, not penalties.

1x – Dble – 1y – Dble = 4y and some values; 2y = 5y and a hand that would have bid 2y over a pass from RHO.

Negative doubles through 4♦ – after that, doubles are value showing, not penalties.

Game try doubles where no space for any other game try.

After our 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, raise 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). Where we overcall 1M, a 2NT response is a four-card limit or better raise, a cue-bid could contain four-card support if only worth a two-level raise, but is otherwise a three-card raise.

Double jumps are splinters.

Lebensohl applies after interference over our 1NT and facing our T/O double of a weak two bid or of 2M after they opened a multi 2♦ against us. 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

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.

1NT – 2♥ – 3♠ is FG). Note that most relatively balanced hands with no stopper will start with a T/O double.

We open 1NT and they overcall. Whatever its meaning, double of the overcall is T/O of the suit BID. Pass then double is also T/O and therefore implies length in the first opposing suit.

2NT is rarely natural in competition (except as defined above). Possibilities include Lebensohl or scramble if game is not viable. Scramble will tend to apply in balancing situations, Lebensohl (Good/Bad) where game is still a live possibility.

This includes the Good/Bad 2NT in situations where it is appropriate.

We double their Stayman or transfer over 1NT: if 1NT = 14+, double shows the suit doubled. If 1NT is maximum 15 HCP, double is PEN of 1NT.

Our 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 single-jumps, splinter double-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 against two-level openings – 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♣ = ♣&M and 4♦ = Ms. Over 3♥, 4♣/♦ = Nat, 4♥ = ♠&m, 4NT = ms. Over 3♠, 4♠/♦/♥ = nat, 4♠/4NT = two-suiter.

Over their 1NT, Dble = 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
November 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 North. E/W Vul.

♠ 10
♥ QJ983
♦ 7
♣ A109742

North opens 1♠ and South raises to 2♣

Hand 2. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ J9764
♥ AQ6532
♦ QJ
♣ —

If East opens 1NT and West bids 2♣ North doubles

Hand 3. Dealer West. N/S Vul.

♠ AQ
♥ KQ52
♦ KQ4
♣ 9632

Hand 4. Dealer South. E/W Vul

♠ 54
♥ K732
♦ KQ10864
♣ 2

North opens 2♠ (5-5 ♠+♦/♣, 6-10) and if East doubles South raises to 3♠

Hand 5. Dealer North. Both Vul.

♠ AK98
♥ AK
♦ AQ6
♣ AK98

Hand 6. Dealer south. E/W Vul.

♠ AKJ8
♥ 82
♦ KQ6
♣ A843

Hand 7. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

♠ A97
♥ A9
♦ AK
♣ AKQJ94

Hand 8. Dealer West. E/W Vul.

♠ 10
♥ AQJ654
♦ AKJ2
♣ 93

South overcalls 3♣ and North raises to 5♣

MASTER POINT BIDDING BATTLE



Results - Set 9

This month's winners were **Andrew King** and **David Barnes** with 74. **Mike Ralph** on 72 and **Mike Perkins** on 70 complete the prize winners. Andrew wins the £40 voucher, David £30, Mike Ralph £20, Mike Perkins £10.

Other Good Scores

69: Colin Brown, Andy Poole, Nigel Guthrie

67 Nelson Pearson

66 Bill Gordon, Tony Burt, Mark Bartusek

65 Carles Acero, Olga Shadyro

Grand Prix standings:

The top twenty scorers currently are:

Alex Athanasiadis	367
Rodney Lighton	367
Mike Ralph	367
Mark Bartusek	363
David Barnes	360
Michael Prior	359
Stuart Nelson	357
Nigel Guthrie	351
Colin Brown	350
Peter Barker	350

Bill Linton	349
Bill Gordon	347
Dominic Connolly	346
Lars Erik Bergerud	345
Mike Perkins	345
Jeff Callaghan	340
Olga Shadyro	338
Dudley Leigh	338
Derek Markham	337
Norman Massey	335

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 9

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
Pass	10	10	12
3♦	5	7	9
2♦	3	6	13
1♥	1	3	0
1♠	0	0	1

I gave an award to a psychic 1♥ response but none of the readers went for that. However, we did get one vote for a psychic 1♠. This is inferior to 1♥ for a couple of reasons. Firstly, we are trying to pick off the opposition's trump suit and, if we have two hearts and three spades, they are more likely to have an eight-card heart fit than an eight-card spade fit. Secondly, and more seriously, if we lay claim to a suit for which partner has support, he will be more inclined to take the push one more time in spades over opposing heart bidding, than he will be to keep on competing with hearts over opposing spade bidding, simply because the latter involves going a level higher while the former does not. The risks in pretending to have a spade suit and some values are therefore noticeably greater than in pretending to have a heart suit plus some values. I'm therefore going to be mean and not award anything to a 1♠ bid.

PROBLEM 2

Bid	Votes	Marks	Readers
Dble	11	10	23
2NT	6	8	6
3NT	1	3	0
Pass	1	2	6

PROBLEM 3

Bid	Votes	Marks	Readers
4♠	10	10	20
Pass	5	6	5
4NT	4	7	7
5♦	0	2	1
5♥	0	2	2

On this problem we received votes for two bids from readers which were not chosen by any of the panel.

5♦. The first question is whether it is clear that this is a cue-bid in support of hearts and not some six-five in the minors hand. I'm not sure that either hand-type is particularly likely to bid this way. For me, if 5♦ is a cue-bid it denies a spade control, when we might just be raising to 5♥ instead. Does it therefore deny both a spade and a club control but show great red-suit cards? Well, maybe, and the alternative of a natural reverse at the five level does not make me feel very comfortable either – I think we have lost any diamond fit we may have and only 5♣ would be natural here. Is the argument that we could never go past game with no spade control so 5♦ implies second-round spade control? A bit too deep for me.

5♥. This looks like a hand without a spade control. After all, it is so easy to bid 4♠ over 4♥, and there is no ambiguity as to its meaning, so why not?

Both 5♦ and 5♥ remove RKCB from our subsequent options, while 4♠ also allows partner to show the ♣K conveniently, which is not possible over 5♦ or 5♥. No, the panel has got this one right, I think.

PROBLEM 4

Bid	Votes	Marks	Readers
4♥	7	10	9
4♠	5	8	6
Pass	4	5	16
3NT	1	2	2
4♦	1	2	0
4NT	1	6	0
6♦	0	3	1
Dble	0	0	1

Again we have two reader-only actions. One we can dismiss rather easily, I'm afraid, as double facing partner's double is not a legal option. Perhaps the reader in question intended to say he/she wanted to defend so meant Pass? The other bid chosen was 6♦. This could be a winner, though 6♥ will also make a large part of the time that 6♦ is a good spot. Partner will very often have three-card diamond support, possibly even four-card, but 2-4-2-5 or 1-5-2-5 are not impossible – would his 4♣ over 3♠ have been forcing or do strong five-fives have to start with a double?

If we feel that we are too good for a quiet 4♥, the 4♠ then convert 5♣ to 5♦ to offer a choice of red suits still looks best to me, as discussed in the original article.

PROBLEM 5

Bid	Votes	Marks	Readers
Pass	10	10	16
Dble	4	6	12
2NT	2	3	0
3♥	2	3	6
3♣	1	2	1

PROBLEM 6

Bid	Votes	Marks	Readers
4♦	11	10	11
Pass	8	8	16
4♣	0	0	3
4♥	0	2	2
4NT	0	2	1
6♦	0	3	2

The panel found only two different calls on this one, while the readers find another four.

4♣. Very dangerous and confusing, I think. We have already jumped in this three-card suit. If we now bid 4♣, I don't see why partner will not play us to be 0-3-5-5. We do not play Gerber here, while with no clear trump suit agreed, 4♣ cannot be a cue-bid.

4♥. We already showed three-card heart support and partner didn't choose to play in hearts. What is more, partner chose 3NT rather than a 3♠ FSF bid, despite our being marked with short spades. He should have quite a bit of stuff wasted in spades. Four Hearts could work, but it does not add to the description of our hand.

4NT. This is natural and invitational, being a raise of no trump. In a sane world, partner should have extra values because he could have bid 3NT directly over 3♣, so his 3♦ expresses doubt which, given the failure to use FSF over 3♥, should be due to extra strength rather than tenuous spades. That means that to bid on in hope of finding a good slam is not unreasonable, but if we do so, surely 4♦ is more descriptive, and moves towards the most likely slam.

6♦. If you believe that partner has extra values and some diamond support for his slow route to 3NT, then 6♦ could easily be the right spot. Still, we do not have that much to spare for our 3♣ rebid and if partner has only four hearts, as seems likely, we will get at most one club loser away on the hearts. Six Diamonds doesn't seem to have any advantages over a more gentle 4♦ probe – apart from saving time and stress, I suppose.

PROBLEM 7

Bid	Votes	Marks	Readers
3NT	14	10	22
Pass	2	4	6
4♣	1	3	0
4♥	1	3	5
4♠	1	2	2

PROBLEM 8

Bid	Votes	Marks	Readers
3♦	8	10	14
2NT	4	7	6
3NT	3	6	6
4♦	3	6	5
2♥	1	2	1
1♥	0	2	1
4♣	0	6	1
4NT	0	0	1

This time the readership finds three bids that were not found by any of the panellists.

1♥. Well, I hate inventing suits that are higher-ranking than those I actually hold as we keep on having to correct to a higher level if partner supports me. However, I suppose that since a jump to 2♠ scored two marks, I can't very well fail to give a simple 1♥, which leaves more space in which to recover, at least the same award.

4NT. This is simply a wild overbid – sorry. The majority are not even forcing to game, and this is taking control and heading towards slam. Even worse, often the response doesn't tell us whether or not we can make slam.

4♣. Well, if it had gone 1♣ – 1M, and we had held that major instead of diamonds, 4♣ would have shown something similar to this hand, so why not likewise when our fit is for diamonds? If the hand is about whether to play 5♦ or 6♦, this will be the bid to solve the problem, and partner may even be able to convert to 4♦ and us pass when that is right.. Of course, if the deal is all about getting to 3NT, 4♣ will not be very helpful.

Nonetheless, this is perhaps the best solution found by a reader but no panellist since I took over this feature, so I'm giving it six marks, as many as the less descriptive jump to 4♦.

EAST

Hands for the
November 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 North. E/W Vul.

♠ A753
♥ A764
♦ AJ8
♣ KQ

North opens 1♠ and South raises to 2♠

Hand 2. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ 53
♥ KJ97
♦ AK3
♣ AQ53

If East opens 1NT and West bids 2♣ North doubles

Hand 3. Dealer West. N/S Vul.

♠ K1052
♥ A98743
♦ J5
♣ K

Hand 4. Dealer South. E/W Vul

♠ AK6
♥ J9
♦ AJ2
♣ AQ543

North opens 2♠ (5-5 ♠+♦/♣, 6-10) and if East doubles South raises to 3♠

Hand 5. Dealer North. Both Vul.

♠ Q63
♥ QJ8
♦ K874
♣ 1075

Hand 6. Dealer south. E/W Vul.

♠ Q107
♥ KQ
♦ AJ87
♣ QJ109

Hand 7. Dealer North. NS Vul.

♠ KQ1084
♥ QJ10652
♦ Q8
♣ —

Hand 8. Dealer West. EW Vul.

♠ 9872
♥ K
♦ Q97643
♣ A2

South overcalls 3♣ and North raises to 5♣

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.