

A NEW BRIDGE MAGAZINE

The Mixing Bowl
Bridge Beats Brexit
Krypton Transfers

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A NEW BRIDGE MAGAZINE

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The Shape of Things to Come

With this issue we complete our first year in office, so to speak. The number of people reading the magazine continues to grow (welcome to the 150 from the USA who have just registered) and as you spread the word to your friends we hope that will continue to be the case. We cannot thank enough those of you who are giving us financial support - without you the magazine could and will not survive. We also owe a debt of thanks to our contributors, who are producing material of the highest quality for a very modest return. Perhaps they are mindful of the old Russian proverb, 'It is better to travel hopefully than to arrive'.

What can you expect in the coming year?

It should be very much a case of 'business as usual', although Ron Tacchi is always looking at ways to improve the appearance of the magazine.

The prize structure for the Master Point Press Bidding Battle is going to change; the details will be announced in the January 2019 issue. Given that we have close to 10,000 readers the entry level for this competition is extraordinarily low and the feature is now under review. If we don't see a significant rise in entries by the end of 2019 then its future will be in doubt.

We want to expand the web site, offering up to the minute news of everything bridge related, so that everyone interested in what is happening in the world of bridge will make ANBM's web site their first port of call.

Rise of the Machines

Computers are a routine part of everyday life. They have a significant role in game playing and new generation software has demonstrated that they can outplay human beings in the most sophisticated of board games, Chess & Go. So far Bridge has been immune from this type of threat, as even the strongest bridge playing software is no match for the world's best players. However, that may not be the case for much longer, as you may discover in this issue.



Around the World in 80 Deals

As we move towards the end of one year a new one beckons. Where will everyone be in 2019?

The ACBL Nationals in March, July and November/December are set for Memphis, Las Vegas and San Francisco, and will attract thousands of players from novices to world champions.

If you want a European adventure, the European Bridge League and the Turkish Bridge Federation have announced that the ninth European Open Championships will be located at the Green Park Pendik Hotel and Convention Center, on the outskirts of Istanbul, Turkey. 15-29 June.

Situated just 8 kilometres from the Istanbul Sabiha Gökçen (SAW) airport, which has many low cost carrier connections across Europe, the 5 star hotel has excellent playing areas, more than 500 bedrooms and the largest Spa and wellness center in Istanbul, overlooking the Sea of Marmara. The hotel is 1km from the Kaynarca train

station and 7 km from the Muhammad Maarifi Mosque.

Rooms have free Wi-Fi and satellite TV, plus minibars and sitting areas and room service is available. Breakfast is free and there are 5 restaurants, including a 24-hour bistro and a buffet with sea views, along with a pub, a juice bar and a nightclub.

Meanwhile, the Turkish Bridge Federation is preparing a comprehensive list of further accommodation which will be published shortly, in conjunction with the opening of the Microsite for the Championships on the EBL's website.

Future Action

Those who want to watch the stars in action should note the dates of the World Championships in Wuhan, China, 14-28 September. That will be a busy time for quite a lot of people, as the IBPA award ceremony is set to take place in Sanya on September 29 and that will be followed by the International Bridge Festival between September 30 and October 14.

EBL Update

Monaco and Poland have decided not to accept their revised medal positions for the 2014 Opatija European Open Team Championship. The EBL Executive has therefore decided that both Gold and Bronze Medal positions will remain vacant.

The record will reflect these decisions as follows:

- 1.Vacant
- 2.Jointly held by Monaco and England
- 3.Vacant
- 4.Jointly held by Poland and Bulgaria
- 5.Sweden.

BARON
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BRIDGE SUPPLY



The Green Park Pendik Hotel and Convention Center

In This Issue

- 4 **FUNBRIDGE** — Test Your Technique
- 5 **McConnell Final** — The Editor reports from the world Championships in Orlando
- 17 **FUNBRIDGE** — Misplay These Hands With Me
- 19 **Deals That Caught My Eye** — David Bird looks at the 2018 Asian Mens Teams
- 24 **Bridge Beats Brexit** — Steve Garry
- 25 **Letter From Germany** — Martin Cantor
- 28 **Defend With Julian Pottage**
- 29 **Krypton Transfers** — Mike McGinley
- 30 **FUNBRIDGE** — Test Your Technique solution
- 31 **The Invisible Woman** — Alex Adamson & Harry Smith with another tale from the Over The Rainbow Bridge Club
- 36 **Book Review** — Martin Cantor
- 37 **Enterprising Bridge Tales: The Next Generation** — Marc Smith
- 40 **Defend With Julian Pottage** — The Answers
- 41 **Bridge With Larry Cohen**
- 43 **Is Bridge The Next Challenge For AI** — Jean-Baptiste Fantun
- 47 **Kit's Corner** — Kit Woolsey
- 51 **The Abbot's New Partnership** — David Bird
- 55 **The uBid Auction Room** — Mark Horton
- 63 **Master Point Press Bidding Battle** — Moderated by Brian Senior
- 81 **Master Point Press Bidding Battle Competition** — Set 12
- 85 **Hands for This Month's Auction Room**
- 86 **Comments on Bidding Battle 10** — Brian Senior



Test Your Technique

with Christophe Grosset

see Page 30

Dealer South. E/W Vul.

♠ K2
♥ A 10 9 7
♦ K J 10 2
♣ A 9 5

♠ 10 9 7 5 3
♥ K 5
♦ A Q 5 3
♣ 7 4

North plays 3NT after the following bidding:

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

East leads the king of clubs, asking for count or unblock, and West plays the 10. Declarer ducks trick one to see the queen of clubs from East and the eight from West.

How should declarer play from here? If declarer decides to duck twice, West will pitch a heart on the 3rd round.

The Mixing Bowl

The Editor takes a look at the final of the World Mixed Teams Championship

106 squads set off in pursuit of the World Mixed Teams Championship in Orlando. After five days play the last two standing were **Manfield** (Melanie Manfield, William Cole, Beth Palmer, William Pettis, Debbie Rosenberg and Michael Rosenberg) and **Wilson** (Alison Wilson, Sally Brock, Chris Willenken, Richard Ritmeijer, Magdalena Ticha and Ricco van Prooijen). They had fought hard to reach the final, both teams coming from behind in more than one of their matches. Sally Brock had already gone all the way in the women's teams – could she overcome the almost inevitable fatigue and make it a golden double?

Set 1

There is no consensus about the origin of the quintessential English expression 'Early Doors', but it is generally attributed to the football manager Ron Atkinson, who used it to describe something that happened early on in a match and which, whilst favouring one side, could not yet be regarded as decisive.

An early strike in a bridge match can give one side a psychological as well as a numerical advantage. This was the third deal of the final:

Board 3. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

♠ 9 ♥ QJ642 ♦ 653 ♣ J862	♠ AQJ1052 ♥ A75 ♦ J ♣ K97 <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto; text-align: center;"> N W E S </div> ♠ K863 ♥ K3 ♦ AK4 ♣ AQ105	♠ 74 ♥ 1098 ♦ Q109872 ♣ 43	
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Open Room

	West	North	East	South
	<i>Van Prooijen</i>	<i>Manfield</i>	<i>Wilson</i>	<i>Pettis</i>
	–	–	–	2NT
	Pass	4♥*	Pass	4♠
	Pass	4NT*	Pass	5♣*
	Pass	5NT*	Pass	6♦*
	Pass	6♠	All Pass	
4♥	Transfer			
4NT	RKCB			
5♣	3 key cards			


There must have been some confusion about the meaning of 6♦. As a result the easy grand slam was missed.

Closed Room

	West	North	East	South
	<i>M Rosenberg</i>	<i>Brock</i>	<i>D Rosenberg</i>	<i>Willenken</i>
	–	–	–	1♣
	Pass	1♠	Pass	4♠
	Pass	4NT*	Pass	5♦*
	Pass	7♠	All Pass	
4NT	RKCB			
5♦	3 key cards			

No mistake here and Wilson was the first to strike a significant blow – still 'Early Doors'.

Board 6. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

♠ A108642 ♥ 843 ♦ J102 ♣ A		♠ KQ ♥ Q1096 ♦ K65 ♣ K632	♠ J953 ♥ A5 ♦ 873 ♣ QJ84
		♠ 7 ♥ KJ72 ♦ AQ94 ♣ 10975	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Van Prooijen</i>	<i>Manfield</i>	<i>Wilson</i>	<i>Pettis</i>
-	-	Pass	Pass
Pass	1♣	Pass	1♥
1♠	2♥	2♠	3♣
Pass	3♥	3♠	4♥
4♠	Pass	Pass	Double
All Pass			

When East decided to compete with 3♠ West felt entitled to bid 4♠, but it was certainly a gamble facing a passed partner who had hardly advertised a mountain with her raise to 2♠.


North led the ♥10 and declarer won with dummy's ace and played a spade to the ten. North elected to win this with the king, a subtle mistake, as we will see. She returned the ♥6 and South took the king and continued with the ace of diamonds and a diamond, North winning with the king and playing a third diamond, which South took with the queen. If North had won the first spade with the queen, it would have been clear to South to continue with the last diamond, promoting the ♠K, as declarer could hardly have started with six spades headed by the AK. When South exited with a club declarer had 'escaped' for -500.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>M Rosenberg</i>	<i>Brock</i>	<i>D Rosenberg</i>	<i>Willenken</i>
-	-	Pass	Pass
1♠	Double	3♣*	3♠*
Pass	4♣*	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

Why North wanted to get involved in the auction with her aceless wonder facing a passed partner is anyone's guess. West led the ♣A and switched to the ♦J. When East got in with the ♥A a club return scuppered the contract and gave Manfield 11 IMPs.

Board 12. Dealer West. N/S Vul.

♠ AK7 ♥ 753 ♦ Q65 ♣ AKQ5		♠ Q8432 ♥ KJ2 ♦ A108 ♣ J10	♠ 10965 ♥ 96 ♦ K742 ♣ 872
			♠ J ♥ AQ1084 ♦ J93 ♣ 9643

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Van Prooijen</i>	<i>Manfield</i>	<i>Wilson</i>	<i>Pettis</i>
1♣	Pass	1♠	Pass
2NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

North led the ♠5 and declarer played four rounds of the suit, North winning and switching to the ♥9. South took two heart tricks, so that was +430.

An initial lead of the ♥9 would have made declarer work harder, but nine tricks are still possible.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>M Rosenberg</i>	<i>Brock</i>	<i>D Rosenberg</i>	<i>Willenken</i>
1♣	Pass	1♠	Pass
2NT	Pass	3♣	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♦	Pass
4NT*	Pass	5♣*	Pass
6♠	All Pass		
	4NT	RKCB	
	5♣	1 key card	

♠ 10965		♠ Q8432
♥ 96		♥ KJ2
♦ K742		♦ A108
♣ 872		♣ J10
♠ AK7	W N E	♠ J
♥ 753	W S E	♥ AQ1084
♦ Q65		♦ J93
♣ AKQ5		♣ 9643

With a moth-eaten suit East's cue-bid in diamonds was too aggressive. Even though South led the ♥A, there were only eleven tricks, 10 IMPs to Wilson, ahead 23-20 at the break.

You can replay the deals [here](#) or <https://tinyurl.com/y9gllz33>

Set 2

Board 15. Dealer South. N/S Vul.

♠ 84		♠ 10973
♥ 32		♥ AQJ108
♦ 94		♦ 72
♣ AK87432		♣ Q10
♠ J52	W N E	♠ AKQ6
♥ 954	W S E	♥ K76
♦ QJ10		♦ AK8653
♣ J965		♣ —

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Ticha</i>	<i>Palmer</i>	<i>Ritmeijer</i>	<i>Cole</i>
-	-	-	2♣
Pass	3♣	3♥	4♦
Pass	4NT	Pass	5NT*
Pass	6♣	Pass	6♦
All Pass			

2♣ was aggressive and N/S were soon overboard, declarer losing a heart at trick one and a diamond later.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>M Rosenberg</i>	<i>Brock</i>	<i>D Rosenberg</i>	<i>Willenken</i>
-	-	-	1♦
Pass	1NT	2♥	2♠
Pass	3♣	Pass	3♦
Pass	4♦	Pass	4♥*
Pass	5♣*	Pass	6♦
All Pass			
4♥	Cue-bid		
5♣	Cue-bid		

Perhaps South was hoping North would deliver a third diamond, but that strikes me as unlikely. It was clear North's values were in clubs, so jumping to 6♦ was optimistic – no swing.

Board 16. Dealer West. E/W Vul.

♠ Q542		♠ K873
♥ 953		♥ AKJ72
♦ 6		♦ K97
♣ J10976		♣ K
♠ 6	W N E	♠ AJ109
♥ 8	W S E	♥ Q1064
♦ AQ1054		♦ J832
♣ AQ8543		♣ 2

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Ticha</i>	<i>Palmer</i>	<i>Ritmeijer</i>	<i>Cole</i>
1♣	Pass	1♥	Pass
2♦	Pass	2♠*	Pass
3♦	Pass	3♥	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♦	Pass
5♦	Pass	6NT	All Pass
2♠ Fourth-Suit forcing			

♠ 6	♠ Q542	♠ K873
♥ 8	♥ 953	♥ AKJ72
♦ AQ1054	♦ 6	♦ K97
♣ AQ8543	♣ J10976	♣ K
	♠ AJ109	
	♥ Q1064	
	♦ J832	
	♣ 2	

Is the West hand worth a reverse? You have the distribution, but you are short on points. It led to a poor slam. South led his club and declarer won in hand, crossed to dummy with a diamond, cashed a top club getting the bad news as South discarded the ♠9. Taking his only shot declarer played a spade to the king and was quickly three down, South winning and returning the ♠J.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>M Rosenberg</i>	<i>Brock</i>	<i>D Rosenberg</i>	<i>Willenken</i>
1♣	Pass	1♥	Pass
2♦	Pass	2♥	Pass
3♦	Pass	4♠*	Double
5♥*	Pass	6♦	All Pass

If 4♠ was asking for key-cards then West showed 2 and the ♦Q. 6♦ is better than 6NT, but the breaks in the minors made things impossible, declarer finishing with ten tricks which were worth 3 IMPs.

Board 19. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

♠ KJ10876	♠ A54	♠ 3
♥ 5432	♥ 10987	♥ AQ6
♦ A104	♦ 85	♦ KJ3
♣ —	♣ A1065	♣ QJ9432
	♠ Q92	
	♥ KJ	
	♦ Q9762	
	♣ K87	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Ticha</i>	<i>Palmer</i>	<i>Ritmeijer</i>	<i>Cole</i>
–	–	–	Pass
3♠	All Pass		

West has a good suit, but with four cards in the other major and first round controls in both minors preempting with one opponent already passed looks odd.

North led the ♦8 solving one problem for declarer and she took South's queen with the ace and played the ♠10. South won with the queen and exited with the ♦2, declarer winning in hand and playing the ♠J. North won and switched to the ♥10 but declarer put up dummy's ace, came to hand with a club ruff, cashed the ♠K and ducked a heart for nine tricks, +140.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>M Rosenberg</i>	<i>Brock</i>	<i>D Rosenberg</i>	<i>Willenken</i>
–	–	–	1♣*
1♠	Double*	Pass	1NT
Pass	Pass	2♣	All Pass

South led the ♠2 and realising that desperate measures were called for

declarer played dummy's king (the ten does not help, as North wins and switches to a heart), North taking the ace and returning the ♥10, covered by the queen and king. South exited with the ♥J and declarer won and played a diamond to the ten. When that held she ruffed a spade, overtook the ♦J with dummy's ace, ruffed a spade and tried to cash the ♦K. North ruffed, cashed a heart and played a fourth round of the suit. Declarer ruffed with the ♣9 and South overruffed and exited with the ♦Q, North ruffing with the ♣6. Declarer overruffed but North took the last two tricks for two down, -200 and 8 IMPs, Wilson ahead 31-25.

Board 20. Dealer West. All Vul.

♠ QJ76 ♥ 8732 ♦ 8742 ♣ 9		♠ AK1043 ♥ K964 ♦ A ♣ J42	♠ 9 ♥ AQ105 ♦ KQ3 ♣ A10876
♠ 852 ♥ J ♦ J10965 ♣ KQ53			

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Ticha</i>	<i>Palmer</i>	<i>Ritmeijer</i>	<i>Cole</i>
1♣	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♥	Pass	3♥	Pass
4♦	Pass	4NT*	Pass
5♠*	Pass	5NT*	Pass
6♦	Pass	6♥	All Pass
4NT	RKCB		
5♠	2 key cards +♥Q		
5NT	Kings?		
6♦	♦K		

Once again West was prepared to reverse with minimal values.

North led the ♥2 and declarer took South's jack with the ace, unblocked dummy's ♦A, returned to hand with a club and pitched two clubs on the ♦KQ before playing on cross-ruff lines. Taking no chances she did not try for all the tricks, +1430.


Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>M Rosenberg</i>	<i>Brock</i>	<i>D Rosenberg</i>	<i>Willenken</i>
1♣	Pass	1♠	Pass
1NT	Pass	2♦*	Pass
2♥	Pass	3♥	Pass
4♣*	Pass	4♦*	Pass
4♠*	Pass	4NT*	Pass
5♠	Pass	6♥	All Pass
2♦	Checkback		
4♣	Cue-bid		
4♦	Cue-bid		
4♠	Cue-bid		
4NT	RKCB		
5♠	2 key cards +♥Q		

Here North led the ♣9 and declarer won, cashed the ♥Q and then unblocked the ♦A and went for the cross-ruff line, also playing safely for 12 tricks.

Had either pair reached 7♥ they would have made it easily after the appearance of the ♥J. If hearts are 3-2 declarer can play to establish dummy's spades after cashing the ♥AQ.

Board 21. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

♠ 3 ♥ AKQ1064 ♦ 32 ♣ J1062		♠ KQJ6 ♥ — ♦ KQJ974 ♣ KQ7	♠ A9754 ♥ 952 ♦ 865 ♣ 84
		♠ 1082 ♥ J873 ♦ A10 ♣ A953	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Ticha</i>	<i>Palmer</i>	<i>Ritmeijer</i>	<i>Cole</i>
–	1♦	1♠	Double*
2♥	4♦	Pass	5♦
All Pass			


East's overcall would not be to everyone's taste, but no harm was done. Would he have led the ♠A against 6♦? A heart lead led to a rapid +620.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>M Rosenberg</i>	<i>Brock</i>	<i>D Rosenberg</i>	<i>Willenken</i>
–	1♦	Pass	1♥
2♥	2♠	3♥	Double
Pass	5♦	All Pass	

Here East led the ♣8, no swing.

Board 22. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

♠ A953 ♥ J6 ♦ 10752 ♣ 1075		♠ 10 ♥ K9842 ♦ 83 ♣ QJ632	♠ Q86 ♥ A7 ♦ AKJ964 ♣ K8
		♠ KJ742 ♥ Q1053 ♦ Q ♣ A94	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Ticha</i>	<i>Palmer</i>	<i>Ritmeijer</i>	<i>Cole</i>
–	–	1♦	Double
Pass	1♥	2♦	2♥
3♦	4♥	All Pass	

East led the ♦A and when West followed with the ten he switched to the ♠6. If declarer plays low from dummy on this trick she would be in a position to make 4♥, but she went up with the king and West took the ace and returned a spade. Declarer ruffed and played a heart and when East played low she won with dummy's queen. If declarer now ruffs a spade, ruffs a diamond and exits with a heart, East will regret his play in the trump suit as he is now endplayed (he should rise with the ♥A and exit with a heart). Missing this declarer played a second heart and East won and got off play with the ♦K. Declarer could not avoid losing a club at the end for one down.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>M Rosenberg</i>	<i>Brock</i>	<i>D Rosenberg</i>	<i>Willenken</i>
-	-	1♦	1♠
Pass	Pass	1NT	Pass
Pass	Double	2♦	2♥
3♦	3♥	All Pass	

The defence started with two rounds of diamonds and declarer ruffed and played a heart for the king and ace. When East returned the ♠6 declarer played low and West took the ace and tried the ♣5. Declarer played low from dummy and won in hand with the nine. he cashed the ♠K, ruffed a spade and played a heart to the queen for ten tricks and 6 IMPs.

Wilson took this low scoring set 18-11 to lead 41-31.

You can replay the deals [here](#) or <https://tinyurl.com/y7sju7lb>

♠ 10	♥ K9842	♦ 83	♣ QJ632
♠ A953	♥ J6	♦ 10752	♣ 1075
♠ Q86	♥ A7	♦ AKJ964	♣ K8
♠ KJ742	♥ Q1053	♦ Q	♣ A94

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Ticha</i>	<i>D Rosenberg</i>	<i>Ritmeijer</i>	<i>M Rosenberg</i>
-	-	4♠	Pass
Pass	Double	Pass	4NT*
Double	5♣	Pass	Pass
Double	All Pass		

4NT Two places to play

East's opening bid was in accordance with the partnership's philosophy, but West's doubles were aggressive. There was no defence, +750.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Pettis</i>	<i>Brock</i>	<i>Manfield</i>	<i>Willenken</i>
-	-	2♠	3♥
4♠	4NT*	5♠	Pass*
Pass	Double	All Pass	

4NT RKCB

Pass 1 key card

Had East passed 4NT, her partner would have led a top spade and switched to a club, defeating 5♥ by a couple of tricks.

South led the ♦4 and declarer won with dummy's ace and cashed the ♠A before playing a heart. South won and switched to the ♣4, declarer ruffing and drawing the outstanding trump, two down, -300 and a 10 IMP pick-up.


If you want to open the East hand then 3♠ is the down the middle approach. If West raises to 4♠ North doubles and South should bid 4NT as in the Open Room.

Set 3

Board 30. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ 5	♥ K76	♦ KQJ10	♣ AJ1072
♠ AK	♥ 32	♦ A98632	♣ K63
♠ J10987643	♥ 1054	♦ 75	♣ -
♠ Q2	♥ AQJ98	♦ 4	♣ Q9854

Board 33. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

♠ J74 ♥ KJ8 ♦ KQJ9 ♣ K103		♠ Q103 ♥ 97643 ♦ A102 ♣ 87	♠ A85 ♥ AQ52 ♦ 8643 ♣ Q4
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Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Ticha</i>	<i>D Rosenberg</i>	<i>Ritmeijer</i>	<i>M Rosenberg</i>
-	1♦	Pass	1♥
Double	Redouble	Pass	Pass
2♣	Pass	Pass	2NT
Pass	3NT	Double	All Pass

Anxious to get both suits into the picture West rejected an immediate overcall of 2♣, but not for the first time in the match she was low on high cards. East felt he had enough to double 3NT and if West had found a spade lead he would have been right. When West went with the ♦7 declarer was one step ahead. He won with dummy's king and continued with the queen. When that also held he cashed the king and jack of hearts and then played a club for the queen and ace. When West played back the ♣9 declarer put up dummy's king and played a diamond, establishing his ninth trick, +750.


Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Pettis</i>	<i>Brock</i>	<i>Manfield</i>	<i>Willenken</i>
-	1♣	Pass	1♥
Pass	1NT	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

East led the ♠3 and West won with the king and returned the two. Declarer put up the jack and when East covered with the queen she withheld dummy's ace and East played a third spade. Now the defenders were in charge, scoring three spades and two aces for one down and 13 IMPs, giving Manfield the lead, 54-46.

Even if declarer had found the blocking play in spades by taking the second round with dummy's ace, she would have needed to play a club next, which is not trivial.

Board 39. Dealer South. None Vul.

♠ AK842 ♥ 963 ♦ AJ105 ♣ 10		♠ 765 ♥ KQ ♦ KQ42 ♣ AJ87	♠ J93 ♥ J107 ♦ 763 ♣ K962
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Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Ticha</i>	<i>D Rosenberg</i>	<i>Ritmeijer</i>	<i>M Rosenberg</i>
-	-	-	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♣*	Pass
2♦	Pass	2♠	Pass
3♥*	Pass	4♣	Pass
4♦	Pass	6♦	All Pass
2♣	Game forcing		
3♥	Fourth-Suit forcing		

Would East have done better to raise to 3♦, planning to show spade support on the next round? Why did West bother with 3♥ with a minimum?


Obviously this slam had no play, declarer losing a heart at trick one and a spade.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Pettis</i>	<i>Brock</i>	<i>Manfield</i>	<i>Willenken</i>
-	-	-	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♦	Pass	2♠	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

Declarer took eleven tricks by arranging a heart ruff in dummy, another 11 IMPs for Manfield.

Board 40. Dealer West. N/S Vul.

♠ J84 ♥ AJ9843 ♦ 96 ♣ J8		♠ Q10976 ♥ 6 ♦ 8532 ♣ K109	♠ A53 ♥ K1052 ♦ Q4 ♣ 7643
♠ K2 ♥ Q7 ♦ AKJ107 ♣ AQ52			

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Ticha</i>	<i>D Rosenberg</i>	<i>Ritmeijer</i>	<i>M Rosenberg</i>
Pass	Pass	2♠*	2NT
Pass	3♦*	Pass	3NT
All Pass			
2♠	5-10, 5+♠ and 4+♦/♣		

West led the ♠3 and declarer won with the king and played the ♥Q, covered by the king and ace. He cashed the ♥J and then ran the ♦9 and West won, cashed the ♠A, the ♥10 and played a spade, two down.

Closed Room


West	North	East	South
<i>Pettis</i>	<i>Brock</i>	<i>Manfield</i>	<i>Willenken</i>
Pass	2♦*	Pass	4♣*
Pass	4♦*	Pass	4♥
All Pass			
2♦	Multi		
4♣	What suit?		
4♦	Hearts		

West led the ♦Q and declarer won and ran the ♥Q. When it held he played a heart to the jack, cashed the ace followed by the ♦9 and exited with a heart, taking twelve tricks when West exited with a club, 13 IMPs to Wilson, who was outscored 37-22 to trail 63-68.

You can replay the deals [here](#) or <https://tinyurl.com/y9no67mw>

Set 4

Board 44. Dealer West. E/W Vul.

♠ 4 ♥ J8432 ♦ KQ9 ♣ 9764		♠ AQJ73 ♥ A9 ♦ A1053 ♣ Q10	♠ 98652 ♥ 6 ♦ J82 ♣ AK52
♠ K10 ♥ KQ1075 ♦ 764 ♣ J83			

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Willenken</i>	<i>D Rosenberg</i>	<i>Brock</i>	<i>M Rosenberg</i>
Pass	Pass	1♠	Pass
2NT*	Pass	3♣*	Pass
3♠*	Pass	4♦*	Pass
4NT*	Pass	5♦*	Pass
6♠	All Pass		
2NT	Fit and a singleton		
3♣	Where?		
3♠	Hearts		
4♦	Cue-bid		
4NT	RKCB		
5♦	3 key cards		

♠ 98652	<table border="1"> <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		♠ AQJ73
	N										
W		E									
	S										
♥ 6		♥ A9									
♦ J82		♦ A1053									
♣ AK52		♣ Q10									
♠ 4		♠ K10									
♥ J8432		♥ KQ1075									
♦ KQ9		♦ 764									
♣ 9764		♣ J83									

With the ♠K offside, this had to go one down

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Cole</i>	<i>Ritmeijer</i>	<i>Palmer</i>	<i>Ticha</i>
Pass	2♥*	2♠	4♥
4♠	All Pass		
2♥	5-10, 5+♥ and 4+ ♠/♦/♣		

That represented a 13 IMP gain, Manfield now ahead 81-63.

Board 45. Dealer North. None Vul.

♠ K72	<table border="1"> <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		♠ QJ853
	N										
W		E									
	S										
♥ 7654		♥ 8									
♦ 10		♦ 985									
♣ AK973		♣ J542									
♠ A4		♠ 1096									
♥ AKQJ1093		♥ 2									
♦ K6		♦ AQJ7432									
♣ 86		♣ Q10									

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Willenken</i>	<i>D Rosenberg</i>	<i>Brock</i>	<i>M Rosenberg</i>
-	Pass	Pass	3♦
3NT	All Pass		

North led the ♣7 and South won with the ten and continued with the queen, North following with the ♣9. When South switched to the ♥2 declarer could win with dummy's eight and play a diamond, establishing his ninth trick, +400.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Cole</i>	<i>Ritmeijer</i>	<i>Palmer</i>	<i>Ticha</i>
-	1♣	Pass	1♦
4♥	Pass	Pass	5♦
Double	All Pass		

4♥ would have failed, while 5♦ had to go one down, Wilson recovering 7IMPs.

Board 46. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ 653	<table border="1"> <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		♠ AQJ1094
	N										
W		E									
	S										
♥ K96		♥ Q72									
♦ 642		♦ AK7									
♣ 8764		♣ K									
♠ K87		♠ 2									
♥ J843		♥ A105									
♦ 83		♦ QJ1095									
♣ J1092		♣ AQ53									

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Willenken</i>	<i>D Rosenberg</i>	<i>Brock</i>	<i>M Rosenberg</i>
-	-	1♠	Double
2♠	Pass	4♠	All Pass

South led the ♦Q and declarer won and eliminated the diamonds before playing a spade to the ace. Now the winning line is to exit with the ♣K. South wins, but is endplayed. Missing this, declarer played two more rounds of trumps ending in dummy followed by a heart to the queen and ace. South exited with a diamond and in due course North took two hearts for one down.

♠ K87	♠ 653	♠ AQJ1094
♥ J843	♥ K96	♥ Q72
♦ 83	♦ 642	♦ AK7
♣ J1092	♣ 8764	♣ K
	♠ 2	
	♥ A105	
	♦ QJ1095	
	♣ AQ53	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Cole</i>	<i>Ritmeijer</i>	<i>Palmer</i>	<i>Ticha</i>
-	-	1♠	Double
2♠	Pass	4♠	All Pass

Here too South led the ♦Q and declarer won, cashed the ♠A and eliminated the diamonds. Would she play a club? No, she drew a second round of trumps with dummy's king and played a heart. North now made a horrendous error by playing the nine, which meant declarer could subsequently finesse against the ten for +420 and 10 IMPs.

Board 47. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

♠ 1084	♠ J652	♠ K
♥ AJ86	♥ Q3	♥ K1042
♦ 109872	♦ J654	♦ K3
♣ 7	♣ Q92	♣ AK10865
	♠ AQ973	
	♥ 975	
	♦ AQ	
	♣ J43	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Willenken</i>	<i>D Rosenberg</i>	<i>Brock</i>	<i>M Rosenberg</i>
-	-	-	1♠
Pass	1NT	Double	Pass
2♥	2♠	3♥	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

North led the ♠2 and South won with the ace and returned the seven, declarer ruffing in dummy and playing three rounds of clubs, pitching a spade on the second and ruffing the third. The ace of hearts and a heart saw declarer claim ten tricks, +620.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Cole</i>	<i>Ritmeijer</i>	<i>Palmer</i>	<i>Ticha</i>
-	-	-	1NT
Pass	Pass	Double	Redouble*
2♦	Pass	Pass	2♠
Pass	Pass	3♣	All Pass

Rdbl Any five-card suit

South led the ♥7 and when dummy's eight held declarer played three rounds of clubs, +110 but 11 IMPs for Wilson, reducing the margin to 10 IMPs.

Board 48. Dealer West. All Vul.

♠ J10	♠ 8732	♠ A964
♥ 8654	♥ A97	♥ KJ1032
♦ 6	♦ J10432	♦ AK
♣ AJ9853	♣ 10	♣ K2
	♠ KQ5	
	♥ Q	
	♦ Q9875	
	♣ Q764	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Willenken</i>	<i>D Rosenberg</i>	<i>Brock</i>	<i>M Rosenberg</i>
Pass	Pass	1♥	Pass
3♥	Pass	4♥	All Pass

South led the ♠K and declarer won with the ace, crossed to dummy with the ♣A and played a heart to the jack. South won, cashed the ♠Q and switched to the ♣6, North's ruff along with the ♥A meaning one down.

If declarer had cashed her diamonds pitching a spade before touching trumps she would have got home.

♠ 8732		♠ A964
♥ A97		♥ KJ1032
♦ J10432		♦ AK
♣ 10		♣ K2
♠ J10	W N E	♠ A964
♥ 8654	W N E	♥ KJ1032
♦ 6	W N E	♦ AK
♣ AJ9853	W N E	♣ K2
♠ KQ5		
♥ Q		
♦ Q9875		
♣ Q764		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Cole</i>	<i>Ritmeijer</i>	<i>Palmer</i>	<i>Ticha</i>
Pass	Pass	1♥	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

South led the ♥Q, which simplified matters for declarer. North took the ace and switched to a spade but declarer won, drew trumps, pitched a spade on the top diamonds, cashed the ♣K and played a club to the jack for twelve tricks and 13 IMPs,

Wilson must have suspected they were behind and both pairs were pushing hard.

On Board 54 both teams reached 6♣ with ♠KQ3 ♥KJ10964 ♦J64 ♣J opposite ♠A87 ♥A ♦A83 ♣AK10762, but West held ♠106 ♥Q53 ♦10972 ♣Q853 and the essential diamond lead was found at both tables – one down and no swing.

On 55 North-South's combined holding was ♠965 ♥10732 ♦KJ862 ♣2 facing ♠AQ1083 ♥A9 ♦A ♣AK864. Chip Martel made an interesting observation on BBO. After 2♣*-2♦*-2♠ North jumped to 4♣, a splinter in support of spades. Chip pointed out that it is possible to use 3NT to show an unspecified splinter with three-card support, so that a jump to the four-level always has four card support.

On a good day clubs will behave and East will hold a doubleton spade king, but this time West held ♠K42 ♥KQ4 ♦Q7 ♣QJ1093 and the 6♣ reached in the Closed Room was hopeless, so Manfield collected 11 IMPs by stopping in game and at 120-81 were home and hosed.

Board 56. Dealer West. N/S Vul.

♠ 98		♠ J107643
♥ A84		♥ Q103
♦ 72		♦ A1053
♣ AK9732		♣ —
♠ 2	W N E	♠ J107643
♥ K97652	W N E	♥ Q103
♦ QJ984	W N E	♦ A1053
♣ 5	W N E	♣ —
♠ AKQ5		
♥ J		
♦ K6		
♣ QJ10864		

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Willenken</i>	<i>D Rosenberg</i>	<i>Brock</i>	<i>M Rosenberg</i>
4♥	Pass	Pass	Double
Pass	5♣	5♥	6♣
All Pass			

6♣ was unbeatable.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Cole</i>	<i>Ritmeijer</i>	<i>Palmer</i>	<i>Ticha</i>
2♥	3♣	4♥	4NT*
5♦	Double*	Pass	6♣
Pass	Pass	6♦	Double
All Pass			
4NT	RKCB		

When the opponents overcall your Roman Keycard ask, you can use double to show 0/3/5 keycards, with Pass promising 1/4 and the next two cheapest suits to show 2 keycards, the higher also promising the trump queen.

6♦ was a great save, and although declarer lost two trump tricks, one via a ruff, the other by failing to drop the then singleton king, it was still a great way to finish for the new World Mixed Team Champions.

You can replay the deals [here](#) or <https://tinyurl.com/yc46xqoj>



Misplay These Hands With Me

Under the Microscope

Towards the end of a long match we have a substantial lead when as dealer I pick up a powerful hand:

♠ K864
♥ AKQ76
♦ A
♣ A87

With E/W vulnerable I open 1♥ and partner raises me to 2♥ which could be based on a very weak hand. I might jump to 4♦ (I do not consider it a crime to make a splinter bid with a singleton ace) but eventually I settle for 4♥ which leaves this auction:

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	1♥
Pass	2♥	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

West leads the queen of clubs and dummy has just about enough in the way of useful cards:

♠ A72
♥ J102
♦ J742
♣ 654

♠ K864
♥ AKQ76
♦ A
♣ A52

There are nine top tricks and either a three spade break or a spade ruff will be enough to see me home, so I win with the ace and play a heart to the jack. I am surprised to see East throw a club on this trick, but it hardly matters. As I will eventually want to ruff a diamond in my hand

I return to the ace of diamonds and play three rounds of spades. When West discards the king of diamonds on the last of these I realise all in the garden may not be rosy.

East wins and continues with the king of clubs and a club and West wins and exits with the eight of hearts. I win in hand and ruff a spade but have to lose a trump trick to West at the end.

This was the layout:

♠ 105	♠ A72	♠ QJ93						
♥ 98543	♥ J102	♥ —						
♦ K8	♦ J742	♦ Q109653						
♣ QJ103	♣ 654	♣ K92						
	<div style="display: inline-block; border: 1px solid black; background-color: #008000; padding: 5px; margin: 5px;"> <table style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 60px; height: 60px;"> <tr> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">N</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">W</td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> <td style="text-align: center;">E</td> </tr> </table> </div>		N		W	S	E	
	N							
W	S	E						
	♠ K864							
	♥ AKQ76							
	♦ A							
	♣ A87							

Post mortem

Although it was difficult to foresee this particular disaster it could easily have been avoided by ruffing a diamond when in dummy with the ace of spades, only then playing two more rounds of spades.

It is the old story - when a contract looks easy consider what might go wrong, or as the chess players might say, 'when you have found a good move, look for a better one'.

Well Spotted

My partner in a Pairs game is an enterprising bidder which sometimes puts a strain on the partnership. With both sides vulnerable and East the dealer I pick up:

♠ AQJ1086
♥ —
♦ A54
♣ 8765

East opens 2♦ and upon enquiry West reveals that it shows a weak hand with diamonds. That's a change from the almost universal multicoloured version. When I overcall 2♠ partner responds 3♣, which we play as forcing. I could raise clubs, but my spades are worth bidding twice, so I continue with 3♠. That appears to excite partner who jumps to 5♠, which we play as asking for a control in the opponent's suit. I cannot do less than bid 6♠ which leaves us with this auction:

West	North	East	South
–	–	2♦	2♠
Pass	3♣	Pass	3♠
Pass	5♠	Pass	6♠
All Pass			

West leads the two of diamonds and I anxiously await the dummy.

♠ K7
♥ K104
♦ 1083
♣ AKJ42

♠ AQJ1086
♥ —
♦ A54
♣ 8765

As long as I can bring in the clubs this will be straightforward.

I win the opening lead and draw trumps in three rounds, West discarding a heart. When I play a club to the ace, East follows with the ten. That's ten of East's cards accounted for - three spades, six diamonds and a club, so I come to hand with a heart ruff and with fair confidence play

a club to the jack. When East discards a diamond I am about to show my cards when I realise the club suit is blocked.

Fortunately I have not played to the next trick so I must consider how best to try to dispose of a club from my hand. If East has the ace of hearts he might have opened 1♦ so I play dummy's king, intending to throw a club. Alas, East does play the ace and I have to go two down.

This was the full deal:

♠ 43	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> <table style="border-collapse: collapse; margin: 0 auto;"> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td></td></tr> </table> </div>		N		W		E		S		♠ 952
		N									
W			E								
		S									
♥ QJ98532	♥ A76										
♦ 2	♦ KQJ976										
♣ Q93	♣ 10										
	♠ AQJ1086										
	♥ —										
	♦ A54										
	♣ 8765										

Post mortem

This type of error, overlooking that a suit may be blocked by the spot cards is not uncommon.

At the end declarer could have got home by playing the ten of hearts, rather than the king, but a stronger line is to cross to dummy at trick two with a trump and play the king of hearts intending to throw a club. When East covers declarer ruffs, draws trumps, crosses to dummy with a club and plays the ten of hearts, disposing of a club when East cannot cover.

Deals that Caught My Eye

David Bird looks at a quarter-final of the Rosenblum, where Andrew Robson faced Tony Forrester

The four-man ALLFREY team had done brilliantly to reach the quarter-finals of the Rosenblum world championship. They would meet the oddly-named FROGS team. This meant that the long-time partners, Andrew Robson and Tony Forrester would face each other. Which of them would emerge triumphant? Place your bets!

S1-Board 2. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

♠ AK9 ♥ A9 ♦ QJ1087 ♣ 984	♠ 72 ♥ Q108532 ♦ K2 ♣ K32 <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto; text-align: center;"> N W E S </div>	♠ 4 ♥ K74 ♦ A965 ♣ AJ1065 ♠ QJ108653 ♥ J6 ♦ 43 ♣ Q7
------------------------------------	--	--

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Lorenzini</i>	<i>Paske</i>	<i>Forrester</i>	<i>Jones</i>
-	-	-	3♠
3NT	Pass	4♠	Pass
4NT	All Pass		

No-one could quibble with this auction, but the cards lay well for East-West. After a spade lead and a successful diamond finesse, declarer added three club tricks to bring the total to twelve. +690.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Robson</i>	<i>L'Ecuyer</i>	<i>Allfrey</i>	<i>Street</i>
-	-	-	3♠
3NT	4♠	5NT	Pass
6♦	Pass	Pass	Pass

North's 4♠ was a wild effort, as I see it. How would 4♠ doubled have fared? Five defensive winners in the side suits would be followed by a third heart, promoting West's ♠AK9. Declarer would eventually look down at only five tricks, losing 1100.

As it was, Allfrey fancied the prospects of a minor-suit slam. He bid a pick-a-slam 5NT and 6♦ was duly bid and made, on the diamond finesse. It was 12 IMPs to Allfrey. By the way, I have realized only now (when writing this report, three weeks after the event) that the name FROGS is a reflection of the three Frenchmen in the team. That's a bit worrying.

The IMPs were handed back after a puzzling auction in the Closed Room on this deal:

S1-Board 10. Dealer East. Both Vul.

♠ K107 ♥ Q1097 ♦ A ♣ AQ765	♠ — ♥ 8732 ♦ K9863 ♣ 10942 <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto; text-align: center;"> N W E S </div>	♠ AQJ ♥ KJ ♦ QJ42 ♣ KJ83 ♠ 9865432 ♥ A54 ♦ 1075 ♣ —
-------------------------------------	---	--

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Lorenzini	Paske	Forrester	Jones
-	-	1NT	2♦
Double	Pass	Pass	Pass

Jones bid 2♦, a defensive multi, showing length in a major. Paske had a fair idea which major his partner held and suggested playing in diamonds. Only one lead can beat the 2♦ doubled contract on a combined 7-count! Lorenzini found it, reaching for the ♦A. Declarer won the heart switch and scored a bundle of trump tricks on a crossruff, going one down for -200.

♠ —	♠ —
♥ 8732	♥ AQJ
♦ K9863	♥ KJ
♣ 10942	♦ QJ42
♠ K107	♣ KJ83
♥ Q1097	♠ 9865432
♦ A	♥ A54
♣ AQ765	♦ 1075
♠ —	♣ —

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Robson	L'Ecuyer	Allfrey	Street
-	-	1NT	Pass
3♦	Pass	3NT	Pass
4♣	Pass	4♠	All Pass

Robson's 3♦ showed diamond shortage. Allfrey's 3NT then indicated values in diamonds, which might not pull their weight in a slam contract. Robson advanced to 4♣, nevertheless. In their system, 4♦ is now the opener's way to agree clubs. Other bids, such as 4♠, are suggestions to play.

Would there be a happy end to this story? No, indeed. Trumps broke 7-0 (let's hope it was the first time in Allfrey's bridge career) and 11 IMPs were lost. Stopping in a no-trump game, or 5♣, would have picked up 10 IMPs.

S2-Board 17. Dealer North. Neither Vul.

♠ —	♠ —	♠ —									
♥ —	♥ —	♥ —									
♦ —	♦ —	♦ —									
♣ —	♣ —	♣ —									
♠ K975432	♠ AJ	♠ 108									
♥ K65	♥ AJ874	♥ 9									
♦ 2	♦ A107	♦ KQJ98543									
♣ 102	♣ QJ5	♣ 96									
	<table border="1"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		
	N										
W		E									
	S										
	♠ Q6										
	♥ Q1032										
	♦ 6										
	♣ AK8743										

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Lorenzini	Allfrey	Forrester	Robson
-	1♥	4♦	4NT
Pass	5♦	Pass	6♥
All Pass			

Robson bid a bold RKCB 4NT and was rewarded by finding three keycards opposite. Allfrey won the ♣6 lead in dummy, picked up the trumps with a finesse and made an overtrick for +1010.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Jones	Volcker	Paske	T.Bessis
-	1♥	4♦	4♥
All Pass			

Bessis guessed to stay low, as many would, and lost 11 IMPs.

Encouraged by this success, Robson bid with similar enthusiasm on the next board:

S2-Board 18. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ 108743 ♥ 74 ♦ K8 ♣ Q1043		♠ Q2 ♥ 2 ♦ AQJ10975 ♣ 752	♠ AJ65 ♥ AJ1093 ♦ 63 ♣ K6
		♠ K9 ♥ KQ865 ♦ 42 ♣ AJ98	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Lorenzini</i>	<i>Allfrey</i>	<i>Forrester</i>	<i>Robson</i>
-	-	1♥	Pass
1♠	2♦	2♠	Double
Pass	3♦	3♠	3NT
All Pass			

Lorenzini led the ♠4 to the jack and declarer's king. A successful diamond finesse was followed by a club to the ace and a second diamond finesse. This allowed a very fine +600 to be added to the English team's card.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Jones</i>	<i>Volcker</i>	<i>Paske</i>	<i>T.Bessis</i>
-	-	1♥	Pass
1♠	3♦	3♠	3NT
4♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

Thomas Bessis also reached 3NT, and Jones could expect this to be made with his ♦K under the 3♦ overcall. He sacrificed in 4♠ and must have been happy when this emerged undoubled. He won the heart lead and played ace and another trump. That was two down for -100 and another gain of 11 IMPs.

The traffic was not all one-way. Forrester and Lorenzini bid and made a pretty good vulnerable 6♥, picking up 13 IMPs. Paske and Jones bid a 50-50 small slam in spades, failing when the ♥K was offside. This pair then gained 10 IMPs and 12 IMPs, making two 3NT contracts (one not bid at the other table, one not made when a better lead was found). At the half-way stage, ALLFREY led FROGS by 96-51.

S3-Board 34. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

♠ 7 ♥ AKQ1043 ♦ Q9863 ♣ Q		♠ AQ1064 ♥ J752 ♦ J ♣ K42	♠ KJ83 ♥ 8 ♦ K102 ♣ A10975
		♠ 952 ♥ 96 ♦ A754 ♣ J863	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Lorenzini</i>	<i>Allfrey</i>	<i>Forrester</i>	<i>Robson</i>
-	-	1♣	Pass
1♥	1♠	Pass	2♠
4♦	Pass	5♦	All Pass

We will see the outcome in a moment, but was the 4♦ rebid wise? Bidding 3♦ instead would surely have been forcing and allowed more space. Also, suppose you ignore slam potential for a moment and imagine that partner might give preference to 5♦. Is it not likely that 4♥, on that splendid suit, would be at least as good a contract?

Allfrey led the ♠A against the diamond game and switched to the ♣2. Lorenzini rose with dummy's ♣A and played two top hearts. He then led the ♦8 to the jack and king, Robson defending strongly by withholding his ♦A. When the ♦2 was led, Robson rose with the ace and returned the ♣6. Lorenzini ruffed and drew trumps. He had to concede a heart trick and North's ♣K then put him two down.


Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Jones	Volcker	Paske	T.Bessis
-	-	1♣	Pass
1♥	1♠	Pass	2♠
4♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

Jones made the practical rebid of 4♥, which I like very much. The ♦J lead was covered by dummy's king, allowed to hold. Declarer lost a spade, a trump and a diamond to collect +620 and 13 IMPs.

The next board was flat in +1540. Both Souths led a heart against 6♦ doubled, when a lead of the ♠A would have found partner with a cashable ♠K.

S3-Board 40. Dealer West. N/S Vul.

	♠ AQJ2		
	♥ 7		
	♦ J9654		
	♣ 1083		
♠ K1043 ♥ K864 ♦ AQ3 ♣ AK		♠ 5 ♥ 32 ♦ K102 ♣ QJ96542	
	♠ 9876		
	♥ AQJ1095		
	♦ 87		
	♣ 7		

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Lorenzini	Allfrey	Forrester	Robson
2NT	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♣	Pass	4♦	Pass
4NT	Pass	6♣	All Pass

The 3♠ response showed clubs, I assume, and 4♦ was a control-bid. 4NT looks like an attempt to play there and may have been misunderstood. Allfrey led his singleton heart and received a heart ruff. The ♠A then put

the slam two down.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Jones	Volcker	Paske	T.Bessis
1♦	Pass	1NT	2♥
3NT	Double	All Pass	

Volcker made an unusual lead-directing double, based on his spade suit over the strong hand. As you see, a ♠9 lead would have given the defenders a remarkable four spade tricks and one heart. Still, there was a risk that South might interpret the double as asking for a diamond lead. As it was, Bessis decided to lead the ♥Q. Jones played low from dummy, and a spade switch would not then have beaten the contract. South actually switched to the ♦8 and a doubled overtrick was recorded for +650 and 13 IMPs.

On the last board of the set Jones and Paske went down in a 7♠ contract that required reasonable breaks and did not get them. ALLFREY still had a sizeable 137-76 lead, with 14 boards to play.

The final set contained four big swings. Paske/Jones let through Forrester's 6♥ by conceding a ruff-and-discard, when opening a different suit would have been safe. Forrester/Lorenzini bid and made a reasonable 7♠. Lorenzini then chose to open 3♥ on: ♠J ♥KJ8742 ♦964 ♣765. Forced to guess, Paske bid 3NT on ♠KQ1093 ♥A9 ♦KQ5 ♣AK3. This went down when there was a profitable 5-5 spade fit, duly found by Volcker/Bessis over Robson's multi 2♦.

Let's enjoy the fourth of the big swings:

S4-Board 51. Dealer South. Both Vul.

♠ AK103		♠ J875
♥ KQJ953		♥ 108
♦ 86		♦ KQ92
♣ 4		♣ AQ10
	♠ Q64	
	♥ 76	
	♦ A1053	
	♣ KJ72	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Paske</i>	<i>Forrester</i>	<i>Jones</i>	<i>Lorenzini</i>
1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass
4♠	Pass	4NT	Pass
5♥	Double	Pass	Pass
Redouble	Pass	Pass	Pass

Forrester ventured the sort of lead-directing double of 5♥ that is sometimes described as 'state of the match'. He was out of luck when Paske and Jones showed the confidence to play in this contract redoubled.

Paske won the club lead with dummy's ace and played trumps. Forrester won the second round and played another club to the 10 and jack, ruffed by declarer. After drawing the last trump, declarer cashed the ♠A. He then forced a diamond entry to dummy and finessed the ♠10 to pick up +1200.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Volcker</i>	<i>Allfrey</i>	<i>T.Bessis</i>	<i>Robson</i>
1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♠	All Pass

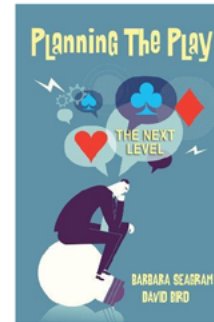
There were no such fireworks in the Closed Room. Bessis scored +650 and ALLFREY gained 11 IMPs, on their way to a 171-132 win. They had reached the Rosenblum semi-finals!



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Bridge Beats Brexit

from Steve Garry

When Steve Garry returned from his retirement home in France to his native Worcestershire for a holiday he contacted the local EBU to fit in a game of bridge. Mike Vetch the President of Worcester Bridge Club arranged for Steve to play and they soon got talking about creating a partnership with Steve's club in Romorantin France. Mike contacted Alain Gillier the President of Romorantin Bridge Club and the idea was received with great enthusiasm by both Club committees.

It wasn't long before Alain flew over to meet Mike in Worcester and on October 24th both Presidents signed an "Agreement of Friendship" Mike explained "The aim is for both Clubs to provide hospitality bridge sessions and a chance to explore the area with cultural exchanges"



Marie Coupee, Romorantin Club Secretary, Mike Vetch, President Worcester Club, Alain Gillier, President Romorantin Club and Steve Garry



Mike Vetch President of Worcester and Alain Gillier of Romorantin signing the 'Agreement of Friendship'

Alain was very impressed with the City of Worcester and the friendship he received at the bridge club. He said "When Mike contacted us with the idea of a partnership it received a 100% vote from our committee. Both Worcester and Romorantin have much in common very historic beautiful and both have nice bridge clubs. I played bridge in England for the first time and there was no problem with translation despite the variations between the French system and the English system. It was very interesting. the game of Bridge is truly international and we look forward to receiving our friends from Worcester here in Romorantin in 2019."

The French FFB and the English EBU have welcomed this initiative and hope more clubs arrange similar partnerships in the future.

Letter from Germany – Slams in the Last Chance Saloon

Martin Cantor

And so we came in April to the final weekend of the German Teams Bundesliga. Regular readers will know that after the six matches of the first two weekends our Bielefeld team was lying bottom of one of three parallel third divisions, and so in grave danger of relegation to the regional league. The position, with three matches to play, was:

Position	Team	VPs
1.	Karo10 Böblingen	83.35
2.	BC Mönchengladbach	76.48
3.	BC Münster-Uni	68.53
4.	Aachener BC 1953 II	68.39
5.	BC Bergisch Gladbach	67.57
6.	BC Ingelheim	52.47
7.	BC Bonn II	51.21
8.	BC 52 Berlin II	49.75
9.	BTC Hamburg I	47.29
10.	BC Bielefeld II	34.96

leaving us with, if not a mountain, then at least a hill to climb to get to at least 8th to avoid the drop. Rather than keep you in suspense to the end of the article I might as well tell you now that we didn't manage it. We had chances, but in the end we didn't do enough to overcome our disastrous second weekend. We switched two of our partnerships for this final weekend, so I was playing with Silvia Klasberg-Brawanski, my erstwhile partner Omid Karimi played with Eckhard Renken, while Horst Hübner and Peer Köster stayed together.

Teammates had built up a handy 34-15 lead in the first half (16 boards) against 8th placed Berlin when Silvia and I came in for Omid and Eckhard. Unfortunately the slam hands ran against us, certainly in part due to poor judgement, but with a fair dollop of bad luck on the side.

Board 17. Dealer North. None Vul.

♠ AJ874 ♥ 93 ♦ 74 ♣ J874	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S	♠ K105 ♥ AK ♦ AKQ63 ♣ 1062
N					
W E					
S					
♠ 932 ♥ J87542 ♦ J108 ♣ 9	♠ Q6 ♥ Q106 ♦ 952 ♣ AKQ53				

Open Room


	West	North	East		South
		<i>Cantor</i>			<i>Klasberg-Brawanski</i>
	-	1♣*	Pass		2♣*
	Pass	2♦*	Pass		2♥*
	Pass	4♣*	Pass		4NT*
	Pass	6♣	All Pass		
1♣		Polish Club: weak NT or ♣s 15+ or any 18+			
2♣		5+♣s GF or 6♣s invitational			
2♦		♦ values			
2♥		♥ values and confirms game force			
4♣		keycard for ♣s			
4NT		2 keycards and ♣Q			

After partner's 4NT, and with no reason to expect diamonds to be any better than clubs I had to choose between 6♣ and 6NT. Unfortunately our sequence would see no-trumps played from the South hand, leaving us potentially vulnerable to a spade lead through the king. So I opted for 6♣ which, as you can see, fails on the trump break while 6♦ and the 6NT

bid at the other table both make. A tough way to lose 14 IMPs, going off in a slam that by my reckoning is about 70%.

Three boards later we lost a further twelve when opponents bid and made a rather worse slam while we stopped in game.


Board 20. Dealer West. All Vul.

♠ QJ987 ♥ 7 ♦ AQ109873 ♣ —		♠ K2 ♥ A532 ♦ J2 ♣ 109742
♠ 1065 ♥ KJ84 ♦ 65 ♣ KJ83		♠ A43 ♥ Q1096 ♦ K4 ♣ AQ65

I was in just 4♠ got the ♣10 lead to ditch my heart, and when the ♠Q was covered finessed the nine on the way back, not unduly worried whether it would hold. In the other room our opponents bid rather agriculturally to 6♦, and with little to go on Horst chose the same club lead, so declarer just had to bring in spades for one loser, which he duly did. On a more normal auction, when North would bid spades twice, and not support his partner's hearts, then whether against 6♦ or 6♠ it surely seems right to lead the ace of hearts with high hopes of making your ♠K. After the ♥A lead slam is heavily against the odds needing spades to play for no loser. In that situation both declarer and East would have faced a classic bluff and double bluff position in the spade suit. When declarer leads the ♠Q beginners are taught that it is 'standard' to cover with a doubleton*. When you cover declarer has to decide whether you have Kx or K10, but with the odds favouring Kx he should of course finesse against partner. But suppose East ducks the first round. Now declarer has to decide whether he has Kx (lead small) or Kxx (lead the jack). Oh well, at least it gave me the opportunity to air that bit of theory, just a shame it was only theoretical.

Two boards later came another potential slam.

Board 22. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

♠ Q42 ♥ K10643 ♦ 63 ♣ J75		♠ 75 ♥ AQJ875 ♦ KQ87 ♣ 10
♠ K10983 ♥ 92 ♦ 94 ♣ 9432		♠ AJ6 ♥ — ♦ AJ1052 ♣ AKQ86

Both 6♠ and 6♥ make on the North South cards, provided you can find the spade queen, although in 6♠ you have to be careful to ruff an opening heart lead with an unblocking jack of spades, then draw trumps via the finesse. I played in 5!s, and after the lead of ♦K had no trouble making my contract, +450. In the other room teammates played in the putatively profitable 5!♥ going two off for -500, and another 2 IMPs out. However the match wasn't all doom and gloom, as first I and then Horst made 3NT contracts that should be beaten. The final score in this match was a 63-62 win, less than we had hoped, but at least we still had a chance.

Sadly, not a chance that we were able to take, losing the next match, against Ingelheim, 81-72 / 11.86-8.14, and then narrowly winning the final match against Aachen 95-84 / 12.24-7.76. When the dust settled the bottom of the table looked like this:

7.	BC Bonn II	74.86
8.	BC Münster Uni	74.81
9.	BTC Hamburg I	69.95
10.	BC Bielefeld II	65.56

Congratulations to all the division winners:

1st Division	Köln-Lindenthaler
2nd Division	Karlsruher BSC
3rd Division A	Jugend BC Deutschland
3rd Division B	ABC Freiburg
3rd Division C	Karo10 Böblingen

and especially to the German youth squad for winning 3A.



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Thank you!

DEFEND WITH JULIAN

POTTAGE

The Questions

1

♠ 987			
♥ QJ2			
♦ AQ104			
♣ Q83			

♠ KJ1043			
♥ A5			
♦ K5			
♣ J1052			

N
W E
S

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

1♠ five-card majors and strong NT

Partner leads the six of spades. What is your plan?

2

♠ QJ3			
♥ QJ			
♦ KQ962			
♣ K95			

♠ K875			
♥ A2			
♦ 10853			
♣ 1064			

N
W E
S

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
-	-	-	1♠
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♠
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

West leads the ten of hearts, won by the ace. You return the two. Partner takes the king and continues with the eight, dummy ruffing with the queen. What do you do?

Krypton transfers with Superman

Mike McGinley

I was having my annual game in Metropolis with Clark Kent (as you do) when this hand came up

♠ —
♥ K10432
♦ 654
♣ KQ954

and bidding started 4♥-7♥-Pass to me!

What the heck is going on, maybe partner has pulled out the wrong bidding card?

Hmm taking it at face value and looking at my heart holding, he's not exposing a psych.

What to do?...I've got a good mind to teach him a lesson and pass (but then again, he is the Man of Steel, so maybe not).

Holding ♥A rather than ♥K I suppose I'd have an easy 7NT bid. I can't do that here so I reluctantly made a waiting bid of 7♠...which ended the auction.

West led ♥A and play didn't take very long as the full hand was

	♠ AKQJ942	
	♥ —	
	♦ AKQJ10	
	♣ A	
♠ 10873		♠ 65
♥ AQJ9875		♥ 6
♦ 32		♦ 987
♣ —		♣ J1087632
	♠ —	
	♥ K10432	
	♦ 654	
	♣ KQ954	



Superman cheerily remarked “Sorry to spring that Krypton transfer on you, but they don't come up too often. If anyone was going to have a void diamond it was the pre-emptor – quite a bonus to see the void was in the club suit. Back home we call Seven Hearts the *cul-de-sac* transfer as there's nowhere else for partner to go. Over three or four of other pre-empt suits, 6NT or a jump cue-bid of six or seven can show two different places to play!”

Our opponents harrumphed a bit, and discreetly asked Mr Kent to show his lead-lined vest (a club rule to ensure X-ray Vision could not be used)

This hand is from a Camrose match this year, when the bidding at all six tables was essentially

4♥	7♠	Pass	Pass
Double	All Pass		

The Lightner Double resulted in a club lead, so one-off for a flat board.

Surprisingly, none of the declarers was heard to sigh and lament - if only we'd been playing Krypton transfers!



Test Your Technique

with Christophe Grosset

see Page 4

Dealer South. E/W Vul.

♠ A86 ♥ Q8643 ♦ 764 ♣ 108	♠ K2 ♥ A1097 ♦ KJ102 ♣ A95		♠ QJ4 ♥ J2 ♦ 98 ♣ KQJ632
♠ 109753 ♥ K5 ♦ AQ53 ♣ 74			

North plays 3NT after the following bidding:

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

East leads the king of clubs, asking for count or unblock, and West plays the 10. Declarer ducks trick one to see the queen of clubs from East and the eight from West.

How should declarer play from here? If declarer decides to duck twice, West will pitch a heart on the 3rd round.

Answer:

The chances for 9 tricks are either 1♠, 3♥, 4♦ and 1♣ or 2 (or 3) ♠, 2♥, 4♦ and 1♣. In any case, declarer will need the ace of spades to be onside.

Playing for 2 or more tricks in spades will require either West to have ♠AQJ or for the defence to make a mistake.

The right play is to go for hearts, playing East to have an honour stiff, doubleton or third. To do that, you need to play the ten of hearts after the ace of clubs. If East covers, you win the king and will then finesse. If East doesn't cover, you will need to let West win the trick and later play for the drop.

In the case where East plays small very smoothly when you lead the ten, you might want to play West for both honours and finesse against him the second time you play hearts... but this will be a consequence of table feeling as the statistics are in favour of East having one honour.

The Invisible Woman

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

He had never felt this way before. He wondered if this was the way the Lion felt when he tried to ask Glinda out for a date. Or was it how Glinda felt when she sat down opposite the Wicked Witch of the West? Or how people felt in war-torn countries.

His brain was sore. His stomach was churning. Sitting down was unbearable, but so was standing up. He wasn't sure that he could trust himself to speak. No, the Tin Man wasn't in love, he wasn't in fear of his partner, and he wasn't in fear of his life.

'If you don't mind me saying so, you do not look at all well,' Professor Marvel looked most concerned. 'I wonder if you overdid it at that restaurant last night? These all-you-can-eat buffets can be very tempting. I feel partially to blame. I'm such a light eater, and you were doing your best to ensure that between us we got full value for money.

'Anyway, I'm sure that you shouldn't be looking that green.'

The Tin Man's grunt was obscured by the gurgling from his stomach. He had selected this B&B because he remembered the spectacular breakfast it provided. The overflowing plate of bacon, eggs, sausages, black pudding, potato scones and beans, was pushed to the side untouched.

'And we only have an hour until the start of play! Your big day in the final of the National Pairs!' The Professor considered the situation then said, 'Wait here. If you can, that is. I'll be back in a minute.'

In a flash he returned with a cup of something warm and smelly, a glass of water and two tablets.

'I don't need your quack cures,' the Tin Man hissed.

'Well it's up to you. This is camomile and ginger tea – both proven in scientific tests to help settle the stomach. And the pills are a special formulation imported from Nepal. Dissolve them in the water.

'You needn't worry. If they are applying Olympic standard doping tests, there's no forbidden substance in any of it.'

The Tin Man gave the smallest of nods and accepted the offerings. His face turned another colour, one Professor Marvel had never seen before on a human being. 'Can you look after them for a minute?' the Tin Man mouthed, as he ran out of the breakfast room and down the corridor to

the bathroom.

Half an hour later, they strolled the 300 yards from the Guest House to the Emerald City Bridge Centre. Having decided that nothing could be worse than the state he was actually in, he had taken the Professor's medicine, not through confidence in it, but through desperation.

Now as they walked, he realised that he felt much better – not fully recovered, but capable of playing a two-board set without imminent danger. Perhaps that Professor's ideas weren't that bad. After all, his declarer play was remarkably good, so he couldn't be that stupid.

The event was to be played in six stanzas, in each of which all the pairs played the same eight boards. At the end of each stanza there was a short break (a godsend for the Tin Man) with the current standings being displayed on a big screen. Dorothy had never played in an event organised in this way before but found that she liked it. She enjoyed getting the scores, and being able to draw a line and start afresh each time.

As on the day before, her partnership started slowly, but above average, much to the relief of the Tin Man. He didn't want to have to explain to Dorothy that his pre-match preparations might not have been the best. It was only in the third stanza that they started to move significantly up the standings, possibly related to the Tin Man's health returning to something close to normality. A good fourth stanza lifted them into the top ten, and for the first time she and the Tin Man started to pay attention to the top scores. Leading the way were the Card Wizard from Australia and his partner.

Stanza five went like a dream for Dorothy and the Tin Man. Their score of 83% on these boards propelled them up into second place, just behind the Card Wizard. A gap had opened up between these pairs and third place. If either of these two pairs had a good final stanza, then it was hard to see them being caught by the field.

Both pairs finished the last set quickly. Dorothy and the Tin Man took up the prime spots in front of the big screen while most tables were still in play. No results were being shown until all the tables had finished. The Tin Man stared frustratedly at the screen and then at some of the

statuesque figures in the playing room. ‘Just because it’s the last round they seem to think they can take all day over the hands,’ he told his partner as he lurched from foot to foot impatiently. The Card Wizard came to join them. The Tin Man was keen to compare notes.

‘What did you do on the fourth board?’ he asked.

Dealer West. All Vul

♠ AJ6532 ♥ 10 ♦ 987 ♣ J96	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ K8 ♥ K986 ♦ J5 ♣ KQ543
♠ Q94 ♥ Q32 ♦ AQ1032 ♣ 107	♠ 107 ♥ AJ754 ♦ K64 ♣ A82	

Not waiting for an answer, he recounted the events at his table.

West	North	East	South
	<i>Dorothy</i>		<i>Tin Man</i>
Pass	2♠	Double	Pass
3NT	Pass	Pass	Double
4♦	Pass	Pass	Double
All Pass			

‘Dorothy was in the North seat and opened a weak Two Spades in second position. East doubled – a bit off shape but we’ve seen worse things done today. I passed and West took a lunge into Three Notrump. When that came back to me I doubled. West ran to Four Diamonds and I doubled that too. Dorothy led her heart so I won the ace and gave her a ruff. Following my signal she put me back in with a club and I gave her another ruff. After that, declarer took the diamond finesse, but he still had to lose the ace of spades. That made it two down for five hundred. I’m not sure how far the silly 3NT was going off but I assume we got a near top.’

‘Great score,’ beamed the Australian. ‘I was sitting West, and we were

playing the juniors, Ben and Trevor. Nice boys but terrible overbidders. Having said that, I must admit that I sank to their level with a One Diamond opening. One must meet fire with fire,’ he smiled. ‘North overcalled Two Spades and my partner doubled. I retreated to Three Diamonds but when he asked me for a stop with Three Spades I felt that I had to give him Three Notrump. Trevor doubled me with the South hand.’

This had been the auction at the Card Wizard’s table:

West	North	East	South
<i>Wizard</i>	<i>Ben</i>		<i>Trevor</i>
1♦	2♠	Double	Pass
3♦	Pass	3♠	Pass
3NT	Pass	Pass	Double
All Pass			

‘Ah, so not a good one for you then,’ the Tin Man affected a degree of sympathy. Even he realised that it was mannerly to suppress his glee.

‘Well, not quite. Let’s take a look at the play. Correctly reckoning that his partner didn’t have a spade honour when he had failed to double Three Spades, Ben led the ten of hearts. I put up the king from dummy and Trevor took the ace. He switched to the ten of spades, which I allowed to hold. Clearly, there was no future in that suit and the minors looked unpromising. I think Trevor hoped that the original lead of the ten was from a doubleton, or perhaps he felt that if I had three hearts then I was going to take the heart finesse at some stage anyway. At trick three he tried a small heart, which I ran to the dummy. Naturally, I took the diamond finesse and then ran the suit. With one diamond left this was the position.’ He quickly wrote out the hand on the back of the hand record.

♠ AJ6
 ♥ —
 ♦ —
 ♣ J96
 ♠ Q9
 ♥ Q
 ♦ 10
 ♣ 107
 ♠ K
 ♥ 98
 ♦ —
 ♣ KQ5
 ♠ 7
 ♥ J7
 ♦ —
 ♣ A82



Dealer West. N/S Vul.

♠ J43
 ♥ A964
 ♦ 98
 ♣ A975
 ♠ Q10962
 ♥ —
 ♦ AKQ7
 ♣ KJ43
 ♠ K75
 ♥ 1072
 ♦ 6542
 ♣ 862
 ♠ A8
 ♥ KQJ853
 ♦ J103
 ♣ Q10



The Card Wizard resumed his narrative. ‘I had taken five tricks to this point and lost two. On the last diamond North threw a spade, while dummy and South pitched hearts. Now I played a spade towards dummy. There was nothing that the defence could do. If North plays back a spade, I win it and play a club. If he tries a club, I rise with the king. Whatever he does, I can’t be stopped from taking five diamond tricks, two hearts, a spade and a club.

The Tin Man was taken aback. ‘So a top for both of us then,’ he almost managed to keep the disappointment out of his voice. ‘Who would have thought that 3NT was making on that lot.’

‘It was Ben who spotted how to beat it,’ the Card Wizard continued. ‘Have you seen it?’ With a light laugh, he spared them the bother of answering. ‘It’s been a long day. I’ll cut to the chase. The winning defence after the ten of spades has scored is a small club. You do need partner to have the jack and nine of clubs, but you have no other possible source of tricks to beat the contract. When he gets in with the ace of spades he’ll play one back and you will take two clubs, two spades and a heart.’

‘After all the cheek they gave me yesterday for a perfectly normal defence!’ a hint of outrage crept into the Tin Man’s voice, partly masking his frustration that he had not made ground on the Card Wizard on this hand.

‘We had a hand against them that I wasn’t too happy with,’ said Dorothy. ‘It was the last board of the stanza. I feel that we could have done better,’ Dorothy said. They all looked at the hand records.

She wrote out the bidding at their table:

West	North	East	South
<i>Dorothy</i>	<i>Ben</i>	<i>Tin Man</i>	<i>Trevor</i>
1♠	Pass	Pass	2♥
Double	2♠	Double	2NT
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

‘I led the king of diamonds, on which my partner played the six, showing an even number. When I played the ace of diamonds he played the five as suit preference for spades, so I switched to the ten of spades. That went to the jack, king and ace. Declarer ruffed a diamond in the dummy then played out his trumps. With one to go, this was the position.’

♠ 43
 ♥ —
 ♦ —
 ♣ A9
 ♠ Q9
 ♥ —
 ♦ —
 ♣ KJ
 ♠ 75
 ♥ —
 ♦ —
 ♣ 86
 ♠ 8
 ♥ 3
 ♦ —
 ♣ Q10



‘When he played his last heart I was finished. I discarded a spade but he just put me in with the queen of spades and I had to lead away from the club to give him his tenth trick.’

The Tin Man interrupted: ‘And that pompous idiot Trevor was pretending to apologise for squeezing you again, after yesterday’s incident. He had the temerity to suggest that had you switched to the queen of spades instead of the ten

then I could have held the suit and prevented the squeeze. I told him how wonderfully double dummy that was, and how stupid we would have looked if I had had king doubleton of spades. He could then have easily set up the jack. Don’t worry, Dorothy. Four Hearts will be a normal contract and no-one will beat it.’

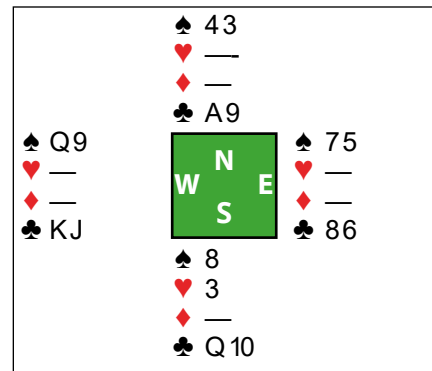
‘Hmm,’ said the Australian, slightly embarrassed. ‘Actually, I beat it, but not by Trevor’s proposed defence.’

The Tin Man looked stunned.

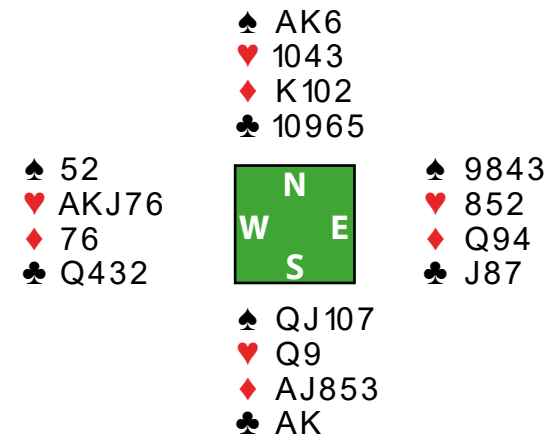
‘I decided that there was no rush for the diamonds so I switched to the ten of spades at trick two. Declarer had to go out to a diamond in order to take the ruff in dummy before he drew trumps. When I was in we were able to play two more rounds of spades. That eliminated the suit so that we eventually reached the same position as in your diagram, but without any spades. There was no endplay now so declarer had to lose a club for one down.’

‘Good thinking,’ Dorothy nodded. ‘I’m sure that will be another top for you, or close to it. Should we be congratulating you on your victory?’

The Card Wizard smiled. ‘I’m far from sure about that. We had a few bad ones that you just haven’t hit on yet. This board was a nasty one, I thought.’



Dealer South. None Vul.



‘I opened the South hand with a strong no-trump and was soon in 3NT after an unopposed auction. West led the king of hearts and when her partner showed an odd number she judged well to follow up with the ace, dropping my queen. At least I was spared guessing the queen of diamonds as I had eight tricks once the defence had finished with their hearts.’

‘I suppose most people would open One Diamond. They would have got a One Heart overcall. Now it’s all very awkward. Twenty-seven points, but the best game is Five Diamonds needing a three – two break and a good guess. Well done to any pair that stops in part-score.’


A gleam had come into the Tin Man’s eye.

‘Yes, plus 400 would be a very good score North-South. Let me take you through our bidding. After I had opened One Diamond and West had come in with One Heart Dorothy doubled. I jumped to Two Spades. Dorothy tried Three Hearts but lacking a stop I jumped to Four Spades. Dorothy knew she should have an extra spade for her double, but showed good judgement in passing. She knew we had a lot of high cards, and I was to be at the helm’

West	North	East	South
	<i>Dorothy</i>		<i>Tin Man</i>
–	–	–	1♦
1♥	Double	Pass	2♠
Pass	3♥	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

‘The defence started with three rounds of hearts, I presume,’ said the Card Wizard. ‘Trumps are four – two so you can’t really ruff. You can duck the third round, win whatever he plays, draw trumps and hope to get the diamond right.’

‘Goodness me no!’ The Tin Man had rarely enjoyed recounting a hand so much before. ‘I ruffed the third heart and made ten tricks without any guess work at all! I took my side winners – two top diamonds and two top clubs – to reach this position.’ He hurriedly stroked off the cards to show what was left:

♠ AK6 ♥ — ♦ 10 ♣ 109		♠ 9843 ♥ — ♦ Q ♣ J
♠ 52 ♥ 76 ♦ — ♣ Q4	♠ QJ10 ♥ — ♦ J85 ♣ —	

‘Now the coup-de-grace. I exited with a diamond, the third trick for the defence. No matter who won it, no matter what they played next, I had an unstoppable high cross ruff for all the remaining tricks!’

‘I must say, that was extremely well played!’ exclaimed the Card Wizard. ‘A line like that deserves to win the tournament.’

A few seconds later the big screen came alight with the final standings. The Card Wizard turned immediately to the Tin Man and Dorothy to offer his heartfelt congratulations to them. They had won by a mere 0.2% with the Wizard coming second.

For both the Tin Man and Dorothy the next fifteen minutes passed in a blur. There were backslaps from Professor Marvel, handshakes from Uncle Henry and the Lion, a cuddle for Dorothy from Aunty Em, and cries of ‘congratulations’ from many other well wishers. The Tin Man, his cheeks a rusty glow, attempted a high five with Trevor. Glinda gave Dorothy a kiss, with the Lion looking on wistfully. It was rumoured later that Almira Gulch had even been heard saying ‘well done.’

All too soon, the photographs had been taken and the players began to drift away. The scene of victory became an empty hall and it was time for the Over the Rainbow contingent to begin their journey back to Munchkinland.

Dorothy, the Tin Man, Aunty Em, Uncle Henry and Professor Marvel set off towards the railway station.

The Tin Man wanted to talk about the event to anyone within ear-shot. He would probably have struck up a conversation with the Wicked Witch of the West or Almira Gulch had they not departed at the earliest opportunity.

‘The first national championship ever won by a player from Munchkinland,’ he addressed the world. ‘The very first! And not only that but the master points from this event will mean that I have overtaken Miss Gulch. Now the Ozian world can see who the finest player in Munchkinland really is!’

Aunty Em gave Dorothy a knowing look the first time that the Tin Man made this speech. The second time, she gave him a sharp look, which entirely failed to pierce his armour. On the third occasion it was too much for her.

‘The first player? I’m sure you mean the first players,’ she smiled. ‘By my calculations it was a dead heat between you and Dorothy. And as for who is the highest ranked played from our neck of the woods, yes indeed, you have come a long way this year. You have come from practically no blue master points to overtake the Gulch woman. Who did you win them all with? Dorothy. Yes, Dorothy, who already had some blue points before this race between you and Almira began. So we do have a new top ranked player and I’m happy to congratulate you on climbing up to second place behind my niece – she’s not the invisible woman that you seem to think she is!’

Book Review

by Martin Cantor

Close Encounters: Bridge's Greatest Matches Books 1 & 2. *Erick Kokish and Mark Horton*

Master Point Press

Book 1: 264pp. \$21.95 £14.95 Book 2: 320pp. \$24.95 £16.95

These books are good. Packed full of interesting hands, dramatic matches and revealing insights into bridge at the highest level. Book 1 covers 7 close-fought matches from 1964 to 2001, Book 2 has 4 further matches from then to the 2017 Bermuda Bowl Final, covered in even more comprehensive detail.

It would have been possible to write perfectly interesting books about these eleven tight matches by just analysing the hands and detailing the ups and downs of the score. But there is much more to these books than that. Both the authors are fine players, but are best at, and best known for, their prowess in other areas of bridge: Kokish as a coach, Horton as a journalist (who has also coached at a high level), and those skills bring specific values to the books.

Their personal involvement in events lends an intimate onsite feel to the accounts, and the many individual and group photos from the time add to this. As do the human touches like this one from the first book: "Diamond gives a lot of thought to his lead against the excellent 6♣ – ♠ or ♥. To relieve the tension, he says, with a straight face: 'Brian, you could be coughing over there or something, to help me out!'"

The chronological order allows them to highlight the evolution of bridge theory and practice, with an occasional "bridge today, huh!?" from Kokish. At many crucial moments we are given insights into the thought processes of the players, often based on discussion with the players themselves. Where players have made bad decisions, any criticism is usually tempered by an explanation of the reasoning behind the decision, including strategic thinking about the state of the match and what might be happening at the other table, lending veracity to the axiom that experts make misjudgments while we mortals make mistakes. The introductions to each chapter are chatty and illuminating, setting the

scene for what follows, drawing the reader into almost feeling present. I also appreciated the occasional generally amusing anecdotes about analogous situations from entirely different events.

The coaching expertise comes out in a series of interesting disquisitions on areas not often discussed: the undervalued significance of 1 or 2 IMP swings; swing strategy when substantially behind in a match; the tendency when reviewing a session to skip over push boards, though there might be valuable lessons in them; the importance of intangibles like tiredness and emotional engagement; Board a Match tactics (a difficult and not much written about subject).

And I enjoyed the large number of wry comments. I won't discourage you from buying the books by quoting them all here, but my favourites included these: "the devil is out catching souls again on Board 50"; "to those watching on the Internet, the auctions on the next deal must seem like a series of mis-clicks by the data-entry technicians"; "if you believe either Fleisher or Martel should do differently, the person staring you in the face in your mirror is a result merchant".

Many of my reviews include a moan about the proof reading. Not in this case, as I don't recall a single error. I do have one minor quibble, that contrary to normal practice the dealer is not identified at the heading of the hands - but it's no big deal (bad pun intended). More seriously, the account of the 2003 Italy v USA Bermuda Bowl final, with Fantoni and Nunes on the Italian team, makes no mention of the cheating scandal that has since erupted around that pair.

When I started reading the first book, I thought there might be scope for a prequel, covering some of those exciting Culbertson matches among others. But, quite apart from the fact that there are already accounts of those, I came to realise that the authors' personal involvement adds much of the value to these two books, and that would be missing. However a sequel, which is hinted at, would be more than welcome.

Enterprising Bridge Tales: The Next Generation

Marc Smith

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

Captain’s log, stardate 21314.65. We are in orbit above Armstrong III in the Octans system, where the Universal Championships begin later today. The main focus of the two-week event will be the Universal Bowl, which kicks off in two days, but about 40 of our crew members have entered the opening event, the Mixed Pairs. We have completed the negotiation of the deal for mining rights with the South Saturnians, so I will spend the two days before the main event starts meeting with some of the other Starfleet captains and administrators who are gathered here for the championships.

There is much excitement amongst the crew of the USS Competitor as the opening day of the championships finally arrives. All around the ship, pairs can be heard discussing system or swapping tales of successes and failures on deals of the past.

Lieutenant-Commander Dieter and Ensign Daniel Prussia, the starship’s star pair, have arranged to meet for lunch with their teammates for the main event, the Romulans Jeffrey Mickstorm and Eric Radwill, and the Vulcans, Sartak and T’Grau. This will be the first time that the two Romulans have ventured into Federation territory. As they are not playing in the opening event, Dieter has agreed to spend the day with Jeff and Eric to assist with their acclimatization. Meanwhile, Daniel will be playing with his mother, Doctor Andrea Prussia, and the Vulcans, the most famous mixed pair in the universe, are widely considered the hot favorites to win the opening event.

The format for the Mixed Pairs is a two-session qualifier with about 20% of the original entry of just over 500 pairs making it to the two-session final on the second day.

“I guess we’ll need 54-55% to qualify,” comments Daniel, as the Prusias take their seats for the first session.

Looking down the line, Daniel spots one other pair from the USS Competitor in their section, Chief Engineer Giles O’Brain and his wife, Teiko. Doctor Prussia waves a ‘hello’ across the room to Commander DeVil and Counselor Roma, who are widely acknowledged as the leading mixed pair aboard the starship.

The first session starts promisingly for the mother-and-son combination and Daniel estimates their score to be somewhere in the high 50s as their opponents arrive for the last round. The pair’s long snouts and distinctive grey fur marks them as natives of Wolverina, the only inhabited planet orbiting the red giant Beta Michigan. They take their seats and the male member of the partnership barks a sociable greeting.

“You’ve come a long way,” observes Andrea, conversationally.

“We’ve attended the last four Universal Championships,” says Mrs Wolverine, displaying an impressive array of fangs in what Daniel supposes passes for a smile, “so we’re used to long-haul travel, although not on your scale, of course.”

“The uniforms give us away, I guess,” laughs the Doctor, as the players withdraw their cards from the first board.

The starship pair sail into game and this is what Mr Wolverine can see:

West	North	East	South
Mr. W	Doctor P	Mrs. W	Daniel
–	–	Pass	1♦
1♥	2♥	Pass	2♠
Pass	4♦	Pass	5♦
All Pass			

Dealer East. Both Vul.

♠ K 10 5
♥ J 6
♦ K Q J 9 4
♣ A 10 7

♠ 9 4
♥ A 10 9 7 2
♦ A 8 3
♣ Q 8 2



With no lead looking particularly attractive, the imposing figure in the West seats opts for the ♣2. Dummy's ♣7 is covered by the ♣9 from East and taken by Daniel with the ♣K. Declarer then leads a trump.

“What’s the minimum number of diamonds he can have?” asks Mr. W. “Three,” responds the Doctor.

After some thought, West follows low and dummy’s ♦K wins.

When declarer then continues with the ♦Q, East following suit, West takes his ♦A and sits back to contemplate his continuation.

“This is all very strange,” he thinks. “With king to three clubs and only three diamonds to the ten, it would seem normal to open One Club, but if declarer has a 4-4-3-2 shape would he not have ruffed a club before playing a second round of trumps? He must be 4-3-3-3 and he opened a sneaky One Diamond to try to stop the lead against notrumps. If he has the king and queen of hearts, he’ll be able to set up a discard for his third club.”

Confident that he has seen through declarer’s charade, West continues with the ♣8. The layout, though, is not quite as he had imagined it:

♠ K 10 5
♥ J 6
♦ K Q J 9 4
♣ A 10 7

♠ 9 4
♥ A 10 9 7 2
♦ A 8 3
♣ Q 8 2

♠ J 7 6 3
♥ K 3
♦ 6 5
♣ 9 6 5 4 3

♠ A Q 8 2
♥ Q 8 5 4
♦ 10 7 2
♣ K J



The ♣10 is played from dummy and, much to the astonishment of his left-hand opponent, Daniel wins in his hand with the ♣J. He then draws West’s last trump with the ♦10. Next comes the ♠A, under which Daniel carefully unblocks dummy’s ten. A spade to the queen comes next and then Daniel takes a third-round spade finesse against East’s jack. The ♠Q now provides a parking place for one of dummy’s hearts.

Daniel concedes one heart trick and claims the rest. When the result is put into the table-top device and the scores so far on the board are displayed, Daniel’s +600 is one of the few plus scores for North/South.

“Well judged partner,” says Daniel. “Most pairs are going down in Three Notrumps.”

After two sessions, Andrea and Daniel Prussia make it safely into the final, lying in ninth place. Also qualifying are two other pairs from the USS Competitor, DeVil/Roma and the O’Brains.

The Prussias have a decent first session and move up into sixth place, just behind Daniel’s Vulcan teammates for the upcoming Universal Bowl. In the final session, the two pairs meet head on. The good news for Daniel is that the Vulcans seem to be in top form. The bad news is that the Vulcans seem to be in top form, as evidenced by T’Grau play of her game contract on this deal:

Dealer East. Both Vul.

♠ A 8 7 6 4 2
♥ Q 6 4
♦ Q 10 5
♣ 8

♠ K 5
♥ J 9 3
♦ 9 8 6 4 2
♣ A 9 6

♠ Q 9 3
♥ K 10 7 5
♦ 3
♣ K 10 7 4 3

♠ J 10
♥ A 8 2
♦ A K J 7
♣ Q J 5 2



West	North	East	South
Daniel	Satrak	Dr. P	T'Grau
-	-	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♥	Pass	2♠
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

♠ A87642	♥ Q64	♦ Q105	♣ 8
♠ K5	♥ J93	♦ 98642	♣ A96
♠ Q93	♥ K1075	♦ 3	♣ K10743
♠ J10	♥ A82	♦ AKJ7	♣ QJ52

Daniel kicks off with the ♦8, won in hand by declarer with the king. Declarer then runs the ♠J to Andrea Prussia's queen. The Doctor returns the ♣7, covered by declarer's jack and taken by Daniel with the ♣A. The diamond continuation is ruffed by East, who exits with her remaining trump.

When T'Grau now starts cashing dummy's trumps, the Doctor comes under increasing pressure. With declarer needing all of the remaining tricks, and only one trump still remaining in dummy, this is the position:

♠ —	♥ J93	♦ —	♣ 96
♠ 4	♥ Q64	♦ Q	♣ —
♠ —	♥ K107	♦ —	♣ K10
♠ —	♥ A	♦ AJ	♣ Q5

Keeping her last trump for communication purposes, T'Grau now overtakes the ♦Q, on which the Doctor discards a heart. When the ♦J is then cashed, a heart is discarded from dummy, but what can East do?

If she bares her ♥K, declarer will cash the ♥A and cross to dummy with a club ruff to cash the winning ♥Q. When the Doctor instead released the ♣10, T'Grau ruffs a club in dummy, bringing down the king. The ♥A provides an entry to score the ♣Q at trick 13.

"I have to lead a heart," observes Daniel, "or, at least, switch to a heart when I get in with the ace of clubs. We don't get the diamond ruff but we score two hearts instead."

"It's good to see that you're in good form going into the big event tomorrow," comments Doctor Prussia, turning towards T'Grau.

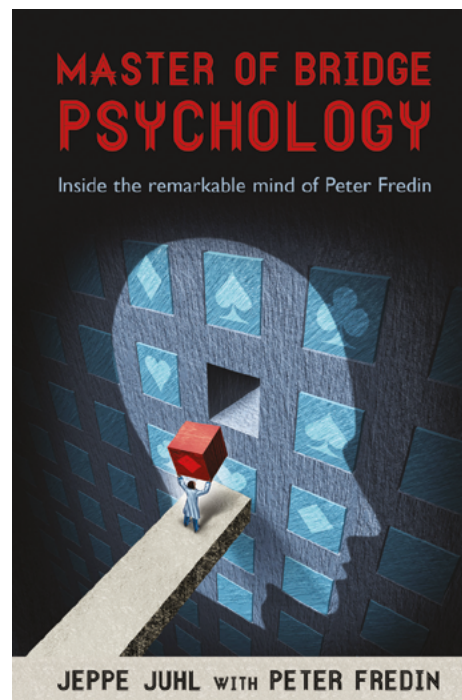
"Yes, nicely played," adds Sartak from across the table.

"Thank you," responds T'Grau.

If she didn't know better, the Doctor would have thought she saw a hint of a smile from the demure Vulcan.

On form they clearly are, for the Vulcans win the opening event of the championship by a margin of almost half a percentage point. A diminutive elven pair claim the silver medals, whilst Andrea and Daniel Prussia just edge out a Cardasian partnership to finish third. Commander DeVil and Counselor Roma finish in a creditable ninth place, to conclude what must be considered a successful start to the event for the starship crew.

Tomorrow sees the start of the much-anticipated Universal Bowl. Hopefully both more experience and more confident now, Daniel wonders if he will once again be inflicted by intense nervousness that he remembers only too well from the latter stages of the historic match against the Borg team. Only time will tell...



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MASTER OF BRIDGE
PSYCHOLOGY

Inside the remarkable mind
of Peter Fredin

by Jeppe Juhl with
Peter Fredin

AVAILABLE FROM A BRIDGE
RETAILER NEAR YOU

Answers to “Defend With Julian Pottage”

1

♠ 62 ♥ 108764 ♦ 876 ♣ 964	♠ 987 ♥ QJ2 ♦ AQ104 ♣ Q83 <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div> ♠ AQ5 ♥ K93 ♦ J932 ♣ AK7	♠ KJ1043 ♥ A5 ♦ K5 ♣ J1052
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WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Pass	3NT	1♠*	1NT
1♠	five-card majors and strong NT	All Pass	

Partner leads the six of spades. What is your plan?

The bidding, lead and the strength of the dummy tell you that partner can hold little. One contribution that you can reasonably expect is either any five hearts or a four-card heart suit headed by the ten. The other help you can hope for is a second spade. In this case, declarer will have only eight tricks after driving out the ace of hearts – two spades, two hearts, one diamond and three clubs.

If declarer plans to take the diamond finesse, you will get to score three spades and two tricks in the red suits.

Given your opening bid, declarer may well place you with the king of diamonds and aim for a strip squeeze.

If you discard a black winner on the third round of hearts, declarer will put you in with the third round of spades and await a diamond lead into the ace-queen. You thwart this by smoothly discarding a diamond on the third heart, pretending to hold a 5-2-3-3 shape. You will then have enough winners to beat the contract.

2

♠ 9 ♥ K109853 ♦ J74 ♣ Q82	♠ QJ3 ♥ QJ ♦ KQ962 ♣ K95 <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div> ♠ A10642 ♥ 764 ♦ A ♣ AJ73	♠ K875 ♥ A2 ♦ 10853 ♣ 1064
------------------------------------	--	-------------------------------------

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
-	-	-	1♠
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♠
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

West leads the ten of hearts, won by the ace. You return the two. Partner takes the king and continues with the eight, dummy ruffing with the queen. What do you do?

At the table, East overruffed with the king of spades and switched to a club. Declarer hopped up with the ace, then proceeded to cash the pointed suit aces and the ten of spades before crossing to the jack of spades. This drew the last trump and enabled declarer to discard two clubs on the king-queen of diamonds.

‘I switched to the club,’ East commented ‘because if you held the ace of clubs it might run away on the diamonds whereas the ace of diamonds could never run away.’

West smiled wryly. ‘You are right about that—but you went wrong the trick before. Overruffing with a natural trump winner is rarely right. With dummy down to a doubleton spade and your own good spade spots, you could be sure of making a trump trick even if I am void or have a small singleton. The advantage of discarding is that if I have the nine (as I did) or the ten of spades then we have two trump tricks after you later cover the jack of spades with the king.’

Bridge with Larry Cohen

www.larryco.com

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

Partner Makes a Slow Pass

The most frequent “ethical” problem is when a player takes advantage of his partner’s slow pass. For example, with both sides vulnerable:

West	North	East	South
3♠	Pass*	Pass	?
Pass	Slow (45 seconds)		

After North takes an exceedingly long time (45 seconds) to Pass, South has an ethical dilemma. He knows that his partner has some values (isn’t broke). North didn’t pass in tempo (normal would be 5-10 seconds). He thought 45 seconds and passed. Clearly, North was thinking of doubling or overcalling. Suppose South holds:

♠A4 ♥AQ9652 ♦Q42 ♣32

Should South balance with 4♥? It is very dangerous, but not as much as when you are sure your partner has some values. Had North passed in tempo, he could easily have held an ugly 5-count. The slow pass makes it clear that North has close to opening bid values.

Is South “allowed” to bid 4♥? Is he allowed to take advantage of his partner’s tempo? In other words, is it “authorized information” to South that his partner has a decent hand?

This is an unfortunate part of the game. The speed/tempo of an action gives away information.

The proprieties state that information shouldn’t be conveyed by anything other than the bid itself. The speed of the bid (or heaven forbid, the emphasis of the bid – such as “snappy” or “fumbling”) must be ignored by the partner of the bidder.

So, when North makes his slow pass, South must not draw any inferences. *In fact, he should ethically bend over backwards to NOT take advantage.* With the example hand above, he should not bid 4♥. To do so would be utilizing the information that his partner has some values.

If South does bid 4♥, the opponents can (and should) call the director. The director call is not an “accusation of cheating.” It is just proper procedure to draw attention to the fact that North slow-passed and South then bid. Is South *allowed* to bid? If his hand warrants it, of course he is allowed. Suppose South held:

♠A2 ♥AKJ107652 ♦32 ♣2

Who would not bid 4♥? I don’t care how long North took or even if he did a cartwheel on the table. South has every right to bid what is in his hand. I’ve heard uninformed players erroneously state: “South was barred – his partner’s slow pass *barred him from bidding.*” Not so. It bars him only in marginal cases. If it is 100% action, he can still take it.

But, when it gets “marginal,” the partner should not bid after obtaining “unauthorized information.” He should take his medicine, be a good person, and make the ethical pass.

Having introduced the confusing concept of acting after partner’s slow pass. Here is another example:

West	North	East	South
-	-	1♥	Pass
2♥	Pass*	Pass	?
Pass	Very slow		

With both sides vulnerable, South holds:

♠K873 ♥K3 ♦Q10872 ♣K2

I love to balance on this auction. If my partner had passed 2♥ in normal tempo (5 seconds or so), I would be free to use my best judgment. But, after partner’s slow pass, I would feel ethically bound to pass out 2♥. I have extra information (partner thought of bidding) that it is safe to bid here. I know my partner doesn’t have a bunch of garbage. I should make the ethical pass. I can’t let the knowledge that partner has values influence my decision. I’ll sleep better at night with a clear (ethical) conscience if I pass.

What would happen if I did balance?

The opponents have the right to call the director. The director would

let the bidding continue and suggest that he be called back after the deal if needed. If the director is called back (my balancing action was “successful”) and deems that a panel of my peers (he can actually go away from the table, take a survey and come back to make his ruling) wouldn’t balance, then the contract is restored to 2♥. Whatever actually happened at the table is “cancelled” and the director determines the score in 2♥ (leaning in the 2♥ declarer’s direction to give him the most favourable outcome). If the director deems my balancing bid was normal (“everyone” would do it), then the table result stands. For example, if my hand were:

♠K875 ♥6 ♦A765 ♣K764

I could surely balance with a double. Who wouldn’t? This hand is possibly worth a double the first time, but certainly clear-cut in the balancing seat after the opponents bid and raise to 2♥.

The guideline on what is “allowable” is fuzzy. It reads as if a team of lawyers all got to put their words into the pot, but boils down to something to the effect of “an action taken after partner’s slow pass is allowable if a normal percentage of the person’s peers would have done the same.” But, why go there? I prefer to just pass in close cases and not get involved with a director call and maybe taking advantage of partner’s tempo. If I deem it is “close” then I just pass.

Is it wrong for the opponents to call the director if you take action after partner’s slow pass? Are they being obnoxious? No! It is fully within their rights. It isn’t rude. Yet, many players are offended when the director is called in this situation. Unfortunately, newer players have trouble understanding all the ramifications and they get intimidated by the director call.

Do we want the director called for these “slow pass and then partner acts” situations only in major tournaments? At a local duplicate game? In a newcomers game? This is a thorny issue where you won’t get agreement from the cognoscenti. Here are the two extreme sides of the coin (about calling the director after hesitations):

A) “Director calls for tempo violations ruin the atmosphere and turn people off – don’t even think of admonishing players for acting after a slow pass and don’t dare call the director.” “We don’t want a cut-throat atmosphere. This is killing bridge. The people who bid after the slow pass don’t even realize what they are doing – they don’t understand the ethics involved.” “Go easy on them!”

Contrasted with...

B) “Active ethics after partner’s slow tempo has to be taught to players from the very start. Even in a newcomers game, this area should be handled firmly (yet politely) with education and director calls upon violation. If we don’t enforce the rules, then why call it bridge?”

My preference would be somewhere in between A and B. There have been many debates (one catchy article has been called: “If it Hesitates, Shoot it”) and if you wish to read about it, you might consider a bridge blogging site such as Bridgewinners.com (you can even post there and ask for opinions).

I leave you with this true story:

When I was 14 years old and new to duplicate, I was faced with a “huddle/bid” situation. Apparently I passed out of tempo and my 14-year old partner then bid in balancing seat. My opponent screamed (she shouldn’t have screamed) for the director. I wanted to cry – I was so embarrassed. I survived (thankfully), but didn’t understand what was happening. Ironically, some 30 years later, I was giving a lecture and in the audience was the lady who had screamed for the director.



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MORE CONVENTIONS,
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Is Bridge The Next Challenge For AI?

Jean-Baptiste Fantun looks into the next bridge challenge

Veronique Ventos is a senior researcher in Artificial Intelligence at Paris-Saclay University and also a bridge addict. In 2015, she met Yves Costel, the creator of the bridge robot WBridge5 and helped him boost his program that won the three following World Computer Championships in Wrocław, Lyon and Orlando. It was enough to convince her that bridge was a wonderful field for AI and that modern approaches could substantially improve computers' skills at bridge. "Computer programs still cannot compete with humans because they are all based on simulations coupled with double dummy analysis, which has serious flaws", said Veronique, who strongly believes that techniques like deep learning, symbolic machine learning or reinforcement learning can bring computer programs a step further. The academic project Alphabridge was born, whose ambitious objective was to build a robot that would rise to the level of bridge champions.

In three years the project evolved (switching names from Alpha-bridge to NuBridge in the process, to distinguish itself from AlphaGo) and thanks to Jean-Baptiste Fantun (an engineer ranked 23rd French player) NukkAI saw the light in May 2018: it is a private lab of Artificial Intelligence, based in Paris, whose primary objective is to address the bridge challenge(s). The idea is to gather researchers from different AI communities (both symbolic and numeric) and bridge experts to create an AI that will hopefully outperform the best human players and provide rules expliciting the reasons for decision making. "To crack a game, a program has to play optimally but to solve it, the program's strategy must be explainable in human understandable terms", claims their website www.nukk.ai.

Unlike other games like chess or Go where machines already surpass humans, bridge is a cooperative, incomplete information game: NukkAI founders believe that solving bridge would be a significant step towards Artificial General Intelligence. They are certain the algorithms they are designing will later find applications in many fields such as healthcare

or insurance: after all, in real-life, most decisions we make are based on incomplete information and we tend to accept machines' decisions if we understand the rationale underlying them.

NukkAI has had a very successful seeding round with four prominent investors (some of them former Carlyle Group and Goldman Sachs partners) and next step is in March-April 2019 where they hope to raise money from American investors. "We started with French and more generally European researchers, bridge champions and business partners but we definitely want to give a more international flavour to the project", said Jean-Baptiste who plans to establish at short term a presence for NukkAI in the US "where there is such a concentration of researchers and bridge stars while being a land of business opportunities".

First results are impressive: in six months they have set up a strong research team and have already presented two scientific papers in international AI conferences in Boston and Ferrara, Italy. They are very proud to have begun to convince the scientific community that "bridge is the next challenge for AI": they are offered more and more collaborations from AI researchers from all over the world.

NukkAI has bridge champions working to improve the bridge program but also designing challenges to come: unlike Go, the machine vs human challenges are not easy to define and they are aware they definitely need the bridge community to help them with that. Organizing different bridge challenges may have a positive impact on the image of bridge, the same way it went with chess or Go.

Veronique and Jean-Baptiste were recently in Orlando during the World Championships to present their project to the Executive Committee of the WBF but also to meet bridge experts who might be interested in collaborating with NukkAI one way or another. They were thrilled with their inspiring discussions with great American champions like Eric Rodwell, Kit Woolsey, Brad Moss or Justin Lall who were curious about the project and shared their insights with them.

They also played in the Mixed Teams with Veronique's children, Solène

(PhD in Math and Machine Learning, former member of the Girl under 26 French team) and Colin (NukkaAI's fresh recruit, current member of French U26 team).

Bridge, AI and fun: that seems to be NukkaAI's motto and their enthusiasm is contagious !



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

A few figures

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

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Kit's Corner

by World Champion Kit Woolsey

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

Leap to Slam

In a round-robin match in the Bermuda Bowl, you are presented with a tricky slam decision.

As North, you hold:

Dealer South None Vul.

- ♠ AK63
- ♥ AJ102
- ♦ A74
- ♣ K10

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	1♦
Pass	1♥	Pass	1NT
Pass	?		

- 1♦ 11-15, 2+ diamonds. If balanced, 13-15 (since 1NT opening 10-12 non-vul first and second seat).
- 1NT 13-15 balanced. Never have a singleton. Always bypass 4-card spade suit. Never raise on 3.

If you wish to probe, you must start with 2♦ which is game-forcing checkback. Notrump bids are natural and quantitative.

Your call?

There is no reason to rush things with this hand. 2♦ has to be the best start. Partner might have 4 spades. He might have 5 diamonds. You can always make a quantitative notrump call later if you so choose. For now, finding out more about partner's shape is of the utmost importance.

You bid 2♦. The bidding continues:

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	1♦
Pass	1♥	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♥
Pass	?		

2♦ Game-forcing checkback

2♥ 3 hearts, may have 4 spades or a 5-card minor

If you wish to probe further, there are two possible approaches available which are consistent with this hand:

You could bid 2♠. This is a natural call, and leads to natural bidding. Partner will raise with 4-card support, bid a 5-card minor if he has one, or bid 2NT otherwise. Nothing artificial after that.

You could bid 2NT. This asks about partner's shape, and via a coded structure he will show you his exact shape without going past 3NT. Once you know his shape, you will have to choose the strain yourself. You will have the ability to sign off at any game, make a slam try in any strain, or bid RKC for any suit. However, you will not be able to involve partner in the decision making unless you make a slam try.

Your choice?

Finding out partner's exact shape may not be what you need on this hand. The quality of his suits could be the key. For example, even 6♣ might be the best contract if he has AQJxx of clubs. For this reason, the natural approach looks to be better than the shape ask, since you will be able to elicit partner's opinion later in the auction if you so choose. If you take the shape ask approach, you will have to determine the right strain yourself.

You bid 2♠. The bidding continues:

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	1♦
Pass	1♥	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♥
Pass	2♠	Pass	2NT
Pass	?		

How do you proceed?

The information is starting to come in. You now know that partner doesn't have 4 spades and he doesn't have a 5-card minor. He is known to have 3 hearts. So, his possible distributions are 3-3-4-3, 3-3-3-4, or 2-3-4-4. His strength is 13-15 HCP.

Suppose you choose to drive to slam. What route should you take? You know you don't have an 8-card fit, but a 7-card fit could easily be best. For example, if partner has something like ♠xx ♥KQx ♦KQxx ♣Axxx you would much prefer 6♥ to 6NT. Or if partner has something like ♠xxx ♥KQx ♦KQJx ♣Qxx then 6♦ hits the spot. Therefore, you should not be leaping to 6NT if there is an intelligent way to find out if partner has a hand like these examples.

What approach will work? While low-level probing is fine, it isn't clear that partner will realize what is important. The best approach appears to be to bid 5NT, pick a slam. Partner will know that you know most of his distribution, and that you could have found out if there were a 4-4 minor-suit fit if you were 4-4-4-1 simply by bidding your minor at this point. Partner will know that you are interested in the possibility of playing a good 4-3 fit, and will be making his call with that in mind. If he has KQx of hearts and a small doubleton in spades he will recognize the possibility of a spade ruff for the twelfth trick in hearts and will bid 6♥. If he has KQJx of diamonds or AQJx of clubs, he will recognize the possibility of getting a ruff in the other minor in your hand if there is a 4-3 fit, so he will bid 6 of that minor. With neither of these holdings, partner will bid 6NT. Partner will be getting it right if you ask him to pick a slam. Therefore, 5NT is a better bid than the lead to slam of 6NT.

Now, let's examine the question of whether or not your hand is worth driving to slam. If you choose not to drive to slam, your bid is clearly 4NT. Partner will pass with a minimum. If he has a non-minimum, he will bid some strong suit holding (such as KQJx of diamonds or KQx of hearts with a ruffing value), or just bid 5NT or 6NT with no strong holding. He won't bid a mediocre 4-card minor, since he knows that if you were looking for a 4-4 minor-suit fit, you would have taken a different route. Therefore, if you do get to slam the 4NT invite will find the same good 4-3 fits as the 5NT pick a slam call.

Are you worth driving to slam? There is a minimum of 32 combined HCP. You have two tens, and the ♥10 is likely to be valuable. So offhand

it looks right to drive to slam one way or another. But before making this decision, it is worth looking at a couple of prototype hands to see just how good 6NT figures to be if you don't catch one of the magic fits. You need only consider 13-counts, since if partner has 14 he will be accepting.

Suppose he has the fillers in the majors, namely QJx of spades and KQx of hearts. Let's continue, giving him ♠QJx ♥KQx ♦Kxxx ♣Qxx. That is 13 HCP with every last card pulling full weight, and you still need the jack of clubs onside for 12 tricks. This is an indication that perhaps slam won't be so good if partner is minimum.

How about a hand which has the ace of clubs and the king of diamonds? Something like: ♠Qxx ♥Qxx ♦KQxx ♣Axx. Pretty perfect, but still not laydown.

More wasted stuff: ♠Jxx ♥Kxx ♦KJx ♣AJxx. Slam could make, but it takes a lot of finesses.

It looks like a close decision. But on balance, it appears that when partner has a 13-count you probably don't want to be in slam.

You choose to leap to slam with a lazy 6NT bid, ending the auction:

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

You bid it, so over you go to partner's seat to play it.

West leads the jack of spades.

♠ AK63
♥ AJ102
♦ A74
♣ K10



♠ Q75
♥ KQ8
♦ Q632
♣ A73

Where do you win the first trick, and what is your plan of attack?

You have 10 top tricks. Since a 3-3 spade split will only get you up

to 11 tricks, it looks like you will need to play for the king of diamonds to be onside. If that is the case, you will make if either spades or diamonds are 3-3 or if you can produce some kind of squeeze. If the king of diamonds is offside, it will take some kind of miracle to make. You will need the spades 3-3, and you will also need a very unlikely club-diamond squeeze. There is, of course, the possibility that the opponents might make a mistake.

When you attack diamonds, leading the ace first guards against a stiff king in the West hand. However, it is better to not cash the ace. The problem with cashing the ace first and leading towards the queen is that if the queen wins you won't know what to do. The diamonds might be 3-3, in which case you can establish the twelfth trick by playing a third round of diamonds. But if the diamonds are 4-2, a third round of diamonds is a disaster. It is better to lead low towards the queen. If the queen wins you can then duck a diamond, and you will be able to test to see if the diamonds are 3-3 without risking an immediate set.

What are the squeeze possibilities if the king of diamonds is onside but neither the diamonds nor the spades break 3-3? One possibility is a straight diamond-spade squeeze, which will succeed if the same opponent has 4 diamonds and 4 spades. The other possibility is a double squeeze, with clubs being the middle suit. This will work if East has 4 diamonds and West has 4 spades. East will be forced to guard the diamonds. When he does so you will discard your now worthless diamond, and West will be squeezed in the black suits. It is a classic double squeeze position. However, if West has 4 diamonds and East has 4 spades the double squeeze will not work, since both guards of the single threats are behind both threats. When you lead the last heart from dummy East can afford to unguard the clubs, and West can discard whatever you discard from your hand.

It would be nice to run the hearts first before making your diamond play, since the opponents might make a bad discard before they know about that hand. The problem is that you will have to make a discard from your hand. What will it be? If you discard a club, you give up on the double squeeze potential. If you discard a spade, the opponents can duck the second round of diamonds and then lead a spade when they win the third round. This will leave you with no communication in either pointed suit, so your spade-diamond squeeze won't work.

The conclusion is that you should win the ace of spades and play

a diamond to the queen immediately. If that wins, the plan will be to duck a diamond to see how the diamonds lie. If East has 4 diamonds the position will be right for the double squeeze, and you will play for that unless you get some indication otherwise. However, if West has 4 diamonds you know the double squeeze won't work, so you will play for the spade-diamond squeeze.

You choose to win the ace of spades and run 4 heart tricks. East discards the ♠8 and the ♦5. What do you discard on the fourth heart?

♠ K63

♥ A

♦ A74

♣ K10



♠ Q7

♥ —

♦ Q632

♣ A73

The club suit is now clearly out of play with no clubs being discarded. It is almost certain that either the spades or the diamonds are now splitting, and if they aren't they won't be guarded by the same person so you won't have a chance. You should discard a club.

You discard a club. What next?

It is time to work on the diamonds. Since a diamond has been discarded, you no longer need to duck a diamond first. You might as well cash the ace and then play another diamond.

You cash the ace of diamonds. East plays the ♦9, and West the ♦8. When you lead another diamond, East plays the jack. What do you do?

♠ K63

♥ —

♦ 74

♣ K10



♠ Q7

♥ —

♦ Q63

♣ A7

If West has K10 of diamonds left you are dead, so assume that is not the case. Ducking is right only if West started with K8 doubleton. Since East started with at least 4 diamonds, it is more likely he has the king. In addition, he would have been less inclined to discard a diamond from J109x than from KJ9x. Playing the queen is clear.

You play the queen. West follows with the ♦10. You knock out the king of diamonds and have 12 tricks with 3 spades, 4 hearts, 2 clubs, and 3 diamonds. The full hand is:

♠ AK63		♠ 984									
♥ AJ102		♥ 96									
♦ A74		♦ KJ95									
♣ K10		♣ J985									
♠ J102	<table border="1" style="text-align: center; width: 40px; height: 40px;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ Q75
		N									
W			E								
		S									
♥ 7543	♥ KQ8										
♦ 108	♦ Q632										
♣ Q642	♣ A73										

Could East have discarded better?

East can't afford to discard a club, as that would be costly if declarer had any 4-card club holding. He was concerned about discarding another spade for fear that this would tell declarer what was going on in the spade suit and allow declarer to cash whatever spade tricks he had and put more pressure on East. Despite this, East's best chance was probably to discard another spade and hope declarer misjudged the diamond position if declarer started with queen-fourth of diamonds.

The leap to slam by North is an example of a common expert error. Even if North judges that 6NT is likely to be the best contract, that doesn't make bidding 6NT correct. If there is any chance that a superior contract exists and that contract can be located by going slower, then the probing route should be taken unless it is judged that the more careful route may be of more help to the defenders. This usually isn't the case, as with this hand. Unless either all the necessary information has been gathered, or there really is no way to improve the quality of the final contract by going more slowly, leaping to slam is almost always wrong.



2018 Book of the Year

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

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Jeff Bayone



The Abbot's New Partnership

by David Bird

Mathieu Gosselin, a pen friend of Brother Aelred, had not enjoyed their first outing in the monastery duplicate. It was some years since he had scored only 39%, despite playing with a motley assortment of partners in the Toulon club.

'May I have a word?' said Gosselin, taking a seat next to the Abbot in the refectory.

The Abbot had always regarded breakfast as one of the most enjoyable meals of the day. He prided himself on enjoying every mouthful of food that the Good Lord provided. If any item failed to give him direct pleasure, he wouldn't eat it. Home-made bread, home-made jam, eggs from the St Titus chickens and, when finances allowed it, freshly-ground Columbian coffee. Who would not relish a breakfast like that? In his opinion, such enjoyment would be considerably reduced by having to chat with a visitor from some foreign country. 'Yes,' he replied.

'You played in the Bermuda Bowl in Chennai?' said Gosselin. 'I read about it in our magazine, *Le Bridgeur*. You beat the team with Rodwell and Meckstroth, I think.'

The Abbot spread a generous layer of blackberry jam on his toast. 'Strong players, of course,' he replied. 'We had to play out of our skins to win that one.'

Gosselin blinked. Out of our skins? What a strange language English was! 'I return to France in a few days,' he continued. 'It would be happy memory for me if I could partner such a famous player in the pairs tomorrow. I could learn so much.'

The Abbot cut his slice of toast into quarters. Four enjoyable morsels for the price of one. Perhaps the Frenchman's suggestion wasn't so bad. It wasn't as if he and Xavier had done so well recently.

The following evening, the Abbot and Gosselin took their seats for the first round against Lucius and Paulo.

Dealer West. E/W Vul

♠ K86	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ Q
		N									
W			E								
		S									
♥ KQ102	♥ J98754										
♦ A108	♦ K7										
♣ KQ6	♣ 10974										
	♠ J109753										
	♥ —										
	♦ J96532										
	♣ 2										

West	North	East	South
<i>The Abbot</i>	<i>Brother Lucius</i>	<i>Mathieu Gosselin</i>	<i>Brother Paulo</i>
1NT	Double	2♥	4♠
All Pass			

The Abbot led the ♥K and down went the dummy. 'Thank you, partner,' said Brother Paulo. 'Not so much for me, I see.'

The Abbot raised an eyebrow at this assessment. Three-card support, three aces and a ruffing value? Since when did that represent a disappointing dummy?

'Play low,' said Brother Paulo. He ruffed in his hand and led a low diamond, the ♦8 appearing from the Abbot. All would be easy if trumps were 2-2 and diamonds 3-2. What if trumps were 3-1 and a trump switch came now?

'Play low,' said Brother Paulo, after a few moments of thought. He won the Abbot's trump switch with dummy's ace, nodding his head when the queen fell from East. Gosselin produced the ♦K on the ♦Q continuation, and the Abbot had no good move available. If he overtook with the ace to draw two more rounds of trumps, declarer's diamonds would

be good. When he played low on the second diamond, Paulo ruffed the heart return and ruffed a third round of diamonds in the dummy. After a trump to the jack and king, Paulo won the Abbot's return and drew the last trump, claiming the contract.

Brother Lucius smiled at his partner. 'The key moment was the first round of diamonds,' he observed. 'Put up dummy's queen and you go down.'

After meagre pickings from the first round, the Abbot was happy to see his next opponents, Brother Jake and Brother Simon from the novitiate.

'Good evening to you both,' said Brother Simon. He turned towards Gosselin. 'I thought you'd be playing with your friend, Brother Aelred. Still, I expect the Abbot couldn't turn down the chance to play with someone from a different country.'

'It must be quite exciting,' said Brother Jake. 'Like playing in an international.'

As the Abbot saw it, there could be various pleasant aspects to a session of duplicate pairs. Participating in meaningless small talk was not amongst them. He drew the youngsters' attention to the board on the table, leaning forward to withdraw his cards. This layout awaited them:

Dealer West. N/S Vul.

♠ AK65 ♥ 3 ♦ AK5 ♣ A9753	<div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #006400; color: white; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ 73 ♥ 975 ♦ 107652 ♣ KQ6
♠ 92 ♥ QJ10842 ♦ QJ84 ♣ 2	♠ QJ1084 ♥ AK6 ♦ 9 ♣ J1084	

West	North	East	South
<i>The Abbot</i>	<i>Brother Jake</i>	<i>Mathieu Gosselin</i>	<i>Brother Simon</i>
2♥	Double	Pass	4♠
Pass	6♠	All Pass	

The Abbot led the ♣2 against the slam. With any luck the Frenchman would have an ace to match the colour of his ridiculous hair, tumbling all over the place. A speedy one down and they could get on with the next board.

This rosy view in the Abbot's crystal ball was dispelled when dummy went down with both black aces. 'Ace, please,' said Brother Simon. When the ♣6 appeared from East, he was faced with two club losers. What could be done about it?

The young declarer drew trumps in two rounds and continued with the ♥AK, throwing a club from dummy. When he led the ♦9, it was joined on the table by the ♦4, ♦A and ♦2. He called for the ♦K, East following with the ♦5. Declarer discarded a club, and the Abbot saw that it would not be a good idea to play the ♦8. He might then be thrown him in with a diamond, forcing him to concede a ruff-and-discard. Relieved that he had spotted the danger in time, the Abbot discarded the ♦J, retaining the ♦8.

'Five of diamonds, please,' said Brother Simon.

Gosselin followed with the ♦6, declarer discarding a club, and the Abbot had to win with the ♦8. His enforced red-suit return conceded a ruff-and-discard. Away went declarer's last club and the slam was made.

'You had no diamond lower than the six?' Gosselin exclaimed. He reached, uninvited, for the Abbot's curtain card. 'Yes, look, you had the ♦4. Keep that card and he goes down. My ♦6 wins and I cash a club.'

'But you had the ♦10,' protested the Abbot. 'Rise with the 10 and he must go down. How on earth can it cost to play your highest card?'

Gosselin spread his palms in Gallic fashion. 'You think it is good defence, relying all the time on partner to rescue you? Keep the ♦4, believe me, and he has no chance.'

A few rounds later a somewhat disgruntled Brother Aelred arrived at the table. Why was Mathieu playing with the Abbot and not with him? Wasn't it rather rude to travel all the way to the monastery to meet your pen-friend and then look elsewhere for a bridge partner after just one unlucky session?

Brother Aelred bore a determined expression as he took the South seat. With any luck he would have a chance to impress Mathieu with some sparkling piece of play. This was the first deal they played:

Dealer West. E/W Vul.

♠ 742 ♥ 1042 ♦ 75 ♣ A10742		♠ K53 ♥ J976 ♦ K64 ♣ Q96	♠ AJ108 ♥ 853 ♦ J1083 ♣ 85
	♠ Q96 ♥ AKQ ♦ AQ92 ♣ KJ3		

West	North	East	South
<i>The Abbot</i>	<i>Brother Michael</i>	<i>Mathieu Gosselin</i>	<i>Brother Aelred</i>
–	–	–	2NT
Pass	3♣	Pass	3♦
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

The Abbot led the ♣4 to his partner's queen, and Brother Aelred won with the king. He wouldn't usually take the trouble to plan an everyday 3NT, but here the circumstances were different. If the contract could possibly be made, he would find the way to do it. Now, what was the first step in making a plan? Ah yes, you had to count your top tricks. He had six tricks on top, including the club already made, so a successful finesse in diamonds or spades would bring the total to nine.

It could hardly be more obvious how to combine those two chances. He would test the spades by leading the queen. If no luck came there, he would rise with dummy's ace and take the second chance in diamonds.

The Abbot gave Brother Aelred a concerned glance. Was he ill in some way or just annoyed that the Frenchman hadn't wanted to partner him again? If anyone else had sat back in his chair like that, you would assume he was making a plan for the contract.

Brother Aelred suddenly sprang into action. He led the queen of spades and the Abbot followed with the two. 'Ace, please,' said Brother Aelred. 'And the jack of diamonds.'

He ran the jack successfully and scored three more tricks from the suit. Three heart tricks brought the total to nine. When he continued with a spade, the defenders scored the last four tricks.

With a triumphant expression, Brother Aelred turned towards Gosse- lin. 'I have Zia Mahmood to thank for that one,' he informed him. 'When the queen isn't covered, they don't hold the king. That was his bridge tip. Once I knew that the Abbot didn't hold the king of spades, I could take my second chance in diamonds.'

The Abbot emitted a small groan. For Heaven's sake, did Brother Aelred think any sane person would cover the ♠Q with that spade holding in dummy?

Brother Michael smiled his congratulations. 'A clever play, indeed, partner,' he said. 'I'm sure I once read somewhere that it's usually better to combine two chances instead of relying on just one.'

The Abbot leaned to his left, inspecting the result sheet. Three pairs had gone down, presumably by taking the spade finesse. Perhaps it wasn't so outrageous, playing matchpoints. At IMPs, it would be totally obvious to cross to the ♠A and run the ♦J. If that lost, you would still make the contract if West held the ♠K.

Brother Aelred caught the Abbot's eye. 'I assume from your expres- sion that you don't agree with Zia's tip,' he observed. 'Surely we should all be humble enough to accept advice given by a world champion? The fact that you didn't hold the ♠K rather proves Zia's point.'

For a moment the Abbot closed his eyes. What on earth must the Frenchman think of such a display of stupidity? He was probably regret- ting his trip to the monastery as much as the Abbot did.

The Abbot's mood was in no way mollified when, a short while later, he faced the disrespectful Brother Cameron. This was the first board of the round:

Dealer South. N/S Vul.

♠ A964
♥ Q86
♦ J4
♣ A762

♠ 105
♥ A92
♦ 1065
♣ QJ1094

♠ K732
♥ 754
♦ AK83
♣ K3



♠ QJ8
♥ KJ103
♦ Q972
♣ 85

West	North	East	South
<i>The Abbot</i>	<i>Brother Damien</i>	<i>Mathieu Gosselin</i>	<i>Brother Cameron</i>
–	1♣	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♠	Pass	2NT
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

The Abbot led the ♣Q and down went the dummy. ‘Your partner’s 2NT?’ queried Gosselin.

‘Forcing,’ Brother Damien replied. ‘He wanted to find out if I had four spades or three.’

The Frenchman’s eyes bulged. ‘You would raise on three spades?’ he exclaimed.

Brother Damien nodded. ‘Doesn’t everyone?’ he replied.

‘For us, in France, it is always four cards,’ Gosselin persisted. ‘Why make a distortion of the bidding?’

Brother Cameron won the club lead in his hand. Both defenders followed when he played the ace and king of trumps. After cashing his two top diamonds, he crossed to the ace of clubs and led a third club. Gosselin saw no point in ruffing a loser with his master trump. When he discarded a heart, Brother Cameron ruffed in his hand and then ruffed a diamond in dummy. These cards remained in play:

♠ 9
♥ Q86
♦ –
♣ 7

♠ –
♥ A92
♦ –
♣ J10

♠ Q
♥ KJ10
♦ Q
♣ –

♠ 7
♥ 754
♦ 8
♣ –



‘Play the club,’ said Brother Cameron.

Gosselin had no answer to this. If he ruffed with the ♠Q, declarer would discard a heart and score his last two trumps separately. If East discarded a heart instead, declarer would ruff with the ♠7 and be able to ruff a diamond in dummy for his tenth trick. Not thinking much of his chances, the Frenchman discarded the ♦Q. Brother Cameron ruffed the club and led the good ♦8, discarding a heart from dummy. Whether or not this was ruffed, ten tricks were in the bag.

With a pained expression, Gosselin entered the 620 in his card. ‘Heart lead, partner,’ he declared ‘We take three heart tricks and I must take a trump trick then.’

For a moment, the Abbot thought he was still partnering Brother Xavier. No-one in the world, even in France, would consider a heart lead from his hand.

‘In fact, wait a moment,’ continued Gosselin. ‘Yes, after three hearts, I lead a fourth heart. You ruff with the ten and we make two trump tricks. It is two down!’

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 quarter-final action from the Mixed Teams in Orlando.

These were the teams in opposition:

Wilson (Alison Wilson, Sally Brock, Chris Willenken, Richard Ritmeijer, Magdalena Ticha and Ricco Van Prooijen)

Macallister (Signe Buus Thomsen, Sarah Combescure, Adam Gros-sack, John Grayson Mcallister, Emma Ovelius and Mikael Rimstedt)

Millens (Kevin Bathurst, Shan Huang, Yiting Li, Joan Millens, Sylvia Shi and Jian-Jian Wang)

Manfield (Melanie Manfield, William Cole, Beth Palmer, William Pet-tis, Debbie Rosenberg and Michael Rosenberg)

Lu Dong (Ling Gan, Dong Lu, Yan Lu, Sheng Shan, Yanhong Wang, Lixin Yang and Dong Lu)

Ferm (Simon De Wijs, Christina Lund Madsen, Bas Drijver, Daniela Von Arnim, Barbara Ferm and Sjoert Brink)

Zhaoheng (Jianwei Li, Zhengjiang Liao, Haotian Wu, Shaohong Wu, Zhaobing Xie, Tao Zhou and Xudong Sun)

Perlmutter (John Kranyak, Laura Perlmutter, Cecilia Rimstedt, Johan Upmark, Gavin Wolpert and Meike Wortel)

The Hands

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

Hand 1. Dealer West. Both Vul.

♠ A953
♥ 2
♦ AK9
♣ J10654



♠ J10
♥ Q76
♦ Q753
♣ AK93

North overcalls 1♠. If East doubles South redoubles and if West bids 3NT at any point South doubles.

West	North	East	South
Buus Thomsen	Ritmeijer	M Rimstedt	Ticha
1♣	1♠	Double	Redouble
2♣	Pass	2♠*	Pass
2NT	Pass	3NT	Double
All Pass			

North held ♠K8642 ♥J9543 ♦104 ♣Q. Had he overcalled 2♣ to show the majors South would have jumped to 4♥, which should cost 500 – not bad if E/W can make a game.

He led the ♥4 and when declarer played the six from dummy South fell from grace by playing the king and switching to the ♠Q. Declarer won that and the appearance of the ♣Q meant there were already nine tricks. A diamond discard from South put that up to ten, so +950 was recorded.

West	East
Van Prooijen	Wilson
1♣	2♥*
2♠	2NT
3♥	4♣
5♣	Pass

2♥ was clearly artificial, and it looks as if 3♥ showed a shortage.

Here North led the ♥3 and as before South played the king, switching to a trump. That resolved one issue for declarer and when dummy's ♠10 was covered by the queen declarer was able to win, draw trumps and claim.

Recommended auction: 1♣-2♣*-2♠-2NT-3♦-3NT is one way to get to 3NT with East as declarer, which will make on this layout. However, you really want to be in 5♣ and once East knows West has a heart shortage there is a strong case for bidding 5♣.

Brink & Ferm bid 1♣-1♦-1♠-2♥*-2♠-3♣-3♦-4♠ which finished five down and cost 15 IMPs against the 5♣ bid in the replay.

Kranyak & Wortel went 1♣-1♦-2♦-2♥*-2♠-3♣-3♦ and had to score

that up against 3NT by East.

Marks: 5♣10, 3NT (E) 7, 3NT(W) 5, 3♣/3♦ 4.

Running scores: Wilson10 (0) Macallister 5 (10) Millens 10 (0) Manfield 7(1) Lu Dong 10 (15) Ferm 0 (0) Zhaoheng 7 (10) Perlmutter 4 (0)

Hand 2. Dealer West. None Vul.

♠ KQ8	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ AJ105432
♥ J2		♥ 8
♦ AJ4		♦ Q985
♣ KJ765		♣ 3

If West opens 1NT North bids 2♦ to show a major and then bids clubs (5♣ if necessary) South bidding 5♥ if possible.

West	North	East	South
<i>Buus Thomsen</i>	<i>Ritmeijer</i>	<i>M Rimstedt</i>	<i>Ticha</i>
1NT	4♥	4♠	Pass
Pass	Double	Pass	5♥
Pass	Pass	5♠	All Pass

South held ♠976 ♥Q963 ♦7632 ♣Q2 and led the ♦7. Declarer took dummy's ace, drew trumps and played a club to the king and ace, losing three tricks for one down.

West	North	East	South
<i>Van Prooijen</i>	<i>Ovelius</i>	<i>Wilson</i>	<i>Mcallister</i>
1NT	2♥	4♥*	Double
4♠	5♣	5♠	All Pass

North cashed the ♥K and continued with the four – no swing.

West	North	East	South
<i>Pettis</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Manfield</i>	<i>Wang</i>
1NT	2♦*	Pass	2♥*
Pass	3♣*	4♥*	Double
4♠	5♥	All Pass	

- 2♦ A major
- 2♥ Pass or correct
- 3♣ ♥+♣
- 4♥ Spades

Declarer ruffed the spade lead, crossed to dummy with the ♥Q and ran the ♣Q. When it held he drew the outstanding trump, cashed the ♣A, ruffed a club and played a diamond to the king, claiming when it held.

West	North	East	South
<i>Bathurst</i>	<i>D Rosenberg</i>	<i>Shi</i>	<i>Rosenberg</i>
1NT	3♥	4♦*	4♥
4♠	5♣	5♠	6♥
Pass	Pass	6♠	7♥
Double	All Pass		
4♦	Spades		

I'm not sure what to make of South's 7♥. Perhaps the opinion of one of the BBO commentators sums it up best: Wow!

It was two down.

Lu Dong & Ferm both saw fit to double 5♥, while in the remaining match Wu & Xie compared their 5♥ doubled with 5♠ doubled making when South led the ♣Q, covered by the king and ace and North returned the ♣10 hoping to give her partner a ruff, which added up to 16 IMPs.

Recommended auction: Suppose the auction starts 1NT-4♥-4♠-5♥. With ♠KQ8 how can you not bid 5♠? Even if the auction develops in a way that does not give West a chance to show spade support it does not feel right to allow N/S to play in 5♥.

Marks: 5♠ 10.

Running scores: Wilson20 (0) Macallister 15 (10) Millens 10 (13) Manfield 7(1) Lu Dong 10 (15) Ferm 0 (0) Zhaoheng 17 (26) Perlmutter 4 (0)

Hand 3. Dealer South. None Vul.

♠ KQ8	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ A94
♥ J985		♥ AK732
♦ 75		♦ 2
♣ Q642		♣ AKJ9

South opens 3♦ and North bids 3NT

West	North	East	South
<i>Pettis</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Manfield</i>	<i>Wang</i>
-	-	-	3♦
Pass	3NT	Double	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

South's opening bid was based on ♠1032 ♥Q4 ♦KQJ1083 ♣85 so there were 12 tricks.

6♥ depends on bringing in the trump suit for no loser, a 53.13% chance.

West	North	East	South
<i>Bathurst</i>	<i>D Rosenberg</i>	<i>Shi</i>	<i>Rosenberg</i>
-	-	-	2♦
Pass	4♦	Double	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

North did not try anything fancy – no swing.

West	North	East	South
<i>Buus Thomsen</i>	<i>Ritmeijer</i>	<i>M Rimstedt</i>	<i>Ticha</i>
-	-	-	3♦
Pass	3♥	Double	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♠	All Pass

North's psychic manoeuvre caught E/W out when West decided to introduce a three-card suit. North led the ♦A and continued with the four. Declarer ruffed in dummy and cashed the ♥AK followed by the ♣AK. There was no way to avoid the loss of three more tricks, so one down.

West	North	East	South
<i>Van Prooijen</i>	<i>Ovelius</i>	<i>Wilson</i>	<i>Mcallister</i>
-	-	-	3♦
Pass	5♦	Double	All Pass

That cost 1100.

Recommended auction: After 3♦-(Pass)-4♦-(Dble) West is sure to bid 4♥.

Marks: 4♥ 10, 6♥ 8.

Running scores: Wilson 30 (15) Macallister 15 (10) Millens 20 (13) Manfield 17(1) Lu Dong 20 (15) Ferm 10 (0) Zhaoheng 27 (27) Perlmutter 14 (0)

Hand 4. Dealer East. E/W Vul

♠ J952	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ AKQ7
♥ J75		♥ 986
♦ 6		♦ AJ3
♣ AJ1063		♣ K95

West	East
<i>Willenken</i>	<i>Brock</i>
-	1NT
Pass	

South held ♠643 ♥AK42 ♦Q74 ♣842 and led the ♠6. Declarer won with the ace and ran the ♣9. When North won and returned a diamond there were nine tricks.

West	East
<i>Buus Thomsen</i>	<i>M Rimstedt</i>
-	1♣
1♠	2NT
3NT	Pass

South led the ♥A and continued with the three, the defenders cashing four tricks in the suit before South switched to the ♦4. Declarer took North's king with the ace, cashed four spades ending in dummy and played a club to the nine, +600.

West	East
<i>Bathurst</i>	<i>Shi</i>
-	1♣*
1♦* (2♦)	Pass (3♦)
Double	3♠
4♠	Pass
1♣	16+ unbalanced or 17+ balanced
1♦	0-7

South started with three rounds of hearts and North switched to the ♦2. Declarer won with the ace, ruffed a diamond, came to hand with a spade, ruffed a diamond and drew trumps. She played South for the ♣Q, so one down.

West	North	East	South
Wang	D Rosenberg	Li	Rosenberg
-	-	1NT	Pass
Pass	Double*	Pass	2♣*
Pass	2♦	Pass	Pass
Double	Pass	2♠	3♦
3♠	All Pass		

Dble One minor
2♣ Pass or correct

South led the ♦4 and declarer was allowed to win with the jack. A good view in clubs would be worth twelve tricks now, but declarer played South for the lady so +170.

West	North	East	South
Wang	Lund Madsen	Yang	Drijver
-	-	1♣*	Pass
1♦*	2♦	Pass	3♦
Double	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

1♣ Precision
1♦ 0-7

After three rounds of hearts and a diamond switch declarer played North for the ♣Q, +620.

In the other room Simon de Wijs opened 1NT and Daniella Von Arnim left him there. As soon as he got in he cashed his winners – and the fall of the ♣Q gave him ten tricks.

Liao and Xie bid 1NT-2♣-2♠-3♠-4♠ and declarer got the clubs right. Kranyak and Wortel bid 1♣-1♠-4♠ and declarer got the clubs wrong.

Recommended auction: Opposite a 15-17 1NT I think West is worth a try.

Marks: 4♠/3NT 10, 3♠/1NT 5.

Running scores: Wilson 40 (22) Macallister 20 (10) Millens 30 (13) Manfield 27(1) Lu Dong 30 (25) Ferm 15 (0) Zhaoheng 37 (37) Perlmutter 24 (0)

Hand 5. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

♠ A1082
♥ QJ10
♦ KQJ43
♣ 4



♠ Q6
♥ K
♦ A92
♣ AKQJ1075

West	East
Grossack	Combesure
-	1♣
1♦	3♣
3NT	Pass

East's hand is very powerful, but is it good enough to go past 3NT? With eight sure tricks it looks reasonable to do something - maybe 4♣ or 4NT.

West	North	East	South
Ticha	M Rimstedt	Ritmeijer	Buss Thomsen
-	-	1♣	Pass
1♦	1♥	2♥*	3♥
3NT	All Pass		

Here East could be sure West had a solid heart stopper, but was still unwilling to advance.

Cole and Palmer bid 1♣-1♠-3NT.

West	North	East	South
Wang	D Rosenberg	Li	Rosenberg
-	-	1♣	Pass
1♦	2♣*	3♥*	Pass
3♠	Pass	5♣	All Pass

2♣ Majors, better hearts
3♥ Splinter

Would East have done better to continue with 4♣?

Drijver and Lund Madsen went 2NT-3♣*-3NT-4♠ which West thought was strong with diamonds. Her partner took a different view.

However, North held ♠K954 ♥A7632 ♦107 ♣98 and declarer was able to restrict her losses to a heart and two spades.

West	East
Shan	Gan
-	1♣*
2♦	3♣
3♠	4♣
4♦*	4♥*
4♠*	4NT*
5♣*	6♣
Pass	

- 1♣ Precision
- 4♦ Cue-bid
- 4♥ Cue-bid
- 4♠ Cue-bid
- 4NT RKCB
- 5♣ 1 key card

West	North
Upmark	C Rimstedt
-	1♣
1♠	2NT
3♠	4♥
4NT*	5♦*
6♦	Pass

6♦ is the worst slam, because of the possible 4-1 diamond break combined with a club lead.

West	East
Li	Zhou
-	1♣*
2♦	3♣
3♠	4♣
4♦*	4♥*
4♠*	4NT*
5♣*	6♣
Pass	

- 1♣ Precision
- 4♦ Cue-bid
- 4♥ Cue-bid
- 4♠ Cue-bid
- 4NT RKCB
- 5♣ 1 key card

That looks familiar!

Recommended auction: I think the East hand is too good to let 3NT go. The advantages of a strong club system are clearly demonstrated in the duplicated auctions of the two Chinese pairs.

Marks: 6NT/6♣ 10, 6♦ 8, 5♣/3NT 7, 5♦ 6, 4♠ 5.

Running scores: Wilson 47 (22) Macallister 27 (10) Millens 37 (13) Manfield 37(3) Lu Dong 40 (38) Ferm 20 (0) Zhaoheng 47 (38) Perlmutter 32 (0)

Hand 6. Dealer West. None Vul.

♠ J742	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> N E </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> W S </div> </div>	♠ AQ
♥ 10		♥ A432
♦ 10		♦ KQJ97
♣ AJ109874		♣ Q5

West	East
Grossack	S Combescure
4♣	5♣
Pass	

The problem with opening 4♣ is that it goes past 3NT and risks losing a spade fit.

Looking at ♠65 ♥Q8754 ♦A6 ♣K632 North led the ♦A and switched to the ♠6. Declarer tried dummy's queen and was soon one down.

West	East
Ticha	Ritmeijer
3♣	3NT
Pass	

South led the ♠10 from her ♠K10983 ♥KJ9 ♦85432 ♣- and declarer won with the queen, played a diamond to the ten and a club to the queen. He could then force out the ♦A and was sure of nine tricks.

A similar thing happened in the next match, Cole's 4♣ being raised to five by Palmer, while Wang's 3♣ allowed Li to bid 3NT.

West	North	East	South
Lund Madsen	Yang	Drijver	Wang
Pass	Pass	1♦	Pass
1♠	Double	2NT	Pass
3♣	Pass	4♠	Pass
5♣	Pass	Pass	Double

Having passed initially, West might have responded 2♣, which would almost certainly have led to the notrump game. 5♣ doubled was one down.

At the other table Shan and Gan bid 3♣-5♣ and when that got back to De Wijs he doubled. Declarer misjudged the play to finish two down.

In the remaining match both tables bid 3♣-3NT and South led a spade.

Recommended auction: If West opens 3♣ then East must choose between 3NT and 5♣. My vote is for the former. I like Christina Lund Madsen's decision to pass, but would then respond 2♣ and raise partner's 2NT to game (there is the option to bid 3♠ along the way).

While 3NT can be defeated if the defenders attack hearts, on this layout it is pretty much odds on, as South is sure to lead a spade.

Marks: 3NT 10, 5♣ 7, 3♣ 6.

Running scores: Wilson 57 (33) Macallister 34 (10) Millens 47 (24) Manfield 44 (3) Lu Dong 47 (38) Ferm 27 (5) Zhaoheng 57 (38) Perlmutter 42 (0)

Hand 7. Dealer East. Both Vul.

♠ 10		♠ KJ865
♥ A98		♥ J104
♦ KQJ1032		♦ A97
♣ J102		♣ KQ

West	East
Grossack	S Combescure
-	1♠
3♦*	Pass
3♦	9-11

If 3♦ could include a hand like West's then East has to bid 3NT – but I doubt it had been discussed.

West	East
Ticha	Ritmeijer
-	1NT
3NT	Pass

South held ♠AQ32 ♥KQ62 ♦6 ♣6543 and led the ♥K (nothing else is better) declarer winning with dummy's ace and playing a club for an easy nine tricks.

Cole and Wang both responded 2♦ to East's 1♠ and 3NT was reached at both tables – Palmer's 2NT rebid being raised to game, while Li's 2♠ rebid saw his partner continue with 2NT and then go on to 3NT over Li's 3♦.

Drijver and Lund Madsen went 2♠*-3♣*-3♦-3NT, East having shown an 11-14 5332, while Gan and Shan bid 1NT-3♠*-3NT.

West	East
Upmark	C Rimstedt
-	1♠
2♦	2♠
3♦	4♣
4♥	4♠
5♦	Pass

North led the ♥3 and declarer could not avoid the loss of three tricks.

West	East	
Li	Zhou	
-	1NT	
3♣*	3♦	(Dble*)
3♠*	3NT	
Pass		
3♣	Diamonds	
Dble	Take out	
3♠	Shortage	

Recommended auction: As you can see, there is more than one way to reach 3NT.

Marks: 3NT 10, 5♦ 6, 3♦ 5.

Running scores: Wilson 67 (43) Macallister 39 (10) Millens 57 (24) Manfield 54 (3) Lu Dong 57 (38) Ferm 37 (5) Zhaocheng 67 (50) Perlmutter 48 (0)

Hand 8. Dealer South. None Vul.

♠ 97
♥ A9875
♦ AQ96
♣ A7



♠ A8
♥ KQ2
♦ 72
♣ J109643

If West opens 1♥ North overcalls 3♠.

West East

Grossack S Comescore
1♥ (3♠) Pass
Pass

I'm not sure that East can afford to pass over 3♠, but West might have reopened with a double.

West East

Ticha Ritmeijer
1♥ (3♠) 4♣
4♦ 4♥
Pass

North's intervention was based on ♠KJ106543 ♥J6 ♦J3 ♣K5, so only an unlikely spade lead holds declarer to eleven tricks.

In the next match the bidding at both tables was 1♥-(3♠)-4♥ and it was a similar story elsewhere, the minor variation being Lund Madsen's opening 2♥, promising 11-15 balanced.

Remarkably one declarer found a way to go down in 4♥.

Recommended auction: 1♥-(3♠)-4♥ is the obvious way to go.

Marks: 4♥ 10, 3♠ (N) 3.

Running scores: Wilson 77 (52) Macallister 42 (10) Millens 67 (25) Manfield 64 (3) Lu Dong 67 (40) Ferm 47 (5) Zhaocheng 77 (50) Perlmutter 58 (11)

Winning the bidding battle does not always result in victory – while Wilson and Zhaocheng advanced, they were joined by Manfield and Ferm.

You can play through the deals mentioned in this article.

Just follow the links:

Hands 1,2 & 3 [here](https://tinyurl.com/y9lclqdl) or <https://tinyurl.com/y9lclqdl>
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[here](https://tinyurl.com/y862z9zu) or <https://tinyurl.com/y862z9zu>

Hands 4, 5, 6, 7 & 8 [here](https://tinyurl.com/y9lzu9rp) or <https://tinyurl.com/y9lzu9rp>
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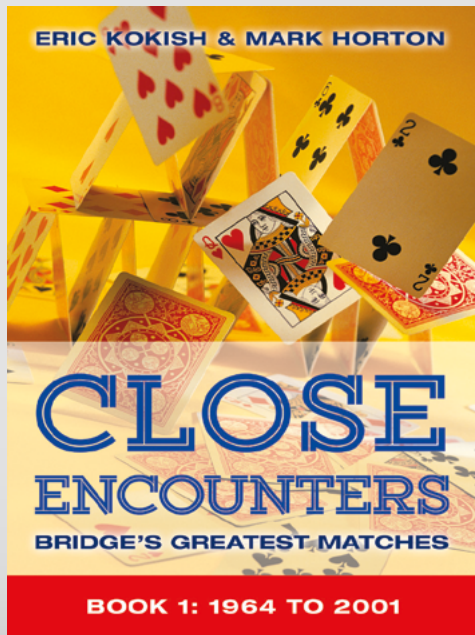
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ERIC KOKISH AND MARK HORTON

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The Master Point Press Bidding Battle Set 11

Moderated by Brian Senior

Welcome back to Philippe Cronier, for whom this is a first appearance as a panellist since I took over as conductor. Let's hope that Philippe will become a regular once again.

A number of this month's problems come from the recent England Mixed Team Trials – and event which I have been doing my best to forget after an undistinguished performance from my team. With a number of panellists having also taken part in those trials, we can expect some inside knowledge at times.

PROBLEM 1

IMPs. Dealer North. All Vul.

- ♠ QJ42
- ♥ AKJ2
- ♦ 75
- ♣ J52

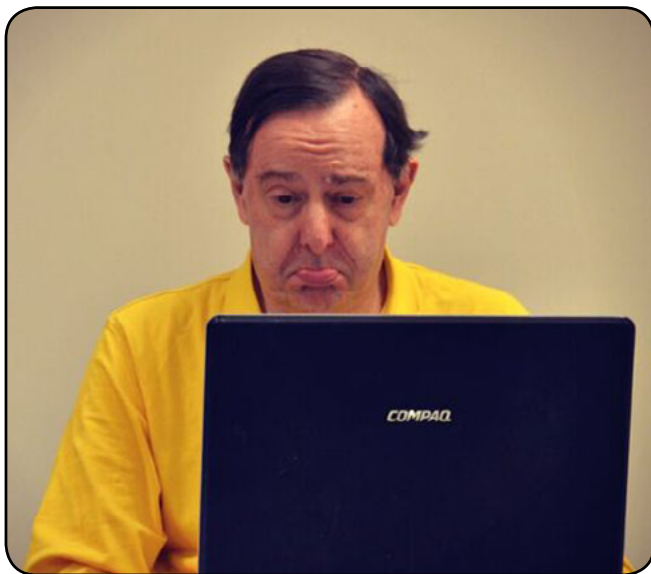
West	North	East	South
–	Pass	1NT*	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♥	Double*
?			
1NT 12-14			
Dble T/O			

Bid	Votes	Marks
Rdbl	15	10
3♥	4	6
Pass	1	3
4♥	1	2

A simple soul simply ignores the opposition double:

THE BIDS & MARKS

	Bid	No. of Votes	Marks		Bid	No. of Votes	Marks
1.	Redouble	15	10	5.	4♥	7	10
	3♥	4	6		3NT	7	9
	Pass	1	3		5♣	4	6
	4♥	1	2		Pass	2	4
2.	4♥	6	10	4♠	1	3	
	4♣	6	10	4♣	0	2	
	4♠	4	9	3♠	0	2	
	6♥	1	4	6. 4NT	13	10	
	6♠	2	3	5♣	6	9	
	5♦	1	3	5♠	1	3	
	4♦	1	2	6♠	1	2	
3.	5♣	15	10	4♠	0	2	
	4NT	2	6	5♥	0	2	
	Pass	4	5	7. 3♠	7	10	
4.	Double	13	10	3♥	5	10	
	3NT	6	7	4♥	1	8	
	4♠	2	4	2♠	4	7	
	3♠	0	2	3♣	4	7	
				4♣	0	4	
8.				4♣	8	10	
				4♥	6	9	
				Pass	7	8	



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

Apteker: 4♥. Wouldn't consider bidding anything less than game vulnerable at teams.

But for once you have no support, Alon. The rest see South's double and take it as a warning to bid cautiously.

Cannell: 3♥. A natural invitation. Too many jacks and a possible 4-1 trump break have me pulling in the reins.

Sver: 3♥. It's quite clear that the hand has maximum invitational values after bad position of points and distribution (hearts 4-1, minors behind) so I bid 3♥, reasonably here, but it's also quite clear that I'd bid 4♥ emotionally at the table.

Bird: 3♥, It was a borderline raise to 4♥ anyway, with eight losers in the hand. Now, South's double suggests that any finesses in the three

side-suits are not favourite to succeed. I am not brave enough to pass, but 3♥ looks right.

Lawrence: 3♥. The bid I would have made anyway. Might have bid 4♥ but I've been warned that finesses may not work. Redouble is a close second choice. But since I would feel hesitant to sit for 3♦ doubled, I reject that. Anyway, might partner think that redouble and raise was stronger than a direct raise?

Which brings us to the popular choice:

Teramoto: Redouble. It shows good hand and suggest defence, maybe doubled. Also, 4♥ may be dangerous because of expected bad heart break.

Sime: Redouble. Fee-fi-fo-fum; I smell the blood of an Englishman. Being Scottish, I would be impolite if I did not accept a gift from the South (unintentional of course ☺). On a good day we will catch North with 3-4-3-3, which will be an opportunity to score more than 140 on the board. Game looks unlikely after South's intervention (finesses wrong, hearts misbehave). Even with 3-4-4-2 or 3-4-2-4 North might choose 2♠, and he will often be right to do so.

Alder: Redouble. Value-showing. If South had passed, this would have just about been worth a game-invitational Three Hearts (but at Pairs I would have passed). Now, though, especially if East is 4-4 in the red suits, we might easily get 500 from something doubled.

I'm surprised to hear that you would not bid game without the double. Yes, it might go down, even be no play, but we have honour combinations, only one loose jack, and most of the strength in the two four-card suits.

Byrne: Redouble. If the opponents had remained

silent I would have bid 4♥ and not expected to miss a slam. As they have given me another bid (sorry Brian, another call (*Quite right – no excuse for sloppy terminology!*)) I shall use it on the off chance that defending is more lucrative. Partner could have ♠Kxx ♥xxxx ♦AKJx ♣KQ where 4♥ will go down if the doubler has a singleton heart but we are getting rich from defending. I don't think redouble shows a fit but I will see what we get out of defending.

Cronier: Redouble. I've been told that hearts break badly and honours are not so well placed. Maybe could we find a penalty instead of bidding a dubious 4♥ game?

Kokish: Redouble. Thanks, Mr South, for the information that might keep us out of a poor 4♥ with the key honours in South. Not that I necessarily expect to get a satisfactory penalty against 2♠ doubled – they may have a happy home in 3♦ – but missing so many top cards I can invite at my next turn. While game might be respectable in hearts or no-trump, it's beginning to sound like we'll do better in a part-score – ours or theirs.

Brock: Redouble. I am not going to drive to game now, merely invite. I will start with a redouble, though, so partner knows I am serious.

Rosen: Redouble: Easy for now.

Cope: Redouble. South may have stuck out his nose where it does not belong, and may also have warned us of an impending 5-0 heart break. Let's start with a blood-curdling redouble and see if partner can co-operate.

Smith: Redouble. It is possible that partner may think a raise to Three Hearts here is just obstructive, but it seems clear that redoubling

and them bidding Three Hearts on the next round should be invitational. This hand is probably not worth a raise to game as we have been warned that any finesses in the side suits rate to lose.

He might think that an immediate 3♥ was obstructive, but we would not be able to bid that way very often, given the known bad trump break.

Robson: Redouble. Can't really cost to do this – I may well defend or play no-trumps now I know hearts are breaking badly.

Mould: Redouble. Go on, I am game! If pard doubles what they bid it could easily be a massacre and I can always bid 4♥ later. I cannot see much downside to this despite us having a fit. It will play very badly for the oppo with effectively a yarborough opposite the take-out doubler.

Sandsmark: Redouble! What else? It cannot mean anything else than baiting the line, and inviting partner to double the opponents' minor suit. If North swallows the bait, hook and sinker and bids 2♠, I will certainly double, expecting at least 5-800 in. Stranger things have happened than the enemy finding a 4-3 fit in a major suit! A game is far from certain our way, and therefore, if we cannot double them, I will bid 3♥, which must be invitational. If the enemy bids 4♣/♦, I will stretch to 4♥ unless partner doubles. I suppose quite a few of my fellow Bidders Club members will ignore the double and invite directly with 3♥ or even go to game as a semi pre-empt that may very well make. That, however, will be like spitting on the opportunity that knocks after South's double. I am not likely to be the odd one out on this deal, but I certainly would have been if I had had 3NT

in view, believing that it will be easier to win nine tricks than 10. Many inexperienced players think that way. I, on the other hand, almost always assume that there will be at least one trick more in a 4-4 major fit than in NT.

Rigal: Redouble. With game not sure to make I see no reason to give up on trying to penalize the opponents, when we have more than half the deck and balanced hands. If they run to diamonds I'll bid hearts unless partner doubles first.

Leif-Erik takes the warning even more seriously and passes and is presumably willing to defend an undoubled part-score.

Stabell: Pass. We just got a warning. Suits are breaking terribly for us, so no need to get excited with this 8-loser hand. Give partner his normal 2-4-4-3 and three bare aces, and we are probably too high already. Add the queen of hearts, and we might just about scramble home in 2♥. Not quite enough to redouble, particularly since partner might feel obliged to move on when South runs to 3♦ and I can't double.

But Pablo sums up the problem for me:

Lambardi: Redouble. Chances of game seem more remote after RHO double. Minor-suit honours rate to be badly placed and trumps to be 4-1, so would be happy with a plus from a penalty double. I can double 2♠ and partner will have a double of one of the minors. If with only seven trumps and less than their fair share of the high cards, they may find big trouble. If they manage to escape I'll bid 3♥ and let partner make the last mistake.

In real life, my partner ignored the double and raised to 4♥, where I was down two with no chance

to do better. However, we could have collected a useful penalty whatever they ran to had she redoubled. South made a serious error by coming into the middle of a constructive auction and was lucky not to be punished. To me, redouble is clear once you think of it. Of course, at the table one might get so caught up in the decision as to how many hearts to bid that redouble only comes to mind when it is too late.

PROBLEM 2

IMPs. Dealer North. All Vul.

♠ J94
♥ AKQJ432
♦ –
♣ K73

West	North	East	South
–	Pass	3♠	Pass
?			

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

Hearts or spades, settle for game or try for/drive to slam? Our first group content themselves with a quite raise to 4♠.

Cronier: 4♠. May I bid a slam? I need to find either ace-king of spades and something in clubs, or ace of clubs and king of spades (at least). All that to play a dubious slam. I don't

know how to get such information (Is 5♦ exclusion Blackwood? Probably...) and can easily be in trouble at the five-level. The four-level is enough. Could it be better to play in hearts? Sometimes, if North owns three small clubs, I may protect my ♣K. But I can suffer a spade ruff as well. Go for the spades.

Smith: 4♠. This looks like an obvious raise to game. Sure, it's possible that Four Hearts will be better if the opponents can take three fast club tricks and wait for their trump trick against spades. If that is the layout, though, 4♥ could easily have the same losers. A slam is possible, of course, but there is no sure way to find out what I need to know without venturing beyond a safe level: we could easily be off two black aces and a spade ruff in hearts or two clubs and a trump in spades.

Robson: 4♠. We won't have slam so this is about finding the best game – which I think has to be spades as his hand will be worse in hearts than mine in spades.

Rigal: 4♠. Yes Six may be on a finesse but my methods don't allow me to explore here so I'm going to take the cash and let the credit go.

Rosen: 4♠. In the absence of any specific methods here. Most now play 4♣ not as natural but as an artificial slam try. (If that is ANBM method put me down for that).

And indeed ANBM Standard plays 4♣ as RKCB so I've altered Neil's choice to 4♣. Others are familiar with the methods and see a 4♣ ask as their best option:

Teramoto: 4♣. RKC for Spades in BM systems, If partner has two key-cards, I will bid 6♥.

Cope: 4♣. Key-card – will bid 6♥ over two

keycards to protect my ♣K, else sign off in 4♠ if only one key-card shown.

Stabell: 4♣. Will jump to 5♠ over 4♥, but I have to bid 4♥ over 4♦ since partner would otherwise feel obliged to move on with a singleton heart. Maybe I should just take the safe plus score in 4♥ or 4♠, but it does happen that partner has AK of spades for his pre-empt.

Apteker: 4♣. If partner shows two key-cards, I will bid 6♥ protecting the ♣K on lead, otherwise I am signing off in game.

Bird: 4♣. I assume this is a test to see which panellists have read the new system notes. 4♣ is RKCB. If partner has two key-cards, I will gamble that they are the ♠AK and bid 6♥. If he has only one, I will have to play in 4♠, since 4♥ over 4♦ would be the trump-queen ask.

Yes, they all want to play in hearts if they bid to slam but, as David rightly points out, it may not be an option at game level if we ask for key cards. Others settle for game but choose hearts, guarding the club position.

Lambardi: 4♥. I cannot think of a way of finding out if partner has AK of spades and even so a club lead might defeat us in slam. At the other end of the spectrum, any move beyond 4♠ may see us down from the top. Cannot see how hearts can play worse than spades and I might gain when my ♣K is protected from the lead. Plus, 4♠ is more likely than 4♥ to attract a 5♦ bid from LHO whenever there is any doubt

Brock: 4♥. Looks better to protect my king of clubs. Also, I can ruff diamonds with impunity.

Byrne: 4♥. Now this really is an interesting problem. I remember this hand from the mixed trials, my partner made the great bid of 6♥ after

I bid 3♠ over a 1♦ opening and the next hand bid 4♠. Rather luckily the opponents guessed to bid on and we “only” got 1100 from Seven to lose 8 IMPs against 1430 in the other room. My choices appear to be some number of spades, or hearts to protect the ♣K. At this vul there is every hope that partner has AKxxxxx or AQxxxxx, so a slam must seriously be considered. I think protecting the ♣K is of paramount importance, as a club lead might beat 4♠ (QJx promoting the singleton queen of spades?) when 6♥ is cold so I am going to bid hearts. Experience has taught me to expect the worst so even with full knowledge of the hand I am going to bid 4♥. If partner has some super hand such as ♠KQ10xxxx, ♥xx, ♦KJx, ♣x he is going to be upset when he raises our slam try of 5♥ to 6♥ only to find we go two down.

Sime: 4♥. If partner wasn't in second seat vulnerable, ace-king to seven spades would usually open 4♠. Even in second position a no-loser spade suit isn't a given. There is also the threat of a spade ruff in 6♥; 6♠ by partner has a more obvious flaw. I will settle for the game which I think is more likely to make as if hearts will play better than spades.

Alder: 4♥. If partner holds: ♠KQ108xxx ♥x ♦Kx ♣xxx, 4♠ might be down in jig time. In 4♥, even if it goes spade to the ace and spade ruff, I am cold. If it goes spade to the ace and a lethal club switch, at least 4♠ was failing; and why should North be so clever? If partner has ace-king-to-seven spades and I have no heart loser (or South has the ace of clubs), I will apologise half-heartedly.

Kokish: 4♥. We'd like to be in 6♥ opposite

AK10xxxx of spades and two or three low clubs, but might not make 4♠ opposite AQ10xxxx or KQ10xxxx and the ♦K, both appropriate 3♠ openings at this vul. If we are permitted to use Exclusion RKC 5♦ for spades, we could reach 6♥ when it's good, but would also reach 5♠ opposite the second hand type and be at risk of going down with the ♣A offside. Is it worth the trouble looking for slam when the ace-king holding is probably less likely than the king-queen? I think not. 4♥ versus 4♠ is not so straightforward either, but the play in spades could be awkward if East can't draw trumps and use the hearts. In hearts there are some unlucky parlays, but the defense might not find the winning line when the contract could be set.

As they say, there is no safety at the five-level, so the only slam try which offers a degree of security is the 4♣ ask. Alan tries something else below game:
Mould: 4♦. Now I wish 4♣ was a cue, not key-card as it is defined in the system! Vul pard ought to have a decent suit so heavy odds it is headed by the AK which will make slam at worst on the club finesse – maybe I ought to just bid it! I cannot see anything better at the moment that 4♦. 5♠ might appeal if we are convinced it is asking for good trumps rather than raising the pre-empt. Do not expect many marks for this and with Brian as conductor I am sure I will not be disappointed.

You know that I would hate to disappoint you, Alan. However, just to explain why you will not score many points for this effort, quite apart from the total lack of support from the rest of the panel, I see nothing in the notes to suggest that 4♦ is other than a natural bid. If so, it could be described as a bit of a distortion, wouldn't you agree?

Sver: 5♦. Since I believe there is a high chance for pard to have AKxxxx in this vulnerability, and with it I'd play slam, I bid 5♦ exclusion. With both zero and one I stop in Five, which might go down, but I think chances are on my side.

That has the merit of being an accurate description of the hand – a diamond void and slam interest. It is Exclusion Key-card according to the notes, being a jump to the five level in a new suit. It should solve the problem whether to play in Five or Six better than any alternative, but does run the risk, as already mentioned, of taking us too high when Four is the limit.

Then there are three panellists who simply bid a slam.

Lawrence: 6♠. Looks like a system hand and I don't have the system for it. The vulnerability suggests that East will have a decent hand. Since I can't think of any science that will solve this hand without helping the defenders find the best lead, I will punt

Well, you do have 4♣ RKCB but, while the other option of 5♦ Exclusion might be the best way to judge accurately, it does indeed help the defenders find the best lead.

Cannell: Six Spades. A Landy Slam Try! We are vulnerabl thpartner's spades are VERY good. Perhaps this is a cold slam. Perhaps they will make the wrong lead. Perhaps we are down.

I'm not sure that partner has promised VERY good spades, but I do love an optimist. I think bidding and slam without any exploration is too much, but most think that 6♥ will be better than 6♠ so, if I have to pick between optimists, I have to choose this next effort.

Sandsmark: 6♥. Exclusion Blackwood (5♦) could have been tempting if it hadn't been for the fact that with a good seven-card spade suit, which partner must have when pre-empting vulnerable, he is not likely to have any side Ace or king. He is, however likely to have a sinaeton or even a void. With e.g.:

- ♠ AKQ10853
- ♥ —
- ♦ 1095
- ♣ 852

6♠ seems to be laydown. There is only one small snag: the contract will be in the wrong hand! With a club lead it may well go down. If you switch the rounded suits, however, this hand may very well even score a grand slam!



Nikica Sver

I think there is no way of finding out exactly where the values of partner's hand lie, since the bidding started at the three level, and this is the back side of the pre-empt medal. In addition, with the distribution at hand, it will hardly be shocking if also the opponents have a void or two! Therefore I suggest that we stay away from Seven, and bid what we believe in. Consequently, my bid is 6♥! This is a practical bid that secures the contract against a club lead, and can only be beaten if an opponent scores with the ♣A and has more than four hearts. My fellow bidders may perhaps suggest to CUE-bid 5♣, and this could indeed have been a very interesting bid, if only partner could be certain that this was a CUE and not a suit (possibly with a void in spades). It may therefore be passed if he holds something like:

♠ KQ108753
 ♥ —
 ♦ 1095
 ♣ A105

Even if partner holds this hand, 6♥ will be a potent bid. We would, however, possibly be only a hair's width from a singleton spade lead (or ♠A) and a spade ruff.

The panel is split down the middle on whether to settle for game or at least make a try for slam. I think that more might have chosen 4♣, RKCB, had they been aware of the system – I'd almost like to give an extra point or two to everyone who knew that 4♣ had that meaning, simply as a reward for having actually read the system. As for hearts or spades, there is a majority for hearts over spades at both game and slam level, with the delicate club position in a spade contract being the obvious

reason. What would I bid? I would bid 4♣, as it allows me to count key-cards below game. It is true that I may be disappointed when partner turns up with the ace of diamonds and we are down in slam, but the alternative slam try of 5♦ Exclusion both helps them with the defence and could also simply take us too high when partner does not have what we are looking for.

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		

Bid	Votes	Marks
5♣	15	10
4NT	2	6
Pass	4	5

This first group don't fancy our chances of making a five-level contract so, what else? – they pass!

Brock: Pass. There doesn't seem any reason to suppose I will make at the five level opposite a hand on which partner could not double 1NT. With only a doubleton spade, and top clubs, there is every reason to suppose we can beat 4♥.

Bird: Pass. He couldn't find any action on the first round, so I don't fancy trying for 11 tricks

in clubs now.

Mould: Pass. Could be wrong, but I do not think we have enough to make the five level and this ought to go off. Pard is something like 4-1-4-4 shape or some other hand on which he could not bid such as 4-0-5-4. Of course if he is (say) 4-0-3-6 I have done something horrible, but reverse the minors and I have probably still done the right thing. This situation is not dissimilar to pard doubling an opening 4♥ – I wouldn't bid over that and I don't now.

Sandsmark: Pass. In all countries in the universe! Partner does not have enough to double 1NT, so his HCP holding is somewhat limited. However, in my book this is a clear-cut penalty suggestion. Partner must see two to four defensive tricks and have good intermediate cards, and with two defensive tricks and a couple of intermediary major cards I see no reason to run right into a disaster area. Any escape is bound to blow up into your face, since you are vulnerable against non-vulnerable. Some of my fellow cowards will for sure "sacrifice" in 4NT, showing both minors, but if you are as easily frightened as that, you should stay at home with your mother after 8 o'clock every night, so that the boogey man doesn't get you! This may be the easiest bidding problem we have faced so far! I would even go so far as to say "Niema Problemu" (Polish for "no problem"). I remember playing with my Polish friend Hubert Lekawski a system which we called: "Niema Systemu – Niema problemu!" That was indeed a winning prescription!

Well, you may be right, but I'm not convinced, especially if Andrew is correct regarding partner's

hand type:

Robson: 4NT. Partner has a light hand with a void heart.

It certainly would not be intuitive to defend if the opposition had a solid 11-card fit. And how light do you mean? Eric seems to expect much what I have in mind for the pass then double combination. Remember, partner is inviting us to bid at the game level when vulnerable against not. I don't see his having an eight-count, for example.

Kokish: 4NT. As East does not have a balanced hand or extra-value unbalanced hand, we must hope we can do something positive facing a three-suiter in the roughly 11-14(15) range. Passing is a bet that East is prime and we can take two or three spade tricks to go with enough minor-suit tricks. To that end we would lead the ♠J not a high club. Wait, this is not a lead problem! As 5♣ or 5♦ might be cold or a paying save, perhaps the money action is to bid 5♣ or 4NT, but it is tempting to try for four tricks on defence rather than accept a likely small minus.

Tempting, perhaps, but only four out of 21 opt to defend. The majority are simple souls who bid their longer and much stronger suit.

Sver: 5♣. I'm not sure what kind of hand did not bid immediately Dble, but I guess It's not too strong three-suiter with short heart (because with stronger hand and two-suiters he would surely bid) where he tries some triple shot of doubling them, finding a sacrifice or a game depending on 4♥ having bid to make or to preempt. Anyhow I don't think I have too much defence and clubs are too good and diamonds too weak for 4NT.

Lambardi: 5♣. This must be take-out, not a

sequence I have agreements on, but my cards seem to be eloquent enough. I wouldn't be surprised if we can make Six but there is nothing else I can think of doing at this point. If I had the ♦A, I might try 4NT followed by 5♦ over 5♣. Yes, if the longer suit was not so much stronger 4NT would be a much more attractive proposition.

Teramoto: 5♣. It is close to Pass, 5♣ is a big plus if we can make at this Vulnerability.

Alder: 5♣. This could be an either minus 500 or 590 deal. But if partner has something like: ♠KQxxx♥ – ♦KQxx ♣Qxxx, 4♥ could well be cold and 5♣ doubled could escape for minus 200.

Cronier: 5♣. To bid at the five-level after passing at the first round, East is probably very short in hearts and doesn't have five spades, which he would have bid previously. I'm a heavy favourite to find a good fit in clubs, I'm not sure if 4♥ will go down? I bid!

A very good point – partner is most unlikely to hold five spades as almost all defences to 1NT would allow a two- or three-suiter with five spades to bid immediately over 1NT.

Smith: 5♣. The usual rule is that it is easier to make four tricks than 11, but here it is not unlikely at all that Four Hearts will be cold. Why hasn't partner bid over 1NT? The likely answer is that he does not have the right shape, so he is not strong enough to double for penalties (i.e. <15 HCP) with either 4-1-4-4 or 3-1-(4-5), neither of which bode well for our defensive prospects against a heart game. With any finesses in the pointed suits likely to be right for us though, our prospects in Five Clubs are not hopeless and it is even possible that both games will be making. It only needs one of them

to be making for bidding to be right.

I'd be surprised if he had only three spades, as spades is the suit that I would be most eager to bid in response to the double. And I do think that a little more than 14 HCP is a possibility, because he might just not fancy a double with a three-suiter and might pass, banking on getting the opportunity to double for take-out at his next turn and actually get his hand across.

Rosen: 5♣. Quite fancy this with spade/diamond finesses favourite to work. Considered pass over 4NT.

Byrne: 5♣. Partner's double is definitely for take-out (maybe it could be two way but holding two hearts it's easy to read it) and I expect something like 4-0-5-4 or 4-0-4-5. In that case we will have nine or 10 clubs and they will have 10 or 11 hearts, and 5♣ will hopefully get them to the five level. Pass could be right but one off won't be a disaster, Minus 590 will be. Given that it is a weak no trump the opponents might not even double when they are supposed to. If partner has some joke 4-2-4-3 13-count and is protecting our plus score (or whatever dreadful phrase he has come up with) then I am sure a penalty of – 800 will be enough for him to get it right next time.

If he has a 4-2-4-3 13-count there may not be a next time.

Cope: 5♣. Right to take-out using the nine-card rule (where the opponent bid four of a major, and partner makes a take-out bid, we should take-out in general with nine cards in our two longest suits). We might consider 4NT as we have two places to play, but my weak diamond spots may eventually find a resting spot if I can

set up something in spades for discards.

Stabell: 5♣. Partner should be void in hearts – he would not double just to get 100 instead of 50. 5♣ should have chances, but they will most likely bid 5♥ which I have to double.

Cannell: 5♣. Very difficult. Partner must have some decent 4=1=4=4 or 4=0=(5-4) hand-type. Do we have enough to collect a penalty? Unclear. Do we have enough for a five-level contract? Unclear. I have a feeling we may have a shot at eleven tricks in clubs so will take some insurance.

Lawrence: 5♣. Modestly happy with this. East should have a singleton heart. Perhaps a void. Hard to imagine a double that does not include shape.

Rigal: 5♣. I believe this to be take-out not penalty (partner cannot have more than three hearts after all so 4-1-4-4 or the like is probable. 4NT for the minors makes sense but can 5♣ ever play worse than 5♦? Sometimes slow diamond losers go on the spades in clubs. I bid 5♣ and prepare my apologies in writing in advance.

Apteker: 5♣. Partner has made a take-out double and I have just enough shape to do so. There could be a double game swing on or the opponents may bid to 5♥. I considered bidding 4NT but it is highly unlikely that partner only has two clubs. More likely is that partner has either 4-1-4-4, where I may be able to discard losing diamonds on clubs, or a 4-1-5-3 type shape.

Sime: 5♣. If I wasn't supposed to bid with this hand, perhaps partner shouldn't have doubled. 4NT is an alternative, but my clubs are much better and I don't want to tip off a ruff in the other minor. We will probably get a shot at 5♥.

Yes, we may very well get a shot at 5♥. The opposition will often have 11 hearts and are at favourable vulnerability. If I remember the deal correctly, however, even 5♥ was cold with South being 8-4 in the majors. Still if we double that, – 650 is better than – 690, isn't it? Whether or not we intend to double 5♥, put me with the majority for now.

To explain the scoring, 4NT is promoted above Pass as the vote for bidding something is so strong.

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

Bid	Votes	Marks
Dble	13	10
3NT	6	7
4♠	2	4
3♠	0	2

Let's start with the man who knows:

Byrne: Double. Ah yes, the magical Sally Brock effect! I sat out this set and received a message from one of my friends (watching on BBO) who told me we had gained IMPs “in the most ridiculous way possible” where someone had passed

3♥(!!!) on this hand, clearly intimidated by Sally's presence. I think on this hand game made in several strains but at the point where I was asked what I would bid I had to stop and think. I eventually I decided double was right, since the fit auction meant partner had a singleton heart (people that open a joke multi with five normally have four to raise) and 4♠ rates to play well with the spades onside. 3NT will also miss a slam when partner is 3-1-3-6 with an 8-10 count (as partner will pass expecting us to have wasted heart values) so double seems the best bet, it will also get us to diamonds or clubs when partner has 2-1-7-3 or 2-1-3-7, as he can pull my 4♠ conversion to 5♣/♦.

Well, it may also get us to a six-two club fit, but double does seem to be the most flexible choice, and received a lot of support.

Teramoto: Double. T/O of Hearts, then bid 4♠ if he partner bids 4♣/♦.

Rigal: Double then convert 4♣/♦ to 4♠, and wish I could convert 5♣/♦ similarly. I'm looking for slam and since 3NT could be very silly and 4♠ is very unilateral I'll try a middle path.

Cannell: Double. I have too much for a simple Three Spade overcall and 3NT seems odd. I will double for take-out of hearts and see what partner does. I expect I may be bidding Four Spades next. We shall see.

Rosen: Double, Assuming N/S not insane partner should have short hearts here – reducing the odds for 3NT.

Robson: Double. 3NT is too committal and, facing a singleton heart, there are many contracts (slam? 4♠?) which may be better.

Kokish: Double. A little heavy for an EOK simple

overall, so it's this or 3NT. 4♠ next unless East bids 3NT. The two-step to 4♠ shows a flexible hand (for me) rather than big fat spades.

Cronier: Double. I hate this problem. My first movement is to bid 3NT, as usual. But I must confess that's a bit too fast. It seems clear that North has hearts (if not, we will manage...). Which means that, often enough, East will be short in hearts and 3NT could be really difficult to make. Beginning by a double and bidding 4♠ over 4♣ or 4♦ seems sensible enough. And sometimes, East will reply 4♠, 5♣ or 5♦ over the Double and we can find the slam.

Stabell: Double. Followed by 4♠ over the likely 4♣ from partner. 3NT looks wrong, and if partner is 2-1-5-5, we might find a good diamond contract

Sver: Double. Looks like too short heart in pard's hand for 3NT.

Cope: Double. Looks wrong for 3NT opposite a known stiff heart and this also may give us play for a spade slam. To show this stronger version, we can start with a double and then bid 4♠ over partner's response.

Apteker: Double. Difficult decision between Double and 3NT. Double takes 3NT out of the picture, which may be the only makeable game, while double keeps all the suits in play. I am concerned that after Double, advancer will bid 4m where after I will follow up with 4♠. This may be understood as showing two places to play which runs the risk of partner then rebidding the other minor. In 3NT I have the right stopper and can hold up. Ultimately, I am swayed by the flexibility of the Double and on many occasions will still make 4♠ opposite two small given the

quality of the trump suit.

Sandsmark: Double! It would be idiotic to do anything else. When North presumably passes (because he has hearts), Partner is likely to bid 4♣/♦, and you will say 4♠. Then you will have shown a super-strong hand with five-plus spades. Panellists who contemplate passing here must be born pessimists. You simply have to bid, regardless of whether it is right or wrong, since for all you know, you may have a super-good slam here if partner possesses the right cards, without being able to bid the first time, e.g.:

- ♠ KJ75
- ♥ 7
- ♦ Q53
- ♣ Q10542

In teams tournaments it is literally catastrophic not to double, and if you don't you most certainly deserve all the negative IMPs you can get! As to other bids, 3♠ will be NF but constructive, and may not bring you anywhere even close to the right contract if partner should turn out to hold something like:

- ♠ 74
- ♥ QJ92
- ♦ QJ986
- ♣ A5

6♦ has a 75 % chance of success (one of two finesses), however, East will probably pass 3♠! My prediction is that none of the panellists will do anything but double. With regard to my record from the latest issue, in which all my predictions failed, unfortunately, I must confess that I do not harbour any great expectations for this one either!

Well, while I agree with Double, to describe anything else as idiotic is a bit strong. I can see why you are better known as a journalist than a player, as you must have run out of partners pretty quickly.

It would be quite a shock were partner to hold your second example hand – which major does opener hold if responder has support for both?

Not everyone likes the double:

Mould: 3NT. What else?

Somehow, that comment almost invariably goes after a minority choice.

Lawrence: 3NT. If North has spades, he will probably lead one. If he has hearts, I can hold up and hope to keep South off lead. And, if I can reach dummy, I may be able to run spades. Disgusting situation.

Sime: 3NT. South's 3♥ shows spade tolerance, so partner probably doesn't have four of them. Therefore, I shouldn't expect a double to fetch 3/4♠, I shouldn't expect 3♠ to fetch a raise, and I shouldn't expect 4♠ to fetch a more useful dummy than 3NT. However, I should expect missing spade honours to be onside.

Lambardi: 3NT. Hoping to buy some tricks in the minors as RHO must have length in both majors or getting partner to bid a long minor in an entryless hand. He will know from his shape I am not bidding on a running minor of my own so I must be strong and balanced. Passing might be the winning action and I might try it at Pairs but I would have to do a lot of explaining if we are cold for +920 somewhere and I settle for +100.

Alder: 3NT. If I double and partner advances with 4♣, I will not feel happy. I would have to

rebid 4♠, but that ought to show two places to play.

Brock: 3NT. What I would have bid after 3♥ – Pass – Pass – to me.

But on the actual auction you know South has some heart support, whereas East may have heart help after 3♥ – Pass – Pass – ?

Bird: 4♠. Partner is likely to be short in hearts, so he may have some spade support.

Smith: 4♠. We are too strong for a simple Three Spade overcall, which leaves us with a choice between Four Spades and 3NT. For me, double is not an option, since partner isn't going to be able to pass and I am forced to bid Four Spades anyway over a 4m response, which should show an even better hand/suit. Yes, South has implied spades, but only in support of a weak two, so Jxx or even Jx/Kx would be enough.



Marc Smith

What does double followed by 4♠ over 4♣/♦ show? Several of the panel mentioned that this combination showed a flexible hand – much like the one we actually hold – while Phillip suggests two places to play. Now Marc comes up with the third possibility, a hand too strong for an immediate 4♠ overcall. Once upon a time, I think the ‘too strong to bid 4♠ first time’ meaning would have been more popular, while today the ‘flexible’ meaning would be more popular, as evidenced by the panel’s comments. That being the case, I’m with the majority.

PROBLEM 5

IMPs. Dealer East. None Vul.

♠ A2
♥ Q105
♦ 1095
♣ KJ1098

West	North	East	South
–	–	1♠	Pass
1NT	3♥*	Double	Pass
?			
3♥	Weak		

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

This one really split the panel. Let’s get the minority actions out of the way first:

Bird: Pass. Recently, I have seen so many potential big penalties declined on BBO. I will hope to give the BBO stars a helpful lesson by collecting up a big number here.

Let’s hope that big number isn’t – 530. We have no guaranteed trump trick and if partner has strong clubs we may not have many winners there either.

Lawrence: Pass. I’m assuming East has a balanced good hand.

Well, I suppose he might be balanced, but why can he not have a take-out hand?

Cannell: 4♠. Ten tricks in spades might be easier than 11 tricks in clubs. At least I hope so.

It might, though what about this third option?

Teramoto: 3NT. It has value for game, but 5♣ may be too high. I hope to stop Hearts and have nine tricks.

Apteker: 3NT. Not sure whether partner’s double is either value showing or take-out. Either way, 3NT looks best giving full weight to the Q10 of hearts.

Sime: 3NT. If we belong in 3NT, I had better bid it now. This may be a silly result, although that is less likely when South didn’t redouble for a heart lead. On a good day partner has heart help, so we wouldn’t need nine tricks on the go.

Robson: 3NT. Paying off to RHO holding A/Kx of hearts and the suit running.

Rigal: 3NT. I assume double is just a good hand but I know no more than you. I’m guessing on NT and am prepared to look very silly. Partner can pull (he knows I don’t have a penalty double type) but am I happy with this? Not at all.

Sandsmark: 3NT! Terrible problem! This is a Catch 22 situation (Joseph Heller): damned if

you do and damned if you don't! You desperately want to bid 3NT, but if you do, you may rest assured that the lay-out will be something like this:

♠ A2 ♥ Q105 ♦ 1095 ♣ KJ1098		♠ J3 ♥ AJ9832 ♦ KQ8 ♣ 75
♠ KQ1087 ♥ 64 ♦ A76 ♣ AQ2		♠ 9654 ♥ K7 ♦ J432 ♣ 643

♥2 is led to the ♥K, and another heart, two down and thank you so much for the coffee! Then, on the other hand, if you choose to pass the double (paso double, a bridge dance?), the lay-out will be e.g.:

♠ A2 ♥ Q105 ♦ 1095 ♣ KJ1098		♠ J3 ♥ A98632 ♦ KQ8 ♣ 75
♠ KQ1087 ♥ J4 ♦ A76 ♣ AQ2		♠ 9654 ♥ K7 ♦ J432 ♣ 643

♥2 is led to the ♥K, and another, and you make 11 doubled tricks! No more than just a jack swaps places with an insignificant card, and the scenario is overwhelmingly different! Who knows what is right or what is wrong here?

There is no way to reliable info! However, because North is likely to hold both ♥A and ♥K, and because I will win 3NT with any other lead than a heart, as well as if South has the ♥J, I really think I have to try 3NT, not least because that is probably what the other table will do in a similar situation. But I don't like it at all! 3NT will for sure give me 10 points, won't it, Brian?

Tommy is under the misapprehension that ANBM pays by the word. 'fraid not, Tommy – we don't pay at all.

Smith: 3NT. Easily the toughest problem of the set, with Pass, Three Spades, 3NT, Four Clubs, Four Hearts, Four Spades and Five Clubs all possibilities. I am tempted by Four Hearts if partner would understand that as a choice of games cue-bid, offering a partial spade fit and a decent minor suit.

So, what about 4♥?

Sver: 4♥. Firstly I am really maximum and secondly not sure about the contract. I'd prefer not to play 4♠ in a 5 2 fit with the prospect of being shortened immediately, but he might have doubled with not too good six spades so I'd pass any suit he bids. With 4-3 minors I think he should bid 4NT as I obviously have one minor. I don't like 3NT as I'm often immediately down.

Rosen: 4♥.

Mould: 4♥. Not passing pard's T/O double with this heart holding, nor am I bidding 3NT on it. If pard wants to bid 4♠ my holding is as good as it can be, more or less, and if pard wants to bid 5m that is OK with me. 4♣ could be right but does not have much upside. 3NT could also be right

Cronier: 4♥. What does the double mean? It's

for take-out, for sure. But it can come from a strong balanced hand or a maybe bit less strong unbalanced opening with a shortness in hearts. In the first case, I've to bid 3NT. In the second, I've a very suitable hand for a club contract, or maybe a spade contract if my partner has a six-card suit. I don't want to put all my eggs in the same basket bidding 3NT. I would choose 4♥, proposing to play either 4♠ or a five-level contract if East doesn't like his spades so much.

Kokish: 4♥. With no information provided about the double I'm going to assume that it's take-out with extras, which would be the popular treatment. 3NT might be cold or down three off the top so the main targets are 4♠, 5♣ and 6♣. East will not bid 4♠ without good spades and will bid 4NT to get us to the right minor. Passing the double could be the winner, but unlikely facing the hand type I expect East to have.

Brock: 4♥. Hopefully showing this hand-type. A strong spade doubleton but a good reason for suggesting a minor. Partner can bid 4♠ with a six-card suit (or strong five-carder), or otherwise try 4NT or five of a minor.

Byrne: 4♥. This is a really tricky problem and I have come up with many alternatives. I could pass (correct if partner is generally strong with a doubleton or singleton heart honour), try game in spades, no-trumps or clubs. Finally I could try 4♣, although that does seem feeble. I think I am going to rule out 3NT since, whilst partner might well have something in hearts, or the opening leader not be able to reach his partner's hand, there is too much danger we will lose the first six or seven heart tricks and that would be embarrassing since surely game is cold



Leif-Erik Stabell

in another strain. I think I will try 4♥, hoping to play 4♠ or a club contract if partner's spades aren't up to much.

I think the cue-bidders make a pretty good case for their choice, but there was one more minority choice:

Cope: 5♣. I have nice working cards opposite a probable 5-1-4-3 shape – not right for NT as we might not be able to run nine quick tricks, and though spades may play OK a bad break might kill us.

Lambardi: 5♣. Good hand but would like my ♥Q to be elsewhere to CUE on my way to Clubs. Correcting to spades seems unnecessary with 5♣ probably guaranteed.

Alder: 5♣. Does this have three fast losers and partner can handle heart forces in 4♠ on the 5-2

fit? I think that is unlikely. I could pass, but that might be thin pickings.

Stabell: 5♣. Not quite enough for 4♥, but with ♠KQxxx ♥x ♦AKx ♣AQxx partner should play me for two key cards and hopefully raise to slam.

Five Clubs could be a disaster if partner could be balanced for the double – we might have only a 5-2 fit once in a while. But I think most panners assume double to be more take-out orientated. Leif-Erik is the only one who suggests that 4♥ shows a better hand, as opposed to being simply a choice of games. Presumably, switching the red suits around would be enough extra to justify the cue-bid for him. For me, 4♥ is simply 'pick a game' – I just hope he never chooses diamonds.

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

Bid	Votes	Marks
4NT	13	10
5♣	6	9
5♠	1	3
6♠	1	2
4♠	0	2

5♥ 0 2

Bird: 6♠. Partner is marked with heart shortage, of course. If we have two losers somewhere, I will consider myself very unlucky.

It's a pity that I like David, otherwise I could spend quite some time expressing my opinion of this effort. We could be missing the ace and king of trumps – ♠Qxxx ♥x ♦AKQJx ♣xxx – for example, and it is just lazy to make no attempt to avoid the no-play slam when that is the case.

Everyone else tried for slam, but none committed to it, which is surely correct.

Robson: 5♠. Mainly a trump ask I think, hopefully partner will upgrade a fourth trump.

I imagine he would, but how clear is it that this is mostly about trumps? With a different hand, I can imagine someone saying that it asked about a heart control – after all, partner's heart cue-bid merely showed a hand too good to bid only 4♠, rather than also saying anything about hearts. Nobody else mentioned 5♠ so we don't know what the panel's view as to its meaning might be.

A substantial minority tried to involve partner in the decision-making in another way:

Kokish: 5♣. Speaks for itself, despite the poor spades. Don't need more than ace-fifth of trumps and the ♦A for slam and Seven is not out of the question, though a distant target.

Brock: 5♣. Difficult. Depends a lot on partner's hand-type. Let's hope he has good trumps.

Apteker: 5♣. Feels like a I have too much to offer no encouragement despite the probable wasted ace of hearts opposite the suspected void. I give weight to the ten and eight of spades. I will bid 5♠ after either cue from partner and leave it to him. Think that we should be safe at

the five level.

Agreeing with 5♣ but intending a different continuation:

Lambardi: 5♣. My trumps are embarrassing but the rest of the hand is too good to sign-off. I will bid 5♥ over the likely 5♦ and pass 5♠ if he cannot bid the slam. We will need lots of trumps to dispose of the hearts even if he does have the hoped-for singleton.

Rigal: 5♣. Envisaging 5♦ – 5♥ – 5♠, and the buck is duly passed. Too many controls for 4♠ I think; but I've been wrong before.

And with the same plan in mind:

Cronier: 5♣. My hand is pretty good and doubtless too good for 4♠. The easiest way to go on is to push the Blackwood button, but it's not a good anticipation: East could easily have a void in hearts and only one key-card and his answer will be too high. I imagine bidding 5♣ now, and 5♥ over 5♦. I hope he will then understand my trumps are really worrying...

Philippe brings up an important point regarding the alternative approach of simply asking for key-cards. What if partner goes past 5♠ to show a void along with just one key-card?

Teramoto: 4NT. RKC for Spades, It has good chance if he has short hearts.

Sver: 4NT. I'd bid slam with two aces and the queen. I'd risk losing a good slam without an ace and the queen in a nine-card fit (which if I don't have any useful discard and have to ruff three hearts might not be good after all) but I certainly want to avoid one with only Kxxx opposite.

Alder: 4NT. Aggressive, but 4♠ would be cautious with all of my good controls.

Rosen: 4NT – seems appropriate.

Byrne: 4NT. Although my spades are terrible I am very control rich and have the right heart holding facing a singleton or void. As little as ♠KQxx♥ – ♦Axxxx ♣xxxx makes slam very good and all I did was overcall 2♠ so partner can't be expecting the world.

Cope: 4NT. Though our ♥A may be slightly wasted, we only need good spades opposite for a slam with all our minor suit controls.

Stabell: 4 NT. 4♥ is a good raise in spades without necessarily promising a heart control, but I am willing to take my chances opposite two key-cards and the ♠Q.

Sime: 4♠. Slam seems to be contingent upon key cards, so let's find out.

I think Iain intended to bid 4NT, given the



Mike Lawrence

comment, so I've changed his vote accordingly.

Cannell: 4NT. RKCB for spades. Partner's Four Heart bid has set spades and shows extra values. I believe I have extra values too! After all there are no rounded-suit losers for our partnership.

Smith: 4NT. Some respite after the previous problem. I need as little as KQxx spades and the ♦A to make Six Spades good, and partner will surely have more than that for his Four Heart cue-bid. He is marked with a singleton heart, so if he happens to hold all four key cards I can even bid the grand. What's not to like about RKC here? Expect a big majority.

Mould: 4NT. There is a huge difference here as to whether pard has four trumps or only three, and unfortunately we do not know. But most of the time pard does have four trumps for this and we are certainly playing with a 30-point pack so even a hand like ♠KQxx♥x♦Axxx♣xxxx makes 6♠ sort of playable. I shall try 4NT, aware that if partner only has three trumps I will almost certainly be in a very poor slam if we have enough key-cards

Lawrence: 4NT. Someone has to ask about ♠K at some time. There's no bid that lets East do it. So I will do it now.

Sandsmark: 4NT! This is absolutely as clearcut as any bidding can be! Partner is void in hearts, has good spade support and a good hand. There is no room for any other explanation. 4NT is RKCB with spades as trumps, and if partner replies 5♣/♦, I will investigate if he has the ♠Q. If we lack an ace and ♠Q, I will go down in 5♠. If we only lack an ace, or the ♠Q is there, I will bid 6♠, and if partner has both an ace and ♠Q, I will bid 5NT to learn if he has any kings. Depending

on how well everything is placed, I will bid up to the appropriate level of spades. If I am not totally in the mist here, good, new “Blackie” will get the top score any day of the week! (Not that I care too much about the points, schmounts!)

OK, those who predicted a big majority for 4NT were sort of correct – 13 out of 21 is a majority though not that big. But nobody other than Philippe has addressed the issue of how partner might respond if holding a void. Will he show it in response to 4NT, in which case we may be in slam off two key-cards. A common scheme is to respond 5NT with two key-cards plus a useful void, and something at the six level with an odd number of key-cards plus a useful void.

Well, partner will surely consider a heart void to be useful. If we hold as little as:

- ♠ AKJxx
- ♥ xxx
- ♦ xx
- ♣ Axx
- his:
- ♠ Qxxx
- ♥ —
- ♦ AKQJx
- ♣ xxxx

will make 7♠ an excellent contract, and we are surely better than that. He may also need to show the void to get to a small slam if we are missing the ♥A and another key-card so that his holding a singleton would leave us with two losers.

So, do the other panellists play that partner never shows a void, always shows a void, or sometimes does and sometimes does not, according to his view of the overall potential of his hand? It looks as though we will have to ask that question

via a future problem.

Until the above question has a satisfactory answer, I am not happy with the choice of 4NT, but the majority is too big to overturn in the scoring. For me, the cue-bidders have the right of it – 5♣ then 5♥ over 5♦, and then pass if partner signs off in 5♠.

In real life, partner held only ♠AQx with king-to-four offside, but the rest of his hand meant that the small slam could not be defeated.

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		

Bid	Votes	Marks
3♠	7	10
3♥	5	10
4♥	1	8
2♠	4	7
3♣	4	7
4♣	0	4

Clubs or spades? Clubs say:

Alder: 3♣. Since partner presumably has not guaranteed five-plus spades, I am going to stress my excellent club suit. I hope I can jump to 4♠ on the next round.

Cope: 3♣. Top score will go to 3♠, but it feels better (since you have told us that 2♦ is a GF) to first show the extra club and then bid 4♠ at our next turn to give partner more options as to our final strain and level.

Lawrence: 3♣. Showing this suit needs to be done as soon as possible. If I bid 2♠, it may cause the club suit to get lost. Would have bid 3♣ instead of 2♣.

Teramoto: 3♣. If we have slam, clubs may be better than spades. If he bids 3NT over 3♣, I will bid 4♠.

Smith: 3♣. First thought was to bid Two Spades or Three Spades, but with this suit it could still be right to play in clubs, particularly if we are looking for slam. Since partner has created a game force, it seems right to emphasize my suit quality once more with the aim of supporting spades next time perhaps.

There were more votes for spades—but 2♠ or 3♠?

Bird: 2♠. It’s tempting to bid the clubs again, but 2♠ is an economical bid. If I don’t support spades now, it will be hard to convince partner that I have three-card support.

Stabell: 2♠. Trying to go slowly – hoping to be able to describe my hand later. Put me down for 4♣ if that shows 7/3 in the black suits and not strong enough for 4♣ the first time – maybe it should since I could always go slowly if I have clubs only.

Apteker: 2♠. It depends on what one’s methods are after this artificial game force. I would guess that 2♠ only shows a doubleton honour and that 3♠ would indicate real support but I still vote for 2♠ as I have more to show than just three spades. I plan to rebid my clubs over

partner's next move. If I don't show some spade interest at this stage it may be impossible to get to spades when that is right.

Byrne: 2♠. I can't help but notice that 2♣ was, shall we say a tiny bit conservative, and I have rather a lot of catching up to do. As much as I am tempted to start leaping about to show my enormous amount of playing strength I am going to adopt a scientific approach and bid 2♠ to show three-card support and find out where we are going. If partner bids no trumps I will jump in clubs, otherwise I will attempt to offer him a choice between Six of either black suit. Of course Seven is not out of the picture (on the actual hand 7NT was lay down, partner holding KQ10xx and a control rich 19-count) and the slow approach leaves more space.

But sometimes that space-saving can be a false economy. Others felt that they needed to start to express their extra playing strength and guarantee the third spade.

Sime: 3♠. Showing genuine spades and, by implication, six good clubs (as I would have raised to 2♠ otherwise).

Cannell: 3♠. I think I may have rebid Three Clubs on the last round. So, I will try to catch up with a Three Spade jump to show extras and three-card spade-support.

Robson: 3♠. Must show support rather than preference. My next bid may be 6♣ or similar as I have grossly underbid thus far.

Brock: 3♠. Wow! I have a lot left unbid here. I will pull 3NT to 4♣. If partner cue-bids 4♦ I will bid 5♥, and later suggest clubs. If he bids 4♥ that will deny diamond control so I will pass. If he simply bids 4♠, I will give it another go with 5♣.

Three Spades then pull 3NT to 4♣ is fine when we are allowed to do it, but the problem is that partner will far too often hold a fifth spade and we will find that we can only suggest the alternative trump suit by jumping to 6♣ at our next turn, which will sometimes suit partner not at all.

Lambardi: 3♠. To guarantee three cards and extras (otherwise 2♠ then 4♠ when three cards and weak). Hoping partner will show his ♣K next. Would 4♥ show a void? Yet even so slam would be better in clubs if he has the ♣K so will allow space to find out.

Rigal: 3♠. shows extras and 6-3 or 7-3; not perfect but you can't get the whole hand off your chest at one go. Let me mention in passing that, pace Tim Bourke, playing 2♦ as artificial is both loathsome and completely unnecessary.

You are entitled to your opinion, Barry, but I bet that if we took a poll we'd find that the majority of the panel play 2♦ as artificial in this sequence. I don't quite see why you have such a problem with the idea. Do you want to be able to play in 2♦, meaning you have to jump to force?

Pablo asks whether 4♥ would be a void, while Tommy makes that bid.

Sandsmark: 4♥! Splinter. (Personally I prefer a double jump with a major as trumps to show a void, but unfortunately I had nothing to say as to the building of the Bidders Club system). If partner doesn't realize that 4♥ means a long and good club suit, three cards in spades and a singleton or void in hearts, he should find himself a new hobby. (What about Ludo, or building things with Lego pieces?) If partner only bids 4♠, he will have some wasted honours in hearts. If he bids 4NT, that will be RKCBlackie with spades

as trumps. The main point is to inform him that a) I have a good hand, b) we might have a black slam and c) there is a spade fit if you have 5♠, and if not, my clubs are very good. Since I preferred to rebid clubs to Splinter after 1♠, I cannot have more than three spades. What happens next is impossible to predict, but partner knows what the terrain looks like. He must, however, find a map that matches the terrain, and not the other way around, for the map is easier to change than the terrain! Just ask any map drawer!

You may not have had any input into the ANBM system, but you seem quite free in making unwarranted assumptions as to what agreements it actually contains. I would certainly assume that 4♥ was showing a void, and therefore a highly unusual hand, as we have not yet confirmed a trump suit. After all, if we want to show a singleton heart, we have this option open to us:

Cronier: 3♥. I must say that I would have bid 3♣ on the previous round. Now, it's really difficult to explain my hand to East. Try 3♥, obviously a Splinter (2♥ will be enough with a Heart suit) with a three-card fit in spades. If East rebids 3NT, I will continue with 4♣.

Kokish: 3♥. As I could "raise" diamonds with four (or five, with a minimum five-six) and would bid 2♥ with a minimum five-six with poorish hearts (if system dictates starting with 1♣ on such hands), 3♥ should not be misinterpreted. This could play much better in clubs than five-three spades and the slam potential is significant.

Rosen: 3♥. Either this or stressing the spades. Problem is clubs are so powerful I don't really want to commit to spades at this stage.

Sver: 3♥. I guess it can't be anything else but short hearts, three spades and good clubs. 3♠ is the intro to cue for spades, everything else for clubs, and I can sleep calmly if I pass when he chooses to bid 3NT.

Mould: 3♥. I would never ever do this at the table as the risks are way too great, but hey, why not in a bidding competition? 3♥ obviously cannot be natural, so must be shortage. I am going to argue that it must show three spades and therefore good clubs as I did not raise 1♠ to 2♠. If the conductor thinks it just shows good clubs and short hearts – well I have got that as well.

Exactly how good the clubs must be for us to have rebid 2♣ rather than 2♠ will depend on personal style when holding three goodish spades and only a moderate six-card club suit. However, I'm willing to buy into the basic idea that 3♥ must show short hearts, three decent spades (I'm not sure we'd want to bid this way with only three small cards in the suit) and long and strong clubs. A six-three hand with only moderate clubs should now focus on spades.

I am not convinced that even 3♥ gets our whole hand across, however. I think we still have the seventh club to spare. Unlike Niki, I wouldn't be comfortable about passing if partner now bid 3NT – thought the lack of an opposing heart bid does suggest that partner may have heart length – but then he'll probably also have a fifth spade. I think I'd go on with 4♣ over 3NT a la Sally. By the time I have done that, I think I've got close to getting my hand across, so the jump to 3♥ could work out quite well. However, if we are clear that 4♥ would show a void, it would also have to be a very powerful hand as it rules out 3NT. Maybe 4♥ also goes

close to showing this hand? As I am confident that both heart bids show three decent spades and long strong clubs, I like either of those bids rather than anything which focuses, even temporarily, on only one of the black suits.

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		

Bid	Votes	Marks
4♣	8	10
4♥	6	9
Pass	7	8

The panel was split three ways on this one – accept 3NT, 'correct' to 4♥, or show the clubs in case partner has a genuine suit.

Brock: Pass. Could be wrong, but don't see any real reason to pull.

Apteker: Pass. I do not have enough to bid on opposite the likely 12-14 balanced. It may be that partner is unbalanced and we have slam on in clubs, but pre-empts sometimes work and this time I'll pay off to it.

Yes, partner may well have a weak NT type. Four Hearts could still be a better spot, but 5♣ is less likely to be if so.

Bird: Pass. I didn't bid 4♥ first-time round, so it

seems odd to bid it now. Maybe partner's spade stopper will allow him to hold up and shut out the South hand.

Rosen: Pass. Surely if we chose double last month our intention was to pass if partner bid 3NT!

Mould: Pass. Sorry but clearly I am missing something. I did not understand this problem last month (given over 3♠) and do not understand it this month either. Sure 4♥ may be better and sure we may have 6♣ on, but both are just shots in the dark. We have no reason at all to assume that anything other than 3NT is the right contract.

Well, you may not have understood the problem – then or now – but we have split the panel three ways, so it is clearly less straightforward than you imagine it to be.

Rigal: Pass. I would not be here, having bid 4♥ the previous round. That said, if 3NT is undefined and even if it isn't I'd pass rather than bid 4♣ I think. In a weak NT base I'd bid 4♣ I think expecting extras.

That is a very good point and, even better, if we were playing good old Acol, we'd know that partner not only had extras, but also genuine clubs.

Cannell: Pass. I think a Four Heart call now would be at least a six-card heart suit. I see no compelling reason to remove 3NT. Sure, there might be a Six Club slam, but how will we sort that out?

How many hearts would we have had to bid 4♥ immediately over 3♠? Would that not be more heart based and double followed by 4♥ more flexible, so implying fewer hearts? That is Niki's view:

Sver: 4♥. He knows I don't have a six-card suit as I'd bid it immediately, so he knows I want

him to pull with clubs in which case I'd rather play 5♣ since his stopper can be weak. I surely made a mistake if he has a balanced hand with two hearts and a very good spade stopper but I don't think these are the odds.

And backed up by a number of other panellists:

Lambardi: 4♥. Correctable to clubs as I did not bid 4♥ on the previous round. Partner may have only one spade stopper – will give him a choice of suit games.

Cronier: 4♥. Difficult. Sometimes 3NT is the only makeable game. On another hand, my spade shortness means that, most of the time, we will need to make nine tricks without giving back the lead to the opponents. It seems easier to make ten tricks in hearts. And if, unfortunately, East is very short in hearts, he will remember my first double. If I wanted to play only 4♥, I would have bid it. I can afford to play in another suit and he can try for the clubs.

Sime: 4♥. Partner's most likely hand is a weak 1NT. He may only have one spade guard and 3NT may not survive a losing heart finesse. After doubling, my bidding 4♥ does not make Pass mandatory for partner.

Smith: 4♥. It seems that this sequence should show moderate hearts with interest in a second denomination too, presumably clubs if partner has a real suit there. Without the club fit I could have just bid Four Hearts over Three Spades. It's possible that 3NT is the best spot, but partner would have passed the double on some hands where that is the case, which sways me against the Pass

While Leif-Erik believes that the difference between the immediate and delayed 4♥ is as much a matter of strength as of interest in alternative

denominations.

Stabell: 4♥. Still hoping for the magical ♠Axx ♥x ♦KQx ♣Kxxxxx opposite. He knows that I am interested in more since I didn't bid 4♥ last time.

The remainder are willing to commit to clubs and lose the fifth heart.

Teramoto: 4♣. Try to find better Game or even Slam.

Alder: 4♣. If partner holds something like ♠Q10x, ♥Kx, ♦Axx, ♣KJxxx, 3NT might go a speedy three down with 6♣ almost cold. But give partner ♠Q10x, ♥Kxx, ♦KQx, ♣Kxxx, and we wish to be in 4♥. If partner has that hand with only two hearts and five clubs, 4♥ could survive, but 5♣ would be preferable. I do not see a guaranteed solution but, over 4♣, if partner has my first hand, surely he will control-bid 4♦, and if he has the second hand, he might well (and probably should) bid 4♥. Put a pox on South!

Remembering last month:

Kokish: 4♣. Which explains graphically why we are weak no-trump fans. This is the mate to an earlier problem in this feature and at that time I believe the panel settled on double as a means of buying time. Well, the time is now and we'll soon see how many of us are comfortable with 4♣ rather than pass or 4♥ (partner, I must have only five or I'd have bid 4♥ last time, etc). I am pretty sure that passing 3NT is too big a position.

Yes, the majority of the panel did vote in favour of the double last month, and they now find themselves where they must have suspected they would be. And, as mentioned by Barry, a weak NT base would make this situation easier.

Byrne: 4♣. Wasn't this problem in last month's set? (I know it was because I just read it). I am

not sure of the subtleties of partner's failure to pass, I would guess it means partner has a fair spade stopper but not enough to leave it. Does that mean he has real clubs? Quite possibly yes, although maybe partner could be 4-3-3-3 and just 3NT is right. (I can't think of a hand that fits the bill) Well, I have a good hand I will bid 4♣. Partner can always bid 4NT to sign off, but I don't see why he has to have some terrible minimum. Surely a possible spade holding is AQ bare, in which case the hands will fit well, ♠AQ ♥xxx ♦Axx ♣Kxxxx and it will take a diamond lead to beat 6♣, assuming the heart finesse is wrong. Given that partner could have real clubs such as ♠Ax ♥Kx ♦Kxx ♣Kxxxx I should make one try I am sure.

Cope: 4♣. A bit nasty setting this problem as a follow up to last month when I told you I was unsure what I would do if partner bid 3NT. If we are to have a slam (there are many hand types partner can have been endplayed into bidding 3NT) then clubs is the most likely and hope that partner can co-operate but will respect a 4NT sign-off if that is all partner can do.

I do have a nasty streak, I confess.

Lawrence: 4♣. Forcing. Having gotten to this point, I'm giving up on hearts, tentatively, and heading for slam. If 4♣ isn't considered forcing. Then we will get a nice 150 or so.

I'm confident that 4♣ will not get passed out, because:

Robson: 4♣. Forcing as you don't remove 3NT to a non-forcing non-game contract. This must be the right move – passing 3NT is playing for the last making (game) contract to be precisely nine tricks in no-trumps.

Sandsmark: 4♣! You can't be serious, Brian? Is this supposed to be a problem? Partner must be really strong, since my initial double surely shows four+ hearts and not necessarily too much (8-11 HCP would suffice, wouldn't it?). However, I have a much stronger hand than that, and I owe it to my excellent partner, who by the way, has not uttered even a single negative word about my bidding this week, to show him that my hand could be good for something more under the right circumstances. If he bids 4NT, I will pass. If he bids 4♦, that will be a CUE-BID with clubs as trumps. If he bids 4♥, it will show a three-card heart support, and I must shut up or man up and go on with Blackie. If he bids 4♠, that will show the ♠A with clubs as

trumps, and I will investigate the slam possibilities through 4NT=RKCB.

Why must partner be really strong? What was he supposed to do when holding a weak NT with spade values – just pass and pray? I think that we needed a bit more than 8 HCP, precisely because partner would then be stuck if holding a weak NT. And he may have to follow through with 4NT over 4♣ with that same balanced 12-count.

I was with the doublers last month, though I wasn't thrilled by the call. The point is that nothing else would work out all the time either, and on a good day partner doesn't have to bid 3NT. If he bids 4♣/♥ over the double we are probably better off than had we chosen something else at our first turn. What would I do now? I'd bid 4♥ and explain to partner that I was showing only five hearts and a flexible hand.

SET II – THE PANEL'S BIDS & MARKS

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
Neil Rosen	England	Rdbl	4♣	5♣	Dble	4♥	4NT	3♥	Pass	78
Philippe Cronier	France	Rdbl	4♠	5♣	Dble	4♥	5♣	3♥	4♥	77
Michael Byrne	England	Rdbl	4♥	5♣	Dble	4♥	4NT	2♠	4♣	77
Tadashi Teramoto	Japan	Rdbl	4♣	5♣	Dble	3NT	4NT	3♣	4♣	76
Tim Cope	South Africa	Rdbl	4♣	5♣	Dble	5♣	4NT	3♠	4♣	76
Eric Kokish	Canada	Rdbl	4♥	4NT	Dble	4♥	5♣	3♥	4♣	75
Barry Rigal	USA	Rdbl	4♠	5♣	Dble	3NT	5♣	3♠	Pass	75
Pablo Lambardi	Argentina	Rdbl	4♥	5♣	3NT	5♣	5♣	3♠	4♥	71
Phillip Alder	USA	Rdbl	4♥	5♣	3NT	5♣	4NT	3♣	4♣	70
Sally Brock	England	Rdbl	4♥	Pass	3NT	4♥	5♣	3♠	Pass	69
Nikica Sver	Croatia	3♥	5♦	5♣	Dble	4♥	4NT	3♥	4♥	68
Marc Smith	England	Rdbl	4♠	5♣	4♠	3NT	4NT	3♣	4♥	68
Iain Sime	Scotland	Rdbl	4♥	5♣	3NT	3NT	4♠	3♠	4♥	67
Andrew Robson	England	Rdbl	4♠	4NT	Dble	3NT	5♠	3♠	4♣	67
Tommy Sandsmark	Norway	Rdbl	6♥	Pass	Dble	3NT	4NT	4♥	4♣	66
Leif-Erik Stabell	Zimbabwe	Pass	4♣	5♣	Dble	5♣	4NT	2♠	4♥	65
Alon Apteker	South Africa	4♥	4♣	5♣	Dble	3NT	5♣	2♠	Pass	65
Alan Mould	England	Rdbl	4♦	Pass	3NT	4♥	4NT	3♥	Pass	62
Drew Cannell	Canada	3♥	6♠	5♣	Dble	4♠	4NT	3♠	Pass	60
Mike Lawrence	USA	3♥	6♠	5♣	3NT	Pass	4NT	3♣	4♣	60
David Bird	England	3♥	4♣	Pass	4♠	Pass	6♠	2♠	Pass	46



Neil Rosen



Master Point Bidding Battle Competition – Set 12

Open to All – Free Entry

PROBLEM 1

PAIRS. Dealer South. None Vul.

♠ Q6
♥ AJ875
♦ 73
♣ K853

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♦*	2♠	3♦

?
1♦ Precision, promising 2+ diamonds

PROBLEM 2

PAIRS. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

♠ J10
♥ 853
♦ A652
♣ AKQ2

West	North	East	South
–	–	1♦*	2♦*
2♥*	Pass	3♦*	Pass

?
1♦ Natural, unbalanced
2♦ Majors
2♥ Constructive diamond raise
3♦ To play facing invitational raise

PROBLEM 3

IMPs. Dealer East. All Vul.

♠ AKQ1094
♥ K7
♦ A642
♣ 3

West	North	East	South
–	–	4♣	4♦

?

PROBLEM 4

IMPs. Dealer East. All Vul.

♠ AKJ108762
♥ 9
♦ 107
♣ 73

West	North	East	South
–	–	Pass	1NT*

?
1NT 15-17

PROBLEM 5

IMPs. Dealer North. None Vul.

♠ Q42
♥ 2
♦ K1098532
♣ K6

West	North	East	South
–	1♣*	1♠	Double

?
1♣ Three+ clubs, playing 15-17 NT

PROBLEM 6

IMPs. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

♠ AQ3
♥ 64
♦ J73
♣ AQ1062

West	North	East	South
–	Pass	1♠	Pass

2♣ Pass 2♥ Pass
?

PROBLEM 7

IMPs. Dealer East. All Vul.

♠ 1064
♥ 5
♦ KQJ75
♣ K863

West	North	East	South
–	–	1♥	Pass

1NT Pass 2♣ Pass
3♣ Pass 3♥ Pass
?

PROBLEM 8

IMPs. Dealer West. N/S Vul.

♠ KQ4
♥ A6
♦ K
♣ AK98742

West	North	East	South
1♣	3♦	Pass	Pass

?

Send entry to biddingbattle@newbridgemag.com or enter via the website www.newbridgemag.com.

Entries to arrive before the end of the month.

A New Bridge Magazine Bidding System

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
December 2018 The uBid Auction Room

Bid these hands with those on the following page with your favourite partner; then turn to The Auction Room inside to see how your score compares to that of the experts

Hand 1. Dealer West. Both Vul.

♠ A953
♥ 2
♦ AK9
♣ J10654

North overcalls 1♠. If East doubles South redoubles and if West bids 3NT at any point South doubles.

Hand 2. Dealer West. None Vul.

♠ KQ8
♥ J2
♦ AJ4
♣ KJ765

If West opens 1NT North bids 2♦ to show a major and then bids clubs (5♣ if necessary) South bidding 5♥ if possible.

Hand 3. Dealer South. None Vul.

♠ KQ8
♥ J985
♦ 75
♣ Q642

South opens 3♦ and North bids 3NT

Hand 4. Dealer East. E/W Vul

♠ J952
♥ J75
♦ 6
♣ AJ1063

Hand 5. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

♠ A1082
♥ QJ10
♦ KQJ43
♣ 4

Hand 6. Dealer West. None Vul.

♠ J742
♥ 10
♦ 10
♣ AJ109874

Hand 7. Dealer East. Both Vul.

♠ 10
♥ A98
♦ KQJ1032
♣ J102

Hand 8. Dealer South. None Vul.

♠ 97
♥ A9875
♦ AQ96
♣ A7

If West opens 1♥ North overcalls 3♠.

MASTER POINT BIDDING BATTLE



Results – Set 10

This month's winners are: 74 points **Lars Erik Bergerud** (£40), 72 points **Mike Perkins** (£30), 69 points **Stuart Nelson** (£20) and 68 points **Colin Brown** (£10).

Other Good Scores

67 *Bill Linton, Simon Hill*

66 *Alex Athanasiadis, Bob Brown, Andrew King, Rodney Lighton*

65 *Nigel Guthrie*

63 *Dean Pokorny*

61 *Mark Bartusek*

60 *Nick Simms, Martin Turner, Norman Massey*

Grand Prix standings:

None of the top-five were able to better their scores, so the race continues to be very interesting

Alex Athanasiadis	367
Rodney Lighton	367
Mike Ralph	367
Mark Bartusek	363
David Barnes	360
Michael Prior	359
Stuart Nelson	357
Mike Perkins	356
Nigel Guthrie	351
Bill Linton	351

Colin Brown	351
Peter Barker	350
Bill Gordon	347
Dominic Connolly	346
Jeff Callaghan	340
Simon Hill	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 10

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
3♠	7	10	7
4♥	6	9	13
3♥	2	4	10
3NT	1	4	2
4♣	1	4	0
3♦	0	2	2
5♣	0	5	1

We have votes for two bids from readers which were not mentioned by the panel. First up is 3♦. I don't really understand what this bid is supposed to achieve. It certainly would not be normal to play it as a cue-bid at a stage in the auction where we are still deciding whether to bid game or not and, if so, which game. Rather, it would be normal to expect a much greater concentration of strength in diamonds. I'll award a couple of points but that's because, as everyone knows, I'm a bit soft-hearted.

Five Clubs has more going for it, given that a big majority of the panel was willing to drive to game. And if partner has strong clubs and only something like ace-empty to five hearts, 5♣ could well be the best game. Accordingly, let's give it five points.

PROBLEM 2

Bid	Votes	Marks	Readers
Double	13	10	21
4♥	4	6	9
4♠	0	2	5

Four Spades would normally be played as agreeing clubs. Were we playing Acol, or any other method in which a 1♣ opening guaranteed four

or more clubs, this hand would be worth the 4♠ cue-bid. Facing a potentially short club opening we simply cannot afford to commit to clubs. If we double and partner rebids 4♣, then we might bid 4♠, but for now we simply don't have sufficient club length. Four Spades could work out well, however, albeit luckily, so it does get a consolation award.

PROBLEM 3

Bid	Votes	Marks	Readers
3♥	9	10	1
3♣	6	9	23
4♥	2	6	2
3♠	0	2	7
4♦	0	4	2

Is a jump to 4♦ forcing? I would say yes, and in the absence of a clear-cut splinter bid it would be the only sensible call on this hand. However, I believe normal expert practice to be to play that a jump to 3♥ would indeed be a splinter, as chosen by several of the panel. Once 3♥ becomes an option, it is, I think, self-evidently far superior to 4♦ as a description of this hand. I'll award four points to 4♦ as perhaps it wasn't completely clear what 3♥ meant, but now that we have that nailed down for the future, I won't be so generous again.

PROBLEM 4

Bid	Votes	Marks	Readers
3♥	9	10	14
5♣	4	7	15
4♥	3	6	1
4♠	1	4	0
4♣	0	2	2
Pass	0	0	3

We had one reader-vote for pass. None of the panel liked the idea, all

believing that it was likely that someone could make a game contract – with some thinking that a heart lead might be the only way to beat a game contract. It is so unlikely that we will be allowed to play in 3♣ that we should be taking this opportunity to do something to help our cause.

PROBLEM 5

Bid	Votes	Marks	Readers
3♠	7	10	3
3♦	6	10	25
4♦	3	7	6
Pass	1	2	0
5♦	0	2	1

Nothing new here as I had already awarded two points to a bid of 5♦ despite no panellist selecting it.

PROBLEM 6

Bid	Votes	Marks	Readers
1NT	4	10	5
2♣	4	10	14
1♠	3	9	1
3♣	3	9	3
2♥	1	6	11
2♠	1	6	0
Redouble	0	0	1 (illegal)

The only call suggested by a reader but not by any of the panel was redouble. As it was our partner who made the initial double, this would of course be an illegal call so scores zero.

PROBLEM 7

Bid	Votes	Marks	Readers
4♣	8	10	9
2NT	3	7	5
2♦	2	5	5
4♠	2	4	6
3♦	1	2	2
3♥	1	2	3
2♥	0	0	3
3♠	0	0	1
4♦	0	0	1

This one collected three responses from readers that were not chosen by any panellist. A change of suit facing an overcall is a one-round force according to the system notes, so 2♥ cannot get passed out, but what does it achieve? If the hearts are worth showing then surely they are worth showing via a fit-jump? But really this hand is all about spades and it is hard to see how bidding 2♥ will help us to reach the right level in that suit. It certainly risks getting a disastrous lead should North be strong and end up declaring five of a minor.

Three Spades could well be the right level for spades, and given that we have some votes for 2NT as a constructive four-card raise, were 3♠ a constructive bid it would have no doubt been chosen by some panellists. But it is virtually universal to play a raise to 3♠ here as pre-emptive – more like the same hand with a small diamond instead of the ace – so it risks a string of good games being missed.

Four Diamonds? Well, if you have never heard of splinter bids then a 4♦ cue-bid might be a possibility, I suppose, but I think it is clear that partner will expect diamond shortage rather than the ace – we should bid here as though we were playing with a strange expert, not our regular partner, with whom we are of course perfectly entitled to agree to play these double jumps as cue-bids.

PROBLEM 8

Bid	Votes	Marks	Readers
Double	7	10	5
5♦	5	8	10
2♣	3	6	2
2♠	1	2	0
3NT	1	2	1
3♦	0	2	16
4♦	0	4	1

Wow! We have almost half the readers making a bid that was not only not chosen, but not even mentioned as a possibility, by any of the panel. So, what is wrong with 3♦? Well, very simply, the hand is way too good for the bid. We could bid 3♦ with five diamonds and a decent eight- or nine-count. This is an 11-count with seven diamonds and some outside shape. We will miss a string of games by bidding only 3♦ on a hand of this potential. I am not surprised that someone might suggest 3♦, but I am quite shocked that 16 out of 35 readers do so.

There was one vote for 4♦. I'm pretty sure that this is an auction I have never seen in all the years I have played bridge – so thank you for the new experience. I guess that 4♦ here is non-forcing but begging partner to find an excuse to raise to game, rather like 1♣ – Dble – Pass – 3♥/♠. As such, it is nearer the mark than 3♦ but I'm not sure that we want to commit to diamonds just yet. It isn't just that we might belong in spades, or even that if partner has a big hand with long hearts we will have really messed him up, but getting our spades into the game may also help partner to judge how high to go in diamonds – slam is far from being out of the picture. Still, I have to give 4♦ a higher award than 3♦.



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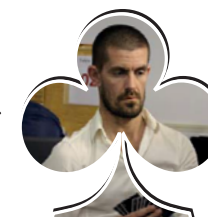
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EAST

Hands for the
December 2018 The uBid Auction Room

Bid these hands with those on the previous page with your favourite partner; then turn to The Auction Room inside to see how your score compares to that of the experts

Hand 1. Dealer West. Both Vul.

♠ J10
♥ Q76
♦ Q753
♣ AK93

North overcalls 1♠. If East doubles South redoubles and if West bids 3NT at any point South doubles.

Hand 2. Dealer West. None Vul.

♠ AJ105432
♥ 8
♦ Q985
♣ 3

If West opens 1NT North bids 2♦ to show a major and then bids clubs (5♣ if necessary) South bidding 5♥ if possible.

Hand 3. Dealer South. None Vul.

♠ A94
♥ AK732
♦ 2
♣ AKJ9

South opens 3♦ and North bids 3NT

Hand 4. Dealer East. E/W Vul

♠ AKQ7
♥ 986
♦ AJ3
♣ K95

Hand 5. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

♠ Q6
♥ K
♦ A92
♣ AKQJ1075

Hand 6. Dealer West. None Vul.

♠ AQ
♥ A432
♦ KQJ97
♣ Q5

Hand 7. Dealer East. Both Vul.

♠ KJ865
♥ J104
♦ A97
♣ KQ

Hand 8. Dealer South. None Vul.

♠ A8
♥ KQ2
♦ 72
♣ J109643

If West opens 1♥ North overcalls 3♠.

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