

A NEW BRIDGE MAGAZINE

Istanbul Diary
Germany Calling
The Ordeal

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A NEW BRIDGE MAGAZINE

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Istanbul

By any standards, the European Open Championships in Istanbul were a triumph. The main hotel was located by the sea in a resort area and after completing their labours in the excellent playing rooms, the competitors had all sorts of options for relaxation. Our Turkish hosts were magnificent, frequently going the extra mile, as you will discover when you read the Istanbul Diary in this issue.

Rise of the Machines

As work continues on the Alpha Zero bridge project, an artificial intelligence program has defeated leading professionals in both head-to-head and six-player no-limit Texas hold'em poker, the world's most popular form of poker.

The program, Pluribus, developed by Carnegie Mellon University in collaboration with Facebook AI, defeated leading professionals in six-player no-limit Texas hold'em poker, the world's most popular form of poker.

Pluribus defeated Darren Elias, who holds the record for the most World Poker Tour titles, and Chris "Jesus" Ferguson, winner of six World Series of Poker events after playing 5000 hands against them.

In another contest involving 13 professionals (all winners of more than \$1 million) Pluribus played five of them at a time for a total of 10,000 hands and was again the winner.

The programmers were elated and believe some of Pluribus' playing strategies might change the way professionals play the game.

I wonder if that might also eventually prove to be the case with bridge.

I am Reviewing the Situation

Taking a break from the daily broadcasts on BBO, one could not avoid watching the pulsating finish of the cricket World Cup Final between England and New Zealand. I could not help thinking what might have happened if New Zealand had been able to call for a review of the incident when the umpires awarded a six when the ball went to the boundary after hitting Ben Stokes's bat.

Had they been able to do so, one trusts that a decision would have been made before the start of the 'super over'.

A Matter of Style

'Zia led the king of diamonds'.

'In the manner of a cobra about to strike Zia tabled the king of diamonds.'

Which of the above do you prefer?

Serendipity played a part in this month's editorial. Reflecting on more than 30 years as a journalist, I was wondering how to fill a page when I happened across a review of Duncan Hamilton's *The Great Romantic, Cricket and the Golden Age of Neville Cardus*. The reviewer, Patrick Kidd, pointed out that until the advent of Cardus, cricket reports were stereotyped – a scorecard reproduced with formulaic sentences. To my mind, that is more often than not the case with the report of bridge deals. One example Kidd quotes is of Patsy Hendren running his first single, 'hugging his bat in his two arms as though



afraid to let it go.’ In bridge terms that might translate to ‘Robson’s cards were so close to his chest they could hear his heart beat.’ The author notes that Cardus was not afraid to ‘give reality a little push’ and mentions the delightful story that when Germany invaded Poland in 1939 Cardus said he had witnessed the bust of WG Grace being removed from the pavilion at Lords and heard a spectator remark, ‘that means war.’ A great anecdote to be sure, but Cardus was in Derbyshire at the time!

It’s a little early for a New Year’s resolution, but I would like to encourage all bridge journalists to attempt to enliven their reports. The game has a certain romance and at times can be as dramatic as any sport you care to mention. Let us resolve to bring these facets to our audience.

‘Declarer played a club to dummy’s queen and when it held he claimed his contract.’

or

‘When declarer played a low club towards dummy’s queen Rodwell, secure in the knowledge that the contract would fail, contentedly discarded a diamond. When his partner failed to take the trick with the king, he shrugged his shoulders, gathered up his paraphernalia and left the table.’

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Test Your Technique

with *Christophe Grosset* see Page 74

IMPs. Dealer West. N/S Vul.

♠ A643
♥ K7632
♦ 5432
♣ —

♠ J10
♥ AJ94
♦ AK87
♣ A93

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♣*	Double	2♥
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

2♣ Stayman

West leads the ♣5 (third and fifth). How do you play?

Istanbul Diary

The Editor presents his diary from the European Open Championships in Istanbul

14 June

An early morning flight to Istanbul's magnificent new airport is followed by what proves to be a long drive to the hotel. Although the distance involved is not great we run into rush hour traffic and the 100 kilometre trip takes around three hours. We are just in time for dinner but then have to complete the first issue of the Bulletin, which goes on line at midnight. Although play does not start until Saturday we do get a deal to discuss, as Roland Wald poses a problem from the Asia Pacific Bridge Championships in Singapore on Facebook:

Board 27. Dealer South. None Vul.

♠ AKQ9 ♥ Q ♦ A43 ♣ AKJ86		♠ — ♥ K10532 ♦ KJ2 ♣ Q10932
♠ 752 ♥ 9874 ♦ 9765 ♣ 54		♠ J108643 ♥ AJ6 ♦ Q108 ♣ 7

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Gill</i>	<i>Zen</i>	<i>Hans</i>	<i>Wan</i>
–	–	–	Pass
1♣	1♥	1♠	Pass
4NT*	Pass	5♣*	Pass
7♠	All Pass		

Roland's question was how should you play 7♠ after a heart lead for the queen, king and ace? At the table, declarer ruffed a heart and cashed the ♠K. He then played on clubs hoping the queen would make an early appearance. That led to a disappointing one down.

As you can see the contract can be made after ruffing a heart high by cashing the ♦A and then running the trumps and cashing the ♥J, squeezing North in the minors. Bulletin Editor Brian Senior asked why would anyone play it that way? North did not overcall 2♥, which suggests he has a five-card suit. He did not make a two-suited overcall, which probably rules out the possibility that he is 5-5 in the red suits. South did not raise to 2♥, which he might have done holding four hearts and the ♦K (or possibly with four hearts and the ♣Q). If you conclude that North is a therefore a favourite to hold the ♦K and the ♣Q then you might opt for the winning line. (there are others but a club lead is fatal.)

At the other table E/W had a misunderstanding and played in 6♣, going five down so failing in the grand slam proved to be worth 5 IMPs!

15 June

Yesterday's copy of *The Times* carried a portentous crossword clue, Blue Team Player (5,6). Later on it also carried an advertisement for tickets to watch the 2018/19 Premier League winners, Manchester City, describing them as *Fourmidables*, which is not far removed from the name of the number one Indian bridge team, the *Formidables*. Suitable omens some might say.

Play gets under way at 10.00 and there is soon a sensational deal:

Board 4. Dealer West. All Vul.

♠ 10542 ♥ 1032 ♦ 43 ♣ AK42		♠ KQ7 ♥ AKQ974 ♦ KJ ♣ J5
		♠ 98 ♥ J ♦ 98762 ♣ Q10763
♠ AJ63 ♥ 865 ♦ AQ105 ♣ 98		

In the Open Room N/S bid 1♥-1♠-2♣-2♦*-2♠-2NT-3♥-4♦-4♥ and East leads the ♣3, +650.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Klukowski</i>	<i>Lu</i>	<i>Zmuda</i>	<i>Huang</i>
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT
Pass	4♥	Pass	5♥
Pass	6♥	All Pass	

You might argue that a club lead is your best shot, maybe finding partner with the ♣K and a quick trick but when East led the ♦8 declarer collected all the tricks and 13 IMPs.

Meanwhile this caught Ron Tacchi's eye:

Board 1. Dealer North. None Vul.

♠ AJ109		♠ Q7543									
♥ AJ		♥ 10874									
♦ Q65		♦ K3									
♣ A1093		♣ J6									
♠ —											
♥ KQ6532	<table border="1" style="display: inline-table; vertical-align: middle;"> <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										
♦ AJ982											
♣ Q5											
♠ K862											
♥ 9											
♦ 1074											
♣ K8742											

One of our ace reporters was given the choice of which match to cover during the first round. He is renowned for his reports from a Hampshire monastery and his fascination with the Biltcliffe coup. Had he chosen more wisely then he could have witnessed the following We shall start with the Closed Room:

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bertheau</i>	<i>Kuranoglu M</i>	<i>Nystrom</i>	<i>Kuranoglu S</i>
–	1NT	Pass	Pass
2♥*	Pass	3♥	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

From a former convention card of E/W 2♥ is explained as 11-15, and when East valued his hand as a raise West had no hesitation in attempting the game contract. North's attack of ace and another trump did not put declarer to any test, especially when the diamonds behaved kindly allowing declarer to make an overtrick.

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sen</i>	<i>Hoftaniska</i>	<i>Berktaş</i>	<i>Brock</i>
–	1NT	Pass	Pass
2♥	Pass	Pass	Double
Pass	2♠	Pass	Pass
3♦	Pass	4♥	All Pass

At this table East did not deem his hand worth a raise, but South came to the rescue. When West showed more than a minimum East came to life and bid the game. The same eleven tricks meant a flat board.

The Biltcliffe coup consists of four parts, the first being the opportunity to pass out a part-score, secondly you protect and the opponents now bid game, thirdly you double, and finally they make the game. This was not a pure Biltcliffe but three of the four elements were present.

The second round starts at 11.50. To simplify matters the top four tables will always be the ones featured on BBO until the knock-out rounds are reached.

I spotted this deal, which featured an instructive point that is perhaps not as well known as it deserves to be:

Board 15. Dealer South. N/S Vul.

♠ KJ10653 ♥ 82 ♦ 8 ♣ K765	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ 9 ♥ QJ973 ♦ A5 ♣ QJ1092	♠ AQ4 ♥ K105 ♦ 109763 ♣ A3
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Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Rimstedt</i>	<i>Mauberquez</i>	<i>Shen</i>	<i>Frey</i>
–	–	–	1♦
3♠	Double	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

When South was able to rebid 3NT North's decision to double was to some extent vindicated. A spade lead would allow declarer to make 3NT, but there is a very good reason why West should avoid it.

It is because East did not redouble, which is a simple way of informing partner that you have a useful card in spades (the ♠A, K or Q). The same principle can be adopted when an opponent bids a suit that partner has overcalled in.

Here West steered clear of a spade, opting for the ♥8, which left declarer with no chance of more than eight tricks.

After a quick walk around the block, establishing that there is a restaurant close by the railway station and that there is clearly a supermarket or shop reasonably close by, its back for Round 3 at 14.20.

I don't have to wait long for a decent deal:

Board 22. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

♠ 842 ♥ 102 ♦ QJ10742 ♣ A4	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ 9 ♥ K875 ♦ K63 ♣ J9752	♠ AKQ1076 ♥ AQ963 ♦ 5 ♣ 6
-------------------------------------	--	-----------------------------------	------------------------------------

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Tuncc</i>	<i>Franchi</i>	<i>Hotamislig</i>	<i>Paoluzi</i>
–	–	Pass	1♠
Pass	2NT*	Pass	3♥
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♣*
Pass	4♦*	Pass	4♥*
Pass	4♠	Pass	5♦*
Pass	5♠	All Pass	

- 2NT Spade support
- 4♣ Cue-bid
- 4♦ Cue-bid
- 4♥ Cue-bid
- 5♦ Cue-bid

When North could not show a heart control, South signed off – not at all unreasonable, as it appeared that the slam would at best be on a finesse.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Attanasio	Eiriksson	Manara	Smederevac
-	-	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♥
Pass	4♠	Pass	4NT*
Pass	5♣*	Pass	6♠
All Pass			
4NT		RKCB	
5♣		1 key card	

♠ J53	♥ J4	♦ A98	♣ KQ1083
♠ 842	♥ 102	♦ QJ10742	♣ A4
♠ 9	♥ K875	♦ K63	♣ J9752
♠ AKQ1076	♥ AQ963	♦ 5	♣ 6

For some reason that has subsequently escaped me, we had spent part of the morning discussing quotations from Shakespeare and one that came up was from the Scottish play – ‘Stand not upon the order of your going but go at once’. When her partner jumped to game, Jovi Smederevac asked for key cards before advancing to 6♠. On this layout it was easy to take 12 tricks and collect 11 IMPs.

I have to mention this deal:

Board 29. Dealer North. All Vul.

♠ KJ9	♥ K6542	♦ 952	♣ A8
♠ Q1073	♥ 3	♦ AK	♣ KQJ976
♠ A62	♥ A10	♦ Q108763	♣ 32
♠ 854	♥ QJ987	♦ J4	♣ 1054

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Tuncc	Franchi	Hotamislig	Paoluzi
-	Pass	1♦	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♦	Pass
2♠	Pass	2NT	Pass
3♦	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♣	Pass	4♥	Pass
4NT*	Pass	5♥*	Pass
6♦	All Pass		

With no way to make use of dummy’s clubs, declarer drifted three down, -300.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Attanasio	Eiriksson	Manara	Smederevac
-	1♥	Pass	4♥
5♣	All Pass		

North led the ♥2 and declarer took dummy’s ace, South dropping the queen and played a club for the king and ace. North switched to the ♠K – a great play attempting a Merrimac coup – but declarer could duck, win the next spade in hand and draw trumps, for a 14 IMP pick up.

Round 4 kicked off at 16.10 and the E/W pairs were immediately confronted with a problem:

Board 1. Dealer North. None Vul.

♠ 32	♥ AKJ875	♦ 9	♣ 10972
♠ KJ5	♥ 92	♦ K54	♣ AQJ65
♠ 10986	♥ 1064	♦ QJ1086	♣ 3
♠ AQ74	♥ Q3	♦ A732	♣ K84

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Matushko</i>	<i>Vainikonis</i>	<i>Gromova</i>	<i>Levitina</i>
–	2♦*	Pass	2NT*
Pass	3♣*	Pass	3♦*
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♥
All Pass			
2♦	Multi		
2NT	Relay		
3♣	Hearts		

♠ 32			
♥ AKJ875			
♦ 9			
♣ 10972			
♠ KJ5		♠ 10986	
♥ 92		♥ 1064	
♦ K54		♦ QJ1086	
♣ AQJ65		♣ 3	
	♠ AQ74		
	♥ Q3		
	♦ A732		
	♣ K84		

West led the ♥2 and when declarer played low from dummy East put up the ten and declarer won and drew trumps, East following with the four and six. Now came a club for the three, eight and queen. After some thought West switched to the ♦K and declarer lost three clubs and a spade for one down.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kowalski</i>	<i>Rudakov</i>	<i>Sobolewska</i>	<i>Rudakova</i>
–	2♦*	Pass	4♣*
Double	4♦*	Pass	4♥
All Pass			
2♦	Multi		
4♣	Which major?		
4♦	Hearts		

The first four tricks were identical, but here West switched to the ♠5 and that gave declarer her tenth trick and 10 IMPs.

The key to this deal revolves around East's play in the trump suit. The first question to address is what card East should play at trick one. Partner cannot be leading away from the queen so there is little point in playing the ten, unless you are attempting to convey something to partner. If you were trying to convey something about the spade suit might you not play the ten (and then follow with the six followed by the four).

If however you believe that partner will attach no significance to the play of the ten then playing the six followed by the four should show some interest in spades, with the four followed by the six being neutral.

If you follow to the first heart with the four you can play the ten on

the next round to suggest interest in spades, with the six being neutral. Judging by what happened at the tables, one West thought playing the ten at trick one suggested something in spades.

The last round of the day starts at 18.00 and one match produces an extraordinary result on this deal:

Board 15. Dealer South. N/S Vul.

		♠ K10932	
		♥ 93	
		♦ 106	
		♣ K832	
♠ 64			♠ AQ85
♥ J64			♥ 10752
♦ AJ			♦ KQ874
♣ QJ10974			♣ –
		♠ J7	
		♥ AKQ8	
		♦ 9532	
		♣ A65	

In the Open Room Aronov and Zobu played the E/W cards in 3♣ which went three down, -150.

This was the dramatic turn of events at the other table:

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Willard</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>	<i>Multon</i>	<i>Marquardt</i>
–	–	–	1♣*
Pass	1♥*	1♠	2♥*
Pass	2♠*	Pass	4♥
Pass	4♠	Pass	5♣*
Double	Pass	Pass	Redouble*
All Pass			
1♥	Spades		
2♥	<i>A lapsus memoriae</i>		
2♠	Showing a good hand for spades		
5♣	Cue-bid		
Rdbl	First round control		

This unfortunate contract finished six down, -3400 not quite enough for a maximum loss of 24 IMP.

Things did not improve much on the deal that followed:

Board 16. Dealer West. E/W Vul.

♠ A64 ♥ 653 ♦ 10754 ♣ Q103	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto; display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> N </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> W E </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: center; width: 100%;"> S </div> </div>	♠ Q53 ♥ AQJ2 ♦ AQ932 ♣ J
♠ K1087 ♥ K104 ♦ K8 ♣ AK82	♠ J92 ♥ 987 ♦ J6 ♣ 97654	

Both teams played in 6NT from West. In the Open Room North led the ♥5 and declarer went one down, -100. At the other table North led the ♦5 and declarer found a route to 12 tricks for +1440 and another 17 IMPs.

June 16

We understand that next Saturday there will be a market right outside the hotel. Meanwhile we have discovered that if you turn right out of the hotel, go to the railway station, walk through to the other side, turn right and go up the hill you will come to a street full of shops. We plan to investigate during today's lunch break.

Turning reluctantly to the bridge, Round 6 was not the most exciting set of the tournament, at least not in the match between Mnepo and Good Six. The first six deals were flat (including a 5♦ doubled for -800 and a sound 6♠) and by the time Board 29 from the Open Room appeared on my screen the score was still 0-0, although there were some prospects of a swing on Boards 27 & 28. Trying to enliven proceedings Barry, looking at the line ups of the two teams started trying to work out how to get in the phrase *Hands knees and Bompsis Daisy*.

The scoreboard was eventually activated when a part swing gave Good Six 5 IMPs.

Board 28. Dealer West. N/S Vul.

♠ A106 ♥ 3 ♦ AJ10984 ♣ 1073	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto; display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> N </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> W E </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: center; width: 100%;"> S </div> </div>	♠ 98732 ♥ J106 ♦ K7 ♣ KJ8
	♠ Q4 ♥ KQ874 ♦ 532 ♣ 962	
	♠ KJ5 ♥ A952 ♦ Q6 ♣ AQ54	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>D'Ovidio</i>	<i>Matushko</i>	<i>Bompis</i>	<i>Gromova</i>
Pass	Pass	2♦*	2NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	
2♦	Multi		

Naturally West led the ♦J and declarer's task was hopeless. She eventually finished three down, -300.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Rudakov</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Rudakova</i>	<i>Lund Madsen</i>
1♦	Pass	1♥	Double
2♦	3♠	All Pass	

Birthday girl Christina Lund Madsen judges well not to raise to 4♠ – or does she?

East leads the ♥K and declarer wins with dummy's ace and plays a diamond. When that slips past the ace a spade goes to the four jack and six and when declarer continues with dummy's ♠5 West puts up the ace giving declarer a tenth trick, +170 and 10 IMPs.

While I am typing up this deal, I get an email from David Bird: *'I am currently writing up the boards from ZIMM-BRENO, Can you look elsewhere?'*

I immediately reply: *I am currently looking out of the office window at the Bosphorus.*

There is an explosive start to Round 7:

Board 1. Dealer North. None Vul.

♠ Q96 ♥ K7 ♦ K7642 ♣ A107	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ 8 ♥ AJ864 ♦ 1085 ♣ Q943
♠ 53 ♥ Q109532 ♦ 93 ♣ J65		♠ AKJ10742 ♥ — ♦ AQJ ♣ K82

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kowalski</i>	<i>Franchi</i>	<i>Sobolewska</i>	<i>Paoluzi</i>
–	1♣	Pass	1♠
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♦*
Pass	2♠	Pass	3♣
Pass	3♦	Pass	3♥
Double	Pass	Pass	Redouble*
Pass	4♣*	Pass	4♦*
Pass	4♥*	Pass	5♦*
Pass	6♣*	Pass	7♠

All Pass

2♦ Check back
 Rdbl First round ♥ control

After South showed first round control in hearts a cue-bidding exchange resulted in the laydown grand slam being reached, +1510.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Attanasio</i>	<i>Vainikonis</i>	<i>Manara</i>	<i>Levitina</i>
–	1♦	1♥	1♠
4♥	Pass	Pass	5♥*
Pass	5♠	Pass	6♥
Pass	6♠	All Pass	

Easy to say from here, but it looks as if South's bidding should have been enough for North to venture 7♠. (Our office is packed with luminaries such as PO Sundelin & Barry Rigal who know a thing or two about bidding.) Down 11 after the opening deal along came:

Board 2. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ 753 ♥ J7643 ♦ J10432 ♣ —	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ KQJ4 ♥ A ♦ — ♣ AQ1087643
		♠ 102 ♥ Q8 ♦ Q985 ♣ KJ952

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kowalski</i>	<i>Franchi</i>	<i>Sobolewska</i>	<i>Paoluzi</i>
–	–	Pass	1♥
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♥*
Pass	2NT*	Pass	3♠
Pass	4NT*	Pass	5NT*
Pass	7♠	All Pass	

2♥ Spades
 2NT Agrees spades
 4NT RKCB
 5NT 2 key cards and a void

Simon Fellus (no mean player himself) was able to explain the early part of the auction – mille grazie.

West led the ♦J and declarer won, pitching a club from dummy, crossed to the ♥A and ruffed a club. West over-ruffed and exited with a trump, the contract going three down, -300.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Attanasio</i>	<i>Vainikonis</i>	<i>Manara</i>	<i>Levitina</i>
–	–	Pass	1♥
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♥
Pass	2♠	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♣	Double	All Pass

I'm not sure if 2♥ showed spades this time, but in any event spades were quickly agreed.

Imagine the look on South's face had she redoubled 4♣ to show first round control and North had then passed!

East led the ♦9 and declarer won with dummy's ace pitching a spade, crossed to the ♥A and played the ♣6. When that held, he continued with the seven and was soon claiming ten tricks, +710 and 14 IMPs.

There is enough time between rounds 7 & 8 to check out the local shops and we return laden (although not heavily) with just enough food to sustain Tacchi through the afternoon sessions.

A couple of deals are perhaps of theoretical interest:

♠ 753	♠ KQJ4	♠ 102
♥ J7643	♥ A	♥ Q8
♦ J10432	♦ —	♦ Q985
♣ —	♣ AQ1087643	♣ KJ952
	♠ A986	
	♥ K10952	
	♦ AK76	
	♣ —	

Board 16. Dealer West. E/W Vul.

♠ 863	♠ A7	♠ Q10952
♥ AQ1042	♥ 97	♥ K865
♦ J7	♦ AKQ4	♦ 9852
♣ J84	♣ AK1076	♣ —
	♠ KJ4	
	♥ J3	
	♦ 1063	
	♣ Q9532	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Tuncok</i>	<i>Vainikonis</i>	<i>Hotamislig</i>	<i>Levitina</i>
Pass	1♣*	Pass	1NT
Pass	3♦	Pass	3NT
All Pass			


West's opening lead of the ♥2 put this contract to the sword immediately. Our considered view was that South should bid 3♠ over 3♦ when the doomed no trump game would be avoided.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kowalski</i>	<i>Eiriksson</i>	<i>Sobolewska</i>	<i>Smederevac</i>
Pass	1♣	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♦	Pass	3♣
Pass	4♣	Pass	4♥
Pass	5♣	All Pass	

Rebidding 2♦ made life easier and the game swing was worth 10 IMPs.

Board 19. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

♠ 10853 ♥ AK73 ♦ 5 ♣ A1075		♠ J96 ♥ QJ85 ♦ AQ109 ♣ Q2	♠ 42 ♥ 6 ♦ K8743 ♣ J9863
		♠ AKQ7 ♥ 10942 ♦ J62 ♣ K4	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Tuncok</i>	<i>Vainikonis</i>	<i>Hotamislig</i>	<i>Levitina</i>
-	-	-	1♣*
1♥	All Pass		

Why anyone would choose to bid 1♥ with the West hand is perhaps to quote Sir Winston Churchill, *a riddle, wrapped in a mystery, inside an enigma*. The defenders were not hard pressed to collect 8 tricks, so -200.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kowalski</i>	<i>Eiriksson</i>	<i>Sobolewska</i>	<i>Smederevac</i>
-	-	-	1♣*
Double	Redouble	1♦	Pass
1♥	Double	Redouble	Pass
1♠	Double	2♣	Pass
Pass	Double	All Pass	
1♣	2+♣		

Why anyone would choose to double 1♣ with that West hand.... well, you've read the rest of the sentence before. When North doubled 1♥ for penalties East redoubled and then bid 2♣, over what might be considered a questionable double of 1♠, making it clear she held both minors.

Having done well to find their fit after the opening bid things got even better for E/W when N/S tried to penalise 2♣. I think North was wrong to double for a third time – if South held real clubs she would surely have doubled 2♣ in this situation.


South led the ♣K and declarer had no trouble in collecting a couple of overtricks for +580, along with 13 IMPs.

In Round 9 the players holding the East cards found themselves as dealer at Red, looking at ♠A1097632 ♥10853 ♦8 ♣6. Those who opened 3♠ were raised to game by partner who held ♠54 ♥A ♦AK75432 ♣753 and with everything lying favourably there was no defence against ten tricks. +790 was a popular result.

When you reach the last round of a Swiss qualifier the real interest lies around the struggle that goes on around the cut-off point and that was recognised when the BBO matches featured teams at what, at this moment in time, might be regarded as the business end of the table.

The teams looking for points were not disappointed by the deals.

Board 2. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ 1043 ♥ — ♦ J10875 ♣ AK975		♠ Q72 ♥ AQ964 ♦ 62 ♣ J83	♠ AK5 ♥ 532 ♦ KQ943 ♣ 106
		♠ J986 ♥ KJ1087 ♦ A ♣ Q42	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Malinowski</i>	<i>Janiszewski</i>	<i>De Botton</i>	<i>C Baldysz</i>
-	-	1♦	1♥
4♥*	Pass	5♦	All Pass
4♥	Cue-bid		

On this layout out it was not difficult to record 12 tricks, +420.

Our considered opinion was that East should bid 4♠ over 4♥, but then it is a question of what you do over partner's 5♣. It looks obvious to continue with 5♦, but if partner's 4♥ guarantees a void then perhaps East is worth 6♦. The doubleton club (vastly superior to holding three of them) may well be all that partner needs.

Well done to the four pairs who reached 6♦.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Golebiowski</i>	<i>Hoftaniska</i>	<i>Sikora</i>	<i>Brock</i>
-	-	1♣	1♥
2♣	3♣*	Pass	4♣
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

What do you understand by South's bid of 4♣? Whatever it meant it saw N/S steal the pot and although 4♥ was trivially two down 6 IMPs changed hands.

Board 9. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

♠ 108		♠ AJ42
♥ AQ83		♥ 10
♦ J1098		♦ K7
♣ KJ9		♣ AQ10876
♠ K9763		
♥ 642		
♦ Q63		
♣ 53		
	♠ Q5	
	♥ KJ975	
	♦ A542	
	♣ 42	

♠ 1043	♠ Q72	♠ AK5
♥ —	♥ AQ964	♥ 532
♦ J10875	♦ 62	♦ KQ943
♣ AK975	♣ J83	♣ 106
	♠ J986	
	♥ KJ1087	
	♦ A	
	♣ Q42	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Malinowski</i>	<i>Janiszewski</i>	<i>De Botton</i>	<i>C Baldysz</i>
-	1♣	Pass	1♥
Pass	2♥	Double	3♥
3♠	Pass	4♠	All Pass

Declarer lost a trick in each of the red suits and having established dummy's clubs he cashed the ♠K and took the spade finesse to finish with ten tricks, +620.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Golebiowski</i>	<i>Hoftaniska</i>	<i>Sikora</i>	<i>Brock</i>
-	Pass	2♣	All Pass

Here too declarer took ten tricks, but that meant a loss of 10 IMPs.

Suppose North opens 1♦ and East overcalls 2♣? If South doubles, North bids 2♥. What should East do now? Obviously 2♠ is a possibility but suppose you decide to double and South passes. How many spades should West bid? Barry is in favour of 3♠ and perhaps he is right. Although the ♦Q does not appear to be a great card the fifth spade must be important. Only 24 pairs scored +620 or more (quite a few had to take the money from 5♥ doubled) so it was obviously not easy to reach game.

Having closed the office around 21.30 we were going our separate ways when we heard familiar notes of Chopin from the piano on level C1. There were two performers, Championship Chairman Josef Harsanyi and Tournament Director Denis Dobrin – and trust me they were both fantastic.


June 17

The early risers meet for breakfast at 07.00 – Tacchi persuades Jan Swann and I to sit outside, whereupon it immediately starts to rain.

As play is about to begin in the round of 32, I suggest to Herman that he goes to report a match from the BAM. 'What, you want me to watch a whole two boards', he replies. It's a fair point.

This deal was puzzling:

Board 3. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

♠ KQ83 ♥ A84 ♦ J82 ♣ 832		♠ A10974 ♥ 96 ♦ 9643 ♣ Q10	♠ 2 ♥ J1072 ♦ Q75 ♣ KJ754
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Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Krasnosselski</i>	<i>Vorobeychi</i>	<i>Dikhnova</i>	<i>Gerasimov</i>
–	–	–	Pass
Pass	1♣*	Pass	1♦*
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♣*
Pass	2♥	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

Absent a convention card, there are numerous possibilities for this sequence – it could be Polish Club, Strong Club or simply natural, with 1♦ being a transfer. Maybe systems Guru Al Hollander knows the answer, but I doubt it.

4♥ was a routine +450.

Before I continue, I should mention that so far today we have had two short power cuts. They have not yet caused us any major problems, but they mean that our scoring guru Fotis Skoularikis has to restart his system each time.

Waiting for the lights to come back on Francesca reminds me of this celebrated piece of poetry (translated from the original Turkish):

*The most beautiful sea
hasn't been crossed yet.
The most beautiful child
hasn't grown up yet.*

*Our most beautiful days
we haven't seen yet.
And the most beautiful words I wanted to tell you
I haven't said yet...*

From the Poems of Nazim Hikmet


Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Lund Madsen</i>	<i>Gulevich</i>	<i>Drijver</i>
–	–	–	Pass
Pass	1♣	Pass	1♥
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

It's quite common for 2NT in this situation to show heart support and regular partnerships then have a way of showing this type of South hand. Absent any esoteric agreements one might be inclined to rebid 3♣ with the South hand, but to some extent that depends on how strong North might be. What is surprising is North's decision to let matters rest in 3NT. East led the ♠10 the contract was two down on the go.


This match between Good Six and Russian Bear (Herman suggests that there might be a typing mistake here somewhere) sees the Russians race into a 16-0 lead.

Board 8. Dealer West. All Vul.

♠ 107 ♥ Q63 ♦ K5 ♣ J108632		♠ AK943 ♥ AK2 ♦ Q4 ♣ K94	♠ J86 ♥ J1094 ♦ AJ1062 ♣ Q
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♠ Q52
 ♥ 875
 ♦ 9873
 ♣ A75

Board 24. Dealer West. None Vul.

♠ 962 ♥ 8764 ♦ AJ102 ♣ J10		♠ K ♥ Q52 ♦ 9743 ♣ AQ852	♠ J43 ♥ AKJ1093 ♦ KQ ♣ 74
♠ AQ10875 ♥ — ♦ 865 ♣ K963			

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Cakici</i>	<i>Bessis</i>	<i>Ozturk</i>	<i>Bessis</i>
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♥	Pass	2♠
All Pass			

That was worth eleven tricks, +230.

Do you think North should raise to 3♠?

In another match North did that, but his partner ignored Meckstroth's Law and passed.

Closed Room


West	North	East	South
<i>B Cronier</i>	<i>Larsson</i>	<i>Cronier</i>	<i>Edlund</i>
Pass	2♥*	All Pass	
2♥	11-15		

Only +170 here, so an IMP changed hands.

Would you have bid 2♠ over 2♥? Maybe if it is invitational but not forcing, or would that not matter?

Distracted by affairs of state, I miss much of the first session of the round of 16, but I spot this deal from the second half:

Board 18. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ KQ108 ♥ 8 ♦ K9 ♣ Q109853		♠ 7643 ♥ A1096532 ♦ 7 ♣ 6	♠ AJ5 ♥ Q74 ♦ J543 ♣ K42
♠ 92 ♥ KJ ♦ AQ10862 ♣ AJ7			

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Klukowski</i>	<i>Manara</i>	<i>Zmuda</i>	<i>Attanasio</i>
-	-	3♥	3NT
All Pass			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Paoluzi</i>	<i>Multon</i>	<i>Franchi</i>	<i>Willard</i>
-	-	3♥	3NT
All Pass			

The first thing to note is that in both rooms East was happy to open 3♥ despite the four-card major on the side. Then, appreciating that partner might be awkwardly placed South did not hesitate to bid 3NT. The proof of the pudding was that both declarers took ten tricks.

I'm prepared to let you in on a little secret; in the days when I played the game and picked up a modest looking hand I would mentally imagine how I might get a good result. Suppose you are looking at: ♠AJ972 ♥K105 ♦J765 ♣10 at Love All. I would immediately think how nice it would be if the opponents played in spades.

Board 12. Dealer North. All Vul.

♠ AJ972 ♥ K105 ♦ J764 ♣ 10		♠ — ♥ QJ9863 ♦ A32 ♣ Q764	♠ 864 ♥ A4 ♦ Q10985 ♣ 532
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Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Paoluzi</i>	<i>Multon</i>	<i>Franchi</i>	<i>Willard</i>
-	-	-	Pass
Pass	1♠	2♥	2♠
Double*	4♠	All Pass	

After making what looks like a support double West was surprisingly unwilling to double 4♠. A slight slip in defence allowed declarer to escape for -100.

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Klukowski</i>	<i>Manara</i>	<i>Zmuda</i>	<i>Attanasio</i>
-	-	-	Pass
Pass	1♠	3♥	Pass
4♥	5♣	Double	5♠
Double	All Pass		

Faced with a 3♥ overcall South decide against raising spades and when West raised the ante North was faced with a decision. A double might risk an unwelcome response in diamonds, but unwilling to pass North tried 5♣. East did well to double that and when South corrected to 5♠ West's dreams came true. Here the defenders made no mistake and the contract was four down, -800.

June 18

Last night we ventured out of the hotel for dinner for the first time. This resulted in two white-knuckle taxi rides to and from the restaurant, both our drivers clearly aspiring to join the Formula 1ranks (Lewis Hamilton doesn't drive while talking on his mobile). Our selection, *Restaurant Tike*, proves to be a good one and we notice that the winners of the BAM have also chosen it.

Do pay a visit to the EBL's Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/europeanbridge/> where you will find photographs and videos from the Championships.

Board 2. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ 654 ♥ KJ8764 ♦ KJ ♣ KJ		♠ 9873 ♥ A103 ♦ A106 ♣ A87	♠ 10 ♥ Q5 ♦ Q87542 ♣ Q1042
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Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Zimmermann</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>Ponomareva</i>	<i>Larsson</i>
-	-	1♣	1♠
2♦*	Pass	2♥	Pass
4♥	All Pass		
2♦	Hearts		

South started with her four top spades, but declarer ruffed with dummy's king and ran the ♥J, soon claiming ten tricks.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Saada</i>	<i>Zmuda</i>	<i>Zack</i>	<i>Klukowski</i>
-	-	1♣	1♠
2♥	Pass	3♥	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

North led the ♠10 and South played spades – this time declarer ruffed with dummy’s ♥J and North’s queen was the setting trick, a 10 IMP swing.

We spend a considerable amount of time considering how best to cover the Mixed Pairs. Eventually we decide that we will rely on word of mouth so far as the qualifying rounds are concerned.

Watching the second half of the quarter-finals, this deal caught my eye for a number of reasons:

Board 16. Dealer West. E/W Vul.

	♠ AKQJ53		
	♥ KJ6		
	♦ K84		
	♣ J		
♠ 86		♠ 94	
♥ AQ852		♥ 97	
♦ AJ32		♦ 96	
♣ A8		♣ KQ107532	
	♠ 1072		
	♥ 1043		
	♦ Q1075		
	♣ 964		

♠ 10			
♥ Q5			
♦ Q87542			
♣ Q1042			
♠ 654		♠ 9873	
♥ KJ8764		♥ A103	
♦ KJ		♦ A106	
♣ KJ		♣ A87	
♠ AKQJ2			
♥ 92			
♦ 93			
♣ 9653			

East led the ♥7 and West took the ace and returned the eight, declarer winning with the jack and playing three rounds of trumps followed by a diamond to the king, so one down.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Saada</i>	<i>Multon</i>	<i>Zack</i>	<i>Willard</i>
1♥	4♠	All Pass	

Here East led the ♥9 and West won and played two rounds of clubs, declarer ruffing, playing three rounds of trumps followed by a diamond to the king, one down being worth a couple of IMPs.

Looking at all four hands it is clear that 4♠ can be made, but there is no obvious reason to play West for the ♦J and indeed every declarer in 4♠ went down. So you may ask, why is the deal of any interest?

Well, the bidding at the various tables is worth discussing – after 1♥ do you double, overcall 1♠ or adopt Multon’s practical approach of jumping to 4♠? Where 1♠ was selected more than one East bid 1NT as a transfer to clubs. If North ends up in 4♠ the knowledge that East has some club length might be useful, but would it be enough to cause declarer to take the required unusual line in the diamond suit?

Then I recalled that the Alpha Zero team are currently attempting to build the ultimate bridge playing programme. Would a computer playing single-dummy find the winning line? In the situation that Multon faced he knew that West held 5/6♥, plus 2 spades and at least two clubs. He also knew that East held the ♣K. Is that limited information enough to persuade declarer to adopt the winning line?

Maybe not for a human, but I wonder if the computer would reason that the mere fact of West’s opening bid makes him a favourite to hold the all important ♦J?

Watch this space!

June 19

Because the semi-finals are 32 board matches we decide to take an early dinner at 19.30. At 18.54 Ron announces that he is feeling extremely peckish and that there are only 36 minutes to go – not that he’s counting.

Team Good Six want to share something:

If you do well at a big event, it is not always about fighting for IMPs.

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Klukowski</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>Zmuda</i>	<i>Larsson</i>
1♥	Double	3♣	Pass
3NT	Double	Pass	Pass
4♣	4♠	Pass	Pass
Double	All Pass		

The teams contesting the knockout rounds often finish late and find themselves last in line in the queue for a taxi. That has certainly been the case for team Good Six and although they were elated to have won their semi-final they then faced what they feared might be a long wait for transport. Or so they thought. When they went outside the hotel they were greeted by a charming member of the Nafiz hospitality staff who knew all their results, congratulated them on reaching the final and delighted them by announcing, “we have a taxi waiting for you”. Tired, hungry and eternally grateful they could go straight to dinner.

With the final of the Mixed Teams, it's the first major day of the Championships (apologies to the BAM winners) and the journalists are lining up to cover it.

This was the opening deal:

Board 1. Dealer North. None Vul.

♠ J43 ♥ Q82 ♦ 9752 ♣ 874		♠ A862 ♥ 1097 ♦ KJ3 ♣ K109	♠ K7 ♥ KJ6543 ♦ A6 ♣ A53
♠ Q1095 ♥ A ♦ Q1084 ♣ QJ62			

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Soulet</i>	<i>Lund Madsen</i>	<i>Reess</i>
–	Pass	1♥	Double
2♥	Double*	3♣	Pass
3♥	3♠	All Pass	

Declarer was not hard pressed to record ten tricks.

Closed Room

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

2♥ drifted one down.

Back in England, my au pair questions why N/S did not reach 4♠. The players in her beginners class bid the hand 1♦*-(1♥)-Dble-(Rdbl*)-1♠-(2♥)-3♠-4♠. They all play Precision – much easier to learn that anything Standard and as avid readers of the Bulletins, know all about Rosenkrantz redoubles.

The second session of the final saw Good Six rack up 83 IMPs giving them a commanding lead at the lunch break. An opportune moment to remind you that they took the last of the 32 qualifying places. A team of destiny as Eric Kokish might say.

Reess was hoping for swingy deals in session 3.

Board 9. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

♠ AQ105 ♥ KQ9 ♦ K862 ♣ 73		♠ K842 ♥ 10873 ♦ AJ3 ♣ 82	♠ J96 ♥ AJ2 ♦ Q7 ♣ KQ1094
♠ 73 ♥ 654 ♦ 10954 ♣ AJ65			

Open Room

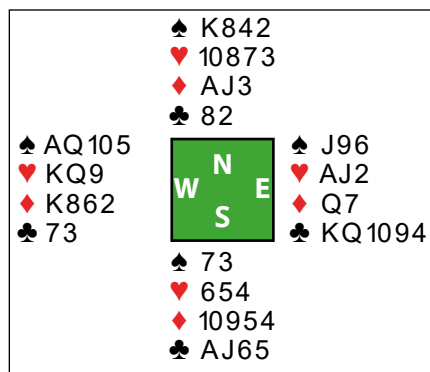
West	North	East	South
<i>D'Ovidio</i>	<i>Soulet</i>	<i>Bompis</i>	<i>Reess</i>
–	Pass	1♣	Pass
1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

What should South lead?

After the $\heartsuit 10$ declarer won with the queen and ran the $\spadesuit 9$, continuing with the six to the ten. North won and switched to the $\clubsuit 8$, South ducking declarer's king. Now declarer had no way to get beyond eight tricks.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Frey</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Mauberquez</i>	<i>Lund Madsen</i>
-	Pass	1 \clubsuit	Pass
1 \spadesuit	Pass	1NT	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

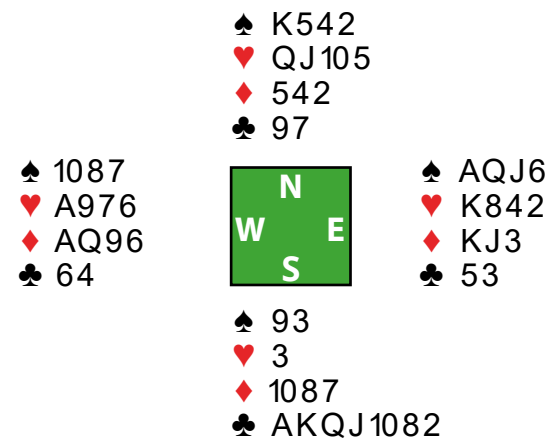


A more or less identical defence saw the defenders prevail, so no swing.

If the spade king is onside then declarer will already be assured of eight tricks, so an extra trick from clubs or diamonds will be sufficient. Suppose at trick two declarer plays the $\clubsuit K$? If South ducks (best) then declarer can get home by forgetting about spades and playing on clubs (provided the diamond return from South is ducked). Not exactly easy.

Looking at the deal from a defensive point of view South might lead the $\diamondsuit 4$. When declarer plays low from dummy North plays the jack and declarer wins. Playing a top club no longer works provided South ducks, wins the next club and switches to a spade. North wins that and can exit with either major, as when South gets in with a club the $\diamondsuit 10$ will seal declarer's fate.

Board 13. Dealer North. All Vul.



Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>D'Ovidio</i>	<i>Soulet</i>	<i>Bompis</i>	<i>Reess</i>
-	Pass	1 \diamondsuit	4 \clubsuit
Double	Pass	4 \heartsuit	All Pass

South cashed two clubs and seeing no danger switched to the $\diamondsuit 7$. Declarer won in hand and played a heart to the ace, leaving North with two trump tricks, +100.

If declarer wins the diamond switch in dummy and plays a low heart North will have to put up an honour, otherwise declarer can put in the eight. Declarer wins and in light of the bidding might find the way to get home by leaving the trump suit well alone. In the endgame that develops North will be down to $\heartsuit QJ5$ and declarer will play dummy's last diamond forcing North to ruff high and lead into dummy's $\heartsuit A9$.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Frey</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Mauberquez</i>	<i>Lund Madsen</i>
-	Pass	1 \diamondsuit	4 \clubsuit
Double	Pass	4 \heartsuit	All Pass

Here too South started with two top clubs. It was obvious that E/W had a 4-4 fit in trumps, marking North with four hearts. It was very unlikely that

the defenders had a diamond trick and any spade honour that North might hold was under the gun. Appreciating that in that situation the defenders best chance might be to take two trump tricks she found the devastating play of the ♣Q, offering up a ruff and discard. If declarer discards from dummy North can pitch a diamond and now there is no way to reach a winning ending. Declarer tired ruffing with dummy's six but North overruffed with the jack and declarer was helpless. He overruffed with the king and played a heart to the seven, but North won and still had a trump trick to come.

While all this was happening, we are informed that Pierre Zimmermann will no longer represent Monaco in International events.

June 20

It was a busy day yesterday, culminating in the first awards ceremony of the Championships when medals were presented to the successful teams in the Mixed Teams Championship and the BAM. Although national anthems are not played at transnational events, the medallists gave an impromptu spirited rendition of the Marseillaise (there were 15 French nationals on the podium) and a foreshortened rendition of the Russian national anthem.

It was also an important day for the EBL Executive who discussed forthcoming Championships. Appreciating that it is important to embrace the latest technology we understand that they may be about to announce the introduction of VAR at every table which should be of enormous benefit to all the Tournament Directors. Paying homage to the Cricket World Cup, matches that are unable to be completed will be decided using the Duckworth-Lewis method. Disputed bidding matters will be resolved using a combination of Hawkeye, Sniko, Ultra Edge & Hot Spot.

In close matches, Formula 1's DRS system will be applied; as soon as a team gets within 2 IMPs all overtricks will count double.

With BBO unavailable, coverage of the Mixed Pairs Final will be intense (how else will the world learn of the many brilliancies and blunders that might occur). Not quite so easy for our off-site reporters – we thought we might send them the hand records and ask them to predict the bidding. I have a vague recollection (these days most recollections are vague) that some years ago I proposed enlivening VuGraph presentations by giving each spectator a hand held gizmo on which they could attempt to predict the next bid – the system would be called Predict-a-Bid. One might

even offer a prize for the spectator with the best percentage. It might work best by restricting it to the actions of one player – just imagine the fun you might have using Predict-a-Bid with Christina Lund Madsen.

Swedish legend PO Sundelin is, amongst other things, checking the convention cards of the teams who will contest the European Youth Team Championships in Norway. One pair, having a little room left of their card have included the following under 'Very Important Notes':

Whiteboards are remarkable

Russian Dolls are full of themselves

Moses had the first tablet that could connect to the Cloud

I expect by now you are becoming impatient to see a deal, so turning reluctantly to the bridge here is a deal from the first session of the EBL Cup. As they might have said in Monty Python – 'and now for something completely different':

Dealer South. E/W Vul

♠ A 10 9 5		♠ K Q 5 3									
♥ —		♥ A 10 9									
♦ 6		♦ K Q J 10 3									
♣ A J 9 8 7 5 4 2		♣ Q									
♠ J 7 6 2	<div style="display: inline-block; border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 0;"> <table style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 40px; height: 40px; text-align: center; font-size: 10px;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table> </div>		N		W		E		S		♠ 4
		N									
W			E								
		S									
♥ K Q J 7 5	♥ 8 6 4 3 2										
♦ 9 7 5 2	♦ A 8 4										
♣ —	♣ K 10 6 3										

West	North	East	South
<i>Alacakaptan</i>	<i>Yuen</i>	<i>Gungor</i>	<i>Fenton</i>
–	–	–	Pass
Pass	1♣	Double	1♥
Double*	1♠*	2♦	Pass
3♣*	Double*	3NT*	Pass
Pass	4♣*	Pass	5♣
5♦	5♥*	Double	Pass
Pass	6♣	Double	All Pass

- 1♣ Cannot be criticised
- Dble Beyond reproach
- Dble Penalties
- 1♠ Showing spades and real clubs
- 3♣ Ambiguous
- Dble I should be able to defeat this
- 3NT I have a partial stopper in clubs
- 4♣ Worried they might have a club stopper and a quick nine tricks in the red suits
- 5♥ Cue-bid
- 6♣ Hoping it's a cheap save

It might not win the IBPA award for auction of the year, but it is certainly entertaining and +1190 helped Canada's Michael Yuen and Angela Fenton to a 64.99% session and second place at the break.

Time to pay a visit to the first session of the Mixed Pairs final:

Board 2. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

	♠ KQJ4		
	♥ J106		
	♦ K108		
	♣ A75		
♠ 63	N	♠ 10	
♥ Q943	W	♥ A752	
♦ AQ97	E	♦ 652	
♣ 863	S	♣ KJ1092	
		♠ A98752	
		♥ K8	
		♦ J43	
		♣ Q4	

West	North	East	South
<i>Yilmaz</i>	<i>J Jansma</i>	<i>Gocen</i>	<i>Jansma</i>
-	-	Pass	2♠
Pass	3♠	All Pass	

West led the ♣3 and East won with the king and after some thought returned the jack. The trouble with doing that was that it suggested to declarer that the ♥A was on her right, and that meant the ♦A must be with West, so ten tricks were recorded. Obviously if East switches to a low

heart at trick two declarer will need to guess well, I suspect she would have risen with the king. +170 was worth only 14/40 as 18 pairs bid game.


Board 3. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

		♠ 1094	
		♥ 73	
		♦ A873	
		♣ KQ75	
♠ KJ8632	N	♠ A7	
♥ A5	W	♥ 109864	
♦ KJ10	E	♦ Q96	
♣ 106	S	♣ A84	
		♠ Q5	
		♥ KQJ2	
		♦ 542	
		♣ J932	

West	North	East	South
<i>Osborne</i>	<i>Demirev</i>	<i>Hinden</i>	<i>Meltzer</i>
-	-	-	Pass
1♠	Pass	1NT*	Pass
2♠	2NT*	Double	3♣
Pass	Pass	3♠	All Pass
1NT	Up to 12, nearly forcing		
2NT	Minors		

Faced with having to choose between 3♠ and a double East went for the former and on this layout there were ten easy tricks. +170 gave N/S 34/20. Doubling 3♣ would have left N/S with only 6/48.

Board 5. Dealer North. N/S Vul.


♠ 1093 ♥ KQ9762 ♦ 52 ♣ J6		♠ J642 ♥ 8 ♦ J93 ♣ AKQ105
♦ AQ5 ♥ J10 ♦ AK76 ♣ 8743	♠ K87 ♥ A543 ♦ Q1084 ♣ 92	

West	North	East	South
<i>A Yalman</i>	<i>Lara</i>	<i>Yalman</i>	<i>Capucho</i>
–	2♦*	Pass	3♥*
Double	All Pass		

- 2♦ Multi, weak two in a major or 22/23 balanced
- 3♥ Pass or correct

I was expecting West to pass 3♥. In that scenario East could then double and West might decide to play for a penalty. The defenders took their tricks for +500 and a whopping 2/52.

Board 6. Dealer East. E/W Vul.


♠ KQJ ♥ A2 ♦ Q10983 ♣ 763		♠ 976532 ♥ 98 ♦ 752 ♣ KQ
♠ 1084 ♥ KQ104 ♦ K4 ♣ 9852	♠ A ♥ J7653 ♦ AJ6 ♣ AJ104	

West	North	East	South
<i>A Yalman</i>	<i>Lara</i>	<i>Yalman</i>	<i>Capucho</i>
–	–	Pass	1♥
Pass	1NT*	Pass	2♣
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

1NT One round force

East led the ♠7 and declarer won performe in dummy and played the ace of diamonds, followed by the jack. Forced to win West fatally played a second spade (a top heart looks obvious) and now declarer had an easy route to eleven tricks, +460 and 45/9. Mind you, restricting declarer to ten tricks would have been worth only 37/17 – to really get on the scoreboard East needs to find a heart lead at trick one – when the points are distributed 21/33.

Dealer 8. Dealer West. None Vul.

♠ 82 ♥ A103 ♦ QJ42 ♣ QJ82		♠ K10 ♥ K762 ♦ K9865 ♣ 104
♠ A3 ♥ J85 ♦ A73 ♣ A9763		


West	North	East	South
<i>Paoluzi</i>	<i>Hoftaniska</i>	<i>Marina</i>	<i>Brock</i>
Pass	3♠	All Pass	

East led the ♥6 and West took the ace and switched to the ♦Q, declarer winning in dummy, ruffing a diamond and playing the ♠J. East covered and declarer won and played dummy's ♠3. When he finessed, East's ten gave the defenders a third trick. that gave E/W 9/45, while +200 would have reduced their score to 23/31. If South had raised to game (not unreasonable opposite a second in hand preempt) declarer would have been playing for one of two results, 34/20 for +420 (which happened only once) or 45/9.

June 21

When I went down to see how Tacchi was getting on following the third session of the Mixed Pairs Final, it was just as he was preparing to depart, having seen little of interest. Tempting fate, I decided to stay and watch the last four deals:

Board 29. Dealer North. All Vul.

♠ 95 ♥ 9874 ♦ A109872 ♣ 4		♠ AQJ106 ♥ A10 ♦ K643 ♣ AQ	♠ 874 ♥ KJ5 ♦ Q5 ♣ 87532
		♠ K32 ♥ Q632 ♦ J ♣ KJ1096	


West	North	East	South
<i>Papakyriakopoulos</i>	<i>Lorenzini</i>	<i>Sykrakopoulou</i>	<i>Bello</i>
–	2NT	Pass	3♣*
Pass	3♠	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

I cannot be sure of the methods being used, but it may be that 3♣ was simple Stayman. South took some time before bidding 3NT, perhaps thinking about introducing her clubs.

East led the ♣3 and declarer won with the ace, and cashed five rounds of spades followed by five rounds of clubs. East's increasingly agonised discarding made it easy for declarer to play dummy's diamond and record 12 tricks, +690, but only 20/34 for N/S.

If 3♣ reveals the 5-3 major suit fit and South can then bid a natural 4♣, North is likely to drive to the slam that was reached 15 times, scoring 40/14.


Board 30. Dealer East. None Vul.

♠ 97 ♥ Q9762 ♦ 98762 ♣ 6		♠ AK864 ♥ A8 ♦ AQ3 ♣ QJ4	♠ Q10 ♥ KJ10543 ♦ J5 ♣ 985
		♠ J532 ♥ – ♦ K104 ♣ AK10732	

West	North	East	South
<i>Papakyriakopoulos</i>	<i>Lorenzini</i>	<i>Sykrakopoulou</i>	<i>Bello</i>
–	–	2♦*	3♣
Pass	3♠	Pass	6♠
Pass	7NT	All Pass	
2♦ Multi			

Jumping to 6♠ is perhaps a gamble, but one that paid off handsomely, +1520 being worth 47/7.

Board 32. Dealer West. E/W Vul.

♠ 62 ♥ 942 ♦ Q109 ♣ AKJ42		♠ AJ93 ♥ KJ10 ♦ A42 ♣ Q107	♠ 754 ♥ A763 ♦ J875 ♣ 98
		♠ KQ108 ♥ Q85 ♦ K63 ♣ 653	

West	North	East	South
Sakr	Rimstedt	Pszczola	Shen
-	1NT	All Pass	

East led the ♥3 and declarer won with the king, played a spade to the king and a club to the ten. When that held she played the ♥J and when East ducked she claimed nine tricks. It was only worth 26/28 as many pairs bid and made 3NT for 41-13. Those who opted for 4♠ were easily defeated by two tricks for 9/45.

Defeating 3NT is trickier – it was managed at only one table by Anna Gulevich and Andrey Gromov. After 1NT-2♣* Andrey doubled and when North passed to show a stopper and South jumped to 3NT it was easily defeated when Anna led the ♣9 and Andrey ducked it, 21/33. Another declarer in 3NT, faced by a heart lead decided to play safe for eight tricks, assuming that the majority of the field would be going two down in 4♠.

Going into the seventh day of the Mixed events I asked one of the players when he was going home. 'Not soon enough!' was his enigmatic reply.

With more medals on the line, it was time to see who was going to make a move.

Board 5. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

♠ 65		♠ 62	
♥ J84		♥ 942	
♦ J1064		♦ Q109	
♣ KQ102		♣ AKJ42	
		♠ 754	
		♥ A763	
		♦ J875	
		♣ 98	
		♠ KQ108	
		♥ Q85	
		♦ K63	
		♣ 653	

		♠ AJ93	
		♥ KJ10	
		♦ A42	
		♣ Q107	
		♠ 754	
		♥ A763	
		♦ J875	
		♣ 98	
		♠ KQ108	
		♥ Q85	
		♦ K63	
		♣ 653	

West	North	East	South
Welland	Zobu	Auken	Aronov
-	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♥*	Pass	2♠	Pass
2NT*	Pass	3♣*	Pass
3♦*	Pass	3♠*	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

2♥ Spades
2NT 5♠+4♣

East's 3♠ showed no slam interest. South led the ♥5 and declarer ducked, won the next heart in dummy, unblocked the spades and ducked a club. She won the heart return in dummy and cashed the ♠Q, but when the suit failed to divide she was soon two down, -100, giving N/S 40/14.

Board 6. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

		♠ AJ106	
		♥ -	
		♦ KQJ74	
		♣ 8632	
		♠ 87	
		♥ K1096	
		♦ A86	
		♣ J754	

West	North	East	South
Welland	Zobu	Auken	Aronov
-	-	Pass	Pass
1♣*	1♦	Double*	2♦
2♥	2♠	3♥	Double
All Pass			


1♣ 10+, may be any balanced hand including any other 5 card suit, also 5422

Dble 4+♥

North led the ♦K and South overtook it and switched to the ♠8, North

allowing dummy's queen to win. A diamond ruff was followed by three rounds of clubs pitching dummy's spades and declarer then crossruffed. When the smoke cleared that was eleven tricks, +1130 and 2-52. If N/S had taken the four tricks to which they are entitled, they would have scored 20/34.


Board 9. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

♠ 42 ♥ AQJ632 ♦ 843 ♣ AQ		♠ AQ95 ♥ 98 ♦ 1092 ♣ K853	♠ J10863 ♥ 74 ♦ AJ ♣ J1096
		♠ K7 ♥ K105 ♦ KQ765 ♣ 742	

West	North	East	South
<i>Mihai R</i>	<i>Casperson</i>	<i>Mihai</i>	<i>Farholt</i>
-	Pass	Pass	1♦
1♥	Double*	Pass	1NT
All Pass			

West cashed the ♥A and continued with the queen and then the jack when declarer ducked, East pitching the ♠6. Declarer won and does best to play a top diamond, after which six tricks will be on the horizon. When she played for the spades to be coming in she was two down, -100 and 25/29. Saving a trick would have been worth 32/22.

Board 10. Dealer East. All Vul.


♠ A75 ♥ A983 ♦ 9 ♣ QJ1082		♠ K82 ♥ J1054 ♦ K75 ♣ A54	♠ Q3 ♥ KQ72 ♦ 1083 ♣ 9763
		♠ J10964 ♥ 6 ♦ AQJ642 ♣ K	

West	North	East	South
<i>Mihai R</i>	<i>Casperson</i>	<i>Mihai</i>	<i>Farholt</i>
-	-	Pass	1♦
Double	Redouble	1♥	1♠
2♥	2NT	Pass	3♦
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

I'm not sure what to make of the auction. Should South have ventured 3♠? Might North have bid 3♠ over 3♦?

If East starts with a low heart West can win and return the nine, and as long as East wins and does nothing foolish the defenders should prevail. However, East led the ♥K and now there is no way to take more than four tricks. +600 was worth 23/31, those playing in 4♠ collecting 33/21. Defeating 3NT would have been worth 4/50.

Board 11. Dealer South. None Vul.

♠ AK96 ♥ QJ986 ♦ K7 ♣ KJ		♠ Q1042 ♥ 732 ♦ J102 ♣ A108	♠ J85 ♥ 104 ♦ AQ943 ♣ Q62
		♠ 73 ♥ AK5 ♦ 865 ♣ 97543	

West	North	East	South
<i>Ionata</i>	<i>Bianchedi</i>	<i>Stegaroiu</i>	<i>Cole</i>
1♥	Pass	1NT*	Pass
2♣*	Pass	2♥*	Pass
3NT	All Pass		
1NT Forcing			
2♥	2♥		

What would you lead?

At the table South went with the ♠7 and declarer won with dummy's ace, North contributing the four and declarer the five. A heart to the ten saw North follow with the two. It look right to duck that and win the next heart. North can play the seven, suggesting another spade will be a good idea, when the defenders collect four tricks and 35/19. However, South took the heart immediately and switched to a club, allowing declarer to score an overtrick and 15/39.

Of course, if South leads a boring club declarer will have to settle for nine tricks.


June 22

Three new medal races start today and BBO was back in action, much to the delight of your team of reporters. They did a brilliant job yesterday, covering one of the most breathtaking finishes you will ever see in a major event. As you will see when you read the reports, it might be the

Last Board to end all last boards:

http://championships.eurobridge.org/EOC2019/bulletins/bul_09.pdf
I was in the room, but not at the important tables:

Board 29. Dealer North. All Vul.

♠ Q107432 ♥ Q87 ♦ 73 ♣ 103		♠ AK95 ♥ J1042 ♦ 4 ♣ AQJ8	♠ J86 ♥ AK53 ♦ AQJ2 ♣ 74
		♠ — ♥ 96 ♦ K109865 ♣ K9652	

West	North	East	South
<i>Voldoire</i>	<i>Ionita</i>	<i>Avon</i>	<i>Stegaroiu</i>
–	1♣*	Double	3♣
3♠	4♣	Double	4♦
Pass	Pass	Double	Pass
4♠	Double	All Pass	
1♣ Polish ♣			

It was difficult to hear the gist of the exchanges regarding the remainder of the auction, but I believe that 3♣ was basically a pre-emptive raise (keep in mind North did not have to have real clubs). When East doubled South, perhaps fearing there had been some misunderstanding, decided to introduce her diamonds, apparently snatching defeat from the jaws of victory. However, when East, now on much firmer ground, doubled, West put his head on the block.

North led the ♦4 and when declarer played dummy's queen South won with the king and returned the five. North ruffed, cashed the ♣A and continued the suit, South winning and playing a third diamond. The result was -800 and 47/7. 4♣ doubled would have been +1110 and 53/1. If West had passed 4♦ doubled North would undoubtedly have gone back to clubs, and -200 would have given E/W 10/44.

Board 32. Dealer West. E/W Vul.

♠ AJ65 ♥ K82 ♦ 42 ♣ KQ64		♠ Q1087 ♥ QJ9 ♦ K7 ♣ 10732
♠ 943 ♥ A65 ♦ AQ10985 ♣ 5		♠ K2 ♥ 10743 ♦ J63 ♣ AJ98

West	North	East	South
<i>Ponamareva</i>	<i>Shan</i>	<i>Zimmermann</i>	<i>Gan</i>
1♦	Double	1♠	Double
All Pass			

The Bulletin Room spent some time discussing this simple sequence; the old-fashioned approach (which is still employed by many top players) is to use the double to show four spades, the idea being to expose a possible psyche by East. PO uses it as a two-way bid, depending on how many diamonds West has promised. Whether it was a good idea on this hand is open to question. I would be tempted to bid 2♣, and then bid 2♥ over the likely 2♦ from E/W. You might also consider bidding a direct 2♥.

South led the ♥4 and at this point dummy asked your scribe to take over. Pierre's first move was to call for 'un petit cour' but when he realised I was at the helm he switched to English. North won with the king and returned a heart and declarer decided to win in dummy and play a club, thereby restricting himself to seven tricks, +160 and 6/48. Making the overtrick would have been worth an extra 4 points.

Yesterday Herman was co-opted as a Director and was called by a player who complained that his opponent had doubled 1♣ when holding: ♠ J 9 8 3 ♥ A 9 8 4 ♦ A 10 4 3 2 ♣ -. He had played that hand for the singleton ♣K, and complained the hand was not strong enough for a take-out double. Herman replied that he thought the actual hand was stronger and consulted the Kaplan – Rubens Hand Evaluator. He was

right. That hand is apparently worth 12.65, while replacing the ♦2 with the ♣K reduces its value to 12.00.

Interestingly this deal then appeared in the third match of the day:

Board 13. Dealer North. All Vul.

♠ 76 ♥ J10 ♦ 109832 ♣ 8654		♠ KQ53 ♥ Q ♦ J ♣ AJ109732
♠ 1084 ♥ A9632 ♦ A654 ♣ K		♠ AJ92 ♥ K8754 ♦ KQ7 ♣ Q

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hop</i>	<i>Rosenthal</i>	<i>Wortel</i>	<i>Silverstein</i>
-	Pass	1♣	1♥
Pass	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♥	Pass	3♣	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

North's ♥J lead was covered all round and declarer unblocked the ♣K and played a spade for a rapid +630.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brogeland</i>	<i>Schollaardt</i>	<i>Lindqvist</i>	<i>Groenenboom</i>
-	Pass	1♣	1♥
Pass	Pass	1♠	Pass
1NT	Pass	2♣	Pass
2NT	Pass	3♣	All Pass

Declarer took ten tricks to lose 11 IMPs.

If you think the hand more or less turns on the club suit then it is worth knowing that the chance of it delivering all 7 tricks is 32.78%.

Here the KR Evaluator rates the West hand as being worth 11.55, but change the ♣K into the ♠9 and it rises to 12.00 while the addition of the ♦9 instead of his majesty makes it 12.15.

So, when trying to assess the worth of the ♣K, as Professor Joad would have said, 'it all depend what you mean by worth'.

June 23

One great advantage of presenting deals in a diary is that there is no need for an introductory title. If one had been required for this deal from the fourth qualifying round, it might have been *Grand Designs*.

Board 28. Dealer West. N/S Vul.

♠ A 10 ♥ AKQ87 ♦ KJ 106 ♣ A 9	<table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <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		♠ J 7 5 2 ♥ 10 6 4 3 ♦ A 9 ♣ 8 6 4
	N										
W		E									
	S										
♠ 9 8 4 ♥ J 9 2 ♦ 7 5 4 2 ♣ 10 3 2	♠ KQ63 ♥ 5 ♦ Q83 ♣ KQJ75										

With 12 easy tricks 6NT was the popular contract, but almost inevitably some pairs went overboard and bid a grand slam.

In the Open Series 5 pairs attempted 7NT and they all failed – well done to the one West who was on lead and selected the ♦2. Two pairs selected 7♣, once by North and once by South, the latter being doubled.

In the Women's Teams 7♣, 7NT and 7♦(!) all failed, and a second pair attempted 7♣.

The 5 pairs who attempted 7NT/7♣ in the Senior Teams were all defeated.

The two pairs playing 7♣ who escaped a diamond lead found a way to get home.

One way to do it is to play to reach this ending:

♠ 9 ♥ J 9 2 ♦ 7 5 4 ♣ —	<table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <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		♠ 7 5 ♥ 10 6 4 3 ♦ A ♣ —
	N										
W		E									
	S										
	♠ Q 6 ♥ 5 ♦ Q 8 3 ♣ 7										

When South cashes the ♣7 discarding dummy's ♦J What can East do? If he parts with a spade declarer cashes two tricks in the suit pitching a diamond and a heart and East is helpless. It's a perfect repeating squeeze.

Discarding the ♦A is no better.

This deal from the first round of the Senior Teams would have escaped my attention, but for a passing comment by a Captain who shall remain nameless.

Board 8. Dealer West. None Vul.

♠ 10 3 ♥ 6 4 3 ♦ Q 9 6 5 ♣ 10 9 8 2	<table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <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		♠ K 9 8 7 ♥ 7 ♦ KJ73 ♣ AKQ4
	N										
W		E									
	S										
	♠ A 4 2 ♥ AKQJ82 ♦ A 4 2 ♣ 5	♠ QJ65 ♥ 10 9 5 ♦ 10 8 ♣ J763									

In the Closed Room N/S had no trouble reaching 7♥ for +1510, but the grand slam proved to be elusive, with only four other pairs hitting the bullseye. One pair somehow stopped in game, but that was not the worst

result for N/S, because one pair reached the giddy heights of 2♥!

My best guess is that North opened 1♣ and South responded 2♥ intending it to be strong, whereas his partner thought it was weak.

The final deal of the day gave both sides a chance to go wrong:

Board 10. Dealer East. All Vul.

♠ A3 ♥ Q1097654 ♦ – ♣ A932	<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	♠ QJ ♥ AK82 ♦ K1052 ♣ J107	♠ 1087652 ♥ J ♦ Q7 ♣ KQ65
N						
W E						
S						
	♠ K94 ♥ 3 ♦ AJ98643 ♣ 84					

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Failla</i>	<i>Linqvist</i>	<i>De Micheli</i>	<i>Brogeland</i>
–	–	Pass	3♦
4♥	All Pass		

5♦ is only one down at best, but who would do that looking at ♥AK82? In the Open series 8 pairs attempted it and 3 of them were allowed to make it.

Here North led the ♦K and declarer ruffed and played a heart towards dummy's jack. When it held he came to hand with a club and played the ♥Q, North winning with the king as South pitched the ♦9. When North switched to the ♠Q declarer ducked, ruffed the diamond continuation and played the ♥10. North won and tried another diamond, but declarer ruffed, drew the outstanding trump and claimed.

Notice that if declarer wins the ♠A he must then cross to dummy and play the ♦Q pitching a spade – a neat example of the scissors coup.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Willenken</i>	<i>Di Bello</i>	<i>Jansma</i>	<i>Avossa</i>
–	–	Pass	3♦
3♥	3NT	Pass	Pass
4♥	Pass	Pass	Double
All Pass			

North led the ♦K (on a spade lead the simplest line is to duck, but if declarer wins, he must then go to dummy with a club and pitch the ♠3 on a diamond) and declarer ruffed and played a heart to the jack. He then made the mistake of returning to hand with a spade and playing the ♥Q. North won (South pitching the ♣4) and could now have ensured the demise of the contract by playing a spade – South overtakes and plays a third round of the suit, promoting North's ♥8. However, he handed declarer a lifeline by playing a diamond. All declarer had to do was discard his remaining spade, but he ruffed and played the ♥10 and North won and played the ♠J, South overtaking and playing the ♠9 for the trump promotion.

Ron came down for breakfast wearing a shirt that perfectly matched the colour of everything that was on his plate – a precautionary measure that proved to be unnecessary. On Saturday, his wife Jane sent him a communication wishing him a Happy Anniversary – a premature articulation as it is today, Monday, that they are celebrating their 47th year of almost total bliss (you have no idea how much Ron is paying me to write this).

It's a testament to the dedication of the staff that although play is not due to start until midday everyone has reported for duty by 10.00. Play will finish late tonight but should not interfere with our plans to watch the French Grand Prix and the Women's World Cup.

June 24

I'm sure most of you will know the name Roland Wald, who for many years has been a fixture as a BBO Commentator. His Facebook page regularly features amusing stories – this was yesterday's:

A hydrogen atom lost its electron and went to the police station to file a missing electron report. He was questioned by the police:

"Haven't you just misplaced it somewhere? Are you sure that your electron is really lost?"

"I'm positive."

This deal posed a defensive problem:

Board 13. Dealer North. All Vul.

♠ AQ10965 ♥ Q7 ♦ Q74 ♣ KQ		♠ J43 ♥ KJ10832 ♦ 3 ♣ A62	♠ 872 ♥ A94 ♦ KJ106 ♣ J98
♠ K ♥ 65 ♦ A9852 ♣ 107543			

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Schollaardt</i>	<i>Serdar</i>	<i>Groenenboom</i>	<i>Tatliciglu</i>
–	2♥	Pass	3♥
3♠	Pass	4♠	All Pass

North led the ♦3 and South won and returned the nine for a ruff. However that was the end of the defence, declarer eventually pitching a heart on one of dummy's diamonds, +620.

To defeat 4♠ South must return a heart at trick two, when declarer will lose a trick in each suit. This happened 12 times in the Open, and twice in both the Womens and Senior events.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Baskan</i>	<i>Wortel</i>	<i>Meh Eksioglu</i>	<i>Hop</i>
–	2♥	Pass	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♠	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

When East raised spades West offered an alternative contract that protected the ♥Q. That card took the first trick when North led the ♥J and

declarer made the natural looking play of a diamond, South taking the jack with the ace and returning the ♥10. Declarer won with dummy's ace and played a spade for the king and ace. Three diamonds were followed by a second spade, but when South discarded the game was up and declarer finished two down.

I was informed by a Senior of my acquaintance that in the first match of the day his partnership had a magnificent bidding sequence in which they were able to confidently bid a grand slam by identifying that they held both second and third round control in diamonds. Unfortunately, they had failed to appreciate that the all-important first round control in the suit was absent.

I have no claims to be able to match the predictions of Nostradamus but I happened to watch this deal from Round 8:

Board 7. Dealer South. All Vul.

♠ 1053 ♥ 986542 ♦ 764 ♣ K		♠ KQ ♥ AK ♦ A9832 ♣ Q963	♠ 642 ♥ J7 ♦ KQJ105 ♣ A82
♠ AJ987 ♥ Q103 ♦ – ♣ J10754			

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wasik</i>	<i>Gomerov</i>	<i>Knap</i>	<i>Prokhorov</i>
–	–	–	Pass
Pass	1♣*	1♦	1♠
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♣
Pass	3♦*	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♣	Pass	4♦*
Pass	6♣	All Pass	

As the auction reached 3♣ I predicted that N/S would reach 6♣ (don't ask me why). What is more I suggested that East might be caught napping if declarer started clubs by leading the queen from his hand.

I was half right, but declarer's approach to the trump suit was to ruff the lead of the ♦K and play the ♣5 for a trivial one down.

In the other room N/S stopped in 3NT.

I should point out that here and there 6♣ was made, most notably by the team setting the pace in the Women's event, Desadima.



Margot is on the right

We are busy training the next generation of Bulletin Editors – the sooner they start the better. Here the Editor gives a few tips to Francesca's daughter Margot.

In a big field there are bound to be surprises; distinguished teams that failed to survive in the Open Series included Zimmermann, Moran, KI, PD Times, Ventin, Vinciguerra and Germany SA. In the Women's Teams, Scottish Terriers were denied a place in the last eight by an overtrick on the final deal. I noticed the Seniors event included a team called Ice-

berg. A pity there was no squad named Titanic.

Marc Smith, co-author (with Barbara Seagram) of one of the best ever selling bridge books, *25 Bridge Conventions You Should Know*, joined the Bulletin's team of reporters today. At the Championships in Menton his somewhat hirsute appearance caused the manager of his hotel to declare 'Robinson Crusoe is staying in my hotel' to which Tacchi replied, 'Don't worry, he's leaving Friday'.

Eitan Levy spent a significant amount of time converting some of the

text in an important document he was working on into red. Needing to give a copy to PO Sundelin, he then printed it out – on a black and white printer.

June 25

Before today's main course here is selection of *amuse-bouches* from the Round of 16.

Mossop led Arma 54-15 at the half and most people thought the match was over as a contest.

Board 19. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

♠ AK10962 ♥ — ♦ 86 ♣ A10432	<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	♠ Q4 ♥ KJ982 ♦ KQ1054 ♣ 9
N					
W E					
S					
♠ J53 ♥ AQ10765 ♦ A3 ♣ 85	♠ 87 ♥ 43 ♦ J972 ♣ KQJ76				

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Ja Hackett</i>	<i>Bilgen</i>	<i>Hackett</i>	<i>Sen</i>
–	–	–	Pass
1♥	1♠	3♦*	Pass
4♥	4♠	5♥	Pass
Pass	Double	All Pass	

3♦ Fit jump

Do you start the North hand with a 1♠ or get both suits into the picture immediately? 5♥ doubled was down 'on the go' as North cashed two spades and a club, -200.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Peyret</i>	<i>Paske</i>	<i>Erbil</i>	<i>Jones</i>
-	-	-	3♣
3♥	3♠	4♣*	Pass
4♥	5♣	5♦*	Pass
6♥	7♣	Double	All Pass

What to do with the North hand when partner preempts in clubs? Lacking any sophisticated methods that might allow you to discover if partner has a diamond control is it not tempting to have a shot at 6♣? North followed the low road and then, perhaps with an eye to the state of the match took out some insurance over 6♥, rather than risk a double that as it happened would have dented any lingering hopes Arma might be entertaining.

That was two down when West led an continued diamonds, -300 and 11 IMPs.

Board 23. Dealer South. All Vul.

♠ 1083	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> <table border="0" style="text-align: center;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table> </div>		N		W		E		S		♠ QJ642
		N									
W			E								
		S									
♥ 3	♥ 2										
♦ A10972	♦ Q8643										
♣ J1098	♣ 65										
♠ A95		♠ J2									
♥ KJ86		♥ Q1086									
♦ KJ5		♦ A10982									
♣ A32		♣ 105									

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Ja Hackett</i>	<i>Bilgen</i>	<i>Hackett</i>	<i>Sen</i>
-	-	-	1NT
Pass	2♦*	Pass	2NT*
Pass	5♦*	Pass	6♣*
Pass	7♥	All Pass	

- 2♦ Transfer
- 2NT Fit for hearts
- 5♦ Exclusion Blackwood
- 6♣ 3 key cards outside diamonds

A painless +2210.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Peyret</i>	<i>Paske</i>	<i>Erbil</i>	<i>Jones</i>
-	-	-	1NT
Pass	2♦*	Pass	3♥*
Pass	3♠	Pass	3NT
Pass	4♦	Pass	4♥
Pass	5♣	Pass	5♦
Pass	6♥	All Pass	

- 2♦ Transfer
- 3♥ Fit for hearts

North's decision to go down a cue-bidding route led to a disappointing +1460 and the loss of 13 IMPs, reducing the margin to just 8 IMPs.

Board 25. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

♠ 83	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> <table border="0" style="text-align: center;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table> </div>		N		W		E		S		♠ KQ109764
		N									
W			E								
		S									
♥ KJ2	♥ A43										
♦ Q7654	♦ -										
♣ 984	♣ QJ3										
♠ A5		♠ J2									
♥ 975		♥ Q1086									
♦ KJ3		♦ A10982									
♣ AK762		♣ 105									

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Ja Hackett</i>	<i>Bilgen</i>	<i>Hackett</i>	<i>Sen</i>
-	1♠	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♠	Pass	3♦
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠
Pass	5♦	Pass	5♥
Double	Redble	Pass	6♠
All Pass			

♠ 83	♠ KQ109764	♠ J2
♥ KJ2	♥ A43	♥ Q1086
♦ Q7654	♦ —	♦ A10982
♣ 984	♣ QJ3	♣ 105
	♠ A5	
	♥ 975	
	♦ KJ3	
	♣ AK762	

I'm not sure how to interpret this sequence – perhaps 5♥ was Last Train.

When North confirmed first round heart control maybe South should bid 6♣, but maybe he was worried about a possible diamond loser. +1010 opened the door for Mossop.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Peyret</i>	<i>Paske</i>	<i>Erbil</i>	<i>Jones</i>
-	1♠	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♠	Pass	2NT
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♣*
Pass	5♦*	Pass	5NT*
Pass	6♣*	Pass	6♦*
Pass	7♠	All Pass	

It was the turn of the Englishmen to use Exclusion and the 11 IMPs gained ensured it was Mossop who would advance.

As you might expect, this deal played a significant role in other matches – if Desadima had reached 7♠ they would have been one of the teams contesting the Women's final.

Board 1. Dealer North. None Vul.

♠ 10963	♠ 10963	♠ 5
♥ K	♥ K	♥ AQJ532
♦ —	♦ —	♦ 97543
♣ AKQJ9875	♣ AKQJ9875	♣ 3
	♠ AQ82	
	♥ 10874	
	♦ AQ42	
	♣ 2	
	♠ KJ74	
	♥ 96	
	♦ KJ108	
	♣ 1064	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Jones</i>	<i>Doxiadis</i>	<i>Paske</i>	<i>Roussos</i>
-	5♣	Pass	Pass
Double	Pass	5♥	All Pass

South led the ♣4 and North won with the jack and decided to return the five. A grateful declarer ruffed in hand pitching a diamond from dummy and was soon claiming +450.

Would it be outrageous to double 5♥ with the North hand? If South then leads the ♦J declarer will be two down.

(5♥ was doubled once in both finals, but South led a club and declarer went one down.)

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kontomitros</i>	<i>Hydes</i>	<i>Koukouselis</i>	<i>Mossop</i>
-	3NT*	4♥	5♣
5♥	All Pass		

3NT Gambling

South led the ♣4 and North won and switched the ♥K, one down and an 11 IMP start for Mossop.

Board 2. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ J10843 ♥ K9 ♦ 10 ♣ AK954	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ 72 ♥ AQ105 ♦ AJ54 ♣ 862	♠ K6 ♥ 872 ♦ Q98732 ♣ J3
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Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Jones</i>	<i>Doxiadis</i>	<i>Paske</i>	<i>Roussos</i>
-	-	1♦	Pass
1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass
3♣	Pass	3NT	All Pass

South led the ♥7 and declarer won with dummy's king, cashed the ♣A and ducked a club, South winning with the jack and playing a second heart, +400.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kontomitros</i>	<i>Hydes</i>	<i>Koukouselis</i>	<i>Mossop</i>
-	-	1NT	Pass
2♥*	Pass	2♠	Pass
4♣	Pass	4♦	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

This contract, with four trump losers, was doomed from the start. Declarer managed a squeeze to save an undertrick, but Mossop was 21-0 ahead after 2 deals. Like Lewis Hamilton in Sunday's French Grand Prix, they had made the perfect start.

Board 11. Dealer South. None Vul.

♠ 108754 ♥ - ♦ K987 ♣ A1076	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ - ♥ KQJ1087 ♦ 542 ♣ Q954	♠ AK9632 ♥ 642 ♦ 103 ♣ KJ
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Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Jones</i>	<i>Doxiadis</i>	<i>Paske</i>	<i>Roussos</i>
-	-	-	1NT
Pass	4♥*	Double	4♠
Double	All Pass		

4♥ Transfer

A low club lead would have given declarer a nasty guess but West led a restrained (I hesitate to use the word pedestrian) ♠5 and declarer won with the jack, East pitching the ♥K and played a diamond, dummy's ten taking the trick. A diamond to the ace was followed by the queen, covered and ruffed and declarer came to hand with the ♠Q, pitched a heart on the ♦J and played a club. He was spared a guess when West went up with the ace and ten tricks were in the bag, +590.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kontomitros</i>	<i>Hydes</i>	<i>Koukouselis</i>	<i>Mossop</i>
-	-	-	1♦
Pass	1♠	2♥	Pass
Pass	2♠	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♠	Pass	Pass
Double	Redouble	All Pass	

East led the ♥K and West ruffed dummy's ace. I must be missing something, but it looks obvious to return a low club – you need to get partner in and looking at dummy your best chance must lay in the club suit. When West continued by cashing the ♣A, the defence's only way of defeating the contract went with it. Declarer won the next club with dummy's king and ran the ♦10 – West's king was the last trick for the defence, +880 and 7 IMPs to Mossop when it should have been 14 to Greece.



Leading 60-14 at half-time, the English team appeared to have booked their seats in the semi-finals.

Roland Wald mentioned on his face book page that the Multi is a popular bridge convention in many places, but the real Multi is somewhat different. Let this white-faced ibis brighten your day. The beautiful multi-coloured bird was photographed at Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge in Utah, USA, by Leslie Scopes Anderson.

June 26

Our plans for a night out were disrupted when the women's final went into overtime, a four-board penalty shoot-out.

The first deal was a dull push.

Board 2. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ K1074	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto; display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> <div style="margin-bottom: 5px;">N</div> <div style="margin-bottom: 5px;">E</div> <div style="margin-bottom: 5px;">S</div> <div style="margin-bottom: 5px;">W</div> </div>	♠ J3
♥ A10742		♥ Q85
♦ Q95		♦ 832
♣ A		♣ J10862
♠ Q98		
♥ 9		
♦ AKJ6		
♣ KQ943		

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Willard</i>	<i>Kazmucha</i>	<i>D'Ovidio</i>	<i>Sarniak</i>
–	–	Pass	1♣*
1♥	Double*	Pass	2♣
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♠
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

1♣ Polish Club

East led the ♥5 and West took the ace and returned the four. Declarer put up the jack and East won with the queen and played the ♥8 for the ten and king. Having pitched two clubs from dummy, declarer played a club for the king and ace and West cashed two hearts and switched to the ♠K. Declarer won with the ace and played three rounds of diamonds, -200.


Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>C Baldysz</i>	<i>Zmuda</i>	<i>Baldysz</i>	<i>Dufprat</i>
–	–	Pass	1♣*
1♥	Double*	2♥*	Double*
3♥	Pass	Pass	Double
All Pass			

1♣ Polish Club

If 2♥ was a weak raise then West was really pushing the boat out by re-raising. North led the ♣5 for the jack, queen and ace. Declarer played a spade for the jack and queen and South returned the ♥9, North winning with the king and playing back the ♥3. A spade to the king and ace saw North exit with a club and declarer ruffed, cashed two spades, played a heart to the queen and a diamond. South won and played the ♣K, the ♥A being declarer's last trick, two down, -300 and 11 IMPs to Apple Pie.

Board 3. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

♠ AJ6 ♥ J ♦ K82 ♣ AK8763		♠ K10542 ♥ A ♦ AJ754 ♣ 54	♠ 983 ♥ K86543 ♦ Q109 ♣ 9
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Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Willard</i>	<i>Kazmucha</i>	<i>D'Ovidio</i>	<i>Sarniak</i>
-	-	-	Pass
1♣	1♥	Double*	4♥
Double	Pass	5♥*	Pass
6♣	Pass	6♦	All Pass

South led the ♥6, covered by the jack, queen and ace. Declarer crossed to dummy with a diamond and played one back to the jack and queen. I was expecting South to exit with the ♦10, when declarer would have been left to divine the position of the ♠Q – and who do you think declarer would place with spade length after taking three rounds of clubs?


Alas, South exited with the ♠8.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>C Baldysz</i>	<i>Zmuda</i>	<i>Baldysz</i>	<i>Dufprat</i>
-	-	-	2♦*
3♣	Pass	3♠*	Pass
4♠	5♥*	5♠	Pass
6♠	All Pass		

South led the ♥5 and declarer took the queen with the ace and played a spade to the ace followed by the jack, soon claiming for a couple of IMPs.

Board 4. Dealer West. All Vul.

♠ Q983 ♥ A ♦ Q542 ♣ A1095		♠ K1072 ♥ 8753 ♦ J106 ♣ Q4	♠ AJ6 ♥ KQJ10962 ♦ — ♣ J86
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Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Willard</i>	<i>Kazmucha</i>	<i>D'Ovidio</i>	<i>Sarniak</i>
1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♦*	Pass
2NT	Pass	3♥	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

I'm not sure if East was making a slam try (annoyingly I saw Catherine at breakfast and forgot to ask her). On this layout it is possible to take 12 tricks but playing safe declarer settled for 10, +620.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>C Baldysz</i>	<i>Zmuda</i>	<i>Baldysz</i>	<i>Dufprat</i>
1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♦*	Pass
2♠*	Pass	4♥	All Pass

I refer the reader to the remarks I made earlier.

It was hard for E/W to judge the state of the match – their result on Board 2 was poor, but they could hope that it would be more than balanced by that on Board 3.

Had they reached 6♥ and made it then they would have been crowned champions.

If you are closely confined with a small group of people for any length of time then it is inevitable that at some point you may momentarily become irritated by someone's behaviour. When I ask Ron if he has anything sharp that he can insert into Barry he laconically answered, 'Only my wit'.


In the famous BBC Radio programme 'Test Match Special' the commentators frequently wax lyrical about the gifts they receive from appreciative listeners, which include both food and drink. Our unbounded thanks to Sevinç Atay, who yesterday delivered a delicious cake to the office – the staff devoured it like a horde of locusts.

June 27

What many might regard as the most important event of the fortnight takes place tonight, with the staging of the staff pairs. Look out for a detailed report in the next issue.

The final session of Wednesday's Open Teams Final proved to be somewhat of a damp squib. Mossop went into it leading 90-55 and gave their opponents no opportunities to reduce the gap. With only four deals remaining they led 102-60.

Board 25. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

♠ A975 ♥ — ♦ 10543 ♣ Q10987		♠ Q ♥ 986532 ♦ 872 ♣ K42
♠ J106 ♥ 10 ♦ AQJ6 ♣ AJ653		♠ K8432 ♥ AKQJ74 ♦ K9 ♣ —

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Ja Hackett</i>	<i>Van Den Bos</i>	<i>Hackett</i>	<i>Van Lankveld</i>
–	Pass	Pass	1♥
Double	Pass	2♣	3♥
All Pass			

West led the ♥10 and declarer won and played a second round, getting the bad news. He turned his attention to spades, but West took the third round and switched the ♣A. Declarer ruffed and played a spade, ruffed by East, who switched to diamonds for one down, -50.

I wonder why South didn't rebid 2♠?

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Molenaar</i>	<i>Jones</i>	<i>Verbeek</i>	<i>Paske</i>
–	Pass	Pass	1♥
Double	1♠	Pass	4♣*
Pass	4♠	All Pass	
4♣	Splinter		

East led the ♥2 and declarer won with dummy's ace pitching a diamond and played two rounds of spades. When East discarded the ♦2 declarer played the ♥K. West could ruff, but there was no way to prevent eleven tricks – West speeded up the play by cashing the ♦A. That gave Mossop 11 IMPs and cemented their victory, 114-66.

In the second half of the match they had restricted their opponents to a mere 16 IMPs, while scoring 81 of their own – a tremendous achievement.

On the first day of the Women and Seniors pairs finals I drop in to watch the former event get under way.

Board 4. Dealer West. All Vul.

♠ AK963 ♥ Q6 ♦ 6 ♣ J10843	<div style="border: 2px solid green; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ QJ4 ♥ AJ7 ♦ AQJ ♣ Q972	♠ 102 ♥ K9532 ♦ 104 ♣ AK65
	♠ 875 ♥ 1084 ♦ K987532 ♣ —		

West	North	East	South
<i>Romaashova</i>	<i>Dorman</i>	<i>Dobrushina</i>	<i>Uygur</i>
1♠	Pass	2NT*	Pass
3♠	Pass	3NT	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

2NT Spade support

North had an easy lead against 4♠ and the defenders took the first three tricks. When South exited with a heart declarer was spared any guesswork about the location of the red kings and +620 was worth 11/5 for N/S.

Suppose West sits for 3NT?

It will require careful defence for N/S to collect more than 3 tricks and +630 would be worth 4/12 for E/W.

For example on a diamond lead declarer wins and plays a club, North winning and playing a diamond. Now if declarer guesses to take the ♦A and play a second club there are even 11 tricks. A heart lead sees declarer win with the jack and play a club. Now if North returns the king an inspired declarer takes the king and knocks out the other top club – the hearts are blocked. To avoid this South must lead the ♥8 at trick one!

Board 7. Dealer South. All Vul.

♠ K ♥ 65 ♦ KJ10 ♣ A1076432	<div style="border: 2px solid green; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ 84 ♥ K10843 ♦ 9654 ♣ QJ	♠ A97532 ♥ — ♦ Q73 ♣ K985
	♠ QJ106 ♥ AQJ972 ♦ A82 ♣ —		

West	North	East	South
<i>Bessis</i>	<i>Sorensen</i>	<i>Puillet</i>	<i>Braatvedt</i>
–	–	–	1♥
2♣	2♠	Pass	4♣*
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

4♣ Splinter

On this layout there were 12 tricks, +680 being worth 9/7. Three pairs reached 6♠ for 14/2.

A quick canvass agreed with my assessment that South should make a further try with 5♣, confirming the void. If North then bids 5♥ (not ideal but you have to do something) then South can jump to 6♠ assuming that North will go on to seven holding ♠AK ♥K.

Board 9. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

♠ AK72 ♥ 875 ♦ J7 ♣ KJ85		♠ J85 ♥ AKQJ4 ♦ AQ5 ♣ Q9	♠ 1043 ♥ 10 ♦ 98642 ♣ A762
	♠ Q96 ♥ 9632 ♦ K103 ♣ 1043		

West	North	East	South
<i>Bessis</i>	<i>Sorensen</i>	<i>Puillet</i>	<i>Braatvedt</i>
–	Pass	1♥	Pass
2NT*	Pass	3♣*	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♥	All Pass

2NT Heart support
3♣ 18-19 balanced

I think 3♠ would usually ask for controls with a heart fit, but here it probably suggested a fit in clubs. South led the ♣3 and North won and switched to a diamond, the only way to be sure of preventing 12 tricks, but worth only 4/12.

4 pairs tried a slam, those playing in hearts being defeated by the same defence as here. Two pairs reached 6NT by East. At one table a heart was led and declarer won, cashed a second heart, crossed to dummy with a spade and played a club to the nine finishing two down.

In the last case South led the ♣10!

Now declarer can get home by refusing the diamond finesse, pitching two diamonds on dummy's clubs and then running the hearts to squeeze South. Wouldn't that be something!

Daniel Viktor dropped in with a couple of interesting deals from the first session of the Open Pairs semi-final B:

Board 5. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

♠ J10 ♥ Q1086 ♦ KQ54 ♣ K93		♠ A43 ♥ A942 ♦ J106 ♣ Q107	♠ K2 ♥ KJ53 ♦ A87 ♣ 6542
	♠ Q98765 ♥ 7 ♦ 932 ♣ AJ8		


West	North	East	South
<i>Fehér</i>		<i>Viktor</i>	
–	Pass	1NT*	2♦*
Double	2♥*	Double	2♠
Double*	Pass	3♥	Pass
Pass	Double	All Pass	

1NT 10-12
2♦ Multi Landy
2♥ Pass or correct
Dble Take-out

South led a spade for the king and ace and declarer played a diamond for the king and ace. When the defenders continued with two rounds of spades declarer ruffed with dummy's ♥Q but North discarded a diamond. That should have been enough to ensure the defeat of the contract (worth 151.82/6.18) but North slipped up later and allowed the contract to make for only 4.13/153.87.

The winning line is to duck the first spade when declarer maintains a measure of control. He may still have to take a good view in clubs to get home.

Board 7. Dealer South. All Vul.

♠ Q42 ♥ K8 ♦ KQ8 ♣ 87654		♠ K73 ♥ 532 ♦ 62 ♣ AKQ102	♠ 965 ♥ A1096 ♦ 109743 ♣ 9
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West	North	East	South
<i>Fehér</i>	<i>Mihov</i>	<i>Viktor</i>	<i>Nanev</i>
–	–	–	Pass
Pass	1♦*	2♣	2♦
2NT	All Pass		

North led the ♥J and declarer won with the king and following Patrick Jourdain's Bols Bridge Tip he played off his long suit, making sure that he would win the last round of the suit in hand. By this stage North was down to ♠AJ10 ♥QJ ♦AJ5 and had to make a discard. The only winning defence is to jettison another heart, but when North pitched a spade declarer could play a low spade to the jack and king and then duck a spade for eight tricks, +120 being worth 25.67/ 132.33.

June 28

Antonio Riccardi dropped by with a story about this deal from the second session of the Open Pairs semi-final. It illustrates that a simple memory lapse can sometimes result in total mayhem:

Board 20. Dealer West. All Vul.

♠ 84 ♥ J32 ♦ A1097653 ♣ 3		♠ A952 ♥ A107 ♦ KQJ2 ♣ 54	♠ KQJ107 ♥ Q54 ♦ – ♣ KQ962
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West	North	East	South
–	1♦	1♠	Double*
2♣*	Double*	3♦*	4♣*
5♦	Pass	5♠	Pass
Pass	6♦	All Pass	

- Dble Negative
- 2♣ Intended as a transfer to diamonds, but interpreted as natural
- Dble Takeout
- 3♦ Intended as forcing with clubs, but interpreted as natural
- 4♣ Intended as forcing with clubs, but interpreted as a cue-bid for diamonds

6♦ went 5 down (I have a feeling that this result was adjusted!)
There was time to watch a few deals from the second session of the Open Pairs final:

Board 1. Dealer North. None Vul.

♠ AQ62 ♥ QJ4 ♦ 65 ♣ Q643	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ K1083 ♥ A82 ♦ J10972 ♣ 9	♠ 754 ♥ K963 ♦ 8 ♣ AKJ107
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Open Room

	West	North	East	South
	<i>Plejdrup</i>	<i>Graversen</i>	<i>Lahrmaan</i>	<i>Caspersen</i>
	–	Pass	2♠*	Pass
	3♣*	Pass	3♦	All Pass
2♠	Spades and a minor			
3♣	Pass or correct			

South led the ♣K for the two, three and nine and then tried to cash the ace. Declarer ruffed, drew two rounds of trumps ending in dummy and advanced the ♠J. He was able to get a heart away on an established spade, +130 and 18/32.

If South doubles 3♦ – not that much off-centre when the opponents have a fit – and N/S play in 4♣ the match point score would be reversed.

Board 2. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ 752 ♥ A954 ♦ 87 ♣ QJ72	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ AK64 ♥ 2 ♦ A943 ♣ AK98	♠ 3 ♥ KQJ763 ♦ KJ105 ♣ 103
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	West	North	East	South
	<i>Plejdrup</i>	<i>Graversen</i>	<i>Lahrmaan</i>	<i>Caspersen</i>
	–	–	1♦	Pass
	1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass
	2♣*	Pass	3♣*	Pass
	3♥	Pass	4NT	All Pass
2♣	Fourth suit forcing			

West agonised for some time before passing 4NT.

South led the ♠Q and declarer won with the king and played on hearts, North taking the second round and returning a spade. Declarer won and with nothing to go on played a diamond to the king, finishing two down when the hearts failed to break and the diamond finesse lost, 46.84/3.16.

Going right in diamonds changes the score to 26.04/23.96. However, declarer is likely to take eleven tricks, as four rounds of diamonds will squeeze North and +460 gets 1.08/48.92.

Board 3. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

♠ Q52 ♥ A76 ♦ K7 ♣ A10932	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ AK1093 ♥ KQ2 ♦ 9654 ♣ 7	♠ 764 ♥ J108 ♦ AQJ ♣ QJ64
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Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Baskan</i>	<i>Dyke</i>	<i>Tatlicioglu</i>	<i>Byrne</i>
–	–	–	Pass
1♣	Pass	1♠	Pass
1NT	Pass	2♦*	Pass
2♥*	Pass	2♠	Pass
3♦	Pass	3♥	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♥	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

When South led the ♥J declarer won with the king and played a diamond, South taking the ace and playing a second heart. Declarer won with dummy's ace and embarked on a cross ruff, cashing a third heart along the way. That gave him 12 tricks and 20/30.

If South leads a trump and a second one when in with the ♦A then 11 tricks are the limit and the score becomes 43/7.

Board 5. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

♠ 1063 ♥ J9843 ♦ 764 ♣ A2	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ Q542 ♥ A1076 ♦ J ♣ KJ74	♠ KJ87 ♥ K5 ♦ K10832 ♣ 95
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West	North	East	South
<i>Welland</i>	<i>Schmidt</i>	<i>Auken</i>	<i>Thuillez</i>
–	1♣	1♦	3NT
All Pass			

West led a diamond and declarer took East's king with the ace and played a club, West taking the ace to play a second diamond. Declarer won, crossed to dummy with a club and played a low heart and when East took the king, ten tricks were there, +630 and 36/14.

Not surprisingly, no-one found the low spade lead that would have scuppered the contract. Declarer can take East's jack with the ace, but West wins a club and tables the ♠10.

June 29

As the end of another Championship draws close, we wait to see if anyone can mount a challenge to the runaway leaders of the Open Pairs, Thomas Bessis and Frederic Volcker. They will be hoping to emulate the achievement of their compatriots, Cedric Lorenzini and Baptiste Combescure, who dominated the field to win the first edition of the John-Paul Meyer Pairs – how fitting that it should be a French pair.

There is so much to do at such a big event, that important things can be overlooked. At breakfast this morning, I bump into David Mossop and we have a quick chat about his team's victory in the Open Championship. When he mentions that he is surprised that a report on the third session

of the final has not appeared in the Bulletin, the alarm bells start ringing, as I know Barry watched it. It duly appeared – better late than never!

Meanwhile here is a great deal from the second session of the Pairs final – maybe the best defence of the event:

Board 4. Dealer West. All Vul.

♠ K94 ♥ K106 ♦ AQJ10 ♣ 963	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ A6 ♥ AQ95 ♦ 654 ♣ AQ107	♠ 53 ♥ J8 ♦ K9732 ♣ J854
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West	North	East	South
<i>Welland</i>	<i>Caspersen</i>	<i>Auken</i>	<i>Graversen</i>
2♠	Pass	4♠	All Pass

North found the spectacular lead of the ♦Q, which was to have unforeseen consequences as the play unfolded. South followed with the two and North continued with the ♦A, ruffed by declarer, who ran the ♠Q and then played a spade to the ace. He ruffed a diamond and exited with a spade, North winning and exiting with the ♦10. Declarer ruffed and paused to reconstruct North's hand. He was marked with ♠K94 and from the lead and play appeared to have ♦AKQJ10. That made it virtually impossible for North to hold the ♥K and so declarer played four round of clubs, throwing South in to lead into dummy's heart tenace. As expected, South held a red king – but when he produced the ♦K the contract was one down. As you might have guessed, this was a complete top.

Russia's Yuri Khiuppenen drew the attention of a Director to a revoke by his partner that had gone un-noticed by the other players. It changed the result on the deal from 4♠+1 to 4♠-1. Wonderful sportsmanship from the Russian star.

Producing the last Bulletin of any championship is always a challenge,

especially if an exciting result is in prospect. The advantage of having an on-line only version is that there is no rush to deliver the pages to a printer, so if there is a decisive deal at the end we have more chance of including it – and we have even had occasion to add deals to a Bulletin several days after the event.

As I write the Open Pairs has every indication of being 'a close run thing' as some obscure general once said of a famous battle and we will do our best to do it justice, although the lack of BBO coverage complicates matters. Barry is reporting on the first half of set four, while I looked at the second half of that session.

On Board 10 Chris Willenken took an unfortunate view in a suit of ♥K52 opposite ♥AJ86 losing a trick even though the queen was onside in his spade part-score. +140 was only 7/43. Ten tricks would have been 19/31 with those recording +620 gathering 41/9.

Board 11. Dealer South. None Vul.

♠ K6 ♥ 765 ♦ A73 ♣ QJ986	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ Q8752 ♥ AQ10 ♦ 854 ♣ 104	♠ 10943 ♥ 92 ♦ KJ109 ♣ K75
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♠ AJ
 ♥ KJ843
 ♦ Q62
 ♣ A32

West	North	East	South
<i>Willenken</i>	<i>Dogan</i>	<i>Jansma</i>	<i>Zabunoglu</i>
-	-	-	1NT
Pass	2♥*	Pass	2♠
Pass	2NT	All Pass	

I would have been tempted to open 1♥ and then rebid 1NT, downgrading the hand (worth only 14.05 on the KR Hand Evaluator). The fact that this leads to the best contract of 2♥ (worth 43/7) is purely coincidental.

West led the ♣J and declarer ducked, won the next club (the queen) East retaining the king, crossed to dummy with the ♥Q and played a spade to the jack and king. East won the club return and switched to the ♦J which led to four down, -200 and 5/45.

By this stage Willenken and Jansma were very close to the leaders, but they suffered a setback when good bidding by their opponents (Mossop/Hydes) saw them defending 2♠ and a defensive error cost a vital trick changing -110 (37/13) into -140, 47/3.

Then they stayed out of a marginal slam (it was making) and their opponents found their only trick on the lead, +480 gathering a miserable 43/7.

Board 15. Dealer South. N/S Vul.

	♠ 102		
	♥ KQ6		
	♦ A98432		
	♣ 52		
♠ K93	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block; text-align: center;"> N W E S </div>	♠ AQJ6	
♥ A107		♥ J954	
♦ KQ75		♦ J	
♣ J103		♣ K864	
	♠ 8754		
	♥ 832		
	♦ 106		
	♣ AQ97		

West	North	East	South
<i>Iavicoli</i>	<i>Willenken</i>	<i>Gerli</i>	<i>Jansma</i>
–	–	–	Pass
1NT*	Pass	2♣*	Pass
2♦*	Pass	2NT	All Pass

1NT	10-13
2♣	Stayman
2♦	No major

North led the ♦4 and declarer won with dummy's jack and played a heart for the ten and queen. North switched to the ♣5 and back came the ♦10 covered by the queen and ace, dummy pitching a club. Declarer took the ♦9 with the king, crossed to dummy with a spade and ran the ♥J. North

cashied his diamonds and then played a club, so that was 4 down, -200 and 49/1.

A normal result on the last deal of the session was worth 23/7 and my featured pair remained in second place, just under a top behind Bessis/Volcker.

As we prepare to leave the office that has been our home for the last two weeks, it is time to pay tribute to the people who worked long hours to bring you just some of the action. Our team of reporters was led by Barry Rigal and Ron Tacchi here in Istanbul, supported by David Bird, Ram Soffer, John Carruthers and Marc Smith, who were 'off-site'. Our Turkish readers were entertained by Murat Molva and Riva Şalhon. The proof-reading team was led by Jan Swaan, aided and abetted by Herman (Roll of Honour) de Wael (also our statistical guru) PO Sundelin (who, as you might expect also provided vital insights into the complex areas of bidding and analysis) Barry and Ron. We were also joined in the office by Simon Fellus and Arianna Testa who were busy producing a brilliant series of videos. Josef Harsanyi was our vital link to the organisation. As usual, I have saved the best and most important person until last. The queen of the Daily Bulletins, now the *Regina*, Francesca Canali (formally the *Principessa*, a title that has been bestowed upon her daughter, Margot) who turns our miserable prose into something special with her outstanding photographs and design.

Letter from Germany

The German Bridge Team Trophy 2019 : By Martin Cantor

This year Germany's top international event attracted an entry of sixty-six teams, among them my transnational team of Sarah Tesholme and Richard Winter from England, Peter Lund and Kjeld (Kello) Hansen from Denmark, and Silvia Klasberg-Brawanski and myself from Germany. After ten rounds of eight-board Swiss, the top eight teams qualify for the A final, and the next eight for the B final, the remainder going into a C group, all with a 50% carryover. The A and B finals then play a full round robin. The C group plays four further rounds of Swiss, after which eighteen teams stay in C for a further three rounds of Swiss, while the remainder go into eight groups of four teams each, these also playing a round robin. It sounds more complicated than it is. Honestly. One of the beauties of this format is that everyone has something to play for right to the last match since there are generous and widely spread cash prizes: over 14,000€ in total with prizes for the top seven of the A final, the top four of the B final, the top six of the C final, and for the winners of each of the groups of four.

Moving on to some bridge. But before I present my collection of the hands I found difficult or interesting or fun, the outstanding result of the tournament undoubtedly came in the first round, when the German Youngsters team of Kim Sanne, Fiona Oelker, Sven Farwig, Lara Bednarski, Mona Rieger and Alexandra Dammann beat the transnational Beverly Hillbillies Reese Milner, Hemant Lall, Petra Hamman, Roy Weland and Sabine Auken 20-0, and as the only ones to score a maximum deservedly topped the table going into round 2.

We won our first match narrowly, 23-19 (11.67VPs), against friends and regular opponents of Silvia and me. It would have been substantially better, but for this board:

Board 4, Dealer West, All Vul.

♠ A1098642	<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	♠ K
N					
W E					
S					
♥ —		♥ KJ9852			
♦ 10743		♦ KJ2			
♣ 83		♣ QJ5			
	♠ 7				
	♥ A64				
	♦ 865				
	♣ A107642				

Against Sarah and Richard, West opened 3♠ and played there, the defence doing well to defeat it by two tricks, +200. At the vulnerability Silvia chose to open 2♦ (weak two in one major). North doubled showing either hearts or a big hand, I bid 2♠ pass or correct, South's 3♣ in a Lebensohl situation was constructive, so North bid 3NT. I led the ♠K and tried to kill the club suit with a Merrimac ♥K, but to no avail as declarer ducked this, took the next heart in hand and set up the clubs for nine tricks and the same number of IMPs. The second match was another 4 IMP win, but the third was a 2 IMP defeat, due largely to my misplay on this hand:

Board 17, Dealer North, None Vul.

♠ AK84 ♥ J10863 ♦ 87 ♣ 106		♠ 1075 ♥ AQ74 ♦ KQ93 ♣ 98
♠ QJ963 ♥ 9 ♦ 64 ♣ K7542		
	♠ 2 ♥ K52 ♦ AJ1052 ♣ AQJ3	

I opened the North hand 2♥ (weak 4-4+ majors) and Silvia enquired, heard me describe the hand as maximum (borderline but just about) and raised me to game. Which is the normal contract at teams, also bid at the other table. At both tables the natural ♦K was led. I spent quite some time before playing to the first trick, but clearly not enough time. Knowing that East would switch to a club at the first opportunity, and allowing for the club king to be offside, I ducked the first trick, took the expected switch with the club ace, crossed to hand with a spade and finessed in diamonds for a club discard. When West ruffed with the nine I overruffed, but my hope for something good to happen in trumps proved to be in vain and I ended up two down. What I failed to recognise was the power of the ♦10, and the correct play, found at the other table, is to take the diamond ace at trick one, cross to hand in spades, and lead a second diamond up, setting the whole suit up. 4♥ can be beaten, but only if West finds the unlikely opening lead of a club (or the even more unlikely defence of the heart ace and a club switch).

The fourth round saw us score our first substantial win, 20-5 (15.23 VPs) against Sarah Bell's team from England. This was the standout hand of the round.

Board 27, Dealer South, None Vul.

♠ 10975 ♥ 86 ♦ 76432 ♣ 109		♠ A2 ♥ AKJ104 ♦ A ♣ AK874
♠ KQ43 ♥ Q972 ♦ J98 ♣ QJ		
	♠ J86 ♥ 53 ♦ KQ105 ♣ 6532	

On an auction I thought it best not to enquire about Peter and Kello in the closed room reached 6♥ and made an overtrick. Against Silvia and me Ben Norton and Alex Roberts had a long auction which ended in the same contract and with the same overtrick. A push board and a lucky escape for us, the only reason our opponents missed the grand being the wrong response to a keycard ask - as the (nameless to protect the guilty) defendant explained after the hand, he had never before had to answer with all five keycards. For the record, 29 pairs bid the grand slam in hearts (one of them doubled for a reason I can't begin to imagine), one in no trump (well done), one in clubs and one pair played in 5♥, which you might severely describe as conservative or careless. The other 33 played the small slam, mostly in hearts, a few in no trump. As an aside, what the score on this match brought vividly to my notice was how fast the VPs mount up with small IMP gains in an eight board match when you are used to longer 16 or 32 board formats.

Moving swiftly past round five which we lost 1-13 (5.61 VPs) we recovered much of that lost ground by winning the next match 18-8 (13.78 VPs). But then lost ground again in round 7 when Peter and Kello didn't bid a 50% slam (just on a finesse) that was bid and made in the other room, 9-15 (7.58 VPs) and we ended the first day in 27th place with 74.68 VPs.

The first match on Saturday was a high scoring one, the balance coming out in our favour 31-24 (12.77 VPs), but in the second we continued our up and down progress with a 15-30 loss (4.77 VPs), leaving us in 31st place, 10 VPs, 15 teams and too far behind to have any realistic chance

of qualifying for the B final.

A large part of our deficit in the match came from this. Would you and your favourite partner bid this hand to the cold 7♠?

♠ AKQ 105	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> N </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> W E </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: center; align-items: center;"> S </div> </div>	♠ J742
♥ K9		♥ A8753
♦ A94		♦ K7
♣ AKJ		♣ Q10

Teammates didn't, but opponents did against Silvia and me, with this elegant auction:

2♣*	2♦*
2NT*	3♦*
3♥	3♠*
4♣	4♦
4NT	5♣
7♠	

- 2♣ weak both majors or various strong hands
- 2♦ puppet to 2♥ if weak majors
- 2NT 23-24
- 3♦ transfer
- 3♠ natural

For the record, thirty-two pairs bid 7♠ or 7NT while two managed to stay out of any slam.

Board 19 presented a defensive problem that neither of the Wests in our match found - indeed I'm not sure anyone would. Why not try it yourself? After two passes the player on your left opens a 15-17 no trump, his partner transfers to spades, LHO completes the transfer, RHO says 3NT and LHO bids 4♠. Partner leads a standard ♥10. Your hand and dummy's are

♠ 7	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> N </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> W E </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: center; align-items: center;"> S </div> </div>	♠ AQ962
♥ AK82		♥ J76
♦ 974		♦ Q
♣ Q9873		♣ J1054

What do you do? The only winning solution is to win the ♥K and play a ♣ back for partner to get the first of two ruffs. The full hand:

Board 19, Dealer South, E/W Vul.

♠ KJ8	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> N </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> W E </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: center; align-items: center;"> S </div> </div>	♠ 10543
♥ Q43		♥ 1095
♦ A62		♦ KJ10853
♣ AK62		♣ —

♠ 7	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> N </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> W E </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: center; align-items: center;"> S </div> </div>	♠ AQ962
♥ AK82		♥ J76
♦ 974		♦ Q
♣ Q9873		♣ J1054

In the final qualifying round for the A and B finals we faced a team of German internationals. This was the first board

Board 25, Dealer North, E/W Vul.

♠ QJ5	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> N </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> W E </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: center; align-items: center;"> S </div> </div>	♠ K109742
♥ 8		♥ 106
♦ K84		♦ Q10
♣ J109542		♣ 863

♠ A3	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> N </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> W E </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: center; align-items: center;"> S </div> </div>	♠ 86
♥ AQ432		♥ KJ975
♦ J92		♦ A7653
♣ AQ7		♣ K

This was the auction in our room:

West	North	East	South
–	<i>Martin</i>	Pass	<i>Silvia</i>
1NT	Pass	Pass	1♥
	2♣	2♠	All Pass

While in the other room Sarah and Richard bid up to 4♠. Ten tricks in both rooms, and ten IMPs to the goodies. The same amount went to the

baddies, for much the same reason, on the penultimate board:

Board 31, Dealer South, N/S Vul.

♠ A7 ♥ K9752 ♦ — ♣ KQ8543	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 60px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ 962 ♥ QJ6 ♦ A1096 ♣ A72
♠ J84 ♥ A3 ♦ Q843 ♣ J1096	♠ KQ1053 ♥ 1084 ♦ KJ752 ♣ —	

Silvia opened the South hand 2♠ showing five spades and a four+ card minor, 5-11 HCP. That naturally ended the auction and she made nine tricks. Our opponents bid the N/S hands to 4♥, and on the very friendly lie of the cards that makes. The only other swing was an overtrick IMP away so we lost 10-11 (9.56 VPs).

Silvia and I play Polish Club, with a lot of bells and whistles. One recently added gadget proved its worth on this hand from the next match:

Board 5, Dealer North, N/S Vul.

♠ K865 ♥ AJ753 ♦ 762 ♣ K	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 60px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ Q932 ♥ 8 ♦ J3 ♣ QJ10762
♠ J74 ♥ 1062 ♦ Q10854 ♣ 54	♠ A10 ♥ KQ94 ♦ AK9 ♣ A983	

West	North	East	South
	<i>Martin</i>		<i>Silvia</i>
-	2♥*	Pass	4♣*
Pass	4♠*	Pass	6♥
2♥	4-4+ majors 5-11 HCP		
4♣	sets hearts and optional control ask		
4♠	maximum, ♠ control, no ♦ control		

Since we play a 3 minor response to the 2♥ opening as natural and forcing for one round, we realised that responder would never need 4 of a minor as natural. We therefore agreed to use them as setting hearts and spades respectively. Since they can be bid either directly or after the 2NT forcing relay response we decided that, in line with the general principle of fast arrival, the direct bid would be the weaker version and so an optional control ask, while the route through 2NT would demand controls. When opponents in the other room stopped in 5♥ we gained 13 IMPs.

The pair at our table will have been disappointed to lose 5 IMPs on the next board when one player's 'imaginative' effort proved in vain.

Board 6, Dealer East, E/W Vul.


♠ 2 ♥ KQ53 ♦ AQ873 ♣ 432	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 60px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ AKQ76 ♥ A74 ♦ 9 ♣ AKJ7
	♠ 1098543 ♥ 1086 ♦ K2 ♣ 96	♠ J ♥ J92 ♦ J10654 ♣ Q1085

West	North	East	South
	<i>Martin</i>		<i>Silvia</i>
-	-	Pass	Pass
1♦	Double	1♠	Pass
1NT	All Pass		

Although I suspected a psyche by East, I didn't think my spades were good enough to bid 2♠, nor could I think of any other sensible bid, so passed the hand out. It's true that Silvia might have doubled 1♠, which we play as showing spades for just this eventuality, but she didn't exactly have a lot of points, so pass is not unreasonable. When I led a small spade declarer was able to finesse in diamonds and cash six tricks. We were therefore delighted to discover that their teammates at the other table had climbed all the way to 5♠ and went two off in trying to make it. A 25-11 win (14.96 VPs) put us into 9th in the C group.

The full Swiss having ended at the first cut after ten rounds, rematches were allowed, and so we next sat down for the second time in three matches against the team of German internationals. Another relatively low-scoring and hard fought battle led to another narrow defeat, 12-14 (9.14 VPs), and a drop to 13th place, just 2.2 victory points above the drop with two matches to go. A good result from the next match would give us some breathing space, and our four teammates duly delivered one in style, winning 43-15 (18.04 VPs), rocketing us up to 4th, and almost 13 VPs clear of danger. Only a catastrophe would see us fall out of the C group, but we avoided that with another good win, 23-6 (15.75 VPs), and now we were in 3rd, less than 2.5 VPs from the leaders. This was the biggest swing of the match.

Board 29, Dealer North, All Vul.

♠ K1097643 ♥ 986 ♦ K87 ♣ –		♠ A8 ♥ J4 ♦ 6542 ♣ Q9862	♠ 2 ♥ KQ10 ♦ AQJ93 ♣ 10754
-------------------------------------	---	-----------------------------------	-------------------------------------

North declared 4♥ at both tables. Against Peter East led the ♦6, and he played safely for ten tricks and 620. At the other table I led the ♠A, and


followed Silvia's suit preference 3 to switch to a club for her to ruff. The contract can and should still make, but declarer got herself into a muddle and ended two down for 13 IMPs in her out column.

And so on to Sunday and the final three matches. In the first Sarah and Richard brought in 13 IMPs by bidding these hands to the making heart slam, while the other table stopped in game:

♠ A8 ♥ KJ106 ♦ KQ9 ♣ AKJ10		♠ 2 ♥ Q852 ♦ AJ865 ♣ Q85
-------------------------------------	---	-----------------------------------

Sarah and Richard must have been pleasantly surprised to gain 7 IMPs on this:

Board 5, Dealer North, N/S Vul.

♠ Q4 ♥ AQ3 ♦ KQ832 ♣ A76		♠ 2 ♥ K1072 ♦ 10975 ♣ J1084	♠ KJ98763 ♥ 5 ♦ 64 ♣ Q52
-----------------------------------	---	--------------------------------------	-----------------------------------

They conceded 790 by doubling North's 4♠, a contract that only has nine tricks on best defence, but that made after the lead of the ♣J. In the other room South played 2♠ doubled after Peter opened a multi, and when Kello also managed ten tricks his 1090 was worth 7 IMPs.

This was the last board of the match:

Board 8, Dealer West, None Vul.

♠ K4 ♥ A8753 ♦ QJ82 ♣ 109		♠ AQ975 ♥ Q4 ♦ AK10 ♣ AKJ
♠ 1063 ♥ KJ6 ♦ 975 ♣ 6532		♠ J82 ♥ 1092 ♦ 643 ♣ Q874

On what I guess was a Kokish auction Kello played 4♠ from the South hand and got the ♦Q lead. Lacking entries to hand he did well to get trumps right and make his contract. Against Sarah and Richard North declared on a heart lead and ended with just nine tricks, a further 10 IMPs for us. We ended up with a thumping win, 42-3 (19.62 VPs) that propelled us into first place. Silvia suggested that with the other two pairs in such form she and I should sit the remaining two matches out and let them get on with it. Maybe she was right.

The penultimate round saw a rematch against the team who had beaten us 13-1 in round 5. The first board was a disaster:

Board 9, Dealer North, E/W Vul.

♠ – ♥ AJ43 ♦ Q85 ♣ KJ9852		♠ QJ732 ♥ K965 ♦ K64 ♣ Q
♠ K1084 ♥ Q10872 ♦ 2 ♣ 1076		♠ A965 ♥ – ♦ AJ10973 ♣ A43

At our table the auction was short but not so sweet. North opened 1♠, I overcalled 2♦, South bid 4♠ and there we played, taking the contract two off for 100. At the other table E/W bid their cards to 6♦, making with an overtrick, so we lost 15 IMPs. I suppose we should be grateful they didn't bid the grand that makes in either diamonds or no trumps, needing 'only' the diamond finesse and finding the ♣Q.

We got some back on this board even though Silvia and I (mostly I) failed to reach the best contract. This was my hand:


♠A ♥AQJ1094 ♦ – ♣KQJ963

Silvia opened 1♦, showing at least 4 cards in the suit, usually 5. I responded 1♥ and she rebid 1NT, 11-14 HCP, not four spades. Now I had to try to find a way to discover whether she held the ♥K, the ♣A, or both. I had two basic options. I could bid a two-way checkback 2♦, artificial and game forcing, or I could bid 3♣, natural and game forcing. Whichever route I took I could set a suit as trumps according to her response, then maybe initiate cue-bidding in the hope she would deny a ♦ control, in which case ace asking would let me choose the best final contract. But some of those routes could take us past ace asking. The other alternative I considered long and hard was jumping to 3♣, then bidding 5♦ as Exclusion. This would obviously be the perfect solution, but could I be sure that Silvia would read it as exclusion in her opening suit? After much soul searching I decided that I wasn't willing to take the chance of Silvia playing in 5♦, so I bid 2♦, Silvia 2♥ promising 3 card support. I could now bid 3♥ to set the suit, knowing that Silvia would bid 4♣ if she had the ace. But even then how would I distinguish between the ♦A and the ♥K if she showed two aces. So I simply asked for aces, heard two, and went with the odds that the diamond ace was one of them by bidding 6♥. After two passes RHO doubled this which was rather surprising, but I couldn't redouble in case he had a club void and LHO the club ace. As you will have guessed by now, Silvia had both the vital cards but not the ♦A. There was no void so I made an overtrick. And gained 7 IMPs against the 6♥+1 from the other room. I asked Silvia afterwards whether she would have read 5♦ as Exclusion. She was still thinking about that a week later, though we have now decided it should be. So next time these hands come up we'll be ready. Anyway, we lost the match 19-29 (6.22 VPs) and dropped to second place.

In the final match we would face the Beverly Hillbillies, the team of

stars beaten 20-0 by the German Juniors in the very first match. If only we could repeat their performance we would most likely win the group. This was the decisive board:

Board 17, Dealer North, None Vul.

♠ 7 ♥ KJ76 ♦ A2 ♣ AJ10643		♠ K63 ♥ A432 ♦ 10987 ♣ K9	♠ A10942 ♥ 985 ♦ KJ3 ♣ Q7
		♠ QJ85 ♥ Q10 ♦ Q654 ♣ 852	

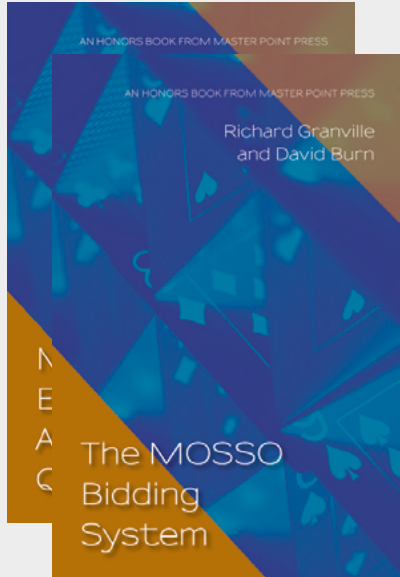
At our table Sabine Auken opened a for them typically light 1♣. I over-called 1♠, Roy Welland passed, Silvia bid 1NT and I with my near minimum let her play there. Where she made nine tricks on the lead of the ♦10.

At the other table North and East passed and Richard opened a light third hand 1♠ (they play four card majors, so not ultra-light). West over-called 2♣, Sarah doubled, East bid 2NT and West raised to 3NT which Sarah doubled. Richard led the ♦4, which looks like a gift for declarer, but actually scrambles communications. When Sarah got in with the ♣K she switched to spades, which declarer has to duck else the defence have five tricks. A second spade now is the winning defence - if declarer takes it, he ends up with eight tricks then has to lead hearts from hand and the defence has five. If he ducks again, with three tricks in the bag the defence can put the lead in West and wait for two heart tricks. The position wasn't as clear at the table as it is to us with the four hands on view, and Richard went back to diamonds. Declarer could now cash dummy's tricks, and eventually one defender or other would have to give him his ♠A and ♦K. So 11 IMPs out instead of 6 in, and a 7-14 defeat (7.23 VPs). Which left us, after three days and 136 boards, in 4th place in the C group, or 20th overall. It was comforting to find that Marieli, the team of German internationals we had played twice, had won their

final match by enough to take them into first place and by a margin that beating 3NTX would not have overcome.

As ever, we all felt we could and should have done better, but at the same time were not unduly disappointed with the end result. And we enjoyed it. Teammates were great both at and away from the table. Berlin is a terrific city and we had some good dinners together. The tournament hotel serves a top-class buffet breakfast included in its very reasonable special room rate. Playing conditions are excellent, roomy, light, and comfortable and the international team of directors (German Dutch and Danish) ran the event impeccably and with humour. Maybe I'll see you there next year (provisionally 1st to 3rd May).

Finally, congratulations to the overall winners team K1 from Bulgaria, Ivan Nanev, Vladimir Mihov, Diana Damianova and Viktor Aronov, to the winners of the B final, team Gromov from Russia, Andrey Gromov, Anna Gulevich, Vadim Kholomeev and Yuri Khyuppenen, and to the winners of all the other groups. Full results, hand records, team records, and match score cards can be found at <http://www.german-bridge-trophy.de/turni-erergebnisse/index.php?Tur=9900>



MASTER POINT PRESS

THE BRIDGE PUBLISHER

THE MOSSO BIDDING SYSTEM

MOSSO: EXAMPLE AUCTIONS AND QUIZZES

Richard Granville and David Burn

For the last three years, the authors have been developing MOSSO, a new bidding system derived from 2/1, Fantunes and Polish Club. Volume One describes the full system, Volume Two contains example auctions and quizzes.

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Across

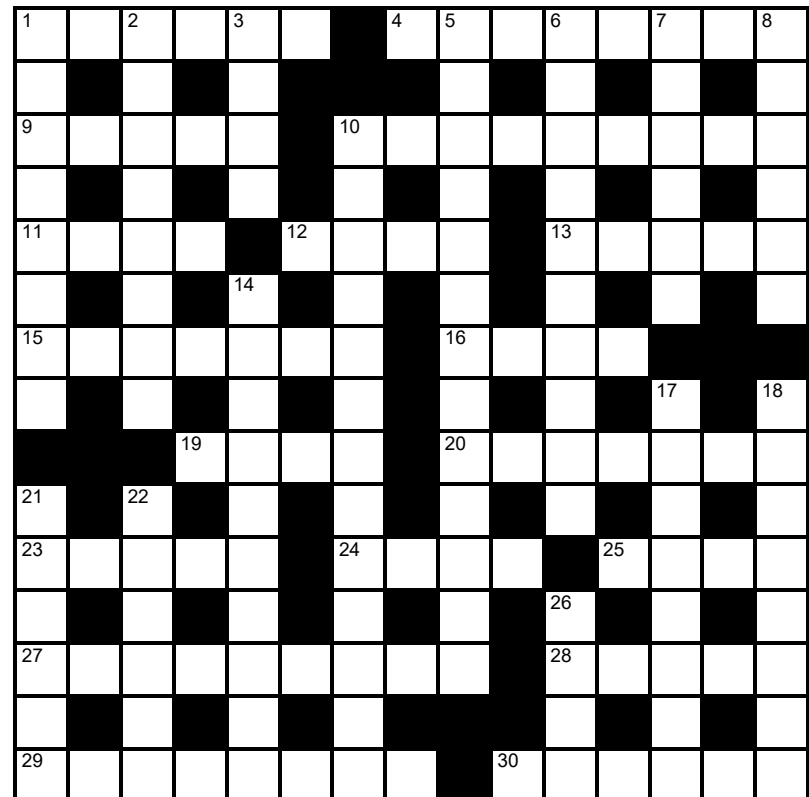
- 1/30 Useless knob totally lacking in judgement. (6,6)
- 4 Mendable, so mended and preserved. (8)
- 9 Author spent a short time living in sin. (5)
- 10 Missing cardinal, sister's old flame embraces Peter - could it lead to this? (6,3)
- 11 In the seraglio, no man is a celebrity. (4)
- 12 Almost blue - the colour of the sky over Paris. (4)
- 13 Endplay on East, but there are two possible exits. (5)
- 15 'Is that a chart I see?' overheard... some image, anyway. (7)
- 16 Girl on the brink, opposite of 8. (4)
- 19 'Gosh!' setter's repeated. (2,2)
- 20 Blind Inuit surround posh vehicle reversing... here? (7)
- 23 Notice that's acceptable – just so long. (5)
- 24 Unknown guys with superpowers? (4)
- 25 Heartless sibling is uncle's rabbit. (4)
- 27 Edited usual memo about large building. (9)
- 28 Present a shield. (5)
- 29 Moves back about goodies. (8)
- 30 See 1

Down

- 1 Aircraft component has safety device with built-in delay getting to Europe. (8)
- 2 Ephemeral changed one line for another, not a heavenly result.(8)
- 3 Sounds like this cat's connected. (4)
- 5 Art museum founder, but she knows she's bad and expects to be yelled at. (3,10)
- 6 Alter charges with emotions. (10)
- 7 Wife has a comeback to chew on – an unskilled but practical person. (2,4)
- 8 On the right, a well-intentioned serial killer. (6)

- 10 Ill-fated pro, who assumed the others knew what they were doing, and always lost. (7,6)
- 14/18 Hey builders, way to go! Can you create this book? (3,3,4,2,6)
- 17 Bid too much in competition, perhaps? (8)
- 18 See 14
- 21 Gatherer has changed a vowel from before. (6)
- 22 Annoyance time? It's just a card game! (6)
- 26 Team of volunteers takes public transport. (4)

On skid row



GOTO Bridge 19

The must-have bridge software for more than 20 years. Lessons, practice and competition directly at home.

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GOTO Bridge 19 bidding and card play lessons and exercises are an excellent source of learning and progress.

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GOTO Bridge 19 allows you to practise the auction of your choice.

Card play practice

The software makes bids on your behalf for the contract you want to play.

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Developed by bridge experts

Among them is Jérôme Rombaut, 2017 Vice World Bridge Champion.

The team is not new to this game. They are also behind the Funbridge app with a community of 400,000 players worldwide

Corrections to your bidding

GOTO Bridge 19 suggests corrections to your bidding and explains why.

Corrections to your card play

The app tells you which card you should play to take as many tricks as possible on the deal.

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Ask the computer for advice and it will tell you what it would play if it were in your shoes.

Play all hands

Play all players’ hands at the table.

“Show cards” feature

GOTO Bridge 19 shows you the cards held by the other players sitting at the table.

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Navigate through the deal as you want and replay tricks.

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Playing bridge has never been easier

Feel the atmosphere of a game of bridge wherever you are (at home, in public transport, travelling abroad...)

thanks to GOTO Bridge numerous assets and features.

- Unlimited deals.
- Immediate comparison on all deals played.
- Tips and help given by the computer.
- Analysis of your bidding and card play at the end of each deal.
- Par score and contracts most often played on the deal.
- Bidding and card play lessons with exercises.
- Practise bidding and card play in the sequence and contract of your choice.



- Assessment of your bidding and card play on thousands of deals and for 10 game levels.
- Undo: you can cancel your last action if you made a mistake.
- Claim: as at a real table, claim the tricks you are certain you can take without being obliged to play the deal until the end.
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- Force a bid or the lead, play the hands of your choice: with GOTO Bridge, you are completely free at the table. You can view and play all hands, replay a card and force the lead. In a nutshell, you do what you want.
- Save a deal and play it again later.

Unlimited deals

- The ideal game mode for a quick game.

“Unlimited deals” game mode

- This game mode allows you to play an unlimited number of deals, one after the other.

At the end of the deal, you are compared to the software which has played the same deal as you in the same conditions.

You have access to its auction and card play to be able to analyse your deals in minute detail.

- Lessons and exercises
- Enrich your knowledge thanks to GOTO Bridge lessons.

“Lessons and exercises” game mode

GOTO Bridge lessons and exercises are an excellent source of learning and progress.

In this game mode, you will take lessons on:

- Bidding: 19 topics (major two-suiters after 1NT, natural responses after an overcall, etc. with corrected exercises).
- Card play: 17 topics (defence in a trump contract, squeeze*, etc.

with corrected exercises).

*This lesson is based on the book entitled “Le Squeeze au bridge” (“The squeeze in bridge”) by Romanet, available at lebridgeur.com.

- Practice
- Improve your skills in different game areas.

“Practice” game mode

This game mode allows you to practice the different areas of the game. It includes the following features:

- The “correction” mode behind the success of the previous versions of GOTO Bridge. Its principle is simple. During card play, GOTO Bridge will show you the best card to play to take the highest number of tricks on the deal. During the bidding phase, it will correct your bidding cards and will explain your mistakes to you. At the end of the deal, you will have the possibility to replay your deal from the moment when you made a mistake.

- Easy deals to take up bridge or have fun: excellent practice without any constraints.
- Card play practice: GOTO Bridge makes bids on your behalf in the type of contract that you want to play.
- Bidding practice in the auction of your choice.
- Random deals requiring special attention as when playing in a club.
- Save your deals while playing tournaments and replay them.

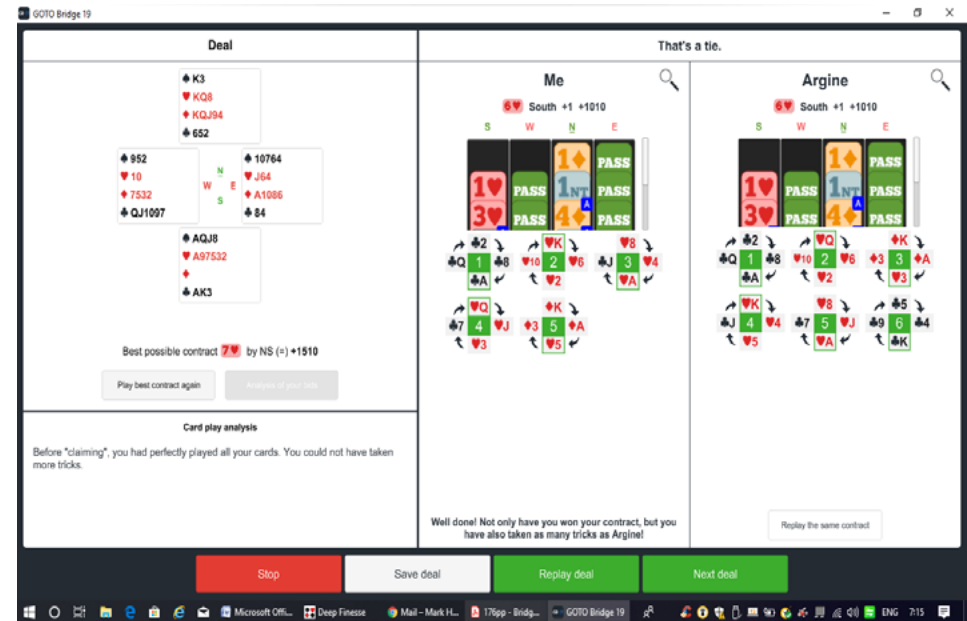
Tournaments

- Compare yourself to other players and challenge champions.

“Tournaments” game mode

This game mode allows you to compare yourself to other players and to be ranked among the best ones: this is the competition part of GOTO Bridge.

- Assessment of the way you play on thousands of deals and for 10 game levels
- Statistics per game area (bidding, card play, attack or defence)



- Head-to-head comparison with the best international and Funbridge players
- Card play tournaments: you are compared (card play only) to other players who have played the same contract
- Challenge “Argine”: pit yourself against the latest version of GOTO Bridge game engine (i.e. the artificial intelligence playing with you) in a 5-deal tournament in IMP scoring. Win 10 tournaments in a row and get a 1-year subscription to the online bridge game Funbridge!

Set your own conventions

Select your bidding system in “Settings” among the SAYC (Standard American Yellow Card), the English ACOL system, the French 5-card major system, the Polish system, the Nordic system, the NBB Standard system and the 2/1 system. A free profile also allows you to set your own conventions.

Bidding systems and conventions

GOTO Bridge allows you to play several bidding systems:

- SAYC system.

- English ACOL system.
- French 5-card major system.
- Polish system.
- Nordic system.
- NBB Standard system.
- 2/1 system.
- Forum D system.

Several profiles are available for each system: beginner, intermediate, competition and strong 2.

You also have the possibility to create a free profile with your own conventions to play GOTO Bridge as you wish.

But since a picture is worth a thousand words, the opposite screen shot should speak for itself.

Deal manager

Sort, prepare, view and print your deals thanks to the brand-new deal manager.

“Deal manager” game mode

Useful resource for your bridge lessons. Thanks to this tool, you can:

- Prepare your deals as you want: set distribution, vulnerability, dealer, bidding sequence and lead.
- Import your deals, edit them and play them from any hand.
- Sort, view and save the deals you have created or imported.
- Print your deals thanks to the customised printing module: print all or part of the deal (i.e. bidding, card play or players’ hands) and add your own commentary.

New « Goulash » game mode

Challenge GOTO Bridge 19 artificial intelligence “Argine” on deals with freak distributions (also called “Goulash deals”)!

Goulash mode

It consists of a challenge against Argine on 8 deals.

What makes it special is that some deals are “Goulash”, i.e. with freak distributions.

You play the first deal as usual:

- If the contract bid is at least a game, a slam or if it is doubled or redoubled, you play the deal.
- If the contract is a part-score or the deal is passed out, the pair who has bid the contract gets the score that goes with it.

If the contract is a part-score, on the next deal, each player sorts his 13 cards by suits. All four hands are stacked back in the deck which is cut once. Cards are then dealt in groups of 5-3-5 for instance instead of one at a time as usual. It allows to create deals where the suits are more unevenly distributed between the players. On this deal, you follow the same rules as above and so on.

Once the 8 deals are played, the winner is the one who has scored the highest number of points: Argine (E/O) or the player in South. So this is not duplicate.

15,000 new deals

- 5,000 new easy deals for practice
- Challenge Argine on 5,000 new deals
- 2,000 new deals in series tournaments
- Challenge elites on 2,000 new deals
- 1,000 new deals in card play tournaments
- Latest version of the game engine Argine
- Accurately mimicking human behaviour

Same robot as in the Funbridge app

- Win a 10-year subscription to Funbridge
- All you have to do is challenge Argine

The 50% Solution

During the Round Robin phase of a major event, I pick up the following:

♠ 9
♥ AK1043
♦ K82
♣ KQ52

With neither side vulnerable, I open 1♥. Partner responds 2NT, which we play as a game forcing raise with at least four-card support. I rebid 3♠ showing a shortage and partner continues with 4♣, which I take to be a cue-bid. When I show my diamond control with 4♦ partner jumps to 5♠, which in this situation we play as asking about my trump honours. I respond 6♦ promising two of the top three and partner concludes matters by jumping to 7♥. This has been our scientific auction:

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	1♥
Pass	2NT*	Pass	3♠*
Pass	4♣*	Pass	4♦*
Pass	5♠*	Pass	6♦*
Pass	7♥	All Pass	

West leads seven of hearts and when dummy appears, I see that the contract is not a laydown:

♠ A10764
♥ QJ865
♦ A97
♣ -

♠ 9
♥ AK1043
♦ K82
♣ KQ52

I cover with dummy's eight and that holds the trick as East follows with the two of hearts.

If the spades break then I can establish a second trick in the suit and will then need to find the ♣A onside. I cash the ace of spades and ruff

a spade, East following with the five and eight, West the two and three.

Given that East did not double 4♣, I advance the ♣K with fair confidence, running it when West plays low. Alas, East produces the ace and I am one down.

This was the full deal:

♠ Q32 ♥ 7 ♦ Q10543 ♣ 10976		♠ A10764 ♥ QJ865 ♦ A97 ♣ -	♠ KJ85 ♥ 92 ♦ J6 ♣ AJ843
♠ 9 ♥ AK1043 ♦ K82 ♣ KQ52			

Post mortem

There was no need to hazard the club finesse.

Declarer should win the trump lead in hand and cross ruff clubs and spades. That will establish a long spade when the suit is 4-3 and the king of diamonds will be the entry that declarer will need to draw the outstanding trump, with the ace of diamonds being the route to the long spade.

Declarer can consider ruffing the third spade high, but if West discards declarer will then need the ♣A to be onside and East to hold the outstanding trump.

At the other table N/S stopped in 6♥.



Bridge Educational Software

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Deals that Caught My Eye

David Bird looks at the final in the 2019 Open USBC

Wolfson faced Fleisher in the final of the 2019 Open USBC, contested in Schaumburg, Illinois. The winners would represent USA2 in the Wuhan Bermuda Bowl. We will look at some of the (many) big swings in this 120-board match. This board drew gasps from the kibitzers:

Seg 2, Board 26. Dealer East. Both Vul.

<p>♠ AQ52 ♥ J7 ♦ AJ7 ♣ AKQJ</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	<p>♠ K8 ♥ 432 ♦ KQ953 ♣ 754</p> <p>♠ J976 ♥ AQ965 ♦ 4 ♣ 862</p>
<p>♠ 1043 ♥ K108 ♦ 10862 ♣ 1093</p>		

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Greco</i>	<i>Hurd</i>	<i>Hampson</i>	<i>Wooldridge</i>
-	-	Pass	Pass
1♣*	1♦	1♥	2♦
Pass	Pass	Double	Pass
2♠	Pass	4♠	Pass
5NT	Pass	6♠	All Pass

West opened with a strong 1♣ and the spade fit was found. North led the ♦Q against 6♠, and it was hard to imagine any result other than one down. Can you imagine how N/S might let the slam through?

Greco won the diamond lead and led the ♥J, North playing the ♥2 and dummy the ♥5. Wooldridge produced the ♥8! If I wasn't writing in bridge's most venerable publication, I might have tried to get a double

exclamation mark past the editor. What on earth could be the point of ducking? Even if declarer continues with a heart to the queen, what will have been gained? The suit will still provide three discards.

Greco ruffed a diamond and ran the ♠J to the king. He won the trump return, ruffed his last diamond with the ♠7, returned to the ♣A and drew the last trump. The slam was his.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Zia</i>	<i>Martel</i>	<i>Rosenberg</i>	<i>Fleisher</i>
-	-	Pass	Pass
2NT	Pass	3♣	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♥	Pass
5♣	Pass	5♠	Pass
6♠	All Pass		

Zia's 2NT showed 20-22 points and 3♣ was 4-card Stayman. Once Rosenberg suggested a possible slam, there was no way to stop Zia with his powerhouse. The start to the play was the same: ♦Q to the ace and the ♥J run. That is as far as the similarity went. Fleisher took the ♥K, and a trump trick had to be lost. It was an awful way to lose 17 IMPs.

The second of eight sets ended with Fleisher leading by 102-30. Showing no sympathy, Fleisher landed two more big swings in the third set to lead by 141-39.

Another 17 IMPs slipped away on the bidding of this slam hand:

Seg 4, Board 59. Dealer North. Both Vul.

♠ KQ2 ♥ AK642 ♦ 95 ♣ 1052		♠ 853 ♥ 10 ♦ KJ876 ♣ J973	♠ AJ764 ♥ Q9 ♦ AQ2 ♣ AK8
	♠ 109 ♥ J8753 ♦ 1043 ♣ Q64		

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Fleisher</i>	<i>Rosenberg</i>	<i>Martel</i>	<i>Zia</i>
–	Pass	2NT	Pass
3♦*	Double	Pass	Pass
5NT	Pass	6♠	All Pass

Martel passed over the double, presumably denying 3-card support. Fleisher's next bid was a 'pick a slam' 5NT. The suggestion of 6♠ was very much to West's liking and the bidding stopped there. After a diamond lead, declarer scored two diamond tricks and ruffed a diamond low. After drawing trumps, he discarded his club loser on the third round of hearts, giving him an easy overtrick.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wooldridge</i>	<i>Hampson</i>	<i>Hurd</i>	<i>Greco</i>
–	Pass	2NT	Pass
3♦*	Double	3♥	Pass
4♦	Pass	4♠	Pass
5♦	Pass	5♠	Pass
5NT	Pass	6♣	Pass
6♥	All Pass		


It is fair enough to double a diamond cue-bid when you hold the ♦KJ. When the preceding diamond bid is completely artificial, such as a transfer, a double is less attractive. I wouldn't have doubled here, with a 2NT opener sitting over me. I remember several deals where slams, even a grand slam, were successfully bid by a player who held an ace-queen sitting over a lead-directing double.

What do I know? Hampson's questionable double appears to be the cause of East/West going off the rails and ending in a 5-2 fit. The available convention cards for East/West are minimal affairs, so I cannot translate their auction. West appears to have placed East with heart support, perhaps because of the 3♥ bid. If 4♠ was some sort of Kickback RKCB, with the third-step 5♦ response showing two key-cards, there is no mention of this on their card.

Greco led the ♦3 to the king and ace. The ♥Q picked up North's ♥10, and the ♥9 was covered by the jack and ace. If South held three spades, there would be a fairly easy trump coup to restrict South to one trump trick. (South must ruff a spade with the ♥8 or ♥7 at some stage and declarer can then ditch a club and overruff South subsequently.) With South holding only two spades, the contract could not be made and 17 IMPs were lost. Play on the Saturday concluded with Fleisher leading by 177-64.

Set 5 on the Sunday saw a serious fight-back from the Wolfson team. In the space of five boards (numbers 4-8) they picked up swings of 13 (playing in 3NT rather than a 5-3 spade fit with a bad trump break), 13 (bidding a good 6♠), 14 (Hampson/Greco went down in borderline slam) and 12. Let's see the last of these swings:

Seg 5, Board 68. Dealer West. None Vul.

♠ A 1042 ♥ A3 ♦ AKJ65 ♣ A2		♠ KQ97 ♥ 1098752 ♦ — ♣ 854	♠ 8 ♥ KJ43 ♦ 10943 ♣ KQ973
♠ J653 ♥ Q6 ♦ Q872 ♣ J106			

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Greco</i>	<i>Wolfson</i>	<i>Hampson</i>	<i>Garner</i>
Pass	1♣*	Double*	1♦*
2♥	3NT	4♥	Pass
Pass	Double	All Pass	

Hampson's double showed the majors and Greco arrived in 4♥ doubled, sacrificing against a 3NT that would have been defeated by a heart lead. He ruffed the diamond lead and immediately played a club to the queen and ace. Two clubs, a spade and a heart had to be lost, and that was one down.

Closed Room


West	North	East	South
<i>Zia</i>	<i>Grue</i>	<i>Rosenberg</i>	<i>Moss</i>
Pass	1♣*	Double*	1♦*
2♥	3NT	4♥	Pass
Pass	Double	All Pass	

The auction was identical, but Zia found the way home. He ruffed the ♦K lead in dummy and finessed the ♥J to North's ace. After winning the trump return, he led the ♦10, covered and ruffed. Placing North with the ♣A after his strong bidding, he called for dummy's ♣4 and finessed the

♣7. When this drew the ace, he claimed the contract.

Fleisher now led by a much reduced 182-116. Wolfson had a chance to close the margin further on this deal:

Seg 5, Board 70. Dealer East. Both Vul.

♠ KQ2 ♥ K ♦ KJ5432 ♣ 1064		♠ J543 ♥ J108 ♦ Q8 ♣ AKQ9	♠ 10986 ♥ Q97 ♦ A107 ♣ J73
		♠ A7 ♥ A65432 ♦ 96 ♣ 852	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Greco</i>	<i>Wolfson</i>	<i>Hampson</i>	<i>Garner</i>
-	-	Pass	Pass
1♦	Double	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

Greco led the ♠K to the South's ace. Would you not expect the contract to go down now? Garner played the ♥A, dropping West's king and continued with a club to the ace. East won the ♥J with the ♥Q and now spent some time planning the route to three more tricks in spades and diamonds. How would you have continued the defence on his cards?

If East plays back a spade, it is possible that West will try to give him a spade ruff, placing declarer with 4-6 shape in the majors. Hampson cashed the ♦A, which seemed a good move to me. Since two diamond tricks and one spade are needed, perhaps a spade should be played next. East eventually preferred to lead the ♦10, West winning with the king. West now had to decide whether to attempt to cash the ♠Q or to lead a third round of diamonds, hoping that East had begun with a diamond doubleton and held a promotable ♥9.

A considerable amount of time ticked by as West pondered his next move. Commentating on BBO, I pointed out that East would surely have bid 1♠ over the double if he held five spades, the ♥Q and the ♦A. The ♠Q was therefore cashable. Greco decided to play a third diamond and the contract was made.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Zia</i>	<i>Grue</i>	<i>Rosenberg</i>	<i>Moss</i>
-	-	Pass	Pass
1♦	Double	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

Zia is famed for his brilliant opening leads. They are reported around the world when they prove successful, beating a seemingly cold contract. His lead on this deal misfired. He reached for the ♠2! Moss was awake enough to call for dummy's ♠J and the contract was claimed a few seconds later. Anyone searching for interesting boards, merely by scanning the BBO archive for large swings, might have deemed this one a dull push.

Let's see an interesting bidding board:

Seg 6, Board 78. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ AJ543 ♥ J963 ♦ K83 ♣ Q	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto; display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> N E </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> W S </div> </div>	♠ — ♥ K52 ♦ J976 ♣ AJ9876	♠ K98 ♥ Q104 ♦ 52 ♣ 105432
-----------------------------------	---	------------------------------------	-------------------------------------

♠ KQ2 ♥ K ♦ KJ5432 ♣ 1064	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto; display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> N E </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> W S </div> </div>	♠ J543 ♥ J108 ♦ Q8 ♣ AKQ9	♠ 10986 ♥ Q97 ♦ A107 ♣ J73
------------------------------------	---	------------------------------------	-------------------------------------

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Fleisher</i>	<i>Wolfson</i>	<i>Martel</i>	<i>Garner</i>
-	-	Pass	1NT
2♣*	3♣	All Pass	

Fleisher showed the major suits and Wolfson bid 3♣. The North-South convention card states that they play Lebensohl (usually: 2NT forces 3♣, an immediate 3♣ is forcing). Anyway, 3NT would go down on a major-suit lead, and Wolfson now had to make 3♣.

The ♠8 lead went to the 2 and ace, declarer ruffing. A finesse of the ♦Q lost to the king and Wolfson won the heart switch with the king. A trump to the king dropped West's queen. Declarer then ruffed a spade in his hand and crossed to the ♦10. The next spade ruff brought down East's ♠K. East ruffed the third round of diamonds and led the ♥10 to dummy's ace. Away went declarer's heart loser on the established ♠Q and +110 was entered in the scorecard.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Zia</i>	<i>Grue</i>	<i>Rosenberg</i>	<i>Moss</i>
-	-	Pass	1♠
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♦
Pass	2♥*	Pass	2♠
Pass	3♦	Pass	5♦
All Pass			

Grue and Moss bid splendidly to the diamond game. 1NT was semi-forcing (the opener may pass only on a weak 1NT type) and 2♦ promised 4+ diamonds. North's 2♥ was a relay to 2♠. It showed either a weak hand with two spades or a diamond raise stronger than an immediate raise to 3♦ would have shown. Well bid!

Moss won the ♣Q lead and led a low trump. Zia rose with the ♦K and switched to the ♥6, East's queen drawing the ace. Moss drew trumps and set up dummy's clubs, making eleven tricks for a well-deserved 10 IMPs.

A competitive bidding misjudgement sounded a further death-knell for the Wolfson team here:

Seg 6, Board 86. Dealer East. Both Vul.

♠ KJ10952 ♥ A6432 ♦ 3 ♣ Q	<table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ 3 ♥ KQJ7 ♦ 76 ♣ 1087432	♠ Q84 ♥ – ♦ AQJ109852 ♣ A9
	N											
W		E										
	S											
	♠ A76 ♥ 10985 ♦ K4 ♣ KJ65											

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Fleisher</i>	<i>Wolfson</i>	<i>Martel</i>	<i>Garner</i>
–	–	Pass	Pass
1♦	2♦	Pass	4♥
5♦	5♥	Double	All Pass

Wolfson had described his hand with the Michaels bid. It went against the normal rules for judging five-level decisions to speak again, and the cost here was significant. Fleisher cashed the ♣A and the ♦A, continuing with the ♦J. Declarer won with the ♦K and ran the ♥10. He won the club return and cashed a second club. He then ruffed his last club, claiming eight tricks for a penalty of 800.

Closed Room

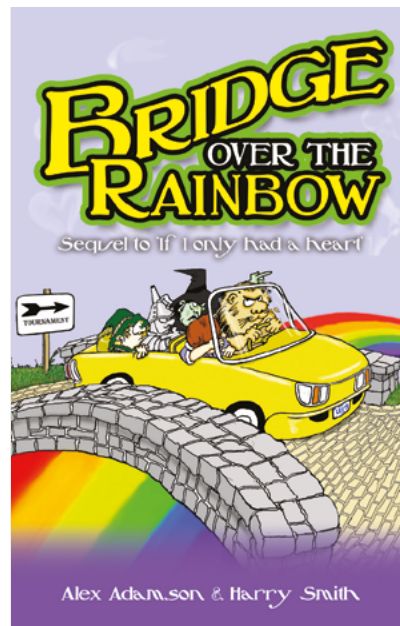
West	North	East	South
<i>Zia</i>	<i>Grue</i>	<i>Rosenberg</i>	<i>Moss</i>
–	–	Pass	Pass
5♦	All Pass		

A lead of the ♥A would let this through, in fact with an overtrick. Grue made no such mistake, leading the ♣Q. Zia won and returned the ♠Q, South winning with the ace. When Moss switched to the ♦4, Zia rose with the ace and ruffed one spade, going two down. That was 14 more

IMPs to Fleisher.

With two sets to play, Fleisher led by 223-132. On Board 92, Zia sought a swing by overcalling a white-v-red 4♦ over 1NT on: ♠J85 ♥2 ♦AQ10982 ♣J42. He was doubled for 300. At the other table, the normal 4♥ by N/S failed by three tricks on a bad trump break. 12 IMPs away. On Board 94, Wooldridge held ♠K103 ♥J865 ♦832 ♣AKJ. He looked for IMPs by playing a 5-3 spade fit in 3NT (1♠ – 1NT – 2♦ – 3NT). and the defenders scored the first five heart tricks. At the other table 4♠ was easily made with an overtrick. It was another 13 IMPs away. These two bold efforts had failed to retrieve a near-hopeless situation.

The match was conceded, with one 15-board set remaining and Fleisher leading 259-153. Fleisher/Martel, Grue/Moss and Greco/Hampson will represent USA2 in the Wuhan Bermuda Bowl. Our congratulations go to them.



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- 11th Nov - 8.30pm | Cool - down Pairs

Main tournament programme

- 04th Nov - 6.00pm | Welcome Cocktail
- 05th - 06th - 07th Nov - 4.00pm | Open Pairs
- 08th Nov - 8.30pm | Open Teams
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- 10th Nov - 2.30pm | Open Teams

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You are South with:

- ♠ KJ107
- ♥ AKJ1065
- ♦ K109
- ♣ —

IMPs. Dealer South. N/S Vul.

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

2NT three or more hearts, invitational values

Your bid please.

Sally Brock (European and World Champion)

4♣. In my view this should be a void. I would bid my length otherwise – or even pass to see what partner had to say.

Tim Verbeek (European and Junior World Champion)

4♣. Easy problem. Shortness in clubs. Could be slam opposite ♠AQxx ♥xxxx ♦Axx ♣xx. Makes life easy for partner after a possible 5♣ by West.

David Bakhshi (multiple Gold Cup winner and winner of several North American Bridge Championships)

4♣ (or 4♠). I often play that opener's dbl would show a singleton club and that bidding 4♣ shows a void, so that would be my choice. Without

that agreement, 3♠ would also be an option but I think that 4♣ would be the most descriptive call at this stage.

Mark Horton (Editor A New Bridge Magazine and prolific author)

4♣. There are many invitational hands partner might have where a slam is excellent. If partner now bids 4♦ I can continue with 4♠. If partner cannot cue-bid in diamonds then the chances of a slam are considerably reduced.

Simon de Wijs (European Champion and Bermuda Bowl Winner)

4♣. Showing a maximum hand, slam interest, with ♣ shortage, likely a void.

Marshall Lewis (represented Croatia internationally, as a player and as a coach)

3♠. My first thought was 4♣ – which MIGHT still remain my choice IF by agreement partner would be entitled to conclude all of the following:

- (a) I definitely have a club void.
- (b) I could easily have a spade control that I bypassed.
- (c) I am emphasizing how much I want to see a diamond cue-bid.

If all that is uncertain, which is quite likely the case, I believe 3♠ is better. Its attraction would be further enhanced if I knew I could count on partner crediting me with actual spade length.

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

5♣. Exclusion Blackwood: asking for Keycards skipping ♣A. When I hear one or two, I bid 6♥.

Post Mortem

Six Hearts was great:

♠ A		♠ Q853									
♥ 942		♥ 83									
♦ AJ7542		♦ 6									
♣ 543		♣ A109872									
♠ 9642											
♥ Q7											
♦ Q83											
♣ KQJ6											
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	N										
W		E									
	S										
♠ KJ107											
♥ AKJ1065											
♦ K109											
♣ —											





Highlights and New Features



Funbridge monthly challenge starting soon: be among the first to discover the first collector's mug you can try to win!

Last month the Funbridge Team announced the launch of a new monthly challenge. The idea is to reward you when you participate in certain federation tournaments, including official EBU tournaments.

At the end of each month, the top 3 players will receive credits valid for federation tournaments:

- 1st place: 5 credits
- 2nd place: 3 credits
- 3rd place: 2 credits

Five players drawn by lot will receive 1 credit.

Each of them will also get 1 credit for Funbridge Points tournaments and 1 Funbridge collector's mug with a new design every month!

Today the Funbridge Team has exclusive information about this challenge: the first one will take place next August. Here is the first mug you may win if you take part in the federation tournaments involved (i.e. EBU, FFB, NBF, TBF, ACBL and Funbridge Points):



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By car: 200 km from Stockholm (E18 towards Oslo). 280 km from Gothenburg (E20 towards Stockholm). 500 km from Malmö (E4/E6) towards Stockholm, then road 50 towards Örebro).

How to get to the Bridge Festival venue: Conventum Arena (Fabriksgratan 28) is situated in the middle of the city, just 200 meters from the Örebro Södra train station, and straight across the street from Scandic Grand Hotel.

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You need to pre-register your team to be able to play the Chairman's Cup. Your registration has to be submitted latest Friday 26th of July at 20.00. Register by sending an e-mail to kansliet@svensksbridge.se.

For all other tournaments, you just need to reserve a seat 20 minutes before game time. Please remember that we always start and stop at the scheduled time!



DEFEND WITH JULIAN POTTAGE

The Questions

1

♠ AQ 10	♠ 98742
♥ 95	♥ QJ74
♦ 96543	♦ K10
♣ J86	♣ K3

N	E
W	S

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
-	-	-	1♦
Pass	3♦	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

- 1♦ "Better minor", not 15-17 balanced
- 3♦ Inverted

Partner leads the five of clubs; your king covers the six, the four coming on your left. What is your plan?

2

♠ KJ76	♠ 854
♥ AKJ5	♥ Q1073
♦ J	♦ 6
♣ AKJ4	♣ Q9653

N	E
W	S

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
3♦	Double	Pass	4♠
Pass	4NT	Pass	5♣*
Pass	5♦*	Pass	5NT*
Pass	6♠	All Pass	

- 5♣ One or four key cards
- 5♦ Asking for the ♠Q
- 5NT Showing the ♠Q and no side kings

Partner leads the king of diamonds, which holds, and switches to the eight of clubs. Declarer plays high in dummy and leads a low spade. What is your plan?



IMPs. Dealer West. N/S Vul.

♠ A643
♥ K7632
♦ 5432
♣ —

♠ J10
♥ AJ94
♦ AK87
♣ A93

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♣*	Double	2♥
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

2♣ Stayman

West leads the ♣5 (third and fifth). How do you play?

Solution

If the red suits break then you will at most lose a spade, a heart and a diamond. Having taken the opening lead with the ♣A, pitching a diamond from dummy, one option is to play the ♥4 intending to cover it with dummy's six if West follows with the five, but you decide to keep all your options open by running the ♠10. East wins with the queen and returns the ♦9 which you take with the ace, West following with the ♦10. Unless West is playing a deep game it looks as if the diamonds are breaking, so you lay down the ♥A. When East discards the ♠2 you have to re-consider. You can't avoid the loss of a diamond and having already ducked a spade you must hold your trump losers to one.

You ruff a club, return to hand with a diamond, West following with the ♦J and East the ♦6, ruff your remaining club and cash the ♠A. In this five card ending:

♠ —	♠ 64	♠ 98									
♥ Q108	♥ K7	♥ —									
♦ Q	♦ 5	♦ —									
♣ 8	♣ —	♣ KQJ									
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> <table style="border-collapse: collapse; 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> </div>		N		W		E		S		
	N										
W		E									
	S										
	♠ —	♠ —									
	♥ J94	♥ —									
	♦ 87	♦ —									
	♣ —	♣ —									

You exit with a diamond and after winning West has no good move. A heart runs to your nine after which the master diamond cooks West's goose. A club allows you to ruff in hand and play the good diamond, discarding dummy's spade, leaving West to lead into the split trump tenace.

The Ordeal

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

Almira Gulch smiled. This was a rare event.

She had expected a tough match against Erica's team from the Emerald City in the quarter-final of the Ozian Cup. It was with great delight that she heard that a team from her own club had unexpectedly beaten them two months ago. Her team, with the three professionals she had hired, should have no difficulty now in getting to the semi-final. And that would lead to a great haul of blue master points, enough to overtake that obnoxious Tin Man, and his slovenly regular partner, Dorothy.

She was taken aback by Steve's reaction. She had phoned him as soon as she heard the news, expecting him to share her delight. She had to make do with his normal response, a grunt, and confirmation that he would tell Wally. She had hoped for more. She hadn't phoned Wally. He took great personal delight in being grumpy, and she hadn't wanted her elation damped.

'What are they like, Erica? I've just heard from our revered sponsor that we're playing your conquerors.' It was a routine club night at the Waverley Club in the Emerald City, and Steve had sought out Erica while waiting for the director to call them all to the table. 'They won't have to be up to much to give us a match with Deadwood Gulch in our team.'

'They're no fools,' Erica started. 'You'll know that Dorothy and her usual partner, the Tin Man, won last season's National Pairs, so I was aware they were no walkover, but when I heard her aunt, who's no spring chicken, was in the team, I thought it would be easy. That was a mistake.'

Dorothy is actually playing with her aunt, and the Tin Man with some aged hippy, but believe me, they all know what they're doing, and I imagine at their club they run rings round your esteemed sponsor.'

Wally was listening. 'Why did we ever accept her offer? The two of us have to play like Zia and Rosenberg to make up for her. And Doug really has the short straw. Of course he treats her like he treats all his partners, playing 60% of the hands their way, and shouting at her after every defence. She must be desperate to put up with it.'

'Doug knew what he was doing,' Steve smirked. 'We're getting enough off her to pay for our beer for the next year, at least. And we have to grant that he is very fair minded when it comes to his partners – he is as rude to an internationalist as to a beginner. At least he is civil to the opponents.'

'Obviously as a professional we'll be playing for the money,' Wally grumped, 'but after scoring up with her I just feel like downing a bottle of gin. God only knows what Doug feels like.'

Aunty Em didn't use make-up. As she strained to appear welcoming to Miss Gulch and her team, she thought that painting a smile on would be far easier, and more realistic. With as few pleasantries as possible, she tossed a coin for seating rights. Almira Gulch positively glowed as she won. 'That's the last thing you'll win today, lady,' Em thought to herself. The match consisted of 48 boards played in four sets of twelve, so Miss Gulch chose seating rights in the second and fourth sets. Aunty Em announced that she would take on Miss Gulch and her partner in the first set, and strode to the table with a steely determination.

Doug, sitting South, and Dorothy, as East, exchanged information on their respective systems. There was not a single word uttered by either North or West; body language was sufficient to express their mutual contempt.

By the time the last board was put on the table, Aunty Em had relaxed; she was confident now that the handicap of having Miss Gulch in their team could prove too much for even these three good players. She was happy with their card. Miss Gulch had played four of the eleven hands, going down in three of them, and Em could see the frustration building up in Doug. Miss Gulch's expression had remained the same throughout. She was confident in her superiority, and was proud of what she saw as her clever play in making that Three Club contract on board seven. She took out her hand for board twelve and sighed when she saw a boring ten-count.

This was the full deal:

Dealer West. N/S Vul.

♠ J4 ♥ AQ65 ♦ K4 ♣ 76532	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ Q10753 ♥ 102 ♦ J10973 ♣ J	♠ AK2 ♥ K3 ♦ A8652 ♣ KQ4
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The auction started with three passes and Doug looked at his balanced nineteen-count. He shrugged his shoulders. He could plausibly upgrade this to a twenty-count because of the fifth diamond, and, having seen his partner's bidding on the previous hands of the set, he was only too well aware that a normal One Diamond would probably lead to his partner playing the hand. Things were poor enough already. He opened Two Notrump, and shortly thereafter, following a simple Stayman auction, found himself as declarer in Three Notrump on the lead of the ♥7.

The full auction had been:

West	North	East	South
<i>Aunty Em</i>	<i>Miss Gulch</i>	<i>Dorothy</i>	<i>Doug</i>
Pass	Pass	Pass	2NT
Pass	3♣	Pass	3♦
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

Doug paused for thought. He had seven top tricks, and an eighth could easily be developed in clubs. The obvious line was to try to set up a ninth trick in clubs, failing which, he could hope for a favourable diamond break. He needed to be in dummy at trick two, so won the first trick with ♥Q, and played a club to his king and Em's ace.

He won the heart return with the king, and received the disappointing news of the bad club break when he played the queen. The play of

the heart suit suggested strongly that West had a five-card suit. Playing further on clubs couldn't work as West would have time to clear the suit and cash his winners, taking three clubs and two hearts to put the contract one down.

He started on the diamonds and when the queen appeared from West, a 3-3 break looked distinctly unlikely. However, all was not lost. He played another diamond to his ace and put Dorothy in with a diamond. She cashed her three diamond winners bringing the defence's tally to four tricks, and the situation now was:

♠ 9 ♥ J9 ♦ — ♣ 9	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ Q1075 ♥ — ♦ — ♣ —	♠ AK2 ♥ — ♦ — ♣ 4
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Dorothy played the queen of spades, giving declarer three spade tricks but no way of cashing more than two of them. The contract was one down. 'Well defended,' Doug said admiringly.

Almira Gulch glared at him. 'Funny how easy you find it to congratulate the opponents for a semi-competent play and yet you never find anything positive to say about your own partner.'

'Believe me, if you ever get close to semi-competent I'll be sure to let you know,' Doug retorted.

Aunty Em mentally kept a running total as she scored up with her team-mates. They were fifteen up, before they came to the last board. 'Plus 100,' she announced. 'Twelve IMPs in', intoned the Tin Man.

'How did we gain on that board?' Aunty Em looked quizzically. 'I would have thought a professional pair would be able to replicate Dorothy's good defence.'

'There was no defence,' the Tin Man said proudly. 'When the jack appeared on the first round of clubs the chances of a bad break were

high. When West continued with the four on the second round of hearts then he was known to have five. When he then played the queen on the first round of diamonds the actual layout became very likely. Declarer just threw East in with a diamond. He cashed his three diamond winners, bringing the defence total to four but the situation then was as follows.?’

♠ 9 ♥ J ♦ — ♣ 1098	♠ J4 ♥ A ♦ — ♣ 76	♠ Q10753 ♥ — ♦ — ♣ —	♠ AK2 ♥ — ♦ — ♣ Q4				
<table style="margin: auto; border: 1px solid black; background-color: #4CAF50; color: white; padding: 10px;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">N</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">E</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">W</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">S</td> </tr> </table>				N	E	W	S
N	E						
W	S						

‘By the simple precaution of retaining the queen of clubs for communication,’ the Tin Man continued, almost as proudly as if he himself had played the hand, ‘whatever East led from his spade suit, declarer would be able to cash all his tricks.’

Aunty Em allowed herself a short chuckle as she looked over to where the other team was sitting. ‘Let’s take a few minutes to savour this,’ she remarked. ‘We need to leave sufficient time for Almira to express her views, and for the professionals to tell her how wrong she is. That way they’ll all be in a bad mood for the next set.’

The Gulch team pulled a few IMPs back in the second set but then fell back in the third. Almira was fuming.

‘I expect better than this!’ She had decided it was time to have a team discussion, an event which, when led by her, never included morale building. Nor for that matter did it include much discussion. ‘I had thought you had managed to get your act together on the previous set, but this result is awful. I am just going to powder my nose before we start the last set, and I hope you will play better for the rest of the match.’ Almira Gulch liked to use old-fashioned euphemisms.

‘Powder her nose, indeed!’ Wally’s face reddened. ‘We can only hope it’s gunpowder she means.’

Doug laughed, or perhaps it was hysteria after 36 boards partnering Almira. ‘We managed to pull back ten IMPs in that second set, mainly because I had the hands and made damned sure I got no-trumps in first. I couldn’t avoid her playing board nineteen or it would have been more.’

‘I think she picked up what I was doing as she opened 1NT three times on this third set, once with a singleton. You can see the result.’ Doug’s face showed his despair. ‘And look what she did on hand thirty-four,’ he continued. ‘We had a huge chance as your opposition missed the good slam. She held:

♠ —
♥ J1032
♦ J74
♣ K109874

‘I opened One Diamond, and played there making twelve easy tricks. She announced, in that imperious manner she has, that she wanted to get out with a positive score, as she was sure I would bid spades. I’m not even sure she realises now, and probably thinks you let game through!’

Doug looked over at Wally’s scorecard. ‘How did we lose on board 28? She didn’t do anything stupid on this one. I played in the routine 3NT, but with a club lead, the diamond finesse failing, and the ace of hearts with the long club suit, there was no chance.’

This was the board:

Dealer West, N/S Vul.

♠ 62 ♥ A74 ♦ 65 ♣ KJ10962	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ A103 ♥ Q ♦ AJ9832 ♣ A53	♠ K954 ♥ J832 ♦ Q104 ♣ Q8
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>		
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>		
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>		

‘I know this is the Over The Rainbow Bridge Club but I didn’t expect to see anyone actually dressed like a rainbow. And he is as eccentric in his bidding as he is with his wardrobe. Absolute maniac,’ Wally grunted, ‘but he sure can play the hands.’

‘I’ve never seen bidding like it,’ Steve continued. ‘I opened Three Clubs with the West hand and the Tin Man overcalled Three Diamonds. With the South hand, the Woodstock survivor now bid Three Spades, and his partner raised him to game. I think he had planned to bid Four Hearts if his partner tried game in no-trumps.’

The full auction had been:

West	North	East	South
<i>Steve</i>	<i>Tin Man</i>	<i>Wally</i>	<i>Professor</i>
3♣	3♦	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

Doug put his head in his hands. ‘If I were marking a bidding competition I would have to give a negative mark to that Three Spades. But how did he make it with the trumps not breaking? There’s a club, a heart and a trump to lose for sure and there is just too much to do. Surely it goes down if you don’t give him anything.’

Steve stiffened slightly. ‘I led my jack of clubs and he won the ace, and played a heart. I took this, cashed my king of clubs, and played the ten of clubs.’ Steve paused. ‘Does that seem a reasonable defence to you?’ ‘Of course,’ Doug nodded, but what happened next?’

‘Wally threw a heart, while declarer ruffed,’ Steve continued. ‘He then played the top two diamonds and ruffed a third one while I discarded a heart. After ruffing another heart he had reached the following position and had won seven tricks, with the lead in dummy:

♠ 62 ♥ — ♦ — ♣ 96	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ A10 ♥ — ♦ J8 ♣ —	♠ K954 ♥ — ♦ — ♣ —
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>		
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>		
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>		

‘He now led a diamond and there’s nothing Wally can do. If he ruffs with the king, Professor Rainbow will still make three more trump tricks by winning the trump return and crossruffing. If he ruffs low, he is over-ruffed, and now declarer ruffs a heart with the ace, and makes his trump queen en passant. Neat isn’t it?’

Steve paused and looked at Doug. ‘You did say you were happy with my play at trick four. I can, of course, beat it at that point. After cashing my king of clubs, he can’t make it on a trump switch, but how on earth am I supposed to find that on this auction?’

Wally joined in. ‘It’s unusual to make game on four-three fit by playing on a crossruff, but it was probably a fairly sensible idea. Trumps are unlikely to break after the pre-empt and he would be very likely to lose control if he tried to set up diamonds and pull trumps.’

An hour and a half later the match was over.

‘What on earth did you think was going on? How could that possibly be the right lead?’ Doug was berating Almira as they walked through to score.

‘Sounds like we’ve lost,’ muttered Steve. Wally shrugged to show his indifference.

Steve was right, as he generally liked to be. He and Wally had had a

strong last set with one blot on it – board 48.

It was, in fact, on that same board that Almira had been faced with this lead problem:

♠ J 10 7 2
♥ 6
♦ AQ 10 4
♣ 7 6 5 4

West	North	East	South
<i>Miss Gulch</i>	<i>Tin Man</i>	<i>Doug</i>	<i>Professor</i>
Pass	3NT	Pass	4♣
Pass	Pass	4♦	6♣!
All Pass			

Having sat opposite Professor Marvel on many occasions, she had come to expect the unexpected, but even for him this seemed astonishing – to sign off in Four Clubs and then jump to slam in the same suit!

‘What was 3NT?’ she asked the Professor.

‘Pre-emptive – a solid minor,’ he replied, courteously.

She turned to her left. ‘And Four Clubs was to play if that was your suit.’

Her tone made it unclear if this was a statement or a question, but the Tin Man decided that it would be wise to confirm that she was correct.

‘What would Four Diamonds have meant?’ she followed up.

‘Asking for a shortage,’ the Tin Man told her.

Having confirmed what she already knew, she now had to make a lead.

Deciding that if this was wrong it would be her partner’s fault, she put the ♦A on the table. This was the full deal:

Dealer West, N/S Vul

♠ J 10 7 2		♠ AK 5
♥ 6		♥ 10 8 3 2
♦ AQ 10 4		♦ KJ 9 8 7 6
♣ 7 6 5 4		♣ —
♠ 6 4		♠ Q 9 8 3
♥ 7		♥ AKQJ 9 5 4
♦ 5 3 2		♦ —
♣ AKQ 10 9 8 2		♣ J 3

The Professor had claimed thirteen tricks even before Doug had played to the first trick.

At the other table, Auntie Em had played in 5♦ after a spirited auction.

West	North	East	South
<i>Dorothy</i>	<i>Steve</i>	<i>Auntie Em</i>	<i>Wally</i>
Pass	3NT	4♦	4♥
5♦	All Pass		

Taking care to ruff hearts high three times, Auntie Em made her contract for the loss of one trick in each major. ‘Did you consider Five Hearts?’ Wally asked, putting his cards back into the board with disgust.

Steve extracted Wally’s hand and fanned it out. ‘Yes, how about you?’

As Steve and Wally had expected, their scores on boards 37 to 47 had pulled them back into the lead, but the 18 IMP gain on the final board meant that the Over The Rainbow team won the match right at the death by a meagre 4 IMPs.

‘I can’t see how this is in any way my fault,’ Miss Gulch rounded on Doug. ‘Why should I suspect that you have bid the suit that you don’t want me to lead!’

‘Did you consider thinking about the auction? Surely it tells you that declarer bid Four Clubs because he expected his partner’s minor to be diamonds. When he found out that it was in fact clubs his hand got a lot better. Isn’t it obvious that he has a diamond void? A heart lead, I could understand. But a diamond? Ugh!’ He tore his scorecard in two

and threw it over his shoulder.

‘Call yourselves professionals!’ Almira Gulch was furious. ‘You bid the suit you don’t want led, and then blame me, while you lot let the opponents play in Five Diamonds while you are cold for Five Hearts! Do not expect to hear from me next season.’ She stomped out the door, and could be heard pulling her bike out of the rack with venom.

‘That’s the first bit of good news we’ve had today,’ Doug’s face broke into a smile. I’m not sure I could have played another match with her. I think we should congratulate our opposition. And thank them!’

He picked up both pieces of his scorecard, extended his right hand, and walked over to the table where the four members of the Over The Rainbow Club were discussing the hands with unconcealed excitement. ‘Well played,’ he started. ‘But tell me please, how you put up with her. Her regular partner must be a saint.’

‘Either that, or he has a style all of his own,’ Em winked at the Professor.

‘That helps explain a lot,’ Doug chuckled. ‘Good luck in the semi-final. You’ll be meeting the top seeds, but if you play like you did today, you’ll be in with a chance. In the meantime I think we can be back in the Emerald City in time to spend some of our hard won earnings on a slap-up meal with a large bottle of wine. Anything to help me forget the experience of playing with her!’



‘Malahide regional bridge club has announced the revival of Malahide bridge congress. First organised in 1965 the congress was subsequently discontinued. The renewal of the festival will take place at the home of the original event, the Grand hotel over the weekend of March 6th to 8th, 2020.’

Irish Times
Seamus Dowling Bridge
Notes March 9th.

The Programme will have Gala Open Pairs, Mixed Pairs and Novice Pairs on its Opening night of Friday March 6th. Saturday is a Pairs day of 2 sessional Congress, Intermediate A and B categories and these categories will be repeated for 2 sessional Teams on Sunday 8th finishing around 5.30pm. These competitions are all pre entry and alongside them will be one sessional Open Pairs with No pre entry required.

The Grand Hotel Malahide is an excellent Congress venue with superb facilities and it has much more to offer with its gorgeous view of Dublin bay and being situated in the historic and homely village of Malahide.

Visit <http://www.visitmalahide.ie/> to know more about Malahide and all it has to offer from Medieval Castle to beaches with coastal walks and it is a 10-minute drive from Dublin Airport.

You might consider adding Malahide Bridge Congress to your diary for 2020!

For more information:

Malahide Regional Bridge Club email: malahidebridgecongress@mrbc.ie

Brochure will be found on

...when ready.... <http://malahideregionalbridgeclub.com/>

The Grand Hotel Malahide email: info@the.grand.ie

Quote Bridge Congress Phone: +353 1 845 0000

<https://www.thegrand.ie/contact-us/>

MALAHIDE BRIDGE CONGRESS March 6th to 8th 2020 GRAND HOTEL MALAHIDE

will be run under the auspices of the Contract Bridge Association of Ireland (CBAI)

Answers to “Defend With Julian Pottage”

1

♠ AQ10
♥ 95
♦ 96543
♣ J86

♠ 63
♥ 10632
♦ Q7
♣ A9752

N
W E
S

♠ 98742
♥ QJ74
♦ K10
♣ K3

♠ KJ5
♥ AK8
♦ AJ82
♣ Q104

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
-	-	-	1♦
Pass	3♦	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

1♦ “Better minor”, not 15-17 balanced
3♦ Inverted

Partner leads the five of clubs; your king covers the six, the four coming on your left. What is your plan?

Firstly, you put partner with the ace of clubs – otherwise declarer would have had a double stopper by taking the king with the ace. Given that your opponent cannot have a strong no-opener and thinks 3NT is the right spot facing a weakish dummy, you expect 18-19 points in the closed hand. If this is the case, partner has at most one queen apart from the presumed ace of clubs.

Since partner cannot have the ace of hearts but might have the ace-queen of clubs, you should certainly return a club. Can you see the need to do anything special on the third round of clubs? If declarer has a club stopper, you will need partner to hold the queen of diamonds to give your side a diamond stopper. What is more, you want partner to be the one to gain the lead. Declarer is equally well aware of this and may have an avoidance play planned – lead low from dummy and play the ace if you play low or duck if you play the king. You can thwart this by discarding the king of diamonds at trick three.

2

♠ KJ76
♥ AKJ5
♦ J
♣ AKJ4

♠ 3
♥ 842
♦ AK108742
♣ 82

N
W E
S

♠ 854
♥ Q1073
♦ 6
♣ Q9653

♠ AQ1092
♥ 96
♦ Q953
♣ 107

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
3♦	Double	Pass	4♠
Pass	4NT	Pass	5♣*
Pass	5♦*	Pass	5NT*
Pass	6♠	All Pass	

Partner leads the king of diamonds, which holds, and switches to the eight of clubs. Declarer plays high in dummy and leads a low spade. What is your plan?

It looks like declarer is crossing to hand with a view to ruffing a diamond in dummy. Your eight of spades is a precious card, preventing a third diamond ruff. You definitely want to play low.

After the expected high diamond ruff at trick three, you can safely discard a club. Declarer then leads a low trump off dummy and ruffs another diamond high (indeed dummy has only high trumps by this time).

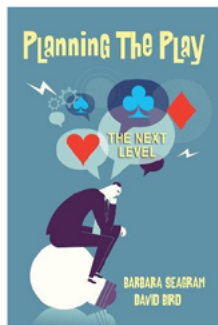
You have now reached the main decision point. Both you and dummy have four hearts and three clubs. Which suit should you weaken? Releasing a card from either suit would allow declarer to cash any top cards in that suit and take a ruff to fell your queen. You could discard a club smoothly, I suppose, pretending to hold a 3-3-1-6 shape. This might work. You would prefer to avoid relying on a wrong guess. Can you see how to do that? The eight of spades has become dispensable. You should under-ruff, keeping parity with both rounded suits.



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Keep Bridge Alive

The Sociology of Bridge is a research project and an emerging academic field exploring interactions within the mind sport, well-being, healthy ageing and social connection as experienced in the bridge world.



Professor Samantha Punch,
UK Bridge Player

How you can help

We need players, bridge clubs and organisations and other supporters to join us in the Keep Bridge Alive campaign so we can publicise and promote bridge more widely. We would also be delighted to hear from you if you have research ideas, expertise or even time to support the campaign.

Please contact us at alumni@stir.ac.uk

“ I totally support the Keep Bridge Alive Campaign which hopefully will become a global campaign by generating momentum to get people together to tackle the sustainability issues that the game faces.”

Zia Mahmood,
International Bridge Player

“ I welcome the Keep Bridge Alive initiative to reach out to young people - indeed everybody - informing them of all the reasons why they have to play bridge. Any research to confirm to all my students what they feel already - that bridge is a life-enhancing activity for so many reasons - is very welcome.”

Andrew Robson,
English Bridge Player

For more information, search:
'Keep Bridge Alive Crowdfund'



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BE THE DIFFERENCE



Play bridge wherever and whenever you like!

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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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.

Suicide Squeeze

In the semi-finals of the open trials, you must decide whether or not to stick in a light overcall.

Dealer South. N/S Vul. As East, you hold:

♠ A8763
♥ 54
♦ K10872
♣ 9

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	1♠
Pass	2♣	?	

Your call?

At first glance overcalling might seem futile. 2♦ doesn't take up any space, and you are clearly outgunned since North has made a 2/1. The overcall may be giving the opponents a fielder's choice. However, there are two potential big upsides to overcalling.

1) The opening lead. If South winds up as declarer in 3NT or 4♠, you know you want a diamond lead instead of a heart lead. If you overcall, you will get that lead. If you don't, partner is much more likely to lead a heart, particularly against 3NT.

2) You could hit partner with a big diamond fit. If you do, he may be able to take a profitable save or at least jam the enemy auction so they are not able to bid as accurately.

What is the downside of overcalling? There is only one major downside. The opponents might double you and get you for a number. How likely is that to happen? The opponents have announced game-going values, so even if you go down 4 tricks that would be only a small loss. Furthermore, the opponents would have to know it is right to double

you. They can see the vulnerability, and they know they have to do better than their vulnerable game to make defending worthwhile. Even when they have you, they will get you only when one of them has a diamond stack and the other one has enough defence to justify passing a penalty double. It could happen, but it will be a very infrequent occurrence. The upsides of overcalling outweigh the downsides here.

You choose to pass. The bidding concludes:

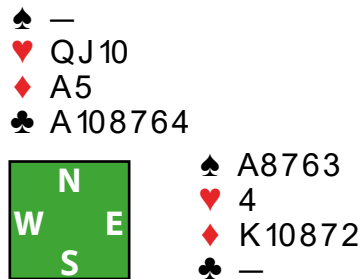
West	North	East	South
-	-	-	1♠
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♠
Pass	3♣	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

Partner leads the ♥2 (attitude leads vs. NT, upside down signals).

♠ -	♠ A8763
♥ QJ103	♥ 54
♦ A5	♦ K10872
♣ A1087642	♣ 9

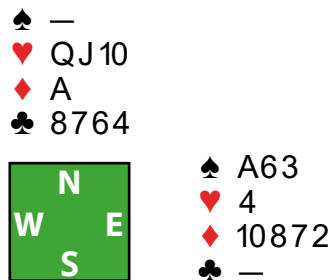


Small from dummy. You play the ♥5 (standard count in this position), and declarer wins the king. Declarer leads the ♣Q, holding the trick. He continues with a small club to the jack and ace, and another club to partner's king. What do you discard on these two rounds of clubs?



You definitely want a diamond shift rather than a spade shift. The best way to get that is to signal discouragement in spades by discarding the ♠8. After the first signal it probably doesn't matter what you play on the next club, but since all of your small spades aren't going to come into play you might as well pitch another spade. This second spade should be a current count card.

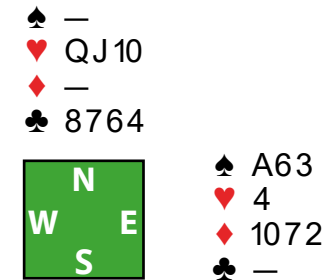
You discard the ♠8 and then the ♠7. Partner wins the third round of clubs, and shifts to the ♦4. Declarer plays low from dummy, and you win the king, declarer playing the ♦3. What do you return?



If declarer has the ♦Q and ♠KJ, your best chance might be to lead a spade and put declarer to the guess. However, if partner has the ♦Q a diamond return will defeat the contract outright. Declarer might not have bid 3NT with only Jxx of diamonds. But partner's diamond spot is the important message. If partner wanted a spade return, he would have led a higher diamond. Instead partner led his smallest diamond, which says he wants diamonds continued instead of a spade shift. You should follow his defence.

When returning a diamond, you should lead back the ♦8 in order to deny strength in the suit. If you lead back a small diamond, partner may wrongly unblock the queen from ♦Qxx, playing you for the jack. Remember, partner doesn't know that you have the ace of spades.

You lead back the ♦8. Small from declarer, jack from partner. Now declarer starts to run dummy's clubs. What is your discarding plan?

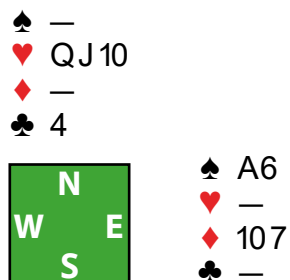


For one thing, you know you can throw your heart. While usually it is right to not discard down to a void in a suit in which partner has the ace, it can't be wrong here. The reason is that after declarer runs as many clubs as he feels like, he will be forced to play a heart to partner's ace himself.

Partner's ♦J play makes it clear that declarer has the ♦Q, so you aren't defeating the contract brute force by taking two diamond tricks. It looks like declarer is home, but the defence still has chances.

What will happen after declarer runs all of his clubs? You will be down to a 3-card ending, where declarer has the ♦Q and 2 spades left. Your partner will hold 1 spade, 1 diamond, and the ace of hearts. When declarer now leads a heart off dummy you come down to ace-doubleton of spades, and declarer will be caught in a suicide squeeze. So you must keep at least one small spade.

There is no reason to keep more than one small spade. Therefore, with 4 cards to go you might as well come down to 2 diamonds and 2 spades. Then you can decide what to discard depending on what declarer does. The resulting position will be:



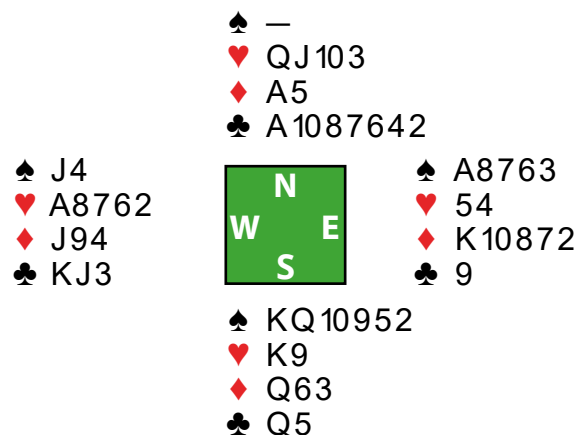
What will you discard if declarer cashes dummy's last club?

As discussed before, you will discard a diamond. When declarer leads the heart off dummy, you will discard your other diamond. If partner has properly kept a spade and a diamond, declarer will be the victim of a suicide squeeze.

What will you discard if declarer doesn't cash dummy's last club but instead leads a heart?

This time you must discard a spade. Partner wins the heart, knocks out declarer's ♦Q, and you get the last two tricks. Whichever way declarer goes, the defence triumphs.

Unfortunately, you make the error of coming down to three spades and 1 diamond. Declarer makes no mistakes. Instead of squeezing himself by cashing the last club, he leads a heart. You are forced to give him a spade trick for his ninth trick. The full hand is:



Could declarer have done better?

A slight improvement would have been to play the ♦6 on the first round of diamonds. Declarer knows he wants a spade return rather than

a diamond continuation, so he wants to make West's ♦4 appear to be a high spot card.

If declarer had foreseen the ending and been confident that East held the ♦K, he could make the hand legitimately by going up ace of diamonds on the diamond shift. Then he could run the clubs and lead a heart. The difference is that East's ♦K hasn't been cashed yet, so both threats are in the East hand. Since declarer discards after East, if he reads the position he will make it. In effect, East's scoring the ♦K amounted to a defensive Vienna Coup. Of course declarer would have to judge which defender had the ♠A (if it were West then it would be necessary to come off dummy with a diamond instead of a heart to break up the squeeze), as well as read the distribution. So declarer can hardly be faulted for his line of play.

Could West have done better on defence?

Obviously West does better leading a diamond, but that is double-dummy on the information he has.

If West had known that declarer had a doubleton club, he would have done better covering the queen of clubs. Declarer would then have to guess what to do (since West might have KJ9), and he might guess wrong. But if declarer has a singleton queen of clubs ducking does much better, so that looks like the right play.

The actual deal is an illustration of the potential gain from the 2♦ overcall. A diamond lead would probably defeat 3NT quite easily, and West would certainly lead a diamond if East had overcalled. Even if the overcall goes for 1100, that doesn't cost as many IMPs as getting the right lead might gain on this hand. Something to think about.

Bridge with Larry Cohen

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

Forcing or Non-Forcing?

Due to (constant) requests, I have given in and written about this annoyingly tricky topic.

How hard can it be? “Just tell us Larry, which bids are forcing and which are not.”

It is very hard. It requires study, memory and sometimes partnership agreement (PA).

Forcing versus Game Forcing

In this series, it is important to recognize the difference between Forcing (F) and Game Forcing (GF). “Forcing” (F) means your partner “cannot” pass the bid. If he does pass, he does so at his own peril. I might pass a forcing bid once a decade. Suppose my partner opens 1♣ and I dredge up a response with a very weak shapely hand. Partner (opener) now makes a forcing rebid (like a jumpshift) but I decide to bail out with a pass. I’d better be right!

“Game Forcing” (GF) means neither partner can pass below game.

In this article, we address: After Overcalls (by us or the opponents)

They Overcall

If we open the bidding and there is an overcall, a new suit by responder is forcing (but not to game).

Example:

Opener	They	Responder
1♣	1♦	1♠

The response can be made with only 4 cards if it is 1♠ or 1♥ after a 1♦ overcall (because a negative double would promise both majors). So, 1♣ (1♦) 1-MAJOR shows 4+ cards and 6+ points (forcing). But, 1♣ (1♥) 1♠ shows 5+ spades (because a negative double would be made with only 4) and 6+ points (forcing).

In all cases, responder’s new suit (after an overcall) is forcing one round (regardless of whether it shows 4 or 5+ cards). This alone can be confusing. If you are struggling, be sure to review negative doubles.

If the response is on the two level, then it shows 5+ cards in the suit (and 10+ points). Again, the response is F, but not GF. Example:

Opener	They	Responder
1♣	1♠	2♦

2♦ shows 5 or more diamonds and 10 or more points.

Responder’s jump raise (after an overcall) is not forcing - some partnerships play it as pre-emptive, others as invitational. Example: 1♦-(1♠)- 3♦.

What if our responder jumps to a new suit after their overcall, such as 1♣-(1♥)-2♠? That is PA. Some play it as weak, some as strong and others as fit-showing. A double-jump such as 1♥-(1♠)-4♣ should still be a splinter bid.

If their overcall is on the two-level, our responder’s new two-level suits are forcing (5+ cards) but not GF. If our responder has to bid on the 3+ level, that should be not only F, but GF. Example: 1♠-(2♦)- 3♣.

What if they overcall after we have made a response? For example, the auction begins:

West	North	East	South
-	1♦	Pass	1♠
2♣	?		

North must reverse or cue-bid to force. So 2♥ would be forcing as would 3♣ (though it is unclear what it means). A rebid in diamonds or spades would not be forcing. The partnership might be using Support Doubles in this situation.

If the opponent jump overcalls and opener rebids his suit on the 3-level, he has a good hand, but his bid isn’t forcing. If he bids a new suit on the 3-level it should be forcing.

We Overcall

If we overcall, the partnership has to agree if a new suit is forcing. Possible

agreements (choose one):

- 1) A new suit by the partner of the overcaller is always forcing.
- 2) A new suit by the partner of the overcaller is always forcing unless one of us is a passed hand.
- 3) A new suit is forcing if the overcall is on the 2+ level.
- 4) A new suit is forcing if it is a change of level.

There is no universal way to play this. The partnership also must know if a cue-bid promises support. For example, (1♦)-1♠-(Pass)-2♦=??

One universal treatment (everyone should play this way) is that a new suit is forcing after we have overcalled their preempt. For example: (2♥)-2♠-(Pass)-3♦ is forcing.

In the next article, we explore auctions with doubles.

Quiz

Is the last bid in the auction shown F or NF? The reasons for the answer can be found by studying the article (“PA” = Partnership Agreement).

1.	West	North	East	South
	1♦	1♠	2♥	
2.	West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♥	1♠	
3.	West	North	East	South
	1♦	1♠	3♣	
4.	West	North	East	South
	1♦	1♠	3♦	
5.	West	North	East	South
	1♦	3♠	4♦	
6.	West	North	East	South
	1♦	3♥	3♠	
7.	West	North	East	South
	1♦	1♠	Pass	2♣
8.	West	North	East	South
	3♦	3♥	Pass	3♠

Answers:

1.F 2.F 3.PA 4.NF 5.NF 6.F 7.PA 8.F



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

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You Have to See This

by Andrew Diosy and Linda Lee

this month's Master Point Press Bidding Battle book prize

YOU HAVE TO SEE THIS • v

Introduction

Readers of Andrew Diosy's first book *There Must Be A Way* will be tempted to skip this section and get right into the hands, but they shouldn't. There are several differences between that volume and the present one. New readers will find the format a little unusual. Unlike the usual run of books of bridge problems, this one, like the first, rarely tells you whether you are declarer trying to make a hand, or a defender trying to come up with the right play to beat it. Instead, you are generally given all four hands, the contract, the bidding where relevant, and the opening lead. Your task is to determine the result, given best play and defence. Imagine you are relaxing with friends after a bridge session; was there some way you could have made that slam? Would a switch at trick 2 have beaten them on the last hand? You get the idea.

The format of the solutions is a little different here, too. Many of these hands are such that the obvious 'solution' fails, given best play by both sides; one or the other has some subtle counter-move. All the hands appear on a right-hand page, and overleaf is the first part of the solution. This will give you some hint as to the direction you should be looking, and may well explain why your first ideas don't quite work. The 'final' solutions are gathered together in a separate section at the back of the book. Bidding on 52-card layouts is given only where it is helpful or indicative of a useful approach to the real-life problem. The single dummy hands can all be made via a reasonably logical line of play.

Level of difficulty is subjective; not everyone will agree with our division of the hands into 'Not Too Hard', 'Pretty Difficult', and 'Really Challenging'. But we'll warn you that some of them will test your powers of analysis to the limit, however good you are! Eddie Kantar, in his foreword to *There Must Be A Way*, warned readers not to try to solve too many at one sitting and we must echo that here, too. Savour them as you would haute cuisine in a fine restaurant, rather than 'All You Can Eat' fast food. In the process, you'll come across neat plays and stratagems that you can begin to look for at the table.

Most of these hands came up in actual play, and surprisingly often the declarer or defenders managed to do the right thing under fire. How will you do?

Andrew Diosy

Linda Lee

Toronto, September 1998

HAND 43 • At the World Championships

Answer Part 1
Answer Part 2

	NORTH														
	♠ AK ♥ K 9 5 ♦ Q J 10 8 3 ♣ 8 6 4														
WEST	<table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse; width: 40px; height: 40px;"> <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	EAST										
N															
W E															
S															
♠ Q 9 4 2 ♥ J ♦ K 9 6 5 ♣ K 10 5 3		♠ 10 ♥ 8 7 6 3 ♦ A 2 ♣ A Q J 9 7 2													
<table border="0" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">W</td> <td style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">N</td> <td style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">E</td> <td style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">4♣</td> <td style="text-align: center;">4♥</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2♣¹</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="4" style="text-align: center;">all pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>1. 11-15 HCP and either 6+♣ or 5♣ and a 4-card major.</p>	W	N	E	S	4♣	4♥	2♣ ¹	2♥	all pass				SOUTH		
W	N	E	S												
4♣	4♥	2♣ ¹	2♥												
all pass															
	♠ J 8 7 6 5 3 ♥ A Q 10 4 2 ♦ 7 4 ♣ —														
	Contract: 4♥														
	Opening Lead: ♣3														

HAND 44 • Perfection?

Answer Part 1
Answer Part 2

	NORTH														
	♠ A 9 8 2 ♥ Q 10 9 ♦ A Q 2 ♣ J 10 5														
WEST	<table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse; width: 40px; height: 40px;"> <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	EAST										
N															
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S															
♠ 3 ♥ K 3 2 ♦ 9 7 5 4 3 ♣ Q 9 8 2		♠ Q J 7 6 4 ♥ J ♦ K J 8 ♣ A 7 6 3													
<table border="0" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">W</td> <td style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">N</td> <td style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">E</td> <td style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">pass</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1♣</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1♠</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">all pass</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3♥</td> <td style="text-align: center;">pass</td> <td style="text-align: center;">4♥</td> </tr> </table>	W	N	E	S	pass	1♣	1♠	2♥	all pass	3♥	pass	4♥	SOUTH		
W	N	E	S												
pass	1♣	1♠	2♥												
all pass	3♥	pass	4♥												
	♠ K 10 5 ♥ A 8 7 6 5 4 ♦ 10 6 ♣ K 4														
	Contract: 4♥														
	Opening Lead: ♠3														

56 • YOU HAVE TO SEE THIS

HAND 43 • *At the World Championships*

Problem

Answer Part 2

Answer Part 1

When this hand was played at the 1996 Bridge Olympiad in Rhodes, the French declarer knew a lot about the distribution from the bidding. After ruffing the club lead, declarer must set up either diamonds or spades since a cross-ruff is unlikely to produce enough tricks and in fact on the actual distribution will fail. Suppose that declarer starts by cashing the top spades; East will ruff in, and the best defence now is a trump. There do not seem to be enough entries to establish the spade suit. If declarer tries to establish diamonds the defence can continue clubs and ruff South down. The Vu-Graph commentators decided the hand could not be made. Were they right? See page 87 for the second part of the answer.

HAND 44 • *Perfection?*

Problem

Answer Part 2

Answer Part 1

This hand was played during an exhibition match on OkBridge. The East-West pair were Bobby Goldman and Paul Soloway, both world champions. You can be sure that they made no mistakes on defence. The spade lead went to the ♠2, ♠J and ♠K. Declarer has a likely heart loser, a diamond loser, a spade loser and at least one club loser. However, the diamond can be discarded on dummy's fourth spade. So declarer led the ♥A and another heart, won by Goldman with the ♥K. Now it is true that Goldman can lead a club to Soloway's ♣A and receive a spade ruff. But then if Goldman returns a diamond, declarer wins the ♦A, cashes the ♥Q, crosses to hand on the ♣K and runs hearts, and Soloway is squeezed in diamonds and spades. If Goldman returns a club, declarer wins, cashes the ♥Q and the ♦A and ruffs a club to hand and proceeds on similar lines.

But what if Goldman plays a diamond instead of a club when he is in on the ♥K? What then? See page 88 for the second part of the answer.

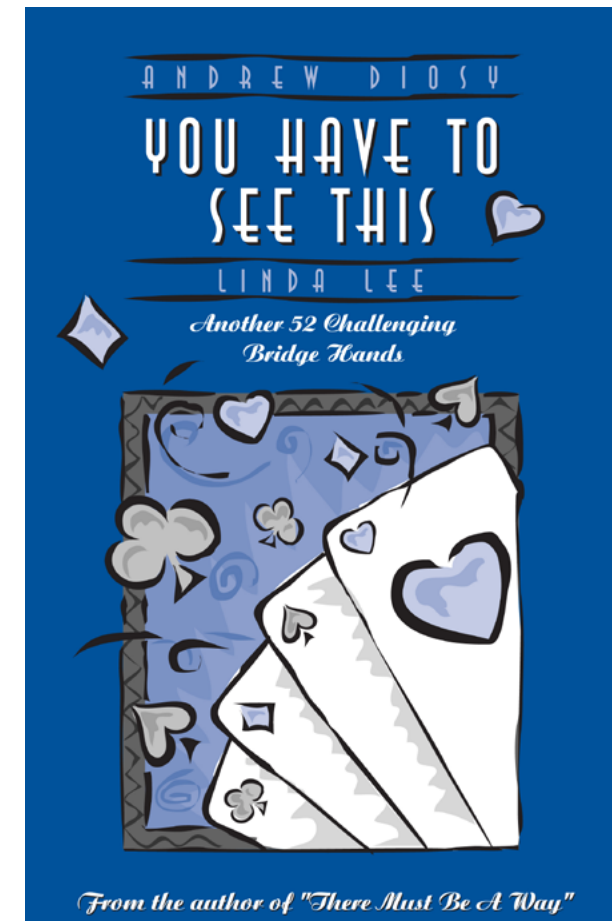
HAND 43 • *At the World Championships* Problems Answers 1

The commentators were right, this hand *cannot* be made, but only if the defence finds an incredible play that was not found at the table. Declarer's only chance is to establish the diamond suit. Declarer ruffs the opening lead and plays diamonds. East wins and continues clubs, South ruffing. South continues with another diamond. If West wins the ♦K and continues clubs, declarer ruffs, cashes the ♥A and crosses on the ♠K and plays diamonds. At this stage the hand is cold. East must ruff a diamond and South overruffs, shortening East's trumps to two. Now declarer plays a spade to dummy and runs diamonds. Whether East ruffs the spade or not, declarer is in control.

But what if West ducks the second diamond? A crossruff won't work: declarer now has two non-trump tricks but can only make seven trump tricks because East can overruff dummy's ♥5. If declarer continues with a diamond, East can throw his spade as West wins the diamond. West continues a club and this is the position with declarer needing all the tricks but one:

	NORTH					
	♠ A K					
	♥ K 9 5					
	♦ 10 3					
	♣ —					
WEST	<table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse; width: 40px; height: 40px;"> <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	EAST	
N						
W E						
S						
♠ Q 9 4 2		♠ —				
♥ J		♥ 8 7 6 3				
♦ 9		♦ —				
♣ K		♣ A Q J				
	SOUTH					
	♠ J 8 7 6 5					
	♥ A Q					
	♦ —					
	♣ —					

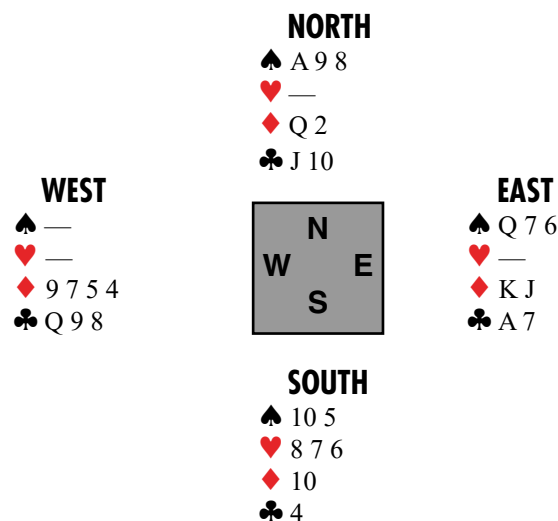
If declarer leads a spade to the ace as before, East ruffs in and plays a fourth club. If South ruffs in hand, he cannot get to dummy without setting up a trump trick for East so he must ruff in dummy. He now tries a diamond which gets ruffed and overruffed but he is once again stuck in his hand since crossing on a trump will leave East in control. Other lines involving cashing the ♠A before leading the diamond will also not work if West continues clubs, since they arrive at a similar position.



HAND 44 • Perfection?

Problems Answers Part 1

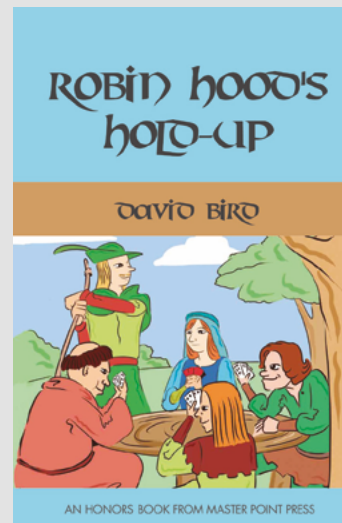
This hand *can* still be made, even with perfect defence. At the table, West returned a diamond. Declarer won the \spadesuit A correctly (if he ducks, East wins, gives West a spade ruff and the defence cashes the \clubsuit A). Next came the \heartsuit Q and then a club from dummy. East correctly ducked (since if he rises, he will be forced to get out a club, the \clubsuit K winning and East once again subject to a squeeze). Declarer won the \clubsuit K, arriving at this end position:



If declarer plays a club now, West will win and play a diamond. East will win the \diamondsuit J and continue the \diamondsuit K breaking up the squeeze. Declarer must instead run hearts in the diagrammed position; without rectifying the count, the squeeze does not operate but East's last four cards must include two spades. Whether he keeps two diamonds, or a diamond and the \clubsuit A, a diamond and a small club, he will eventually be endplayed in spades. Sometimes even perfect defence will be defeated by perfect play.

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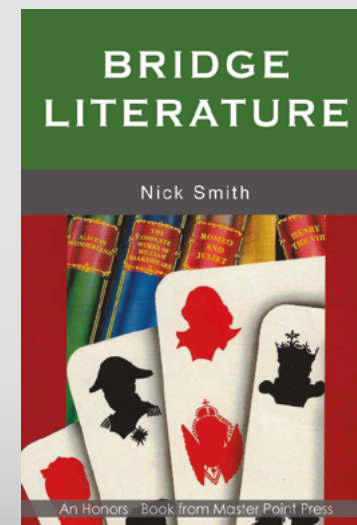
ROBIN HOOD'S HOLD-UP

David Bird

Journey back to Sherwood Forest and Nottingham Castle in David Bird's fourth book of Robin Hood bridge stories. The 32 stories contain well over 100 splendid deals and provide the laugh-aloud humor and painless instruction for which the author is renowned.

BRIDGE LITERATURE

Nick Smith



First published in 1993, Nick Smith's Bridge Literature is an anthology of literary parodies featuring characters from Shakespeare, Marlowe, the Bible, Jane Austen, Charles Dickens, Charlotte Bronte, Thomas Hardy, Lewis Carroll and George Orwell. This collection will be enjoyed for its reimagining of classic books and the ingenuity of its bridge settings.

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The Abbot's Return to Sanity

by David Bird

After a tiresome four hours drive, from St Geofric's back to the monastery, the Abbot decided to go straight to bed.

'You don't want any supper first?' queried Brother Xavier. 'I believe Brother Anthony is producing some of his cabbage pizzas.'

'Ask one of the novices to bring the suitcase in from my car,' replied the Abbot. 'I left the boot open.'

'I thought you'd be hungry after such a long journey,' continued Brother Xavier.

'The dinners at St Geofric's might as well have come from another planet,' the Abbot replied. 'You wouldn't believe the quality of fare they enjoy there. Last night we had roast mallard in a cherry-and-brandy sauce. If there was any prospect of us affording the ingredients, here at St Titus, I would have brought the recipe back for Brother Anthony.'

'I'll ask him to leave a couple of pizza slices in the fridge,' said Brother Xavier. 'You could have them for lunch tomorrow.'

The Abbot began to climb the staircase to his quarters. 'Don't forget to have my suitcase brought up,' he said.

The following evening the Abbot was back in harness with Brother Xavier, playing in the weekly duplicate. This was an early board:

Dealer South. None Vul.

♠ KQJ98		♠ A742
♥ J109762		♥ Q3
♦ 7		♦ J982
♣ 5		♣ Q103
		♠ 6
		♥ K4
		♦ KQ65
		♣ AJ9864
		♠ 1053
		♥ A85
		♦ A1043
		♣ K72

West	North	East	South
<i>The Abbot</i>	<i>Brother Paulo</i>	<i>Brother Xavier</i>	<i>Brother Lucius</i>
-	-	-	1♦
2♦	2♠	3♠	Pass
Pass	5♦	All Pass	

Brother Paulo showed a strong diamond raise over the Abbot's Michaels cue-bid, and the Abbot led the king of spades against the diamond game. Brother Xavier overtook with the ace and returned the ♠2 to give the Abbot a count on the suit. Brother Lucius ruffed in the dummy. The king and queen of trumps revealed the 4-1 break and he continued with the king and ace of clubs. A third round of clubs went to East's queen and Brother Xavier returned a third round of spades, ruffed in the dummy, and these cards remained:

♠ Q9		♠ 4
♥ J109		♥ Q3
♦ -		♦ J9
♣ -		♣ -
		♠ -
		♥ A85
		♦ A10
		♣ -

Brother Lucius showed his hand to Brother Xavier. 'I play good clubs,' he said. 'If you ruff at any stage, I overruff and draw trumps. Otherwise, I discard my three hearts and lead a heart from dummy for the coup.'

The Abbot said nothing, returning his cards to the board. Imagine the deal had arisen at St Geofric's. The chance of anyone making 5♦ was no better than that of a chimpanzee typing out the Lord's Prayer. What had


Lucius held for his opening bid? A sorry-looking 11-count with 9 losers. No way would Rhoda Lederer's book recommend opening on such an awful hand. The field at Geofric's would have stopped in a part-score somewhere.

Brother Lucius turned towards the Abbot. 'Did you get round to explaining trump coups at St Geofric's?' he asked. 'I suppose it would have been too much for them.'

'You can't believe how bad they were,' the Abbot replied. 'One pair actually had "second-hand low, third-hand high", written on their convention card.'

A few rounds later, the Abbot faced the black-bearded Brother Zac and his partner:

Dealer South. E/W Vul.

♠ 109 ♥ KJ97 ♦ 952 ♣ Q1083		♠ Q64 ♥ 1053 ♦ AK104 ♣ AJ6	♠ 832 ♥ Q8 ♦ QJ86 ♣ K975
		♠ AKJ75 ♥ A642 ♦ 73 ♣ 42	

West	North	East	South
<i>The Abbot</i>	<i>Brother Sextus</i>	<i>Brother Xavier</i>	<i>Brother Zac</i>
–	–	–	1♠
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♥
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

The Abbot led the ♠10 against the spade game. Brother Zac won with the ace and immediately played ace and another heart. The Abbot put up the jack and Brother Xavier won with the queen, returning a second round of trumps. Winning in his hand, Brother Zac led a third round of hearts. The Abbot won with the king and, with no further trump to play, switched

to a club. 'Ace, please,' said Brother Zac. 'And the ace of diamonds.'

Declarer continued with the diamond king and reached his hand with a diamond ruff. He ruffed his last heart with dummy's ♠Q. He could not be prevented from scoring two further tricks with the ♠J7 and the game was made.

'I found the best lead,' observed the Abbot. 'Nothing we could do after that, with such a favourable lie of the cards for declarer.'

'No,' agreed Brother Zac. 'Should be flat in +420.'

Brother Sextus studied the result sheet from a distance of around six inches. 'Actually, it's quite a good one for us,' he reported. 'Two others made it, five went down.'

'Let me see that,' demanded the Abbot. 'How can anyone go down on such a simple deal?' He surveyed the sheet disbelievingly. 'I might as well have stayed at St Geofric's,' he continued. 'I dare say most of their declarers would have messed it up too.'

A round or two later, the Abbot faced Brother Andrew and Brother Jake, two novices who had joined the monastery quite recently.

'We're playing the two-over-one system tonight, Abbot,' Brother Andrew announced proudly.

'I see,' the Abbot replied. 'Having spent a full two months mastering the intricacies of Acoll, you think that you're ready to move on to fresh pastures.'

'It's much the same as Acoll, really,' said Brother Andrew. 'It's just that a two-level response in a different suit is forcing to game. We thought it was worth a try, anyway, after coming below average three weeks in a row.'

The Abbot, who had rarely heard anything so absurd, pointed resignedly at the board to be played.

Dealer South. N/S Vul.

♠ A3 ♥ 92 ♦ AK9753 ♣ K72		♠ Q84 ♥ 8643 ♦ Q ♣ 108543	♠ K762 ♥ A ♦ J1064 ♣ QJ96
♠ J1095 ♥ KQJ1075 ♦ 82 ♣ A			

West	North	East	South
<i>The Abbot</i>	<i>Brother Jake</i>	<i>Brother Xavier</i>	<i>Brother Andrew</i>
–	–	–	1♥
Pass	2♦	Pass	3♥
Pass	4NT	Pass	5♠
Pass	6♥	All Pass	

‘Anything I should know about the jump to 3♥?’ queried the Abbot.

‘It shows a good heart suit with at most one loser,’ replied Brother Andrew.

The Abbot sighed. ‘I addressed the question to your partner,’ he said. ‘Still, let’s get on with it.’

Not wishing to be endplayed with the trump ace at a later stage, the Abbot placed that card on the table. At trick 2 he switched to the ♣Q. The young declarer won with the ♣A and crossed to the ♦A, the queen falling from East. If diamonds broke 3-2, it would be easy to set them up and discard his spade losers. What if the ♦Q was a singleton and diamonds were 4-1?

Brother Andrew could see that he still had a chance. ‘King of clubs, please,’ he said. He discarded his remaining diamond and called for a low diamond from dummy. Just in time, he saw that he should ruff this with the ♥10. A heart to the nine allowed another diamond ruff and he drew the outstanding trumps. ‘They’re all there now,’ he said. I can cross

to the ♠A and discard three spades on the good diamonds.’

‘I was expecting you to switch to the king of spades, Abbot,’ said Brother Xavier. ‘You know, to remove the entry from dummy. As it happens, it doesn’t even give up a trick. I have the spade queen over here.’

Not overjoyed at having his defence queried in front of two 17-year-olds, the Abbot reached for the South curtain card. ‘Goodness me, a bare 11-count?’ he exclaimed. ‘How can that be worth a jump to 3♥?’

‘I know it’s a strong rebid in Acol,’ Brother Andrew replied, ‘but in two-over-one, I think it just shows a good trump suit.’

Brother Jake inscribed an over-large 1430 onto the travelling score-sheet. ‘No-one else bid it,’ he said. ‘I wouldn’t have gone to a slam facing a 2♥ rebid. It was just an unlucky one for Acol, I suppose.’

On the last round of the evening the Abbot faced his nemesis, Brother Cameron. The novice flopped into the West seat. ‘Had a good time?’ he queried.

The Abbot peered at the novice. Was it necessary for him to prune every sentence to the minimum number of words? It was surprising in a way that he had not deemed ‘Good time?’ to be sufficient.

‘It wasn’t a holiday,’ the Abbot replied. ‘I was teaching bridge to a group of very elderly monks from St Geofric’s. It’s not easy to pick up the game at their age, nor was it at all easy for me to pass on my expertise at the game. Quite tiresome, really.’

Brother Xavier scored reasonably in a spade part-score and this was the last deal of the session:

Dealer South. Both Vul.

♠ 9843 ♥ K32 ♦ K64 ♣ KJ5		♠ 52 ♥ QJ108 ♦ J852 ♣ 763	♠ KQJ106 ♥ 95 ♦ Q97 ♣ Q102
♠ A7 ♥ A764 ♦ A103 ♣ A984			

West	North	East	South
Brother Cameron	Brother Xavier	Brother Damien	The Abbot
-	-	-	1NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

♠	9843	♠	52
♥	K32	♥	QJ108
♦	K64	♦	J852
♣	KJ5	♣	763
♠	KQJ106		
♥	95		
♦	Q97		
♣	Q102		
		♠	A7
		♥	A764
		♦	A103
		♣	A984

Brother Cameron led the ♠K and the Abbot won the second round of the suit, East playing high-low to show a doubleton spade. There were seven tricks on top and it seemed that he would need four club tricks to make the game. A finesse of the ♣J was successful and the Abbot continued with the ♣K, Brother Cameron following with the queen.

For a moment the Abbot closed his eyes. It was typical of his luck to be playing this deal against one of the few players at St Titus who would follow with the queen from an original Q10x. An obligatory false-card, did they call it? Not for a large majority of St Titus monks. Nor for a single player back at St Geofric's, it went without saying. Facing a competent defender, he was now faced with a 50-50 guess. Mind you, if West had started with five spades to East's two, the odds must favour him holding two clubs rather than three.

With a sense of foreboding, the Abbot called for dummy's ♣5 and finessed the 9. Brother Cameron won with the ♣10 and cashed his remaining spades to put the game one down.

Brother Xavier shook his head. 'I'm surprised you fell for that, Abbot,' he observed. 'It's an obligatory false-card when a defender holds Q10x.'

The Abbot raised his eyes to the ceiling. 'It's also obligatory to play the queen from Qx,' he retorted.

Not long afterwards, the Abbot joined Lucius and Paulo in the monastery buttery. The Abbot took a sip from his pint of home-brewed ale, returning the glass to the table. 'The last board we played was so annoying,' he said. 'Board 23, you remember. You need four club tricks to make 3NT.'

Lucius consulted his scorecard. 'Yes, no problem at our table,' he replied. 'I made nine tricks for not much more than an average board.'

'It was my misfortune to be playing it with Brother Cameron in the West seat,' the Abbot continued. 'When I played dummy's ♣K he dropped


the queen, of course.'

'Always possible,' said Brother Lucius. 'They made it easy for me at my table. When the ♣J won, I played a spade from dummy. West took his three tricks in the suit and East threw a club away.'

The Abbot blinked. Exit with a spade? The idea had never occurred to him.

Brother Paulo took up the tale. 'It wasn't easy for East,' he said. 'He had to keep three hearts or Lucius makes an extra trick there. As the cards lie, his only chance is for East to ditch two diamonds.'

The Abbot was not listening. 'This beer is even more watery than normal,' he declared, looking down into his glass. 'Well below Brother Jeffrey's normal standards. I'll have a word with him tomorrow!'



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CROCS ON SQUEEZE PLAY
VOLUME 1 & 2
Stephen Kennedy

From the mind of a junior bridge player comes two new books designed to challenge the norm and push squeeze play to its absolute limits. Well-known squeezes are thoroughly examined and dissected, and a variety of all-new squeezes are brought into the light of day.

AVAILABLE FROM A BRIDGE RETAILER NEAR YOU

The uBid Auction Room

Mark Horton

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

This month we pay a visit to the European Junior Championships in Norway where the teams in four competitions were fighting not only for titles and medals, but also for the right to represent Europe in the 2020 World Championships.

When the last round of the U26 Championship started, these were the standings:

1	Sweden	311.12
2	Netherlands	299.13
3	Germany	295.02
4	Norway	283.83
5	Poland	271.28
6	Czech Republic	266.34
7	Bulgaria	264.18
8	Israel	261.21
9	England	258.31
10	Italy	244.77
11	France	238.36
12	Denmark	226.63
13	Slovakia	211.93
14	Estonia	193.05
15	Latvia	184.95
16	Russia	174.58
17	Scotland	173.45
18	Croatia	173.39
19	Turkey	171.77
20	Portugal	161.04
21	Austria	157.98
22	Ireland	154.47
23	Finland	121.81

The top eight would earn a trip to China. Bulgaria had the Bye while Israel and England faced tough opponents in the guise of Germany and the Netherlands.

The Hands

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

Hand 1. Dealer South. Both Vul.

♠ 63		♠ AQJ8
♥ 103		♥ 82
♦ A1098		♦ KJ7
♣ KQ943		♣ AJ82

South overcalls 2♥ and North raises to 3♥.

West	North	East	South
Westerbeek	Natt	Van Overbeeke	Norton
–	–	–	Pass
Pass	Pass	1NT	2♥*
Pass	Pass	3NT	All Pass
2♥	5♥ and 4+ ♦/♣		

That's the auction given on BBO – which is hard to believe. However, when South led the ♦2 from his ♠975 ♥AKJ97 ♦Q632 ♣7 declarer emerged unscathed and recorded +660.

West	North	East	South
Ye	De Leon	Kennedy	Sprinkhuizenen
–	–	–	Pass
Pass	Pass	1NT	2♥*
Double*	3♥	Pass	Pass
Double	Pass	3♠	Pass
3NT	All Pass		
2♥	5♥ and 4+ ♦/♣		

West's first double probably showed interest in taking a penalty. Had East

passed the second double the penalty would have been significant, but the auction took a turn for the worse. South started with his top hearts and the defenders soon had the first five tricks.

Recommended auction: After 1NT is overcalled most pairs will have an agreement about how best to continue. I prefer 2NT in this situation to show at least invitational values with clubs (Rubensohl) but double is fine – as long as you know what subsequent bids mean. If East-West get to 5♣ then declarer is likely to get the diamonds right.

In passing notice that South did not open 1♥ – Matsson did for Germany against France and North-South got to 3♣, declarer scoring +150 to go with 3NT down one.

Marks: 3♥X10, 5♣ 7, 4♣ 5, 3NT 2.

Running score: England 2 (0) Netherlands 2 (13)

Hand 2. Dealer West. E/W Vul.

♠ 65		♠ A97
♥ QJ98		♥ A106
♦ KQ72		♦ A95
♣ Q92		♣ K753



North opens 2♠

West	North	East	South
Westerbeek	Natt	Van Overbeeke	Norton
Pass	2♠	All Pass	

North's hand was ♠KQJ1043 ♥754 ♦J8 ♣86 and when the defenders led a club and did not attack hearts declarer could get up to eight tricks.

West	North	East	South
Ye	De Leon	Kennedy	Sprinkhuizen
Pass	2♠	Pass	Pass
Double	Pass	3NT	All Pass

When West reopened South had an easy decision. South led the ♠8 and declarer ducked twice, let the revealing heart switch run to South's king, took the heart return in hand, played a club to the queen, cashed two hearts and two diamonds ending in hand and played the ♠A. South, down to ♦106 ♣AJ was squeezed for a well played +600.

Recommended auction: You can't beat that of the English pair. East could

have overcalled 2NT, but facing a passed partner it is hardly gilt-edged.

Marks: 3NT10, 2♠ E/W 5.

Running score: England 12 (12) Netherlands 7 (13)

Hand 3. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

♠ AQ3		♠ K84
♥ Q98542		♥ A106
♦ Q84		♦ A102
♣ 4		♣ Q1072



North opens 1♣, 2+♣

West	North	East	South
Westerbeek	Natt	Van Overbeeke	Norton
–	1♣*	Double	Pass
4♥	All Pass		
1♣	2+♣		

Having started with ♠J652 ♥K ♦953 ♣AKJ63 North led the ♣A and continued with the king. Declarer started trumps with the ♥Q so took only ten tricks.

West	North	East	South
Ye	De Leon	Kennedy	Sprinkhuizen
–	1♣*	Pass	1♦*
2♥	Pass	3♥	All Pass
1♣	2+♣		
1♦	0-6/7 any or natural or 8-10 4♥4♠		

Recommended auction: I have never been an admirer of doubling an opening bid with a balanced hand, but it worked well enough here. In the English auction East might have done more – should 3♣ show this type of hand. Adherents of Meckwell's Law would have gone on to 4♥ with West's cards.

Marks: 4♥ 10, 3♥ 5.

Running score: England 17 (12) Netherlands 17 (19)

Hand 4. Dealer West. None Vul

♠ AK9876		♠ J53
♥ 9		♥ Q8
♦ J72		♦ AK65
♣ K93		♣ A1087

North overcalls 4♥.

West	North	East	South
Norton	Westerbeek	Natt	Van Overbeeke
1♠	4♥	4♠	All Pass

North held ♠2 ♥AK106542 ♦Q83 ♣52 and started with his top hearts, declarer ruffing, cashing his top spades and exiting with a spade, South winning and exiting with a heart. Declarer ruffed, pitching a club from dummy, crossed to the ♦A and played a diamond for the nine, jack and queen. The heart return was ruffed and declarer played a diamond, claiming when the suit divided.

West	North	East	South
Sprinkhuizen	Ye	De Leon	Kennedy
1♠	4♥	4♠	All Pass

The first six tricks were identical, save for the fact that declarer pitched a diamond from dummy and then played a club for the five, seven and queen. The ♦10 was covered by the jack, queen and ace and when declarer continued with the ♦K the game had to go one down.

Recommended auction: Nothing complicated here!

Marks: 4♠ 10.

Running score: England 27 (22) Netherlands 27 (19)

With only four deals to play England trailed 24-33 – they were still in with a shout, but time was running out.

Hand 5. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

♠ 95		♠ AKQ103
♥ Q52		♥ AK94
♦ A2		♦ 8
♣ KQJ983		♣ 765

South opens 3♦ and North raises to 4♦.

West	North	East	South
Westerbeek	Natt	Van Overbeeke	Norton
-	-	-	3♦
Pass	4♦	Double	Pass
5♣	All Pass		

South's preemptive strike was based on ♠7642 ♥107 ♦K97654 ♣4 so 12 tricks were available.

West	North	East	South
Ye	De Leon	Kennedy	Sprinkhuizen
-	-	-	3♦
Pass	4♦	Double	Pass
6♣	All Pass		

To some extent, West's decision was predicated on the fact that England needed points if they were to secure a qualifying spot. It worked here.

Recommended auction: You must choose between the two options – 5♣/6♣. You may think that the slam was lucky, but I'm not so sure. You might even make a case for West to bid 5♦, just in case East has the right cards for 7♣.

Marks: 6♣ 10, 5♣/4♠ 7, 6♠ 4.

Running score: England 37 (35) Netherlands 34 (19)

Hand 6. Dealer West. Both Vul.

♠ J7		♠ A9632
♥ Q873		♥ K2
♦ A82		♦ KJ976
♣ AK74		♣ Q

West	North	East	South
Westerbeek	Natt	Van Overbeeke	Norton
1♣*	Pass	1♠	Pass
1NT	Pass	2♦*	Pass
2♥	Pass	3♦	Pass
3NT	All Pass		
1♣	2+♣		
2♦	Two-way checkback		

Having established there was no eight-card fit West settled for the

nine-trick game.

North led the ♥6 from ♠KQ85 ♥A1096 ♦Q5 ♣985 and declarer put up dummy's king and ran the ♦J, North winning and exiting with a club. Declarer won with dummy's queen and cashed his winners for nine tricks.

West	North	East	South
Ye	De Leon	Kennedy	Sprinkhuizen
1♣*	Double	1♥*	Pass
2♥	Pass	2NT	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

1♣ 2+♣
1♥ Spades

Obviously a wheel came off here – a surprising one in the 23rd round of a competition.

The convention card says 1♥ is natural unless there is intervention, after which transfers are used. South led the ♥4 for the three, six and king and declarer could not avoid the loss of three hearts and a spade. That was a severe blow to England's hopes.

Recommended auction: Given a free run, anything along the lines of the Dutch auction is fine. The intervention should not make it too difficult to reach 3NT.

Marks: 3NT 10.

Running score: England 37 (35) Netherlands 44 (31)

Hand 7. Dealer North. None Vul.

♠ AK6		♠ Q982
♥ 63		♥ AJ10975
♦ KQ		♦ A64
♣ AKQ874		♣ –

West	North	East	South
Westerbeek	Natt	Van Overbeeke	Norton
–	Pass	1♥	Pass
2♣*	Pass	2♥	Pass
2♠*	Pass	3♦*	Pass
3♥*	Pass	4♦*	Pass
4NT*	Pass	5♥*	All Pass

2♣ Game forcing relay
2♠ Relay
3♥ Relay
4NT RKCB
5♥ 2 key cards

A spectator opined that this was a relay auction where West discovered that East was minimum with 4630, and decided not to bid a slam – a brave decision.

North held ♠J104 ♥KQ8 ♦J72 ♣J532 so there were 12 tricks.

West	North	East	South
Ye	De Leon	Kennedy	Sprinkhuizen
–	Pass	1♥	Pass
2♣*	Pass	2♠	Pass
3♣	Pass	3♥	Pass
3♠	Pass	3NT	Pass
4♣	Pass	4♦*	Pass
4NT*	Pass	5♥*	Pass
6NT	All Pass		

2♣ 12+, 2+♣
4♦ Cue-bid
4NT RKCB
5♥ 2 key cards

East's bidding strongly suggested he had at most one club.

Declarer won the lead of the ♦9 with dummy's king and played three rounds of clubs, claiming when the suit broke. The chance of 5 tricks in clubs is 66.53% but playing on hearts offers a 68.39% chance of 5 tricks.

Recommended auction: This is quite tricky – after 1♥-2♣-2♥ it looks reasonable to bid 3♣, but if partner then continues with 3NT West is not that well placed – considering that if East has a couple of clubs then you might have a good play for all the tricks. Maybe the answer is to bid 4♣, followed by 4NT over East's 4♥, which will lead to 6NT.

In the good old days the auction might have gone 1♥-3♣-3♥-4♣-4♥-4NT-5♥-6NT.

Marks: 6NT/6♥ 10, 5NT/5♥ 5.

Running score: England 47 (46) Netherlands 49 (31)

That revived England's hopes, but with just one deal remaining they

were still adrift of eighth place.

Hand 8. Dealer South. N/S Vul.

♠ 32	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> N </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> W E </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: center; align-items: center;"> S </div> </div>	♠ A109
♥ K5		♥ AQ7
♦ 532		♦ KQ1096
♣ KQ10973		♣ 65

West	North	East	South
Norton 3♣	Westerbeek All Pass	Natt	Van Overbeeke

North held ♠KJ8764 ♥J632 ♦84 ♣J so declarer was not hard pressed to take ten tricks.

West	North	East	South
<i>Sprinkhuizen</i>	Ye	<i>De Leon</i>	<i>Kennedy</i>
2♣*	Pass	2♥*	Pass
3♦*	Pass	3NT	All Pass
2♣	Weak with ♣ or any game force		
2♥	Relay		

South led the ♥10 and declarer won with the ace and played a club to the king. When the jack appeared it is clear that declarer should continue with clubs. South can win and switch to spades, but declarer can duck twice and must come to nine tricks. When declarer played a diamond to the king at trick three, South won and played a second heart, removing a vital entry. When the diamond finesse failed, declarer had to go one down.

Recommended auction: There is nothing wrong with opening 3♣. Were West to pass, North might open with a weak-two or a Multi, but it is not an automatic action. If East is allowed to open 1NT then West will at the very least invite game (I would be inclined to bid 3NT directly).

Marks: 3♣ 10, 3NT 8.

Running score: England 57 (51) Netherlands 57 (31)

England just won the match, 53-45 IMPs, 12.36-7.64 VP, but could not overtake Israel, who defeated Germany 27-24 IMPs, 10.94-9.06 VP. However, the Czech Republic lost 3-29 IMPs, 3.77-16.23 against Italy and that left them 0.56 adrift of England who secured the final qualification

spot at the last gasp. Congratulations to [Stephen Kennedy](#), Shahzaad Natt, [Ben Norton](#), Ian Robson, Eshan Singhal and Junyuan Ye, [David Bakhshi](#) (NPC) and [Andrew McIntosh](#) (Coach).

You can play through the deals mentioned in this article.

Just follow the link:

Hands 1-8

https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&-linurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=64468

You can also see how Sweden and Germany coped with these deals:

https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=64467



The Master Point Press Bidding Battle Set 19

Moderated by Brian Senior

This month's problems come from the recent APBF Championships in Singapore, the zonal qualifier for this September's world championships in Wuhan, China.

A couple of them seemed to be more of a problem in Singapore than for the panel, starting with an almost unanimous panel on Problem One.

PROBLEM 1

IMPs. Dealer East. All Vul.

- ♠ J104
- ♥ AKQJ85
- ♦ AJ92
- ♣ —

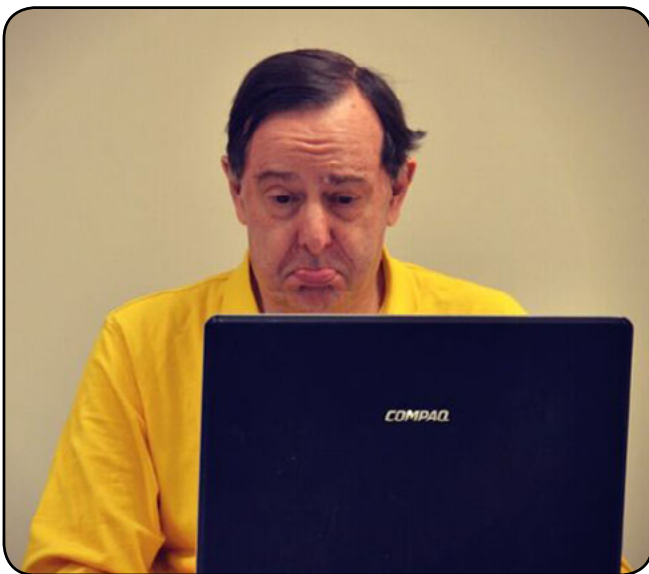
West	North	East	South
—	—	1♦	Pass
1♥	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♠	Double	Pass	Pass
3♦	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♣	Pass	4♦	Pass
?			

Bid	Votes	Marks
4♥	15	10
5♥	1	3

Lambardi: 4♥. I would have bid 4♦ and not 3♦ over the double of 2♠, to make clear that I am not looking for 3NT, that I have four-card support and that the kind of spade control I need is for slam purposes and not Qxx e.g. It would have also been better if he understood I was trying to get him to evaluate his diamonds in

THE BIDS & MARKS

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



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

view of a slam contract, i.e. to not be overly enthusiastic with weak diamonds and strength in clubs. As things stand I am not overly worried if he passes 4♥ – although this should not be read as an option, having not rebid hearts at any point. Partner has not redoubled 2♠ so we are at least off the first trick. With – at best – the K, we would need ♦KQxxx to make the slam. If he does have that holding, he should now bid a non-committal 4♠.

Mould: 4♥. This all depends on what a failure to bid over Two Spades (including Redouble) and then Three Spades rather than anything, mean. My beliefs are that (a) pard would have redoubled with the ace and nothing else to suggest NTs so we could right-side it with say Qx or Qxx; (b) would have bid NTs with a stop at

some point (and if not I get a new partner); and (c) would have bid something else with shortage by this stage. My view therefore is that pard has the dreaded xx or even xxx in spades (a hand such as ♠xxx ♥x ♦KQxxx ♣AKxx seems consist with her bidding to me. I therefore bid Four Hearts and hope (perhaps forlornly – after all I have only bid them once) that this is interpreted as a place to play. Given our Four Club bid last time it may well be that we have different agreements and Three Spades was a cue with diamonds agreed. Well, I can only bid as I see fit.

Stabell: 4♥. Do we have 2-3 quick spade losers? As I play it, partner's pass on 2♠ denies a spade control, in which case 3♦ was the wrong bid. Hope partner is on the same wavelength.

Brock: 4♥. I think I have bid this hand like a complete idiot. For me, when partner passes 2♠ he doesn't have a stopper or a half stopper or shortage, so why am I talking about playing in diamonds? I would have bid 4♥ when the double came back to me. Now, given that I have only bid hearts once, how is partner supposed to know I don't need any support? (I think his 3♠ was a last-ditch attempt to get a stopper out of me.) I guess he might have only a doubleton, so I will try 4♥ forlornly, expecting to be playing in 5♦ in a minute.

Apteker: 4♥. Don't mind whether partner thinks this is to play or a cue-bid as I have both. I do not believe partner can have a spade stopper in this auction unless he has a control. From his perspective we were still looking for the best game and so should have bid 3NT if he has spades stopped unless he has slam aspirations himself. I disagree with 4♣ and would have bid

4♥ last time round.

Sandsmark: 4♥. Cue-bid with diamond support. Hopefully Partner will go to Blackwood, whereupon I can jump to 6♣ (2 Aces and void in clubs). If he then bids 5NT, I will jump to 7♦. I don't think I have bid too well here: Why didn't I bid 5♣ over 3♠? That would in my book have been Exclusion Blackwood with void in clubs. I think that would bring us more safely into the best contract.

Bird: 4♥. Diamonds are agreed. I have shown my club control and will now show my heart control. Since 3♠ may have been merely a no-trump probe, it's possible that partner has no spade control and we belong in 4♥. Still, the ♠A and ♦KQxxx will give us a grand slam. All a bit tricky.

Kokish: 4♥. This is annoying, as our last game if we still have one might be 4♥, but after setting diamonds and showing a club control, we may not convince East that 4♥ is an offer to play. As 3♠ is entirely consistent with ♠xxx ♥x ♦KQxxx ♣AKxx, for example, and as North did not overcall 1♠, 3NT over 3♠ might well have been the winner and would not have precluded reaching 6♦ when East had more ambitious intentions with that 3♠ bid. Having decided against 3NT, perhaps 4♥ would have been more practical than 4♣ on a void in partner's second suit. In case I haven't explicitly said so, I do hate 4♣.

Teramoto: 4♥. It is suggesting to play, We may have three losers in spades. In that case, 5♦ will go down.

Green: 4♥. I think I would have bid 4♥ over 3♠ as I'm worried that we don't have a stopper at all. Partner could easily have ♠xxx ♥x ♦KQxxx ♣AKxx.

Smith: 4♥. This may be our last making contract, eg. opposite something like ♠xxx ♥x ♦KQ10xx ♣AQJx, which is quite consistent with partner's bidding so far.

Robson: 4♥. I'm really struggling with that 4♣ bid. Partner's 3♠ is for me not a cue-bid but a grope. I think he is 3-1-5-4 with three small spades (with ♠Qxx, he'd bid 3NT, with 2-2-5-4, he'd have bid 3♥ over 3♦). I think 4♥ now is a cue-bid as I didn't bid it a round earlier. But what else can I try, here? (I'm not passing by the way.)

I agree – 3♠ should be a grope towards no-trump, making the 4♣ bid highly suspect.

Alder: 4♥. We could be off three spade tricks, partner having something like: ♠xxx ♥x ♦KQ10xx ♣AKJx On a good day, hearts will be 4-3 – if partner passes! To be honest., I much prefer an initial 2♥ strong jump shift. Then 3♦ on the next round would facilitate the auction.

Sime: 4♥. Can partner have ♠xxx ♥x ♦KQxxx ♣AQxx? Yes. Will he pass Four Hearts? Probably not. Anyone for Strong Jump Shifts? Me.

Strong jump shifts, when properly used, can be very helpful, and it is hard to imagine a much more suitable hand than this one – 2♥ followed by 3♦ gets all the important information across so much more easily than when strong jump shifts are not available. As we see here, where the panel may be almost unanimous in their choice of bid, but are far from unanimous as to the meaning of their action or the advisability of our bidding to date.

Rigal: 4♥. The 3♠ call did not guarantee a control; I'm hoping that even with only the ♠K partner might do more than 5♦. Yes 4NT might be our last making spot facing ♠Qx; tant pis.



Marc Smith

The odd man out:

Zia: 5♥. Clearly asking for spade control but they may take three spades and then uppercut, so possibly even 4♥ goes down!

Well, 5♥ may be the best way to get to slam, but it is surely not the best way to avoid slam. I have to agree with the majority that 4♥. whether partner will take it as natural or not, is the best option open to us. If partner does not have a spade control, we will have to hope that he can pass as 4♥ is so likely to be the best spot. And, in your partnership, can partner have a spade control after his pass over 2♠ doubled? I agree with those who suggest that he would have done something different earlier in the auction if he held either a spade

stopper or a spade shortage. This auction is a mess. In real life, partner did indeed have a spade control. He held:

- ♠ A8
- ♥ 7
- ♦ KQ1074
- ♣ J10743

Presumably, he thought that to bid freely over 2♠ doubled would have shown a better hand. 7♦ was an easy make.

PROBLEM 2

IMPs. Dealer North. All Vul.

- ♠ K10985
- ♥ J
- ♦ Q754
- ♣ A97

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

Bid	Votes	Marks
2NT	13	10
2♠	1	3
3♣	1	3
Pass	1	2

Lambardi: 2♦. If it's not GF (my preference), 2NT otherwise. Tempted to content myself with 2♠ as spades will play better if partner has two. I fear NT will play badly; should partner Pass I am doomed probably. Yet passing 2♣ feels like wild guessing. Were 2♦ non - forcing, we could stop in 2♠ when partner is 2-5-2-4 and minimum as he should know to jump to 3♠ with

any 3-5-1-4.

For anyone else who is in any doubt, the system states that FSF is game-forcing, so Pablo's vote is transferred to 2NT.

A number of panellists mention the fact that they are vulnerable at IMPs, and cannot afford to miss game:

Green: 2NT. Passing 2♣ vulnerable at teams is not my cup of tea as game could easily be cold. 2NT keeps 3NT in the game and we may be able to stop in 3♣ depending on our agreements.

Teramoto: 2NT Invitation with usually diamonds stopped. I would like to avoid missing a vulnerable game at IMPs,

Kokish: 2NT. I kind of like the obscure false preference to 2♥, dislike pass, and cannot say that 2NT is a lovely bid, but it's more or less essential at IMPs

Alder: 2NT. This is an overbid, but we are vulnerable at IMPs.

Robson: 2NT. Ugly but we're vulnerable at Teams so I must show my values.

Smith: 2NT. I have to choose between the overbid (2NT) and the underbid (Pass), and vulnerable at IMPs I opt for the former. Passing could easily miss a good game if partner has some extra values (eg. ♠Q ♥KQ10xx ♦AJx ♣KJxx) but it is equally possible that any bid will carry us too high if partner has a minimum opening bid. There really is no middle ground here, since something like Two Hearts or Three Clubs is just as likely to turn a plus score into a minus.

Brock: 2NT. Horrible problem. 2♠ might be a better choice, but not if partner is void.

Apteker: 2NT. An overbid so not ideal but nothing is perfect.

Bird: 2NT. It's possible that Pass or 2♥ will work out better, but those actions have their own flaws.

They do indeed.

Zia: 2NT. I can't bear to bid 2♥, though would consider 2♠ at matchpoints as I might steal a lot of tricks before they catch on

Rigal: 2NT. The least worst option, and although I'm rarely one for predictions I guess the plurality will either bid 2NT or will defend their answer as the least unattractive call. Maybe, like me, both.

Yes, you got that spot on, Barry.

Mould: 2NT. An old chestnut. The classic "nothing fits" hand. The options are as they have always been: (a) overbid with 2NT (and also potentially wrong side it); (b) bid Two Hearts and hope to survive; (c) Pass and hope we have no game on. My long experience is that whatever I do on these hands is the wrong thing to do, so I await cleverer panellists to tell me what I should be doing, and in future I will do that.

There were three solo efforts:

Sime: 2♠. Constructive playing Weak Jump Shifts (as previous, not my preference). I am a spade short, but this might play as well as any other partial, and keeps the auction live in case we have game.

Yes, 2♠ would indeed be constructive due to our use of weak jump shifts. It therefore gets the strength of our hand across, perhaps better than does 2NT, but it rather overstates the spades.

Stabell: 3♣. Looks ugly, but I am too strong to pass and 2NT will wrong-side the contract.

All of that is true, and 3♣ would have worked well on the actual deal, for what that is worth.

Sandsmark: Pass. 2♣ is not forcing, and the whole shit smells of misfit!

Well, Tommy could be the only panellist to go plus on the deal. However, I would like this choice more at matchpoints, where the frequency of gain is more important than at IMPs, when the size of the gain becomes more significant. I'll go with the 2NT overbid, though of course understanding that it is just that – an overbid.

Partner held:

♠ 6
♥ AK8765
♦ 10
♣ KJ1085

and hearts were three-three with the ♣Q with North so that either 4♥ or 5♣ could be made.



Tommy Sandsmark

PROBLEM 3

IMPs. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

♠ KQ943
♥ 5
♦ A53
♣ K764

West	North	East	South
–	3♥	Pass	4♥
?			

Bid	Votes	Marks
Double	8	10
4♠	5	8
Pass	3	5

Firstly, it is man or mouse time (or should that be person or mouse?). ‘Eek, eek,’ say:

Lambardi: Pass. At least on paper. 4♠ can obviously be a big winner as partner can have been kept out of the bidding with a balanced hand. But it can also end in a hefty penalty against a non-making game. Would probably try 4♠ at Pairs.

Sandsmark: Pass. It is tempting to double since you can support any suit from partner. However, partner may pass down your double, and then you will not feel too well. There are six losers in your hand and therefore to find a cheap sacrifice can easily become a Pyrrhic victory (costs more than it tastes). Better safe than sorry!

Stabell: Pass. Bidding could easily be right or possibly very wrong.

The ‘persons’ were split between 4♠ and double. First, the more committal action:

Rigal: 4♠. Again we may not like it but the Devil (RHO) made us do it. Wouldn’t be surprised to

make Six (♠Jxxx ♥Axx ♦KQxxx ♣Ax) or go down 800. But do it confidently and LHO wont double when he should or will save with his singleton spade in front of his partner’s ♠AJ10xx.

Alder: 4♠. Now tell me it would have cost 1400 at the table! Obviously, pass and double could work better.

Bird: 4♠. It’s a complete guess. Should I pass, doggedly preserving my reputation as a timid underbidder? Or should I head for a big number in one or other column? My lucky coin has come down tails, so I will go for it and bid 4♠. (I realize my learned analysis will not be much use for readers who do not have a lucky coin.)

Smith: 4♠. Pass, Double and Four Spades are all possible, and any of the three could be horribly wrong. If RHO has raised with a heart fit and an a couple of high cards, then both Four Hearts and Four Spades could be making, or Four Hearts could be a cheap save against out game. If he has raised with no real heart fit and a good hand, then Four Spades may be an 1100 phantom when partner has a couple of trump tricks to defeat their heart game. Double is no more certain to get you to the right spot, as partner will not pull to Four Spades on Jxx when that is where you should be.

Brock: 4♠. Would I be so brave at the table? I think so. The odds must favour partner having some sort of near weak NT.

Well, how good the odds are is unclear – once in a while partner will be very weak – but we don’t need so much to make acting a winner, we just need for what partner has to be in the right places.

Green: Double. Caters for partner passing as well as a possible minor suit contract or 3NT.

4♠ should suggest at least six here.

Teramoto: Double. T/O of Hearts, 4♠ is in dangerous with only these Spades.

Mould: Dble. It is double or Four Spades. Pass could be right, but in the modern game we all bid. Usually we bid Four Spades (and certainly if it had gone 2♥ – Pass – 3♥ I would bid Three Spades) but here double is just so more flexible and gives partner so many more options. And yes I do appreciate that sometimes those options will be – 690 and – 1100...

Apteker: Double I am a bidder so it is either 4♠ or double. The fifth spade makes it close but the double once again trumps on grounds of flexibility.

Kokish: Double. Perhaps it’s craven not to bid 4♠ like a man, but as 4♥ could be almost anything at this score, it’s more discreet to involve other strains and the possibility of defending 4♥ when that’s best.

Sime: Double. This month’s guess. We are potentially in Double Game Swing territory. I will risk a double and hope not to lose 800 or more for their game.

Robson: Double. The danger of bidding 4♠ at these colours is the big number. It may be that – 590 is my smallest minus if I act, but passing is not my style

Zia: Double. In case of ♠x ♥xx ♦KQxxxx ♣Axx

Yes, Zia’s example would be a big winner for the double, but generally, double is so much more flexible than 4♠. Yes, it misses the five-three spade fit, but it picks up some minor-suit contracts and also penalties when partner can pass. I think that the potential benefits of acting outweigh the risk of going for a number, and that double’s flexibility

makes it a better option than 4♠.

Partner held:

♠ AJ2
♥ 632
♦ 6
♣ AJ10952

and 12 tricks were easy in either black suit.

PROBLEM 4

IMPs. Dealer South. None Vul.

♠ AKQ9
♥ Q
♦ A83
♣ AKJ86

West	North	East	South
–	–	–	Pass
1♣	1♥	1♠*	Pass
?			
1♠	Five-plus cards		

Bid	Votes	Marks
4NT	7	10
3♥	6	10
4♦	1	8
2♥	1	2
4♥	1	2

There is the simple approach:

Brook: 4NT. Surely can't be worse than on the club finesse.

Kokish: 4NT. OMG it's a real KeyCard bid. Could be a Four or Six hand depending on whether we have a club loser or enough club winners, but it would be unlucky to have no play for Six and Seven might be easy. Thank you for slipping in that 1♣ opening which might attract some

snarky comments from religious point counters. A side note: If one splinters and then bids 4NT over a sign-off, that would normally imply a void unless there were another way to do so.

Alder: 4NT. If I bid, say, 4♥ and partner rebids 4♠ (which really would be a surprise!!), would I really pass? No way!

Rigal: 4NT. This looks familiar with slam making on a minor-suit squeeze; if my partner cannot play slams maybe I shouldn't risk it. But since I KNOW partner won't cooperate why ask him his opinion? Blackwood and slam and blame him in the post mortem.

Mould: 4NT. Cannot see anything better and cannot see how I can identify whether pard has ♣xxxx or not. Since ♠xxxxx ♥xxx ♦xxx ♣xx gives us decent play for a slam I shall just drive.

Stabell: 4NT. Can't stop below slam now – happy it didn't go all pass on 1♣. Agree with 4NT and hope my partner plays for the squeeze. Or did South perhaps lead a club at my table?

Yes, slam was excellent but a bad club break meant that the suit could not be ruffed out and a squeeze was required.

Lambardi: 4NT. I am a rather diehard fan of Blackwood whenever it is at all usable. I know many would raise an eyebrow at such savagery but I will play Six whether he has ♥A or not (secretly hoping he doesn't as he must then be cold in 6♠. The real problem will come later, if he does have the ace, as we would need a firm understanding or a deep reading of the situation by him when I invite Seven through 5 NT

I have to confess to a liking for Blackwood in all its forms, however, while 4NT tied for the top vote, the majority preferred to go more slowly.

Bird: 2♥. There is no rush to bid 4NT. I will agree spades on the next round and see what information I can obtain.

But 2♥ doesn't agree spades, it merely shows a strong hand. Surely it must be right to let partner know why we are getting excited?

Teramoto: 4♥. SPL raise, it shows GF a with a stiff heart and four-card spade support. I think it should have four spades even if partner showed five or more. Because, number of support is important for slam judgement. Then bid 4NT if partner bids 4♠ over 4♥.

Sime: 3♥. Easy to mini-splinter here and find out what partner thinks of his hand. A Three Spade response would be non-forcing, but I will still look for slam. 4NT now is premature; a no-space Four Hearts splinter is for those who didn't think of Three Hearts.

Yes, as will be mentioned again below, 4♥ should surely show a void.

Green: 3♥. Showing a splinter (game forcing I hope) gets across the spade across and possible aspiration for slam. 4♥ for me would show a void. I would have opened 2♣ on this as I would be worried about playing in 1♣ with game making.

Tommy agrees that 3♥ is GF:

Sandsmark: 3♥. Shortage with excellent spade fit. GF, and if partner cue-bids, I will be happy to have started the bidding in the best possible way! It is my conviction that most of the jurors are going to show their short hearts here.

But Alon and, for what it worth, yours truly, do not.

Apteker: 3♥. I assume a splinter hoping to hear any cooperation from partner before launching into Keycard. If partner signs off with 3♠, I will

bid 4♣ and follow up 4♠ with 5♣ so that partner can value the Q♣ which would be enough for slam to make.

Robson: 3♥. Unlimited splinter, giving partner the room to show a little interest. Mind you, I'm so ginormous, I'm pretty-much driving to slam anyway.

Smith: 3♥. Splinter. Whether a jump to Four Hearts is also a splinter is a matter for partnership agreement, although with Three Hearts available to show a singleton, it seems that the extra level should promise a void. There is also the tactical advantage of 3♥ over 4♥: over 4♥, do you really expect partner to bid anything

other than 4♠ with ♠Jxxxx ♥xxx ♦Kxx ♣Qx? Indeed, you do not even need him to hold the ♦K or ♠J to make slam cold. By bidding only 3♥, though, you can at least advance with Four Clubs over his expected Three Spades. How you get him to co-operate when all you need for slam is ♠xxxxx ♥xxx ♦xxx ♣Qx is a moot point, but Three Hearts seems to be the best way to start at least.

And finally, a bit of low cunning:

Zia: 4♦ then Key-card. I prefer a heart lead.

And that might just help you to get one. I like it. Failing the psychic splinter, however, I'll go for the more normal 3♥ splinter, which I believe to be, initially, not game-forcing.

PROBLEM 5

IMPs. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ AK5
♥ KJ
♦ 98
♣ AKJ962

West	North	East	South
–	–	4♥	Pass
?			

Bid	Votes	Marks
Pass	6	10
4♠	5	10
4NT	2	8
5♣	1	8
5♦	1	6
6♥	1	6

A matter of knowing partner's style and your own philosophy – better to risk missing slam or to risk

trying for or bidding slam then going down.

First, the pessimists – realists?

Green: Pass. The five level isn't safe. Picture partner with eight hearts to the queen and we could lose the first three tricks. At favourable vulnerability in first seat I always try to give partner plenty of leeway.

Robson: Pass. Partner could have ♥Q1098xxxx and out.

Yes, he could.

Rigal: Pass. If we don't have a way to ask for a diamond control I pass and am taking my ball and going off to sulk on my own. Here, 5♣ to ask for diamond control would maybe do the job...there again at this vulnerability maybe passing is OK.

Brock: Pass. At this vulnerability partner could have just about any hand with an 8-card suit.

Mould: Pass. Partly a function of pard's style, and partly just random. Does pard have ♠ – ♥Qxxxxxxx ♦xxxx ♣x or does pard have ♠x ♥AQxxxxxx ♦x ♣Qxx? Pard certainly should not have two aces IMHO. There is also the matter of how I go on. Do I bid 4NT, find pard with one key card, bid 6♥ and find pard with ♠x ♥AQxxxxxx ♦xx ♣x? Or do I bid Five Clubs, asking for a diamond control, get Five Diamonds, bid Six Hearts and find pard with ♠x ♥Qxxxxxxx ♦KQx ♣xx? Maybe I should bid Five Clubs and then Five Hearts over Five Diamonds and trust pard to go on when they have the right hand? That is probably correct. Hell, I have written Pass now and cannot be bothered changing it.

Teramoto: Pass, If bid 6♥, they lead usually from better suit, because the 4♥ opening shows a very long suit and they try to take tricks quickly.



Andrew Robson

They certainly should lead from their best suit and that could be bad news for us on this occasion.

The gamblers:

Lambardi: 4NT. I am happy to risk 6♥ with no guarantee of a diamond control. We surely have 12 tricks on any other lead and it may be our best chance of bidding Seven should partner have ♠x ♥AQxxxxx ♦Axx ♣x. We don't need to worry about whether he (or I) would open 4♥ on that type of hand. A moot point by now. Cueing will probably muddle us out of a cold grand and force us to keep out of Six when a diamond control is lacking, as opps will have been given a road map.

Stabell: 4NT. I could presumably cue-bid and tell the opponents to lead a diamond. Or gamble that one ace is enough. I try the latter, and South (who cannot tell which slam I am heading for) might double 5♦ if we have two quick losers in the suit. Then, I hope my pass will show that we have enough aces but that diamonds is a problem.

Alder: 6♥. Five Diamonds. This is a perfect hand for Roman Key Card Blackwood. You bid a suit to show two (or more) immediate losers in this suit. Partner signs off with two (or more) losers also; otherwise, answers as if partner used RKCB. If that response is not in our system, I will jump to 6♥!

Good idea but...

And the scientists:

Smith: 4♠. Surely partner will have at least ♥AQ10xxxx, and probably an eighth trump too. True, the least likely singleton for him to hold is diamonds, but surely we can underwrite the 5-level, so giving him a chance to cue-bid will

get us to slam when he does have a diamond control.

Bird: 4♠. There are several possibilities. I could raise to 6♥, not assisting the defenders with their lead. Similarly, I could bid RKCB, which would at least pick up the grand when partner has both red aces. I will go for the straightforward approach, cue-bidding to discover if partner has a diamond control. No, I am not worried that partner will pass.

Sime: 4♠. Cue-bid (do not fight partner's major). Once upon a time we would gamble 6♥ here, and only go down if opening leader had ♦AK or an honour sequence in diamonds. Opening leaders have wised up. Slams missing two cashers have become worse than 20%. I think that the five level should be safe, so I will try to establish whether partner can control diamonds.

Apteker: 4♠. Would like to hear 5♦ from partner, where after I will jump to 6♥. The five level looks safe so passing is too conservative. Once you decide to move, punting 6♥ or going through 4NT has merit, hoping for South to be unable to find the diamond lead or for partner to have the ♦K or unlikely shortage. Problem with that strategy is that If South has either the ace or king of diamonds, he should lead it.

Kokish: 4♠. 5♦, if we're playing asking bids, 4♠ or 5♣ if we're playing cue-bids, 4NT if we're prepared to excuse that as a tactical effort, 6♥ if we're playing poker. I guess Zia would bid 5♦ as a cue-bid.

Eric mentions asking bids and that is Zia's preferred approach. Of course, while asking bids have a lot of merit in this situation, we don't play them in NBMS.

Zia: 5♦. I do play five of a minor = bid Six with a control, so let's try it.

And lastly:

Sandsmark: 5♣. Wow! This one is problematic. You cannot pass, for that may be disastrous for you. Nor can you bid 4♠ as partner is likely to pass. 4NT will for sure be RKCB, but it brings you no closer to the target. How can you find out partner's ♦ holding? If he is void in diamonds, this may well be an excellent grand slam. I think I will bid 5♣, hoping that partner will believe it to be a Cue-bid with heart support. Then, if partner says 5♥, I will pass, and if he can CubBid 5♦, I think I will land in 6♥. There is no point in being too greedy here, for there is no bid that can bring you safely into a grand slam!

Does anyone else have doubts about the meaning of 4♠? I can imagine an argument that 'I should not have to pass your 4♥ opening when I have seven solid spades and no hearts', and of course we would indeed want to be able to convert to 4♠ on such a hand. I have played in partnerships where the agreement was that converting to 4♠ was indeed to play, while five of a minor agreed partner's suit. So, a bit of a novelty this, I do have sympathy with Tommy on this occasion, albeit the rest of the panel do not seem to share his concern.

I open 4♥ aggressively but I think I would move and, with this panel, I can afford for my move to be a 4♠ cue-bid. The majority of the panel also make a move.

In real life there were two diamonds to lose, but only if the defence takes them. In the match I was watching, one defender found the killing lead, the

other did not, so I'm not sure if that proves anything. Partner held:

♠ J4
♥ A10875432
♦ J2
♣ 8

PROBLEM 6

IMPs. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

♠ 87
♥ 8
♦ AKQJ107
♣ A1097

West	North	East	South
–	–	Pass	3♠
?			

Bid	Votes	Marks
4♦	15	10
3NT	1	5
5♦	0	2
Dble	0	2

An unpleasant problem to have, but an almost unanimous panel.

Green: 4♦. I can't bring myself to pass and 3NT is too risky missing stoppers in both suits.

Brock: 4♦. Can I bid this? I wouldn't be able to in my regular partnerships and would have to bid 5♦ (if at all). I'll go for it either way.

Teramoto: 4♦. If we have Game, it is more likely to be 3NT than 5♦, but in this situation I can't ask stopper. 3NT overcall may be good with nine-trick hand without stopper, but I don't have that this time.

Lambardi: 4♦. If available as a natural bid. This

bypasses 3NT which could easily be the only making game but Double (which could lead to it) might get us in big trouble. Do not dare Pass as it won't help us to get there anyway and might allow LHO to make a sneaky raise and keep us out. I am not overly concerned about correcting a 4♥ to 5♦ and going a couple off, but would not like to have partner bidding happily his long suit over a pre-emptive raise to 4♠.

Stabell: 4♦. A 3NT experiment might work, but would most likely result in 600 the wrong way. Hope partner has a natural 4NT available now.

I think he should have a natural 4NT available to him.

Apteker: 4♦. Bidding what is in front of me. Obviously double could work fetching 3NT or 4♣/5♣ or bidding 4NT could find the ♣ fit but those bids have too many flaws.

Sandsmark: 4♦. You have only five losers, and if partner has nothing, the enemy may well have a slam their way. If I don't bid, it will be too easy for them to find out.

A slam? Well, I suppose they might, but no-one else is quite such a pessimist.

Smith: 4♦. Since NBMS does not include non-Leaping Michaels in this situation, I'll take advantage and overcall my suit at the four-level. In the real world, I'd have to choose between pass and Five Diamonds, and two low spades makes a jump to the five-level particularly unattractive when a sensible alternative is available. I'm guessing you're going to tell me that if I double partner will bid 3NT, which has nine top tricks and is the only game we can make. Well, I'm just not good enough to find that.

Kokish: 4♦. As this feature treats 4♦ as NAT

rather than both red suits, we could do that easily enough, but if 3NT is our only game, we've got to bid it here and now. I'd bid 3NT at Pairs and I confess I might bid it at IMPs too. Anyone who doubles, hoping to reach 3NT from East's side is fibbing and short-sighted, at that. Too many bad scenarios.

Yes, double will fetch a heart bid from partner so often that to double in the hope of hearing 3NT is a wild gamble. And when partner does have a spade stopper he may be passing his balanced ten-count, when our hand will not be nearly as useful on defense as it would be on offense.

Alder: 4♦. I would double if I knew partner would advance with 3NT – but that is so unlikely. Maybe I should jump to 5♦.

Bird: 4♦. Since the NBM system treats this as natural, I will take advantage of that. I don't remember ever making such a bid at the table.

Sime: 4♦. It seems that we play this as natural. If not, I would bid Five Diamonds even opposite a passed partner. I suspect that 3NT was a winner, but too rich for me (I might try it at matchpoints).

Zia: 4♦.

Rigal: 4♦. Well I can't bid 3NT and in my methods I can't bid 4♦ (as that would be ♦+♥). Are you saving me from myself or asking me to bid 4♦. I bid it so that if it doesn't work I can blame you.

We are good to you in this feature, where 4♦ is natural and not two-suited. Say thank you, Barry.

Mould: 4♦. We don't play non-Leaping Michaels. I cannot stomach 3NT with the lead coming through, so I will bid my diamond suit. Boring I know.

A number of panellists have mentioned the fact

that 3NT is our most likely game, but none have had the courage(?), or some rather different term, to choose it. The odd one out is Andrew:

Robson: 3NT. Don't we all.

No, apparently we do not. I confess to not having the nerve to do this myself with the lead coming through partner's spade holding, but you have to admire the nerve of the bid. I would bid 3NT had 3♠ been opened on my left, hoping to find partner with a stopper.

Partner held:

- ♠ J64
- ♥ KJ1093
- ♦ 6
- ♣ KJ65

There was a stiff ace of spades so that the suit was blocked, and any of 3NT, 5♦ and 5♣ could be made, North holding the ♣Q.

PROBLEM 7

IMPs. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

- ♠ Q9854
- ♥ 9
- ♦ AKQ2
- ♣ KJ9

West	North	East	South
–	–	1♥	Pass
1♠	Pass	3♥	Pass
?			

Bid	Votes	Marks
3NT	7	10
4♥	4	8
4♣	2	5
4NT	2	4
4♦	1	3

The majority took cautious approaches to this hand. First:

Sime: 4♥. Partner thinks that he has about seven tricks. I think that I have another three or four. Perhaps I have five more, but perhaps his seven tricks were predicated upon doubleton trump support.

Smith: 4♥. Yes, partner could have exactly the right hand for slam (ie. ♠K ♥AKQJxx ♦xxx ♣Axx, but Hamman's third law forbids trying to find out if that day is today.

Kokish: 4♥. Great problem as anything from 3NT to 6♥ could be right, much depending on whether East has very short spades or one-loser/solid hearts. As both 4♣ and 4♦ cast doubt on control in the other minor or figure to endplay East in the auction, trying for 6♥ that way is awkward, and bidding 3NT might be the only way to go minus if East is (say) 3-6-3-1 with a heart loser and spades weaker than AKx. Not to mention that an Acoll-style 3♥ has a lower minimum than other non-strong-club systems.

Oh, OK, I never realised that.

Alder: 4♥. Very cautious. If 4♦ were definitely a control-bid, that would have considerable appeal, but what would I do with a long spade-diamond two-suiter? (*In the Acoll Index Eric Crowhurst says that 4dx is a cue bid.* Editor)

My partnerships have always had the agreement that we have to rebid 3♠ with such a hand, leaving 4♣/♦ available as cue-bids agreeing hearts. No, it isn't ideal, and it doesn't work very well when the spades are weak, as here, so that we can't afford to rebid them.

The alternative cautious action is:

Green: 3NT. With a singleton heart I don't think



Eric Kokish

my hand is that great (else I might try a quantitative 4NT) so I'll go low and take the plus.

Sandsmark: 3NT. Also a difficult bidding problem, and about every bid you can make may be a blessing or bring a disaster. I believe it is better to keep your feet firmly on the ground in cases like this. I am afraid that if I bid 4♣/♦, partner will see this as a cue-bid with heart support. My spades are not strong enough to be repeated, and every move towards a slam will be like a blind punch-drunk boxer.

Stabell: 3NT. A tad heavy, but we might have a misfit if partner has upgraded his spade fit. ♠Kxx ♥AQ10xxxx ♦x ♣AQ would not be unreasonable. With more and self-supporting hearts,

I might hope for a cue-bid on the way to 4♥.

A hope shared by:

Brock: 3NT. Quickly. Not so much because I think it will be a better contract than 4♥, but if partner has a hand where she doesn't need to have any heart support so can always cue on her way to 4♥. I don't think the five level is necessarily safe.

Rigal: 3NT. Not artificial and though partner might not realise my minors are this way round I won't mind what he does. Again I can surely blame him if it is wrong.

Robson: 3NT. A bad good hand.

Bird: 3NT. Yes, a slam is possible, but 4NT would be RKCB and there is no easy way to investigate 6NT.

Would it? That might depend on what 4♣/♦ mean. If they agree hearts then perhaps these next two have the right understanding regarding a jump to 4NT.

Apteker: 4NT Quantitative as 4♣/♦ should be control showing while agreeing hearts. If I bid 3♠ which is forcing and only promises five in an attempt to try find three-card support, partner may be a bit jammed and unable to bid 3NT comfortably for lack of a diamond stopper and may raise to 4♠ with a doubleton believing my spades to be better.

Zia: 4NT. I play; 4NT = natural, 4♣, 1 agree hearts

Lambardi: 4♦. Would 4♥ by partner now show an extra/solid hearts or would it be partner's only option with less than three spades? Would he bid 4NT as natural when his hearts are not good to play opposite shortness? If so, I would probably Blackwood over 4♥ and pass 4NT.

Teramoto: 4♣. Cue and slam try. It needs very good Hearts and a good hand for slam.

Mould: 4♣. Worth a try despite the lack of real support. Pard could have ♠x ♥AKQJxxx ♦xx ♣Axx perfectly easily for example.

As Eric says, either 4♣ or 4♦ could endplay partner if he lacks control of the other minor. What will he do with Alan's example hand over 4♣? Holding two low diamonds is a serious problem, I would have thought. Perhaps we will see that problem in a future article? My inclination is to go for 3NT. Though that may occasionally work out poorly when it ends the auction, I trust partner to bid 4♣ on the way to 4♥ with the examples suggested by Alan and Marc, and now we are off to the races.

PROBLEM 8

IMPs. Dealer East. All Vul.

♠ J6
♥ 7
♦ AQJ4
♣ KQ10864

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

Bid	Votes	Marks
4♦	9	10
Dble	3	6
4NT	2	4
5♦	1	3
4♥	1	2

There seems to be a lot of panel confusion

regarding the forcing nature of a 4♦ bid in this sequence. Firstly, the system we play is two-over-one so, simplistically, 2♣ is GF. Secondly, even if we only play that after a 1♥/♠ opening, surely the combination of 2♣ response and 4♦ continuation in a sequence where partner has done nothing to confirm long diamonds, must be forcing. The only time that we would consider bidding clubs while holding genuine diamond support is when we hold a game-forcing hand, otherwise we would show some kind of invitational diamond raise at our first turn. Anyway, I suppose I had better let the panel have its say.

Green: Double. My first thought was to bid 5♦. However, if partner bids 3NT then I can bid 4♦ (must be forcing) and possibly get to the magic slam when partner hold something like ♠Ax ♥xxx ♦Kxxxxx ♣Ax (perhaps I'm dreaming that we will ever get there).

Lambardi: Double. Not sure that 3NT will play better than diamonds but I must take the chance, as 5♦ could easily be down off the top (including a spade ruff). If partner has the expected four hearts (and chooses to bid them instead of 3NT with ♠K(10)x, I'll convert to 5♦. I have a (small) hope LHO might have bid on 6-4-x-xx (as, where are the hearts?) and might run into a nasty penalty pass. Partner may consider that, if I did have four hearts I may have bid them myself in some combinations, so showing his hearts should be by no means automatic.

Sime: Double. System says "Two Clubs is Game forcing." System says that "partner can be 4-4-3-2." Maybe North's pre-empt and partner's pass makes 4-4-3-2 less likely. System doesn't say what double under the pre-empt means, but

shouldn't be penalty. That doesn't mean that Three Spades doubled won't be 800. If partner has some sort of weak 1NT, Five Diamonds might be down by trick three. 3NT might make, but we won't be playing the hand.

Zia: 5♦. Too much danger in doubling. *Clearly sees partner either passing or bidding hearts over double as all too likely.*

Smith: 4♥. Double would show hearts, so this should (hopefully) be taken as a cue-bid agreeing partner's suit. He did open the bidding, so ♠Ax ♥Jxxx ♦K10xxx ♣Ax surely isn't too much to ask for.

I'm a long way from being convinced that partner will take this as other than natural, or that double promises hearts. And as I am completely happy that 4♦ should be forcing, I see no reason to take what looks to me to be a very big risk.

Mould: 4NT. Pick a minor in my view. Unless doubling Three Spades was penalties (entirely reasonable in 2/1) then pard could even still be 4-4-3-2 for example. Double is fine if it gets 3NT, but it is way too likely to get Four Hearts (after all no one else seems to have the suit).

But:

Sandsmark: 4NT! OMG! 3NT is absolutely out of the question. 4♦ is a huge underbid, 4♣ will not help partner to understand that we have an excellent fit that could even make a vulnerable slam if partner holds the right cards. 4♥ will never be understood at all and 4♠ will be a huge lie. 4NT must set diamonds as trumps, and be RKCB. As far as I can see, this is the only bid that will maintain some degree of control.

Not sure that we have a good enough hand to take control with RKCB, even if we are confident

that partner will take 4NT as having that meaning. And equally not sure that we need a pick-a-minor bid as partner will naturally give preference to 5♣ over 4♦ if he is really the dreaded 4-4-3-2 and doesn't prefer a natural 4NT himself.

Robson: 4♦. Double. Don't like my earlier 2♣, prefer a bid that tells partner diamonds are trumps (inverted raise, splinter etc). But we are where we are and unless 4♦ is forcing (in which case you can change my answer to 4♦) I have no other call apart from 5♦ and Double.

Rigal: 4♦. No reason to do anything extravagant since partner's pass is forcing and slam might still be good (or game no play). Yes a 5♦ call is worth considering but not with this hand (♠xx ♥xx ♦AQJx ♣AKJxx for concentrated minor cards no major controls).

Teramoto: 4♦. This may be NF, depends on agreement. But this hand may have three losers.

Brock: 4♦. I could double but then I wouldn't know whether or not to pass 3NT, so I'll go for the more straightforward approach.

Apteker: 4♦ We are in a GF so I can show my support and take it from there.

Stabell: 4♦. Surely forcing, but I wouldn't mind if partner thinks otherwise.

Kokish: 4♦. While some would argue that this is non-forcing, it's wildly impractical to build a bidding system of stopping on a farthing at 4m after a 2/1 in a new suit. Sure, we might not have a game, but doubling doesn't describe this shape and honour location or solve our level problem. If the system dictates that 4♦ is NF, I'd bid 5♦, shrugging my shoulders in air quotes.

Alder: 4♦. Why not? Even in Acol (instead of two-over-one game-forcing), this ought to be

forcing. Yes, I could jump to 5♦ – maybe I should. **Bird:** 4♦. I look forward to seeing why this bid is wrong. Perhaps because I am writing this answer before my first morning cup of coffee, I can't see any reasonable alternative.

Neither can I, David, neither can I.

Congratulations to our joint-winners, Sally and Barry, with 78 points apiece.



Sally Brock



Barry Rigal

SET 19 – THE PANEL’S BIDS & MARKS

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
Sally Brock	England	4♥	2NT	4♠	4NT	Pass	4♦	3NT	4♦	78
Barry Rigal	USA	4♥	2NT	4♠	4NT	Pass	4♦	3NT	4♦	78
Ben Green	England	4♥	2NT	Dble	3♥	Pass	4♦	3NT	Dble	76
Eric Kokish	Canada	4♥	2NT	Dble	4NT	4♠	4♦	4♥	4♦	76
Andrew Robson	England	4♥	2NT	Dble	3♥	Pass	3NT	3NT	4♦	75
Tadashi Teramoto	Japan	4♥	2NT	Dble	4♥	Pass	4♦	4♣	4♦	67
Alon Apteker	South Africa	4♥	2NT	Dble	3♥	4♠	4♦	4NT	4♦	74
Phillip Alder	USA	4♥	2NT	4♠	4NT	6♥	4♦	4♥	4♦	72
David Bird	England	4♥	2NT	4♠	2♥	4♠	4♦	3NT	4♦	70
Alan Mould	England	4♥	2NT	Dble	4NT	Pass	4♦	4♣	4NT	69
Marc Smith	England	4♥	2NT	4♠	3♥	4♠	4♦	4♥	4♥	68
Iain Sime	Scotland	4♥	2♠	Dble	3♥	4♠	4♦	4♥	Dble	67
Leif-Erik Stabell	Zimbabwe	4♥	3♣	Pass	4NT	4NT	4♦	3NT	4♦	66
Pablo Lambardi	Argentina	4♥	2NT	Pass	4NT	4NT	4♦	4♦	Dble	62
Tommy Sandmark	Norway	4♥	Pass	Pass	3♥	5♣	4♦	3NT	4NT	59
Zia Mahmood	USA	5♥	2NT	Dble	4♦	5♦	4♦	4NT	5♦	54



Master Point Bidding Battle Competition – Set 20

Open to All – Free Entry

PROBLEM 1

Pairs. Dealer North. All Vul.

♠ KQJ7
♥ 5
♦ 98764
♣ AK8

West	North	East	South
–	Pass	Pass	1NT*
Pass	2♠*	Pass	3♣*
Pass	Pass	Double	Pass
?			
1NT 15-17			
2♠ Clubs			
3♣ Likes clubs			

PROBLEM 2

Pairs. Dealer West. N/S Vul.

♠ AK954
♥ Q87
♦ 74
♣ J105

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	1♥*	Pass
1♠	Pass	Pass	Double
?			
1♥ Playing four-card majors and weak no trump			

Send entry to biddingbattle@newbridgemag.com or enter via the website www.newbridgemag.com.

Entries to arrive before the end of the month.

PROBLEM 3

Pairs. Dealer North. All Vul.

♠ AKQ10
♥ Q4
♦ Q9754
♣ 84

West	North	East	South
–	Pass	Pass	3♣
?			

PROBLEM 4

Pairs. Dealer South. N/S Vul.

♠ A
♥ AK9
♦ A62
♣ KJ9654

West	North	East	South
–	–	–	Pass
1♣	Pass	1♥	Pass
?			

PROBLEM 5

Pairs. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

♠ KJ
♥ AKQ86
♦ 2
♣ AQ954

West	North	East	South
–	–	–	3♦
Double	4♦	4♠	Pass
?			

PROBLEM 6

Pairs. Dealer South. All Vul.

♠ KJ976
♥ AK
♦ 5
♣ KQJ53

West	North	East	South
–	–	–	Pass
1♠	Pass	4♣*	Pass
?			
4♣ Splinter			

PROBLEM 7

Pairs. Dealer South. All Vul.

♠ 6
♥ AQ732
♦ AKJ8
♣ Q52

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

PROBLEM 8

Pairs. Dealer West. None Vul.

♠ KQJ642
♥ 6
♦ AK532
♣ K

West	North	East	South
1♠	Pass	1NT	Double
?			

A New Bridge Magazine Bidding System

Attention!!!

The Bidding System will be modified – It will be updated next month as per Brian’s comments in his recent moderations.

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.



WEST

Hands for the
August 2019 The uBid Auction Room

Bid these hands with those on the last 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 South. Both Vul.

♠ 63
♥ 103
♦ A1098
♣ KQ943

South overcalls 2♥ and North raises to 3♥.

Hand 2. Dealer West. E/W Vul.

♠ 65
♥ QJ98
♦ KQ72
♣ Q92

North opens 2♠

Hand 3. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

♠ AQ3
♥ Q98542
♦ Q84
♣ 4

North opens 1♣, 2+♣

Hand 4. Dealer West. None Vul

♠ AK9876
♥ 9
♦ J72
♣ K93

North overcalls 4♥.

Hand 5. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

♠ 95
♥ Q52
♦ A2
♣ KQJ983

South opens 3♦ and North raises to 4♦.

Hand 6. Dealer West. Both Vul.

♠ J7
♥ Q873
♦ A82
♣ AK74

Hand 7. Dealer North. None Vul.

♠ AK6
♥ 63
♦ KQ
♣ AKQ874

Hand 8. Dealer South. N/S Vul.

♠ 32
♥ K5
♦ 532
♣ KQ10973

MASTER POINT BIDDING BATTLE



Results – Set 18

Only 30 readers sent in their answers this month – remember that only five entries are needed to get a place in the year's end trophy, so no reason not to continue to send in your entries!

First place this month was deserved for **Nelson Pearson**, with a score of 73. Joint second, on 72, were **Dean Pokorny** and **Bazil Caygill**. All three receive the book token.

Newcomer **Linnea Edlund** is lucky from the first time and wins the fourth book token.

Other Good Scores

70 *Mark Bartusek*

67 *Bill March*

65 *Dominic Connolly, Martin Turner, Carles Acero*

64 *Nigel Guthrie, Alex Athanasiadis, Bill Linton*

63 *Linnea Edlund, Rodney Lighton*

62 *Peter Barker, Mike Ralph*

The Yearly Standings:

With a sixth result now in the bank, some readers can see one bad score fall away. Bill March and Mark Bartusek are the first beneficiaries of this effect, as they take the lead in the trophy:

Bill March 345

Mark Bartusek 333

Dominic Connolly 325

Rodney Lighton 324

Mike Perkins 320

Alex Athanasiadis 314

Bazil Caygill 312

Mike Ralph 311

Colin Brown 304

David Barnes 303

Comments on Bidding Battle Set 18

Brian Senior examines the responses of the readers and compares them against those of the panel.

PROBLEM 1

IMPs. Dealer North. None Vul.

♠ —
♥ K865
♦ AKQ762
♣ KQ4

West	North	East	South
—	3♥	Pass	Pass
?			

Bid	Votes	Marks	Readers
3NT	16	10	23
4♦	4	7	6
4NT	1	2	0
5♦	0	2	1

Several people commented (wrongly) that this problem was the same as the first one from the previous month. Don't worry – I fooled a few panellists as well.

PROBLEM 2

IMPs. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

♠ A8753
♥ —
♦ 104
♣ A108652

West	North	East	South
—	—	1♥	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♦	Pass
?			

Bid	Votes	Marks	Readers
Pass	8	10	15
2♠	8	10	10
2NT	5	8	3
3♣	0	0	2

Dudley Leigh called this a horrible choice - Partner could be very distributional and weakish, or quite good with 3NT a possible destination. Pass might work well but is very unilateral. He's not good enough to force. 2NT may get him to a ridiculous 4♥ if partner is 6-5. So his choice of 2♠(n/f) seems the best of a bad bunch.

Bazil Caygill passed: stop digging, if he bids again it's an SOS redouble.

Linnea Edlund would bid 2NT and have an easy pass if partner rebids 3♦.

I think we can all agree that it is a horrible decision which we have to make and that there is no good solution to the problem. However, the one option which has to be wrong is 3♣, FSF, so no award for that, I'm afraid. FSF is game-forcing and we have a misfitting hand with two aces. If anything is going to get us to a high level with a double tagged on by someone, this is it. Either 2♠ or 2NT gives us a chance to get to game when we should be there, while also offering the possibility of staying at a safe(?) level, while the unilateral pass which got the joint-top vote from the panel may leave us in a bad contract, but at least there will be no double and there may be nothing better that it is possible to get to.

PROBLEM 3

IMPs. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

♠ A9
♥ A85
♦ A
♣ A1098642

West	North	East	South
–	2♠	Double	3♠
?			

Bid	Votes	Marks	Readers
6♣	10	10	19
7♣	8	9	1
4♠	3	6	5
5♣	0	2	3
Double	0	0	2

Bill March (6♣) commented that Seven could be lay down; he did not like this kind of punt but could see no ‘scientific’ approach.

Bazil Caygill bid 6♣ and thought double might be better but would also convey to partner that he’s interested in the red suits which, given the lack of 4♦ leaping Michaels, he’s not.

Nelson Pearson gave a full explanation: Being V vs NV partner showed opening values without having any ace! With ♠x ♥KQxx ♦xxxxx ♣Kxx from partner I win 7♣, and he should have more than that. So, what Ks and Qs has he got in order to double being Vulnerable?

He surely has at least three cards in clubs, for he did not show a one-suiter, nor a two-suiter, he just doubled promising support to ♥, ♦ and ♣. I’ll bid 6♣, and if partner has the king of trumps he should raise to seven. Not inquiring for aces means I have them all. With no losers in ♣, I’d discard my three losers on his side honours. If partner then bids 6♥ I’ll raise to 7♥. If he bids 6♦ I’ll pass.

Dudley Leigh also hoped partner would raise his 6♣ to 7♣ if he has KQJ or KQxx. He could think of no way to get to 7NT or 7♥ which might be better spots.

Two points, really. The first one is that double will only cloud the main issues and, whatever we do subsequently, will convince partner that we have more interest in the red suits than is actually the case. I think double is a very dangerous action which has potential to create an entirely self-inflicted disaster.

The other point is that the only way to explore seven is to bid 4♠. It is wishful thinking to believe that partner, with no aces, is going to raise 6♣ to 7♣. Sorry, but a jump to 6♣ does not promise all the aces, it is a hand on which you want to play in slam facing a normal minimum take-out double and either don’t think you are worth a grand slam try or cannot think of a sensible one you could make. It is far from clear that 4NT would be asking for aces/key-cards – in fact I would go so far as to say that it would not be asking as we have not agreed a suit. 4NT, for me, would be asking partner to pick a minor.

I’ve added an award of 2 points for 5♣ simply because, although this looks to me, and to the panel, to be a gross underbid, at least it could be a point-winner if the other team is in 7♣ down one. Nothing, however, for double.

PROBLEM 4

IMPs. Dealer South. N/S Vul.

♠ J54
♥ 10753
♦ KQ1092
♣ 5

West	North	East	South
–	–	–	Pass
Pass	1♣	2♠	Double
?			

Bid	Votes	Marks	Readers
3♦	14	10	5
4♦	3	7	2
4♠	3	5	7
3♠	1	3	13
Pass	0	0	3

Nelson Pearson called his raise to 4♠ a sacrifice with favourable vulnerability.

Bazil Caygill bid 3♦, not punishing partner if he/she had bid on filth.

There were three reader-votes for passing. This is just losing bridge. Yes, it might work today, but then on Thursday and Friday it will cost you points. When you can take bidding space away from your opponents, to whom the deal will often belong, do so and you take away the precision from their auctions. Meanwhile, if the hand does not belong to the opposition that is because our partner is strong and now we need to let him know about our spade support and reasonable values so that our side can get to game.

PROBLEM 6

IMPs. Dealer West. All Vul.

♠ 3
♥ AKJ8
♦ K1074
♣ AJ62

West	North	East	South
1♦	Pass	2♦	4♠
?			

Bid	Votes	Marks	Readers
5♣	9	10	4
4NT	5	8	6
Double	4	6	5
Pass	2	2	3
5♦	1	2	9
6♦	0	2	3

Carles Acero added that his pass was forcing. Bazil Caygill hoped it would be.

Bill March called this another horrible problem and found it a shame that pass wouldn't be forcing.

While forcing passes are a matter for individual partnerships, the bulk

of the panel thought that, as 2♦ was not GF, Pass would not be forcing. Yes Bill, it is a horrible shame, and is an argument in favour of playing the inverted raise as GF, while obviously having to find a different way to handle invitational raises.

I've awarded 2 points to 6♦ as it is not much more a committal decision that bidding 5♦ and either could be right or wrong. The panel generally prefers a less committal approach.



Final Peebles SBU Congress 6th to 8th December 2019



The last SBU Congress after 46 years at the Peebles Hotel Hydro, and the only one in 2019, will take place in December this year. The format is shown below, but we aim to have a truly special event with some additional features:

- ‘Play through the ages’ with Liz McGowan. We have a special set of boards for you with a booklet providing analysis and entertaining stories from the history of the SBU congress
- A ‘nightcap with the experts’ late on Friday evening, hosted in the hotel’s brand new gin lounge. This will give you a chance to ask the experts about the hands played that day in a seminar format
- A celebratory Gala Dinner on Saturday, followed by a speedball pairs event.

To mark this final congress, participants will be encouraged to follow the evening dress code which was once the standard at Peebles congresses – strictly black tie, lounge suit or equivalents.

Friday		Saturday		Sunday	
14:00	Play through the ages	10:45	Swiss Pairs session 1	13:40	Swiss Teams session 2
19:45	Swiss Teams session 1	15:00	Swiss Pairs session 2		
23:00	Nightcap with the experts	18:45	Gala Dinner	19:45	Swiss Teams session 3
		22:00	Speedball pairs		

**Join us in marking the end of an era
and saying goodbye in style.**

See over for costs and entry details.

Congress fees:

Full congress (includes Friday afternoon and the speedball)	£75
Congress Swiss Teams only (three sessions)	£45
Congress Swiss Pairs only (two sessions)	£30

Hotel prices:

We have worked hard to agree value-for-money rates with the hotel.
Resident prices cover all meals including buffet lunches and the Gala Dinner.

Accommodation	Three nights (Friday lunch to Monday breakfast)
Single room	£340 pp
Double room used as a single	£395 pp
Double room	£315 pp

The Gala Dinner is available to non-residents for £45 pp.

Note that spaces are limited and there is much enthusiasm for the event. Residency for the whole weekend will secure a space – after that non-resident places will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

Entries:

Visit www.sbu.org.uk or contact Hasan or Julie
at sbucongressdesk@gmail.com or on 0131 343 3838.



EAST

Hands for the
August 2019 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 South. Both Vul.

♠ AQJ8
♥ 82
♦ KJ7
♣ AJ82

South overcalls 2♥ and North raises to 3♥.

Hand 2. Dealer West. E/W Vul.

♠ A97
♥ 754
♦ J8
♣ 86

North opens 2♠

Hand 3. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

♠ K84
♥ A106
♦ A102
♣ Q1072

North opens 1♣, 2+♣

Hand 4. Dealer West. None Vul

♠ J53
♥ Q8
♦ AK65
♣ A1087

North overcalls 4♥.

Hand 5. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

♠ AKQ103
♥ AK94
♦ 8
♣ 765

South opens 3♦ and North raises to 4♦.

Hand 6. Dealer West. Both Vul.

♠ A9632
♥ K2
♦ KJ976
♣ Q

Hand 7. Dealer North. None Vul.

♠ Q982
♥ AJ10975
♦ A64
♣ —

Hand 8. Dealer South. N/S Vul.

♠ A109
♥ AQ7
♦ KQ1096
♣ 65

Running Costs

In order to meet our production costs we are relying on sponsorship, advertising revenue and donations.

Sponsorship can come in many forms – one that is proving popular is the sponsorship of a particular column – as you will see from the association of FunBridge with Mis-play these Hands with Me and Master Point Press with The Bidding Battle.

We have set ourselves a target of 50,000+ readers, which should be enough to attract a significant level of advertising. As that number increases we will be able to approach more famous companies who might wish to associate themselves with the bridge playing community.

You can help us to achieve our aims in several ways.

Firstly – and by far the most important – by telling all your bridge playing friends that we exist and making sure they register at our web site, www.newbridgemag.com

Secondly by becoming a sponsor. That could take many forms – I have already mentioned the possibility of being linked to a column within the magazine and you will see from this issue that is already popular. There is also the possibility of linking directly to the title.

Thirdly by becoming a Friend of the magazine. That would involve a donation. Anyone donating £500 would become a Golden Friend.

It is possible to make a donation by credit card – just go to the appropriate page on the web site. A number of readers are making regular donations by bank transfer.

If you would like to discuss any of the above contact me at: editor@newbridgemag.com

Ask not what A New Bridge Magazine can do for you – ask what you can do for A New Bridge Magazine.