

A NEW BRIDGE MAGAZINE

Gold Cup
Crockfords
Unconventional Conventions

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A NEW BRIDGE MAGAZINE

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Alive & Kicking

The University of Stirling and Prof Punch launched the Keep Bridge Alive campaign earlier this year and are now working in partnership with bridge organisations to use research to promote the benefits of bridge. We would like to draw your attention to the forthcoming Keep Bridge Alive Pro-Am fundraising event in central London on 20 February. We are delighted to announce that Victoria Coren Mitchell (who has been hosting the BBC show Only Connect since 2008) has agreed both to play and to do a special Q&A at the event, which will open doors in terms of raising the profile of bridge in the wider media. Visit the online auction site and consider bidding for a pro or a junior to play at this exciting event: <https://www.jumblebee.co.uk/keepbridgealiveproam20february2020>

See Page 35 for brochure.

Winter Games

There is still plenty of time to give yourself an extra Christmas present by arranging to go to Monaco at the end of February for the third Winter Games. This year the organisers have added an extra Competition, the T.O.P Pairs, which carries a first prize of €10,000. You will find all the information at:

<http://db.eurobridge.org/repository/competitions/20monaco/microsite/Information.htm#Programme>

The Legend Continues

The Executive committee of the European Bridge League has voted unanimously to rename the Main TD Course, which takes place every 3 years, as the “Max Bavin TD Course.”

TD Courses are organised every few years by the EBL in order to train TDs who have already proven themselves at national level.

The 11th Main Tournament Directors Course was held at the Porto Bello Hotel Resort in Antalya, Turkey, February 2019. You can find a wealth of information (including all the test questions and answers) about this event at:

<http://www.eurobridge.org/education/td-training/courses/>

Vive Le Bridgeur!

This month the leading French Magazine, Le Bridgeur celebrates its 60th anniversary, its first issue appearing in 1959. They have great plans for 2020.

Long Life

In response to last month's editorial, Meic Good-year points out that Smyslov made it to 89, and Taimanov (though not a world champion) got to 90.

Rule of Lords

The annual match between the Houses of Parliament went the way of the upper chamber, as the Lords defeated the Commons by 120-65 IMPs over 24 boards. The winning team included Kitty Teltscher, who has kept her elevation to the Peerage remarkably quiet.



New Tricks

If you think this is going to relate to the former BBC television crime series - you would be wrong! The New Tricks team is developing modern content in the hope of attracting new, young players to bridge. They have tutorial content and are producing a tournament series that you can watch on You Tube The first episode is already live, and can be viewed at: Tournament Series, Episode One. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rMifqV6Z9RQ>)

The web site confirms that all of the players and commentators involved have given their time voluntarily because they support the aims of the New Tricks project.

There is a fund raising page, and they are already well on the way to reaching the £25,000 they need to cover the cost of the project.

To find out more go to:

<http://www.newtricksbridge.club/>

<https://uk.gofundme.com/f/new-tricks-bridge-club/campaign/gallery/0>

Happy Holidays

Time to wish you all a very Merry Christmas. This list covers some (but by no means all!) of the possibilities:

Vrolijk Kerstfeest, Joyeux Noël, Frohe Weihnachten, Djoyeus Noyé, Vesela Koleda, Sheng Dan Kuai Le (圣诞快乐), Seng Dan Fai Lok (聖誕快樂), Sretan Božić, Veselé Vánoce, Glædelig Jul, Rõõmsaid Jõulupühi, Hyvää joulua, Bon Natale, Kala Christouyenna, Gleðileg jól, Śubh krisamas, Selamat Natal, Chag Molad Sameach, Nollaig Shona Dhuit, Buon Natale, Gledelig Jul, Meri Kurisumasu, Il-Milied it-Tajjeb, Wesolych Świąt, Feliz Natal, Crăciun Fericit, s rah-zh-dee-st-vohm, Veselé Vianocce, Feliz Navidad, Bon Nadal, God Jul, Mutlu Noeller, Nadolig Llawen.

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Test Your Technique

with Marc Smith

see Page 67

This month's hand comes from a Funbridge daily matchpoint tournament. Both the bidding and the play are instructive.

Dealer North. Both Vul.

♠ AK1085
♥ 93
♦ Q52
♣ KQ5

♠ 93
♥ AQJ
♦ AK43
♣ AJ86

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|----------|-------|
| - | 1♠ | Pass | 2♣ |
| Pass | 2♠ | Pass | 4NT |
| Pass | 6NT | All Pass | |

West leads the ♦J against your no-trump slam. How would you plan to make twelve tricks?

Gold Cup 2019

The Editor reports on the Gold Cup semi-finals and final

Despite the gradual decline in the number of teams competing, the Gold Cup remains as the premier knock-out event in the United Kingdom. This year the four teams that reached the last weekend were packed with household names. It is a reflection of the modern era that three of the four squads contained a sponsor.

Senior v Gillis

After 8 deals Senior led 23-10.

Board 9. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

| | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| ♠ A853 ♥ K5 ♦ K985 ♣ J82 | | ♠ J1097642 ♥ — ♦ Q10 ♣ KQ54 |
| ♠ K ♥ QJ843 ♦ AJ42 ♣ 1096 | ♠ Q ♥ A109762 ♦ 763 ♣ A73 | |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| <i>Gillis</i> | <i>B Senior</i> | <i>Svendson</i> | <i>Penfold</i> |
| – | 1♥ | 1♠ | 2NT* |
| 3♠ | 4♥ | 4♠ | 5♥ |
| All Pass | | | |
| 2NT Heart support | | | |

5♥ is expensive if it is doubled and the defenders start with a spade followed by a diamond switch and as you can see E/W take 11 tricks in spades. I would have been tempted to bid 3♦ with the West hand – in this

situation this must show a fit for spades and may help partner to judge what to do if the auction remains competitive.

The play and defence was not optimum, declarer going three down, -150.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|------------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|
| <i>Holland</i> | <i>Hanlon</i> | <i>Mould</i> | <i>McGann</i> |
| – | 1♥ | 2♠ | 3♠* |
| 4♠ | Pass | Pass | 5♥ |
| All Pass | | | |
| 3♠ Heart support | | | |

Here West might have bid 4♦. At least they defended perfectly, -200 and 2 IMPs.

Board 10. Dealer East. All Vul.

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ♠ Q863 ♥ 432 ♦ J7432 ♣ 4 | | ♠ J10975 ♥ Q ♦ KQ9 ♣ AQJ3 |
| ♠ A4 ♥ KJ10765 ♦ A108 ♣ 52 | ♠ K2 ♥ A98 ♦ 64 ♣ K109876 | |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| <i>Gillis</i> | <i>B Senior</i> | <i>Svendson</i> | <i>Penfold</i> |
| - | - | 1♠ | Pass |
| 2♠ | 3♥ | Pass | 4♥ |
| All Pass | | | |

I wonder why South did not overcall 2♣?

Although East's hand improved when spades were supported, he was not inclined to take another bid. It would be a bit rich to bid 4♠, but in this situation a double of 3♥ would be a game try.

Even though declarer sustained a club ruff, it was easy to secure ten tricks, +620.

| | | | |
|----------|-----------|---------|-----------|
| ♠ A4 | ♥ KJ10765 | ♦ A108 | ♣ 52 |
| ♠ Q863 | ♥ 432 | ♦ J7432 | ♣ 4 |
| ♠ K2 | ♥ A98 | ♦ 64 | ♣ K109876 |
| ♠ J10975 | ♥ Q | ♦ KQ9 | ♣ AQJ3 |

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|----------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|
| <i>Holland</i> | <i>Hanlon</i> | <i>Mould</i> | <i>McGann</i> |
| - | - | 1♠ | 2♣ |
| 3♠* | 4♥ | 4♠ | Pass |
| Pass | Double | All Pass | |
| 3♠ | Weak | | |

South led the ♥A and now needs to find a diamond switch for a chance of two down. A second heart allowed declarer to ruff and play on trumps, one down, -200 and a 9 IMP pick up.

Board 12. Dealer West. N/S Vul.

| | | | |
|----------|---------|-----------|---------|
| ♠ K10972 | ♥ 972 | ♦ Q4 | ♣ Q92 |
| ♠ Q854 | ♥ KJ86 | ♦ 7 | ♣ A1076 |
| ♠ J | ♥ Q1043 | ♦ 1098632 | ♣ K5 |
| ♠ A63 | ♥ A5 | ♦ AKJ5 | ♣ J843 |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| <i>Gillis</i> | <i>B Senior</i> | <i>Svendson</i> | <i>Penfold</i> |
| Pass | Pass | 3♦ | 3NT |
| All Pass | | | |

East's opening bid propelled N/S into a game that could not be defeated. West led a club and without a heart switch declarer took eleven tricks, +660.

Note that if N/S reach 4♠ then the defenders need to lead a heart to defeat it.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|----------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|
| <i>Holland</i> | <i>Hanlon</i> | <i>Mould</i> | <i>McGann</i> |
| - | - | 3♦ | All Pass |

Was South waiting for a double that never was?

Three Diamonds was two down, -100 so 11 IMPs changed hands.

Board 16. Dealer West. E/W Vul.

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| ♠ AKQ84 ♥ 53 ♦ 54 ♣ 9872 | | ♠ 3 ♥ 9864 ♦ AJ732 ♣ Q64 |
| ♠ J9765 ♥ KJ72 ♦ 108 ♣ K10 | | ♠ 102 ♥ AQ10 ♦ KQ96 ♣ AJ53 |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| <i>Gillis</i> | <i>B Senior</i> | <i>Svendson</i> | <i>Penfold</i> |
| Pass | 2♠* | Pass | 2NT* |
| Pass | 3♠* | Pass | 4♠ |
| All Pass | | | |
| 2♠ | 3-10, 5+♠ | | |
| 2NT | Asking | | |
| 3♠ | Maximum | | |

East led the ♥6 and declarer tried dummy's queen, West winning with the king and returning the ♦10. East took the ace and played a second heart and declarer took dummy's ace and tested the trumps. When East discard a heart on the second round a diamond to the nine was followed by the ♦Q. When West erroneously refused to ruff that declarer saved a trick, escaping for one down, -50.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|----------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|
| <i>Holland</i> | <i>Hanlon</i> | <i>Mould</i> | <i>McGann</i> |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | 1NT |
| Pass | 2♥* | Pass | 2♠ |
| Pass | 3NT | All Pass | |

West led the ♥2 and declarer won with the ten, crossed to dummy with a spade and ran the ♣9. West won with the ten and returned the ♠6. Declarer put up dummy's king and played a club to the jack and king. West switched to the ♦10 and East took the ace and played a heart, but declarer now had a route to ten tricks by winning, cashing three tricks in clubs and spades and then playing a diamond to the nine, +430 and 10 IMPs.

That meant Senior had replicated the score form the first set, 23-10 and now led 46-20.

You can replay these deals [here](#) or <https://tinyurl.com/s625wev>

Board 17. Dealer North. None Vul.

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| ♠ — ♥ QJ5 ♦ A105 ♣ A865432 | | ♠ J109762 ♥ 9743 ♦ K42 ♣ — |
| ♠ AQ843 ♥ K8 ♦ 963 ♣ J97 | | ♠ K5 ♥ A1062 ♦ QJ87 ♣ KQ10 |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| <i>B Senior</i> | <i>Svendson</i> | <i>N Senior</i> | <i>Gillis</i> |
| — | Pass | 2♠ | Double |
| All Pass | | | |

South led the ♠K and continued the suit, North winning and switching to the ♥K followed by the ♥8. South won and returned the ♥6, North ruffing and switching to the ♣9 (it is difficult to see that a diamond switch is best). If declarer pitches a diamond then ruffs a club and plays a spade South will eventually be squeezed in the red suits for one down, but declarer threw her last heart, ruffed a club and played a spade. That should lead to two down, but South mysteriously discarded one diamond too many, so declarer took three tricks in the suit for -100.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|-----------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|
| <i>Erichsen</i> | <i>Holland</i> | <i>Liggins</i> | <i>Mould</i> |
| - | Pass | Pass | 1NT |
| 3♣ | 3♠ | Pass | 3NT |
| All Pass | | | |

West led a club and declarer won with dummy's jack and played a diamond for the queen and ace. In due course he played a second diamond from dummy and had nine tricks, +400 and 7 IMPs.

| | | |
|-----------|---------|-----------|
| ♠ — | ♠ AQ843 | ♠ J109762 |
| ♥ QJ5 | ♥ K8 | ♥ 9743 |
| ♦ A105 | ♦ 963 | ♦ K42 |
| ♣ A865432 | ♣ J97 | ♣ — |

| | |
|---------|--------|
| ♠ K5 | ♠ 862 |
| ♥ A1062 | ♥ Q104 |
| ♦ QJ87 | ♦ 854 |
| ♣ KQ10 | ♣ J742 |

Board 22. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|-----|---|-------------------------------------|
| ♠ AKQ ♥ K875 ♦ A9 ♣ AKQ3 | <table style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 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 | ♠ J1097543 ♥ 62 ♦ K ♣ 1098 |
| N | | | | | |
| W E | | | | | |
| S | | | | | |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| <i>B Senior</i> | <i>Svendson</i> | <i>N Senior</i> | <i>Gillis</i> |
| - | - | Pass | Pass |
| 2♣* | 3♠ | Pass | Pass |
| 3NT | All Pass | | |

North led the ♠J and declarer was not hard pressed, finishing with an overtrick by squeezing/endplaying South in the red suits, +630.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|-----------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|
| <i>Erichsen</i> | <i>Holland</i> | <i>Liggins</i> | <i>Mould</i> |
| - | - | Pass | Pass |
| 2♣* | 3♠ | Double | All Pass |

East's double showed a bad hand, but West was delighted to play for penalties.

East led the ♥4 for the nine and king and West cashed three clubs and the ♦A before playing a second heart for the queen and ace. Declarer ruffed the ♦Q and played the ♠J, West winning with the king and playing a third heart, ruffed by declarer who exited with the ♠10. West won with the ♠Q and played his last heart. When declarer ruffed with the ♠7 East could overruff for five down, -1100 and 10 IMPs.

Declarer has seen 21 points appear from West, but unless 2♣ included a 20-22 2NT type then West was still a favourite to hold the ♠A, which suggests ruffing with the ♠9 was indicated.

Gillis edged the set 18-13 to trail 38-59.

You can replay these deals [here](#) or <https://tinyurl.com/rf2rh3r>

Board 27. Dealer South. None Vul.

| | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|-----|---|-------------------------------------|
| ♠ 10876 ♥ 102 ♦ 3 ♣ AKQ642 | <table style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 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 | ♠ K95 ♥ Q93 ♦ A1085 ♣ J107 |
| N | | | | | |
| W E | | | | | |
| S | | | | | |

♠ Q42
 ♥ AK865
 ♦ KJ642
 ♣ —

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|--------|---------|----------|---------|
| McGann | Senior | N Hanlon | Penfold |
| - | - | - | 1♥ |
| 2♣ | Double* | 2NT | 3♦ |
| Pass | 4♥ | All Pass | |

West led the ♣K and declarer ruffed, drew trumps in three rounds and played a diamond to the ace followed by the ten. When East played the ♦9 declarer decided to go up with dummy's king and if I may be permitted to quote Edgar Kaplan 'down went the contract'.

| | | | |
|----------|---------|--------|--|
| ♠ K95 | | | |
| ♥ Q93 | | | |
| ♦ A1085 | | | |
| ♣ J107 | | | |
| ♠ 10876 | | ♠ AJ3 | |
| ♥ 102 | | ♥ J74 | |
| ♦ 3 | | ♦ Q97 | |
| ♣ AKQ642 | | ♣ 9853 | |
| | ♠ Q42 | | |
| | ♥ AK865 | | |
| | ♦ KJ642 | | |
| | ♣ — | | |

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|----------|---------------|-------|----------|
| Holland | Liggins | Mould | Ericksen |
| - | - | - | 1♥ |
| 2♣ | 2NT* | 3♣ | 4♥ |
| All Pass | | | |
| 2NT | Heart support | | |

After a similar start, declarer took only two rounds of trumps ending in hand and played a spade for the king and ace. He pitched a spade on the club return, ruffed the next club and played a diamond to the ace followed by a diamond to the jack, claiming eleven tricks.

Declarer might not have been certain that West held four spades (his 6 did not suggest an even number) but if West held six clubs it was odds on that the diamonds were 3-1. What is more, declarer would have been home even if the diamond finesse had lost – dummy could take care of a fourth round of clubs and the ♠Q would be the entry to allow declarer to draw the last trump.

It was a deserved 11 IMPs.

Board 30. Dealer East. None Vul.

| | | | |
|--------|--|-----------|----------|
| | | ♠ K8 | |
| | | ♥ AJ3 | |
| | | ♦ K97653 | |
| | | ♣ 103 | |
| ♠ Q3 | | | ♠ J64 |
| ♥ KQ96 | | | ♥ 105 |
| ♦ AQJ4 | | | ♦ 82 |
| ♣ 852 | | | ♣ AKQ976 |
| | | ♠ A109752 | |
| | | ♥ 8742 | |
| | | ♦ 10 | |
| | | ♣ J4 | |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|--------|-----------------|--------|---------|
| McGann | N Senior | Hanlon | Penfold |
| - | - | 2♣* | Pass |
| 2♦* | Pass | 3♣* | Pass |
| 3NT | All Pass | | |
| 2♣ | Precision Style | | |
| 2♦ | Asking | | |
| 3♣ | No major | | |

North led the ♦6 and declarer won with the queen, crossed to dummy with a club and played a heart to the king and ace, quickly making an overtrick when North returned the ♥J, +430.


Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|---------|----------|-------|----------|
| Holland | Liggins | Mould | Ericksen |
| - | - | 1♣ | 1♠ |
| Double* | 2♦ | Pass | 2♠ |
| 3♦ | 3♠ | 4♣ | Pass |
| 5♣ | All Pass | | |

The intervention made it nigh on impossible for E/W to find the nine-trick game. South led the ♦10 and declarer went up with dummy's ace, eventually finishing three down, -150 and another 11 IMPs that saw Gillis take the set 23-3 to make the score 60-62.

You can replay these deals [here](https://tinyurl.com/ujcqr5) or <https://tinyurl.com/ujcqr5>

Board 33. Dealer North. None Vul.

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ♠ J10863 ♥ Q8643 ♦ 76 ♣ K |  | ♠ KQ4 ♥ A75 ♦ K85 ♣ J732 | ♠ 97 ♥ KJ102 ♦ J10943 ♣ Q8 |
|------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|---------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| <i>McGann</i> | <i>B Senior</i> | <i>Hanlon</i> | <i>N Senior</i> |
| – | Pass | 1♣* | 1♦ |
| 2♣* | Pass | 3♣ | Pass |
| 4♥* | Pass | 4♠* | Pass |
| 5♣ | All Pass | | |

1♣ 11-13 balanced or 17+ any distribution
 4♥ Splinter
 4♠ Cue-bid

That looks conservative – bearing in mind that if a diamond finesse was required it was likely to be right.


Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|----------------|----------------|--------------|-----------------|
| <i>Holland</i> | <i>Liggins</i> | <i>Mould</i> | <i>Erichsen</i> |
| – | Pass | 1♣ | Pass |
| 3♥* | Pass | 4♣ | Pass |
| 4♦* | Pass | 4♥* | Pass |
| 4♠* | Pass | 5♣ | Pass |
| 6♣ | All Pass | | |

- 3♥ Splinter
- 4♦ Cue-bid
- 4♥ ♥A
- 4♠ Cue-bid

That was worth 11 IMPs.

Board 34. Dealer East N/S Vul.

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ♠ AKJ1084 ♥ A8543 ♦ – ♣ J4 |  | ♠ 9763 ♥ QJ10 ♦ K10 ♣ Q852 | ♠ Q52 ♥ K ♦ AQJ87 ♣ 10973 |
|-------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|

♠ –
 ♥ 9762
 ♦ 965432
 ♣ AK6

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|---------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| <i>McGann</i> | <i>B Senior</i> | <i>Hanlon</i> | <i>N Senior</i> |
| – | – | Pass | Pass |
| 1♦ | 1♠ | Double* | Pass |
| 2♣ | 2♠ | 3♣ | All Pass |

No doubt Brian will feature this hand in the Master Point bidding Battle at some point – or perhaps not. N/S took the first seven tricks and still had the ♣K to come, -200.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|----------------|----------------|--------------|-----------------|
| <i>Holland</i> | <i>Liggins</i> | <i>Mould</i> | <i>Erichsen</i> |
| – | – | Pass | Pass |
| 1♦ | 2♦* | Pass | 3♣ |
| Pass | 3♦ | Double | 4♣ |
| Pass | 4♦* | Pass | 4♥ |
| All Pass | | | |

2♦ Majors

Once North elected to show both his suits it was only a question of avoiding the no-play slam for a ten IMP pick-up.

Board 36. Dealer West. Both Vul.

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ♠ K74 ♥ J6 ♦ 963 ♣ AK432 | | ♠ AJ1096 ♥ 8543 ♦ J ♣ Q87 | ♠ Q5 ♥ A972 ♦ AQ10854 ♣ J |
| ♠ 832 ♥ KQ10 ♦ K72 ♣ 10965 | | | |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|---------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| <i>McGann</i> | <i>B Senior</i> | <i>Hanlon</i> | <i>N Senior</i> |
| 1♣* | 1♠ | Double* | 2♠ |
| Pass | Pass | Double | Pass |
| 3♣ | Pass | 3♦ | All Pass |

Was that well judged or simply lucky?

Declarer won the spade lead with the queen, cashed dummy's clubs to dispose of the ♠5 and played two rounds of hearts. That resulted in eleven tricks, +150.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|----------------|----------------|--------------|-----------------|
| <i>Holland</i> | <i>Liggins</i> | <i>Mould</i> | <i>Erichsen</i> |
| 1♣ | 1♠ | 2♦ | 2♥ |
| Pass | 2♠ | Double* | Pass |
| 3♦ | Pass | 3♥ | Pass |
| 3NT | All Pass | | |

2♥ was not annotated, so it may have been natural. The convention card

I can see says, 'Change of suit forcing except 2/1'. North led the ♥8 and South won with queen and switched to spades which led to a rapid two down and 8 IMPs.

Board 39. Dealer South. Both Vul.

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ♠ K853 ♥ — ♦ A7532 ♣ AQ97 | | ♠ J2 ♥ AKQ1094 ♦ 96 ♣ 865 | ♠ AQ9764 ♥ 5 ♦ KJ ♣ K1032 |
| ♠ 10 ♥ J87632 ♦ Q1084 ♣ J4 | | | |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|---------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| <i>McGann</i> | <i>B Senior</i> | <i>Hanlon</i> | <i>N Senior</i> |
| – | – | – | 2♥ |
| Double | 4♣* | 4♥* | Pass |
| 6♠ | All Pass | | |

Was 4♣ a fake splinter?

Should West have bid 6♥ rather than 6♠ – would it have been enough for East to advance to the almost cold grand slam.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|----------------|----------------|--------------|-----------------|
| <i>Holland</i> | <i>Liggins</i> | <i>Mould</i> | <i>Erichsen</i> |
| – | – | – | Pass |
| 1♦ | 2♥ | 2♠ | 5♥ |
| 5♠ | Pass | 6♠ | All Pass |

Could West have bid 6♥ here?

Board 40. Dealer West. None Vul.

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ♠ AK84 ♥ J83 ♦ K98 ♣ A108 | <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div> | ♠ 10973 ♥ — ♦ Q7632 ♣ 6532 | ♠ J52 ♥ AKQ96 ♦ J1054 ♣ 9 |
|------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|---------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| <i>McGann</i> | <i>B Senior</i> | <i>Hanlon</i> | <i>N Senior</i> |
| 1♥ | Double | 1♠* | 2NT |
| 4♣ | All Pass | | |

1♠ may have been a transfer. North started with three rounds of spades, so declarer could cross-ruff his way to eight tricks, -100.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|----------------|----------------|--------------|-----------------|
| <i>Holland</i> | <i>Liggins</i> | <i>Mould</i> | <i>Erichsen</i> |
| 1♥ | Double | Pass | Pass |
| 2♣ | Pass | Pass | 3♦ |
| Pass | 3NT | All Pass | |

East led a club and declarer took the third round and cashed his top spades, claiming when the queen appeared, +400 and 7 IMPs.

Gillis had won the set 25-12 to lead 85-78.

You can replay these deals [here](https://tinyurl.com/sffw3m3) or <https://tinyurl.com/sffw3m3>

The sixth session saw only 11 IMPs change hands, 9-2 for Senior making the score 87-83.

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

Board 53. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ♠ AQJ842 ♥ 6 ♦ Q965 ♣ Q6 | <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div> | ♠ — ♥ 92 ♦ A1082 ♣ AJ98753 | ♠ K3 ♥ KQ108543 ♦ K743 ♣ — |
|-----------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|

| | | | |
|----------|-------|-----|---------|
| ♠ 109765 | ♥ AJ7 | ♦ J | ♣ K1042 |
|----------|-------|-----|---------|

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|---------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| <i>McGann</i> | <i>B Senior</i> | <i>Hanlon</i> | <i>N Senior</i> |
| — | 1♠ | 2♣ | 4♦* |
| 4♥ | 4♠ | 4NT* | 5♠ |
| 6♥ | 6♠ | Double | All Pass |
| 4♦ | Splinter | | |

If East leads an ace the defenders should get 500, but he went with the ♥9 and declarer won with dummy's ace and played a spade to the ace, so it was -500 after all.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|----------------|----------------|--------------|-----------------|
| <i>Holland</i> | <i>Liggins</i> | <i>Mould</i> | <i>Erichsen</i> |
| — | 1♠ | 2♣ | 4♠ |
| 5♥ | 5♠ | 6♥ | Double |
| All Pass | | | |

The way to beat 6♥ is to lead a trump!

When North went with the ♦5, declarer won in hand, ruffed a spade, pitched a spade on the ♣A and played the ♥9, overtaking it with the ten. He lost only one trump and played North for the missing diamonds, a spectacular +1210 and 12 IMPs.

You can replay these deals [here](https://tinyurl.com/s7jfg7q) or <https://tinyurl.com/s7jfg7q>

Board 54. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ♠ 7432 ♥ K542 ♦ 65 ♣ 1063 | <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div> | ♠ KJ1098 ♥ 1087 ♦ A92 ♣ KJ | ♠ A5 ♥ AQ63 ♦ QJ83 ♣ AQ2 |
|------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|---------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| <i>McGann</i> | <i>B Senior</i> | <i>Hanlon</i> | <i>N Senior</i> |
| - | - | 1♠ | Double |
| Pass | 2♥ | Pass | 4♥ |
| All Pass | | | |

East led the ♥7 and declarer took three rounds of the suit ending in hand and played a diamond for the queen and king. He won the spade switch with dummy's ace and played a diamond, East winning with the nine. Two rounds of spades forced dummy to ruff, but when East's ♦A was ruffed out declarer could claim ten tricks via the club finesse, +420.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|----------------|----------------|--------------|-----------------|
| <i>Holland</i> | <i>Liggins</i> | <i>Mould</i> | <i>Erichsen</i> |
| - | - | 1♠ | Double |
| Pass | 2♥ | Pass | 3♥ |
| All Pass | | | |

North did not think his hand was worth a raise to game. Perhaps it was just as well, as when East led the ♠J declarer won at once, which meant the defenders could get in three rounds of spades, which held declarer to nine tricks, +140 and 10 IMPs.

Board 55. Dealer South. All Vul.

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ♠ 1054 ♥ 10853 ♦ 742 ♣ AK7 | <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div> | ♠ 93 ♥ 742 ♦ QJ86 ♣ J852 | ♠ AK62 ♥ AKQ6 ♦ 10953 ♣ 10 |
|-------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|---------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| <i>McGann</i> | <i>B Senior</i> | <i>Hanlon</i> | <i>N Senior</i> |
| - | - | - | 1♥ |
| Double | 2♥ | All Pass | |

West led the ♠J so declarer could win, draw trumps and play a spade, the diamond blockage giving her ten tricks, +170.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|----------------|----------------|--------------|-----------------|
| <i>Holland</i> | <i>Liggins</i> | <i>Mould</i> | <i>Erichsen</i> |
| - | - | - | 1♦ |
| Pass | 1♥ | Pass | 2NT* |
| Pass | 3♦ | Pass | 4♥ |
| All Pass | | | |

2NT 16+ with 4+ support

East led the ♠9 and declarer won with dummy's ace and tried a diamond, West winning with the king. Seeing no danger he omitted to cash the ♦A and returned the ♠Q, declarer winning in dummy and drawing trumps, after which there was no play for the contract. The winning line is to draw two rounds of trumps, then play three rounds of clubs, pitching a spade on the ♣K and then exit with a spade, a classic partial elimination (note how important it is that the ♥J is doubleton).

By winning the set 20-13, Senior went into the last eight deals leading 103-100.

Board 57. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ♠ K62 ♥ A93 ♦ A1062 ♣ 864 | | ♠ J10987 ♥ J8765 ♦ 9 ♣ K10 | ♠ Q4 ♥ Q42 ♦ K874 ♣ AQ92 |
| ♠ A53 ♥ K10 ♦ QJ53 ♣ J753 | | | |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| <i>Erichsen</i> | <i>B Senior</i> | <i>Liggins</i> | <i>N Senior</i> |
| – | Pass | 1♣* | Pass |
| 1NT* | Pass | 2NT | All Pass |
| 1♣ 2+♣ | | | |
| 1NT 10-12 | | | |

North led the ♠J and the defenders played three rounds of the suit, declarer winning with the king and then cashing the top diamonds, after which he could manage only seven tricks, -100.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|----------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|
| <i>Holland</i> | <i>Hanlon</i> | <i>Mould</i> | <i>McGann</i> |
| – | Pass | 1♣ | Pass |
| 1♦ | 2♦* | 3♦ | Pass |
| 3NT | All Pass | | |
| 2♦ Majors | | | |

North led the ♣K and declarer won in dummy, cashed the ♦K and played a second diamond ducking when South played the queen, North pitching

a heart. When South returned a diamond, declarer finessed and cashed the ♦A, North parting with the ♠87. If North was 5-5 in the majors, then he was a favourite to hold one of the ♠A and the ♥K (he was unlikely to have both being a passed hand). At double-dummy, the winning line is to duck a heart, but you can hardly blame declarer for playing a low heart to dummy's queen, after which he could muster no more than seven tricks, -200 and the match was tied.

If North leads the ♠J then the defenders must take only two rounds of the suit North then switching to a heart; the line to make after three rounds of spades is very tough, but knowing you cannot afford to let North in might just be a big enough clue to give you a shot. You must take the club finesse, then play a diamond, winning if South splits his honours and then playing a second club, followed by a third. If that wins you cash the ♥A and duck a heart to South, who will have to lead into the split diamond tenace.

Board 58. Dealer East. All Vul.

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ♠ J86 ♥ – ♦ K975 ♣ AQJ532 | | ♠ K932 ♥ A7 ♦ AQ3 ♣ 10986 | ♠ Q74 ♥ K98543 ♦ 864 ♣ K |
| ♠ A105 ♥ QJ1062 ♦ J102 ♣ 74 | | | |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| <i>Erichsen</i> | <i>B Senior</i> | <i>Liggins</i> | <i>N Senior</i> |
| – | – | Pass | Pass |
| 1♣* | Pass | 1♦* | Pass |
| 2♣ | All Pass | | |
| 1♣ 2+♣ | | | |
| 1♦ Transfer | | | |

North led the ♣10 and declarer won perforce with dummy's king and played a diamond for the two, nine and queen. Exiting with a club works now, but seeing the possibility of being endplayed, North tried to cash the ♥A first – declarer ruffed, drew trumps and ducked a diamond. He was sure to make a long diamond and sooner or later the defenders would have to give him a trick in the majors, so +90.

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ♠ J86 ♥ — ♦ K975 ♣ AQJ532 | <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div> | ♠ K932 ♥ A7 ♦ AQ3 ♣ 10986 | ♠ Q74 ♥ K98543 ♦ 864 ♣ K |
| | | ♠ A 105 ♥ QJ1062 ♦ J102 ♣ 74 | |

Board 60. Dealer West. E/W Vul.

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ♠ 4 ♥ AQ42 ♦ 82 ♣ A105432 | <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div> | ♠ AK10832 ♥ 9 ♦ A9763 ♣ J | ♠ QJ97 ♥ 75 ♦ J104 ♣ KQ86 |
| | | ♠ 65 ♥ KJ10863 ♦ KQ5 ♣ 97 | |

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|----------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|
| <i>Holland</i> | <i>Hanlon</i> | <i>Mould</i> | <i>McGann</i> |
| – | – | 2♥ | Pass |
| Pass | Double | Pass | Pass |
| 3♣ | Double | All Pass | |

Here too North led the ♣10. He did not try the ♥A when he got in with a diamond, but in the three-card ending that developed, dummy having ♠Q7 ♥K he did not risk the possibility that declarer might have the ♠A (South had not gone out his way to suggest he held the ♠A) so declarer was only one down, -200 and a loss of 7 IMPs.

With ♠106 ♥93 ♦AK105 ♣AQ983 opposite ♠K5 ♥AKQ108 ♦Q97 ♣K105 both sides stopped in 3NT after South had overcalled in spades. As that was on ♠AQJ72 ♥J54 ♦J643 ♣2 6NT would have made as you get a count on the South hand and score 5 hearts, 4 diamonds and three clubs. Senior lost an overtrick IMP on the deal to trail 103-111.

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| <i>Erichsen</i> | <i>B Senior</i> | <i>Liggins</i> | <i>N Senior</i> |
| 1♣* | 1♠ | 1NT | 2♥ |
| Pass | 3♦ | All Pass | |
| 1♣ | 2+♣ | | |

East led the ♦J and declarer won with dummy's king, played a spade to the ace, went back to dummy with a diamond, played a second spade to hand and then ruffed a spade, making ten tricks, +130.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|----------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|
| <i>Holland</i> | <i>Hanlon</i> | <i>Mould</i> | <i>McGann</i> |
| 1♣ | 1♠ | 1NT | 2♥ |
| 3♣ | 3♦ | 3♠* | Pass |
| 4♣ | All Pass | | |
| 3♠ | Club support | | |

4♣ was unbeatable, so +130 and 6 IMPs to Senior, down by 2, 109-111.

A flat game and a slam brought us to the penultimate deal:

Board 63. Dealer South. N/S Vul.

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ♠ 9876 ♥ 742 ♦ KJ6 ♣ Q65 | <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div> | ♠ AKQ43 ♥ 6 ♦ Q73 ♣ J1042 | ♠ 102 ♥ AKQJ83 ♦ A109 ♣ A8 |
|-----------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| <i>Erichsen</i> | <i>B Senior</i> | <i>Liggins</i> | <i>N Senior</i> |
| - | - | - | 3NT* |
| Pass | 4♦* | 4♠ | Double |
| Pass | 5♥ | Pass | Pass |
| 5♠ | Double | All Pass | |

With such a defensive hand 5♠ strikes me as misguided – even 4♥ is not going to make.

South led the ♥K and then played two rounds of clubs, ruffed a club and cashed the ♥A, three down, -500.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|----------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|
| <i>Holland</i> | <i>Hanlon</i> | <i>Mould</i> | <i>McGann</i> |
| - | - | - | 1♣* |
| Pass | 1♦* | 1♠ | 2♥ |
| 3♠ | 4♥ | 4♠ | Pass |
| Pass | Double | All Pass | |

An identical defence produced -300, giving Senior 5 IMPs and the lead, 114-111.

Board 64. Dealer West. E/W Vul.

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ♠ K3 ♥ A4 ♦ KJ97 ♣ KJ632 | <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div> | ♠ 2 ♥ K732 ♦ Q10543 ♣ AQ5 | ♠ QJ10654 ♥ Q1095 ♦ 2 ♣ 87 |
|-----------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| <i>Erichsen</i> | <i>B Senior</i> | <i>Liggins</i> | <i>N Senior</i> |
| 1NT | 2♠ | Double | 3♠ |
| Pass | Pass | Double | Pass |
| 4♣ | Pass | 4♦ | Pass |
| 5♦ | All Pass | | |

5♦ was cold, so all Senior had to do was duplicate the result to advance to the final.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|----------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|
| <i>Holland</i> | <i>Hanlon</i> | <i>Mould</i> | <i>McGann</i> |
| 1NT | 2♠ | Double | 3♠ |
| Pass | Pass | Double | Pass |
| 4♣ | Pass | 4♦ | All Pass |

Having doubled twice and then bid a new suit East must have fallen off his chair when West passed 4♦.

You can replay these deals [here](#) or <https://tinyurl.com/ta63muz>


Brock v Allfrey

The second semi-final started quietly, Allfrey leading 11-8 after 8 deals.

You can replay these deals [here](#) or <https://tinyurl.com/s4ejyso>

The second session saw Allfrey increase his lead to 28-21, by winning the session 17-13.

Board 22. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ♠ A ♥ K109432 ♦ AKQ10 ♣ A8 |  | ♠ K1087 ♥ AQ7 ♦ J96 ♣ K52 | ♠ J96432 ♥ 8 ♦ 8742 ♣ 74 |
| | | ♠ Q5 ♥ J65 ♦ 53 ♣ QJ10963 | |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| <i>Bell</i> | <i>Jones</i> | <i>Gold</i> | <i>Rosen</i> |
| - | - | Pass | Pass |
| 1♥ | Double | Pass | 2♣ |
| Double* | Pass | 2♠ | 3♣ |
| 3♦ | All Pass | | |

You will know what I think of North's double – a totally pointless move facing a passed hand.

Do you think East should have raised to 4♦ in the manner of a Skid Simon Master Bid? West had shown a very strong hand and as it happens the singleton heart and four trumps would have been enough for 5♦ to make.

Closed Room


| West | North | East | South |
|------|----------|------|-------|
| - | - | Pass | 3♣ |
| 4♥ | All Pass | | |

North led the ♣2 and declarer won with the ace and played the ♥2. North went in with the queen and exited with the ♥7, which was not the hottest defence of the year, gifting declarer +620 and 10 IMPs.

Brock won the stanza 12-5 to tie the scores at 33-33.

You can replay the deals [here](#) or <https://tinyurl.com/scaa4pt>

Board 25. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ♠ Q53 ♥ A986 ♦ 7542 ♣ K7 |  | ♠ KJ8 ♥ KQJ ♦ Q6 ♣ AQ942 | ♠ 1042 ♥ 102 ♦ KJ83 ♣ J853 |
| | | ♠ A976 ♥ 7543 ♦ A109 ♣ 106 | |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|------------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|
| <i>Forrester</i> | <i>Selway</i> | <i>Osborne</i> | <i>Preddy</i> |
| - | 1♣* | Pass | 1♦* |
| Pass | 1NT | Pass | 2♣* |
| Pass | 2♥ | Pass | 2♠ |
| Pass | 3♣ | Pass | 3NT |
| All Pass | | | |
| 1♣ | 1+♣ | | |
| 1♦ | Transfer | | |
| 2♣ | Checkback | | |

East led the ♠4 and declarer took West's queen with the king and played

the ♥Q, followed by the ♥K. West took that and exited with the ♥8, declarer winning, cashing three spades and exiting with a heart. West won and returned the ♦2 and East, down to the ♦KJ ♣J83 played the king, declarer taking ten tricks, +450.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|--------------|----------------|--------------|---------------|
| <i>Brock</i> | <i>Allfrey</i> | <i>Myers</i> | <i>Robson</i> |
| – | 1♣* | Pass | 1♦* |
| Pass | 2NT | Pass | 3♥* |
| Pass | 3NT | All Pass | |
| 1♣ | 1+♣ | | |
| 1♦ | Transfer | | |
| 3♥ | 4♥+4♠ | | |

East led the ♥10 and declarer won with the queen and played a club to the ten and king. West cashed the ♥A and exited with a heart and declarer won and tried the clubs, East winning the fourth round of the suit with the jack as West pitched two diamonds. When East exited with a diamond, declarer went up with the ♦A and played a spade to the king, which meant he had to go one down, so 10 IMPs to Brock.

Board 27. Dealer South. None Vul.

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|
| ♠ QJ ♥ A982 ♦ KQ ♣ AJ1094 | | ♠ A1032 ♥ 7653 ♦ A93 ♣ Q8 |
| ♠ K9654 ♥ 104 ♦ 1065 ♣ 652 | | ♠ 87 ♥ KQJ ♦ J8742 ♣ K73 |

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| ♠ Q53 ♥ A986 ♦ 7542 ♣ K7 | | ♠ KJ8 ♥ KQJ ♦ Q6 ♣ AQ942 |
| | | ♠ 1042 ♥ 102 ♦ KJ83 ♣ J853 |
| | | ♠ A976 ♥ 7543 ♦ A109 ♣ 106 |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|------------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|
| <i>Forrester</i> | <i>Selway</i> | <i>Osborne</i> | <i>Preddy</i> |
| – | – | – | Pass |
| Pass | 1NT | Pass | 2♠* |
| Pass | 3♣ | Pass | 3♥ |
| Pass | 5♣ | All Pass | |

2♠ Clubs or balanced game values, two low in any suit

East led the ♥5 and when declarer took the club finesse he won and switched to spades for two down, +100.

Closed Room


| West | North | East | South |
|--------------|----------------|--------------|---------------|
| <i>Brock</i> | <i>Allfrey</i> | <i>Myers</i> | <i>Robson</i> |
| – | – | – | Pass |
| Pass | 1NT | Pass | 2NT* |
| Pass | 3♣* | Pass | 3♥* |
| Pass | 3♠* | Pass | 3NT* |
| Pass | 4♣ | Pass | 4♥ |

All Pass

- 2NT Relay
- 3♣ Forced
- 3♥ ♠xx and values for 3NT
- 3♠ Unable to bid 3NT do you have four hearts
- 3NT No

Having denied 4 hearts South was happy to show his three-card support on the next round. West led the ♠5 and the defenders played three rounds of the suit. Declarer ruffed in dummy, pitching a club from his hand and played the ♦Q, East taking the ace and returning the ♥3. Declarer won, unblocked the ♦K, crossed to hand with the ♣K, cashed the ♦J and played a club to the ace. When the queen fell he continued with the ♣10 and East was helpless, declarer soon entering +420 onto his scorecard along with 11 IMPs.

Board 28. Dealer West. N/S Vul.

| | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ♠ A 106 ♥ KJ 10 ♦ 9832 ♣ Q62 |  | ♠ 74 ♥ 98632 ♦ J105 ♣ J53 | ♠ J952 ♥ 74 ♦ A764 ♣ AK7 |
| ♠ KQ83 ♥ AQ5 ♦ KQ ♣ 10984 | | | |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|------------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|
| <i>Forrester</i> | <i>Selway</i> | <i>Osborne</i> | <i>Preddy</i> |
| 1♣* | Pass | 1♦* | Pass |
| 1NT | Pass | Pass | Double |
| Pass | Pass | Redouble* | Pass |
| 2♣ | Double | Pass | Pass |
| Redouble* | Pass | 2♦ | Pass |
| Pass | Double | All Pass | |
| 1♣ 2+♣ | | | |
| 1♦ Transfer | | | |


East's redouble set up a scramble, but 2♦ proved to be a poor spot. South led the ♦K, won the diamond return and exited with the ♣4, North winning with the queen and playing the ♦8. That sealed declarer's fate, four down, -800.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|----------------|----------------|--------------|---------------|
| <i>Brock</i> | <i>Allfrey</i> | <i>Myers</i> | <i>Robson</i> |
| 1NT | Pass | 2♦* | Pass |
| 2♥ | Pass | Pass | 2♠ |
| All Pass | | | |
| 2♦ Transfer | | | |

It was surprising to see N/S stop in a part score, but there was no guarantee they would have made 3NT. +140 meant the swing was 12 IMPs.

Board 29. Dealer North. All Vul.

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| ♠ 82 ♥ 9832 ♦ KQ42 ♣ 975 |  | ♠ AK95 ♥ KQ4 ♦ AJ98 ♣ K3 | ♠ 764 ♥ A107 ♦ 653 ♣ J862 |
| | | | ♠ QJ103 ♥ J65 ♦ 107 ♣ AQ104 |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|------------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|
| <i>Forrester</i> | <i>Selway</i> | <i>Osborne</i> | <i>Preddy</i> |
| - | Pass | 2NT | Pass |
| 3NT | All Pass | | |

South led the ♠Q and declarer ducked, won the next spade with the king, crossed to dummy with the ♥A and played a diamond to the jack. When it held he cashed the ♦A and his other top cards before exiting with a spade. He got a trick with the ♣K but that only added up to eight winners, -100.


Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|--------------|----------------|--------------|---------------|
| <i>Brock</i> | <i>Allfrey</i> | <i>Myers</i> | <i>Robson</i> |
| - | Pass | 2NT | Pass |
| 3NT | All Pass | | |

Here declarer took the ♠Q immediately and played the ♦9. South took the ten and played the ♠10, declarer winning and returning the ♠5, setting up a third spade trick. South won and exited with the ♥J. Declarer took dummy's ace, unblocking the ♥Q, and played a diamond. If North

puts up an honour the contract must go down, but when he followed with the ♦2 declarer won with the jack, cashed the ♠9, took two hearts ending in dummy and played a club to the king. South could win, but had to give dummy a trick with the ♣J and the ♦A was the game going trick, +600 and another 12 IMPs for Brock.

Board 30. Dealer East. None Vul.

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ♠ AQJ106 ♥ 5 ♦ AQ6 ♣ K863 |  | ♠ 973 ♥ KJ762 ♦ 943 ♣ J7 | ♠ 84 ♥ 94 ♦ KJ1075 ♣ Q1042 |
| | | ♠ K52 ♥ AQ1083 ♦ 82 ♣ A95 | |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|------------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|
| <i>Forrester</i> | <i>Selway</i> | <i>Osborne</i> | <i>Preddy</i> |
| – | – | Pass | 1♥ |
| 1♠ | 3♥ | Pass | Pass |
| Double | Pass | 4♦ | All Pass |

South started with two rounds of hearts and declarer ruffed high in dummy, drew trumps, and played a club to the king followed by the ♠Q. When South did not cash the ♣A there were eleven tricks, +150.


Would a bid of 3NT by East offer West a choice of minors and show some values?

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|--------------|----------------|--------------|---------------|
| <i>Brock</i> | <i>Allfrey</i> | <i>Myers</i> | <i>Robson</i> |
| – | – | Pass | 1♥ |
| 1♠ | 4♥ | Pass | Pass |
| Double | All Pass | | |

North's Law abiding bid resulted in the loss of 500 when the defenders had no trouble collecting all the tricks to which they were entitled, giving Brock another 8 IMPs.

Board 32. Dealer West. E/W Vul.

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ♠ AK7632 ♥ 9 ♦ 9 ♣ KQ752 |  | ♠ 109 ♥ AQ63 ♦ 10742 ♣ 863 | ♠ Q854 ♥ J1087 ♦ J3 ♣ AJ4 |
| | | ♠ J ♥ K542 ♦ AKQ865 ♣ 109 | |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|------------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|
| <i>Forrester</i> | <i>Selway</i> | <i>Osborne</i> | <i>Preddy</i> |
| 1♠ | Pass | 3♣* | 3♦ |
| 4♣ | 5♦ | 5♠ | All Pass |
| 3♣ | Spade support | | |

Declarer was soon claiming, +650.



Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|--------------|----------------|--------------|---------------|
| <i>Brock</i> | <i>Allfrey</i> | <i>Myers</i> | <i>Robson</i> |
| 1♠ | Pass | 3♠* | Double |
| 4♠ | Pass | Pass | 5♦ |

3♠ was described by the BBO operator as weak (a recent convention card says 2♠ is weak, with 3♣/3♦ showing 3/4 card limit raises). West might have bid 4♣, but that could be interpreted as a slam try. 5♦ was the obvious two down, so Allfrey recovered 11 IMPs to trail 55-75.

You can replay the deals [here](#) or <https://tinyurl.com/u5guagb>

Board 35. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ♠ A7 ♥ AK1075 ♦ A92 ♣ 532 |  | ♠ J6 ♥ Q82 ♦ Q743 ♣ J986 | ♠ 108532 ♥ 93 ♦ 86 ♣ AK74 |
| |  | | ♠ KQ94 ♥ J64 ♦ KJ105 ♣ Q10 |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|-------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|
| <i>Bell</i> | <i>Selway</i> | <i>Gold</i> | <i>Preddy</i> |
| - | - | - | 1♣* |
| Pass | 1♦* | Pass | 1♥ |
| 1♠ | 2♠* | Pass | 2NT |
| Pass | 3NT | All Pass | |
| 1♣ | 1+♣ | | |
| 1♦ | Transfer | | |

West led the ♠5 and declarer took East's jack with the king and ran the ♦J as West followed with the six. East won with the queen and switched to the ♣9 for the ten and king. Some pairs have an agreement that when dummy has a worthless holding in a suit you switch to your second highest when you don't have one of the top honours in the suit. That might have been the case here, but West did not know how many clubs East held so he switched to the ♦8. Declarer won in dummy, cashed a heart and then took her winners before trying the heart finesse, finishing one down, -50.



Suppose the ♦J had held? Then declarer would have been more or less committed to playing the ace on the next round otherwise her play to trick one would have caused insuperable communication problems. In addition, if you think West has spade length, then playing East for the ♦Q is an option.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|--------------|----------------------------------|--------------|---------------|
| <i>Jones</i> | <i>Allfrey</i> | <i>Rosen</i> | <i>Robson</i> |
| - | - | - | 1♣* |
| Pass | 1♦* | Pass | 1♥* |
| 1♠ | 4♥ | All Pass | |
| 1♣ | 1+♣, natural or balanced or 4441 | | |
| 1♦ | Transfer | | |
| 1♥ | Three hearts | | |

West started with three rounds of clubs and declarer ruffed, played the ♦J and with a nod to Zia went up with the ace when West did not produce the queen. He continued with a low heart and East went in with the queen and played the ♦7, but declarer finessed and claimed, +420 and 10 IMPs.

Board 36. Dealer West. All Vul.

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ♠ AK ♥ Q32 ♦ A842 ♣ K943 |  | ♠ Q10832 ♥ K94 ♦ Q ♣ J876 | ♠ 54 ♥ A108765 ♦ J1093 ♣ 2 |
| |  | | ♠ J976 ♥ J ♦ K765 ♣ AQ105 |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|-------------|----------------|-------------|---------------|
| <i>Bell</i> | <i>Selway</i> | <i>Gold</i> | <i>Preddy</i> |
| 2♦* | 2NT | Pass | 3♣* |
| Pass | 3NT | All Pass | |
| 2♦ | Multi | | |
| 3♣ | Puppet Stayman | | |

East led the ♥4 and West contributed the ♥8, which gave declarer a ninth trick – he cashed the ♣Q, crossed to hand with the ♣K and was soon claiming, +600.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|----------|-----------------|-------|--------|
| Jones | Allfrey | Rosen | Robson |
| 2♦* | 2NT | 3♥* | Double |
| Pass | 4♣ | Pass | 5♣ |
| All Pass | | | |
| 2♦ | Multi | | |
| 3♥ | Pass or correct | | |

There was no way to bring home this contract and declarer finished two down, -200 and 12 IMPs to Brock.

Board 37. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------|---|----------|---|--|---|--|---|--|---|--|-------|
| | ♠ KJ9872 | | | | | | | | | | |
| | ♥ J | | | | | | | | | | |
| | ♦ J9532 | | | | | | | | | | |
| | ♣ 7 | | | | | | | | | | |
| ♠ Q5 | <table border="1" style="width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table> | | N | | W | | E | | S | | ♠ 106 |
| | N | | | | | | | | | | |
| W | | E | | | | | | | | | |
| | S | | | | | | | | | | |
| ♥ K76 | | ♥ Q5 | | | | | | | | | |
| ♦ 76 | | ♦ AKQ104 | | | | | | | | | |
| ♣ KJ9852 | | ♣ Q1064 | | | | | | | | | |
| | ♠ A43 | | | | | | | | | | |
| | ♥ A1098432 | | | | | | | | | | |
| | ♦ 8 | | | | | | | | | | |
| | ♣ A3 | | | | | | | | | | |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|----------|------------------|------|--------|
| Bell | Selway | Gold | Preddy |
| - | 2♠* | 3♦ | 4♠ |
| All Pass | | | |
| 2♠ | 6(5)♠ and 5(3)-9 | | |

East started with two rounds of diamonds but declarer could ruff in dummy and establish the hearts while drawing trumps for +680.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|----------|-----------------|--------|--------|
| Jones | Allfrey | Rosen | Robson |
| - | 2♦* | Double | 2NT |
| 3♣ | 4♠ | 5♣ | 6♠ |
| All Pass | | | |
| 2♦ | Weak major, 3-8 | | |
| 2NT | Enquiry | | |

When North jumped to game South chanced his arm and his reward was +1430 and 13 IMPs.

Board 39. Dealer South. All Vul.

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------|---|----------|---|--|---|--|---|--|---|--|-------|
| | ♠ Q3 | | | | | | | | | | |
| | ♥ QJ7 | | | | | | | | | | |
| | ♦ KQ72 | | | | | | | | | | |
| | ♣ KJ32 | | | | | | | | | | |
| ♠ K104 | <table border="1" style="width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table> | | N | | W | | E | | S | | ♠ 972 |
| | N | | | | | | | | | | |
| W | | E | | | | | | | | | |
| | S | | | | | | | | | | |
| ♥ 9653 | | ♥ 108 | | | | | | | | | |
| ♦ J43 | | ♦ A109 | | | | | | | | | |
| ♣ 754 | | ♣ AQ1086 | | | | | | | | | |
| | ♠ AJ865 | | | | | | | | | | |
| | ♥ AK42 | | | | | | | | | | |
| | ♦ 865 | | | | | | | | | | |
| | ♣ 9 | | | | | | | | | | |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|------|--------|----------|--------|
| Bell | Selway | Gold | Preddy |
| - | - | - | 1♠ |
| Pass | 2♣ | Pass | 2♦ |
| Pass | 3NT | All Pass | |

East led the ♣6 and declarer was off to a good start when dummy's nine held. A low spade at this point would have worked well, but declarer played a diamond for the three king and nine (it was impossible for East to win and return a diamond). Playing on spades would have worked now, but declarer went down another route, cashing four rounds of hearts

before playing a second diamond for the queen and ace. East returned a diamond and West won and played a club and East took two tricks in the suit and exited with a spade for one down, -100.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|--------------|----------------|--------------|---------------|
| <i>Jones</i> | <i>Allfrey</i> | <i>Rosen</i> | <i>Robson</i> |
| – | – | – | 1♠ |
| Pass | 2♣* | Pass | 2♥ |
| Pass | 2NT | Pass | 3♦ |
| Pass | 3NT | All Pass | |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|---|---|---|--|--|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| ♠ K104 ♥ 9653 ♦ J43 ♣ 754 | <table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="padding: 5px;">W</td><td style="padding: 5px;">N</td><td style="padding: 5px;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 5px;">S</td><td style="padding: 5px;"></td><td style="padding: 5px;"></td></tr> </table> | W | N | E | S | | | ♠ Q3 ♥ QJ7 ♦ KQ72 ♣ KJ32 | ♠ 972 ♥ 108 ♦ A109 ♣ AQ1086 |
| W | N | E | | | | | | | |
| S | | | | | | | | | |
| | | ♠ AJ865 ♥ AK42 ♦ 865 ♣ 9 | | | | | | | |

Could East find the lead of the ♣Q/10, which would flatten the board? He did lead a club, but it was the eight and declarer won with dummy's nine and played a spade to the queen after which he cleared the spades and had an easy route to nine tricks and 12 IMPs.

Allfrey had won the set 42-13 to lead 97-88.

You can replay these deals [here](#) or <https://tinyurl.com/qlfglg3>

Board 41. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

| | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|---|---|---|---|--|--|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| ♠ 10 ♥ 6 ♦ KQJ532 ♣ QJ862 | <table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="padding: 5px;">W</td><td style="padding: 5px;">N</td><td style="padding: 5px;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 5px;">S</td><td style="padding: 5px;"></td><td style="padding: 5px;"></td></tr> </table> | W | N | E | S | | | ♠ A ♥ AQJ873 ♦ 97 ♣ AK75 | ♠ K873 ♥ K109 ♦ A104 ♣ 1093 |
| W | N | E | | | | | | | |
| S | | | | | | | | | |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| <i>Bell</i> | <i>Jones</i> | <i>Gold</i> | <i>Rosen</i> |
| – | 1♦ | Double | 1♥* |
| Pass | 2♣ | 2♥ | 3♦ |
| 3♥ | 5♦ | Double | All Pass |
| 1♥ Spades | | | |

The standards for opening bids have been falling steadily, but 1♦ looks wafer thin to me. However it did not turn out badly. East cashed the ♣K and ♠A and then went back to clubs, West ruffing the third round and playing a spade. Declarer could ruff high, draw trumps and pitch his heart on the ♠K, only two down, -300.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|--------------|----------------|--------------|---------------|
| <i>Brock</i> | <i>Allfrey</i> | <i>Myers</i> | <i>Robson</i> |
| – | 3♦ | 4♥ | All Pass |

The defence cashed two diamonds and switched to a spade, so declarer took the ace, cashed the ♣A, ruffed a club, came to hand with the ♥A and ruffed another clubs for an easy +620 and 8 IMPs.

Two more swings to Brock including a Meckwellian 3NT that needed a lot of luck left them ahead 108-99.

Board 45. Dealer North. All Vul.

| | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|---|---|---|--|--|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ♠ 93 ♥ K1054 ♦ J764 ♣ 832 | <table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="padding: 5px;">W</td><td style="padding: 5px;">N</td><td style="padding: 5px;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 5px;">S</td><td style="padding: 5px;"></td><td style="padding: 5px;"></td></tr> </table> | W | N | E | S | | | ♠ AQ107654 ♥ Q3 ♦ 109 ♣ Q7 | ♠ J2 ♥ 72 ♦ AKQ853 ♣ 1064 |
| W | N | E | | | | | | | |
| S | | | | | | | | | |
| | | ♠ K8 ♥ AJ986 ♦ 2 ♣ AKJ95 | | | | | | | |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| <i>Bell</i> | <i>Jones</i> | <i>Gold</i> | <i>Rosen</i> |
| - | Pass | 2♠ | 4♣* |
| 4♦ | Pass | 4♠ | All Pass |

Leaping Michaels, ♣+♥

It was something of a surprise that North did not bid 4♥ over 4♦. 4♠ was two down, but the goal was wide open.

| | | | |
|------------|---------|----------|---------|
| ♠ 93 | ♥ K1054 | ♦ J764 | ♣ 832 |
| ♠ J2 | ♥ 72 | ♦ AKQ853 | ♣ 1064 |
| ♠ AQ107654 | ♥ Q3 | ♦ 109 | ♣ Q7 |
| ♠ K8 | ♥ AJ986 | ♦ 2 | ♣ AKJ95 |

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|--------------|----------------|--------------|---------------|
| <i>Brock</i> | <i>Allfrey</i> | <i>Myers</i> | <i>Robson</i> |
| - | Pass | 3♠ | 4♥ |
| All Pass | | | |

Robson quickly put the ball into the net, taking twelve tricks for +680 and 10 IMPs.

25-22 for Brock on the set, but Allfrey still ahead, 120-113.

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

Board 52. Dealer West. All Vul.

| | | | |
|-----------|----------|--------|---------|
| ♠ AK | ♥ AQJ532 | ♦ A109 | ♣ A8 |
| ♠ QJ10972 | ♥ 8 | ♦ Q87 | ♣ QJ9 |
| ♠ 84 | ♥ 9764 | ♦ J52 | ♣ 6532 |
| ♠ 653 | ♥ K10 | ♦ K643 | ♣ K1074 |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|-------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|
| <i>Bell</i> | <i>Selway</i> | <i>Gold</i> | <i>Preddy</i> |
| 2♠ | Double | Pass | 3♥ |
| Pass | 6NT | All Pass | |

I have no idea what 3♥ meant – the lucky club position would have delivered all the tricks in 7♥. +1440.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|--------------|------------------|--------------|----------------|
| <i>Brock</i> | <i>Forrester</i> | <i>Myers</i> | <i>Osborne</i> |
| 2♠ | Double | Pass | 3♣ |
| Pass | 3NT | All Pass | |

This conservative auction resulted in the loss of 13 IMPs and Brock regained the lead, 127-122.

Board 54. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

| | | | |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|
| ♠ J9 | ♥ J1062 | ♦ QJ102 | ♣ J109 |
| ♠ K764 | ♥ Q43 | ♦ 93 | ♣ KQ74 |
| ♠ 10832 | ♥ 97 | ♦ K764 | ♣ 653 |
| ♠ AQ5 | ♥ AK85 | ♦ A85 | ♣ A82 |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|-------------|--------------------|-------------|---------------|
| <i>Bell</i> | <i>Selway</i> | <i>Gold</i> | <i>Preddy</i> |
| - | - | Pass | 2NT |
| Pass | 3♣* | Pass | 3♦* |
| Pass | 3♠* | Pass | 4♣* |
| Pass | 4♥ | All Pass | |
| 3♣ | Puppet Stayman | | |
| 3♦ | At least one major | | |
| 3♠ | Hearts | | |
| 4♣ | Cue-bid | | |

| | | | |
|---------|--|--|---------|
| ♠ J9 | | | |
| ♥ J1062 | | | |
| ♦ QJ102 | | | |
| ♣ J109 | | | |
| ♠ K764 | | | ♠ 10832 |
| ♥ Q43 | | | ♥ 97 |
| ♦ 93 | | | ♦ K764 |
| ♣ KQ74 | | | ♣ 653 |
| | | | ♠ AQ5 |
| | | | ♥ AK85 |
| | | | ♦ A85 |
| | | | ♣ A82 |

East led the ♠3 and West won with the king and returned the four, declarer winning with dummy's queen, cashing the ♥A, ruffing the ♠A and then finessing the ♥10. West won and returned a trump and now declarer could only muster nine tricks, -50.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|--------------|------------------|--------------|----------------|
| <i>Brock</i> | <i>Forrester</i> | <i>Myers</i> | <i>Osborne</i> |
| - | - | Pass | 2NT |
| Pass | 3♣* | Pass | 3♥ |
| Pass | 4♥ | All Pass | |

West led the ♦9 and when dummy's queen held declarer ran the ♥J, West winning and playing a second diamond that ran to declarer's eight. he drew trumps ending in dummy and ran the ♠J, claiming ten tricks when it lost, +420 and 10 IMPs.

Another set to Brock, 18-13 but Allfrey ahead by a short head, 133-131.

You can replay the deals [here](#) or <https://tinyurl.com/wf9yb4e>

Board 57. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

| | | | |
|---------|--|--|----------|
| ♠ Q3 | | | |
| ♥ 87 | | | |
| ♦ KQJ54 | | | |
| ♣ AK85 | | | |
| ♠ 652 | | | ♠ AJ1097 |
| ♥ 6542 | | | ♥ AK1093 |
| ♦ A73 | | | ♦ 109 |
| ♣ Q32 | | | ♣ 6 |
| | | | ♠ K84 |
| | | | ♥ QJ |
| | | | ♦ 862 |
| | | | ♣ J10974 |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|------------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|
| <i>Forrester</i> | <i>Jones</i> | <i>Osborne</i> | <i>Rosen</i> |
| - | 1NT | 2♣* | Pass |
| 2♥ | 2NT* | Double | 3♣ |
| 3♦* | Pass | 4♥ | All Pass |
| 2♣ | Majors | | |
| 2NT | Minors | | |
| 3♦ | Some values | | |

Did North's 2NT help E/W to reach game?

On this layout the defenders could score only a spade, a diamond and a club,+620.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|--------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|
| <i>Brock</i> | <i>Gold</i> | <i>Myers</i> | <i>Bell</i> |
| - | 1♦ | 2♦* | Pass |
| 2♥ | All Pass | | |
| 2♦ | Majors | | |

That sort of answers my question don't you think?

The defence was not taxing and declarer took eleven tricks,+200, but a 9 IMP loss, Allfrey ahead 142-131.

Board 58. Dealer East. All Vul.

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ♠ Q32 ♥ J6 ♦ QJ763 ♣ Q54 | <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div> | ♠ J10864 ♥ 82 ♦ AK2 ♣ K98 | ♠ AK75 ♥ KQ94 ♦ 84 ♣ AJ6 |
| ♠ 9 ♥ A10753 ♦ 1095 ♣ 10732 | | | |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|------------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|
| <i>Forrester</i> | <i>Jones</i> | <i>Osborne</i> | <i>Rosen</i> |
| - | - | 1NT | Pass |
| 2♠* | Double | 3♦* | All Pass |
| 2♠ Transfer | | | |
| 3♦ No fit | | | |

South led the ♠9 and declarer won with the king and played a diamond for the jack and king. South ruffed the return of the ♠8 and switched to the ♣7, but declarer won with the jack and now had only to play a second diamond to be on course for nine tricks. When he played a heart South could have shot up with the ace and played a second club ensuring one down, but he played the five and dummy's jack won. Now the ♦Q is the winning move, but declarer played the ♥6 and South won and returned a heart and the ♦2 scored, one down, -100.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|--------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|
| <i>Brock</i> | <i>Gold</i> | <i>Myers</i> | <i>Bell</i> |
| - | - | 1♣* | Pass |
| 1♦ | 1♠ | 1NT | All Pass |
| 1♣ 2+♣ | | | |

South led the ♥3 and declarer won with the nine and played back the ♥4, finishing with nine tricks, +150 and 6 IMPs, 142-137.

Board 60. Dealer West. N/S Vul.

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ♠ K8 ♥ K108642 ♦ 54 ♣ A32 | <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div> | ♠ QJ1065 ♥ J ♦ AQJ6 ♣ J94 | ♠ 93 ♥ A953 ♦ K1083 ♣ K108 |
| ♠ A742 ♥ Q7 ♦ 972 ♣ Q765 | | | |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|-----------------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|
| <i>Forrester</i> | <i>Jones</i> | <i>Osborne</i> | <i>Rosen</i> |
| 1♥ | 1♠ | 2NT* | 3♠ |
| 4♣* | Pass | 4♦* | Pass |
| 4♥ | All Pass | | |
| 2NT Heart support | | | |
| 4♣ Cue-bid | | | |
| 4♦ Cue-bid | | | |


Declarer lost a spade, a diamond and a club, +420.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|--------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|
| <i>Brock</i> | <i>Gold</i> | <i>Myers</i> | <i>Bell</i> |
| 2♥* | 2♠ | 4♥ | 4♠ |
| All Pass | | | |
| 2♥ 8-11 | | | |

That was two down, -200 and a loss of 6 IMPs, 149-137.

Board 62. Dealer East. None Vul.

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ♠ 1052 ♥ A985 ♦ 975 ♣ Q87 |  | ♠ J93 ♥ KJ1073 ♦ K32 ♣ K3 | ♠ K4 ♥ Q6 ♦ AQ864 ♣ 10942 |
| ♠ AQ876 ♥ 42 ♦ J10 ♣ AJ65 | | | |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|------------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|
| <i>Forrester</i> | <i>Jones</i> | <i>Osborne</i> | <i>Rosen</i> |
| - | - | 1♦ | 1♠ |
| Double* | 2♦* | Pass | 2♠ |
| All Pass | | | |


2♠ was not in any danger and declarer emerged with nine tricks,+140.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|--------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|
| <i>Brock</i> | <i>Gold</i> | <i>Myers</i> | <i>Bell</i> |
| - | - | Pass | 1♠ |
| Pass | 3♣* | Pass | 4♠ |
| All Pass | | | |

West led the ♦7, a good start and East won with the queen and cashed the ace (a club switch is best). He then switched to the ♥6, apparently solving one problem for declarer but when West won with the ace and returned the ♥5 declarer put in the ♥J and East won and exited with a diamond. Winning with dummy's king, declarer ran the ♠9 and West won with the ten, -200 and 6 IMPs, 149-143.

Board 63. Dealer South. N/S Vul.

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ♠ — ♥ Q106432 ♦ A954 ♣ A43 |  | ♠ A874 ♥ AKJ87 ♦ Q6 ♣ J9 | ♠ QJ95 ♥ 95 ♦ 1032 ♣ K876 |
| ♠ K10632 ♥ — ♦ KJ87 ♣ Q1052 | | | |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|------------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|
| <i>Forrester</i> | <i>Jones</i> | <i>Osborne</i> | <i>Rosen</i> |
| - | - | - | Pass |
| 1♥ | Pass | 1♠ | Double |
| Pass | 1NT | Pass | Pass |
| 2♥ | Double | All Pass | |

North's old-fashioned trap pass worked!

He led the ♣J and declarer won with the ace, played a club to the king and now does best to ruff a spade. Instead he played a diamond to the ace. It was hardly obvious to drop the queen under that, but it should lead to three down. When North followed with the ♦6 declarer exited with a diamond and North won with the queen and tried the ♠A. Declarer ruffed (discarding is best) and exited with a diamond. South won and played two rounds of clubs and North overruffed declarer and played three rounds of trumps for three down, -500.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|--------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|
| <i>Brock</i> | <i>Gold</i> | <i>Myers</i> | <i>Bell</i> |
| - | - | - | Pass |
| 1♥ | Pass | 1♠ | Pass |
| 2♥ | Pass | Pass | Double |
| All Pass | | | |

North led the ♥K and switched to the ♦6. When South followed with the seven declarer won with the nine and played two more rounds of the suit, South winning as North pitched the ♣9. Declarer won the club switch and played her last diamond, ruffing when North correctly discarded a spade. Declarer ruffed a spade and played a club and was sure of two more tricks, so only one down, -100 and a 9IMP swing that put Brock ahead 152-149 with just one deal to play.

Board 64. Dealer West. E/W Vul.

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ♠ KJ963 ♥ 52 ♦ 10872 ♣ 62 | | ♠ Q5 ♥ K9 ♦ AJ954 ♣ KQ103 | ♠ A84 ♥ AQ1086 ♦ KQ6 ♣ A5 |
| ♠ 1072 ♥ J743 ♦ 3 ♣ J9874 | | | |

Open Room

| | West | North | East | South |
|----|-------------------------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|
| | <i>Forrester</i> | <i>Jones</i> | <i>Osborne</i> | <i>Rosen</i> |
| | 2NT | Pass | 3♠* | Pass |
| | 3NT* | Pass | 4♦* | Pass |
| | 4♥* | Pass | 5♥* | Pass |
| | 5♠* | Pass | 6♣* | Pass |
| | 6♦ | Pass | 6♥* | Pass |
| | 6♠* | Pass | 7NT | All Pass |
| 3♠ | Forces 3NT | | | |
| 4♦ | Diamonds (and probably clubs) | | | |
| 4♥ | Cue-bid | | | |
| 5♥ | Cue-bid | | | |
| 5♠ | Cue-bid | | | |
| 6♣ | Cue-bid | | | |

6♥ and 6♠ were probes, suggesting that a grand slam might be possible. North led the ♦2 and declarer won with the queen and immediately cashed the ♠A. He then cashed four diamonds pitching two spades and the last of these squeezed South, who parted with the ♥3. Declarer continued with three rounds of clubs and then cashed his hearts, +2220.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|--------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|
| <i>Brock</i> | <i>Gold</i> | <i>Myers</i> | <i>Bell</i> |
| 1♥ | Pass | 2♦ | Pass |
| 3NT | Pass | 6NT | All Pass |

The same squeeze gave declarer all the tricks, but it was Allfrey who advanced to the final.

You can replay the deals [here](#) or <https://tinyurl.com/wab48z3>

Allfrey v Gillis

Board 1. Dealer North. None Vul.

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ♠ K10853 ♥ J8 ♦ 9654 ♣ 104 | | ♠ AQ7 ♥ Q943 ♦ 2 ♣ K8753 | ♠ J2 ♥ A105 ♦ AKQJ73 ♣ 92 |
| | | | ♠ 964 ♥ K762 ♦ 108 ♣ AQJ6 |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|-------------|---------------|-------------|----------------|
| <i>Bell</i> | <i>Gillis</i> | <i>Gold</i> | <i>Svensen</i> |
| - | 1NT | Pass | 2♣* |
| Pass | 3♦ | Pass | 3NT |
| All Pass | | | |

East led the ♣3 and declarer put up the ace and cashed out, +400.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|---------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|
| <i>McGann</i> | <i>Allfrey</i> | <i>Hanlon</i> | <i>Robson</i> |
| – | 1♦ | Double | Pass |
| 1♠ | 2♦ | Pass | 2♠* |
| Double | Pass | Pass | 3♦ |
| Pass | 3NT | All Pass | |

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ♠ K10853 ♥ J8 ♦ 9654 ♣ 104 | <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div> | ♠ J2 ♥ A105 ♦ AKQJ73 ♣ 92 | ♠ AQ7 ♥ Q943 ♦ 2 ♣ K8753 |
| ♠ 964 ♥ K762 ♦ 108 ♣ AQJ6 | | | |

East led the ♠A followed by the queen and seven for a rapid one down, -50.
 To my way of thinking, North should have preferred 3♥ to 3NT when 5♦ would probably have been reached. Gillis 10-0.

Board 5. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ♠ K ♥ A5 ♦ Q1093 ♣ 1087643 | <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div> | ♠ 42 ♥ QJ1064 ♦ K762 ♣ AJ | ♠ A9875 ♥ 93 ♦ J84 ♣ Q95 |
| | | | ♠ QJ1063 ♥ K872 ♦ A5 ♣ K2 |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|-------------|---------------|-------------|-----------------|
| <i>Bell</i> | <i>Gillis</i> | <i>Gold</i> | <i>Svendsen</i> |
| – | Pass | 1♥ | 1♠ |
| Double | 2NT* | Pass | 4♠ |
| All Pass | | | |

2NT Spade support

West led the ♥A and that was all the help declarer needed, +620.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|---------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|
| <i>McGann</i> | <i>Allfrey</i> | <i>Hanlon</i> | <i>Robson</i> |
| – | Pass | 1♥ | 1♠ |
| Double | 3♠ | All Pass | |

West led the ♣6 and declarer took East's jack with the queen and returned a club for the nine and ace. East switched to the ♥J and West took declarer's king with the ace and played a third club, killing the potential discard, so +140 and another 10 IMPs to Gillis, ahead 26-13 at the end of the set.

You can replay these deals [here](https://tinyurl.com/rxt65pq) or <https://tinyurl.com/rxt65pq>

Very little happened in the next session, Gillis edging it 9-6 to lead 35-19.

You can replay these deals [here](https://tinyurl.com/w67ddgv) or <https://tinyurl.com/w67ddgv>

In the third set Gillis led 9-5 after seven of the eight deals.

Board 24. Dealer West. None Vul.

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ♠ AQ103 ♥ A10965 ♦ K ♣ AQ7 | <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div> | ♠ J6 ♥ KQJ7 ♦ AQ974 ♣ 93 | ♠ 852 ♥ 842 ♦ 1082 ♣ J862 |
| | | | ♠ K974 ♥ 3 ♦ J653 ♣ K1054 |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|----------------|----------------|------------------|-----------------|
| <i>Osborne</i> | <i>Liggins</i> | <i>Forrester</i> | <i>Erichsen</i> |
| 1♥ | Pass | 2NT* | Pass |
| 3♠ | Pass | 3NT | Pass |
| 4NT* | Pass | 5♠* | Pass |
| 5NT* | Pass | 6♦ | Pass |
| 7♥ | All Pass | | |

- 2NT Heart support
- 4NT RKCB
- 5♠ 2 key cards +♥Q

5NT usually asks for side kings so presumably East upgraded his hand.

With the ♠K inside this rolled home for a not unlucky 1510.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|---------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|
| <i>McGann</i> | <i>Allfrey</i> | <i>Hanlon</i> | <i>Robson</i> |
| 1♣* | Pass | 1♥ | Pass |
| 2NT* | Pass | 3♣ | Pass |
| 3♥ | Pass | 3NT | Pass |
| 4♣* | Pass | 4♦* | Pass |
| 4NT* | Pass | 5♠* | Pass |
| 5NT* | Pass | 6♥* | All Pass |

- 1♣ 11-13 balanced or any 17+
- 1♥ 8+ may have minor suit canapé
- 2NT Heart support
- 4♣ Cue-bid
- 4♦ Cue-bid
- 4NT RKCB
- 5♠ 2 key cards +♥Q
- 5NT Kings
- 6♥ No

A good auction – but a loss of 11 IMPs. A 16-19 set for Allfrey who now trailed 35-44.

You can replay these deals [here](https://tinyurl.com/w7xyjxr) or <https://tinyurl.com/w7xyjxr>

The cards refused to get hot in Set 4:

| | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|---|---|--|---|--|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ♠ J ♥ 10742 ♦ 1094 ♣ 96542 | <table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td>W</td><td>N</td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table> | W | N | E | | S | | ♠ A 10853 ♥ — ♦ KQ8 ♣ AKJ87 | ♠ KQ742 ♥ KJ9853 ♦ J ♣ 3 |
| W | N | E | | | | | | | |
| | S | | | | | | | | |
| | | ♠ 96 ♥ AQ6 ♦ A76532 ♣ Q10 | | | | | | | |

Board 29. Dealer North. All Vul.

| | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|---|---|--|---|--|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ♠ AK984 ♥ J87 ♦ 6 ♣ AKJ10 | <table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td>W</td><td>N</td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table> | W | N | E | | S | | ♠ 107632 ♥ K52 ♦ KQJ ♣ 75 | ♠ Q5 ♥ AQ63 ♦ 842 ♣ Q842 |
| W | N | E | | | | | | | |
| | S | | | | | | | | |
| | | ♠ J ♥ 1094 ♦ A109753 ♣ 963 | | | | | | | |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|-------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|
| <i>Bell</i> | <i>Hanlon</i> | <i>Gold</i> | <i>McGann</i> |
| – | Pass | Pass | Pass |
| 1♠ | Pass | 1NT | Pass |
| 2♣ | Pass | 2♠ | Pass |
| 3♥ | Pass | 4♦* | Double |
| 4♥ | All Pass | | |

West patterned out and East's 4♦ looks like a Last Train type effort in case West held three good hearts, say ♥KJ8.

North started with two rounds of diamonds and declarer ruffed, crossed to dummy with a spade and played a heart for the jack and king. North returned the ♠3 but South's ruff was the last trick for the defence, +620.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|-----------------|------------------|---------------|----------------|
| <i>Svendsen</i> | <i>Forrester</i> | <i>Gillis</i> | <i>Osborne</i> |
| – | Pass | Pass | Pass |
| 1♠ | Pass | 1NT | Pass |
| 2♣ | Pass | 3♣ | Pass |
| 3♥ | Pass | 3♠ | Pass |
| 4♣ | All Pass | | |

Declarer ruffed the second diamond, played a heart to the queen, ruffed another diamond, cashed the ♣AK, crossed to dummy with a spade and drew the outstanding trump, +150.

East's final pass was surprising – it resulted in the loss of 10 IMPs and Allfrey won the set 17-3 to move ahead, 52-47.

You can replay the deals [here](#) or <https://tinyurl.com/sm4zar9>

The next set also went Allfrey's way, 8-5 to make the score 60-52.

You can replay the deals [here](#) or <https://tinyurl.com/uh98uae>

Board 42. Dealer East. All Vul.

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ♠ J96 ♥ Q75 ♦ K105 ♣ AJ83 | | ♠ KQ5 ♥ J83 ♦ J843 ♣ K42 | ♠ 8432 ♥ 6 ♦ Q9762 ♣ 976 |
| ♠ A107 ♥ AK10942 ♦ A ♣ Q105 | | | |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|-------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|
| <i>Bell</i> | <i>Hanlon</i> | <i>Gold</i> | <i>McGann</i> |
| – | – | Pass | 1♣* |
| Pass | 1NT* | Pass | 2♥* |
| Pass | 3♥ | Pass | 3NT* |
| Pass | 4♥ | All Pass | |

- 1♣ 11-13 balanced or any 17+
- 1NT 8-11
- 2♥ Game forcing
- 3NT Slam try

West led the ♣6 so declarer took 12 tricks, +680.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|-----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|
| <i>Erichsen</i> | <i>Allfrey</i> | <i>Liggins</i> | <i>Robson</i> |
| – | – | Pass | 1♥ |
| Pass | 2♦ | Pass | 2NT |
| Pass | 3♣ | Pass | 3♥ |
| Pass | 4♣ | Pass | 4♦ |
| Pass | 4♥ | Pass | 4♠ |
| Pass | 5♦ | Pass | 5♥ |
| Pass | 6♥ | All Pass | |

Could West find the spade lead that would scupper the slam?

Yes he could! Out came the ♠3 and declarer took East's ♠Q with the ace, drew trumps and took a losing club finesse for one down. Well, not quite, as East returned the ♦4 and a grateful declarer claimed, +1430 and 13 IMPs.

Board 44. Dealer West. N/S Vul.

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ♠ K72 ♥ 1097643 ♦ 9 ♣ 862 | | ♠ AQ985 ♥ – ♦ KQ108732 ♣ J | ♠ J10 ♥ 52 ♦ 654 ♣ KQ9743 |
| | | ♠ 643 ♥ AKQJ8 ♦ AJ ♣ A105 | |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|-------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|
| <i>Bell</i> | <i>Hanlon</i> | <i>Gold</i> | <i>McGann</i> |
| 2♦* | 4♦ | Pass | 4♥ |
| Pass | 4♠ | Pass | 4NT* |
| Pass | 5♣* | Pass | 6NT |
| All Pass | | | |
| 2♦ | Multi | | |
| 4NT | RKCB | | |
| 5♣ | 1 key card | | |

| | | |
|------------|---------|----------|
| ♠ AQ985 | | |
| ♥ — | | |
| ♦ KQ108732 | | |
| ♣ J | | |
| ♠ K72 | | ♠ J10 |
| ♥ 1097643 | | ♥ 52 |
| ♦ 9 | | ♦ 654 |
| ♣ 862 | | ♣ KQ9743 |
| | ♠ 643 | |
| | ♥ AKQJ8 | |
| | ♦ AJ | |
| | ♣ A105 | |

N/S fell short – depending on the precise meaning of 4♦ perhaps South could have bid 4NT immediately, trusting that there would not be two losing spades. When partner shows two key cards and the trump queen (or 2 key cards and a void with 5NT) South can bid 7NT.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|-----------------|--------------------------|----------------|---------------|
| <i>Erichsen</i> | <i>Allfrey</i> | <i>Liggins</i> | <i>Robson</i> |
| 2♦* | 3♦ | Pass | 4NT* |
| Pass | 5♠* | Pass | 7NT |
| All Pass | | | |
| 2♦ | Multi | | |
| 4NT | RKCB | | |
| 5♠ | Two key cards and the ♦Q | | |

That simple sequence was worth 13 IMPs, Allfrey now ahead 87-59.

Board 45. Dealer North. All Vul.

| | | | |
|----------|----------|----------|--|
| | ♠ 72 | | |
| | ♥ 1032 | | |
| | ♦ Q942 | | |
| | ♣ 8763 | | |
| ♠ AKQ853 | | ♠ J1094 | |
| ♥ — | | ♥ AKJ965 | |
| ♦ J1076 | | ♦ 83 | |
| ♣ KJ5 | | ♣ A | |
| | ♠ 6 | | |
| | ♥ Q874 | | |
| | ♦ AK5 | | |
| | ♣ Q10942 | | |



Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|-------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|
| <i>Bell</i> | <i>Hanlon</i> | <i>Gold</i> | <i>McGann</i> |
| – | Pass | 1♥ | Pass |
| 1♠ | Pass | 3♠ | Pass |
| 4NT* | Pass | 5♥ | Pass |
| 6♠ | All Pass | | |
| 4NT | RKCB | | |
| 5♥ | 2 key cards | | |

Everyone knows you should not generally use Blackwood with two losers in a side suit (but there are exceptions, as on the previous deal). However, here West might have preferred 4♣, hoping to hear East bid 4♦. North still had a lead to find, but he went with the ♦2 and that was -100.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|-----------------|--------------------|----------------|---------------|
| <i>Erichsen</i> | <i>Allfrey</i> | <i>Liggins</i> | <i>Robson</i> |
| – | Pass | 1♥ | Pass |
| 1♠ | Pass | 2NT* | Pass |
| 3♣* | Pass | 3♥ | Pass |
| 3♠ | Pass | 3NT | Pass |
| 4♣ | Pass | 4♠ | All Pass |
| 2NT | Spade support | | |
| 3♣ | Game forcing relay | | |

It may be that after 3♣ West was able to discover his partner's shape and lack of a diamond control – avoiding the bad slam was worth 13 IMPs.

Allfrey took this stanza 33-20 to lead 93-72.

You can replay these deals [here](#) or <https://tinyurl.com/rxcno4s>

Board 49. Dealer North. None Vul.

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ♠ 108732 ♥ KJ94 ♦ — ♣ KJ83 | <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div> | ♠ K65 ♥ 1087 ♦ AK10 ♣ AQ65 | ♠ J4 ♥ 6532 ♦ Q9764 ♣ 94 |
| ♠ AQ9 ♥ AQ ♦ J8532 ♣ 1072 | | | |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|----------------|----------------|------------------|-----------------|
| <i>Osborne</i> | <i>Liggins</i> | <i>Forrester</i> | <i>Erichsen</i> |
| – | Pass | 1NT | Pass |
| 2♣* | Pass | 2♦ | Pass |
| Pass | Double | Redouble | 2♠ |
| Pass | 3♠ | Pass | 4♠ |
| All Pass | | | |

2♣ Puppet to 2♦

West led the ♣9 and East won with the queen, cashed the ace and continued with the five, West ruffing and exiting with the ♥3, taken by declarer's ace. A diamond ruff enabled declarer to play the ♠10 and when East followed with the five the critical moment had arrived. Declarer knew East held the ♠K, but might he also have the jack? On the other hand, as West held only two clubs, was he more likely to have three spades than two? Declarer played the ♠9 and was one down, -50.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|---------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|
| <i>McGann</i> | <i>Gold</i> | <i>Hanlon</i> | <i>Bell</i> |
| – | Pass | 1NT | Pass |
| Pass | Double | Pass | 2♣ |
| Pass | 2♥ | Pass | 2♠ |
| All Pass | | | |

West led the ♠J, after which declarer took ten tricks (and even eleven were possible) so 6 IMPs for Allfrey.

Board 52. Dealer West. All Vul.

| | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ♠ 1072 ♥ 105 ♦ AQ1098 ♣ 1063 | <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div> | ♠ AKJ93 ♥ 94 ♦ K ♣ J9542 | ♠ 84 ♥ KQ86 ♦ J53 ♣ AK87 |
| ♠ Q65 ♥ AJ732 ♦ 7642 ♣ Q | | | |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|----------------|----------------|------------------|-----------------|
| <i>Osborne</i> | <i>Liggins</i> | <i>Forrester</i> | <i>Erichsen</i> |
| 1♣* | Pass | 1♥* | Double |
| Pass | Pass | Redouble | Pass |
| Pass | 2♦ | 3♣ | All Pass |

1♥ Transfer

North led the ♣3 and although it looks as if declarer can make eleven tricks, he was credited with +130.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|---------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|
| <i>McGann</i> | <i>Gold</i> | <i>Hanlon</i> | <i>Bell</i> |
| 1♣* | Pass | 1♠ | Pass |
| 1NT* | Pass | 2♦* | Pass |
| 2♥ | Pass | 2♠ | Pass |
| 2NT | Pass | 3NT | All Pass |

1♣ 11-13 balanced or any 17+

1NT 11-13

2♦ Two way check back

North led the ♦10 and when dummy's king held declarer played a club for the queen and ace, North following with the ♣6. Declarer played three more rounds of the suit ending in hand and tried a spade to the jack. When it lost he was two down, -200 and another eight IMPs went to Allfrey.

Board 53. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

| | | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|---|---------|---|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ♠ K653 ♥ 3 ♦ Q1076 ♣ KJ54 | <table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="padding: 5px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 5px;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 5px;">S</td></tr> </table> | N | W E | S | ♠ A10742 ♥ 109 ♦ J85 ♣ 632 | ♠ J98 ♥ 86 ♦ 943 ♣ Q10987 |
| N | | | | | | |
| W E | | | | | | |
| S | | | | | | |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|----------------|----------------|------------------|-----------------|
| <i>Osborne</i> | <i>Liggins</i> | <i>Forrester</i> | <i>Erichsen</i> |
| – | Pass | Pass | Pass |
| 2♣* | Pass | 2♦* | Pass |
| 2♥ | Pass | 2♠ | Pass |
| 3♥ | Pass | 3♠ | Pass |
| 4♣* | Pass | 4♥ | Pass |
| 4NT* | Pass | 5♣* | Double |
| 5NT* | Pass | 6♠ | Pass |
| 7NT | All Pass | | |

If North had been dealt the ♠J then the only lead to defeat 7NT would have been the ♠K, but here North had an easy club lead and there were only 12 tricks, -50.

Perhaps West should have preferred 7♥?

If North leads a club you can win, cash the ♦AK and when the queen does not appear play the ♠Q, intending to run it! If North covers, you win,

and ruff a spade and can establish and enjoy the ♠10 – not that unlucky. The traditional lead of a trump would thwart that plan.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|---------------|--------------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| <i>McGann</i> | <i>Gold</i> | <i>Hanlon</i> | <i>Bell</i> |
| – | Pass | 2♠* | Pass |
| 3♣* | Pass | 3♥* | Pass |
| 4NT* | Pass | 5♣* | Pass |
| 6♦* | Pass | 6♥* | All Pass |
| 2♠ | Weak, 5+♠ | | |
| 3♣ | Hearts | | |
| 3♥ | 2/3 hearts | | |
| 4NT | RKCB | | |
| 5♣ | 1 key card | | |
| 6♦ | Asking for third round control | | |
| 6♥ | No | | |

That was a deserved 14 IMP swing and with Gillis edging the set 17-15 the match score was 108-89 in favour of Allfrey.

You can replay these deals [here](#) or <https://tinyurl.com/qpft5ku>

Spectators hoping for an exciting conclusion to the match were disappointed.

The Great Shuffler offered up a set of deals which did not generate a single double figure swing, Allfrey taking the set 13-9 and the match 121-98.

You can replay these deals [here](#) or <https://tinyurl.com/u8ukkzo>

It was Forrester's 14th win!

Bridge – a mind sport for all ages

The Sociology of Bridge is a research project and an emerging academic field that explores interactions within the mind sport, well-being, transferable life skills, mental health and social connection. Playing bridge encourages clear thinking, boosts self-esteem, facilitates partnerships, trust and cooperation, and contributes to intergenerational community building.

In summary, Keep Bridge Alive aims to:

- Promote the social benefits of bridge
- Support an intergenerational approach to learning and playing bridge
- Develop bridge in schools, universities, libraries, workplaces and community centres
- Establish resources to support widening access to bridge
- Embed bridge into strategies for combatting social isolation and loneliness

The global Keep Bridge Alive campaign aims to publicise the benefits of bridge beyond the bridge world. Join us in making a difference to the bridge community by showing others the exciting, challenging and life-enhancing nature of bridge. The Keep Bridge Alive Pro-Am is the only charity bridge Pro-Am that is giving back to the game itself.

Programme of work

- **Phase 1:** Publish academic papers (four currently under development) and establish the sociology of mind sports as a new area of teaching and research
- **Phase 2:** Develop a global Keep Bridge Alive network to share best practice and ensure effective use of academic research within the bridge community
- **Phase 3:** Create accessible resources from the research findings for different groups such as teachers, parents, employers, policy-makers and children
- **Phase 4:** Conduct new research within the bridge community to co-develop solutions and roll out practical projects for sustaining bridge

Our research partners



All profits from the Pro-Am will go directly to pay the part-time researchers who work with Professor Samantha Punch, as UK universities no longer fund research, relying instead on increasingly limited external funding.

The University of Stirling is a registered charity (no SCO 011159) and Keep Bridge Alive is a charitable project that sits within the University.

The Worshipful Company of Stationers and Newspaper Makers

The Stationers' Company originated in 1403 when the text-writers who made copies of books and the 'lymners' who illuminated them, petitioned the Lord Mayor of London to join in a single trading company with a warden from each craft to oversee their affairs. They set up stalls in St Paul's Churchyard - hence the term 'stationer' as opposed to those operating as itinerant vendors.



Venue address: Stationers' Hall, Ave Maria Lane, London EC4M 7DD

Victoria Coren Mitchell



Victoria Coren Mitchell is the host of *Only Connect* on BBC Two, and *Heresy* and *Women Talking About Cars* on BBC Radio Four. She currently writes a weekly column about television for the *Saturday Telegraph*. She has also written three books, including *For Richer, For Poorer: Confessions Of A Player* which is her poker memoir. Victoria was the first woman to win a championship title on the European Poker Tour, and currently the first and only person of any gender to win two of them. We are delighted she is playing in the Keep Bridge Alive Pro-Am Pairs. You will also have the chance to ask questions of Victoria on the evening in a special Q&A.

"Bridge is condensed life. You need to solve a variety of problems, make a huge number of decisions and face emotional ups and downs. The social aspect of bridge - interacting with your partner and opponents - is also challenging and rewarding. It's a wonderful game. Live it."

BOYE BROGELAND
Norway



BRIDGE

A mind sport for all ages



BE THE DIFFERENCE

Keep Bridge Alive Pro-Am

20 February 2020, Stationers' Hall, London

The University of Stirling is delighted to offer you the chance to be a part of a unique bridge experience. Featuring a special guest appearance by Victoria Coren Mitchell you will have the chance to play, dine and network with world class bridge players, in the setting of one of London's historic hidden gems, Stationers' Hall, Grade I listed building completed in 1673.



By joining us at this special event you will contribute to the wider recognition of bridge as a fun and meaningful mind sport with positive lifelong impacts on brain fitness and healthy ageing.



The Keep Bridge Alive Pro-Am provides an exclusive opportunity to partner a world class player in a world class field. Bid for the chance to play with an International or UK expert from the world of bridge; an exciting opportunity for keen bridge enthusiasts. Furthermore, it is a great opportunity to 'sponsor a junior to play' and help raise the profile of bridge as an intergenerational game for young people and families.

The auction

Available for auction are experts from USA, Ireland, Germany, Norway, Denmark, Bulgaria, and the UK. The auction will be held online. It opens on 4 November 2019 and ends on 7 February 2020 at noon.

The Pro-Am dinner and tournament

The Pro-Am on Thursday 20th February starts with a drinks reception at 6pm, followed by a buffet dinner and wine, and then the tournament itself. The event concludes around 11pm with a raffle and prize giving, with prizes for newcomers to tournament bridge. The bar is open for mingling with the experts until midnight.

Sociologyofbridge.wordpress.com

@soc_of_bridge Keep Bridge Alive Pro-Am Pairs

The experts

| | | |
|----------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Sabine Auken | David Gold | Andrew McIntosh |
| David Bakhshi | Marusa Gold | Barry Myers |
| Mike Bell | Irving Gordon | Shahzaad Natt |
| Sarah Bell | Ben Green | Tom Paske |
| Dennis Bilde | Barbara Hackett | Steve Root |
| Sally Brock | Fredrik Helness | Neil Rosen |
| Boye Brogeland | Thor Erik Hoftaniska | Norman Selway |
| David Burn | Alex Hydes | Victor Silverstone |
| Simon Cope | Ed Jones | Stefan Skorchev |
| Willie Coyle | Gary Jones | Nicola Smith |
| Peter Crouch | Phil King | Les Steel |
| Jeremy Dhondy | Glyn Liggins | Simon Stocken |
| Espen Erichsen | Liz McGowan | James Thrower |
| Joe Fawcett | Zia Mahmood | Tom Townsend |
| Tommy Garvey | Artur Malinowski | Roy Welland |

Be part of this fabulous evening

Three ways to bid for a partner:

- Online: visit bit.ly/2LTRWA6 and choose from amongst the players who have kindly volunteered their time for this prestigious event. Bids can be made online. jumblebee.co.uk/keepbridgealiveproam20february2020
- Email to philanthropy@stir.ac.uk
- Phone **01786 466 029**

Bidding starts from £275. All successful bids entitle the partnership to the reception drinks, dinner and wine, and taking part in the Pro-Am bridge tournament, eligibility for prizes, and a donation to the KBA project. The auction closes on Friday 7 February 2020 at noon.

Special premium sponsor package

To reward the generosity of our premium sponsors, we can offer them a package which includes publicity surrounding the event. The sponsors of the event have the right to a partner of their choice, thus precluding that player from the auction. Please contact hazel.mcilwraith@stir.ac.uk for details.

Play with a junior

We are delighted to offer the opportunity to play with up and coming junior players, who have made an impact at national and international level, for their age and category. If you'd like to do this, then the fee is fixed at £300. This includes the same benefits as described in the "Pro-Am dinner and tournament". Please get in touch by email or phone.

Cannot play on the day, but would like to be a patron?

- Support the KBA work by sponsoring a junior to play at the event with one of our invitees (e.g. from EBL and WBF): £200. This is a great opportunity to help raise the profile of bridge as a mind sport for all ages.
- Consider bidding for a player and gifting the entry.
- If you are unable to join us, you can always make a donation to the campaign bit.ly/35dqvsC (or search for 'Keep Bridge Alive Campaign'). The University also accepts charitable donations via cheque or bank transfer by emailing philanthropy@stir.ac.uk or phone **01786 466 029**.

For Keep Bridge Alive Pro-Am Auction Terms and Conditions visit bit.ly/2LTRWA6



"Razor-sharp thinking. Intriguing psychology. Social powerhouse, complete digital detox. Just 52 cards."

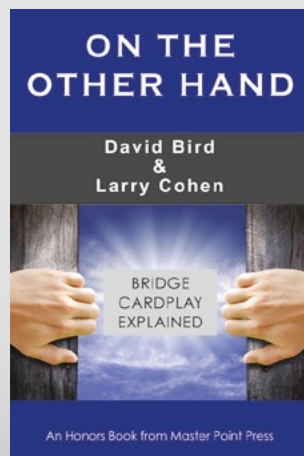
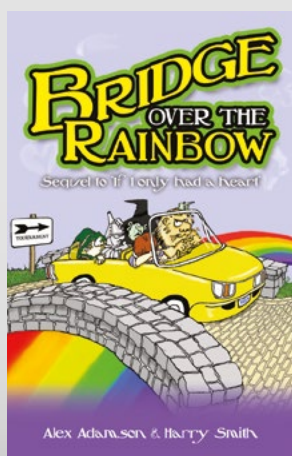
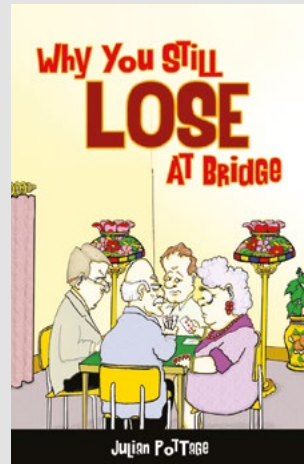
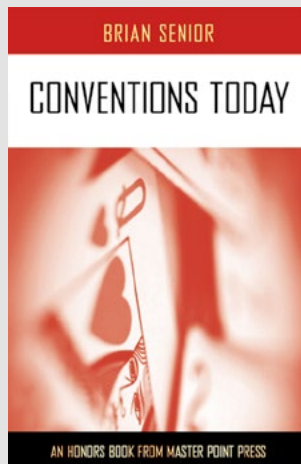
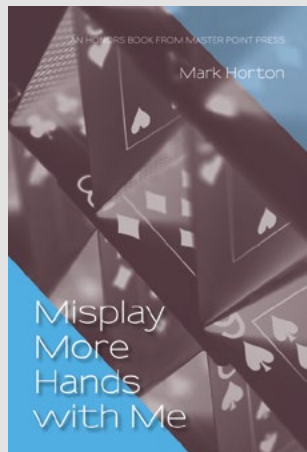
SABINE AUKEN
Germany



MASTER POINT PRESS

THE BRIDGE PUBLISHER

BOOKS FROM YOUR CONTRIBUTORS



AVAILABLE FROM A BRIDGE RETAILER NEAR YOU



'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)

GOTO Bridge 19

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

Lessons and exercises

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

Easy deals

Ideal to take up bridge or have fun, it is the perfect game mode to practise without any constraints.

Bidding practice

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.

Play bridge offline

Take the new GOTO Bridge 19 software everywhere with you and play whenever you want!

On the plane, the train, the underground... You can play anywhere without an Internet connection.

GOTO Bridge lessons and exercises are made for you! Written by bridge professionals, they will help you learn the basics of bridge in all game areas (bidding and card play). Then you will be able to apply what you have learned with exercises.

Evaluate your level, strengths and weaknesses thanks to the various practice exercises offered by GOTO Bridge. Select the game area of your choice (bidding or card play, attack or defence) and make progress thanks to the corrections suggested by the software.

Pit yourself against the best players in the “Tournaments” mode! At the end of each deal, you will be compared to them on the same deals and in the same conditions.

The game mode “Challenge the best international players” will even give you the opportunity to compare yourself to world champions.

The deal manager is made for you. This tool can be used as teaching material for your bridge lessons since it allows you to prepare and import your own deals, save them and sort them as you see fit. Besides, thanks to the printing module included, you can print your deals, bidding boards, tricks and commentary.

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.

Tips given by the computer

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.

Reverse, forward and replay buttons

Navigate through the deal as you want and replay tricks.

GOTO Bridge is seen as the reference among bridge software in France. Thanks to its numerous game modes and features, it allows players of all ages and levels to have endless fun.

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.
- History: GOTO Bridge manages the history of the deals you play. Therefore you will always be able to search for a deal that you particularly liked.
- 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.

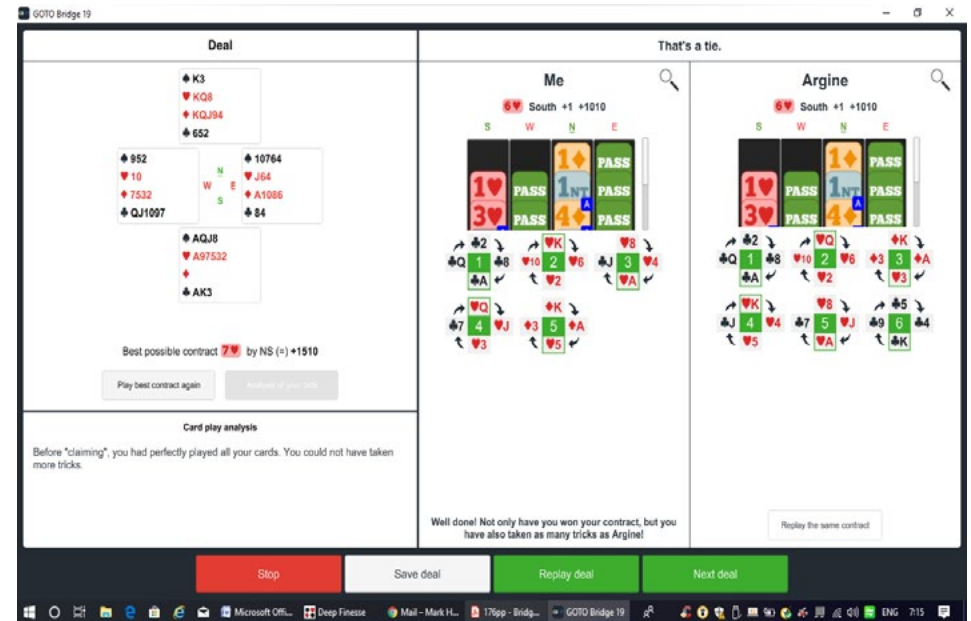
Tournaments

- 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 2,00 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



Misplay These Hands With Me

Down to the Wire

In a Swiss Teams event where everyone plays the same deals, I pick up:

- ♠ A53
- ♥ J65
- ♦ KQ52
- ♣ K92

With neither side vulnerable I am the dealer and I open 1NT which we play as showing 13-15. After some thought partner surprises me by jumping to 5NT, which asks me to bid a grand slam with a maximum. My 6NT leaves us with simple auction:

| West | North | East | South |
|----------|-------|------|-------|
| - | - | - | 1NT |
| Pass | 5NT | Pass | 6NT |
| All Pass | | | |

When West leads the ten of diamonds partner produces a fine collection:

- ♠ Q74
- ♥ AKQ
- ♦ A7
- ♣ AQ654



- ♠ A53
- ♥ J65
- ♦ KQ52
- ♣ K92

I quickly spot a chance of an overtrick – it only requires West to hold the king of spades along with four or more diamonds. My general plan is to win the diamond lead in dummy, cash a couple of clubs, play off the ace of spades (a Vienna Coup) and then cash my winners in dummy. On the last of them West will either have to part with the ♠K or a diamond.

I play a club to the king and a club to the ace but to my horror, East throws a heart. I duck a club to West, but he returns a diamond, which

breaks communications for a possible squeeze and I have to go one down.

This was the full picture:

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------|---|-----------|---|--|---|--|---|--|---|--|--|
| ♠ Q74 | | ♠ J1082 | | | | | | | | | |
| ♥ AKQ | | ♥ 1098432 | | | | | | | | | |
| ♦ A7 | | ♦ J6 | | | | | | | | | |
| ♣ AQ654 | | ♣ 8 | | | | | | | | | |
| ♠ K96 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ♥ 7 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ♦ 109843 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ♣ J1073 | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| | N | | | | | | | | | | |
| W | | E | | | | | | | | | |
| | S | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | ♠ A53 | | | | | | | | | |
| | | ♥ J65 | | | | | | | | | |
| | | ♦ KQ52 | | | | | | | | | |
| | | ♣ K92 | | | | | | | | | |

Post mortem

If declarer had cashed dummy's ace of clubs and only then played a club to hand the 4-1 break is revealed, but with a vital difference; declarer is in the right hand to play a low spade towards the queen. West can win and play a diamond, but declarer would then be able to squeeze West in the minors.

It would not help West to exit with a club, as declarer wins in dummy and cashes the major suit winners ending in dummy, again catching West in a squeeze.

6NT was attempted 31 times – but only 14 declarers got home – luckily my opposite number was not one of them.

Too Late the Hero

During a big team tournament in Croatia, I pick up the following hand:

♠ AQ97643
♥ A10
♦ Q
♣ 764

With neither side vulnerable, West deals and opens 1♦. My partner has nothing to say but when East responds 1♥ I come in with 1♠. When West raises to 2♥ my partner doubles. We play that as showing values in the unbid suit, with tolerance for spades. I may not make it, but I cannot do less than bid 4♠ which gives us this auction:

| West | North | East | South |
|----------|---------|------|-------|
| 1♦ | Pass | 1♥ | 1♠ |
| 2♥ | Double* | Pass | 4♠ |
| All Pass | | | |

West leads the two of diamonds and I get a reasonable dummy:

♠ J5
♥ 9842
♦ 973
♣ AKJ3

♠ AQ97643
♥ A10
♦ Q
♣ 764

East wins with the ace and switches to the three of hearts. When I put in the ten West wins with the jack and plays the king of diamonds, which I ruff. If the king of spades is onside there should be ten tricks, but West opened the bidding and East has already turned up with the ace of diamonds and must have a heart honour, as West would have led one holding ♥KQJ. Rather than take a pointless finesse I lay down the ace of spades and continue with the four, West taking the king as East throws a diamond, and exiting with another diamond. I ruff, draw the outstanding trump, play a club to the ace, a heart to the ace and cash my remaining trumps. In the two card ending dummy is down to the ♣KJ but when I

play a club to the jack East wins with the queen and although he has to give the last trick to dummy's king I am one down.

This was the layout:

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|---|---|--|---|--|---|--|---|--|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ♠ K108 ♥ KJ5 ♦ KJ1082 ♣ 109 | <table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table> | | N | | W | | E | | S | | ♠ J5 ♥ 9842 ♦ 973 ♣ AKJ3 | ♠ 2 ♥ Q763 ♦ A654 ♣ Q852 |
| | N | | | | | | | | | | | |
| W | | E | | | | | | | | | | |
| | S | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ♠ AQ97643 ♥ A10 ♦ Q ♣ 764 | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Post mortem

The bidding and play made it a virtual certainty that West's shape was 3-3-5-2. In the six-card ending, rather than eventually hazard the club finesse, declarer should have continued with a trump, throwing dummy's jack of clubs. If East has thrown two clubs, declarer can cash dummy's honours making the seven of clubs good, while if East parts with a heart declarer cashes the ♥A, crosses to dummy with a club and ruffs a heart, establishing a heart winner.

We did not lose on the board, as at the other table West, after taking the king of spades, found the stronger defence of exiting with the ten of clubs, removing a vital entry from dummy.



Bridge Educational Software

www.bid72.com

Bid72

If bridge is to prosper in the 21st Century, it will be linked inextricably to the advance of technology. With virtually everyone owning a mobile telephone, a computer and/or an ipad all sorts of opportunities are available to bridge players and we will make sure that the best of them feature in A New Bridge Magazine.

We are delighted to announce that we have negotiated some special terms for readers with Bid72, an outstanding app that offers a wide range of features:

- bidding with an app
- suitable for smart phones and tablets, iOS and Android
- working on your partnership with your own partner, coach or teacher
- unlimited number of highly interesting boards
- every system, every level (beginners, club, expert)
- interesting Topics of 100 games each, such as: Defense against 1NT, 2-way Check Back Stayman, Limit raises

Try the app for free for 21 days

- download bid72 via the buttons below (iOS or Android)
- free trial period for 7 days, or 21 days if you sign up for our newsletter
- What does bid72 cost?
- per month: US\$ 3.49 (€2,99)
- per year: US\$ 28.99 (€24,99)

What does a topic cost?

- One Topic (100 boards) costs 100 bid points
- 100 bid points: US\$ 1.99 (€2,29)
- 500 bid points: US\$ 6.99 (€7,99)
- 1000 bid points: US\$ 12.99 (€13,99)

Special offer:

100 bid points for free for each reader of A New Bridge Magazine who downloads bid72 and registers to our News Letter.

An additional 100 bid points for free for each reader of A New Bridge Magazine who purchases an annual subscription.



Deals that Caught My Eye

David Bird looks at Crockfords Final

The Editor has already picked eight great bidding deals from the Crockford's Final, for his 'uBid Auction Room' article. I will have to step neatly over those and look for some other big swings to instruct us. Let's see if we strike lucky on this one:

Match 1, Board 10. Dealer East. Both Vul.

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ♠ 53 ♥ AQ654 ♦ A843 ♣ J3 | | ♠ 4 ♥ K873 ♦ KJ102 ♣ K1072 | ♠ A876 ♥ J92 ♦ Q75 ♣ A96 |
| | ♠ KQJ1092 ♥ 10 ♦ 96 ♣ Q854 | | |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|------------------|-----------------|----------------|------------------|
| <i>Forrester</i> | <i>Hallberg</i> | <i>Osborne</i> | <i>Patterson</i> |
| - | - | Pass | 2♠ |
| Pass | Pass | Double | Pass |
| 2NT | Double | All Pass | |

Graham Osborne was entitled to compete on that shape and was somewhat unlucky that there was no 4-4 fit available. Gunnar Hallberg's double of 2NT surprises me. No convention card is available on the internet. Perhaps 2♠ showed something like 8-11, and they use the multi on a weaker hand. Even so...

Spades were led and Tony Forrester won the second round. When diamonds were played, Hallberg won the third round and exited passively with a fourth diamond. A low heart went to the 10, jack and queen.

Forrester won the heart return with the 9 and led another heart, North rising with the ace. Hallberg's next heart exit squeezed South in the black suits. That was nine tricks and +890 for East/West.

No record is available from the other table, but West played in the less successful spot of 3♣, going four down vulnerable for a loss of 15 IMPs.

One of England's finest pairs went for a big number of the next deal, where MOSSOP faced BLACK. It will be the task of the NBM readers – those who take the trouble to read my humble articles, anyway – to assess who was to blame.

Match 2, Board 30. Dealer East. Neither Vul.

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ♠ J97 ♥ Q1083 ♦ 9865 ♣ 65 | | ♠ AK863 ♥ A75 ♦ KJ7 ♣ 103 | ♠ Q42 ♥ KJ92 ♦ - ♣ K98742 |
| | ♠ 105 ♥ 64 ♦ AQ10432 ♣ AQJ | | |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|-------------|--------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| <i>King</i> | <i>Ju. Hackett</i> | <i>McIntosh</i> | <i>Ja. Hackett</i> |
| - | - | 1NT | 3♦ |
| Double | 4♦ | 4♠ | 5♦ |
| Pass | Pass | Double | All Pass |

Members of the jury, I feel sure that you will allow the first three calls to escape any criticism. We come now to North's 4♦ raise. Its purpose,

no doubt, was to remove space from the opponents' search for their best fit. You may consider, I suggest, that the playing strength North was adding to his partner's hand was inadequate to justify such a raise. East was happy to make a free 4♠ bid and we must now assess South's raise to 5♦. The major-suit doubletons suggested four losers in those suits. The best outcome would perhaps be minus 300, with a fair risk of something larger. What is your verdict?

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------|--|---------|--|---|--|---|--|---|--|---|--|
| ♠ Q42 | ♠ J97 | ♠ AK863 | | | | | | | | | |
| ♥ KJ92 | ♥ Q1083 | ♥ A75 | | | | | | | | | |
| ♦ — | ♦ 9865 | ♦ KJ7 | | | | | | | | | |
| ♣ K98742 | ♣ 65 | ♣ 103 | | | | | | | | | |
| | <table border="1"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table> | | | N | | W | | E | | S | |
| | N | | | | | | | | | | |
| W | | E | | | | | | | | | |
| | S | | | | | | | | | | |
| | ♠ 105 | | | | | | | | | | |
| | ♥ 64 | | | | | | | | | | |
| | ♦ AQ10432 | | | | | | | | | | |
| | ♣ AQJ | | | | | | | | | | |

First, let's see what happened. East doubled 5♦ and West led the ♠2. Jason Hackett ruffed the third round of spades and led a heart to the 10 and ace. The ♣10 switch went to the queen and king, West returning the ♣8 to South's ace. When another heart was led, West rose with the king. He then led the ♣9, ruffed with dummy's ♦8 and overruffed with the ♦J.

Reduced to five trumps, declarer had to ruff East's heart exit. The ace of trumps failed to bring down the king and that was five down. Minus 1100 for a game sacrifice at Love All.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|--------------|-------------|---------------|--------------|
| <i>Hydes</i> | <i>Gold</i> | <i>Mossop</i> | <i>Black</i> |
| – | – | 1NT | Pass |
| 2♣ | Pass | 2♠ | Pass |
| 3♣ | Pass | 3♠ | Pass |
| 4♠ | All Pass | | |

Andrew Black did not enter the auction, and David Mossop collected a peaceful +450. The jury retired for only a few minutes, returning with their verdict against North/South at the other table. A fine of 12 IMPs had to be paid.

There was an unexpected bidding misunderstanding early in the match between JAGGER and SENIOR.

Match 3, Board 5. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------|--|---------|--|---|--|---|--|---|--|---|--|
| ♠ AQ1093 | ♠ K752 | ♠ 64 | | | | | | | | | |
| ♥ 108 | ♥ K63 | ♥ A9752 | | | | | | | | | |
| ♦ J8 | ♦ 103 | ♦ K74 | | | | | | | | | |
| ♣ 7543 | ♣ KQ96 | ♣ A82 | | | | | | | | | |
| | <table border="1"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table> | | | N | | W | | E | | S | |
| | N | | | | | | | | | | |
| W | | E | | | | | | | | | |
| | S | | | | | | | | | | |
| | ♠ J8 | | | | | | | | | | |
| | ♥ QJ4 | | | | | | | | | | |
| | ♦ AQ9652 | | | | | | | | | | |
| | ♣ J10 | | | | | | | | | | |

Open Room


| West | North | East | South |
|----------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| <i>Holland</i> | <i>Cooke</i> | <i>Mould</i> | <i>Barden</i> |
| – | Pass | 1♥ | 2♦ |
| Double | Pass | 2NT | Pass |
| 3NT | Double | All Pass | |

John Holland apparently read partner for 18-19 points, since he had not opened a 15-17 1NT. Such an understanding implies that East would have to rebid a 5-card heart suit on his present hand. That would be a playable method, allowing West to back out when his double was based on any weakish single-suiter. The partnership may have been happy to shell out some IMPs here, rather than in the World Seniors championship.

Paul Barden's ♦6 lead was won with dummy's ♦J, North following with the ♦10. When the ♥10 was run to South's jack, a switch to the ♣J would have taken the contract five down. Barden chose to return the ♠8 and declarer could have escaped for three down by playing a middle spade. He rose with the ♠A and continued with ace and another heart to North's ♥K. A diamond through East's ♦K7 then put the doubled game four down, for the loss of 800.

At the other table, East opened 1NT and played in 2♠. This was three down for minus 150 and JAGGER gained 12 IMPs.

Match 4, Board 29. Dealer North. Both Vul.

| | | |
|------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| ♠ J109 ♥ A54 ♦ AK973 ♣ 98 |  | ♠ K85 ♥ 1098 ♦ QJ65 ♣ 752 |
| ♠ A4 ♥ KQJ72 ♦ 842 ♣ AKJ | | ♠ Q7632 ♥ 63 ♦ 10 ♣ Q10643 |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|--------------------|---------------|--------------------|---------------|
| <i>Ju. Hackett</i> | <i>Mestel</i> | <i>Ja. Hackett</i> | <i>Jagger</i> |
| – | 1NT | Pass | 2♥ |
| Double | 2♠ | Pass | Pass |
| Double | Pass | 3♦ | Pass |
| 3♥ | Pass | 4♥ | All Pass |

Jonathan Mestel (North) was deterred from a top diamond lead by East's bid in the suit. He led the ♣9, drawing the ♣3 from partner and the ♣J from declarer. All was not yet lost for the defenders. Justin Hackett led the ♥Q at trick two, Mestel winning with the ace. When he switched to the ♦K, presumably asking for a count signal, South played the ♦10 and declarer a well-judged ♦4. What should North do next?

Two more tricks are needed to break the heart game. If South holds ♦102, only one more trick can be taken from diamonds. If West has ♠Axx, with 3=5=2=3 shape, the spade loser will be ditched on dummy's ♦QJ. The only chance, it seems, is that South has a singleton diamond. In that case, the ♦A and a diamond ruff will defeat the game.


Mestel preferred to lead another club, and the game was made.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|--------------|------------------|---------------|----------------|
| <i>Cooke</i> | <i>P.Hackett</i> | <i>Barden</i> | <i>Brenner</i> |
| – | 1♦ | Pass | 1♠ |
| 2♥ | Double | 3♥ | All Pass |

Paul Hackett led the ♦A and switched to the ♠J. Declarer won with the ♠A and played the ♥Q. Hackett won with the ♥A, cashed the ♦K and delivered a diamond ruff. That was +140 for East/West and a swing of 10 IMPs to HACKETT.

Match 6, Board 21. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| ♠ 1097 ♥ J832 ♦ 103 ♣ K952 |  | ♠ A8 ♥ 10 ♦ 98754 ♣ Q8743 |
| | | ♠ J4 ♥ AKQ9 ♦ AKQ2 ♣ AJ6 |
| | | ♠ KQ6532 ♥ 7654 ♦ J6 ♣ 10 |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|------------------|---------------|----------------|--------------|
| <i>Forrester</i> | <i>Barden</i> | <i>Osborne</i> | <i>Cooke</i> |
| – | Pass | 2♣ | 2♠ |
| Double* | 3♠ | Pass | Pass |
| Double | All Pass | | |

What do you make of Jon Cooke's 2♠ bid, vulnerable against not? Some would decry it. I am always reluctant to criticize pre-emptive bids, because they are designed to cause problems and occasionally there is a cost to be paid. Of course, you would like better spot-cards in the spade suit, but I don't see that it is a bad bid. Perhaps you disagree with me.

Forrester's double showed a 'bad hand'. Now we must look at North's

raise to 3♠. I am not so happy with that. Surely some account must be taken of the vulnerability?

Forrester's double was passed out and the ♦10 was led. Osborne won with the ♦Q and switched to the ♠J, won with the ace. When Cooke led the ♥10, East won with the ♥Q and played a second trump. It was +800 for East/West, expensive even if North/South made their expected game at the other table.

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|--------------|--------------|------------------|--------------|
| <i>Pagan</i> | <i>Jones</i> | <i>Wightwick</i> | <i>Paske</i> |
| – | Pass | 2♣ | Pass |
| 2♦ | Pass | 2NT | Pass |
| 3♣ | Pass | 3♦* | Pass |
| 3NT | All Pass | | |

Tom Paske did not overcall. Ian Pagan's 3♣ was Puppet Stayman, partner's response showing no 5-card major but at least one 4-card major. West's decision to play in 3NT, rather than 4♥, was not rewarded by the lie of the cards. Paske led the ♠5 against 3NT and the defenders scored six spade tricks for two down. It was 14 IMPs for ALLFREY.

I will end with a deal where luck had a big role to play. We will watch in the Closed Room first:

Match 7, Board 37. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| ♠ Q876 ♥ 82 ♦ J432 ♣ K54 | <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div> | ♠ KJ ♥ AKJ63 ♦ 1087 ♣ J107 |
| ♠ A95432 ♥ Q75 ♦ AQ9 ♣ Q | | ♠ 10 ♥ 1094 ♦ K65 ♣ A98632 |

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|----------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| <i>Holland</i> | <i>Jones</i> | <i>Mould</i> | <i>Paske</i> |
| – | Pass | 1♥ | Pass |
| 1♠ | Pass | 1NT | Pass |
| 2♦* | Pass | 2♥ | Pass |
| 4♣* | Pass | 4♠ | Pass |
| 4NT | Pass | 5♥ | Pass |
| 6♥ | All Pass | | |

John Holland's splinter bid in clubs told Alan Mould that he held a very useful hand. He was full value for his 4♠ control-bid, past the game-level, and the low point-count slam was reached. Would it receive the good breaks that their bidding perhaps deserved?

Knowing from East's lack of a 4♦ control-bid that the ♦A was in dummy, Paske led the ♦5. Mould finessed the ♦Q successfully and continued with a spade to the king, an ominous ♠10 appearing on his left. When he continued with the king and queen of trumps, Paske followed with the ♥10 to give the impression that he had no trump remaining. It made little difference since Mould would need a 3-2 spade break anyway. When he called for the ♠A, South ruffed and cashed the ♣A.

It was a borderline slam, it's true, and the Great Dealer decided on this occasion that bold bidding would not be rewarded. Declarer had a further loser to come, in diamonds, and was two down.

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|------------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| <i>Forrester</i> | <i>Penfold</i> | <i>Osborne</i> | <i>B.Senior</i> |
| – | Pass | 1♥ | Pass |
| 1♠ | Pass | 1NT | Pass |
| 4♥ | All Pass | | |

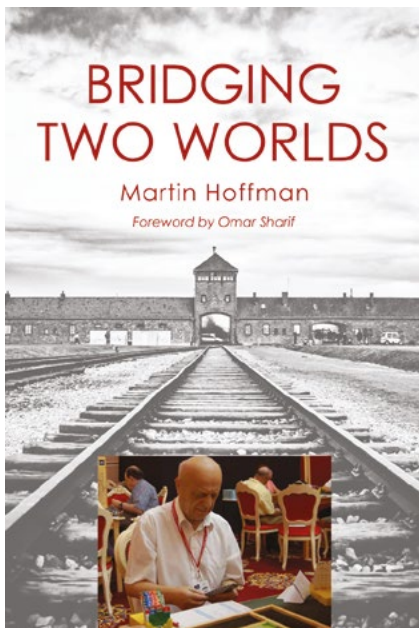
Forrester did not search for the perfect hand opposite, very reasonably, and was rewarded with 11 IMPs. Brian Senior led the ♣A and switched to the ♦6, Osborne finessing. The same ten tricks were made.

The ALLFREY team won six matches out of seven, winning by a massive margin. This was the top of the eventual leader board:

ALLFREY 104
MOSSOP 84
BLACK 80

As I conclude my check for typos, it occurs to me that England's top players, competing in a major national final, may not be overjoyed to have their very occasional poor boards portrayed in this series. 'Typical!' they may say. 'Why does he mention just the bad boards and not the ones where we did well?'

It's a fact of our great game that many more big swings result from blunders rather than brilliancy. I compile these reports by looking at all the double-digit swings and deciding whether the associated deals are interesting or instructive. (I used the same approach in my book, Famous Bridge Swings, focussing on world championship deals.) Whatever may come to light in such a process, both I and the readers know that we make exactly the same sort of mistakes – sadly much more often!



MASTER POINT PRESS
THE BRIDGE PUBLISHER

BRIDGING TWO WORLDS

Martin Hoffman
Foreword by Omar Sharif

Czech-born bridge player and writer, Martin Hoffman, recounts the horrors of the WW2 death camps and how he managed to survive Auschwitz. He shares his struggles to establish a normal life after relocation to post-war England, and the important part the game of bridge played in his recovery.

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World Online Championship.

WORLD ONLINE CHAMPIONSHIP
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CHAMPIONNAT DU MONDE EN LIGNE: *première!*

LE MONDE ENTIER DU BRIDGE S'APPRETE À VIBRER GRÂCE À LA TOUTE PREMIÈRE ÉDITION DU WOC (WORLD ONLINE CHAMPIONSHIP). MODE D'EMPLOI À L'USAGE DES FUTURS CONCURRENTS.

Le bridge, jeu de cartes le plus populaire au monde devenu sport de compétition, s'apparente – dans sa forme digitale – aux e-sports. On dénombre déjà quelque deux millions de joueurs de bridge en ligne sur les cinquante millions de pratiquants, et un million qui jouent presque quotidiennement en tournois. Il s'agit là de la grande famille des bridgeurs qui, loin de s'opposer, se complètent.

La Fédération mondiale de bridge (WBF) a donc décidé d'organiser, en coopération avec les plus grandes plateformes de jeu en ligne BBO, Funbridge, CBO, le 1^{er} Championnat du monde en ligne (1st World online championship, WOC).

Les vainqueurs se verront décerner des titres officiels de **champions du monde**, mais aussi de champions de leur pays et de leur zone, avec la **dotation en points d'expert** correspondant à chaque étape.

En effet, la compétition se déroulera en **deux temps**:

- ✓ **Une phase qualificative de six mois** : de mars à août 2020.
- ✓ **Des packs de vingt tournois de douze donnes** seront proposés chaque mois pour un coût de 50€ (soit 2,50€ par tournoi). Ils pourront être joués à n'importe quel moment et n'importe quel jour du mois, éventuellement les vingt premiers ou derniers jours.

(*) Le nombre de ces qualifications et le montant des prix sont garantis dans la limite de 10 000 participants ayant joué 120 tournois. Ils seront éventuellement proportionnels au cas où ces minima ne seraient pas atteints et revus à la hausse en cas de dépassement.

Sur une base et un objectif de **10 000 joueurs** participants, on retiendra pour une grande finale en réel sur un même site:

- ✓ Les 500 meilleurs, qui seront qualifiés sur leurs 60 meilleurs tournois.
- ✓ Quelques qualifiés aux meilleurs du mois.
- ✓ Quelques places catégorielles seront réservées aux non classés, juniors ou dames.

Tous ces joueurs et joueuses finalistes seront **intégralement défrayés pour leur voyage et séjour**, soit un budget d'environ 500 000€ (1000 € par personne).

La finale, prévue en novembre 2020 dans un seul et même site emblématique d'une ville sélectionnée, se déroulera sur trois jours. Outre des prix spéciaux^(*), elle décernera un total de **500 000€ de prix** (dont 100 000€ aux vainqueurs) et jusqu'à 1 000€ pour le 50^{ème}.

Bon à savoir : un tournoi test "gratuit" sera organisé le jeudi 12 décembre 2019.

Inscriptions sur
www.funbridge.com
 (rubrique WBF robots)

Les points d'expert WBF y seront attribués et probablement les PE français.

Actus & Reportages.

1st World Online Championship

October 2019



BBO

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CBO



Bridge, the best known and most played worldwide card game is embracing eSports by offering the first big World Online Championship (WOC) .

The World Bridge Federation in close partnership with FunBridge and BBO, the two main online bridge providers will jointly organize this event in 2020.

The 1st World Online Championship.

This competition will be an official one.
The winner or winners will be awarded the title of

World Online Champion



WHEN: From March 2020 to November 2020

WHO: Every bridge player in the world



Some key figures !



+50 Million + Bridge players in the world



And already more than 2 Million regular online players !



More than 10 000 players expected for this first World Online Championship !



500 best players fully invited for a live final during 3 crazy days !



A total cash prize of \$500k (US) and a \$100k (US) for the winner: highest ever cash prize for a Bridge tournament !

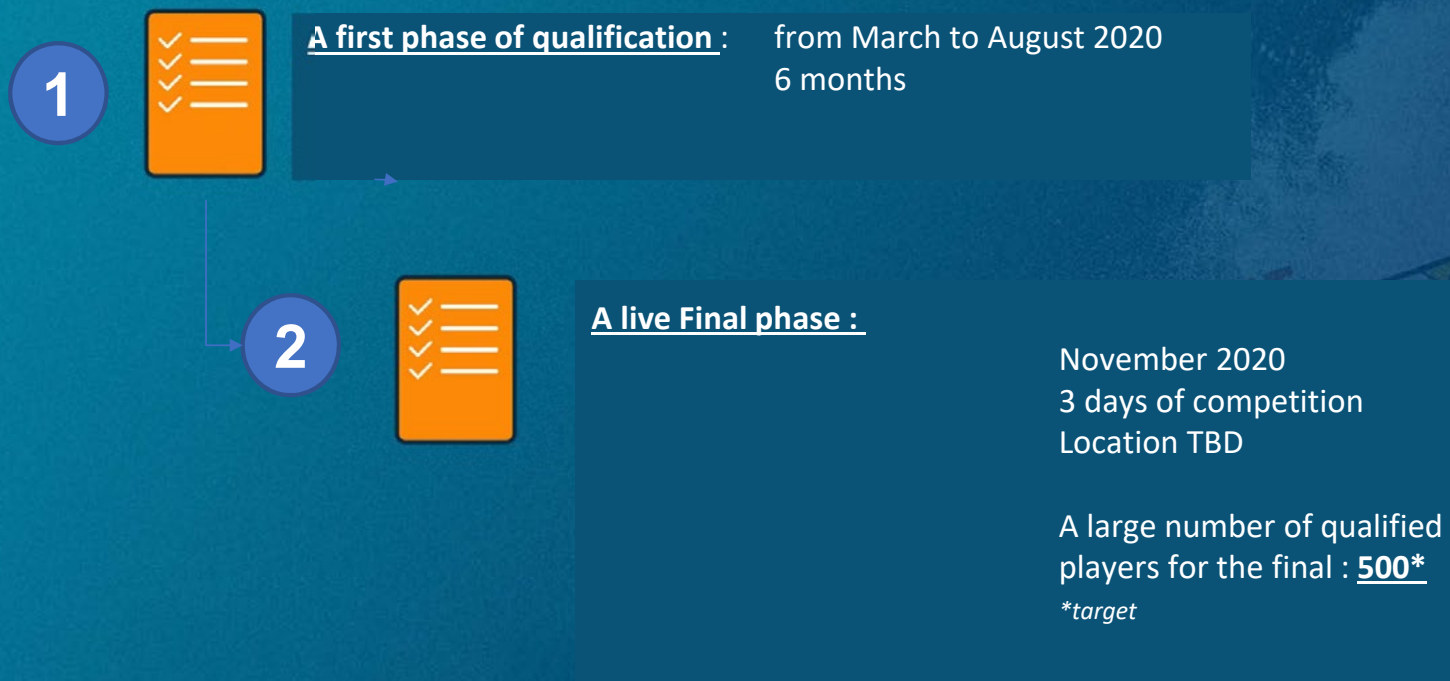


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2 phases – from March to November





Qualification: How will this work ?

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The rule:

Every player, good or bad, young or more senior, no matter where in the world they are based CAN participate and become a World Champion!



Where:

To enter, the qualification phase will be online only on :

- FunBridge
- BBO (Bridge Base Online)
- CBO (China Bridge Online)

The player can chose which platform they prefer to use, ensuring that it's easy for every player to find a place to play.

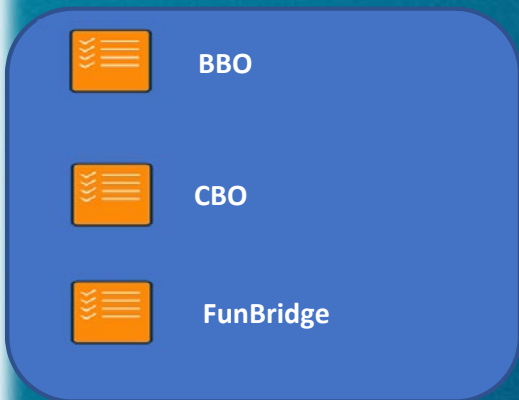


Qualification: How will this work ? Up to 500 qualify !

Players will have to purchase WOC entry packs to participate

- Each WOC pack contains 20 tournaments per month
- A player can buy as many packs as they want

** See all rules on the next page*



[PER MONTH]

A number of players, depending on the number of participants will qualify based on their best 20 tournaments

[DURING THE 6 MONTHS]

A number of players, depending on the total number of participants will qualify based on their best 60 tournaments



Qualification for an exciting 3 day Final at a venue to be determined, with all expenses (travel and accommodation) paid

Up to 500 players qualify for the Finals



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How will this work ?



Basic Rules:

- Rules are the same on each platform.
- A WOC entry pack contains 20 tournaments.
- Price for a WOC entry pack will be €50 or \$55(US).
- All players can buy several packs every month if they want.
- Each OWC pack bought during the month must be played during the same calendar month



How will this work ?



Basic Rules :

- All tournaments will be 12 boards.
- All tournaments can be played at any time in the month.
- All tournaments will be closed at the end of each calendar month.
- The number of qualified players will be announced
- The number of qualified players on each platform will be proportional to the number of participants by platform.
- Every month, some players will qualify based on their best 20 tournaments, and at the end of the 6 months others will qualify based on their best 60 tournaments to give a maximum of 500 players in the Final *.

*Based on minimum 10,000 participants purchasing a minimum of 120 packs in total

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How will this work ?



Additional Information:

- Consideration is being given to offering a reduced rate to Junior players upon proof of age being provided
- Definitive rules regarding this and other matters will be published on the website in due course



Final: How will this work ? Up to 500 qualified !



The qualifiers will be invited to the venue of the final with their travel and accommodation provided.



1



DAY 1 : 2 times 5 x 12 boards
500 Players [*Playing on Funbridge*]

2



DAY 2 : 2 times 5 x 12 boards
Number to be decided before the cut
[*Playing on Funbridge*]

3



DAY 3 :
• Final : 52 players playing on BBO
"Generali" system & individual format



(This format is subject to modifications)



Cash prize Breakdown : \$500,000 (US)

- \$100,000 (US) to the winner
- Minimum award of \$1000 (US) to 50th place **
- Additional prizes (non cumulative) may be offered to different categories of players, non registered in any NBOs, juniors, or special prizes for best women and first of their Zone.

** based on a field of 500 in the Final

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Great World Bridge Day Thursday 12th Dec !



There will be a test before going live consisting of two, daylong, tournaments (one IMPs one MPs) free of charge.

These will be on Thursday 12th December 2019 played on the Funbridge WBF Robots site (<https://www.funbridge.com>).



The top five players from each of these tournaments will receive:

- A free year's subscription to Funbridge

In addition

- The next 250 players from each of the tournaments will be awarded 10 free WBF Robot Tournament entries
- WBF Robot Master Points will be awarded and your own NBO Master Points if you wish to offer these, free of charge for that day
- Everyone can participate in the Journalists' competition (See IBPA Bulletin April – issue N° 651)

CBO

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Your Bid Please

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IMPs. Dealer West. East-West Vul.
You are East with:

- ♠ Q7
- ♥ AJ754
- ♦ KJ9
- ♣ 1062

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------------|-------|
| | | <i>You</i> | |
| 1♠ | Pass | 1NT | Pass |
| 2♦ | Pass | ? | |

Sally Brock (European and World Champion)

3♠. This slightly depends on system, but assuming I would have raised in some other way with 3-card support, 3♠ must show this hand-type with Hx in spades and good cards for suit play.

Tim Verbeek (European and Junior World Champion)

2NT. This feels like underbid, but it gives partner a chance to bid his hearts with a 5=3=4=1. However over a 3♦ or 3♠ rebid I bid 4♠, because all my points or gold.

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

3♠. I think that this is a problem with no perfect solution. I would be choosing between 2♥, 2♠, 2NT and 3♠. Bidding 2♥ would typically suggest a weaker hand, often containing six hearts, and 2♠ also tends to suggest a weaker hand. 2NT describes our values better, but having ♣xxx is a worry, so my choice would be 3♠. This might get us too high if partner is minimum and also risks missing a 5-3 heart fit, but assuming

that 1NT denied three spades, then jumping to 3♠ now would be consistent with S♥ and a positive diamond holding, so with a good hand, then partner may be able to evaluate her cards better and choose the best game as a result of this inference.

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

3♥. Bidding 2♥ would show a weak hand so 3♥ clearly shows invitational values. It must deny three spades. 2NT is a possibility, as with a decent 5-3-4-1 I would expect partner to pattern out, catering for this hand. 3♠ will never locate a 5-3 heart fit.

Simon de Wijs (European and World Champion, Bermuda Bowl Winner)

2NT. True, I don't like my Club stopper that much, but I feel this bid comes closest to describing my hand.

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

3♥. Actually at IMPs probably I would force to game with a 2♥ response because of the difficulty of catching up. Anyway you need methods: (1) We should certainly have a way to show an INV one-suiter in hearts directly – e.g. 1♠-3♥. (2) In that case we should have the agreement that 3♥ at this point is a hand like this – very close to an initial GF, only 5 hearts, improved by Opener's rebid, viable in all suits bid so far, uncertain what to do, and unwilling to bid NT again.

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

3♠. I take the risk losing a 5-3 fit in Hearts, but I like the surprise element. I believe my hand has enough values for an invitational bid, in spite of my doubleton spade.

These were the West and the East hands:

- ♠ AK1065
- ♥ Q98
- ♦ Q765
- ♣ 8



- ♠ Q7
- ♥ AJ754
- ♦ KJ9
- ♣ 1062



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Highlights and New Features

Funbridge December News

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This tournament scored by MPs will be run both on Funbridge and BBO (20 deals on each platform). The overall rankings will include results from Funbridge and BBO.

Register now on the Funbridge app! Go to: Play a tournament > Federation Tournaments > Funbridge Points > The Biggest Bridge Online Tournament

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DEFEND WITH JULIAN POTTAGE

The Questions

1

| | |
|-----------|--------|
| ♠ AK10986 | ♠ QJ3 |
| ♥ K10 | ♥ QJ85 |
| ♦ K73 | ♦ A2 |
| ♣ K9 | ♣ J652 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| N | | E |
| W | S | |

| WEST | NORTH | EAST | SOUTH |
|----------|-------|------|-------|
| – | 1♠ | Pass | 1NT |
| Pass | 3♠ | Pass | 3NT |
| All Pass | | | |

Partner leads the four of diamonds, on which dummy plays low. What is your plan?

2

| | |
|------------|----------|
| ♠ K9 | ♠ J10752 |
| ♥ J92 | ♥ A73 |
| ♦ AQJ10973 | ♦ – |
| ♣ A | ♣ K10762 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| N | | E |
| W | S | |

| WEST | NORTH | EAST | SOUTH |
|----------|-------|------|-------|
| – | – | – | 1♣ |
| Pass | 2♦ | Pass | 2♠ |
| Pass | 3♦ | Pass | 3NT |
| All Pass | | | |

West leads the six of hearts and dummy plays low. What is your plan?



West leads the $\heartsuit J$ against your no-trump slam. How would you plan to make twelve tricks?

This was the full deal:

Dealer North. Both Vul.

| | | | |
|--|--|--|---|
| <p>\spadesuit QJ72 \heartsuit K6 \diamondsuit J1098 \clubsuit 972</p> | <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">N</p> <p style="margin: 0;">W E</p> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">S</p> </div> | <p>\spadesuit AK1085 \heartsuit 93 \diamondsuit Q52 \clubsuit KQ5</p> | <p>\spadesuit 64 \heartsuit 1087542 \diamondsuit 76 \clubsuit 1043</p> |
|--|--|--|---|

| | |
|---------------------|------------------|
| \spadesuit 93 | \heartsuit AQJ |
| \diamondsuit AK43 | \clubsuit AJ86 |

| West | North | East | South |
|------|----------------|----------|---------------|
| – | 1 \spadesuit | Pass | 2 \clubsuit |
| Pass | 2 \spadesuit | Pass | 4NT |
| Pass | 6NT | All Pass | |

Solution

Let's start with the bidding. After 1 \spadesuit -2 \clubsuit -2 \spadesuit , how would you describe the South hand? You are too strong to just bid 3NT, but you do not want to commit to slam if partner has a minimum opening bid. There are many ways for you to set spades as trumps if you want to use RKCB: if you play 2/1, you can simply raise to Three Spades at your second turn, and if not then you can jump to Four Diamonds or Four Hearts, either of which would be a cue-bid agreeing spades. Having set spades, you could then Blackwood at your next turn. Using this immediate jump to 4NT as a quantitative bid though is the only way to describe this strength of

hand with no spade fit.

Now, on to the play. You have ten top tricks, so you need to find two more. One possibility is to take the heart finesse and, if that fails, hope that diamonds break 3-3. That is less likely than the normal 36% chance after West's opening lead, though.

A better option is to play on spades, planning to take two finesses. Rather than leading the $\spadesuit 9$, you should start with the $\spadesuit 3$, just in case West happens to have been dealt a singleton honour. If West follows with a low spade, you plan to insert the $\spadesuit 8$ from dummy. Suppose East wins the spade and returns a heart. Are you going to finesse? No, the chance of finding one of the spade honours onside was originally 75%. Although East has won the first spade, the Principle of Restricted Choice still makes West a 2-1 favourite to hold the other honour. Reject the heart finesse and take a second finesse in spades.

As you can see, playing a low spade to dummy's eight solves all of your problems immediately. If West splits his spade honours you could win, return to hand in one of the minors, and lead the $\spadesuit 9$ hoping to make an overtrick if West started with exactly $\spadesuit QJx$. If he does not split, then the $\spadesuit 8$ will win and you could then take the heart finesse to ensure twelve tricks.

Whether West splits his honours or not, you could also cash your club winners next. Doing so hits the jackpot on this layout. With West holding guards in all three other suits, he will be squeezed to concede two more tricks. If he unguards spades, you will have five tricks in that suit to go with three diamonds, four clubs and one heart. If he relinquishes a red-suit guard, then cashing your winners in that suit squeezes him again in spades and the other red suit.

As it happens, starting with a losing heart finesse would also have produced twelve tricks on this layout. Although diamonds do not break 3-3, West holds both four diamonds and the $\spadesuit QJ$, so he will be squeezed when you cash your winners in the rounded suits.

Bidding and making 6NT was worth 79% of the matchpoints. Scoring the overtrick would push your score into the high 90s.

Unconventional Conventions

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

‘I’m going to have to let you down.’ There was real sorrow in the Scarecrow’s voice.

‘In some new way?’ the Tin Man queried, looking round to the Lion and Dorothy. It was a Monday evening and they were halfway through a match-pointed session at the Over the Rainbow Bridge Club. The four friends had sat together for the coffee break in the club social area. Dorothy had noticed that the Scarecrow looked nervous and uneasy. He rarely looked calm anywhere near a pack of cards, but he seemed to be more perturbed than usual. She had assumed that it had something to do with the gift of an 1100 penalty they had just received from him, though the Lion had reacted stoically. Dorothy suspected that probably there were other hands on the Scarecrow’s conscience.

‘It’s the club Handicap Teams,’ the Scarecrow continued. ‘I know we have played as a team for years, and won it several times, but I feel I need to accept my responsibilities as an elder statesman in the club. It’s time to give something back.’ The Scarecrow looked as solemn as his mismatched outfit and wild hair allowed.

The Tin Man was lost for words. Dorothy smiled, understanding at last this unusual reason for his nervous appearance. After all, she thought to herself, when was the last time the Scarecrow had left a team at his own suggestion? ‘That is very public spirited of you.’ she started. ‘Well done, how thoughtful,’ she continued, trying with only limited success to match his serious expression.

The Tin Man had found his voice again. ‘We’ll try to find someone else,’ he announced with a chortle. And just who is it that you are going to be, erm, giving back to?’

‘Dorothy’s young class member Toto, actually.’ The Scarecrow was relieved that he had managed to pass on the bad news without any of his friends being angry with him. ‘I have been talking over some hands with him and he asked me for a game. I thought that this might be a useful event for him to put his toe in the water and get a feel for playing with and against experienced club players with the advantage of a handicap.’

‘And your other pair?’ Dorothy enquired, amused at the thought of the

Scarecrow describing himself as an experienced player.

‘I’ve persuaded Shy and Hank to play.’

The Tin Man gave a loud squawk, ‘The mind boggles! You really are putting the handicapping committee to the test with this line up!’

The Lion leant forward. ‘I could ask Glinda,’ he ventured. ‘As we know, she has been part of the winning team for the last two years, with the Witches. The poor girl is worried that she is going to be replaced by Munchkin Meg. I’m sure you’ll agree that offering her a safe haven is really the only gentlemanly thing we could do under the circumstances.’

The Tin Man sighed. ‘Yes, I thought you might say that.’ Since this was not a clear-cut objection, the Lion decided to take it as signifying agreement. ‘I’ll put our entry in,’ he announced quickly, as he stood up to return to the bridge table.

Dorothy was deep in thought as the second half of the evening started. What should she say to Toto? He was a promising young player. What would a few sessions with the Scarecrow do to him? She couldn’t really say anything at this stage to put him off, but she decided she would try to prepare him with a good dose of advice.

Aunty Em had mixed feelings as she read the entry list for the event. Yes, it was excellent that they had sixteen teams – the largest entry in many years. And it was good to see a number of players from the Tuesday night tournament that the Wicked Witch of the West and Munchkin Meg ran for the players who had graduated from the beginners’ class. After all, the whole point of setting that up had been to help people make the jump from the classes into the club events. She just could not help but seek for deep laid plans and plots whenever that gruesome twosome did things that seemed to be to the benefit of the club.

She sighed and turned her attention to the handicaps. She had decided to remove herself from the handicapping committee after years of arguments, usually with the Wicked Witch of the West or Almira Gulch. She had put it in the capable hands of the Mayor of Munchkinland and the

Honorary Chairman of the Lollipop Guild. She was astonished when she saw that the Scarecrow's newly formed team was not the one awarded the highest handicap. The only qualification for any player to be rated better than Hank was the ability to recognise all four suits by shape and colour. Shy was a competent player, Toto showed promise, and the Scarecrow had the luck of the devil, but surely the handicap committee had taken leave of their senses if they thought these players could make up for Hank.

She shook her head and turned her attention to her own first match and tried to reassure herself that her team should indeed have a fifty-fifty chance of overcoming a 72 IMPs handicap against four near beginners, just as the system intended. She was glad that they had avoided the Scarecrow's team – a real potential banana skin. That lot could lose by 100 IMPs to anyone, any day of the week, but if luck was on the Scarecrow's side then they could be unstoppable. She supposed that was the problem in deciding what handicap to give them. She smiled when she saw that they had been drawn against the members of the handicapping committee, plus Cissie and Ada. In many ways, they were ideal opponents for the Scarecrow's ensemble. They were sound, but not experts, and they were all of a friendly nature. A pleasant match would ensue, with, hopefully, the desired result.

The new team met up at the club on the evening before the match. The Scarecrow was keen that Toto should have the chance to broaden his knowledge of a range of conventions – the sort of things commonly played by the better players, but not taught to the beginners. Strangely enough, he found it hard to convince the Lion to adopt any of them, but that was beside the point. He had suggested to Toto that they should meet an hour before their practice session to discuss what they should include on their system card. Hank sat beside them in the social area as they went through all the Scarecrow's suggestions. He had been there for an hour before they arrived, as a precaution against the clocks having changed without him having noticed again.

Once Shy had arrived, they had played 24 boards together, breaking and switching directions, every six boards in order to mimic the conditions of the match. After Shy and Toto had left, the Scarecrow and Hank decided to IMP it up, for further practice. They found that almost all of their scores cancelled out and the match was effectively a draw. They

saw this as a good omen.

The following evening, the Scarecrow tried to exude confidence as he led his team into the club to play the match. The anxiety was visible on Shy's face after what he had seen the night before, but in the interest of team morale he didn't voice his concerns.

The Honorary Chairman's team had 48 IMPs to make up. 'Only, yes only, 12 IMPs a quarter,' he told Ada and Cissie once more. Indeed, after two sets of six boards they had picked up 40 IMPs and seemed well on course. Set three saw the Mayor and the Chairman sitting North-South against Toto and the Scarecrow. They started with board 17, and Toto surveyed his hand:

♠ KQ874
♥ K986
♦ A4
♣ 43

His partner opened a strong no-trump, and the Honorary Chairman on his right bid Two Clubs, alerted by his partner. Toto turned to the Mayor, who informed him that this showed both majors. Toto's eyes lit up, as he strove to keep a poker face. He could see a juicy penalty coming their way and decided to pass and then double whatever major suit contract came back to him. The flaw in the plan became clear when there was no more bidding. With a horrible feeling that he had missed a game, Toto led the ♠K. The full deal and auction were:

Dealer North. Neither vul.

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| ♠ KQ874 ♥ K986 ♦ A4 ♣ 43 | ♠ — ♥ — ♦ Q1087653 ♣ Q109876 <div style="display: inline-block; border: 2px solid green; padding: 5px; text-align: center; width: 40px; height: 40px; background-color: #008000; color: white; font-weight: bold; line-height: 40px;"> N W E S </div> | ♠ A965 ♥ AQ73 ♦ K92 ♣ K5 |
| ♠ J1032 ♥ J10542 ♦ J ♣ AJ2 | | |

| West | North | East | South |
|-------------|--------------|------------------|-----------------|
| <i>Toto</i> | <i>Mayor</i> | <i>Scarecrow</i> | <i>Chairman</i> |
| – | Pass | 1NT | 2♣ |

The Honorary Chairman, who had involuntarily jumped when his partner passed, breathed a sigh of contentment. ‘Thank you partner, yes indeed thank you.’ He ruffed in the dummy and played a diamond to his jack and Toto’s ace. Toto tried a small heart, ruffed in the dummy. Declarer played a second diamond, ruffed in hand, ruffed another spade in the dummy and played a third diamond. The Scarecrow played the king, declarer ruffed with the jack and Toto discarded a heart.

Before declarer cashed the ♣A, they were down to:

| | | | |
|---------|--|---------|--|
| | ♠ – | | |
| | ♥ – | | |
| | ♦ Q 10 8 7 | | |
| | ♣ Q 10 9 | | |
| ♠ Q 8 7 | <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto; text-align: center;"> N W E S </div> | ♠ A 9 | |
| ♥ K 9 | | ♥ A Q 7 | |
| ♦ – | | ♦ – | |
| ♣ 4 3 | | ♣ K 5 | |
| | ♠ J 10 | | |
| | ♥ J 10 5 4 | | |
| | ♦ – | | |
| | ♣ A | | |

Declarer had won five of the six tricks so needed three more. The diamonds in dummy were now good but he was in hand and could not draw trumps and cross to dummy to enjoy them. He could cash the ♣A for his sixth trick and ruff a major suit card in the dummy for his seventh but then he would be down to one trump and the master diamonds. If the defence could ruff a diamond with a low trump then he could be faced with the ♣K taking out his queen, and the loss of a pile of hearts and spades. To secure his contract, he took a different line. He ruffed a heart for his sixth trick, ruffed a master diamond with his ♣A for the seventh and then ruffed another heart to make his contract. Feeling very content he conceded the rest.

‘Oh, my goodness!’ the Scarecrow exclaimed, in his role as the senior player in the partnership. ‘We had hundreds of points between us and we’ve let the opponents make a part-score. Thank goodness we’re not

going to score up with the Tin Man!’ Toto was red-faced and apologised profusely.

At the other table, Cissie was trying to think of a way of describing her experience. So many boards against Hank at one sitting was a novel experience and she somehow felt she had to find a way of putting it into words. It was a bit like a murder mystery, where bridge is the victim, and the puzzle is why the perpetrator so often gets away with his crimes. Or perhaps it was like a trip on a rollercoaster through a haunted house. There were many ups and downs, a few unpleasant surprises, and sometimes she felt that the world had turned upside down.

Over the years, she had become used to the Scarecrow, but was shocked to realise that, bizarre as he was, Hank had even less of a clue about every aspect of the game. Even holding thirteen cards in his hand seemed to be an overwhelming task. And his bidding! It was as if he had recently swallowed a book on modern conventions and was regurgitating the paragraphs in a random order. Thankfully his use of Leaping Michaels over his own partner’s Weak Two opening had gained them a good swing. Then she remembered how in the first set he had attempted to use odd-even discards, having failed to understand that it referred to the number on the card, not the number of the trick. No wonder Ada had failed to make that game. She clutched tightly onto her handbag as an anchor to normality in a very uncertain world. Hank put board 17 onto the table. Ada corrected the orientation, which seemed to be part of the routine, and they drew their cards.

A light came on in Hank’s eyes as he opened the North hand 2NT. Ada looked slightly surprised but passed. Shy knew that his methods with Hank were beyond sketchy but felt reasonably sure that Three Clubs was some sort of major suit ask. Cissie passed and Hank surprised everyone by jumping to Five Clubs. Ada passed again, and could not resist turning slightly to observe Shy out of the corner of her eye. Clearly baffled, Shy raised to Six Clubs. He guessed that his partner must have very long clubs in his strong, balanced hand, and his hand had to be worth a raise. This came as a surprise to Hank, but his reality had a more fluid aspect than the version experienced by most people. After two passes Ada could resist no further and pulled out a double, ending the bidding.

The full auction was:

| West | North | East | South |
|---------------|-------------|------------|------------|
| <i>Cissie</i> | <i>Hank</i> | <i>Ada</i> | <i>Shy</i> |
| - | 2NT | Pass | 3♣ |
| Pass | 5♣ | Pass | 6♣ |
| Pass | Pass | Double | All Pass |

Before Cissie could lead both of her opponents leant towards her. Hank said, ‘I think my partner should have alerted my Two Notrump jump overcall. It was the Unusual Notrump, long in the minors.’

Shy shook his head vigorously and pointed repeatedly at their convention card. Cissie picked it up. ‘It says twenty to twenty-two points,’ she said dryly. ‘And can you explain how as dealer you could start the auction with an overcall?’

Hank was taken aback. ‘Oh, well. We play Weak Two openings, and we play Weak Jump Overcalls. I thought the same would apply with the Unusual Notrump?’

‘Your card, and the rest of the sane world, would beg to differ,’ Ada opined. ‘Lead on, Cissie.’ Her partner put the ♠K on the table.

Shy shook his head in disbelief. He knew of Hank’s reputation, and in the first half of the match he had almost lost his lifelong record of never having uttered a word of criticism at partner. He steadied himself ready to try to find the best way to limit the damage.

The play started in the same way as at the other table. He ruffed the spade in the dummy and, pointing at dummy, indicated that he wanted his partner to play a low diamond. Ada played low and his jack was taken by Cissie’s ace. Like Toto at the other table, she tried a low heart, ruffed in the dummy.

Here the lines of play diverged as Shy leant forward and pushed up the ♦Q. Ada could see little chance of beating the contract unless they had a second diamond trick, so she covered it with her king. Shy ruffed in hand. He now played a spade, ruffing in dummy for the third time, finessed the ♣J, played dummy’s fifth club under the ace, and when the trump suit broke two – two, claimed the rest and his contract.

‘My goodness,’ Cissie gasped. ‘A twelve-point slam bid and made without us finding any way into the auction apart from the final double!’

‘I don’t think it can be stopped,’ sighed Ada. ‘If I play low on the second diamond he will finesse, draw trumps and ruff out my king. Maybe I should play it on the first round of diamonds. Then he has to guess whether or not to finesse or ruff down your ace on the second round. I

hope you can forgive me for doubling.’

‘I suspect it will make little difference since our teammates will no doubt be defending a game the other way,’ Cissie tried to look comforting.

The 14 IMP swing to the Scarecrow’s team meant that they only lost the set by 5 IMPs. That reduced their lead, after the handicap was taken into account, to a slender 3 IMPs with one more set of six boards to play.

They swapped opponents for the last time.

Dealer South. N/S vul.

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ♠ J2 ♥ AK9752 ♦ 103 ♣ 1074 | <div style="border: 2px solid green; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div> | ♠ A7643 ♥ Q106 ♦ K5 ♣ 983 | ♠ K10985 ♥ 3 ♦ AJ7642 ♣ K |
| ♠ Q ♥ J84 ♦ Q98 ♣ AQJ652 | | | |

Toto, as dealer, opened the South hand with a routine One Club. Cissie came in with One Heart and the Scarecrow bid One Spade. Deciding that since everyone else had shown their suit she would do the same, Ada bid Two Diamonds.

Toto felt that he would like to bid Three Clubs, but knew that he lacked the values. Then he remembered that the Scarecrow had taught him about the Good-Bad Two No-trumps. How did it go? Ah, yes: if he bid at the three level right away that showed a good hand, and if he bid Two No-trumps that showed the same sort of hand but with less values. His partner gave that a look, then raised it to game. This was the full auction:

| West | North | East | South |
|---------------|------------------|------------|-------------|
| <i>Cissie</i> | <i>Scarecrow</i> | <i>Ada</i> | <i>Toto</i> |
| - | - | - | 1♣ |
| 1♥ | 1♠ | 2♦ | 2NT |
| Pass | 3NT | All Pass | |

‘What was 2NT?’ Cissie asked.

‘Good-Bad’, said the Scarecrow. Toto sighed with relief. The auction had not gone off the rails after all. The Scarecrow continued, ‘Yes it says he has a good hand or a bad hand. I’m hoping that this time it is a good hand.’

‘No, I don’t think that’s right!’ Toto exclaimed. ‘It can only be a bad hand, well not that bad – just not strong enough for me to bid Three Clubs.’

‘Are you sure?’ the Scarecrow enquired. ‘If that was the case would it not just be called the Bad 2NT?’

‘You can sort this craziness out in your own time,’ Cissie was getting exasperated. ‘We know enough to defend.’ It was clear that the 2NT bid was not meant to indicate a stop in her partner’s suit, so she led the $\spadesuit 10$.

Toto called for the king from the dummy. Ada won the ace and played back a low diamond. Toto confidently finessed the $\heartsuit 9$. He played the $\spadesuit Q$, and when West played low he went up with dummy’s ace. Crossing his fingers, he asked his partner to play a club. When the king popped up he gratefully claimed nine tricks by way of one spade, two diamonds and six clubs. Plus 600 looked like just the sort of score they needed if they were to have any chance in the match.

Before long, it was time to score up. The Scarecrow’s team gathered nervously and began to call out the results. The tide had been slowed but was still running against them. With only the Scarecrow’s 3NT to score their handicap had disappeared and they trailed by 6 IMPs.

‘600,’ he called out hopefully, but then saw the disappointment on his friend’s face. ‘That’s a loss of 2 IMPs,’ Hank slowly reported, scrutinising the scale carefully.

The Honorary Chairman’s team had scored up at a quicker rate and he was walking towards them.

The Scarecrow stood up to meet him, saying ‘Well we gave it a good shot. It was a close match right up to the end. Well played.’

‘Yes indeed, yes indeed,’ the Honorary Chairman agreed. ‘Well done. Good match.’

‘Thank you, and well done to you,’ the Scarecrow replied, trying to match his counterpart’s politeness.

The Honorary Chairman checked the Scarecrow’s face then ventured, ‘You do know that you won?’ They compared scorecards. ‘That one – your amazing 3NT – you have it as minus 2 IMPs but it should be plus 15.’

The Scarecrow grabbed Hank’s scorecard. ‘Ah, I thought you were minus on the hand! Your 530 is in the plus column.’

The other members of the Chairman’s team had come up to give their congratulations. Both Ada and Cissie clutched their handbag closer to them than ever. Having seen diabolical bridge steal the match, they were insuring against a second theft.

Toto was still dazed. What had happened on that board? He knew he would get no sense out of Hank, and Shy was not the most forthcoming with explanations. When he asked the Honorary Chairman, the first answer he got was a rueful shaking of the head, but then as he calmed down, he started to explain the auction. ‘Hank bid Two Hearts over my One Club opener. I think they are playing weak jump overcalls, but with that man, who knows, who knows?’

The Chairman dabbed his eye with a handkerchief. ‘My partner came in with Two Spades, and the quiet young man on my right doubled. I asked what the double of Two Spades showed.’

‘All I can say is that after that it became surreal, completely surreal’ the Chairman continued. Hank just scratched his head, seeking inspiration, and then finally answered, with conviction, that it was a support double, and that his partner would have three card support for him.

‘A sideways glance at his partner’s facial expression made it entirely clear that the explanation was wrong, that he was at, or near, his wits end, that he probably deeply regretted having entered into the auction, and perhaps the entire event.’

The Chairman’s mouth was smiling but there seemed to be tears in his eyes. This hand seemed to have stirred unaccustomed emotions in him. ‘I must admit I was a bit mischievous, yes mischievous. I said that I believed, indeed was sure, that support doubles were made by opener when his or her partner had responded, and the next hand had overcalled. I told him that a survey of the bidding cards in front of us suggested that Shy’s double was made in an auction that met few, very few, if any, of these criteria.’

‘I’m not sure he understood a word of what I was saying, but knowing they didn’t know what they were doing, I passed, and after Hank bid Three Hearts, my partner’s double ended the auction.’

The full auction had been:

| West | North | East | South |
|------|--------|----------|----------|
| Hank | Mayor | Shy | Chairman |
| – | – | – | 1♣ |
| 2♥ | 2♠ | Double | Pass |
| 3♥ | Double | All Pass | |

Toto was looking worried. He had become aware that Hank's grasp of the game might not be as good as his own, despite Hank's seven years in the beginners' class. The Honorary Chairman continued. 'As I led the queen of spades face-up, Hank threw his dummy down. It happened so quickly that, before the Mayor was able to point out that it was in fact his lead, we had fourteen cards on the table. None of us knew what the rules were, but we felt we could hardly have thirteen exposed cards in declarer's hand. We decided it was best for Shy to play it.'

'But surely he can't have made it!' Toto exclaimed. Cissie had found the hand records and he took one from her.

'Oh, he did.' The Chairman brought out a fresh handkerchief. 'My partner, yes my poor partner, The Mayor, overtook the queen of spades with his ace, and returned the four of spades, which I ruffed. I could see these cards.' He covered the North and East cards, and scored off the two cards already played in each hand.

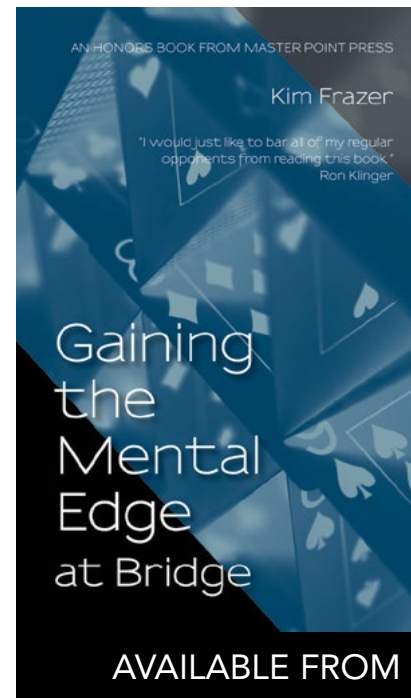
| | |
|----------|--|
| ♠ – | |
| ♥ AK9752 | |
| ♦ 103 | |
| ♣ 1074 | |
| ♠ – | |
| ♥ J8 | |
| ♦ Q98 | |
| ♣ AQJ652 | |

'What was I to do, indeed what was I to do?' The Chairman was now very serious. 'Hoping that the low spade was a suit preference signal for clubs, I cashed the ace, only to be disappointed by the appearance on my right of the king. Now I decided that my partner had to have something in hearts for his double, and as declarer had to be very short in that suit, it seemed sensible to cut down club ruffs. I switched to a trump. Shy won the ace of hearts, cashed the king, played a diamond to his ace and played out three master spades. With my partner in the North seat condemned to follow suit, these allowed Shy to discard his remaining

minor suit cards. All he had to lose was the queen of hearts to add to the first three tricks.'

The Scarecrow and Hank were sitting open mouthed listening in to the Honorary Chairman, but not really understanding a word. All they knew was that they had indeed won this board and the match. Shy was stunned into even greater silence than usual at the thought that he would have to play with Hank again.

By now, the Honorary Chairman had regained his usual bonhomie. 'And so to conclude, yes to conclude, I can only thank you for a game that we will not forget in a long time, a very long time, and wish you good luck in your next round match. I believe that the Witches defeated a team of Tuesday night players by over 100 IMPs, and that was after the handicap, so you will be playing them. The very best of luck to you all.' He gave a little chuckle and added, 'Perhaps you will conjure up some good magic to counteract their back arts!'



MASTER POINT PRESS
THE BRIDGE PUBLISHER

GAINING THE MENTAL EDGE AT BRIDGE

Kim Frazer

In this book, Kim Frazer—an Olympian, winner of gold medals at three consecutive Commonwealth Games and an Australian international bridge player—has adapted the mental techniques that brought her success in target shooting and explains in easily-understood terms how to use these at the bridge table.

AVAILABLE FROM A BRIDGE RETAILER NEAR YOU

Book Reviews

Martin Cantor

A bumper crop of book reviews to help you decide on that Christmas present for your favourite bridge partner (s).

Bridge Literature: Nick Smith

An Honors eBook from Master Point Press
180pp. £14.95 US\$18.95 CD\$22.95

Nick Smith has substantially updated and extended the original 1993 edition of this book, as a prelude to the sequel More Bridge Literature scheduled for publication early in 2020.

What you will find here is a collection of bridge hands, imagined to have been reported by a wide range of famous writers, and in settings and with characters taken from their works. Which means that, alongside the interesting bridge you will be amused by the parodies of authors as diverse as Shakespeare, Lewis Carroll, George Orwell and Sue Townsend, to name just a few.

Smith's parodies are accomplished, no easy task with such a wide range of styles to capture. Added to which, they are spiced with incidental jokes and puns. These latter are a bit of a mixed bag – many of them, even some of the groanier puns, tickled me, but others can only be described as laboured, in particular the long build-up to Brutus “the knobliest Roman of them all”.

All bridge players will enjoy this book, but those with a fair knowledge of English literature will enjoy it more, especially as the balance is

notably more towards the text than the bridge. I found it fun to read, not just for the parodies, but for the many allusions to the literature and the authors – though I'm sure to have missed a number. I bet it was at least as much fun to write too. So I look forward to reading the sequel, and wonder which authors and which of their works will make an appearance.

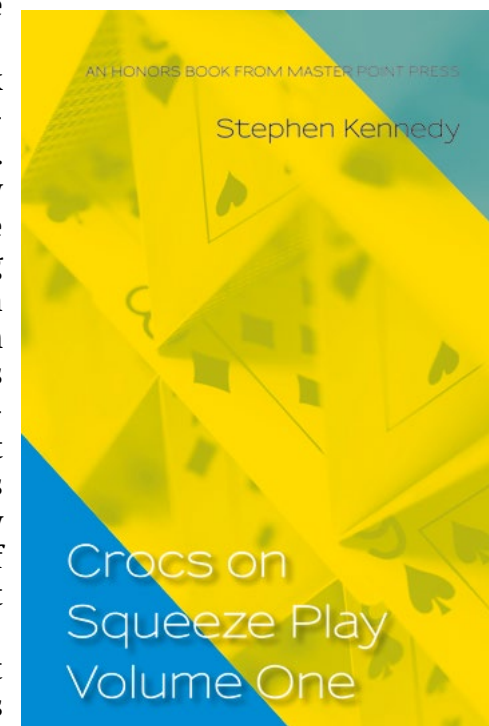
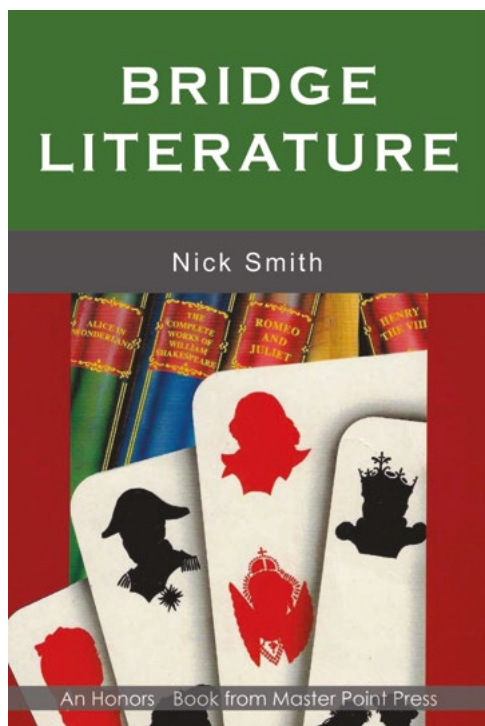
Crocs on Squeeze Play Volumes 1 & 2: Stephen Kennedy

Two Honors eBooks from Master Point Press
Both 260pp. Each £18.95 US\$24.95 CD\$29.95

Stephen Kennedy (nickname Crocs) is an English junior international who has clearly spent (or perhaps mis-spent) a lot of time studying, discovering and analysing esoteric squeezes. In these two volumes he shares his thinking with us, taking us on a journey of discovery from the strange, through the bizarre, to the almost absurd.

That might lead you to think that the books are difficult for anyone other than squeeze devotees. You would be wrong. I'm certainly no squeeze expert, but I found the books enjoyable and interesting in equal measure. The pleasure in reading them comes not just from the technical, but from the author's sense of awe and wonder at the mysteries of our game, the magic that can make the defenders' winners disappear into thin air, the alchemy that can turn the base metal of minor honours and humble spot cards into the gold of winners.

The presentation is clear, so that I could easily see how the various



kinds of squeezes worked, and even thought I might be able to apply them. It's certainly true that when I next played at my local club I was looking for exotic squeezes almost every time I was declarer. The fact that I didn't find any doesn't mean there weren't any.

Most books on squeezes, or indeed other technical play subjects, tend to be dry, but that isn't the case here, thanks to the light-hearted and chatty style, together with the setting of deals in imaginary situations. I particularly liked the sentence "A wheel came off on this auction ♠...♥ and by the looks of things you were riding a unicycle."

If you want to improve and expand your squeeze technique, these books will certainly help. If you think you are already a master of squeeze play, I take it you have a comprehensive understanding of, for example, the criss-cross extended menace throw-in squeeze, or the imaginary double stepping-stone winkle squeeze (thankfully each volume has a glossary to guide you through the plethora of such names). He even teases the reader by sometimes providing two or even three successive solutions, using different squeezes, for the same hand

Alternatively, if you just want to be bewitched, bothered and bewildered by the beauty of the cards, these books will do that for you too.

Don't Be Fooled! Countering Deception at Bridge: Danny Roth

Master Point Press

198pp. £15.95 US\$19.95 CD\$24.95

Bridge is a hard game. Sometimes it seems like the more you know about it the harder it gets. And then sometimes those pesky opponents get sneaky and make it harder still by playing "unnatural" or "dishonest" cards. Don't they know that I'm perfectly capable of misleading myself? Not to mention all the times I get fooled by partner?

So a book that can help us spot those deceits, and better yet counter them, is a valuable addition to the bridge literature. Has Danny Roth achieved that with this book? Well yes and no. He certainly provides an extensive coverage of the kinds of deceptive manoeuvres available to both defenders and declarers, together with helpful advice on spotting them. Rather less extensive is the advice on countering them – but then the principal counter-measure is simply to spot them, or at least to be aware that you should not take every card at face value.

If you never or rarely falsecard when you play, then you should think seriously about getting this book (or, to be fair, one of the other books

on deception at bridge). If you never distrust the cards your opponents play, then you should seriously think about getting this book. But, a word of warning is in order. I think the author might have done more to give general guidance on when to get deceptive, especially as a defender. Once you have read it, don't start scattering falsecards willy-nilly. Equally, don't start expecting every card your opponents play to be false ones.

About half of the book is taken up with fifty-five problem hands for the reader to solve, twenty-one for declarer, thirty-four for defenders, and a careful study of these will certainly help you considerably to improve your deceptive technique.

Interspersing some hands where there is no deception would have improved the learning experience – when you know there is a deceptive trick in every hand it's much easier to find it, and it would also be a helpful reminder that falsecards are the exception not the rule. One of the most pleasing things ever said to me at the bridge table was when a player I respected a lot said he found me difficult to play against. This book can help you become a difficult opponent.

Gaining the Mental Edge at Bridge: Kim Frazer

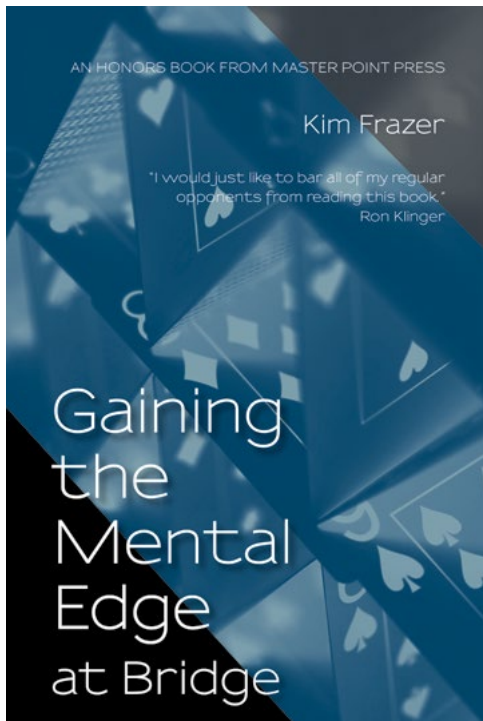
An Honors eBook from Master Point Press

182pp. £14.95 US\$18.95 CD\$24.95

As Ron Klinger points out in his very positive Foreword, this book tackles a subject rarely touched on in the extensive literature of bridge. Kim Frazer, a multiple gold medal winner in the sport of shooting, and now a successful bridge player, offers her experience and advice on psychological tools and methods that will improve your performance at bridge.

It is certainly true that sports psychology is a growing field, and one increasingly used by top players and teams across a wide range of sports.





I entirely agree with the author that bridge players and teams can also benefit from these methods, as a few top teams have trailblazed in recent years.

So there is no doubt that the subject is one well worth dealing with. How well does the author manage it? In short, pretty well. She does a very good job of identifying the problems that bridge players suffer from. Some of them are familiar, whether from our own (or partners' and teammates') experience, or from some of the more humorous literature of Mollo, Simon or Bird. But some of them are far less familiar, and it is certainly helpful to have the entirety of this kind of issue brought together in one place.

I did find some instances where one theme strayed into another more than the inevitable overlap justifies, but that is perhaps a minor quibble.

I found the remedies and solutions less convincing and less comprehensive, though certainly still useful. Perhaps the biggest weakness of the book, certainly what irritated me the most, was the frequent repetition of points, to the extent that a good editing job would reduce the text by up to a quarter.

Of course, diagnosis is one thing, remedy is another. And the author readily admits that not all players suffer all the 'diseases', even more so that not all the proposed remedies are suitable for all players.

In case you are worried that this is a bridge book without any bridge hands, you can set your mind at rest. There are a good number of hands used to illustrate particular points, most played by the author, and many with some interest to the bidding or play.

It would be easy to say that much of what Frazer has to say about the problems is just common sense. Indeed it probably is. But it is common sense that many bridge players seem not to recognise. If you have never

played badly because you were distracted by something, or because you weren't properly prepared for a tournament, or for any other 'extraneous' reason, then you're lucky and exceptional and can ignore this book. Otherwise, reading it should help you to recognise the psychological factors which affect your performance, and just thinking about that should improve your game, even if you don't adopt the author's suggested remedies.

Misplay More Hands With Me: Mark Horton

An Honors eBook from Master Point Press
184pp. £15.95 US\$19.95 CD\$24.95

Regular readers of A New Bridge Magazine will be familiar with Mark Horton's Misplay These Hands articles. If you're not familiar with them, the clue, or at least a large part of it, is in the title: this is a collection of bridge hands where declarer has gone wrong.

Part of the beauty is that these are all real-life examples from major tournaments, and so it is top-class declarers going wrong, offering both relief and encouragement to us lesser folk. You may be disappointed to hear that he (quite rightly of course) refrains from identifying the miscreants.

Another attraction is that they are all written in the dry style of the great Terence Reese, in particular his over the shoulder books, so we always get a little introduction to the setting where the deal occurred. Mind you, since most of the hands are taken from more recent years, Reese would surely struggle to make sense of many of the auctions, a fact which Horton nods to in several instances, when his narrator speaks of 'the modern style'. A downside to this consistent and particular style is a couple of phrases recurring with grating frequency: "leaving us with this auction", and "West has nothing



to say”. But then even the English language, in all its rich variety, has limits when it comes to describing bridge deals.

There were also a small number of the deals where I felt that declarer had taken an unfortunate rather than a wrong line, but I must admit that I didn’t stop to undertake a full and deep analysis, so that might be just me.

As a nice supplement to the full analysis and careful explanation of where declarer went wrong, there is usually a note of what happened at the other table(s) to complete the picture. Also, occasionally, a little anecdote on the side, more often than not involving The Rabbi (the late lamented Leonard Helman). All in all an enjoyable book, but also one we can all learn much from.

Santa Fe Precision: Dennis Dawson

an Honors e-Book from Master Point Press
212pp. US\$19.95 CD\$24.95 £15.95

All serious players of our game know that Eric Rodwell and Jeff Meckstroth – jointly known as Meckwell – are unquestionably one of the top pairs – arguably the top pair – in the world. Their skill, their aggressive style and their partnership understanding may be the major factors in that, but their carefully developed bidding system is a significant factor too. So much so that many leading North American pairs have adopted a reduced version of it commonly known as “Meckwell Lite”. The system that Dennis Dawson sets out here is simplified further than Meckwell Lite, a sort of “Meckwell Lighter” (I would have written Meckwell Liter, but Europeans might misunderstand this).

The author argues that playing a form of Precision leads to greater success, and is supported in this by Fred Gitelman in his Introduction where he also claims it is more fun to play since you get to bid more. As someone who enjoys playing Polish Club, which shares many features with Precision, I tend to agree.

So, how easy would it be for a reasonable pair to adopt Santa Fe Precision just using this book. The short answer is pretty easy. A four section structure takes you from getting started with Precision to the essential but more complex next steps, then to Precision’s ability to find low point slams, finally to the optional extras of bells and whistles. The sequencing, the layout and, importantly, the writing, are for the most part very clear.

There are plenty of example hands but of course – I seem to make this

point in all my reviews of books proposing bidding systems – they are selected to support the strengths of the system, we rarely see examples of where the system doesn’t work so well. Nor is there much said about what everyone knows is the biggest weakness of strong club systems, namely the way opponents interfere to make finding the right strain (or level) harder. Yes, there are ideas on how to counter intervention, but they mitigate rather than solve the problem.

Pairs could quite happily just read and adopt the first two sections of the book. What is offered in the last two is far from obligatory, for example the Meckwell defence to one no trump, or Transfer Lebensohl, or Mulberry; although these are all perfectly good treatments, pairs can just as well stick to their tried and trusted favourites.

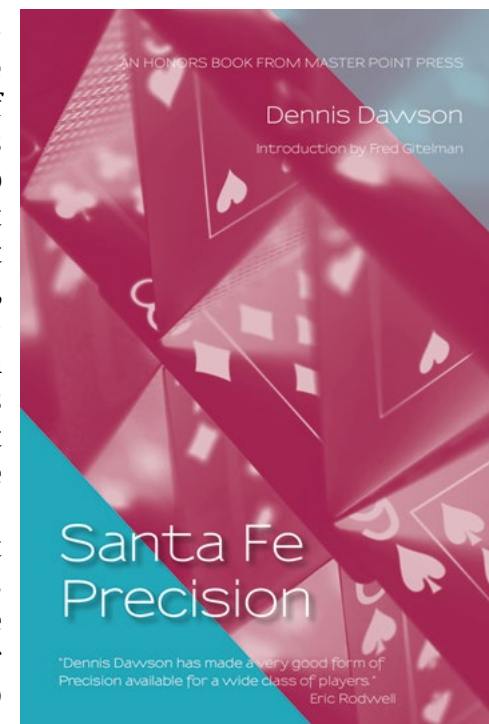
Santa Fe Precision was designed by a World Seniors bronze medalist and experienced teacher to be a relatively simple system for aspiring partnerships. It succeeds in that aim.

Anyone who has watched or read about any expert level bridge over the last ten years will have noticed the fast growing popularity of transfer responses to a 1♣ opening. The bridge literature is starting to catch up.

Transfer Responses to One Club with Relays: Lyle Poe.

An Honors Book from Master Point Press
148pp. £12.95 US\$16.95 CD\$ 19.95

Lyle Poe’s book is altogether more comprehensive, and more prescriptive, setting out a full and complex relay system that he has developed over a period of time. I won’t try to give you a full picture of even the basics, but it involves the 1cx opener being 100% forcing since it is also used for very strong hands (with a 2cx rebid to show this); a 1NT response being an artificial game force that initiates relays; and much use of two-way





checkback.

I found the opening chapter somewhat hard going, with the repeated “more on this later”s leaving the reader hanging. In fact the whole book is hard work, but you have to expect that if you want to adopt a complicated and recondite bidding system, even if, as the author says, the relay system is not the most complex one ever.

Even more than Senior, the author accentuates the positives but eliminates the negatives, as where he extols how the precision that relays deliver on partner’s shape helps to identify the right contract, without pointing out how it can also help the defence to beat that contract.

Overall I can see that the system could be an effective one, but only to be recommended for partnerships willing to put in a lot of work to learn it, and to keep developing their agreements, particularly for when those pesky opponents decide to join in the auction.

Short Club and Transfer Responses: Brian Senior.

32pp. £4.00. Available from the author.

Brian Senior’s book – actually more of a pamphlet – is a simple and lucid introduction for anyone interested in switching to this approach, or indeed preparing themselves to defend against it since there is a welcome section on this. The author makes it abundantly clear that he does not claim to have the last word on the system, or indeed on any particular aspect within it. Rather he describes alternatives, and identifies his personal preferences. He could maybe have said a bit more about the upsides, and certainly could have said more about the downsides, but this is generally the case with books on bidding. The section on dealing with interference offers effective but simple solutions, at least for low level intervention, less so for high level.



- National Teams: Monday 9th March - Friday 13th March
Registration: Monday 9th March @ 12h30 - 13h30
Playing Times: Starts Monday 9th @ 14h00 - Ends Friday 13th @ 12h30
Entry Fee: R4000.00 per Team
- National Pairs: Friday 13th March - Monday 16th March
Playing Times: Starts Friday 13th @ 14h00 - Ends Monday 16th @ 14h00
Entry Fee: R1200.00 per Pair
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Answers to “Defend With Julian Pottage”

1

| | | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|---|-----|---|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ♠ 542 ♥ A6 ♦ J954 ♣ 10743 | <table border="1" style="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 | ♠ AK10986 ♥ K10 ♦ K73 ♣ K9 | ♠ QJ3 ♥ QJ85 ♦ A2 ♣ J652 |
| N | | | | | | |
| W E | | | | | | |
| S | | | | | | |
| ♠ 7 ♥ 97432 ♦ Q1086 ♣ AQ8 | | | | | | |

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

Partner leads the four of diamonds, on which dummy plays low. What is your plan?

Playing fourth highest leads, you know the lead is from a four-card suit. Unless partner has viewed to lead low from QJ9x, a diamond return will not set up more than one trick in the suit and quite possibly not that. Two diamond tricks, a spade trick and partner’s hoped for entry will give you four – insufficient to beat the contract.

A switch offers better prospects: if you can make three tricks in the suit to which you switch together with a diamond and a spade, this will be enough tricks.

For a club switch to do any good you need partner to hold AQxx (unlikely on the bidding), Axxxx (weird to lead a diamond from four in that case) or A10xx. To cater for the last possibility you would switch to the jack of clubs. Given your stronger holding in hearts, a heart switch offers a better chance. If you lead low, you just need partner to hold the ace and at least one low heart. So switch to a low heart.

2

| | | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|---|-----|---|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| ♠ 86 ♥ Q10865 ♦ K852 ♣ 95 | <table border="1" style="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 | ♠ K9 ♥ J92 ♦ AQJ10973 ♣ A | ♠ J10752 ♥ A73 ♦ — ♣ K10762 |
| N | | | | | | |
| W E | | | | | | |
| S | | | | | | |
| ♠ AQ43 ♥ K4 ♦ 64 ♣ QJ843 | | | | | | |

| WEST | NORTH | EAST | SOUTH |
|----------|-------|------|-------|
| - | - | - | 1♣ |
| Pass | 2♦ | Pass | 2♠ |
| Pass | 3♦ | Pass | 3NT |
| All Pass | | | |

West leads the six of hearts and dummy plays low. What is your plan?

At the table, East put up the ace of hearts and returned the seven. Declarer won, finessed in diamonds, cashed three top spades and repeated the diamond finesse. Then, since West had had to discard a club on the third spade, cashing the ace of clubs and exiting with a heart gave West an insuperable problem. Although it was possible to cash three hearts, dummy took the last two tricks on the forced diamond exit.

‘Does it help if you discard a heart,’ East enquired, ‘If I get in with a club, I have spades to cash.’

South answered before West could. ‘I don’t try for the endplay then. I just give up a diamond.’

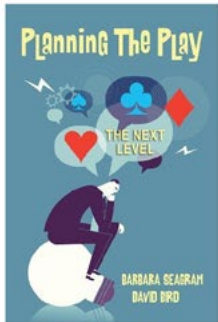
West then spotted the solution. ‘You need to duck the first heart. You can place me with five to one honour from the bidding and lead, so it won’t cost. Then I can cross to your hand in the endgame.’



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Keep Bridge Alive



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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Play bridge wherever and whenever you like!

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

A few figures

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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.

Leading A Singleton

In a Round of 32 match in the Open trials for USA2, you face a common choice of games problem.

As South, you hold:

Dealer South. Both Vul.

♠ K8
♥ AQJ1092
♦ Q4
♣ AQ9

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| - | - | - | 1♣* |
| 3♦ | 3NT | Pass | ? |
| 1♣ | 16+ | | |

If North had doubled, that would show an artificial game force with nothing else to bid. Any bid other than pass by North would be natural, game-forcing.

Your call?

Your heart suit is self-sufficient. Partner might have only a single stopper in diamonds, which won't be sufficient if the hearts don't run. The spade suit also poses a danger in no-trump. In addition, partner may have a hand which wasn't worth more than 3NT but becomes suitable for slam when you bid 4♥.

On the other hand, 9 tricks might be easier than 10. If partner's diamond stopper is the king, there is a danger of a diamond ruff.

It isn't clear, but 4♥ is probably safer. Even if the opponents have a diamond ruff coming, partner figures to have enough power to bring in the contract. The dangers from 3NT look greater.

You bid 4♥, ending the auction.

| West | North | East | South |
|----------|-------|------|-------|
| - | - | - | 1♣* |
| 3♦ | 3NT | Pass | 4♥ |
| All Pass | | | |

West leads the ♠2, third and fifth, upside down count and attitude.

♠ J106
♥ 654
♦ KJ9
♣ K832

♠ K8
♥ AQJ1092
♦ Q4
♣ AQ9

What spade do you play from dummy?

You might as well play the jack of spades. You know it doesn't make any difference, but the defence doesn't know that. Any time you can make a play which helps conceal your holding at no cost, you should do so.

You play the jack of spades. East wins the ace, and returns the ♠9 to your king, West playing the ♠4. What do you do next?

♠ 10
♥ 654
♦ KJ9
♣ K832

♠ -
♥ AQJ1092
♦ Q4
♣ AQ9

You can afford to lose a trump trick. The only danger is that East gets a diamond ruff in addition to a trump loser. Unfortunately, the auction indicates that this is a very real danger.

One possibility is to forget the trump finesse and bang out ace and queen of hearts. This is often the right approach when an enemy ruff is threatened, but it isn't a good idea here. If East has ♥Kxx and a stiff diamond, he will win, return a diamond, and get a diamond ruff for down 1. You can't necessarily put too much stock into his failure to return a singleton diamond, since if he has ♥Kxx and a singleton diamond he can see that there is no rush needed to get the diamond ruff.

The natural-looking play is to cross to dummy's king of clubs and take the heart finesse. This will make when East has ♥Kxx, even if he does have a singleton diamond. It will probably lose when the heart finesse is offside, but if East doesn't have the king of hearts it seems like he would have always returned a singleton diamond if that is what he holds.

There is one other possibility. How about leading the singleton diamond yourself? True, you don't have a singleton diamond, but West doesn't know that. He will win his ace, of course. However, he isn't likely to return a diamond, since that would give you an extra entry to dummy to take a heart finesse. If West doesn't return a diamond, you are definitely home. Now ace and queen of hearts guarantees the contract, since if East has ♥Kxx(x) he will no longer be able to get his diamond ruff.

If you do pretend to have a singleton diamond, which diamond should you lead? If you lead the queen and West wins his ace, the 4 will be missing from his view. Depending upon East's diamond spot and the enemy carding methods, West may be able to deduce from East's spot card that East must have a singleton if East's spot card would not be consistent with holding a doubleton. However, if you lead the ♦4, West won't have that information. The missing diamond will be the queen, and West knows East would never be playing the queen from Qx. Consequently, West will get no information from East's spot card about the diamond suit.

It looks like leading a diamond is a good idea.

You choose to cross to dummy with the king of clubs, West playing the ♣7 and East the ♣4. When you lead a trump from dummy, East follows with the ♥3. Which trump do you play from your hand?

♠ 10
♥ 654
♦ KJ9
♣ 832



♠ —
♥ AQJ1092
♦ Q4
♣ AQ

It probably doesn't make much difference. Playing the queen pretty much advertises your holding. Perhaps the jack is best.

You choose to play the queen. West discards the ♦2. What next?

♠ 10
♥ 65
♦ KJ9
♣ 832



♠ —
♥ AJ1092
♦ Q4
♣ AQ


That was unfortunate. You don't have a entry to take another trump finesse. If you continue trumps and East has a singleton diamond, he will surely get his ruff.

Perhaps now is the time to lead the singleton diamond. West has seen you take one trump finesse, and it will look to him like you are trying to get to dummy to take another finesse. He will win his ace, of course, but if he believes that you have a singleton diamond he will play a black suit and you will be cold.

The problem with this is that West might wonder why you didn't lead your singleton diamond at trick 3 if that is what you have. That would be the natural thing to do, particularly if you have a possible club loser. Blowing out dummy's only entry before setting up a diamond trick is right only when you don't have a possible club loser. If West realizes this, he may have enough information to see that leading back a diamond can't cost.

Is there any other possibility? Yes, there is. The diamonds could be 8-0. West presumably has 3 spades and no hearts. East might well have returned a singleton diamond if he had one to make sure West doesn't go wrong, since with East's heart holding he can see that one diamond ruff will definitely defeat the contract. While 8-card suits aren't the norm, it appears reasonably likely that West does have 8 diamonds and you should play for this by simply playing trumps.

You choose to lead the $\spadesuit 4$. West wins the ace, as East discards. West gives East a ruff, and with no dummy entry to repeat the heart finesse you are down 1. The full hand is:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| \spadesuit 432 \heartsuit — \diamondsuit A10876532 \clubsuit 107 |  | \spadesuit J106 \heartsuit 654 \diamondsuit KJ9 \clubsuit K832 | \spadesuit AQ975 \heartsuit K873 \diamondsuit — \clubsuit J654 |
| \spadesuit K8 \heartsuit AQJ1092 \diamondsuit Q4 \clubsuit AQ9 | | | |

How was the defence?

West's opening lead is a guess. Leading the ace of diamonds could work very well or very badly. This time it would have led to a quick down 1. An interesting part of his decision might have been how comfortable South was bidding $4\heartsuit$. If South took a long time before bidding $4\heartsuit$ that might be an indication that South doesn't have a singleton diamond, which would make leading the ace of diamonds more attractive.

East was hoping his partner had the king of spades and would give him a diamond ruff. The problem is that partner might not work this out. Perhaps a better idea is to play the queen of spades at trick 1. If it holds, a later return of the $\spadesuit 9$ to partner's king will make things very clear. If declarer has the king, East will not have done any worse than on his actual defence.

What do you think of the $3\diamondsuit$ call?

Usually it is right to preempt to the four-level with an eight-card suit,

particularly against an artificial strong club. With the West hand, it is not clear. The suit doesn't have any intermediates, and the heart void may mean the opponents are headed for $4\heartsuit$ with a bad heart split if you don't jam them out of it. Either $3\diamondsuit$ or $4\diamondsuit$ could work well.

How about North's 3NT call?

North can't guarantee making a game opposite a minimal $1\clubsuit$ opener, but his hand is strong enough so game has to be bid and his diamond holding is great for notrump. It looks like the right call.

The tactic of attacking a suit you don't want the opponents to attack is a common theme in no-trump. It is less well known in suit contracts, where you attack a suit yourself to dissuade the opponents from getting a ruff in the suit. On this hand it would not have been a success to lead a diamond at trick 3, but if the diamonds had been 7-1 the ploy likely would have worked. It is a matter of seeing how things will look to the opponent which will determine if a play such as this is likely to succeed.

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General Approach; 2C Opening (Part 1)

Opening Bids and General System

In my years of tournament success, I used Precision (discussed at the footnote at the end of this article). I suspect most readers will stick with what is familiar to them and play “Standard American.” “2-over-1 Game Forcing” is becoming more and more popular –and for good reason. “2/1” is a much easier system than “standard.” I’d teach beginners that 1♠-2♣ shows 13 and enough for game (as opposed to the 10 in the “book.”) Eventually, I think, everyone will play 2/1 GF. (Of course, some of my inexperienced students can be found bidding 2-over-1 with 7 or 8 points—a definite no-no in any era with any system.)

While a weak no-trump (12-14) is popular in many countries, most of my readers prefer 15-17.

Okay. So, for most of you the general approach will be “Standard,” or “2/1 GF”, 15-17 notrump openings. Fine. What about the Strong Opening bid (2♣)?

2♣ Opener (What do you need?)

We’ll get to 2♦, 2♥ and 2♠ openings in a later instalment of this series. For now, let’s presume that 2♣ (artificial) is the only suit bid to depict a strong hand. (In the old days, all 2-level openings were strong, but sanity has since prevailed.)

What do I mean by “strong?” If your strong hand is balanced, I can tell you an exact point range. Presuming a 2NT opener is 20-21, then when 2♣ is opened with a balanced hand it shows 22+ HCP.

What if unbalanced? This is a pet peeve of mine. After an opening 2♣, an opponent asks: “How many points?” Poor question. It has no good answer. (And why ask in the first place – does it matter to you? Will you interfere or not interfere depending on the answer? By the way, if you

do interfere, make sure you and your partner know what double shows – typically clubs.)

Anyway, if balanced, the answer (if you are silly enough to ask what 2♣ shows) is easy: more than a 2NT opener. But what about unbalanced hands? Who is to say which (if any) of these hands are worth 2♣:

| | | |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| ♠AKQJ1098 | ♠AKJ96542 | ♠KQJ10987 |
| ♥AQJ2 | ♥— | ♥— |
| ♦5 | ♦AK42 | ♦KQJ |
| ♣4 | ♣5 | ♣KQJ |

The HCP for each hand above are 17, 15, and 18, respectively. Depending on which experts you asked, you’d get votes for opening 2♣ with A,B,C, none, or all. There is no right answer! That is why it is silly to ask your opponent: “How many points does 2♣ show?”

What should your HCP requirements be for a 2♣ opener? Again, with a balanced hand, there is no decision. With unbalanced hands such as A,B,C above, it is a matter of personal preference. Some people count losers or quick tricks. Others insist on having a certain number of aces or HCP. I tend to open 2♣ more than most people, fearing that my one-level opening could be followed by three passes. I’d probably open 2♣ with all of these hands. That doesn’t make it right; many experts would open 1♠ with all three hands. All of those hands are much too strong for a 4♠ opening.

Another consideration is: “How hard will it be to show my hand if I open 2♣?”

For example, consider this hand: ♠AQJ2 ♥32 ♦A ♣AKQ1087

If you open 2♣, your next call will be 3♣. It might be hard to find a 4-4 spade fit. Meanwhile, if you open 1♣ (and survive, i.e., it doesn’t go 1♣-P-P-P), you will get to jump in spades next, getting the hand “off your chest.” For such awkward hands, I tend to risk a one-level opening.

So, you’ve opened 2♣. What next? We’ll explore the follow-ups in a later month.

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Why You Still Lose At Bridge - by Julian Pottage

this month's Master Point Press Bidding Battle book prize

By custom Mr. Smug, the club Chairman, occupies the South seat with the other players rotating around him. The club uses the oldest method for setting who is vulnerable, namely that the dealing side is vulnerable on the second and third deals of each four-deal 'rubber' and that both sides are on the fourth. In theory, any partscore made on the first, second or third deals can count towards a game later in the 'rubber'. In practice, the 'Famous Four' rarely stop short of game and, when they do, they fail to make the contract. The effect is as if duplicate scoring applies.

Mr. Smug, who (like the others) you may have met before in S.J. Simon's *Why You Lose at Bridge and Cut for Partners*, believes in bidding the full value of his hand (and some of his partner's!) and likes to be declarer. Counting, planning and giving his partner signals are things in which he rarely indulges. He survives pretty well on many deals, though of course his *laissez faire* attitude means he comes to grief at times.

Mrs. Guggenheim tries very hard to be good at the game, attending regular lessons and always carrying a *Pocket Guide to Bridge* around with her. So long as the auction is straightforward, she bids quite well. She panics if something unusual happens. She also shakes like a rabbit every time she becomes declarer and happily lets her partner take control. Unlike the other three players, she is modest about her abilities.

The Unlucky Expert is in theory an outstanding player. He has good bidding judgment and knows all the correct techniques of play and defense. He falls down by failing to allow for the shortcomings of the other players. He assumes that everyone bids and plays as he does, often making logical but disastrous decisions.

Futile Willie is a bit of mixture of the others. His confidence exceeds Mrs. Guggenheim's but is below that of Mr. Smug. He bids in a scientific style; the standard of his card play varies, at times up to the Unlucky Expert's, at times worse than that of Mrs. Guggenheim.

RUBBER 1 DEAL 1

Dealer South

Neither vulnerable

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|--|---|--|---|--|---|--|---|
| ♠ 10 9 8 4 2 ♥ 8 7 3 2 ♦ 8 ♣ K 8 7 | <table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td></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 | | ♠ A K 3 ♥ A Q ♦ 9 7 6 ♣ J 10 6 5 4 ♠ J 6 5 ♥ J 10 9 5 4 ♦ Q J 10 3 ♣ A ♠ Q 7 ♥ K 6 ♦ A K 5 4 2 ♣ Q 9 3 2 |
| | N | | | | | | | | | | |
| W | | E | | | | | | | | | |
| | S | | | | | | | | | | |

| West | North | East | South |
|------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| <i>Mrs. Guggenheim</i> | <i>Futile Willie</i> | <i>Unlucky Expert</i> | <i>Mr. Smug</i> |
| pass | 3♣ ² | pass | 1NT ¹ |
| pass | 4NT ⁴ | pass | 4♣ ³ |
| pass | 6♣ ⁶ | all pass | 5♦ ⁵ |

1. An overbid: although the five-card suit may indeed be worth a point, he has no tens and the doubleton ♠Q is a minus. Such trifles don't concern Mr. Smug. He judges — correctly — that the best chance of game is 3NT, so wants to start with 1NT. The fact that at the club it shows 15-17 points he regards as a minor matter.
2. This is typical Futile Willie. He sees a possible 31 points between the hands. This gets him thinking of a slam. He overlooks the poor quality of his clubs and that his heart holding is not pulling full weight.
 If he had ♠AKx and ♣AQ10x, his hand would warrant a slam try. With his actual hand, he needs perfect cards from his partner. World champion Bob Hamman says to his partners, 'Don't play me for perfect cards. I won't have them.' Futile Willie isn't listening.
3. Though it takes the bidding past 3NT, Smug feels obliged to raise clubs with four-card support.
4. What does Futile Willie intend this to mean? Logic says it can't be a sign-off. How could he want to sign off when his partner has just done something highly positive, like raising his suit?

5. Mr. Smug ponders the same question and finally admits to possession of an ace.
6. Futile Willie, noticing that the bidding has gone past 5♣, decides to shoot a slam. He considers bidding 6NT to protect a possible diamond tenace in Smug's hand. He then remembers that, with at most 31 high-card points between the two hands, the values for a slam will only be present if he can find a ruffing value in dummy.

The Play

The Unlucky Expert leads the ♦Q. Futile Willie wins in dummy and displays surprising coolness given the hopelessness of the contract. Perhaps he knows he is largely to blame. He leads the ♣Q off dummy.

Mrs. Guggenheim pulls out a card. She puts it back. In the olden days, she covered without thinking. Now she knows it can be wrong to cover, she is of two minds. She pulls out the ♣K again. As she thinks her pause has given the position away, she might as well cover.

The Unlucky Expert looks even more stony-faced than usual as he overtakes with the ace. Being an expert, however, he doesn't allow this setback to throw him off stride. His side needs another trick to defeat the slam. His thoughts focus on this.

On the bidding, Futile Willie surely holds the two top spades and the ♥A together with his presumed ♣J10xxxx. The Unlucky Expert reads Futile Willie for just six clubs from Mrs. Guggenheim's pause but tries to put this out of mind. Anyway, he must hope Futile Willie started with three losing diamonds. Moreover, if Mrs. Guggenheim ruffs dummy's ace, this will be a second undertrick. He pauses to judge whether it would be ethical to lead a diamond. Seeing nothing else to play for, he decides it is.

Result: Two down, 100 to East-West

Post Mortem

Smug and Willie have quite a wrangle trying to pin the blame for this disaster on each other. Smug fires the opening salvo.

'You don't have anything like enough to bid 3♣. All you had was a flat 14-count and a jack-high suit.'

'At least I can count,' retorts Willie. 'You had 14 points yourself.'

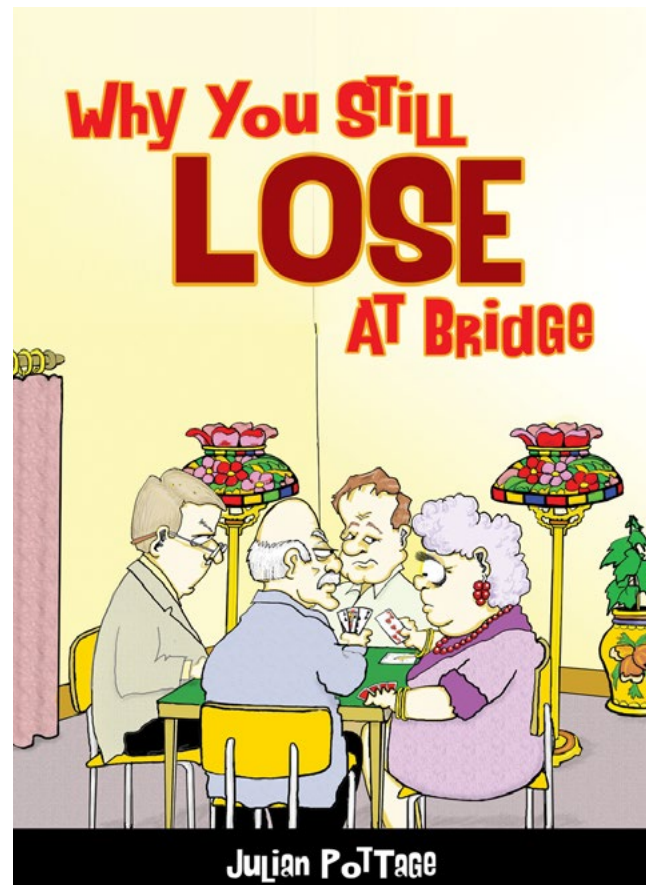
Smug changes tack. 'Why didn't you bid 5♠ when you found out there was an ace missing? Then I bid 5NT.'

The Unlucky Expert intervenes, 'I'm afraid you don't make that. You make two diamonds, two hearts, three spades and three clubs.'

Chucks

East-West should have beaten six clubs by another trick: 50.

It's harder to assess for North-South. The opening bid should have been a winner because Mrs. Guggenheim would lead a spade against 3NT, after which ten tricks are easy. After the normal 1♦ opening, Futile Willie bids 2♣, Smug raises to 3♣ and Futile Willie bids 3NT. On a heart lead from the Unlucky Expert, declarer lacks the time to set up the clubs (unless the defenders crash their ace-king!) and must play on diamonds. As the cards lie, it takes the careful play of leading the ♦9 to cater for a singleton eight to make nine tricks. I suppose we should judge against the par result of 400, making the North-South chuck 500.



RUBBER 1 DEAL 2

Dealer West

East-West vulnerable

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|---|--|---|--|---|--|---|--|--|
| <p>♠ 8 5 3 2 ♥ Q 9 6 2 ♦ Q 6 ♣ 9 6 2</p> | <p>♠ 7 4 ♥ 7 4 ♦ J 8 3 2 ♣ A K Q 10 4</p> | <table border="1" style="margin: auto; text-align: center; width: 60px; height: 60px;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table> | | N | | W | | E | | S | | <p>♠ K J 10 ♥ K J 10 5 ♦ A 9 7 ♣ J 8 5</p> |
| | N | | | | | | | | | | | |
| W | | E | | | | | | | | | | |
| | S | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | <p>♠ A Q 9 6 ♥ A 8 3 ♦ K 10 5 4 ♣ 7 3</p> | | | | | | | | | | | |

| West | North | East | South |
|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|----------|
| Mrs. Guggenheim | Futile Willie | Unlucky Expert | Mr. Smug |
| pass | pass | 1♣ ¹ | dbl |
| pass | pass ² | redbl ³ | pass |
| pass ⁴ | pass ⁵ | | |

1. You already know my views on playing that a one-of-a-major opening bid absolutely guarantees a five-card suit. The case for opening a four-card major on a hand like this is very strong. Facing a passed partner, you dismiss hope of game and can afford to pass any normal response that partner might make. If it is not your hand and LHO becomes declarer, you would much prefer partner to lead a heart than a club. Oh well, the Unlucky Expert feels constrained by system to open his three-card club suit.
2. Futile Willie has no doubts about leaving in the double. He has good trumps and enough strength to give his side the balance of power.
3. I agree with the Unlucky Expert about the wisdom of running from 1♣ doubled. When RHO leaves in a takeout double, he often holds very good trumps. When you have opened a short suit, you nearly always have a better spot somewhere. Usual practice if the opponents have doubled for penalty and your hand is suitable for playing in more than one other contract is to use an SOS redouble. At a low level, you would very rarely want to redouble for business because one of the opponents would surely have a safe escape suit. While his redouble is the correct technical call, because his hand is playable in any suit, it is madness

playing with Mrs. Guggenheim. How can one expect her to understand the subtle difference between the sequence 1♣-pass-pass-dbl-redbl (when the redouble shows strength rather than a desire for rescue) and the actual sequence? The sensible thing, playing with her, is to bid your four-card heart suit.

4. As you or I would have expected, Mrs. Guggenheim doesn't think that her partner has invited her to bid.
5. If this makes, it will be Mr. Smug's fault. In any case, 1♣ redoubled is not enough for game. There is more to gain than to lose.

The Play

For once Mr. Smug and Futile Willie defend perfectly.

Mr. Smug has perhaps read that a trump lead often works well after this auction. In any case, he hardly fancies a lead from his tenaces in spades and diamonds or his ♥A. Futile Willie draws three rounds of trumps and Mr. Smug discards a low heart on the third round. Futile Willie correctly switches to a spade. Mr. Smug makes his ace and queen and continues with a low spade. Futile Willie ruffs this, which also sets up Mr. Smug's nine. Recalling that Mr. Smug threw a low heart, Futile Willie switches now to a diamond. With a resigned air, the Unlucky Expert plays low from hand. Mr. Smug wins with the king and cashes the ♠9, on which Futile Willie sheds a heart.

Knowing that Futile Willie's last trump is a winner in any event, Mr. Smug does not look to give him a heart ruff. Instead, he reverts to diamonds. Dummy's queen wins and the Unlucky Expert tries a heart. Mr. Smug wins with the ace and perseveres with diamonds. This sets up a long diamond. The Unlucky Expert makes a measly two tricks: the ♦A and ♦Q.

Result: Five down redoubled for 2900 to North-South (with 100 honors)

Post Mortem

Some events are too grim for words. Mr. Smug cackles but Futile Willie is much too courteous to rub further salt in the wounds.

Chucks

In theory, North-South can double 1♥ and collect 500. In practice, with only five hearts between them, they will never manage to achieve this. Most likely they play in a partscore and, with the cards

playing with Mrs. Guggenheim. How can one expect her to understand the subtle difference between the sequence 1♣-pass-pass-dbl-redbl (when the redouble shows strength rather than a desire for rescue) and the actual sequence? The sensible thing, playing with her, is to bid your four-card heart suit.

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Chucks

In theory, North-South can double 1♥ and collect 500. In practice, with only five hearts between them, they will never manage to achieve this. Most likely they play in a partscore and, with the cards lying well for them, score 150 (duplicate scoring). This means the East-West chuck comes to 2750.



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Jeff Bayone

Honors Bridge Club



The Abbot's Dream

by David Bird

At half-time in the Hampshire League match between the Abbot and Hoggitt, there was little to choose between the teams – Hoggitt led by just 3 IMPs. The Abbot could hardly believe that the visitors had declined the proffered margarine sandwiches. Indeed, they had broken all protocol by bringing their own half-time refreshments with them! What were they expecting in an establishment where every available coin was donated to charitable work and support of foreign missions? Did they not realize the amount of work involved in baking fresh bread and creating one of the tastiest home-made margarines known to mankind? It was an insult to Brother Anthony, the overworked monastery cook.

The second half had not been long underway when the first slam deal arrived:

Dealer South. N.S Vul.

| | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ♠ 104 ♥ 10852 ♦ 9832 ♣ J108 | | ♠ 2 ♥ K763 ♦ A765 ♣ AK42 |
| ♠ AKQ98 ♥ AJ ♦ KQ10 ♣ Q95 | ♠ J7653 ♥ Q94 ♦ J4 ♣ 763 | |

| West | North | East | South |
|---------------|----------------|--------------|-----------|
| Jeremy Barker | Brother Xavier | Andy Hughton | The Abbot |
| - | - | - | 2NT |
| Pass | 3♣ | Pass | 3♠ |
| Pass | 6NT | All Pass | |

The Abbot had recently been persuaded by his team-mates to adopt Puppet Stayman, and his 3♠ response showed five spades. A 4-4 fit elsewhere was unlikely after this start, so Brother Xavier leapt to 6NT at his second turn. Looking disapprovingly at his balanced 1-count, Jeremy Barker had little hope of beating the slam. He placed the jack of clubs on the table.

Dummy went down and the Abbot surveyed the cards at his disposal. He had eleven top tricks and a multitude of chances to land a twelfth trick. The clubs might divide 3-3. In diamonds, the jack might fall in two rounds, or that suit might break 3-3. In hearts, there was a possible finesse of the jack. In spades, a 4-3 break would suffice; an extra spade trick might also materialize if the jack or ten fell in two rounds.

Suddenly, inspiration struck. The Abbot had spotted a 100% line! Goodness me, he was in sharp form tonight. It was like being back at the Bermuda Bowl again. ‘Win with the ace,’ he said. ‘And play the spade.’

A finesse of the ♠9 lost to West’s ♠10, and the Abbot proudly displayed his cards. ‘You are endplayed in four suits,’ he declared. ‘You must lead into one of my four tenaces.’


With no sign of being impressed by this announcement, Barker returned his cards to the wallet. ‘There were thirteen tricks on top,’ he replied.

The Abbot had rarely encountered such a lack of appreciation, not to mention appalling manners. However the defenders’ cards lay, surely such a magnificent safety play deserved recognition?

‘Never mind, partner,’ said Brother Xavier. ‘Losing 1 IMP isn’t likely to cost us the match.’

Meanwhile, at the other table, Lucius and Paulo faced Hoggitt and his partner:

Dealer South. Neither Vul.

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ♠ QJ1094 ♥ 10854 ♦ AK2 ♣ 5 |  | ♠ 8532 ♥ Q62 ♦ 83 ♣ 9632 | ♠ AK ♥ 93 ♦ Q10754 ♣ AKQ10 |
|-------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|

| West | North | East | South |
|-----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| <i>Brother Lucius</i> | <i>Steve Presley</i> | <i>Brother Paulo</i> | <i>David Hoggitt</i> |
| – | – | – | 1♦ |
| 1♠ | Double | Pass | 2NT |
| Pass | 3NT | All Pass | |

Brother Lucius led the queen of spades and Hoggitt won with the king. He could count eight top tricks, but there would not be time to build a ninth trick in diamonds. Perhaps game in one of the minors would have been a better prospect. What could be done?

Concluding that the extra trick would have to come from the heart suit, Hoggitt led the ♥3 from his hand, West following with the ♥4. ‘Play the seven,’ he said.

Somewhat surprised by this development, Brother Paulo won with the queen. When he returned a spade, Hoggitt faced his cards. ‘Just the nine,’ he said.


Brother Paulo smiled at the declarer. ‘Nice extra chance in hearts,’ he said. ‘If I win cheaply, you finesse the jack next.’

Hoggitt nodded. ‘Nothing special,’ he replied. ‘It’s the same with the AQ9. You try the 9 first and then the queen.’

‘Yes, yes,’ agreed Brother Paulo. ‘Easy enough, once you think about it.’

The boards continued to tick by. The Abbot was happy with his score-card so far, when this deal arrived.

Dealer North. Both Vul.

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ♠ 752 ♥ Q106 ♦ 62 ♣ 109863 |  | ♠ A63 ♥ 9875 ♦ AK ♣ J542 | ♠ Q10 ♥ AK32 ♦ QJ10973 ♣ A |
|-------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|

| West | North | East | South |
|----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| <i>Jeremy Barker</i> | <i>Brother Xavier</i> | <i>Andy Hughton</i> | <i>The Abbot</i> |
| – | 1♦ | Pass | 1♠ |
| Pass | 2♥ | Pass | 3NT |
| All Pass | | | |

Jeremy Barker led the ♣10 and dummy’s ace won the trick. The Abbot surveyed the assets at his disposal. It seemed that there would be no problems. Four diamonds, three clubs and the ♥AK would add up to nine. ‘Queen of diamonds,’ he said.

Although the Abbot was unrelenting in his insistence that the novices should thank their partner for the dummy, Brother Xavier had noted that he rarely followed this practice himself. Andy Hughton won with the diamond king. Declarer’s jump to 3NT made it very likely that he held the ♣KQ, so there was no future in persevering with clubs. Maybe a heart switch would do some damage.

The ♥9 was covered by the jack, queen and dummy’s ace. The Abbot began to see that all might not be as simple as he had thought. What would happen if he played another diamond at this stage? The defenders would win and clear the hearts. Even if diamonds were 2-2, he would not be able to reach his ♣KQ with the ♦8 on the third round. That would leave him with no entry back to the long diamonds in dummy.

The Abbot sat back in his chair to consider the matter further. Barker

and Hughton shared a glance. It seemed that the heart switch had caused a problem of some sort.

‘Play the queen of spades,’ said the Abbot.

Hughton could not win with the ace, as the cards lay, since declarer would then make a large number of spade tricks. When he held off the ace, the Abbot overtook with the king in his hand. He then cashed just one further club trick before reverting to diamonds. Four diamond tricks, two hearts and three tricks in the black suits gave him the game.

‘That was neat,’ said Brother Xavier. ‘Well played, partner.’

For an instant, the Abbot looked disappointed. Brother Xavier had congratulated him? This could only mean that he was dreaming and had not found the great play in real life. He looked around the room. Lucius and Paulo were still there, playing at the other table. The room was just as cold and draughty as it always was. Well, it seemed that it wasn’t a dream.

Back at the other table, the players had just drawn their cards for the last board of the match:

Dealer North. E/W Vul.

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| ♠ 32 ♥ J2 ♦ AQJ985 ♣ 876 | <div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #90ee90; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div> | ♠ KQ8654 ♥ AK3 ♦ K2 ♣ 92 |
| ♠ 1097 ♥ 97654 ♦ 1043 ♣ 54 | ♠ AJ ♥ Q108 ♦ 76 ♣ AKQJ103 | |

| West | North | East | South |
|-----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| <i>Brother Lucius</i> | <i>Steve Presley</i> | <i>Brother Paulo</i> | <i>David Hoggitt</i> |
| – | 2♦ | 2♠ | 3NT |
| All Pass | | | |

Lucius led the ♠10 and Hoggitt allowed Paulo’s queen to win, following

with the jack. A low spade continuation forced out declarer’s ace, West playing the ♠7. Declarer had only eight top tricks. If West held the ♦K, the remaining tricks could be taken. The first target, however, was to make the game.

With no wish to take an early diamond finesse, Hoggitt decided to run the club suit. Brother Paulo would now have to find four discards. Suppose he discarded the ♥3 and his three remaining low spades, retaining ♠K ♥AK ♦K2. There was a serious chance that declarer would read the situation and throw him on lead. At Trick 12, he would then have to lead into dummy’s diamond tenace.

Once Paulo had considered the matter, the answer was not difficult to find. Partner was marked with the ♠9, so the best idea was to ditch the ♠K and keep a low spade instead.

Declarer’s club suit was soon exhausted, leaving these cards still in play:

| | | |
|-----------------------------|---|----------------------------|
| ♠ 9 ♥ 9 ♦ 1043 ♣ – | <div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #90ee90; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div> | ♠ 8 ♥ AK ♦ K2 ♣ – |
| | ♠ – ♥ Q108 ♦ 76 ♣ – | |

Hoggitt did not like the look of what he’d seen. If he played a heart now, Brother Paulo would win and cross to the West hand for a diamond switch. Fearing the worst, declarer led a diamond. ‘Queen, please,’ he said.

Paulo won with the diamond king and cashed two hearts followed by his last spade. The game was one down.

‘Yes, well done,’ said Hoggitt. ‘Nothing I could do.’

The final comparison of scores revealed that the St Titus team had won by 15 IMPs, a rare victory over these opponents. The Abbot could barely conceal his delight at this outcome. There were those who thought that the monastery first team was becoming long in the tooth and should give

a chance to the younger generation. The Abbot's views on the matter were unshakeable. Not yet! Look at that wonderful 3NT he had played, the one with the long diamonds in dummy. He must make a note of it and show it to next week's novitiate class. How it would inspire them!

The visitors bade their farewell and the Abbot made his way to the monastery kitchens. After such a masterful performance, he was feeling a bit peckish. A margarine sandwich before bedtime was in order. He soon spotted the two sandwich plates, on a large wooden table next to the AGA oven. Good gracious, they were both empty. The St Titus novices must have a higher opinion of such fare than the Hoggitt team. They had scoffed the lot!



Proposed Timetable and Categories

Open, Women's, Senior's, Mixed and Youth.
(<26, <21 and <16 all subject to entries)

Bridgefest daily side events

| Date | Event |
|----------------|--|
| Wed 15 April | Swiss Pairs |
| Thurs 16 April | Swiss Pairs |
| Fri 17 April | APBF Teams Q1 |
| Sat 18 April | APBF Teams Q2 |
| Sun 19 April | APBF Teams Q3 |
| Mon 20 April | APBF Teams Q4 |
| Tue 21 April | APBF Teams SF APBF Pairs Q |
| Wed 22 April | APBF Teams F APBF Pairs F Presentation and close |

To enter follow this link

www.abfevents.com.au/events/apbf/2020/

ACCOMMODATION

Many hotels are offering special rates to APBF 2020 participants. For example: The Ritz-Carlton Perth, situated in the heart of Elizabeth Quay, will have 40 of its 204 rooms/suites available for the APBF, and the Melbourne hotel will hold 20 rooms for APBF participants.



Convenor

Robina McConnell Bina360@hotmail.com

The uBid Auction Room

Mark Horton

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

This month we pay a visit to the final of the Champions Cup in Budapest, featuring teams from The Netherlands and England.

The Hands

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

Hand 1. Dealer South. Both Vul.

| | | |
|--------|---|---------|
| ♠ 986 |  | ♠ K2 |
| ♥ KQ6 | | ♥ J74 |
| ♦ K63 | | ♦ AQ954 |
| ♣ A843 | | ♣ K92 |

South opens 1♥.

| West | North | East | South |
|----------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| <i>De Wijs</i> | <i>Robson</i> | <i>Muller</i> | <i>Allfrey</i> |
| – | – | – | 1♥ |
| Pass | 1♠ | Pass | 3♠ |
| All Pass | | | |

Someone must have recommended responding to an opening bid with a weak hand?

By bidding 1♠ Robson made it impossible for E/W to get into the auction.

South's hand was ♠AJ75 ♥A10532 ♦8 ♣QJ5 when East led the ♣2 there were five losers, -100.

| West | North | East | South |
|-------------|----------------|-------------|------------|
| <i>Bell</i> | <i>Drijver</i> | <i>Gold</i> | <i>Nab</i> |
| – | – | – | 1♥ |
| Pass | Pass | 1NT* | Pass |
| 2♣* | Pass | 2♥* | Pass |
| 2NT | All Pass | | |

- 1NT 11-16
- 2♣ Range asking Stayman
- 2♥ 13-14 without good stopper in hearts

It is well known that when you know the location of most of the missing high cards 3NT is frequently a good proposition, so West's decision to invite game rather than just bid it is surprising. However, the 4-1 diamond break would have made taking nine tricks difficult for most declarers, but not Gold, who took the heart lead in dummy, cashed the ♦K and then played a diamond to the nine for +150.

Recommended auction: You would like to get to game on the E/W cards.

Marks: 3NT (E)10, 2NT 7, 3♠ (NS) 6, 3NT (W) 5.

Running score: English Champions 7 (2) BC'T Onstein 1 6 (0)

Hand 2. Dealer South. All Vul.

| | | |
|-----------|---|----------|
| ♠ AK10975 |  | ♠ Q2 |
| ♥ AK876 | | ♥ QJ1032 |
| ♦ 6 | | ♦ 974 |
| ♣ 4 | | ♣ AQ2 |

| West | North | East | South |
|----------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|
| <i>Allfrey</i> | <i>De Wijs</i> | <i>Robson</i> | <i>Muller</i> |
| – | – | – | Pass |
| 1♠ | Pass | 2♦* | Double |
| 4NT* | 5♦ | Pass* | Pass |
| 6♥ | All Pass | | |

- 2♦ Hearts
- 4NT RKCB
- Pass 1 key card

As soon as East showed a heart suit West could ask for key cards.

For the record, South's hand was ♠J8 ♥94 ♦AQJ10 ♣J8653

| West | East |
|------------|----------------|
| <i>Nab</i> | <i>Drijver</i> |
| 1♠ | 2♥ |
| 3♥* | 4♥ |
| 4♠* | 5♣* |
| 6♥ | Pass |
| 3♥ | Slammish |
| 4♠ | Cue-bid |
| 5♣ | Cue-bid |

The slower auction also led to the laydown slam.

Recommended auction: All roads should lead to 6♥ - I like the simplicity of the English auction.

Marks: 6♥10, 4♥ 5.

Running score: English Champions 17 (2) BC'T Onstein 1 16 (0)

Hand 3. Dealer South. N/S Vul.

| | | |
|----------|--|--------|
| ♠ AK9853 | | ♠ Q102 |
| ♥ 1094 | | ♥ AQJ3 |
| ♦ 2 | | ♦ A983 |
| ♣ 754 | | ♣ J10 |

| West | East |
|----------------|---------------|
| <i>De Wijs</i> | <i>Muller</i> |
| West | East |
| 3♠ | 4♠ |
| Pass | |

North held ♠76 ♥2 ♦KQJ65 ♣AQ632 and led the ♦K. Declarer won with dummy's ace, played the ♠10 to his ace and a heart to the queen. South won with the king and switched to the ♣9. North won with the queen, cashed the ace and exited with a club, but declarer had the rest. North's ♥2 suggested an odd number of cards in the suit, so South might have wondered why declarer was taking a heart finesse. Had he laid down the ♣K North would have discouraged with the ♣6 and as long as South could read that he might have given his partner a heart ruff.

| West | North | East | South |
|-------------|----------------|-------------|------------|
| <i>Bell</i> | <i>Drijver</i> | <i>Gold</i> | <i>Nab</i> |
| - | - | - | Pass |
| 2♠* | 3♦ | 4♠ | All Pass |
| 2♠ | Good weak two | | |

As before North led the ♦K and declarer won in dummy and played the ♣10, South winning with the king and returning the ♦4. Declarer ruffed and played a second club, North taking the ace and switching to the ♥2. When declarer played dummy's three South won and returned a heart for one down.

Recommended auction: If West opens 2♠ East will not stop short of 4♠. If West starts with a Multi 2♦ then East will look for game in partner's major.

Marks: 4♠ 10, 2♠ 5.

Running score: English Champions 27 (2) BC'T Onstein 1 26 (10)

Going into the second half of the final, English Champions led 29-15.

Hand 4. Dealer East. N/S Vul

| | | |
|---------|--|--------|
| ♠ K873 | | ♠ J106 |
| ♥ 52 | | ♥ AK4 |
| ♦ A1087 | | ♦ K964 |
| ♣ 1075 | | ♣ AQ6 |

| West | East |
|----------------|------------------|
| <i>Osborne</i> | <i>Forrester</i> |
| - | 1NT |
| All Pass | |

South was looking at ♠A954 ♥1097 ♦53 ♣KJ93 and led the ♥10. Declarer ducked, won the next heart and ran the ♠10, North winning with the queen and clearing the hearts. When declarer played the ♠J South won and exited with a club and declarer settled for seven tricks.

| West | East |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|
| <i>Van Prooijen</i> | <i>Verhees</i> |
| - | 1♣* |
| 1♦* | 1NT |
| 2♣* | 2♦* |
| 3NT | All Pass |
| 1♣ | 15+ unbalanced or 17+ balanced |
| 1♦ | 0-8 |
| 1NT | 17-18 |
| 2♣ | Stayman |

The Precision style auction led to the poor game. Play developed along identical lines, but having won the second spade South exited with the ♠4 and when declarer did not finesse he was two down.

Recommended auction: If East opens 1NT (15-17) West has no reason to bid. After a strong club opening it is hard to stay out of game. West might have bid an invitational 2NT, but trying to land on a pin head is not usually a good idea.

Marks: 1NT 10, 2NT 5, 3NT 3.

Running score: English Champions 37 (7) BC'T Onstein 1 29 (10)

Hand 5. Dealer South. None Vul.

| | | |
|---------|---|-----------|
| ♠ AKQ6 | <div style="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> | ♠ 1087543 |
| ♥ K87 | | ♥ J6 |
| ♦ Q | | ♦ A8764 |
| ♣ 98764 | | ♣ — |

South opens 1♥ and North responds 2NT promising a 3/4 card fit with invitational values

| West | North | East | South |
|----------------|----------------|---------------|------------------|
| <i>De Wijs</i> | <i>Osborne</i> | <i>Muller</i> | <i>Forrester</i> |
| - | - | - | 1♥ |
| 1♠ | 2♠* | 4♦* | Pass |
| 4♠ | All Pass | | |
| 4♦ | Fit jump | | |

The meaning of 2♠ is unclear - it might have been a transfer to clubs or some heart raise.

South's opening bid was on ♠92 ♥AQ952 ♦1093 ♣KQ3 so a black suit lead would hold declarer to eleven tricks. Naturally North led a heart and now declarer could take one round of trumps and then establish the diamonds.

| West | North | East | South |
|-------------|----------------------------------|-------------|----------------|
| <i>Bell</i> | <i>Van Prooijen</i> | <i>Gold</i> | <i>Verhees</i> |
| - | - | - | 1♥ |
| 1♠ | 2NT* | 4♦* | Pass |
| 4♠ | All Pass | | |
| 2NT | Heart support, invitational plus | | |
| 4♦ | Fit jump | | |

Here too, North led a heart.

Recommended auction: Given that 6♠ can be defeated you don't want to be in it do you?

The interest lies in West's overcall on a four-card suit and East's choice of bid. Is the fit jump a better idea than a splinter? If West had held a fifth spade then the slam would be excellent. After (1♥)-1♠-(2NT)-4♣ West can bid 4♦ and then consider over East's 4♠. With only four trumps and no certainty that East has a first round club control put me down for a Pass.

Marks: 4♠10, 6♠ 7.

Running score: English Champions 47 (7) BC'T Onstein 1 39 (10)

Hand 6. Dealer West. Both Vul.

| | | |
|---------|---|---------|
| ♠ K1083 | <div style="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> | ♠ QJ |
| ♥ QJ9 | | ♥ A1042 |
| ♦ 954 | | ♦ AKQ73 |
| ♣ K84 | | ♣ J7 |

| West | East |
|----------------|------------------|
| <i>Osborne</i> | <i>Forrester</i> |
| Pass | 1NT |
| 3NT | All Pass |

Simon de Wijs was looking at ♠A94 ♥K86 ♦102 ♣AQ1052 and tabled the ♣A. He continued with the ♣Q and a third club and declarer had to take the heart finesse for two down. (Note the similarity to a deal from the Gold Cup on Page 23.)

West East

| | |
|---------------------|----------------|
| <i>Van Prooijen</i> | <i>Verhees</i> |
| Pass | 1♣* |
| 2♦* | 2♥* |
| 2♠* | 2NT* |
| 3♣* | 3♦* |
| 3♠ | 3NT |

All Pass

- 1♣ 15+ unbalanced or 17+ balanced
- 2♦ Game forcing, balanced
- 2♥ Relay
- 2♠ Balanced
- 2NT Relay
- 3♣ (43)33
- 3♦ Which Major

Here South led what the Bulletin described as a ‘pedestrian ♣2’ and declarer took eleven tricks.

Recommended auction: 1NT-3NT - no point in looking for a fit with a 4-3-3-3

Marks: 3NT 10, 4♥ 7.

Running score: English Champions 57 (7) BC'T Onstein 1 49 (23)

Hand 7. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

| | | |
|----------|--|--------|
| ♠ J87 | | ♠ AK94 |
| ♥ – |  | ♥ AKJ5 |
| ♦ AQ84 | | ♦ KJ5 |
| ♣ AJ9763 | | ♣ Q8 |

West East

| | |
|----------------|------------------|
| <i>Osborne</i> | <i>Forrester</i> |
| – | 2NT |
| 3♠* | 3NT* |
| 4♣* | 4♦* |
| 5♥* | 6NT |

All Pass

- 3♠ Minors
- 4♣ Longer clubs
- 4♦ Cue-bid
- 5♥ Exclusion

South held ♠Q6 ♥10974 ♦1076 ♣10542 and led the ♦7. Declarer won with the jack and ran the ♣Q losing to the Rabbinical ♣K. He took the heart return with the ace and immediately played a club to the jack. When North discarded there were only eleven tricks.

West East

| | |
|---------------------|----------------|
| <i>Van Prooijen</i> | <i>Verhees</i> |
| – | 1♣* |
| 2♣* | 2♦* |
| 2♥* | 2♠* |
| 3♠* | 4♣* |
| 4♠* | 6NT |

All Pass

- 1♣ 15+ unbalanced or 17+ balanced
- 2♣ Game forcing, 5+♣, maybe 4♦, not 4♥/♠
- 2♦ Relay
- 2♥ 4♦, 5+♣
- 2♠ Relay
- 3♠ 3046
- 4♣ Controls?
- 4♠ 4 controls, AA or AKK

Knowing the ♣K must be missing East settled for 6NT.

South led the ♣5 and declarer could play low from dummy and claim when North won with the king.

Recommended auction: The English auction is not bad, certainly up to the point where West bid 5♥.

Marks: 6NT 10, 6♣ 9, 6♦ 8.

Running score: English Champions 67 (7) BC'T Onstein 1 59 (40)

Hand 8. Dealer South. N/S Vul.

| | | |
|--------|---|-----------|
| ♠ AJ8 | | ♠ 1095432 |
| ♥ K96 |  | ♥ AQ2 |
| ♦ KQ7 | | ♦ 862 |
| ♣ A964 | | ♣ 10 |

South opens 2♣ *Precision style.*

| West | North | East | South |
|---------|--------------|-----------|----------|
| Osborne | Muller | Forrester | De Wijs |
| – | – | – | 2♣* |
| 2NT | Pass | 3♥* | Pass |
| 3♠ | Pass | 4♠ | All Pass |
| 2♣ | 10-14/15,6+♣ | | |
| 3♥ | Transfer | | |

North was looking at ♠KQ76 ♥J10843 ♦1054 ♣8 and led his club, declarer winning with his ace, ruffing a club (on which North pitched a diamond) and playing a spade. When South discarded the ♣3 declarer put in dummy's jack and North won and switched to the ♦10. Declarer was allowed to win with the king and he continued with the ace and another spade, North winning and playing a diamond which South won to return a diamond for his partner to ruff for one down.

Once the 4-0 trump split was disclosed, declarer should have left trumps alone and played to ruff two more clubs, also eliminating hearts along the way. In the four-card ending, declarer will have two spades and two diamonds in each hand and exit with a diamond. South wins and plays a minor suit, but North, forced to ruff, is endplayed.

| West | North | East | South |
|--------------|--------|----------|-------|
| Van Prooijen | Gold | Verhees | Bell |
| – | – | – | 1♣ |
| Double | 1♥ | 3♠ | 4♣ |
| 4♠ | Double | All Pass | |

West could not bid 1NT as it would have been conventional, 4(O)M + 5+(o)m.

South led the ♣K and declarer won with dummy's ace and played the ♠A followed by the jack. North won with the ♠K and switched to the ♦10 ducked to dummy's king. North won the next spade, but declarer had the rest.

Recommended auction: (1♣)-1NT-(Pass)-2♥-(Pass)-2♠-(Pass)-3♠-(Pass)-4♠. The effect of a 2♣ opening is to push E/W a level higher, so that East has no way to invite game.

Marks: 4♠ 10, 3♠ 5.

Running score: English Champions 77 (7) BC'T Onstein 1 69 (52)
English Champions won the bidding battle - but they lost where it

matters most in the quest for IMPs and BC'T Onstein 1 retained the title they won last year.

You can play through the deals mentioned in this article.

Just follow the links:

Hands 1, 2, & 3

https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=66856

Hands 5, 6, 7 & 8

https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=66866

AN HONORS BOOK FROM MASTER POINT PRESS
Dennis Dawson
Introduction by Fred Gitelman
Santa Fe Precision
"Dennis Dawson has made a very good form of Precision available for a wide class of players."
Eric Rodwell

MASTER POINT PRESS
THE BRIDGE PUBLISHER

SANTA FE PRECISION
Dennis Dawson

This book on Precision describes a very simplified version, based on the system played by Rodwell and Meckstroth so successfully, but aimed at club players. It includes many examples from Dawson's thirteen years of teaching the system.

Eric Rodwell has endorsed the system and the book.

AVAILABLE FROM A BRIDGE RETAILER NEAR YOU



The Master Point Press Bidding Battle Set 23

Moderated by Brian Senior

Good to welcome the return of a couple of panelists who have been busy with other things recently, giving us a slightly bigger group this month. We start with a competitive/constructive bidding decision:

PROBLEM 1

IMPs. Dealer West. All Vul.

- ♠ 864
- ♥ A104
- ♦ 8
- ♣ AK10876

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|--------|--------|
| 1♣ | 1♦ | 1♠ | Double |
| 2♣ | 3♦ | Double | Pass |
| ? | | | |

| Bid | Votes | Marks |
|------|-------|-------|
| 3♠ | 6 | 10 |
| 4♠ | 5 | 10 |
| 3♥ | 3 | 8 |
| Pass | 3 | 6 |
| 4♦ | 2 | 7 |
| 4♣ | 0 | 6 |

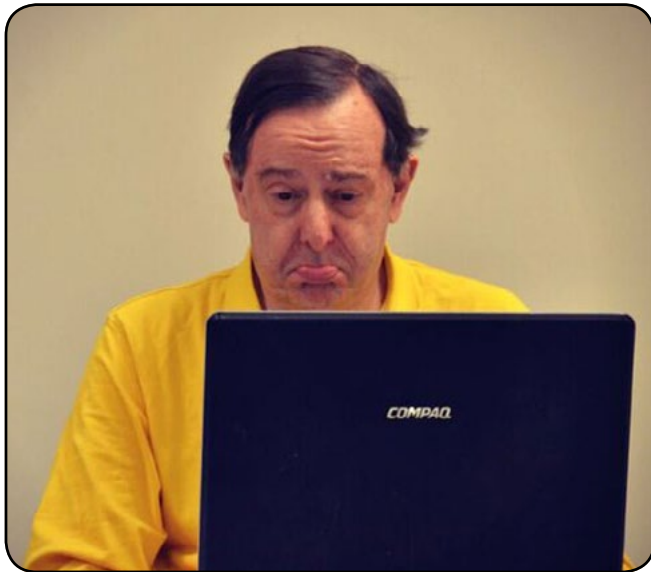
For a minority, this is a very simple non-problem:

Bird: Pass. With three top cards and no honours in spades, I am well suited for defence. Tempting as it is to retreat into a likely 4-3 spade fit, I will look forward to partner's opening lead.

Smith: Pass. There are no unbid suits so this sounds like a penalty double to me. I'd expect

THE BIDS & MARKS

| | Bid | No. of Votes | Marks | | Bid | No. of Votes | Marks |
|-----|------|--------------|-------|--------|----------|--------------|-------|
| 1. | 3♠ | 6 | 10 | 5. | 4♥ | 10 | 10 |
| | 4♠ | 5 | 10 | | 5♥ | 2 | 6 |
| | 3♥ | 3 | 8 | | Pass | 1 | 5 |
| | Pass | 3 | 6 | | Redouble | 1 | 5 |
| | 4♦ | 2 | 7 | | 2♠ | 1 | 5 |
| 2. | 4♣ | 0 | 6 | 2NT | 1 | 5 | |
| | 5NT | 8 | 10 | 3NT | 1 | 5 | |
| | 6♦ | 5 | 8 | 4♦ | 1 | 5 | |
| | 5♠ | 4 | 9 | 4♠ | 1 | 5 | |
| | 4NT | 1 | 4 | 6. | 5NT | 12 | 10 |
| 3. | 6♥ | 1 | 3 | 6♥ | 3 | 7 | |
| | 3♠ | 10 | 10 | Pass | 2 | 6 | |
| | 2♠ | 4 | 8 | Double | 1 | 2 | |
| | 1♠ | 4 | 7 | 4NT | 1 | 0 | |
| | Pass | 1 | 4 | 7. | 2♥ | 6 | 10 |
| 4. | 4♠ | 0 | 2 | 2♦ | 4 | 8 | |
| | 3♦ | 8 | 10 | 2NT | 4 | 7 | |
| | Pass | 8 | 9 | 3NT | 3 | 6 | |
| | 2♦ | 3 | 7 | 2♠ | 2 | 6 | |
| | 1♥ | 0 | 2 | 8. | 4♦ | 14 | 10 |
| 1NT | 0 | 2 | 4♠ | 2 | 6 | | |
| 2NT | 0 | 2 | Pass | 2 | 4 | | |
| | | | | Double | 1 | 2 | |



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

partner to be something like 4-3-4-2 and I have A-K-A as defensive values, Happy days.

Sandsmark: Pass! What else? I am certainly not going to deny partner his Christmas Eve, birthday and New Years' Eve, all at the same time. If I pull out, I should go ...where? It is more than just a little certain that it is unclear what harvest we can expect. But on the other hand, I have very good defensive values, and it is fairly obvious that North is going down! The only question is: how many down? I must say that I do expect some support for this view.

Well, your prediction skills are improving, Tommy, in that at least you have SOME support from the panel, but you are in a small minority, the bulk of the panel seeing double as a competitive rather than punitive, manoeuvre.

For the majority, it was a question of how many spades to bid, though Barry and Drew also thought that the double suggested defending.

Rigal: 3♠. This doesn't look like a 100% penalty double to me, more a defensive hand with eg a doubleton club and a three- or four-card diamond holding. While I would surely pull the double with the majors switched I think this is very close. I'm going with a 3♠ call but I wouldn't crime anyone who passed.

Cannell: 3♠. A shame we are not playing Support Doubles/Redoubles here. A redouble would be preferable to Two Clubs, but we are where we are. Close to passing, but I will show a modicum of respect for the Three Diamond jump.

Stabell: 3♠. If we have agreed that this is a penalty double, I have a fairly easy pass. If not, I will assume that partner has something in diamonds and is looking for the best contract: ♠Axxxx ♥xxx ♦Kx ♣QJx. Here, 3♠ is playable and 3NT excellent, and I hope partner will suggest that over 3♠. He has already shown doubt about hearts, so will expect me to take out without a heart stopper. Note that 3♦ is probably a make the other way, so pass would not be a winner opposite this hand.

Teramoto: 3♠. This is showing three spades. Double shows cards, not penalty.

Byrne: 3♠. Partner's double is for take-out and I have spade support and a hand rich in playing strength. If my cards were working better then I would try 4♠, but the lack of a trump honour and absence of a club fit suggest caution.

But we do have a stiff diamond and ace-king, ace and have already failed to support spades – in that context this is a pretty good hand.

Apteker: 3♠. Not sure why we did not make a support redouble first time round? Having decided not to, seems normal to show the delayed support opposite the action double.

I can help you there – rightly or wrongly, Support Doubles and Redoubles are not part of the NBM methods.

Alder: 4♠. If partner had them nailed to the mast, I will apologise. But my hand looks good for offence.

Green: 4♠. I'm not sure that I would have bid 2♣ as 1♠ is so often a five-card suit. By doubling partner has asked me to describe my hand and so now I need to tell partner that I have three spades, I also have enough for game so 4♠ seems clear to me. 4♦ (the only alternative that I can see) is possible, but will partner always believe that I have three spades? Not so sure that I couldn't hold ♠Kx ♥Kxx ♦xx ♣AKxxxx or something similar.

Sime: 4♠. A good hand for playing non-mandatory support (re)doubles. When I rebid clubs and jump to Four Spades, I have shown six good clubs and three not-so-good spades.

Carruthers: 4♠. East must have five spades on this auction. With 4-4 in the majors, he'd have doubled 1♦. With just four spades and club support he'd not have doubled 3♦. BTW, could I not have redoubled to show three spades?

No, you couldn't.

Brock: 4♠. This looks like a pretty good hand to me. Partner will know I have only three spades so can go back to 5♣ if he wants.

Yes, he can.

Then there are those for whom even a jump to 4♠ is not enough:

Lambardi: 4♦. I do not take this as a penalty double although my singleton makes me hesitate. Cannot have both a diamond stack and a weak four-card spade suit – he shouldn't have bid a spade with that. 3♠ from me only shows a doubleton in my book. We don't need that much for a slam, so I'll show my diamond shortage and all-round suitability.

Mould: 4♦. If I didn't know Brian better, I would think that he had set up these problems purely for me to reflect on my actions, since I held more than half of these hands and was at the table for a couple more. Here, I cannot see how I can possibly have a better hand for spades than the one I have, so I will tell partner the good news.

But others are not convinced that we should commit to spades at all.

Zia: 3♥. Stopper/feature.

Kokish: 3♥. Assuming South's double showed 5(4) hearts and a couple of diamonds despite the lack of footnote, East's double is more about finding the right strain and level, usually but not always with 5+ spades. While I could pick a level in spades, this could be an easy 3NT with clubs and primes and no future in spades, so for me it is a standout. Double could be a hand like: ♠AKxx ♥xx ♦Kxx ♣Qxxx. We will usually be fine in 5♣ or occasionally six, so supporting spades may complicate matters.

But why would supporting spades complicate matters, when we have clearly limited our spade support by the 2♣ rebid? Partner with the example above can easily bid 5♣ over 4♠. The bigger issue is that we might belong in 3NT if partner has both the ♣Q and a diamond stopper.

Robson: 3♥. Abstain – why not 2♠ last time?

In a competitive auction, surely the supporting bid of the higher-ranking suit is called for. Okay, I won't abstain and will bid 3♥, reading the double to show diamond cards and denying heart cards. My 3♥ leaves me well placed to raise a 3♠ bid and pass 3NT.

OK, a number of issues. Firstly, I am surprised that so many panellists either think the double is for penalty or are not sure – it never occurred to me that it could be other than take-out, just like so many other doubles in competitive auctions.

John pointed out that partner would have doubled 1♦ had he been 4-4 in the majors, which is of course correct. He could have only four spades, but only when he has club support, so I like Sally's suggestion that if we jump to 4♠ he has the option of correcting to 5♣.

While some feel very strongly about the matter, I am quite happy with the 2♣ rebid, rather than supporting spades with three low cards. Given that a Support Redouble is not available, I would much prefer my partners to rebid 2♣ on a strong six-card suit rather than raise with three low. The latter makes it tough for us to judge to what level we should compete, Perhaps more to the point, if we repeat the clubs, we will often then be able to show three-card spade support at a later point in the auction, while if we raise spades we will usually lose the clubs altogether. After all, 1♣ could have been based on three low clubs (and in many partnerships away from this forum even two low).

At the table, I was surprised that West bid only 3♠ – I would have bid 4♠, and paid off to the rare hand where partner has only four spades and 5♣ is not an option.

Partner held ♠AKJ97 ♥Q875 ♦J53 ♣4, and

North held eight almost solid plus the ♣Q in a 2-1-8-2 shape. 4♠ would have made – we know where the hearts are from the auction – while cashing the five winners then playing a third club through collects +500 on defence.

This one is difficult to score. Yes, the plurality vote is for 3♠, but the majority seem to be committing to game, while even some of those who bid at least toy with the idea of Pass being the winning call.



Alan Mould

PROBLEM 2

IMPs. Dealer South. None Vul.

♠ —
♥ AQ109543
♦ AKJ87
♣ 3

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| — | — | — | Pass |
| 1♥ | 3♠ | 3NT | 4♠ |
| ? | | | |

| Bid | Votes | Marks |
|-----|-------|-------|
| 5NT | 8 | 10 |
| 6♦ | 5 | 8 |
| 5♠ | 4 | 9 |
| 4NT | 1 | 4 |
| 6♥ | 1 | 3 |

Only one panellist was willing to leave open the possibility of stopping short of slam:

Brock: 4NT. With the intention of converting 5♣ to 5♦, thus (hopefully) showing a better hand than a direct 5♦.

There was the simple approach:

Teramoto: 6♥.

And a group who introduced their second suit with a jump to slam:

Alder: 6♦. No doubt turning a plus into a minus.

Well predicted Phillip.

Rigal: 6♦. Unimaginative but I'm not chasing down a grand slam and can't really stop lower. Any exploration risks losing my ability to get both suits so clearly into play. 5NT would be two- or three-suited with secondary suits less long/strong. 5♠ is certainly a possibility but is it a one-suiter? Who knows?

Zia: 6♦. More or less automatic.

Cannell: 6♦. Damn the torpedoes!

Green: 6♦. Monster hand. I need so little to make a slam and the heart finesse (if required) rates to be onside. I think jumping to 6♦ as opposed to going via 5NT (4NT would be natural here I think) must show at least five, so partner should be well placed. I suppose I could start with 5♠, but will that help me to reach diamonds? It will likely get a bit murky over 5♠.

I'm not quite sure why.

Byrne: 5♠. I want to make it clear Seven is on the table and I await developments. Over 5NT I can continue with 6♦ and partner has some way of judging my hand. Partner's 3NT can be bid on a huge variety of hands so I can't assume he has a tasty balanced hand with a heart fit.

Lambardi: 5♠. Correcting 6♣ to 6♦. Partner may have been pressured into bidding 3NT with an unbalanced hand, e.g. ♠Kxx ♥x ♦Qx ♣AKJxxxx. Chances of making a slam are huge; we might even be cold for seven. The problem will be how to bid them. Will partner know to raise with ♥K, ♦Q and ♣A?? Will he think I have a three- loser hand? 5♠ should guarantee a void – otherwise 5NT pick a slam.

Robson: 5♠. Grand slam try with a void spade, pulling a club bid to 6♦.

Sandsmark: 5♠. Maybe a little unorthodox, but it will pay for its way and make us happy. The enemy could have a slam (or a good ♠ sacrifice) in the cards, but when you bid like this, they will guess more than they know. 5♠ must mean long hearts and another long suit in addition to a probable void in ♠. If partner bids 6♣, I will say 6♦, and he will make a preference bid

between my suits based upon knowing that I have at least 5♦ and longer ♥. If I jump direct to 6♦, the enemy may suspect that this is a sacrifice instead of a good hand, and then it will be easier for each of them to 'take a chance' and bid the ♠ slam. In my opinion, 4NT would be perceived by partner as either quantitative or "bid a minor if you have one"!

They all seem pretty comfortable with the idea of converting 6♣ to 6♦ at their next turn, and the meaning of that should be clear.

The rest follow a different route to show their second suit:

Stabell: 5NT. Pick a slam. Will bid 6♦ over 6♣ and have presumably shown a two-card discrepancy between hearts and diamonds. With 6-5, I would have bid 6♥ instead of 5NT.

Sime: 5NT. Pick a Slam with longer hearts (would bid Six Diamonds if equal length). Five Spades as a try for Seven Hearts might work. However, partner would not know which cards are useful. And, we might belong in diamonds.

Carruthers: 5NT. Pick a slam. I'll pull 6♣ to 6♦, conveying that I have a (two-card) disparity between hearts and diamonds. With equal or nearly-equal length I'd just bid Six Diamonds to make him choose between the red suits. This really is a guess. With ♠Kx ♥Kx ♦Qxxx ♣Axxxx, we're cold for a grand, but with ♠KQx ♥x ♦xxx ♣AKxxxx, slam is iffy.

Smith: 5NT. Is this about find the right level or the right strain? I have huge playing strength, so despite wasted spade values opposite I want to take a shot at slam but I don't see how to investigate the grand. I think an immediate jump to 6♦ would show less suit disparity. Here I bid 6♦

over 6♣ but I think partner should read this as longer hearts.

Bird: 5NT. A rebid of 6♦ was my first thought. The hearts are two cards longer than the diamonds, though, and partner might choose the wrong suit. After a ‘pick a slam’ 5NT, I can correct 6♣ to 6♦, hoping to paint a more accurate picture. I don’t fear partner choosing 6NT, since he can expect me to have a void spade.

Apteker: 5NT. Tough problem to which I expect a number of different answers. First issue is whether to invite slam, drive to slam or invite the Grand. I think the hand is worth at least driving to slam so passing and pulling the double to 5♦ or 5♥ is out for me. I could suggest the Grand by bidding 5♠ along the way, but how will we find out everything we need to know? The practical bid is to jump to slam although to which strain is not clear as 6♥ might still be better than 6♦ opposite three diamonds and a singleton ♥. I’d rather involve partner and bid 5NT, intending to convert 6♣ to 6♦, which should hopefully show the two-card disparity, very likely to be 7-5 versus jumping to 6♦, which probably shows 6-6 or 6-5. It also does not preclude partner from still bidding 6♥ or bidding the Grand with both black aces and one of Q♦ or K♥.

Kokish: 5NT, converting clubs to diamonds to indicate much longer hearts. If we can make Seven their sacrifice may be cheaper than our small slam, and we don’t have a logical route to a grand slam in any case.

And the man who knows:

Mould: 5NT. Pick a slam, and then correct 6♣ to 6♦. This ought to show longer hearts. I know



Alon Apteker

this is entirely the wrong thing to do (partner has a two-count for you – the ♦Q) but I cannot see how you can realistically stop at the five-level and, even if you could, that doesn’t make either – you have to defend Four Spades on the hand to get a plus score.

Yes, partner held ♠KQ10 ♥76 ♦Q103 ♣KQJ72. The 3♠ bidder held ♥KJ2 over us, and diamonds were five-zero, meaning that 4♥ was the limit of the hand and 4♠ would have been down two.

I agree with the panel that the two-card disparity is best shown by one of the slow routes

to 6♦ – an immediate jump to 6♦ should show six-five or equal length. I also agree that it will often be impossible to explore the grand effectively. Where I disagree, is with the notion that we should therefore give up on Seven. For me, the difference between 5NT followed by 6♦ compared to 5♠ followed by 6♦ is that the latter shows that we have no spade loser. Often, that will not be sufficient to allow partner to bid the grand slam, but if he holds ♥K, ♦Q and ♣A, he is going to be close to bidding it, and add the ♠A or ♣K and he will surely do so.

PROBLEM 3

IMPs. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

♠ J1097642
♥ —
♦ Q10
♣ KQ54

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| — | — | — | 1♥ |
| ? | | | |

| Bid | Votes | Marks |
|------|-------|-------|
| 3♠ | 10 | 10 |
| 2♠ | 4 | 8 |
| 1♠ | 4 | 7 |
| Pass | 1 | 4 |
| 4♠ | 0 | 2 |

As always, pre-emption is a bit of a personal thing. Roughly half the panel go for the three-level opening, jack-high suit notwithstanding.

Alder: 3♠. Self-explanatory.

Teramoto: 3♠. I have some tricks and would like to make a pre-emptive bid.

Zia: 3♠. Normallish.

Byrne: 3♠. What I would bid at the table. The suit is poor but the pips are good and the void heart is a big plus. You can't always be dealt KQJ10xxx, sometimes you have to go for a pressure bid on more surprising hands.

Brock: 3♠. Not classic, for sure, but about what the hand is worth. And if we defend I will probably be on lead so no danger of bidding spades encouraging the wrong lead.

Rigal: 3♠. Yes this isn't the right hand for this action but when hearts are about to be raised to four, you want to help partner bid on without much in the way of spade honours but tricks outside.

Pretty much echoed by:

Robson: 3♠. Got to show offense, enabling partner to bid 4♠ over 4♥. At other colours I'd have bid 4♠ straight away but not these.

Apteker: 3♠. Seems like a choice between 1♠ and 3♠. I don't care much for the compromise 2♠. While the colours are not great for the pre-empt and I have some defense, I still prefer to put maximum pressure on the opponents and believe that the shape offers me some protection offensively.

Sandsmark: 3♠. If you enter with 1♠, partner will believe that both the suit is stronger and that you have more HCP. A pre-empt will certainly infect your opponents' day. They may have a ♦ slam in the cards, but will probably not even be able to find the suit. With only six losers, the lack of top honours in the ♠ suit is compensated for. Some perfectionists among the panel may think the suit is too thin and therefore pass, but that is like beating yourself

in the head with a hammer! If they do, they leave the ground wide open for the opponents. They will find both a possible ♦ fit and a possible double fit, and you will be left at the entrance, cap in hand.

Green: 3♠. Not ideal, as my suit isn't great, but if I bid 1♠ and 4♥ comes back to me I will be itching to bid but won't be able to without overstating my values. So I'll show my seven-bagger and see what partner does. Not enough for 4♠ at this vul for me.

As you say, bid 1♠ and see 4♥ come back to you and how will you feel?

If our suit was not worth a three-level opening we would often open with a weak two bid, so:

Sime: 2♠. Looks like middle-of-the road. If my King-Queen were in spades, I would bid Three Spades.

Smith: 2♠. I cannot bring myself to bid 3♠ vulnerable on this suit, but I'd like to show a pre-emptive hand type. I could bid 1♠, but how willingly will partner support then? I expect some large number of hearts next and I think this is more likely to encourage partner to bid 4♠ over 4♥ with Axxx than would 1♠.

Mould: 2♠. I held this hand and didn't know what was right then and I don't now, so I will stick with the bid I made at the table. The problem is more interesting when it comes back to you at the five level.

Kokish: 2♠. We are all tempted to bid 3♠ and others might take that plunge, but at this vulnerability East has the right to expect more high cards in my suit and perhaps less outside. If I were strong enough to bid again voluntarily I would settle for 1♠, but that's not the way I

was brought up: bidding twice unsolicited still shows a real hand for me.

Lambardi: 1♠. Very, very close. I will have more information on the next round (so will the opponents unfortunately).

Cannell: 1♠. Too much stuff on the side for a pre-empt. Spade jumps may shut out a minor-suit contract for us.

Bird: 1♠. It seems quite wrong to bid 2♠ with only one eighth of my points in that suit. I am very happy with 1♠. Whether I will be when I see the marking of this problem is another matter.

Carruthers: 1♠. This hand is not suitable for any other spade bid. Just because we have extra length does not mean we have to go straight to the two or three level.

Agreed, it is far from ideal for a pre-empt, but then 1♠ doesn't exactly describe it either.

Ploughing a lonely furrow – if no number of spades is right, then how about:

Stabell: Pass. Close between this and 2♠, since none of the bids describe this hand. But if I play with the same partner as in problem five, he will probably expect me to bid 3♠ with this. On a good day, they will continue, Bid – 2♦ – Pass – 2♥, and I can stick in a 2♠ bid.

When did you last have such a good day at the bridge table? It never goes like that for me.

Regular readers will not be surprised to find me siding with the 3♠ bidders. No, it isn't ideal, but it is the pressure bid and there is no good constructive bid available, so I'd go with that.

Partner held, ♠A853 ♥K5 ♦K985 ♣J82. Spades are 1-1 and you are making 5♠ while they make only 1♥ despite their 11-card fit.

PROBLEM 4

IMPs. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ J
♥ Q1043
♦ 1098632
♣ K5

| | | | |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| West | North | East | South |
| – | – | Pass | Pass |
| ? | | | |

| Bid | Votes | Marks |
|------------|--------------|--------------|
| 3♦ | 8 | 10 |
| Pass | 8 | 9 |
| 2♦ | 3 | 7 |
| 1♥ | 0 | 2 |
| 1NT | 0 | 2 |
| 2NT | 0 | 2 |

Favourable vulnerability, weak hand, third-in-hand – time for some fun, right?

Carruthers: 3♦. If you want to open 1♦, 1♥, 1NT, 2♦, or even Pass, I'm okay with all of those. In the old days, Joey would open 1♥. Today?

Rigal: 3♦. My astigmatism led to that ♥Q looking too much like the ♦Q. Or so I will tell the judge.

Zia: 3♦. If not allowed to bid 2NT.

You are certainly allowed to try 2NT, but I'm going to score you as bidding 3♦, which gets you eight extra points. 2NT could work beautifully if we need a swing, but it could also, of course, prove to be a bloody affair.

Robson: 3♦. I'm not letting them have the auction to themselves, although I know some pairs against whom the best way to muck up their auction is to pass throughout.

Brock: 3♦. I like 6-4 hands and want to make life as difficult as possible for them.

Kokish: 3♦. It's easy to open 3♦ and not worry about the consequences as the opponents will usually more inconvenienced than our side. Although another way to look at it is that the vulnerability is ideal for saving and some of the sacrifices East will choose based on what he expects from me could be too expensive or phantoms. With this honour location the possibility that they will go down if we don't blow a trick on the lead are not insignificant. I think it's closer than the vote will suggest.

Green: 3♦. I could try an exciting 1NT in an effort to hoodwink the opponents (and hopefully not partner) or maybe 4♦, but I would be a bit concerned about both of those choices. 3♦ seems down the middle and applies the pressure.

Mould: 3♦. This is a bit odd. 3♦ is what I opened at the table. It floated and pard tabled the usual 4-4-1-4 10 count with what looked plenty enough defence to beat 3NT or 4♠ (it included ♠Qxxx and ♥KJxx as I recall). However, teammates appeared to have put 3NT on the card with an overtrick as I recall so that was fine.

That gets the 'real men' out of the way. As on the previous problem, if you can't stomach a three-level opening there is always the option to open a level lower.

Apteker: 2♦. We play this as weak so may as well use it in 3rd seat favourable. This may serve to disrupt the opponents' auction or we may find a profitable sacrifice at these colours. Not unreasonable to open 3♦ under these conditions.

Teramoto: 2♦. 3rd hand and favourable vulnerability.

Byrne: 2♦. My first answer was Pass, with a learned treatise about tipping the wrong lead. However, since I would never in a million years give the opponents a free ride at the table, I can hardly pretend I would on paper.

Still, mildly effeminate by your standards, Michael. At the table I'd have put you down as a 3♦ man.

Alder: Pass. Yes, I am drawing my old-age pension.

Stabell: Pass. A weak 2♦ is OK, but I have too little to realistically hope to be able to shut out the opponents, so I'm afraid that such a bid might just help them. Better pass and hope the suits are breaking badly for the opponents.

Lambardi: Pass. Any number of diamonds may work better but not my style (never works for me).

Sandsmark: Pass! Thank you, Brian! But you are not going to lure me into psychic bidding here. And, just to set it straight, whatever you bid on this hand will be labelled a psychic bid!

Nope. It contains a six-card suit and is in range point-wise for a weak two bid, so it isn't a psyche, merely a judgement call with which you would not agree.

Sime: Pass. Too many flaws for a pre-empt. Anything that can go wrong with pre-empting is more likely to go wrong on this hand; partner over-saves or leads the wrong thing, we tip-off bad breaks, they play 3NT rather than a badly breaking major.

Cannell: Pass. Nope!

Smith: Pass. Yes, even from me! Second choice something like 1NT. It's just the wrong honour structure for a weak two in diamonds. Prefer 1♥

or even 2♥. Partner hasn't opened a weak two so they have at least an eight-card spade fit and Two Diamonds is more likely to get partner to do the wrong thing than it is to inconvenience the opponents.

Bird: Pass. Opening 2♦ will not cause much havoc. Nor will a diamond lead from partner against some contract by North. If I was determined to exhibit how clever I am, I would choose 1♥.

I might say that opening 1♥ would show exactly how clever you are, but you might think that was an unwarranted slur given some of the calls that I favour.

I could not bear to let my opponents have a free run so would certainly open something, either 2♦



Marc Smith

or 3♦ according to mood. Partner held the aforementioned 4-4-4 10-count but 3NT or 4♠ could be made as spades played for five tricks with A63 facing K10972 thanks to our bare jack. We could come to seven tricks in a red-suit, so even 3♦ doubled would not have been too painful.

PROBLEM 5

IMPs. Dealer East. All Vul.

♠ J2
♥ AKQ1094
♦ 96
♣ 865

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|--------|
| – | – | 2♥ | Double |
| ? | | | |

| Bid | Votes | Marks |
|----------|-------|-------|
| 4♥ | 10 | 10 |
| 5♥ | 2 | 6 |
| Pass | 1 | 5 |
| Redouble | 1 | 5 |
| 2♠ | 1 | 5 |
| 2NT | 1 | 5 |
| 3NT | 1 | 5 |
| 4♦ | 1 | 5 |
| 4♠ | 1 | 5 |

There was a whole range of 'clever' options tried by assorted panellists. We could try going quietly:

Smith: Pass. This seems an extreme example, but saving on balanced hands is always too expensive. Give partner something like ♠xx ♥Jxxxxx ♦Qx ♣Axx and 5♥ costs 1100. Yes, they can make slam, (perhaps on a diamond guess), but some big heart raise is more likely to make

it easy for them to evaluate their hands than having to work out that they are both short. Yes, partner is likely to have seven hearts for his vulnerable weak two, but even so the penalty could easily be more than we might expect. We cannot outbid them here, so I won't try doing so.

Or we could try to show strength:

Cannell: Redouble. I have no idea what the correct or best psyche is here. Brian probably knows – I do not.

Honestly, Drew, I haven't a clue. Maybe no psyche at all is the answer?

Brock: 2NT. Who knows? 4♥ looks like a waste of time as they will just bid 4♠ and I won't know what to do. Although my six-card support is impressive there may well not be a lot of tricks for us outside. Maybe a show of strength will keep them conservative.

Maybe if they bid 4♠ we should pass, grateful that they have not bid a slam?

Or we can try to steal their most likely trump suit.

Sandsmark: 2♠. A psyche! Partner's opening suit is feeble, so he has got to have compensating values. Yet, I am willing to fight to 4♥, but the vulnerability will make 5♥ very dangerous. Thus, I see it as my task to try to prevent the enemy from reaching 4♠. When doubled, I will run to 3♦, then run on to 4♣ and finally hide in 4♥. Quite a devious bastard, aren't I? I am afraid that my bid will be utterly unsupported, but I think it doesn't matter how many points I get as long as I am happy with my own bidding.

If we are going to steal their suit, why not go the whole hog:

Carruthers: 4♠. Ten down is good bridge. I

might not sit if doubled. There is no ‘right’ answer on a problem such as this. It’s pure tactics. One approach is to bid 4NT to find out how many aces partner holds so you know at which level to sacrifice. If partner held this hand and wanted to bid 3♥, 3NT, 4♥, 5♥, 6♥, or make a splinter bid in any suit, they’re all okay by me.

Probably not wise to sit it doubled, I concur.

Green: 3NT. It is hard to imagine that partner could open 2♥ vulnerable with such a poor suit (I really hope that partner didn’t pull the wrong card and actually intended to open 2♠). It would also seem likely that the opponents are cold for a slam and possibly even a grand slam. I could just bid 4♥ but I prefer 3NT in an effort to show values and see if the opponents bid 4♠. If they double I’ll run to Four Clubs and hope that partner gets the message later. I could try 5♥ but that’s not likely to stop them either. Anyone for a direct 6♥?

Rigal: 4♦. If fit showing, else 4♥. If I’m playing with a partner who doesn’t have ALL SEVEN of the missing hearts, I don’t want to play with him again. 4♥ may take up just enough space to let them settle down cheaply somewhere. But I sort of prefer 4♦ fit showing. Not too much can go terribly wrong with that – if partner raises then I’m offering him ruffs.

But the rest settled for raising hearts. A couple tried an immediate jump to 5♥, an advance save:
Teramoto: 5♥. Pre-emptive and hope they stop in 5♠. They have Slam probably and 7♥ doubled is too much.

Kokish: 5♥. Everyone’s personal preferences will emerge here as this is a deal for tactics and a good guess later on. I am not sure whether to save

against Six, as East is sure to have a very shapely weak two bid and may well have two side tricks.

While the majority chose a more sedate 4♥.

Apteker: 4♥. I don’t see any reason to bid 5♥ straight off and basically tell the opponents that you believe that they have slam on, or to get clever with some psyche bid. It may not be easy for the opponents to find the slam after this start in any case.

Zia: 4♥.

Sime: 4♥. Unimaginative, but perhaps our best chance to escape with minus 680 or 710.

Bird: 4♥. Even 4♥ might go for 800, so I’m certainly not bidding any more. I don’t see that a ‘clever’ Pass will help much. They will then have a free run to what they judge is the best contract.

Byrne: 4♥. Hoping for a rhythmic 4♠ – All Pass. If the void heart is on my left (not that unlikely) then he might assume partner is strong balanced and tread more carefully, bidding 4♠ on ♠Qxxxx, ♥–, ♦KJxx, ♣Axxx when partner actually has ♠AKJx, ♥x, ♦AQxx, ♣QJxx. The trouble with 5♥ or psychic bids is that people have seen them before and all they do is tip off a slam. (No-one ever bids 5♥ on a hand that expects to beat a slam).

Alder: 4♥. I am probably the only panellist to choose this staid-looking response. I was so surprised to see that we are vulnerable. But that makes me worried that partner has a smattering of stuff outside of hearts.

Lambardi: 4♥. Partner will probably have a couple of outside tricks at this vulnerability.

Stabell: 4♥. Not sure what partner can have for a vulnerable weak two when I have this suit, but I am worried that a bid like 5♥ might push them

into a makeable slam. Over 4♥, North will normally bid his suit and the matter will rest there. We might have a profitable sacrifice if partner has something like: ♠xx ♥Jxxxxx ♦KQxx ♣x..but chances are that they can make a slam, so I am not going to the five-level.

Mould: 4♥. I am very firmly of the opinion on these kind of hands where you are pretty sure the opponents can make a slam that you should give leftie the chance to bid 4♠. A 4♠ bid covers a HUGE range here and unless leftie has a clear slam try or rightie a clear slam try over 4♠ this will get the job done. It may well not have worked here, but I think it is your best shot. I think the problem at the other table was perhaps more interesting.

Robson: 4♥. Forrester would of course redouble (although 2♥ redoubled may not make...). He’ll be right some of the time. So will the very mundane bid of 4♥. Perhaps the next hand will bid a heavy 4♠ and the doubler will make a heavy pass. The more you bid, the more they’ll bid – and we know 100% they’re making whatever they do bid.

Yes, while I confess to having tried a jump to 4♣ at the table – who cares whether this is a splinter of a fit-jump – 4♥ looks right to me. As mentioned by a number of panellists, that will sometimes see LHO make a heavy 4♠ bid, while if we jump to 5♥ we add momentum to an auction that we want to slow down.

Partner held, ♠10 ♥J87632 ♦Q1084 ♣J4. I approve of the opening, though I know many do not. The opposition were cold for 7♠ and I’m reasonably confident that they were always bidding at least Six.

PROBLEM 6

IMPs. Dealer South. N/S Vul.

♠ —
♥ 92
♦ A1082
♣ AJ98753

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| — | — | — | 1♠ |
| 2♣ | 4♠ | 5♥ | 5♠ |
| ? | | | |

| Bid | Votes | Marks |
|------|-------|-------|
| 5NT | 12 | 10 |
| 6♥ | 3 | 7 |
| Pass | 2 | 6 |
| Dble | 1 | 2 |
| 4NT | 1 | 0 |

There was one pessimist:

Lambardi: Double. Whatever it may mean. Opponents seem to have loads of spades but I do have a couple of aces and they are not running the side suit. Lead a quiet heart.

And two who leave it to partner, implying that they would pass if partner doubles.

Stabell: Pass. I can't tell what partner has for the 5♥ bid, but I would have doubled with three defensive tricks or two tricks and no heart fit. If he has a club fit, 5♠ and 6♣ might make, and partner is hopefully in a better position to decide what to do.

Smith: Pass. Very difficult. North's pre-empt means that partner could have anything from ♠xx ♥QJ10xxxxx ♦x ♣Qx, when 5♠ is probably cold and we should be saving in 6♥, to ♠Ax ♥AKQxxxxx ♦xx ♣x, when we are cold for 6♥.

Second choice 6♥. I don't like double, since I both cannot be sure they are going down and I don't want to discourage him from bidding on. Interesting to see what the panel do.

Then there is the one who didn't read the question carefully enough:

Brock: 4NT. Want to bid to the five-level but not sure exactly where. Will pass whatever partner bids.

Oops!

There was a small minority who were willing to commit to hearts, assuming partner to have a massive suit for its introduction at the five-level.

Apteker: 6♥ This may be a good sacrifice or may make, who knows.

Teramoto: 6♥. It is not sure we can make 6♥, but defending 5♠ is not interesting.

Bird: 6♥. I see no value in 5NT to get partner to choose between clubs and hearts. If we make clubs trumps, what will happen to my diamond losers? Partner has a massive heart suit and my hand will fit splendidly with that.

The majority, however, know that they want to bid on but, disagreeing with David, they question in which suit. In which case, partner's opinion can be requested by bidding:

Byrne: 5NT. Why not? Partner either has an exceptional suit or some club support, and I fancy raising the stakes. Certainly we might beat 5♠, but passing isn't playing for very high stakes.

Alder: 5NT. Pick a slam – and hope for the best.

Cannell: 5NT. Pick-a-slam partner. I like my holdings in all four suits on the auction given.

Rigal: 5NT. Pick a slam; no guarantees of course but Rosenberg says bid on with voids and I believe him.

Zia: 5NT.

Robson: 5NT. Must bid on with such a powerful shapely hand including the spade void. 5NT asks partner to pick the slam – I'll pass his choice.

Sandsmark: 5NT. "Pick a suit". This bid will have to mean long ♣, a side suit in ♦ and a secondary preference to ♥. When in the green zone against the red one, you have to sacrifice with such a hand, and if the weather is nice and the bridge gods approve, you may even land in a slam that will make!

Green: 5NT. At this vulnerability it doesn't sound as though N/S are messing about. I have no idea who can make what and so will take-out insurance by bidding. I bid 5NT just in case partner has club tolerance with me, who knows, sometimes he has diamonds too!

Sime: 5NT. Still Pick a Slam. I might have turned plus into minus, but there must be a decent chance of making slam, or defending Six Spades doubled.

Carruthers: 5NT. I feel I want to bid, and double does not get this powerful playing hand across, despite its attractive defence, and double in no way suggests to partner that he bid on. Neither my clubs nor my hearts are good enough to insist on that suit. What'll I do if partner surprises me by bidding 6♦?

Kokish: 5NT. Pre-knowledge of the deal should not affect us. Lots of ways to win here while double is bound to end the auction when we don't know enough to make that determination. I could pass, of course, but the torture for partner is not the way to win a long tournament.

Mould: 5NT. 2P2P. I had this problem a level lower and bid 4NT with the same meaning. Just

following the general principle that it is right to keep bidding on freak hands. Here 6♥ is a truly awful contact – approximately 5% or so, but is cold on the lie if you pick up the trumps. The oppo saved in 6♠ against us for – 500 after they had had a bidding misunderstanding. One of the many hands that cost the Gold Cup semi-final.

Partner held, ♠K3 ♥KQ108543 ♦K743 ♣ – . 6♥ could have been defeated on the lead of a singleton trump and continuation to prevent a spade ruff in the dummy. On a non-trump lead, declarer takes a spade ruff, pitches the other spade, and leads a heart to the ten. Diamonds can be played without loss as there is a bare jack on dummy's left. I'm with the panel, favouring 5NT to offer a choice of trump suit.

PROBLEM 7

IMPs. Dealer North. All Vul.

♠ A4
♥ KQJ72
♦ 842
♣ AKJ

| West | North | East | South |
|--------|-------|------|-------|
| – | 1♦ | Pass | 1♠ |
| Double | Pass | 1NT | Pass |
| ? | | | |

| Bid | Votes | Marks |
|-----|-------|-------|
| 2♥ | 8 | 10 |
| 2NT | 4 | 8 |
| 3NT | 3 | 7 |
| 2♠ | 2 | 6 |
| 2♦ | 2 | 6 |

For some, it is very simple:

Byrne: 3NT. Bidding hearts is angling for a very narrow range (exactly a 5-3 fit) and even then there might be diamond ruffs. Partner rates to be 4-2-4-3 or similar and I don't need much to give game a good chance.

Alder: 3NT. Seems straightforward, so that cannot have worked at the table!

Mould: 3NT. This is what Ollie Burgess did against me and 3NT was cold, so who am I to argue? Assuming 1NT shows some values, this seems a reasonable shot.

But does it show the same values as in response to a second-seat double?

Teramoto: 2♥. Shows Hearts and about 18 HCP. 1NT may not have many values, because there is little space.

Stabell: 2♥. Which partner would be happy to pass with ♠J10xx ♥xxx ♦QJxx ♣xx. With both opponents bidding, I don't think he has promised more than this for 1NT, and I (still) show a hand that was too strong for a 2♥ overcall.

Sime: 2♥. I am tempted to Pass, as I am pessimistic about making game on this hand, even though we may have ample points. An above average hand for partner would be 4-3-3-3 with the pointed kings. If so, Four Hearts would be worse than the against-odds club finesse, and the probable diamond lead would see off 3NT unless the suit broke 4/3.

Apteker: 2♥. After the sort of constructive 1NT, a new suit bid should be forcing for one round so I may as well show this rather than the non-informative 2NT. Even though the opponents are vul it does not mean that they necessarily have their values and we may still have game on, so passing 1NT is out for me.

Cannell: 2♥. Showing some oomph with a fifth heart. The ball is in partner's court.

Smith: 2♥. This problem is created by our failure to bid 2♥ on the previous round. We would then have had the choice of doubling at our second turn to show extra values. As it is, I don't see how I can now bid more than 2♥ without showing a much better suit (at least six, anyway) than I have. Whilst it is recognized that 1NT is a positive response to a normal take-out double of one suit, it that also the case here? What does he bid with ♠J10xx ♥xx ♦Jxxxx ♣xx, if not 1NT?

Bird: 2♥. Should I join with the masses complaining about the lack of a 2♥ overcall? Why not? Following up my choice of Double, I cannot consider such as 3♥ on just a 5-card suit. Nor does a raise to 2NT or 3NT make any sense. Partner should read me for 'an old-fashioned double, with five hearts and a high point-count'. **Kokish:** 2♥ or 3♥, according to our agreements about forcing vs corrective and our expectations for 1NT. 2♥ would be F1 for me so 3♥ would be bigger hearts and a different hand. I would have preferred a simple 2♥ overcall, of course, opening the door for Mr Grumpy to cast slings and arrows in my direction. I am tough so I can take it.

Fine, you prefer a 2♥ overcall – I don't mind a 2♥ overcall, but what problem have we caused ourselves here? If we continue with 2♥ we have shown a hand too good for an overcall and a five-card heart suit. I would imagine that an awful lot of readers would think that to be exactly what we have got.

Should 2♥ be forcing? It would be facing a



John Carruthers

second-seat double, but I would suggest that it should not be in this situation – as we have seen, a number of panellists worry about just how weak partner could be for 1NT if he has no support for an unbid suit. So I think that double followed by 2♥ shows something like this hand or a bit stronger, and is highly encouraging but passable. If I wanted to commit to game I would bid:

Brock: 2♦. I think I am good enough for game but would like to introduce hearts. I think 3♥ sounds like a more ‘suit’ hand, i.e. one that was always going to jump in hearts, while bidding 2♦ first followed by 3♥ suggests this sort of hand-type – five hearts and lots of points.

Sandsmark: 2♦. 1RF, which may later become a

GF. We have at least 24 HCP, and should be not too far away from a game. But where? If partner doesn’t bid 2♥, I will follow up with 3♦, asking for a ♦ stopper. Without any stopper, partner will probably say 3♥ with two or three hearts, and then I will stop there.

Or maybe:

Carruthers: 2♠. I want to force a choice between 3NT and 4♥. I’ll follow up with 3♥ if given the chance, pass 3NT and raise 3♥ to 4♥. I think 3♥ over 1NT over-emphasizes hearts to the exclusion of no trumps.

Green: 2♠. My first thought was to bid 3NT but there are some hands where we may belong in 4♥. So I intend to follow 2♠ with 3♥ showing 5♥ and a spade stopper. When I have a choice of cue-bids I bid the one I have values in.

OK, so do I, though 2♦ here does have the benefit of leaving more space to explore.

And if I want to invite game without worrying about the forcing or non-forcing nature of 2♥, then I could go for:

Rigal: 2NT. About right on values, and yes it may be hanging partner but they really don’t rate to be able to double this, as opposed to 3NT.

Zia: 2NT.

Lambardi: 2NT. Can’t find any good reason to try for a suit contract, with three cards in one of their suits and Ax in the other.

Robson: 2NT. Abstain. Why double and not bid 2♥? Okay, I won’t abstain and raise to 2NT, expressing my values (and I’m starting to prefer my double to 2♥ too ...).

My, but someone was in grump mode, weren’t they? Two threatened abstentions in one set of problems, even if Andrew eventually thought

better of it. And even a reluctant admission that maybe double wasn’t too horrible a call after all.

I like 2♥, encouraging NF, failing which I’d invite game by raising to 2NT. If partner cannot support hearts 3NT rates to play better than 4♥. If 2♥ is passable, then our double has actually worked out better than an initial; overcall – if partner is weak – as we get to stop in 2♥. Had we overcalled, we would now be doubling and getting higher with no guarantee that we can make anything.

In real life, partner held, ♠K85 ♥1098 ♦QJ65 ♣752. The club was onside and 3NT was cold, while 4♥ was down one on a diamond ruff.

PROBLEM 8

IMPs. Dealer East. None Vul.

- ♠ AQJ106
- ♥ 108
- ♦ AJ6
- ♣ 1054

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| – | – | 3♦ | 3NT |
| ? | | | |

| Bid | Votes | Marks |
|--------|-------|-------|
| 4♦ | 14 | 10 |
| 4♠ | 2 | 6 |
| Pass | 2 | 4 |
| Double | 1 | 2 |

You can go quietly:

Byrne: Pass. The trouble with 4♦ is that while it will be cheap it will just help the opponents find their 4♥ contract. If I pass and lead the A♣ we have a fair chance to beat this if partner can

stop either clubs OR hearts.

Brock: Pass. And lead the ace of spades.

Wildly:

Sandsmark: Double. I will lead the ♦J to partner's king and on his ten the declarer will put in his queen and we will get 100s down, since declarer's ♠K is also trapped. Why risk the unsure when you have a good plan?

That would have cost – 750 in real life.

Or you can start from the assumption that 3NT is likely to be making, in which case:

Green: 4♠. Definitely not passing and hoping to beat 3NT. The opponents likely have a big heart fit and if I can force North to bid 5♥ I will be happy for partner to lead a spade. I could jump in diamonds but I am desperate for the spade lead.

Alder: 4♠. At least it is only 50s – and it might not matter, because South could well be about to bid 4NT or 5♣.

4♠ is rather committal, though hugely successful on the actual deal. There was a big majority for:

Robson: 4♦. Tricky, as they may have just reached the wrong contract. Then again, I don't know what to lead. 4♦ may well get them to 4♥ with partner leading their singleton spade. Here's hoping...

That was the problem with Tommy's double – lead a spade and take the first 12 tricks against 3NT, lead a diamond, and lose the first 11.

Kokish: 4♦. How nauseating! They could be down a zillion or we could make 4♠ or 5♦. I advocate that serious partnerships spend a lot of time on requirements, expectations for pre-empts, at different positions and vulnerabilities, rather than pre-empting whenever conceivable.

I am a dinosaur as I slip into old age.

If you must be a dinosaur, don't be a vegetarian, be a raptor. That means more and more pre-emption.

Lambardi: 4♦. South may be hoping to run his long clubs (or hearts). It may be that we can beat this heavily but I won't risk it. We'll see what happens next ; they won't get rich doubling us in 4♦.

Stabell: 4♦. Safety first – this is bidder's vulnerability and they will surely run if I double and 3NT is expensive. If partner has something like: ♠x ♥KQx ♦Q10xxxxx ♣xx 4♦ should be an easy make and I can see us having an accident against 3NT. And who knows – maybe the opponents are in a forcing situation over 4♦?

Sime: 4♦. I am unwilling to risk 3NT making, or West transferring to hearts, leaving me on lead.

Carruthers: 4♦. I expect South to have something like (a.) 20 balanced or (b.) seven solid clubs and the king-low of diamonds, with perhaps another card. While he might not be able to take 9 tricks on a diamond lead if he has hand (a.), I would not bet against him doing so. Most of the cards that South does not have would be coming down in dummy, so 3NT could well be ice-cold.

Rigal: 4♦ I can see how they might make 3NT here while I can't put partner in. Still the real issue is if I will double 4♥. I'm glad you didn't ask me!

Zia: 4♦. No reason to think we can beat 3NT.

Cannell: 4♦. Oddly, I do not think we can defeat 3NT. If they double I hope it is only 300 away.

Apteker: 4♦ I will have a harder decision next time if North bids 4♥ whether to bid 4♠.

That was the call chosen at the table, and is the plan of a number of panellists.

Smith: 4♦. This feels like enough, If this goes 4♥ – Pass – Pass, back to me, I'll have the option of bidding 4♠ then, having shown a diamond fit already. The problem with that, of course, is that a spade lead through South's king might be enough to beat 4♥.

Bird: 4♦. I would not relish finding a lead against 3NT. What will I bid next-time round, over North's 4♥? Probably 4♠.

Teramoto: 4♦. Defeating 3NT is not easy and 4♦ looks to be a good contract. If they bid 4♥, I will bid 4♠ for choice of 4♠ and 5♦.

Mould: 4♦. Again I held this hand (this time in the Pachabo) and had no idea what to do. I tried 4♦ and that worked like a charm! The expected 4♥ came back to me and I bid 4♠, knowing that partner could not think I had too many of them. This got doubled on my right, all passed and I got a diamond lead. Partner put down England's entry for "dummy of the century": ♠Kxx ♥xx ♦Qxxxxxx ♣x and even I was not pressed to put +790 on the card the unusual way.

Difficult to argue with both success and a large majority. I think 4♦ has a lot going for it, even if not everyone agrees as to what they plan to do at their next turn.

This month's winner is Iain Sime, with 77 points, one ahead of Alon Apteker.



SET 23 – THE PANEL’S BIDS & MARKS

| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | Total |
|-------------------|--------------|------|-----|------|------|------|------|-----|------|-------|
| Iain Sime | Scotland | 4♠ | 5NT | 2♠ | Pass | 4♥ | 5NT | 2♥ | 4♦ | 77 |
| Alon Apteker | South Africa | 3♠ | 5NT | 3♠ | 2♦ | 4♥ | 6♥ | 2♥ | 4♦ | 76 |
| Zia | USA | 3♥ | 6♦ | 3♠ | 3♦ | 4♥ | 5NT | 2NT | 4♦ | 73 |
| Eric Kokish | Canada | 3♥ | 5NT | 2♠ | 3♦ | 5♥ | 5NT | 2♥ | 4♦ | 72 |
| Alan Mould | England | 4♦ | 5NT | 2♠ | 3♦ | 4♥ | 5NT | 3NT | 4♦ | 71 |
| Barry Rigal | USA | 3♠ | 6♦ | 3♠ | 3♦ | 4♦ | 5NT | 2NT | 4♦ | 70 |
| Andrew Robson | England | 3♥ | 5♠ | 3♠ | 3♦ | 4♥ | 5NT | 2NT | 4♠ | 70 |
| Drew Cannell | Canada | 3♠ | 6♦ | 1♠ | Pass | Rdbl | 5NT | 2♥ | 4♦ | 69 |
| Phillip Alder | USA | 4♠ | 6♦ | 3♠ | Pass | 4♥ | 5NT | 3NT | 4♠ | 69 |
| John Carruthers | Canada | 4♠ | 5NT | 1♠ | 3♦ | 4♠ | 5NT | 2♠ | 4♦ | 68 |
| David Bird | England | Pass | 5NT | 1♠ | Pass | 4♥ | 6♥ | 2♦ | 4♦ | 67 |
| Leif-Erik Stabell | Zimbabwe | 3♠ | 5NT | Pass | Pass | 4♥ | Pass | 2♦ | 4♦ | 67 |
| Michael Byrne | England | 3♠ | 5♠ | 3♠ | 2♦ | 4♥ | 5NT | 3NT | Pass | 66 |
| Ben Green | England | 4♠ | 6♦ | 3♠ | 3♦ | 3NT | 5NT | 2♠ | 4♠ | 65 |
| Marc Smith | England | Pass | 5NT | 2♠ | Pass | Pass | Pass | 2♥ | 4♦ | 64 |
| Tadashi Teramoto | Japan | 3♠ | 6♥ | 3♠ | 2♦ | 5♥ | 6♥ | 2♥ | 4♦ | 63 |
| Pablo Lambardi | Argentina | 4♦ | 5♠ | 1♠ | Pass | 4♥ | Dble | 2NT | 4♦ | 61 |
| Tommy Sandmark | Norway | Pass | 5♠ | 3♠ | Pass | 2♠ | 5NT | 2♦ | Dble | 60 |
| Sally Brock | England | 4♠ | 4NT | 3♠ | 3♦ | 2NT | 4NT | 2♦ | Pass | 51 |



Master Point Bidding Battle Competition – Set 24

Open to All – Free Entry

PROBLEM 1

IMPs. Dealer West. None Vul.

♠ A
♥ 62
♦ AQ863
♣ AQJ32

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

PROBLEM 2

IMPs. Dealer North. None Vul.

♠ K87632
♥ AK
♦ 1093
♣ J7

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|--------|-------|
| – | 3♦ | Double | Pass |
| ? | | | |

PROBLEM 3

IMPs. Dealer West. All Vul.

♠ 98642
♥ K9852
♦ A3
♣ 6

| West | North | East | South |
|--------|--------------------|---------|-------|
| Pass | 1NT | Pass | 2♦ |
| Pass | 2♥ | Double* | Pass |
| ? | | | |
| Double | Take-out of hearts | | |

PROBLEM 4

IMPs. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

♠ AKJ9
♥ QJ83
♦ KQ93
♣ 9

| West | North | East | South |
|------|----------|------|-------|
| – | – | – | 2♥* |
| ? | | | |
| 2♥ | Weak Two | | |

PROBLEM 5

IMPs. Dealer East. All Vul.

♠ AKJ102
♥ 8
♦ AQ32
♣ 865

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

PROBLEM 6

IMPs. Dealer West. All Vul.

♠ 9
♥ A643
♦ AK108
♣ AJ102

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 1♦ | 1♠ | 2♥ | 4♠ |
| ? | | | |

PROBLEM 7

IMPs. Dealer South. All Vul.

♠ AK102
♥ 4
♦ K92
♣ AQ765

| West | North | East | South |
|------|----------|------|-------|
| – | – | – | 2♦* |
| ? | | | |
| 2♦ | Weak Two | | |

PROBLEM 8

IMPs. Dealer West. All Vul.

♠ A7
♥ J6
♦ AK7
♣ AK9873

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

Send entry to biddingbattle@newbridgemag.com or enter via the website www.newbridgemag.com.

Entries to arrive before the end of the month.

A New Bridge Magazine Bidding System

Attention!!!

The Bidding System 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
December 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.

♠ 986
♥ KQ6
♦ K63
♣ A843

South opens 1♥.

Hand 2. Dealer South. All Vul.

♠ AK10975
♥ AK876
♦ 6
♣ 4

Hand 3. Dealer South. N/S Vul.

♠ AK9853
♥ 1094
♦ 2
♣ 754

Hand 4. Dealer East. N/S Vul

♠ K873
♥ 52
♦ A1087
♣ 1075

Hand 5. Dealer South. None Vul.

♠ AKQ6
♥ K87
♦ Q
♣ 98764

South opens 1♥ and North responds 2NT promising a 3/4 card fit with invitational values

Hand 6. Dealer West. Both Vul.

♠ K1083
♥ QJ9
♦ 954
♣ K84

Hand 7. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

♠ J87
♥ —
♦ AQ84
♣ AJ9763

Hand 8. Dealer South. N/S Vul.

♠ AJ8
♥ K96
♦ KQ7
♣ A964

South opens 2♣ Precision style.

MASTER POINT BIDDING BATTLE



Results – Set 22

A few readers remarked that the November issue was published before the end of October, which meant they could have seen the answers before sending in their own responses. We trust that they all indeed did as they said, and did not look at the new issue before replying. We have accepted all responses that arrived before October 31st.

There were only 21 entries this month. Presumably some regular entrants have given up on the year's awards, but all readers should remember that there are four prizes to be won each month, including one drawn at random from all entries. And as if to prove a point, one of this month's joint winners, with a score of 67, is a newcomer to this contest: **Ron Lell. Todd Holes** has the same score, **Dean Pokorny** came third with 65.

Peter Becker was drawn as the fourth prize winner for this month.

Other Good Scores

63 *Bazil Caygill*

61 *Peter Barker*

60 *Carles Acero, Lajos Hajdu*

The Yearly Standings:

In the year's standings, the following readers have a total in excess of 300.

| | |
|--------------------------|-----|
| <i>Dean Pokorny</i> | 358 |
| <i>Bill March</i> | 355 |
| <i>Mike Perkins</i> | 344 |
| <i>Dominic Connolly</i> | 342 |
| <i>Mark Bartusek</i> | 339 |
| <i>Alex Athanasiadis</i> | 333 |
| <i>Todd Holes</i> | 330 |
| <i>Rodney Lighton</i> | 328 |
| <i>Mike Ralph</i> | 327 |
| <i>Bazil Caygill</i> | 324 |

| | |
|-----------------------|-----|
| <i>Colin Brown</i> | 320 |
| <i>Dudley Leigh</i> | 315 |
| <i>Carles Acero</i> | 311 |
| <i>David Barnes</i> | 311 |
| <i>Nelson Pearson</i> | 308 |
| <i>George Willett</i> | 307 |
| <i>Peter Barker</i> | 306 |
| <i>Bill Linton</i> | 305 |
| <i>Steve Handley</i> | 304 |
| <i>Nigel Guthrie</i> | 303 |

Comments on Bidding Battle Set 22

Brian Senior examines the responses of the readers and compares them against those of the panel.

Not so many suggestions from the readers this month which were not also found by at least one panellist.

PROBLEM 3

IMPs. Dealer East. All Vul.

♠ K10764
♥ 8
♦ 653
♣ A942

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| – | – | 1♥ | Pass |
| 1♠ | Pass | 3♦ | Pass |
| ? | | | |

| Bid | Votes | Marks | Readers |
|------|-------|-------|---------|
| 3♥ | 6 | 10 | 0 |
| 3NT | 4 | 8 | 14 |
| 3♠ | 3 | 7 | 6 |
| 4♦ | 1 | 2 | 0 |
| Pass | 0 | 0 | 1 |

Not a single reader chose the winning bid of 3♥! Bill March would have bid 3♥ if the director was Eric Kokish. Well, Bill should know that the top panel vote will normally score 10 points, whatever the views of the director, so if he believes in his answer and trusts the panel he should run with it and hope for the best.

This problem illustrates the fact that experts will sometimes solve problems with bids that would not even occur to the average reader/player. I play as a professional partner to some perfectly decent clients, but I'm confident that not a single one of them would bid 3♥ on this hand. Maybe it's the correct call, but it's a case of 'readers are from Mars, panellists are from Venus'.

There was only one reader vote for a non-panel call, and that was for

Pass. While passing might work on any given deal, 3♦ is normally played not just as forcing, but game-forcing, so I can't award anything.

PROBLEM 7

IMPs. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ 10
♥ AK
♦ AK8
♣ KQ109653

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| – | – | Pass | Pass |
| 1♣ | Pass | 1♥ | 1♠ |
| ? | | | |

| Bid | Votes | Marks | Readers |
|--------|-------|-------|---------|
| 2♠ | 11 | 10 | 7 |
| 2♦ | 2 | 6 | 5 |
| Double | 1 | 3 | 1 |
| 3♣ | 0 | 2 | 4 |
| 4♣ | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| 5♣ | 0 | 3 | 2 |

OK, no panellist opted for any number of clubs, because any number of clubs is flawed. However, I can understand a club rebid so they can all have a modest award.

Three Clubs is a gross underbid, being only invitational, and will result in game, or even slam, being missed and played in part-score – the ♣A and ♦Q, for example means 12 tricks, but partner will pass 3♣ holding a flat 6-count. Four Clubs is more often played as five strong clubs and four-card heart support, so isn't really an option for most partnerships. Five Clubs, while crude and leading to missed slams, is a reasonably practical bid in that it will often be the right contract, so I'll award three points to that and only two to 3♣ and 4♣. However, when there is such an easy

2♠ cue-bid available, after which we can bid clubs,, allowing for proper exploration, it is hard to justify an almighty jump to game.

PROBLEM 8

IMPs. Dealer East. All Vul.

- ♠ KJ
- ♥ KQ3
- ♦ AKQ874
- ♣ 86

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| – | – | 1♠ | Pass |
| 2♦ | Pass | 2♥ | Pass |
| 3♦ | Pass | 3♠ | Pass |
| ? | | | |

| Bid | Votes | Marks | Readers |
|-----|-------|-------|---------|
| 5♠ | 7 | 10 | 8 |
| 4♥ | 2 | 9 | 2 |
| 4♣ | 2 | 5 | 4 |
| 4NT | 2 | 3 | 3 |
| 4♠ | 1 | 3 | 2 |
| 4♦ | 0 | 2 | 1 |
| 5NT | 0 | 0 | 1 |

Nelson Pearson added that his 4♣ was fourth suit forcing, showing strength and a problematic bid.

Well, a choice of games cue-bid was suggested by one panellist, and I guess that is similar in intent to FSF. It doesn't need to show strength, because we are already in a GF sequence.

Carles Acero hoped his 4♥ would be taken as Last Train. Those panellists who mentioned the bid were happy that it agreed spades, but thought that it also showed a control – which is fine, as we have second-round heart control. Four Hearts bypasses too many other possibilities to be Last Train, I would think.

Bill March bid 5♠ but called is horrible, (but sometimes there is no good bid available and horrible is less bad than REALLY horrible).

There were two reader-only votes. The first was to bid the diamonds for a third time. I'm not sure if the intent was that this would be natural, or if it would be a cue-bid in support of spades. I think most would consider it to be natural, while the panel believe it to be time to focus on spades. WE could, after all, have a solid diamond suit and small singleton spade, when we would surely get a substantial vote for repeating the diamonds. I'll award two points because it isn't impossible that we belong in diamonds. The other reader vote was for 5NT, presumably intended as pick a slam. With one exception, who signed off in 4♠, the panel votes to make a slam try, with nobody committing to slam. That must be correct, given the two low clubs, so I am not inclined to award anything for a slam force, particularly after an auction which screams for a club lead.

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EAST

Hands for the
December 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.

♠ K2
♥ J74
♦ AQ954
♣ K92

South opens 1♥.

Hand 2. Dealer South. All Vul.

♠ Q2
♥ QJ1032
♦ 974
♣ AQ2

Hand 3. Dealer South. N/S Vul.

♠ Q102
♥ AQJ3
♦ A983
♣ J10

Hand 4. Dealer East. N/S Vul

♠ J106
♥ AK4
♦ K964
♣ AQ6

Hand 5. Dealer South. None Vul.

♠ 1087543
♥ J6
♦ A8764
♣ —

South opens 1♥ and North responds 2NT
promising a 3/4 card fit with invitational
values

Hand 6. Dealer West. Both Vul.

♠ QJ
♥ A1042
♦ AKQ73
♣ J7

Hand 7. Dealer East. EW Vul.

♠ AK94
♥ AKJ5
♦ KJ5
♣ Q8

Hand 8. Dealer South. NS Vul.

♠ 1095432
♥ AQ2
♦ 862
♣ 10

South opens 2♣ Precision style.

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