

A NEW BRIDGE MAGAZINE

The Memory Lingers On

Getting The Point

The Colour Of Magic

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A NEW BRIDGE MAGAZINE

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Brave New World

I am delighted to announce that A New Bridge Magazine is about to become part of the Fun-bridge group, which also owns Le Bridgeur. The famous French magazine is launching a new life-style publication, Be Bridge and in March they will release an English version. Both magazines will be bi-monthly. Ron & I would like to thank everyone who has been associated with the magazine, you the readers, our contributors, advertisers, sponsors and especially those who have so generously given us their support. This will be the final issue of the magazine. We will let you know when the March/April edition of Be Bridge is ready to view.

Decisions regarding the continued publication of the MasterPoint Press Bidding Battle, the uBid Auction Room and other articles are to be determined later.

Committee Stage

The European Bridge League's Women's Committee has published an information letter. You can read it at: <http://www.eurobridge.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/INFORMATION-FOR-EBL-WBCS-JAN-2020.pdf>

One of the things that impressed me was the number of countries that have appointed Women Bridge Coordinators: Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland(2), Israel, Italy, Latvia, Malta, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland.

That's very impressive, but there are some surprising names missing from this list, including England, The Netherlands & France.

Senior Service

The English Bridge Union's first round of trials for the Open, Women's and Senior Teams at the European Championships in Madeira is now complete. Four days had been set aside for the Seniors, but only two teams entered the lists, which meant they could play a head-to-head match. It came as no surprise that Mossop (David Mossop, Brian Senior, Norman Selway, John Holland, Paul Hackett and Gunnar Hallberg) defeated Dhondy (Jeremy Dhondy, Brian Callaghan, David Kendrick, Alan Mayo, John Hassett and Trevor Ward) but they were made to work very hard.



Don't be a Dope

The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) has announced that its current List of Prohibited Substances and Methods (List), entered into force from 1 January 2020.

The List, which is one of six International Standards that are mandatory for all Signatories of the World Anti-Doping Code (Code), designates what substances and methods are prohibited both in- and out-of-competition, and which substances are banned in particular sports. All NBOs and participants in World Bridge Federation events are asked to take note of this updated list and ensure that all the requirements regarding applications for TUEs are fully complied with.

Everyone playing in WBF/EBL events should take the time to check the list.

P8. Les Winter Games régaler à Monaco

♥♠♦♣

N°925
BeBRIDGE
by Le Bridgeur

P28. QUATRIÈME COULEUR FORCING
Les conseils pro d'Alain Lévy

P42. TEST
Quel joueur êtes-vous ?

6 applis pour voyager jusqu'au bout du monde !

RENCONTRE PHÉNOMÈNE

Sanna Clementsson
L'OVNI
À seulement 19 ans, la championne suédoise incarne l'avenir du bridge.

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Test Your Technique

with Marc Smith

see Page 59

This month's hand comes from the match-pointed Funbridge Series Tournament. Players are divided into levels, and twice each month the top players are promoted and the lowest-scoring ones relegated. Scores are matchpointed across all participants at your level. On this week's deal, a simple play was missed by more than 85% of declarers confronted with the same problem. See if you would have outscored most of the field:

MP Pairs. Dealer East. None Vul.

♠ 8542
 ♥ A4
 ♦ A94
 ♣ Q1065

♠ AQJ
 ♥ KJ73
 ♦ KQJ5
 ♣ 73

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

West leads the ♦2. How would you play?

The Memory Lingers On

The Editor reports on a new event from across the pond.

In the well-established bridge calendar, major new events are few and far between. However, a new top-tier event made its inaugural appearance at the ACBL's Fall Nationals in San Francisco, the Soloway Knockout Teams. A two-day Swiss reduced the field to 32 teams, who then contested a series of knockout matches to determine the winner. The event paid homage to the legendary Paul Soloway, one of the greatest players to have graced the green baize.

By the time only two teams were left standing, one of them was, with a sense of inevitability, Paul's long time team mates, the squad led by Nick Nickell, who together had won a host of World and NABC titles. In the 60-board final, they faced a tough outfit made up of stars from Poland and the Netherlands.



Paul Soloway

Board 2. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ QJ9 ♥ QJ4 ♦ A9543 ♣ Q5	<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		♠ 63 ♥ A862 ♦ Q1087 ♣ K92	♠ K42 ♥ 1053 ♦ J62 ♣ 10876
	N											
W		E										
	S											
♠ A10875 ♥ K97 ♦ K ♣ AJ43												

Open Room

	West	North	East	South
	<i>Weinstein</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Levin</i>	<i>Brink</i>
	-	-	Pass	1♠
	Pass	1NT	Pass	2♣*
	Pass	2♦*	Pass	2NT*
	Pass	3NT	All Pass	
2♣	15+			
2♦	8+			
2NT	Balanced, not 4♥			

After the Gazzilli like auction East led the ♣7 and declarer took West's queen with the king and played a spade for the ten and jack. West switched to the ace of diamonds and a diamond and when declarer played the eight East won with the ♦J and switched to the ♥3. Declarer won with dummy's king, cashed the ♣A and when the ♣10 did not appear he played two rounds of spades, claiming when the suit divided, +600.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kalita</i>	<i>Nickell</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Katz</i>
-	-	Pass	1♠
Pass	1NT*	Pass	2♣*
Pass	2♦*	Pass	2♠*
All Pass			
	1NT	Forcing	
	2♣	Gazzilli	
	2♦	8+	
	2♠	Normal 2♣ rebid	

♠ 63			
♥ A862			
♦ Q1087			
♣ K92			
♠ QJ9			♠ K42
♥ QJ4			♥ 1053
♦ A9543			♦ J62
♣ Q5			♣ 10876
♠ A10875			
♥ K97			
♦ K			
♣ AJ43			

West led the ♥Q and declarer won with the king and played the ♦K, West winning and returning the ♥4. Declarer won in dummy, pitched a heart on the ♦Q, ruffed a diamond, cashed the ♣AK and played the ♦10, ruffed and overruffed. West ruffed the ♣J in front of dummy so that was +140 and a loss of 10 IMPs.

Board 3. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

		♠ 102	
		♥ A853	
		♦ A96	
		♣ Q532	
♠ AJ98743			♠ K6
♥ 10			♥ 72
♦ 54			♦ K1082
♣ J94			♣ K10876
		♠ Q5	
		♥ KQJ964	
		♦ QJ73	
		♣ A	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Weinstein</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Levin</i>	<i>Brink</i>
-	-	-	1♥
3♠	4♥	4♠	5♥
All Pass			

No doubt South envisaged no more than one spade loser. West started with two rounds of spades and in the fullness of time declarer had to lose a diamond, -50.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kalita</i>	<i>Nickell</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Katz</i>
-	-	-	Pass
3♠	Pass	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

According to the BBO operator West opened 3♠ out of turn, and North contributed a Pass card. So this is how the auction was displayed as BBO can't have a non-dealer starting the auction.



West led the ♦4 and declarer won with dummy's ace and drew trumps for +420 and 10 IMPs.

The operator reported that when Nick Nickell asked his partner 'what did you have?' he replied, 'I had a 4♥ bid over 3♠' laughing.



Nick Nickell

Board 4. Dealer West. All Vul.

♠ 62 ♥ A85 ♦ QJ732 ♣ 962		♠ Q1094 ♥ J74 ♦ 8 ♣ KQJ87	♠ J53 ♥ 92 ♦ K105 ♣ A10542
			
		♠ AK87 ♥ KQ1063 ♦ A964 ♣ —	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Weinstein</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Levin</i>	<i>Brink</i>
Pass	Pass	Pass	1♥
Pass	2♣*	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

The old convention card I have suggests that 2♣ is Drury.

I looked at a number of web sites to see what a rebid of 4♣ by South would mean - but answer came there none. If South had done that would North have continued with 4♦?

Declarer had no trouble collecting +680.



Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kalita</i>	<i>Nickell</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Katz</i>
Pass	Pass	Pass	2♦*
Pass	4♥	Pass	5♣*
Pass	5♦*	Pass	5♠
Pass	6♥	All Pass	
2♦	4-5♠, 5-6♥	11-16	
5♣	Void		

The defenders started with two rounds of trumps and declarer won with dummy's jack and played the ♣K, covered and ruffed. That set up two

of dummy's clubs for diamond discards and when the spades behaved declarer had twelve tricks and 13 IMPs.

Board 10. Dealer East. All Vul.

♠ AQ75 ♥ KQ ♦ J9853 ♣ 62		♠ J8 ♥ AJ75 ♦ KQ2 ♣ Q973	♠ K64 ♥ 10932 ♦ A64 ♣ AK8
			
		♠ 10932 ♥ 864 ♦ 107 ♣ J1054	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Weinstein</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Levin</i>	<i>Brink</i>
–	–	1♣	Pass
1♦	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♦*	Pass	2♥	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♦	Pass
3NT	All Pass		
2♦	2-way checkback		

Al Hollander confirmed that 1♦ only contains 4♥/4♠ with invitational plus values.

South led the ♣4 and declarer ducked North's queen, won the return of the ♣3 with the ace and played a heart to the queen. When that held, he continued with the ♥K and North won and exited with a club, declarer winning and playing the ♥9. North won and switched to the ♦5 and declarer won and tried the spades, conceding one down when they failed to divide, -100.

Fans of the intra-finesse would have made this by playing a diamond to the eight at trick three, subsequently leading the ♦J from dummy to pin South's ten, but Levin's line looks best.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kalita</i>	<i>Nickell</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Katz</i>
-	-	1♣	Pass
1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

♠ J8			
♥ AJ75			
♦ KQ2			
♣ Q973			
♠ AQ75			♠ K64
♥ KQ			♥ 10932
♦ J9853			♦ A64
♣ 62			♣ AK8
			♠ 10932
			♥ 864
			♦ 107
			♣ J1054

Many Polish players use MAFIA - Majors always first in answering.

South led the ♥8 and North won and returned the ♥5. Now declarer had time to play on diamonds - a diamond to the ace and a diamond for the ten, jack and queen quickly delivering nine tricks, +600 and 12 IMPs.

Nickell led by 20 IMPs, 48-28.

https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67111

Board 17. Dealer North. None Vul.

♠ QJ2			
♥ A4			
♦ A2			
♣ QJ10953			
♠ 3			♠ K6
♥ Q9763			♥ K1085
♦ J876			♦ K10543
♣ A62			♣ K7
			♠ A1098754
			♥ J2
			♦ Q9
			♣ 84

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Meckstroth</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Rodwell</i>	<i>Kalita</i>
-	1NT	2♦*	3♥*
Pass	4♠	Pass	Pass
4NT*	Double	Pass	Pass
5♦	Double	All Pass	

- 2♦ Diamonds and a major, either longer
- 3♥ Invitational plus transfer
- 4NT Probably both red suits

South led the ♣4 (low from a doubleton in the Polish style) and declarer won with dummy's ace and played the diamond jack, North going up with the ace and returning the ♣9. Declarer won and played the ♥K, and when North won and played a third club he was two down, -300.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brink</i>	<i>Nickell</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Katz</i>
-	1♣	1NT*	2♠
4♦	4♠	All Pass	
1NT	5+♦ and 4♥/♠		

West led the ♦7 and declarer had to lose four tricks, -50 and 8 IMPs away.

Board 19. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

♠ AJ86			
♥ K86			
♦ QJ98			
♣ J2			
♠ -			♠ Q5432
♥ Q432			♥ 1097
♦ K106543			♦ A
♣ A108			♣ 9754
			♠ K1097
			♥ AJ5
			♦ 72
			♣ KQ63

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Meckstroth</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Rodwell</i>	<i>Kalita</i>
-	-	-	1♣
1♦	1♥*	Pass	2♠
Pass	4♠	All Pass	
1♥	4+♠		

West led an unlucky ♥3 and declarer won with the jack and played a diamond, West going up with the king (it cost nothing), East taking the ace and returning the ♣5. West won and played the ♦5 for East to ruff, but that was the last trick for the defence, declarer safely negotiating the trump break by playing on cross-ruff lines, +420.

♠ — ♥ Q432 ♦ K106543 ♣ A108	<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		♠ AJ86 ♥ K86 ♦ QJ98 ♣ J2 ♠ Q5432 ♥ 1097 ♦ A ♣ 9754 ♠ K1097 ♥ AJ5 ♦ 72 ♣ KQ63
	N										
W		E									
	S										

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brink</i>	<i>Nickell</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Katz</i>
-	-	-	1♣
1NT*	Double*	Pass	Pass
Redouble*	Pass	2♥	Pass
Pass	Double	All Pass	

1NT 5+♦ and a major
Double Values
Redble 4♥

South led the ♣K and declarer won with dummy's ace, played a diamond to the ace, ruffed a spade, ruffed a diamond, ruffed a spade and ruffed a diamond. South overruffed and played two rounds of hearts, so that was three down, -800 and a 9 IMP loss.

Board 22. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

♠ 976 ♥ 43 ♦ KQJ1084 ♣ 92	<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		♠ J4 ♥ J7 ♦ 632 ♣ Q108764 ♠ AK52 ♥ AQ1052 ♦ 5 ♣ AK3
	N										
W		E									
	S										

♠ Q1083
♥ K986
♦ A97
♣ J5

Open Room

	West	North	East	South
	<i>Meckstroth</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Rodwell</i>	<i>Kalita</i>
	-	-	1♣*	Double
	1♦*	Pass	1♥	Pass
	3♦	Pass	3NT	All Pass
1♣	16+ unbalanced or 17+ balanced			
1♦	6-7 points			

Al Hollander noted that according to the convention card the Polish pair's defence to a strong club was Crash, but the double does not match that. It was suggested that the bid showed majors or minors. It was an odd choice with such a defensive looking hand.

South led the ♠3 for the jack and king and declarer continued with a diamond to the king and a heart for the seven, ten and king. Back came the ♠Q and declarer won and played three rounds of hearts, South cashing out for one down, -100.

Closed Room


	West	North	East	South
	<i>Brink</i>	<i>Nickell</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Katz</i>
	-	-	1♥	Pass
	1NT	Pass	2♣*	Pass
	3♦	Pass	5♦	All Pass
2♣	15-17 or red suits or strong			

North led the ♠J and when declarer played dummy's ace South followed with the eight. Declarer played on diamonds and South took the second round and returned the ♠Q. Declarer won in dummy and played three rounds of clubs, ruffed and overruffed, drew the outstanding trump and played the ♠9, establishing a trick for dummy's ♠5, +600 and 12 IMPs. South's comment at the end was 'sorry, I made it easy'.

Had South followed to the first spade with the three, declarer might have been able to find the winning line, which is to play in similar fashion. Having won the second spade declarer cashes the top clubs, ruffs a club and then runs the trumps to reach a four-card ending where dummy has ♠52 ♥AQ. When a spade is discarded on the last trump, South, down to ♠108 ♥K9 is squeezed - discarding a spade results in a throw in, while

a heart allows declarer to drop the king. If declarer follows this line and South does pitch a heart when declarer plays a heart North must follow with the jack, trying to persuade declarer he started with ♥KJ. Declarer has to find this line and I suspect he would have done so, but it would be much easier if South has bid, which is one reason why I am not a fan of South's effort in the other room.

Board 29. Dealer North. All Vul.

♠ 6 ♥ J5 ♦ AJ10642 ♣ Q953		♠ 43 ♥ 10943 ♦ Q5 ♣ A10862	♠ AKQJ9 ♥ Q ♦ K987 ♣ K74
		♠ 108752 ♥ AK8762 ♦ 3 ♣ J	

Open Room

	West	North	East	South
	<i>Meckstroth</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Rodwell</i>	<i>Kalita</i>
	–	Pass	1♣*	3♥
	Double	4♥	4♠	Pass
	Pass	5♣	Pass*	5♥
	Pass	Pass	Double	All Pass
1♣	16+ unbalanced or 17+ balanced			
Dble	7+, no better bid available			

I leave you to judge the merits of South's intervention.

West led his spade and East won with the king, cashed the ♠J and the ♦K and then played the spade queen, West's ruff with the ♥Q representing the second undertrick, -500. 4♠ would have failed as long as the defenders adopt a forcing defence.

Closed Room

	West	North	East	South
	<i>Brink</i>	<i>Nickell</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Katz</i>
	–	Pass	1♠	Pass
	1NT	Pass	2♣*	Pass
	2♦*	Pass	2NT	Pass
	3♠*	Pass	4♣*	Pass
	4♦*	Pass	4NT*	Pass
	5♣*	Pass	5♦	All Pass
2♣	Gazzilli type			
2♦	Good hand opposite 15-17			
3♠	6♦ and a singleton			
4♣	Relay			
4♦	Minimum			
4NT	RKCB			
5♣	1 key card			

North led the ace of clubs and continued with the six for a rapid one down and 12 IMPs.

Blass edged the set 36-30, to trail 64-78.

https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67112

In the third session, Blass could manage only 8 IMPs over the 15 deals. However, they only conceded 14 IMPs to lose 6 on the set and trail 72-92.

Board 37. Dealer South. All Vul.

♠ 92 ♥ 762 ♦ 84 ♣ AK10976	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ J1085 ♥ Q95 ♦ AK102 ♣ 52
♠ Q764 ♥ AKJ ♦ Q6 ♣ Q843		♠ AK3 ♥ 10843 ♦ J9753 ♣ J

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Weinstein</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Levin</i>	<i>Brink</i>
-	-	-	Pass
1♣	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♠	Pass	Pass	Double
Pass	3♣*	Pass	3♦
Pass	Pass	Double	All Pass

Despite having virtually all his points in the opposition's suit South followed the principle of not going quietly when the opponents have shown a fit.

West led the ♦6 and East won with the king and cashed the ace, which cost the defenders a trick, two down, -500.

It reminds me of a deal from the Camrose Trials where Richard Winter and I had doubled a diamond contract and I led a low diamond from ♦Qx. Looking at ♦Kx partner withheld the king, so we only collected +800.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kalita</i>	<i>Rodwell</i>	<i>Nowosadzki</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>
-	-	-	Pass
1♣	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♠	All Pass		

South led the ♣J and when it held he switched to the ♥3. Declarer won with dummy's ace and played a spade to the jack and ace. He was soon claiming nine tricks, +140, but losing 8 IMPs.

Board 10. Dealer East. All Vul.

♠ K92 ♥ AQJ ♦ 5 ♣ AKQ975	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ Q743 ♥ 8 ♦ AQ1073 ♣ J102
♠ J65 ♥ 65432 ♦ J96 ♣ 43		♠ A108 ♥ K1097 ♦ K842 ♣ 86

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Weinstein</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Levin</i>	<i>Brink</i>
-	-	Pass	Pass
Pass	1♣*	1♦	Double*
Pass	2♦*	Pass	3♦
Double	Pass	Pass	3NT
All Pass			
1♣	2+♣		
Dble	4/5♥		
2♦	Strong		

West led a diamond and East's ace was the defenders trick, -690.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kalita</i>	<i>Rodwell</i>	<i>Nowosadzki</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>
-	-	Pass	Pass
Pass	1♣*	Pass	2♦*
Pass	3NT	All Pass	
1♣	16+ unbalanced or 17+ balanced		
2♦	8-10 balanced		

♠ K92	♠ Q743
♥ AQJ	♥ 8
♦ 5	♦ AQ1073
♣ AKQ975	♣ J102
♠ J65	♠ A108
♥ 65432	♥ K1097
♦ J96	♦ K842
♣ 43	♣ 86

When East led the ♦3 South announced, 'I have a monster for you'. West won with the ♦J and returned the six, but East with held the ace so there was no swing.
https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67114

Board 48. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ A3	♠ 109
♥ KJ	♥ Q10974
♦ J1053	♦ A987
♣ K10742	♣ A3
♠ J8542	♠ KQ76
♥ 632	♥ A85
♦ K2	♦ Q64
♣ QJ6	♣ 985

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Rodwell</i>	<i>Nowosadzki</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>	<i>Kalita</i>
-	-	1♥	Pass
1♠	Double	Pass*	2♠
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT
All Pass			
Pass	0-2 ♠		

East led the ♥9 which turned out to be all the help declarer needed. He won with the jack, ducked a club to West's jack, took the heart return and ducked another club, claiming nine tricks when the ace appeared, +600.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brink</i>	<i>Levin</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Weinstein</i>
-	-	1♥	Pass
2♥	All Pass		

South led the ♠K and switched to the ♥5 and when the king held North unblocked the ♠A, and continued with the ♥J, South winning and exiting with the ♥8. That more or less ensured one down, -50 but it was an 11 IMP swing.

Board 51. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

♠ 1032	♠ J95
♥ AJ	♥ KQ1053
♦ KQ942	♦ 76
♣ J92	♣ 876
♠ AK7	♠ Q864
♥ 7642	♥ 98
♦ J105	♦ A83
♣ K54	♣ AQ103

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Rodwell</i>	<i>Nowosadzki</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>	<i>Kalita</i>
-	1♦	1♥	Double*
2NT*	Pass	3♥	Double
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠
All Pass			
2NT	♥ support		

East led the ♥Q and declarer won and played a spade for the nine, queen and king. The heart return and club switch meant two down was a certainty, and unsure of the position East was eventually allowed to ruff a diamond with the ♠J and play a heart, promoting West's ♠7 into a third defensive trick, -300.

♠ AK7	♠ 1032	♠ J95
♥ 7642	♥ AJ	♥ KQ1053
♦ J105	♦ KQ942	♦ 76
♣ K54	♣ J92	♣ 876
		♠ Q864
		♥ 98
		♦ A83
		♣ AQ103

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brink</i>	<i>Levin</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Weinstein</i>
–	Pass	Pass	1♣
Pass	1♦	1♥	Double*
2♥	2NT	Pass	3♦
3♥	All Pass		

Double 3♦

South led a trump and the defenders gave nothing away, two down, -100 and 9 IMPs, Nickell still ahead but only by 11 IMPs.

Round about here the Director mentioned the slow rate of play, Levin concurring and adding that 'the bridge had been terrible'.

Board 53. Dealer South. All Vul.

♠ 642	♠ —
♥ 85	♥ QJ9762
♦ AQ742	♦ K105
♣ AJ2	♣ KQ94
♠ J985	♠ AKQ1073
♥ A3	♥ K104
♦ 9863	♦ J
♣ 853	♣ 1076

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Rodwell</i>	<i>Nowosadzki</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>	<i>Kalita</i>
–	–	–	1♠
Pass	2♣*	2♥	2♠
Pass	4♠	All Pass	
2♣	2+♣		

Naturally West led the ♥A and that proved to be fatal. Declarer ducked the club switch to East's queen, won the heart return, cashed the ♠A, played a diamond to the ace, ruffed a diamond and played the ♥10. West ruffed (discarding does not help) and declarer discarded dummy's ♣J and was able to organise a club ruff for +620.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brink</i>	<i>Levin</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Weinstein</i>
–	–	–	1♠
Pass	1NT*	2♥	2♠
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

1NT Almost forcing

Here too West led the ♥A and switched to a club, but declarer went up with dummy's ace and played a spade to the ace. When the diamond finesse lost he was two down and the 13 IMP swing gave Blass the lead, 108-101.

Board 57. Dealer South. None Vul.

♠ 10652	♠ AK4	♠ 983
♥ KQ2	♥ 963	♥ J1084
♦ K1074	♦ A9865	♦ 3
♣ 92	♣ J5	♣ 108743

♠ QJ7	♠ 983
♥ A75	♥ J1084
♦ QJ2	♦ 3
♣ AKQ6	♣ 108743



Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Rodwell</i>	<i>Nowosadzki</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>	<i>Kalita</i>
-	-	-	1♣
Pass	1♦	Pass	2NT
Pass	4NT	Pass	6NT
All Pass			

It is clear that if West leads a heart the contract will fail. I have not had time to ask David Bird's computer, but I have a sneaking suspicion it would not take long to lead the ♥K. When West went with the ♠2 declarer won with dummy's ace and played a diamond for the queen and king, quickly claiming the rest, +990.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brink</i>	<i>Levin</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Weinstein</i>
-	-	-	1♣
Pass	1♦	Pass	2NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

Here too West led a spade, but +490 meant a loss of 11 IMPs. If Rodwell had led the ♥Q the swing would have been the other way. The last three deals offered no opportunities. Blass had outscored Nickell 51-9 to win 123-101.

https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67117



Getting the Point

The Editor looks at one of the most difficult events of the year, the Reisinger..

San Francisco played host to the 2019 Fall Nationals, which features what is arguably the toughest event in the calendar.

The Reisinger is a six-session open event scored by board-a-match with two qualifying, two semi-final and two final sessions, considered the toughest on the ACBL tournament calendar.

It employs Board-A-Match (BAM) scoring where instead of the more common IMP comparison (where, for example +620 at one table is compared with, say down 1, -100 at the other table for a 720-point swing converted to 12 IMPs), the BAM score is more rudimentary. The board is scored as either a Win a Loss or a Tie. If the N/S pair is +620 and the E/W pair at the other table is +100, the result is 1-0 - a full win. If a team is -800 East-West at one table and also -2,000 by North-South at the other table, it is simply a loss or 0-1. If both tables achieve the same score, say +170 at each table, it is a tie and 0.5 for each team. At the end of the session, each team adds up its ties and wins. Over 26 boards, an average session is 13 points. Whoever gets the most points in the event is the winner.

You can win a board in BAM by the smallest of margins. If the N/S pair is +130 in a part-score, and their counterparts play in 2NT, making +120, they would get a full 1-0 on the board. If it were IMP scoring, this scenario would produce a flat board – 0 IMPs (since 0-10 on the IMP scale isn't worth even 1 IMP).

Very few tournaments use this form of scoring, yet many experts consider it the 'purest' form of the game. It is an easy form of scoring to understand, even for a non-player.

Lots of stamina and concentration are required. You never know when a trick can be the difference between a win and a loss. At no point can you relax, even though many of the tricks won/lost will be irrelevant. If you are fighting hard for an overtrick in 2♥, but your counterparts are in 4♥, your result won't matter (the board is already won or lost at the other table). Yet, the other table might be +120 on your cards and your effort to turn +110 into +140 will be worth everything!

The 42 teams who entered the lists were whittled down to the ten who

would contest the final, playing two mini matches of three deals against each other, making average 30.00.

The finalists comprised a myriad assortment of World and National Champions -we can see how things unravelled thanks to BBO, who covered all ten tables through both sessions.

Team Lavazza scored heavily in the semi-final, their score of 50.57 giving them an almost-maximum carryover into the final of 4.82.

Here is how things stood as the final got under way:

		C/O
Lavazza	Norberto Bocchi, Antonio Sementa, Dennis Bilde, Agustin Madala, Philippe Cronier, Giorgio Duboin	4.82
Fleisher	Martin Fleisher, Chip Martel, Joe Grue, Brad Moss, Geoff Hampson, Eric Greco	3.04
Bid 72	Jan Van Cleeff, Marina Wiltvliet, Matthias Felmy, Iain Sime	1.79
Rippey	Mike Rippey, Kamil Nowak, Leonardo Cima, Giovanni Donati, Tarek Sadek, Walid Elahmady	1.25
Lebowitz	Laurence Lebowitz, Adam Grossack, Zachary Grossack, Michael Rosenberg, Fredrik Nystrom, Johan Upmark	1.25
Crouch	Peter Crouch, Simon Cope, Espen Erichsen, Fredrik Helness	0.79
Blass	Jacek Pszczola, Michal Nowosadzki, Jacek Kalita, Sjoert Brink, Sebastiaan Drijver, Josef Blass (NPC)	0.32
Ventin	Diego Brenner, Miguel Villas-Boas, Frederic Wrang, Antonio Palma, Juan Carlos Ventin (NPC)	0.22
Nickell	Nick Nickell, Ralph Katz, Jeff Meckstroth, Eric Rodwell, Robert Levin, Steve Weinstein,	0.14
Weinstein	Howard Weinstein, Michael Becker, Bob Hamman, Peter Weichsel, Liam Milne, Andy Hung,	0.00

Final 1

Board 1. Dealer North. None Vul.

♠ 642 ♥ 5 ♦ J543 ♣ QJ1083	<div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #008000; color: white; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ KQ97 ♥ 103 ♦ AQ109 ♣ 962	♠ A3 ♥ AQ9876 ♦ 8762 ♣ 4
	♠ J1085 ♥ KJ42 ♦ K ♣ AK75		

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kalita</i>	<i>Weinstein</i>	<i>Nowosadzki</i>	<i>Levin</i>
–	1♦	1♥	Double
Pass	1♠	2♥	3NT
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

I wonder why North overruled South's suggestion that 3NT was the place to play. That might well have seen declarer take eleven tricks.

East led the ♣4 and declarer won with dummy's king, unblocked the ♦K and played the ♠J. East won with the ace, cashed the ♥A, continued with the ♥6 for West to ruff and ruffed the club return for one down, +50.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Katz</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Nickell</i>	<i>Brink</i>
–	1NT	2♦*	Double
Pass*	Pass	2♥	Pass
Pass	Double	All Pass	

2♦ Hearts
Pass Suggests diamonds

2♥ was hopeless, declarer losing a spade, two hearts, four diamonds and a club for three down, -500 and a loss.

You can replay this deal at:

https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67238

Final 2

Board 6. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

♠ 1097 ♥ 87432 ♦ A964 ♣ 3	<div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #008000; color: white; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ A83 ♥ Q5 ♦ J7532 ♣ 985	♠ J64 ♥ A9 ♦ KQ108 ♣ KJ42
	♠ KQ52 ♥ KJ106 ♦ – ♣ AQ1076		

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Weinstein</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Levin</i>
–	–	1♣	Pass
1♦*	Pass	1NT	Double
2♦	3♦	Pass	4♦

All Pass
1♦ Hearts
I wonder why North bid 3♦?

Commentating on BBO, Roland Wald summed this up nicely 'N/S can make a part score in clubs or let E/W go down in a number of diamonds. 4♦ is not a good contract for either side.

Levin had not seen the alert of 1♦, but he got no redress. He managed six tricks, -400.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Katz	Bilde	Nickell	Madala
-	-	1♦	Double
2♦	Pass	Pass	Double
Pass	2♠	All Pass	

♠ A83		♠ J64									
♥ Q5		♥ A9									
♦ J7532		♦ KQ108									
♣ 985		♣ KJ42									
♠ 1097	<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		♠ KQ52
	N										
W		E									
	S										
♥ 87432		♥ KJ106									
♦ A964		♦ -									
♣ 3		♣ AQ1076									

East led the ♦K and declarer ruffed in dummy and played the ♥J followed by the ♥6, East winning and returning the ♦8. Declarer ruffed in dummy and pitched a club on the ♥10 as East ruffed and exited with the ♦10. Declarer ruffed with dummy's queen and pitched another club on the ♥K. East ruffed and exited with a spade and that left declarer looking at eight tricks, +110 and a win.

In the match between Blass and Lebowitz East opened 1♦ and South doubled. Lebowitz raised to 2♦ and when Brink doubled again Drijver converted it, +200. In the replay Kalita bid 3♦ and when Nystrom doubled again Upmark converted it. However, the defenders failed to extract the maximum and the result was a tie.

You can replay this deal at:

https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67247

https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67241

https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67241

Final 3

Board 7. Dealer South. All Vul.

♠ 43		♠ AJ652									
♥ Q10975		♥ K64									
♦ Q		♦ AK987									
♣ AK962		♣ -									
♠ 10987	<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		♠ KQ
	N										
W		E									
	S										
♥ 832		♥ AJ									
♦ J642		♦ 1053									
♣ J5		♣ Q108743									

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Cima</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Donati</i>	<i>Brink</i>
-	-	-	1♣
Pass	1♥	2♣*	Pass*
2♠	3♣	Double*	Pass
3♦	4♣	Double*	Pass
4♠	Pass	Pass	5♣
Double	All Pass		
2♣	♠/♦		
Pass	Not 3♥		
Dble	Good hand		

Clearly 5♣ was unbeatable, so +750.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kalita</i>	<i>Nowak</i>	<i>Nowosadski</i>	<i>Rippey</i>
-	-	-	1♣
Pass	1♥	1♠	2♣
Pass	5♣	Double	All Pass

Would you have raised to 2♠ with West's hand? In my experience it is rarely wrong to show four card support, and your safety net is that partner knows you have a poor hand because you did not bid 2♥. However, as we saw at the other table, you still have to find the paying save in 5♠.

There was an accident in the match between Ventin and Lavazza; Madala opened 1♣ and when Bilde responded 1♦ to show hearts, Villas-Boas bid 2♣, which Brenner passed.

Cope and Crouch achieved a win for their team against Bid72 by not doubling 5♣, while Becker and Weinstein conceded the point to Fleisher by stopping in 4♣.

You can replay this deal at:

- https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&linurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67239
- https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&linurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67259
- https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&linurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67256

Final 4

Board 12. Dealer West. N/S Vul.

♠ 7532 ♥ 52 ♦ 853 ♣ KJ85	♠ AJ106 ♥ K4 ♦ J1062 ♣ 972		♠ Q94 ♥ 983 ♦ K94 ♣ Q1064
♠ K8 ♥ AQJ1076 ♦ AQ7 ♣ A3			

Open Room

	West	North	East	South
	<i>Lebowitz</i>	<i>F Helness</i>	<i>Grossack</i>	<i>Erichsen</i>
	Pass	Pass	Pass	2♣*
	Pass	2♦*	Pass	2♥
	Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT
	Pass	4NT	All Pass	
2♣	Strong			
2♦	Waiting/positive			

When East led the ♥3 declarer won in hand and ran the ♦10, quickly claiming all the tricks, +720.

Closed Room

	West	North	East	South
	<i>Crouch</i>	<i>Upmark</i>	<i>Cope</i>	<i>Nystrom</i>
	Pass	Pass	Pass	1♣*
	Pass	1♥*	Pass	1♠*
	Pass	2♣*	Pass	2♦*
	Pass	2♥*	Pass	2♠*
	Pass	4♣*	Pass	4NT*
	All Pass			
1♣	2+♣, 12-14 NT or 17+-19 NT or 11-22, natural (4)5+♣ (4-card only if 4414)			
1♥	4+♥ Forcing for one round but may be very weak			
1♠	Usually balanced with 2-3 card major.			

This was a long relay sequence, where South was asking all the questions, discovering that North was 4243 with 5 zz Points (A=3, K=2, Q=1).

West led the ♣5 and declarer won and cashed his hearts, eventually rejecting the diamond finesse (both defenders had pitched a diamond) thereby taking only ten tricks and losing the board.

Given that without a club lead 12 tricks are a certainty you want to be in slam.

West	North	East	South
<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Brink</i>
Pass	Pass	Pass	2♣*
Pass	2♦*	Pass	2♥*
Pass	2♠	Pass	3♥*
Pass	4♦*	Pass	4♥
Pass	4NT*	Pass	5♦*
Pass	5♠*	Pass	6♥
Pass	6NT	All Pass	

- 2♣ Any game force
- 2♦ Relay
- 2♥ Kokish
- 2♠ Forced
- 3♥ 6+♥, no four-card suit
- 4♦ Agrees hearts, no club control
- 4NT RKCB
- 5♦ 3 key cards
- 5♠ Asking
- 6♥ ♥Q, no minor suit king

♠ AJ106	♠ Q94
♥ K4	♥ 983
♦ J1062	♦ K94
♣ 972	♣ Q1064
♠ 7532	♠ K8
♥ 52	♥ AQJ1076
♦ 853	♦ AQ7
♣ KJ85	♣ A3

https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67260

Final 5

Board 13. Dealer North. All Vul.

♠ A1063	♠ K82
♥ KQ10953	♥ A87
♦ 4	♦ KQ985
♣ K9	♣ 102
♠ J974	♠ Q5
♥ 4	♥ J62
♦ 10632	♦ AJ7
♣ AJ64	♣ Q8753

East led the ♣4 and declarer took dummy's ace, crossed to the ♥K and ran the ♦10, +1470.

West	North	East	South
<i>Kalita</i>	<i>Bilde</i>	<i>Nowosadzki</i>	<i>Madala</i>
Pass	Pass	1♣	Double
Pass	1♠	Pass	4♥
Pass	5♥	All Pass	

With a useful card in partner's suit, and the likely hood that any required diamond finesse would be right South's final Pass looks conservative. Keep in mind that 6♥ would not be good enough to save the board.

Van Cleef and Wilviet reached 6♥, enough to win against the other room's 4♥.

You can replay this deal at:

https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67255

https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67257

https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67262

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brenner</i>	<i>Weinstein</i>	<i>Villas-Boas</i>	<i>Levin</i>
-	2♦*	Pass	2♥
All Pass			
2♦	4♠ and 5♥ (6♥), 11-16		


South's options over 2♦, included an invitational 3♥, but he went quietly. West led the ♦3 and declarer emerged with 11 tricks, slipping a spade past East's king.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Katz</i>	<i>Palma</i>	<i>Nickell</i>	<i>Wrang</i>
-	1♥	Pass	2♥*
Pass	3♥	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

The defenders took their tricks here, but +620 was a loss.

Board 14. Dealer East. None Vul.

♠ 10983		♠ —
♥ 4		♥ AKJ97
♦ KQ9843		♦ J752
♣ 97		♣ Q642
♠ AQ7652		♠ KJ4
♥ 108		♥ Q6532
♦ 10		♦ A6
♣ KJ108		♣ A53

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brenner</i>	<i>Weinstein</i>	<i>Villas-Boas</i>	<i>Levin</i>
–	–	1♥	Pass
1NT*	Pass	2♦	Pass
3♣	Pass	3NT	All Pass
1NT	5+♠		

North led the ♠9 and when the ♥7 was pitched from dummy South put up the king and declarer won with the ace and played a club for the queen and ace, South returning the ♠J. Declarer won, cashed his clubs and then ran the ♥10, finishing four down, -200.

In the match between Crouch and Lavazza, after 1♥-Pass-1♠ Bilde overcalled 3♦ and when Madala tried 3NT, Crouch doubled and led the ♣10 for four down, +800 and a win against the 4♠ - 3 at the other table.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Katz</i>	<i>Palma</i>	<i>Nickell</i>	<i>Wrang</i>
–	–	1♥	Pass
2♠	All Pass		
2♠	Invitational		

North led the ♦K (a heart works well) and continued with the eight. Declarer ruffed, cashed the ♠A and exited with a spade, South winning with the jack and exiting with the ♥6. When the ♥10 held declarer played another spade and South won and played the ♥5. North could ruff that, but declarer had the rest, +110.

Have you spotted South's mistake?

Suppose he exits with the ♥Q at trick 5! Declarer wins in dummy and plays a club, but South goes in with the ace, gives partner a heart ruff, ruffs the diamond return and plays another heart, promoting North's ♠10 into the setting trick.

That may give you a clue as to the error made by declarer.

Instead of cashing the ♠A, declarer should duck a spade. By retaining control of the trump suit declarer avoids the promotion and arrives at eight tricks.


You can replay these deals at:

https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67265

https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67271

Final 6

Board 16. Dealer West. E/W Vul.

♠ KQJ983		♠ 4
♥ 2		♥ KJ98743
♦ AKJ87		♦ Q2
♣ 10		♣ AJ2
♠ A1062		♠ 75
♥ 5		♥ AQ106
♦ 109643		♦ 5
♣ 873		♣ KQ9654

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Nowak</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Rippey</i>
Pass	1♠	3♥	3NT
Pass	4♦	Pass	4♠
Pass	4NT*	Pass	5♣*
Pass	5♠	All Pass	
	4NT	RKCB	
	5♣	1 key card	

♠ KQJ983		♠ 4
♥ 2		♥ KJ98743
♦ AKJ87		♦ Q2
♣ 10		♣ AJ2
♠ A1062	W N E	♠ 75
♥ 5	W N E	♥ AQ106
♦ 109643	W N E	♦ 5
♣ 873	W N E	♣ KQ9654

If South passes over 3♥ and North re-opens with a double then 800 is just about a sure thing.

East led the ♥3 and declarer put in dummy's queen, cashed his top diamonds and continued with the ♦8. When East could not produce the ♠10 declarer ruffed and tried the ♥A, ruffed by West with the ♠6 and overruffed by declarer, who ruffed another diamond, ruffed a heart and played the ♠J. He was sure of 11 tricks, +450.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Donati</i>	<i>Bilde</i>	<i>Cima</i>	<i>Madala</i>
Pass	1♠	2♥	Pass
Pass	4♠	Pass	4NT
Pass	5♠	All Pass	

Here South was presumably prepared to defend 2♥ doubled. He showed the nature of his hand on the next round.

East led the ♦2 and declarer won with the jack, played a heart to the queen and tried to cash the ace. When West ruffed with the ♠6 declarer overruffed and ruffed a diamond before playing a spade. He was left with three losers, -50 and a loss.

If declarer cashes a diamond honour before ruffing a diamond, he can follow the line adopted at the other table.

Not a single North saw fit to re-open with a double.

Peter Weichsel was the only player not to overcall on the East hand - he deserved better than a tied board.

You can replay this deal at:

https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67272

https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67270
https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67267
https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67269
https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67273

Final 7

Board 21. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

♠ 84		♠ AK75
♥ KJ8765		♥ AQ
♦ 2		♦ K3
♣ J865		♣ AK1072
♠ J63	W N E	♠ Q1092
♥ 92	W N E	♥ 1043
♦ Q654	W N E	♦ AJ10987
♣ Q943	W N E	♣ —

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Katz</i>	<i>Nowak</i>	<i>Nickell</i>	<i>Rippey</i>
–	Pass	2♣*	Pass
2♦*	Pass	2NT	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

2♦ 0-1 controls

With a horrible hand to lead from South went with the ♦7 and declarer won with the king, cashed the ♠A followed by the ♠5. South took the queen and cashed the ♦A, the last trick for the defence, +460.

Closed Room

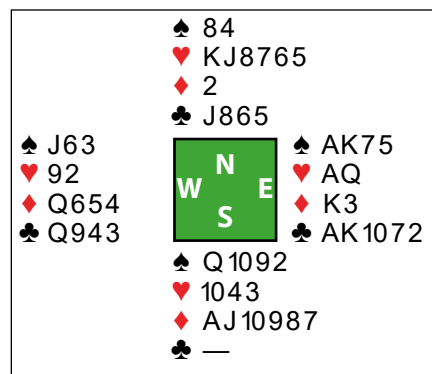
West	North	East	South
<i>Donati</i>	<i>Weinstein</i>	<i>Cima</i>	<i>Levin</i>
-	2♥	Double	4♥
Pass	Pass	Double	All Pass

East led the ♠A and when West followed with the ♠6 he cashed the king and switched to the ♦3 (echoing the play he made on Board 16) and declarer won with dummy's ace, pitched a club on the ♠Q and then played the ♠10. (It's best to ruff a diamond and ruff a club first. Declarer can then play a diamond and pitch a club if West does not cover, escaping for one down.) West ruffed with the nine and now declarer could not avoid two down and a loss, as East could over-ruff the third round of diamonds and draw dummy's remaining trump.

The strongest defence is to switch to clubs at trick two, forcing dummy to ruff. Then as long as West covers the third round of diamonds with the queen, the defenders will collect 800.

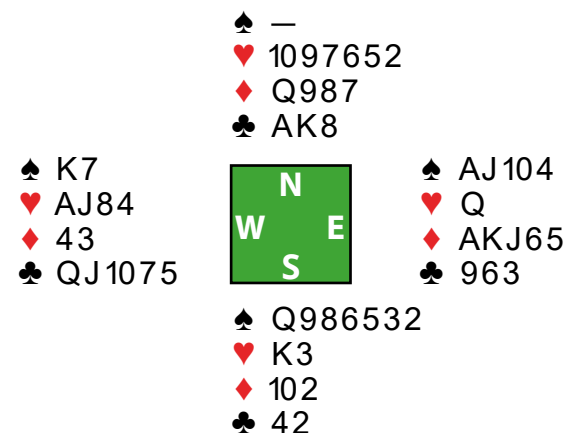
You can replay this deal at:

- https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67264
- https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67268
- https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67279
- https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67284
- https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67282



Final 8

Board 23. Dealer South. All Vul.



Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Van Cleeff</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Wilvliet</i>
-	-	-	Pass
1♣	2♥	3♣*	Pass
3NT	All Pass		
3♣	Diamonds		

North led the ♥6 for the queen, king and four and declarer won the next round with the ace, pitching dummy's ♦5 and played the ♣10. North won with the king and played the ♥10 and declarer won, parting with dummy's ♦6. When he played the ♣5, North won and cashed his hearts for two down, -200.

If declarer retains four diamonds in dummy, throwing the ♠4, he can cross to dummy with a diamond and run the spade ten. A spade to the king is followed by a diamond finesse and then the ♠A squeezes North. Perhaps a little double-dummy?

As the cards lie, declarer would have had an easy time if he had won the first heart, one possibility being to .

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sime</i>	<i>Bilde</i>	<i>Felmy</i>	<i>Madala</i>
–	–	–	2♠
Pass	Pass	3♦	All Pass

When West took the low road South led the ♣4 and North won and switched to the ♥7. That gave declarer an easy route to ten tricks, +130 and a win.

Had South started with a spade the defenders would have been in a position to defeat 3♦ via a cross-ruff.

Nick Nickell preferred to bid 2NT with the East hand after the same 2♠ opening and that gave partner an easy raise via 3♣. It proved to be a win when Fleisher passed at the other table.

You can replay this deal at:

- https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67281
- https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67277
- https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67275
- https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67283

Final 9

Board 26. Dealer East. All Vul.

♠ Q2 ♥ AJ852 ♦ J9863 ♣ 4		♠ 1096 ♥ KQ64 ♦ Q ♣ KQJ65
♠ 8543 ♥ 10973 ♦ 75 ♣ A98	♠ AKJ7 ♥ – ♦ AK1042 ♣ 10732	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Lebowitz</i>	<i>Nowak</i>	<i>Grossack</i>	<i>Rippey</i>
–	–	1♣	1♦
Double*	4♦	All Pass	

West led the ♥10 so declarer took all the tricks, +170.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Donati</i>	<i>Upmark</i>	<i>Cima</i>	<i>Nystrom</i>
–	–	1♣*	1♦
Pass	3♥*	Pass	3♠
Pass	5♦	All Pass	
1♣	2+♣		
3♥	Fit jump		

West led the ♣A, giving the defenders a trick.

Should North have done more, bidding 4♣ over 3♠?

West	North	East	South
<i>Martel</i>	<i>Bilde</i>	<i>Fleisher</i>	<i>Madala</i>
–	–	1♣*	1♦
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠
Pass	3♦	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♣*	Pass	4NT*
Pass	5♣*	Double	Pass*
Pass	6♦	All Pass	
1♣	2+♣		
4♣	Cue-bid		
4NT	RKCB		
5♣	1 key card		
Pass	Not first round club control		

If North had been able to redouble to show first round club control then I suspect South would have bid 7♦. Moss & Grue stopped in 5♦ in the other room.

Weinstein-Becker and Weinstein-Levin also bid 6♦ to win the point for their respective teams.

You can replay this deal at:

https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67280
https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67276
https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67274
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https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67285

Final 10


This was little of interest in this round, although Madala and Bilde had a defensive misunderstanding to flatten a deal they should have won hands down.

You can replay these deals at:

https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67287
https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67300
https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67297
https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67302

Final 11

Board 32. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

♠ 9 ♥ K4 ♦ 96432 ♣ KJ862		♠ 43 ♥ A109753 ♦ J1085 ♣ 4
♠ AQJ872 ♥ 62 ♦ KQ ♣ 1075		

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Donati</i>	<i>Cronier</i>	<i>Cima</i>	<i>Duboin</i>
-	1NT	3♥	4♥*
Double	4♠	All Pass	
4♥	Spades		

East led the ♣4 and declarer played low from dummy, taking West's king with the ace and playing three rounds of trumps. When West threw the ♥4 declarer continued with the ♣10, covered by the jack and queen. It was then a simple matter to eliminate the minor suits before playing a heart, the enforced ruff and discard giving declarer a vital overtrick.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Madala</i>	<i>Elahmady</i>	<i>Bilde</i>	<i>Sadek</i>
-	1NT	2♦*	4♥*
Double	4♠	All Pass	

Once again East led the ♣4, but declarer took only two rounds of trumps before playing a heart, +650 and a zero.


Bas Drijver was another declarer to notch up twelve tricks - having won the club lead and drawn trumps he played the ♣10 and West failed to cover.

You can replay this deal at:

https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67305
https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67293
https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67291

Final 12

Board 35. Dealer West. None Vul.

♠ J643 ♥ 93 ♦ 1052 ♣ QJ32		♠ AK82 ♥ J108 ♦ AQ7 ♣ A87
♠ 107 ♥ AQ765 ♦ K943 ♣ K4		♠ Q95 ♥ K42 ♦ J86 ♣ 10965

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kalita</i>	<i>Rosenberg</i>	<i>Nowosadzki</i>	<i>Grossack</i>
1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass
1NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

One Heart promised 5 and the rebid was consistent with 11-14. +520.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nystrom</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Upmark</i>	<i>Brink</i>
1♥	Pass	2♣*	Pass
2♥	Pass	2♠*	Pass
3NT*	Pass	4♣*	Pass
4♦*	Pass	4♥*	Pass
4NT*	Pass	5♣*	Pass
5♦*	Pass	6NT	All Pass
3NT	2542, 8-10 zz points		
4♦	8 zz points		
4NT	1A,2K,1Q		
5♦	No ♥K		


After the game forcing 2♣ East relayed to the slam, +1020 for the wine.
 Van Cleeff and Wilviet reached 6♥ - and that lost them the board when Bilde and Madala got to 6NT.

You can replay this deal at:

https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67298
https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67299
https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67295
https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67312
https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67313

Final 13

Board 37. Dealer East. All Vul.

♠ A974 ♥ 7 ♦ AJ873 ♣ K76		♠ J108 ♥ K863 ♦ KQ952 ♣ 10
♠ KQ63 ♥ J2 ♦ 64 ♣ QJ952		♠ 52 ♥ AQ10954 ♦ 10 ♣ A843

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Milne</i>	<i>Cronier</i>	<i>Hung</i>	<i>Duboin</i>
-	-	Pass	1♥
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♥
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

West led the ♠K and declarer ducked, a play that is easy to overlook. If West plays a second spade declarer wins, plays a heart to the queen and continues with the ace and another heart. East wins and plays a spade, but declarer ruffs, draws the last trump and plays a diamond to the ace and a diamond, pitching a club. He wins the club exit and cashes the last heart squeezing West.

♠ KQ63	♠ A974	♠ J108						
♥ J2	♥ 7	♥ K863						
♦ 64	♦ AJ873	♦ KQ952						
♣ QJ952	♣ K76	♣ 10						
<table style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">W</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">N</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">E</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">S</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"></td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"></td> </tr> </table>			W	N	E	S		
W	N	E						
S								
♠ 52	♠ 52	♠ 52						
♥ AQ10954	♥ AQ10954	♥ AQ10954						
♦ 10	♦ 10	♦ 10						
♣ A843	♣ A843	♣ A843						

East played the ♠J at trick one and West switched to the ♣Q. Declarer won with dummy's king and played on trumps, East taking the third round and exiting with the ♦K. Declarer won with dummy's ace, ruffed the ♦J, and drew the last trump pitching a diamond. That forced West to pitch a spade, but declarer played a spade to the ace, ruffed a spade and played a low club to endplay West.

To defeat 4♥ West must lead a diamond (or an unlikely low club). Frederic Wrang was the only one to find a diamond lead. The point is that when East comes in with the ♥K a club switch is awkward. If declarer wins in hand, draws the last trump and plays a spade the final hurdle for the defence is that West must play a spade honour so as to be able to play a second club when declarer ducks.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Madala</i>	<i>Weichsel</i>	<i>Bilde</i>	<i>Hamman</i>
-	-	Pass	1♥
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♥
Pass	2♠	Pass	3♣*
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

East led the ♠J and declarer took the third round of the suit and played on hearts. That was good for nine tricks - but not for the point, as when East came in with the ♥K he switched to the ♣10 which broke up the impending squeeze on West and ensuring that the point went to Lavazza.

You can replay this deal at:

https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67320

https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67311
https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67308

Final 14

Board 41. Dealer East. None Vul.

♠ 96	♠ A3	♠ KQJ1072						
♥ Q104	♥ J8753	♥ K						
♦ J752	♦ KQ96	♦ A104						
♣ 9742	♣ 103	♣ K86						
<table style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">W</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">N</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">E</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">S</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"></td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"></td> </tr> </table>			W	N	E	S		
W	N	E						
S								
♠ 854	♠ 854	♠ 854						
♥ A962	♥ A962	♥ A962						
♦ 83	♦ 83	♦ 83						
♣ AQJ5	♣ AQJ5	♣ AQJ5						

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Milne</i>	<i>Levin</i>	<i>Hung</i>	<i>Weinstein</i>
-	-	1♠	Pass
1NT	Pass	3♠	All Pass

Many years ago I suggested that it was a good idea to respond to an opening bid with sub-standard hands, a theory endorsed by Larry Cohen in The Law of Total Tricks. Here it resulted in N/S being shut out of the bidding.

South led the ♦8 and declarer took North's queen and played the ♥K, South winning with the ace and playing a second diamond. North won and switched to the ♣10 and when the smoke had cleared the contract was three down, -150.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Rodwell	Weichsel	Meckstroth	Hamman
-	-	1♣*	Pass
1♦*	1♥	1♠	2♠*
Pass	3♦	Pass	4♥
All Pass			
	1♣	RM Precision	
	1♦	0-7	
	2♠	Good heart raise	

♠ A3			
♥ J8753			
♦ KQ96			
♣ 103			
♠ 96		♠ KQJ1072	
♥ Q104		♥ K	
♦ J752		♦ A104	
♣ 9742		♣ K86	
		♠ 854	
		♥ A962	
		♦ 83	
		♣ AQJ5	

Declarer won the spade lead and played the ♣10 covered by the king and ace. Two more clubs took care of the losing spade and declarer continued with a diamond for the king and ace. He ruffed the spade return, played a heart to the ace and then cross-ruffed the minors for eleven tricks.

Elsewhere Jan Van Cleeff saved in 4♠ and when South started by cashing his aces he escaped for -300 - still a loss as they failed to bid 4♥ at the other table.

Board 42. Dealer South. N/S Vul.

♠ 10			
♥ KJ984			
♦ Q108654			
♣ 10			
♠ KQJ52		♠ A864	
♥ 76		♥ 10532	
♦ AK3		♦ J72	
♣ 963		♣ 74	
		♠ 973	
		♥ AQ	
		♦ 9	
		♣ AKQJ852	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Milne	Levin	Hung	Weinstein
-	-	-	1♣
1♠	Double*	3♠	Double
Pass	4♥	Pass	5♣
Pass	5♦	Pass	5♥
All Pass			

Perhaps South was hoping to see his partner bid 3NT over his double. East started with two rounds of spades and declarer ruffed, crossed to the ♥A and overtook the queen. When West discarded on the third round the game was up and the contract was four down. If hearts had been 3-3 East would have needed to switch to a minor suit at trick two. If he plays a diamond West wins but must then switch to a club.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Rodwell	Weichsel	Meckstroth	Hamman
-	-	-	1♣
1♠	2♦*	3♠	5♣
All Pass			
2♦	Hearts		

West led the ♦K and when East followed with the ♦2 he switched to a trump, the quickest way to ensure one down, but of no use given the result at the other table.

5♣ was allowed to make at one table - West led the ♦K and switched to the ♠K. East overtook it and returned a diamond, allowing declarer to ruff a losing spade for his eleventh trick.

You can replay these deals at:

https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67316

https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67306


https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67315

https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67309

https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67314

Final 15

Board 45. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ 104 ♥ AKJ8 ♦ 96532 ♣ 73		♠ AK3 ♥ Q1063 ♦ AK8 ♣ A92	♠ Q95 ♥ 9742 ♦ J4 ♣ KJ108
♠ J8762 ♥ 5 ♦ Q107 ♣ Q654			

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Madala</i>	<i>Rosenberg</i>	<i>Bilde</i>	<i>Grossack</i>
–	–	Pass	Pass
1♥	Double	3♣*	3♠
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

3♣ Weak heart raise

When N/S could not find a route to 4♠ West's tactical opening was a success. East led the ♥7 and West won with the king and switched to the ♣7 for the nine, ten and queen. Three rounds of spades put East on lead and he exited with the ♣K. That left declarer with nine tricks, +600.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nystrom</i>	<i>Cronier</i>	<i>Upmark</i>	<i>Duboin</i>
–	–	Pass	Pass
1♥	Double	3♥*	3♠
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

South was marked with at most one heart, which made it highly likely that he held five spades. West led the ♥K and switched to the ♠10 and declarer won and played to ruff three hearts, eventually playing a club to the ace and a club for ten tricks and a win.


Hereabouts Lavazza had a narrow lead - on this deal their closest challengers scored a point when West opened 1♥ and East saw fit to bid 4♥ over North's 3NT, which cost 800. However, Blass lost the other two deals to fall further behind. These two teams were around three points clear of the rest and they were to meet in the next round with Lavazza ahead, 30.82-28.82.6

You can replay this deal at:

https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67330
https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67323
https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67325
https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67321
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Final 16

Board 46. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

♠ QJ2 ♥ J74 ♦ AQ1097 ♣ K2		♠ A7653 ♥ 8 ♦ 432 ♣ AQ97	♠ – ♥ KQ9652 ♦ KJ5 ♣ 10653
♠ K10984 ♥ A103 ♦ 86 ♣ J84			

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kalita</i>	<i>Cronier</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Duboin</i>
-	-	-	Pass
1♦	1♠	2♦*	4♠
All Pass			
	2♦	Hearts	

East led the ♥K and declarer won with dummy's ace and played the ♠10 to the ace, East pitching the ♥9. Declarer exited with a diamond and West won with the nine and played the ♠Q, declarer winning with dummy's king and playing a second diamond. West took the ace, cashed the ♠J and exited with a heart. Declarer ruffed, ruffed a diamond, and with a decent inferential count played a low club to the queen and cashed the ace, +420.

♠ A7653			
♥ 8			
♦ 432			
♣ AQ97			
♠ QJ2			♠ —
♥ J74			♥ KQ9652
♦ AQ1097			♦ KJ5
♣ K2			♣ 10653
			♠ K10984
			♥ A103
			♦ 86
			♣ J84

Board 47. Dealer West. All Vul.

♠ 102			
♥ A2			
♦ AK72			
♣ AQJ64			
♠ A93			♠ Q876
♥ K9876			♥ Q103
♦ 84			♦ QJ96
♣ 1093			♣ 85
			♠ KJ54
			♥ J54
			♦ 1053
			♣ K72

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kalita</i>	<i>Cronier</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Duboin</i>
Pass	1♣	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♥*
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

2♥ Fourth-Suit, game forcing

With a nasty hand to lead from East went with the ♦Q. Declarer won with the ace and played back the two, East taking the jack and switching to the ♠6 (the ♥10/♥3 will hold declarer to nine tricks). Declarer played low from dummy and when West could only win with the ace declarer was up to eleven tricks, +660.

Where South was declarer West's heart lead ensured the demise of the contract, but with East on lead it was asking a lot for East to find a heart lead when West had not doubled 2♥. Wrang did double 4♥ so Palma led a heart. However, he went with the three (I have made this type of mistake myself) and now Fleisher had a chance for glory by putting up dummy's jack, which would block the suit. When he played low from dummy, he was doomed to defeat.

Hats off to Jan Van Cleeff, who led the ♥10 against Levin and Weinstein for a well-deserved win.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Madala</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Bilde</i>	<i>Brink</i>
-	-	-	Pass
1♣*	1♠	2♥	4♠
Double*	Pass	4NT*	Pass
6♦	Pass	6♥	Double
Pass	Pass	7♣	Double
All Pass			

Double Extra values
4NT Take-out

E/W got their wires crossed - I'm still looking at West's hand trying to locate those 'extra values'. North led the ♥8 and West offered his opponents down 6/7 - 'or whatever you want!' Six down, -1700 was agreed (with perfect defence -2300 is possible!).

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Madala</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Bilde</i>	<i>Brink</i>
Pass	1♣	Pass	1♦
1♥	2♦	2♥	Double
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

♠ A93 ♥ K9876 ♦ 84 ♣ 1093	<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		♠ 102 ♥ A2 ♦ AK72 ♣ AQJ64	♠ Q876 ♥ Q103 ♦ QJ96 ♣ 85
	N											
W		E										
	S											
♠ KJ54 ♥ J54 ♦ 1053 ♣ K72												

East led the ♥3 and declarer missed the blocking play, winning the trick with the ace and cashing five rounds of clubs. West played the ♣9 on the first round, followed by the three and ten and East pitched the ♦6. On the penultimate club East parted with the ♦9 and now declarer was up to ten tricks - not enough to save the point.

Suppose West plays his clubs in the order ♣10/♣9/♣3. Should that suggest he has spades under control?

Board 48. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

♠ J763 ♥ Q32 ♦ QJ876 ♣ J	<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		♠ Q984 ♥ J95 ♦ A32 ♣ K104	♠ AK102 ♥ 1087 ♦ 109 ♣ 9876
	N											
W		E										
	S											
		♠ 5 ♥ AK64 ♦ K54 ♣ AQ532										

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kalita</i>	<i>Cronier</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Duboin</i>
-	Pass	Pass	1♣
1♦	1♥*	Pass	2♥*
Pass	3♦*	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

1♥ 4♠
 2♥ Not 3♠

West led the ♠3 and East won with the ten and switched to the ♦10. Declarer won with dummy's ace and cashed his clubs, but the defenders took the last three tricks, +600.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Madala</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Bilde</i>	<i>Brink</i>
-	Pass	Pass	1♣
1♦	1♥*	Pass	1NT
Pass	Pass	Double	Redouble
2♦	Double	All Pass	

1♥ Spades


When East doubled 1NT West beat a hasty retreat. He could afford to go three down and win the board, but a soft defence let him out for one down and Lavazza had another priceless point.

You can replay these deals at:

- https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67327
- https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67322
- https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67328
- https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67336
- https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67338

Final 17

Board 51. Dealer West. None Vul.

♠ AKQ10 ♥ KQ9532 ♦ K ♣ J9		♠ 964 ♥ A4 ♦ AQ42 ♣ Q872	♠ J82 ♥ J76 ♦ 9653 ♣ 654
		♠ 753 ♥ 108 ♦ J1087 ♣ AK103	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Crouch</i>	<i>Cronier</i>	<i>Cope</i>	<i>Duboin</i>
1♥	Pass	Pass	Double
Redouble	Pass	Pass	1NT
2♥	3NT	Pass	4♣
All Pass			

The BBO operator reported that North was amused by his partner's 4♣. Nine tricks were available in clubs - as they were in 3NT. (This was the only table where the notrump game was reached.)

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Madala</i>	<i>Helness</i>	<i>Bilde</i>	<i>Erichsen</i>
1♥	Double	Pass	2♣
2♠	Pass	3♥	All Pass


3♥ was untouchable and +140 was a win that left Lavazza on the brink of victory.

You can replay this deal at:

https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67339
https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67337
https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67340
https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67332
https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67333

Final 18

Board 52. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

♠ A1087 ♥ Q1086 ♦ 3 ♣ J865		♠ Q5 ♥ KJ532 ♦ Q75 ♣ AK2	♠ KJ32 ♥ A94 ♦ 82 ♣ Q1073
		♠ 964 ♥ 7 ♦ AKJ10964 ♣ 94	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Crouch</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Cope</i>	<i>Brink</i>
-	1♥	Pass	3♦
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

Against this revealing auction East led the 3 and West took the ace and returned the seven, East winning with the king, cashing the ♠J and then carefully taking the ♥A before playing his remaining spade for one down.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Kalita	Helness	Pszczola	Erichsen
-	1NT	Pass	3♥
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

An identical defence tied the board.

Bilde led a spade against Levin's 3NT for one down, but Meckstroth led a club which meant the result was no longer in doubt.

You can replay this deal at:

https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67343

https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67342

https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67342

https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67342

https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67335

https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67346

https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&li-nurl=https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/vugraph_linfetch.php?id=67346

♠ A1087	♠ Q5	♠ KJ32
♥ Q1086	♥ KJ532	♥ A94
♦ 3	♦ Q75	♦ 82
♣ J865	♣ AK2	♣ Q1073
		♠ 964
		♥ 7
		♦ AKJ10964
		♣ 94

This is how they finished:

Lavazza	Norberto Bocchi, Antonio Sementa, Dennis Bilde, Agustin Madala, Philippe Cronier, Giorgio Duboin	36.32
Blass	Jacek Pszczola, Michal Nowosadzki, Jacek Kalita, Sjoert Brink, Sebastiaan Drijver, Josef Blass (NPC)	32.82
Weinstein	Howard Weinstein, Michael Becker, Bob Hamman, Peter Weichsel, Liam Milne, Andy Hung,	31.83
Crouch	Peter Crouch, Simon Cope, Espen Erichsen, Fredrik Helness	30.79
Rippey	Mike Rippey, Kamil Nowak, Leonardo Cima, Giovanni Donati, Tarek Sadek, Walid Elahmady	28.25
Lebowitz	Laurence Lebowitz, Adam Grossack, Zachary Grossack, Michael Rosenberg, Fredrik Nystrom, Johan Upmark	27.25
Nickell	Nick Nickell, Ralph Katz, Jeff Meckstroth, Eric Rodwell, Robert Levin, Steve Weinstein,	26.64
Fleisher	Martin Fleisher, Chip Martel, Joe Grue, Brad Moss, Geoff Hampson, Eric Greco	26.04
Ventin	Diego Brenner, Miguel Villas-Boas, Frederic Wrang, Antonio Palma, Juan Carlos Ventin (NPC)	23.22
Bid72	Jan Van Cleeff, Marina Wilvliet, Matthias Felmy, Iain Sime	20.04

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](https://twitter.com/soc_of_bridge) [Keep Bridge Alive Pro-Am Pairs](https://www.facebook.com/KeepBridgeAliveProAmPairs)

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



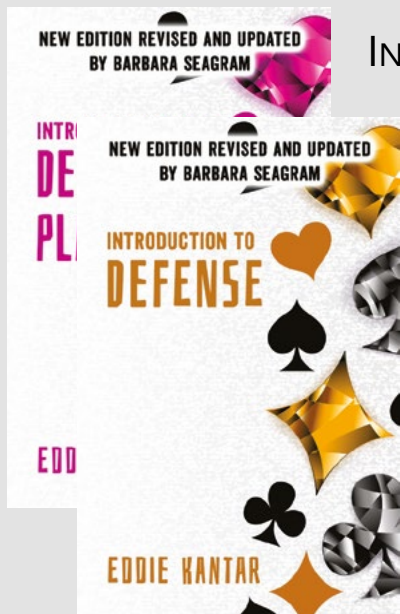
"Razor-sharp thinking. Intriguing psychology. Social powerhouse, complete digital detox. Just 52 cards."

SABINE AUKEN
Germany



NEW BOOKS FROM MASTER POINT PRESS

THE BRIDGE PUBLISHER



INTRODUCTION TO DECLARER PLAY and INTRODUCTION TO DEFENSE *Second Editions* Eddie Kantar

These classics on defense and declarer play cover the topics with clarity, skill and humor. More than fifty years after their first publications, these books have been revised and updated by Barbara Seagram to bring them into line with modern methods of play and bridge education.

PLANNING THE DEFENSE

Barbara Seagram and David Bird

Ten years after their award-winning Planning the Play of a Bridge Hand, Seagram & Bird tackle the hardest part of the game: defense. Using the same step-by-step approach, they guide the reader through the minefield of signaling, making a defensive plan and, above all, counting – points, tricks and distribution.



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)



Misplay These Hands With Me

Mirage in Montecatini

Despite my reservations, I have been persuaded to play in the European Mixed Teams Championship in the delightful town of Montecatini. During one of the early qualifying rounds, I pick up a useful looking hand:

♠ A
♥ A
♦ AK1065432
♣ 652

West opens 2♥, which upon enquiry proves to be Muiderberg, a weak hand with hearts and a minor – an idea that originated in the Netherlands. When my partner has nothing to say East raises to 4♥. Having a rush of blood I jump to 6♦, which appears to give partner a problem. Eventually he raises me to 7♦ which leaves us with this dramatic auction:

West	North	East	South
2♥	Pass	4♥	6♦
Pass	7♦	All Pass	

West leads the king of hearts and partner proudly displays his dummy:

♠ K765
♥ J62
♦ Q7
♣ AQ97

♠ A
♥ A
♦ AK1065432
♣ 652

I can follow the rationale behind partner's raise, but in general, it is better to allow partner some leeway in this type of situation – he must almost certainly be hoping that you will have some useful cards. Whilst the contract is not cold the bidding has given me a green light, so after

winning with the ace of hearts I draw trumps – it takes three rounds as West is void – unblock the ace of spades and with fair confidence play a club to the queen. When East wins with the king I am one down.

This was the full deal:

		♠ K765									
		♥ J62									
		♦ Q7									
		♣ AQ97									
♠ 108	<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		♠ QJ9432
		N									
W			E								
		S									
♥ KQ10843	♥ 975										
♦ –	♦ J98										
♣ J10843	♣ K										
		♠ A									
		♥ A									
		♦ AK1065432									
		♣ 652									

Post Mortem

Declarer was in too much of a hurry to take the club finesse. After winning with the ace of hearts, he should unblock the ace of spades, cross to dummy with the queen of diamonds, pitch a club on the king of spades and then run his trumps. On the last of these dummy's cards will be the ♣AQ ♥J. West will be down to the queen of hearts and two clubs, while East will have a spade, a heart and a club. West will have to throw a club and when declarer plays a club he will know that West's last card is the ♥Q. With no point in finessing, he goes up with the ace and the grand slam comes home.

(The Rabbi would have made this one!)

The Luck of the Irish

In an International match against Ireland East is the dealer and neither side is vulnerable when I pick up a modest hand:

♠ 83
♥ KQJ76
♦ 865
♣ 962


The player on my right deals and passes. Seeing no reason to distort my hand I pass and West opens with a weak 2♠. My partner doubles and East bids 4♠. I could bid 5♥, but if we can take eleven tricks we will surely be able to defeat 4♠ by a trick or so, and I decide to double. Partner's response is to jump to 5NT, which asks me to pick a slam so I bid 6♥ and anxiously await the dummy.

This has been our auction:

West	North	East	South
–	–	Pass	Pass
2♠	Double	4♠	Double
Pass	5NT	Pass	6♥
All Pass			

West leads the three of clubs and partner displays the following:


♠ A
♥ A42
♦ KJ932
♣ AKJ4



♠ 83
♥ KQJ76
♦ 865
♣ 962

As is so often the case, pre-emption appears to have provoked an indiscretion—I would prefer to be taking whatever was available from 4♠. I will have to bring in the diamond suit, so I win with dummy's ♣A, play a trump to the king and a diamond to the jack, hoping West started with the ♦AQ. However, East wins with the ace and returns the eight of clubs. West ruffs that and plays a spade. I subsequently lose a second diamond to finish two down.

This was the layout:

♠ A		♠ QJ105
♥ A42		♥ 103
♦ KJ932		♦ A7
♣ AKJ4		♣ Q10875
♠ K97642		
♥ 985		
♦ Q104		
♣ 3		
♠ 83		
♥ KQJ76		
♦ 865		
♣ 962		

Post mortem

Declarer should cash the ace of spades at trick two, come to hand with a heart, ruff a spade with the ace of hearts and draw trumps. He can then play a diamond to the nine (in isolation the best line for four tricks in diamonds is low to the nine, which offers a 22.6% chance). If East wins with the ♦A he will not be able to prevent declarer getting back to hand to bring in the diamonds – unless declarer has made the mistake of pitching a club on the third round of trumps – when East can return a club which locks declarer in dummy.

In the replay N/S reached 5♦, which could not be defeated.



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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:

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Deals that Caught My Eye

David Bird looks at the England Senior Trials

Two days after Boris Johnson’s glorious/horrifying (delete appropriate adjective) general election win, England’s top senior players, including several big names, competed in a trial for the Teltscher Trophy. We will take a look at some of the biggest swings, seeking to deliver a fair verdict on what caused them.

Mossop faced Davies on this deal from Round 2 (out of 7):

Board 28. Dealer West. N/S Vul.

♠ J1087 ♥ J953 ♦ KQ7 ♣ J2		♠ Q9 ♥ K10 ♦ 985432 ♣ K63	♠ 65432 ♥ A62 ♦ 6 ♣ 9854 ♠ AK ♥ Q874 ♦ AJ10 ♣ AQ107
------------------------------------	---	------------------------------------	--

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Gisborne</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Davies</i>	<i>P.Hackett</i>
Pass	Pass	Pass	2NT
Pass	3♣*	Pass	3♦*
Pass	3♥*	Pass	3NT
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

Brian Senior treated his spades as a 4-card suit and used Puppet Stayman. When no 5-4 spade fit came to light, he elected to play in the 4-3 heart fit. He won the diamond lead with dummy’s ace and ruffed the ♦10 in his hand. A finesse of the ♣Q succeeded and he cashed dummy’s two top spades. All followed to the ♣A and he ruffed dummy’s ♦J with the

♥6. What should he do next?


The know-it-all double-dummy analysers recommend the ♥A and then another spade. Senior preferred to lead a third round of spades immediately, and Sandy Davies then had a chance to beat the contract (he needs to ruff with the ♥K, cash the ♣K and exit with a diamond). When he preferred to discard a diamond, Senior ruffed the spade in the dummy and returned to his ♥A. Davies discarded again on the fourth spade and declarer ruffed in dummy for his tenth trick. That produced a useful +620.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Mossop</i>	<i>Robinson</i>	<i>Hallberg</i>	<i>Sowter</i>
Pass	Pass	Pass	2NT
Pass	3♥*	Pass	3♠
All Pass			

Dave Robinson could see five spades, rather than four, in his hand. He responded with a 3♥ transfer bid and left Tony Sowter in 3♠. Nine tricks were made, but it was 10 IMPs to Mossop.

Board 19. Dealer East. Neither Vul.

♠ 743 ♥ A7 ♦ 1064 ♣ KQ1065		♠ Q986 ♥ QJ102 ♦ AKJ ♣ 83 ♠ 1052 ♥ 8643 ♦ 532 ♣ 942	♠ AKJ ♥ K95 ♦ Q987 ♣ AJ7
-------------------------------------	---	--	-----------------------------------

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Gisborne</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Davies</i>	<i>P.Hackett</i>
-	-	Pass	1♦
Pass	1♥	Pass	2NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

Paul Hackett's 2NT rebid showed 17-18 points and Senior very reasonably saw no worthwhile prospects of a slam. Twelve tricks were made on a spade lead. Against 6NT, West would no doubt have led the ♣K successfully.

♠ Q986		♠ 1052									
♥ QJ102		♥ 8643									
♦ AKJ		♦ 532									
♣ 83		♣ 942									
♠ 743											
♥ A7											
♦ 1064											
♣ KQ1065											
	<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										
♠ AKJ											
♥ K95											
♦ Q987											
♣ AJ7											

Board 23. Dealer South. Both Vul.

♠ QJ872		♠ 104									
♥ A76		♥ 832									
♦ J10		♦ K75									
♣ Q94		♣ AK852									
♠ AK93											
♥ QJ954											
♦ A643											
♣ -											
	<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										
♠ 65											
♥ K10											
♦ Q982											
♣ 10763											

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Smith</i>	<i>Hallberg</i>	<i>Brock</i>	<i>Mossop</i>
-	-	-	Pass
1♥	Pass	2♣*	Pass
2♦*	Pass	2♥	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♣	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

Brock's 2♣ was artificial and game-invitational+. Smith's 2♦ was then artificial game-forcing. Hallberg led the ♦J against the eventual heart game. How would you have played it?

Smith won in the dummy and discarded two diamonds on the ♣AK. Since Hallberg had not entered the bidding, alerting her to the spade position, she continued with the ♠AK and a spade ruffed with the ♥2. Mossop overruffed with the ♥10 and returned the ♦Q to declarer's ace. The contract could no longer be made. Smith ruffed her last spade, overruffed with the king. A further round of diamonds then promoted Hallberg's ♥7 for one down.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Mossop</i>	<i>Robinson</i>	<i>Hallberg</i>	<i>Sowter</i>
-	-	Pass	1♣
Pass	1♥	Pass	2NT
Pass	3♣*	Pass	3♥
Pass	3♠	Pass	3NT
Pass	4NT	Pass	5♣
Pass	5NT	Pass	6♥
All Pass			

We will give N/S the benefit of the doubt and assume that they both had the same interpretation of the 4NT bid. Anyway, Robinson ended in a 4-3 heart fit, just as Senior had done on my first deal. Meanwhile, David Mossop must have been wondering if he should have doubled South's 5♣ RKCB response for a lead.

Gunnar Hallberg had no reason to lead a club, in the absence of such a double, and reached for the ♦3. Away went declarer's club loser on the diamond suit and it was 10 IMPs to Davies instead of 11 IMPs the other way.

In the 4th round, Mossop faced Brock.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Mould</i>	<i>Myers</i>	<i>Holland</i>	<i>Sheehan</i>
-	-	-	Pass
1♥	1♠	2♠	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

♠ QJ872			
♥ A76			
♦ J10			
♣ Q94			
♠ AK93	♠ 104		
♥ QJ954	♥ 832		
♦ A643	♦ K75		
♣ —	♣ AK852		
♠ 65			
♥ K10			
♦ Q982			
♣ 10763			

Again the ♦J was led. Would Alan Mould benefit from the information given by North's overcall? He won the diamond lead with the ace, crossed to the ♦K and ditched his last two diamonds on the ♣AK. A trump went to the 10, jack and ace. Sheehan won the trump return and played the ♦Q, Mould ruffing with the ♥9. He then crossed to the ♥8, drawing North's last trump.

Mould ran the ♠10 to Barry Myers, who had to win and lead back into the ♠AK9 tenace. That was +620 for a gain of 12 IMPs.

Board 30. Dealer East. Neither Vul.

♠ Q10854			
♥ AQ6			
♦ 7			
♣ Q963			
♠ 96	♠ K7		
♥ K1073	♥ 87		
♦ KJ8	♦ AQ95432		
♣ AJ54	♣ 82		
♠ AJ32			
♥ J954			
♦ 106			
♣ K107			

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Smith</i>	<i>Hallberg</i>	<i>Brock</i>	<i>Mossop</i>
-	-	1♦	Pass
1♥	1♠	2♦	3♠
Double	Pass	3NT	4♠
Double	All Pass		

Mossop took out insurance against Sally Brock's 3NT, based on a long diamond suit. How do you think the resultant contract of 4♠ doubled would fare?

Brock led the ♥8, covered by the 9, 10 and queen. Hallberg ran the ♠10 successfully and drew the remaining trumps with a second round. When he played a diamond, Brock won with the ♦9 and switched to the ♣8, solving declarer's club problem. An eventual heart trick had to be lost but declarer had ten tricks for a score of +590.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Mould</i>	<i>Myers</i>	<i>Holland</i>	<i>Sheehan</i>
-	-	1♦	Pass
1♥	1♠	2♦	2♥*
2♠*	Pass	3♦	3♠
Double	Pass	3NT	All Pass

A spade lead would have conceded a double game swing. Sheehan placed the ♠K with declarer, though, and put his finger on the ♣7. Holland could have settled for one down by rising with dummy's ace. He played low instead and Myers won with the ♣9. He switched to the ♠10, covered by the king and ace. Five spades, two hearts and a club would have put 3NT four down. Very reasonably, Robert Sheehan did not risk a heart switch. He settled for +150 for three down and Mossop gained 10 IMPs.

Several of the BBO session records are screwed up or missing, so I have a limited number of boards available. I will therefore end with the following swing, which resulted from a bidding misunderstanding:

Board 31. Dealer South. N/S Vul.

♠ A 10962 ♥ AQ3 ♦ Q5 ♣ A103	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ 43 ♥ K985 ♦ J832 ♣ 865	♠ J85 ♥ J2 ♦ A7 ♣ KQ9742
--------------------------------------	--	-----------------------------------	-----------------------------------

3♣ showed only three spades and long clubs.

Myers marked time with 3♦ and had a second chance to bid 4♠ when Sheehan could say no more than 3♠. No, he tried again with 4♣. To Sheehan it now seemed that partner held only four spades and that 3♦ had been a move aimed towards a possible 3NT. Perhaps the partnership held no stopper in the heart suit. Rightly or wrongly, he elected to pass 4♣.

Eleven tricks were made and that was 11 IMPs away. Regardless of whether we think that Myers held enough to be bidding round the houses as he did, it was a surprising misunderstanding at this level.

These teams headed the final leader board:

1st Mossop (Hallberg, Hackett, Senior, Holland, Mould)	92.02VPs
2nd Brock (Smith, Myers, Sheehan)	71.18
3rd Granville (Sadie, Chamberlain, Shields)	66.15

Open Room

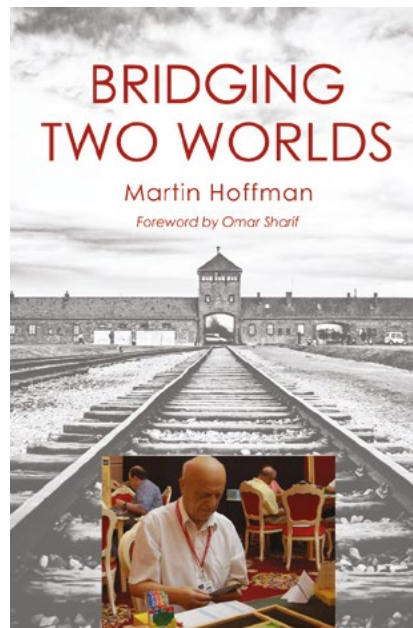
West	North	East	South
<i>Smith</i>	<i>Hallberg</i>	<i>Brock</i>	<i>Mossop</i>
-	-	-	1♣
1♦	1♠	3♦	Pass
Pass	Double	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

Brock led a diamond, Hallberg winning with dummy's ace. When a trump was led, Smith split her honours and declarer won with the ace. Smith won the next trump and switched to a heart, Hallberg won with the ace, drew the last trump and claimed +650 for eleven tricks.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Mould</i>	<i>Myers</i>	<i>Holland</i>	<i>Sheehan</i>
-	-	-	1♣
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♠
Pass	2NT*	Pass	3♣
Pass	3♦	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♣	All Pass	

Sheehan's 2♠ could be made on three-card support. 2NT was forcing and often used to discover how many spades partner holds. Sheehan's



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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 1ST EDITION 2020

CHAMPIONNAT DU MONDE EN LIGNE: première!

LE MONDE ENTIER DU BRIDGE S'APPRÊTE 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.

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.

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

(*) 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.

Actus & Reportages.

1st World Online Championship

October 2019



BBO

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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 !

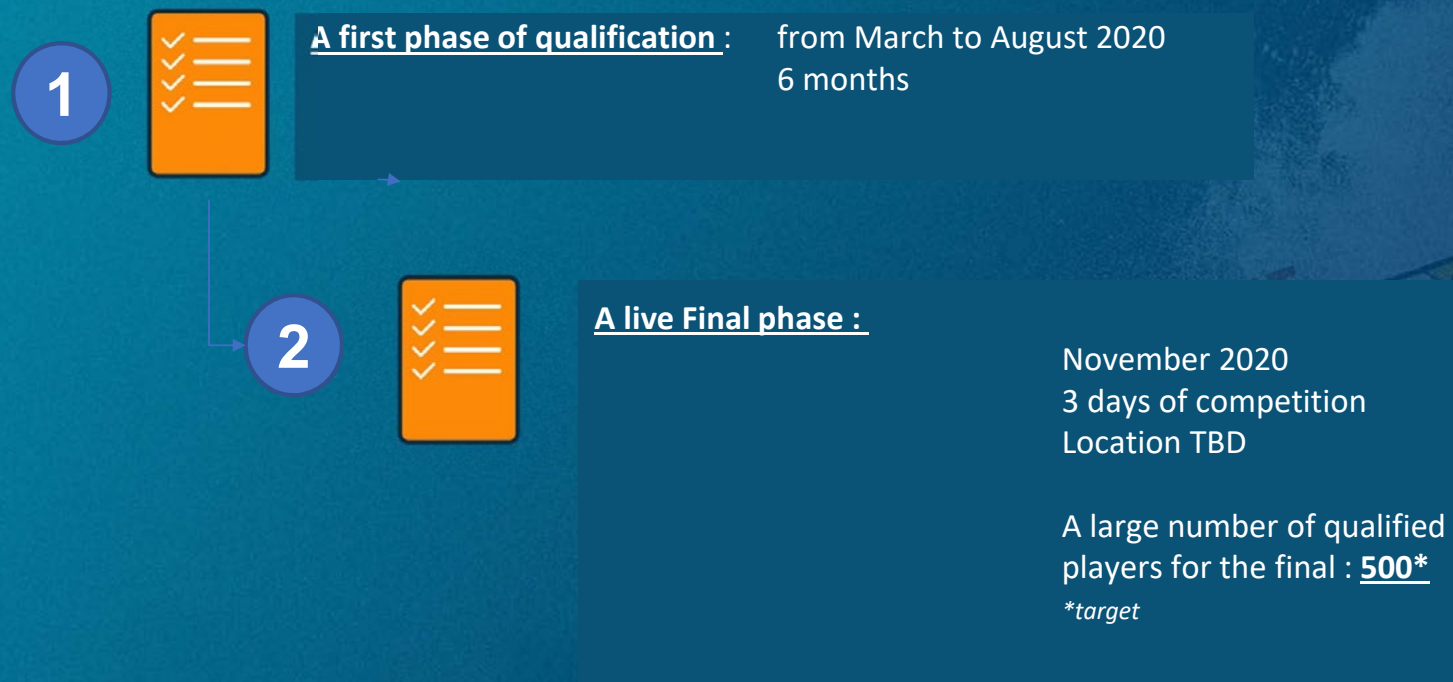


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2 phases – from March to November





Qualification: How will this work ?

CBO

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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.

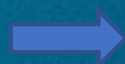
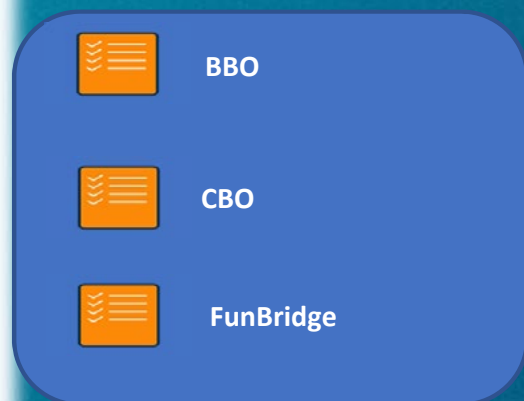


Qualification: How will this work ? Up to 500 qualify !

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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Your Bid Please

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You are East with:

IMPs. Dealer North. All Vul.

♠ 1085
♥ AJ1076
♦ A9
♣ Q62

West	North	East	South
		<i>You</i>	
–	Pass	1♥	Pass
2♦*	Pass	2♥*	Pass
2♠	Pass	2NT	
3♦	Pass	?	

2♦ 2/1, gf
2♥ 5+♥

Your bid please.

Sally Brock (European and World Champion)

3♠. Difficult. I can't rebid NTs with such a paltry club stopper, and I don't want to go past 3NT with such a weak hand. So it is a choice between the majors. I am afraid it will sound as if I have 6 Hearts if I bid Hearts yet again, so I go for 3♠ instead. If he bids 3NT I will pass quickly. If not, then I guess we'll have to play 5♦ (or even 4♠).

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

4♦. When partner bid 2♠ we had a close decision between bidding 2NT or 3♦. Now that she has bid 3♦, I would expect her to have at least

6/4, so it feels like we should show that we have good support for diamonds, especially having 2 Aces, which could be useful for slam. Having 3 Spades is potentially bad, but it might also be that partner has weakness in clubs, in which case 5♦ (or even 4♥) could be the safest game.

Tim Verbeek (European and Junior World Champion)

3♥. To keep all options open. 3♥ doesn't promise anything and certainly not 6 Hearts which I denied by bidding 2NT.

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

3♠. My club stopper is too flimsy to simply bid 3NT, so I'll show the three-card support for spades. I'm not sure how much to be influenced by partner's failure to bid 3♣ rather than 3♦.

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

4♦. 3NT is ruled out, so I will now show my Diamond support intending to bid 5♦ over partners cue-bid.

Marshall Lewis (international Croatian player and coach)

4♦. Mainly to let partner bid 4♥ with the likes of ♠AKxx ♥Kx ♦KJTxxx ♣x. Even without prior agreement, 4♥ in that sequence should be treated as tolerance, in accordance with this vital meta-principle: "When in terra incognita (absence of discussion), both partners should assume that a bid which COULD sensibly be played as natural IS in fact meant as natural." Probably we are headed to 5♦, but this seems most flexible. Fast-arrival should not apply, because opener may need to leave room for 4♥.

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

3♠. Suggesting 4♠ in a 4-3 fit. By now partner must have a good idea of my shape: 3-5-2-3. If she continues with 3NT I pass and in stead she bids 4D I bid 5♦.

These were the West and East hands:

♠ AKQ9		♠ 1085
♥ –		♥ AJ1076
♦ Q107652		♦ A9
♣ K54		♣ Q62



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NEW: create and upload your own boards in the app. Contact us at info@bid72.com how does that work.



Highlights and New Features

Funbridge February News

Coming soon on Funbridge: Instant Tournaments



What are they?

These are past federation tournaments that are given a second life and for which results are already known. You are ranked against other players and you earn points awarded by the relevant federation immediately after playing.

Advantages:

- Tournaments available at any time
- Ranking known immediately after playing
- Large number of participants per tournament guaranteed
- Play as many tournaments as you want

Tournaments consist of 12 deals scored by MPs.

To start with, they will be found in ACBL, AEB and Funbridge Points tournaments. Then they will soon become available for other bridge federations.

When will this new game mode be released?

Instant tournaments will arrive very soon... [Click here](#) to follow Funbridge on Facebook and be kept abreast of further announcements about this new game mode.

How to play?

Once instant tournaments become available, open the app and follow the steps below:

1. Select “Play a tournament” > “Federation Tournaments”.
2. Select one of the participating federations.
3. Select “Instant Tournaments”.



Duplicate Cards®

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Playing duplicate bridge at home has these advantages:

- Eliminate the luck of the deal – what matters is how you and your partner bid and play with the same cards as everyone else who has played the same deal.
- Compare scores with players of all levels who have played the same deal.
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DEFEND WITH JULIAN POTTAGE

The Questions

1

♠ Q7	♠ K1063
♥ AJ963	♥ KQ87
♦ AK4	♦ 83
♣ KJ4	♣ 983

N	E
W	S

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

Partner leads the two of spades (standard second and fourth) and dummy plays low. What is your plan?

2

♠ AK76	♠ Q104
♥ 6	♥ KJ10842
♦ KQ108	♦ 764
♣ QJ105	♣ 6

N	E
W	S

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
-	1♦	2♥*	2NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

2♥ Weak

Partner leads the five of hearts. What is your plan?



This month's hand comes from the match-pointed Funbridge Series Tournament. Players are divided into levels, and twice each month the top players are promoted and the lowest-scoring ones relegated. Scores are matchpointed across all participants at your level. On this week's deal, a simple play was missed by more than 85% of declarers confronted with the same problem. See if you would have outsourced most of the field:

Dealer East. None Vul. MP Pairs

♠ K97 ♥ Q1062 ♦ 10872 ♣ A8		♠ 8542 ♥ A4 ♦ A94 ♣ Q1065	♠ 1063 ♥ 985 ♦ 63 ♣ KJ942
	♠ AQJ ♥ KJ73 ♦ KQJ5 ♣ 73		

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

West leads the ♦2. How would you play?

Solution

You start with seven top tricks (four diamonds, two hearts and one spade) and you can ensure a second spade trick by force. All suits except diamonds offer chances for your ninth trick, so how should you play?

Of the 32 declarers who faced this problem, 26 won with the ♦A and played a spade to the queen, which won. They then re-entered dummy with the ♥A and repeated the spade finesse. When West won this with the

♠K and exited with a third round of diamonds, declarer's chances were now poor. Most cashed their fourth diamond winner and then exited with a club. West won this trick with the ♣A and played a second club. After East had won his two tricks with the ♣K-J, he exited with his remaining spade. Declarer was left to lead away from the ♥K-J at the end and the ♥Q was the fifth trick for the defenders.

Some declarers gave themselves a better chance, by cashing the ♠A before exiting with a club. This at least meant that East had to play a heart after taking his club winners. With West holding the ♥Q, though, that was still one down.

The six declarers who made their contract, all did so by the simple expedient of making use of the opening lead. West's ♦2 opening suggests he holds an honour, which can clearly only be the ♦10. Inserting the ♦9 from dummy at trick one provides you with an additional entry. You can now take the spade finesse and, when it wins, cross back to dummy with the ♦A to repeat it. Now, when West wins with the ♠K, you still have a heart entry to dummy.

Suppose West plays ace and another club after winning with the ♠K. East cannot afford to cash his two winners as doing so would set up the ♣Q as a trick, so he immediately switches to a heart. Should you take the heart finesse or play for spades to split 3-3?

You have been watching the spot cards, and experience of playing against Argine tells you that she is a compulsive signaller. As East followed upwards, with the ♠3 and ♠6, on the first two rounds of the suit, you can be fairly sure that spades were originally 3-3. Win with the ♥K, cash the ♠A, and use the ♥A as an entry to the thirteenth spade.

When you play regularly against the same players, or if you are playing a long match, pay attention to whether your opponents routinely signal their length accurately. Some people just cannot help themselves. As declarer, take advantage of their proclivity. As a defender, be wary of giving what may be critical information to declarer. Signal accurately if the information will be useful to partner, but do not do so habitually. Declarer may be watching.

The Colour Of Magic

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

Everyone agreed that it was a black and white situation. The Scarecrow's team was unlikely to win on skill or inspiration, so would need large quantities of good luck, or even magic, if it was to beat the Witches in the quarter-final of the Handicap Cup. True, the handicap itself was substantially in their favour, but could any handicap really take account of Hank's play? And these witches, in particular the Wicked Witch of the West with her partner, Munchkin Meg, were privy to a whole range of dark arts.

Aunty Em and Dorothy were discussing the upcoming match on their way back from visiting Ada. It had been good to see that she was on the mend, but sadly she was showing no inclination to get back to the bridge table. Unable to bring up the subject of the Cup in her presence, indeed the very mention of Hank's name would have set her back weeks, Em had waited until she and Dorothy were in the car.

'The Scarecrow's team: Hank, Toto and Shy, are such innocents!' she exclaimed. 'It's a lost cause hoping they might win, but I don't trust that Wicked Witch of the West or her crony, Munchkin Meg, one iota.' She paused for thought. 'With no-one to look out for them they will be putty in the hands of those crones. I remember only too well watching them cheat their way to victory in the Ozian Cup match against Henry's team.'

Dorothy nodded. 'Then there must be someone looking out for them. Not one of us. But someone we trust who can help protect the Scarecrow's team. Keeping an eye open for wrongdoing could possibly produce more evidence to help us to act against Wicked and Meg. They're a disgrace to the club.'

'The match is going to be next Thursday night, she continued. 'The Chairman of the Lollipop Guild will be directing the match points tournament. I can make sure that he is ready to step in to give any rulings. He's as keen as we are to gather evidence.' she added.

Em nodded thoughtfully. 'And I think we should arm the Scarecrow's team with a witch of their own, but a good one. I'll ask Glinda to kibitz, helping with the scoring and making sure that the Chairman is called in if necessary.'

'Good idea,' said Dorothy. 'Make sure to tell her to take a note of all

the bidding and play at Wicked's table. We can't rely on the Scarecrow or Hank to remember what happened, Toto is very inexperienced and Shy is not a great one for talking about the hands.'

As usual, what Aunty Em planned became reality. And so it was that Glinda found herself in the club on that evening, watching on in despair as the handicap was steadily dismantled. As expected, the Witches had unleashed their usual barrage of tactics, and possibly some new ones. They interrogated their opponents at the end of each auction on every aspect of their methods, always focussing on the Scarecrow and Hank. Anything they those two might have known was soon thoroughly confused, not that that made much difference, especially for Hank.

The Witches deliberately bamboozled the Scarecrow's team with their own bidding, always delighted to provide lengthy explanations, indeed usually giving them before they were even asked. There was nothing untruthful in these accounts, but after a three-minute analysis of a simple Stayman auction, given in full each time the convention came up, the Scarecrow and Hank were having difficulty balancing on their seats.

Then when Hank or the Scarecrow was declarer, or in the unlikely event that they appeared to be thinking about their defence, Wicked or Meg would hurry them along. They themselves would vary their own tempo, sometimes slowing play down, and then suddenly speeding up.

Wherever possible they would distract them. Wicked seemed to have itches in various parts of her body, which needed scratching. Meg developed a loud cough, which only affected her when either the Scarecrow or Hank was about to bid or play a card.

And then there were a suspiciously large number of mis-scores – all in their favour.

Glinda prevented as many of the abuses as she could, and probably caught all of the mis-scores, but the Witches were still pulling back twenty or more IMPs a set. With one stanza of six boards left to play, the lead of the Scarecrow's team, which the handicap had given them, had been whittled down to four IMPs.

At this, the last interval, Glinda tried to rally their spirits. She gathered

the four men together, a sad picture of dejection and despair.

‘You can do this! Think positive, go with your instincts! So far, you’ve let them dictate the match but if you just tap into... whatever it was that got you through the last match, you can win. Remember that Six Clubs you bid and made on twelve points. Anything is possible if you just go in there and be yourselves!’

The Scarecrow perked up. ‘Thank you, Glinda. You’re right. And I’m not going to let them have their own way anymore. Six boards to go – why shouldn’t it be our turn?’ His drooping shoulders were raised, he straightened his back and led his troops into battle.

At the same time, the Wicked Witch was haranguing her forces. ‘We’re almost there. One or two more good boards and we will win as long as none of you mess it up.’ She glared at her team-mates. ‘Irritable, Unpleasant, try to keep it steady. We have seen how awful this team are. They can only get scores by going off the beaten path and being given a helping hand by Lady Luck. Don’t let the Scarecrow’s stupidity divert you away from aiming for normal scores. You can leave the rest to me and Meg.’ She chortled. ‘We know how to get the points that we need.’

Three quarters of an hour later the Wicked Witch of the West, Munchkin Meg, Hank and Shy had finished. Shy sat dejectedly at a table in the corner of the social area. Hank sat beside him. It was clear from his partner’s body language that he wasn’t happy at all with their card. It didn’t seem too bad to him. After all, there was only one four-figure score in the minus column, which was better than usual for him over any set of six boards. He whiled away the time trying to think of a way to get a five-figure score.

Wicked and Meg were hovering excitedly near the door, waiting for their teammates to emerge. The smiles on their faces were bordering on sneers. Glinda was talking earnestly to the Chairman of the Lollipop Guild. He nodded gravely and the pair of them walked over to the Wicked Witch and Meg.

‘Good evening, yes good evening ladies. I need to speak to you about a number of the hands in this last set. I need to hear your account, yes indeed your account, of what transpired.’

‘What!’ screeched Wicked. ‘There has been no director call! Our opponents have made no complaint! What right do you to have to interfere?’

I tell you that for the last few months Meg and I have been the subject of a witch hunt!’

The Chairman resisted the urge to smile at this most apt description. ‘You are playing, yes, you are playing in a club event. The club rules apply. I was appointed as tournament director, as you know. Glinda, a club member and participant in the competition, has the right to watch and the right to draw any possible infractions to the attention of the tournament director.’

‘Infractions!’ Munchkin Meg screeched, her face turning crimson. ‘We’ve certainly seen infractions. That fool there,’ she pointed dismissively at Hank, ‘everything he does is an infraction against all the principles of bridge!’

The Wicked Witch allowed herself a smile. ‘And Glinda! A participant indeed! A most biased one!’ Wicked’s face reverted to its normal glare. ‘She quit my team, leaving us a player short. We were very lucky that Meg happened to be available. And Glinda is playing for a team that would happily see us lose.’

‘Nevertheless, yes nevertheless, it is my duty to enquire about the events at your table.’ The Chairman was a master at remaining calm in the face of such outbursts. Over the years, he had had plenty of practice. ‘Surely you have no problem with me hearing your side of the story?’

Wicked could think of no suitable objection. The Chairman sat down and ushered Wicked, Meg and Glinda to join him. He passed round hand records.

‘We will start,’ he paused to consider. ‘We will start with this one.’

Dealer North. N/S Vul.

♠ 10762		♠ KJ3			
♥ J973		♥ Q1086			
♦ K86		♦ A103			
♣ 54		♣ 1092			
♠ A84	<table style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S	
N					
W E					
S					
♥ 52					
♦ QJ92					
♣ KJ87					
♠ Q95					
♥ AK4					
♦ 754					
♣ AQ63					

‘I believe that this was the bidding.’ He took out his pen, writing neatly at the bottom of the hand record.

West	North	East	South
<i>Wicked</i>	<i>Shy</i>	<i>Meg</i>	<i>Hank</i>
–	Pass	1♣	Pass
1♦	Pass	1NT	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

♠ A84	♠ 10762	♠ KJ3
♥ 52	♥ J973	♥ Q1086
♦ QJ92	♦ K86	♦ A103
♣ KJ87	♣ 54	♣ 1092
	♠ Q95	
	♥ AK4	
	♦ 754	
	♣ AQ63	

Wicked sniffed in agreement. ‘What of it?’ said Meg. ‘With three tens I upgraded my hand to put more pressure on the opponents.’ She sneered. ‘Their defence has been worth at least a point or two on every board so far.’

‘Three tens or not, I can’t imagine anyone else upgrading this to twelve points,’ the Chairman observed.

‘You are forgetting the state of the match,’ Wicked countered, adding, ‘And I considered my diamonds to be worth much more than three points, not to mention the value of my clubs, should partner have a genuine suit. It was obvious to put my partner into game.’

‘It certainly worked out well for you, didn’t it?’ Glinda could not hide her annoyance. ‘A flat ten count and a flat eleven count bid to Three Notrump and it can’t be stopped.’

‘You took four diamonds, three clubs and two spades for nine tricks. Was it nine tricks?’ the Chairman checked. ‘Is there anything else that I should know about the board?’

‘A well earned 400 points,’ said Wicked. ‘Straightforward. If anyone behaved strangely on the hand it was Hank – not overcalling One Notrump over the opening One Club. Funny how he managed to avoid that when his partner had a weak hand!’

‘Mmm. Yes, a seven loser fifteen count opposite a passed hand. Thank you, thank you, I think I have all of that recorded. Now, two boards later, we have this one.’

Dealer South. Both vul.

♠ K32	♠ AQ10
♥ Q843	♥ 652
♦ 1072	♦ A98654
♣ AJ9	♣ 6
♠ 986	♠ J754
♥ J109	♥ AK7
♦ KJ	♦ Q3
♣ 108753	♣ KQ42

‘I believe that after South opened One Notrump, and North responded with a Two Clubs Stayman enquiry, you came in with Two Diamonds, Meg.’

‘Yes, and what is wrong with that?’ Meg stood up and drew herself up to her full height, towering over the Chairman.

‘Oh nothing, I assure you, nothing at all,’ the Chairman pulled his chair back a few inches. ‘Please, oh please do sit down. I certainly wasn’t questioning your bidding.’ He looked pensive as Meg haughtily took her seat again. ‘Despite your call your opposition still bid to a contract of Three Notrump, even though they had a rather tenuous, yes tenuous, diamond stop.’

Glinda remembered the unease on Shy’s face when he had to decide what to do after his partner’s Two Spades came back to him. The full auction had been:

West	North	East	South
<i>Wicked</i>	<i>Shy</i>	<i>Meg</i>	<i>Hank</i>
–	–	–	1NT
Pass	2♣	2♦	2♠
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

‘A good contract,’ the Chairman observed. ‘A good contract that cannot be beaten on the obvious lead of the king of diamonds. The jack of diamonds at trick two sets up a diamond trick for declarer whether East overtakes or ducks. Even if West finds a safe switch such as a heart or a club, the defence can only come to two diamonds and two spades before declarer

has nine tricks. That would be a normal contract and a normal result.’ He paused for emphasis. ‘Except that I understand, I am informed, that you took the contract four down!’

The Wicked Witch of the West glared at him. ‘Obvious diamond lead? I thought you were closer to competent than that.’ She halted momentarily for a sniff. ‘Declarer is likely to have something in diamonds for his strong Notrump. Dummy has hearts for this sequence and with my club holding it is very unlikely that partner has anything in that suit. The master play is clearly to lead a spade.’ She folded her arms, well satisfied with her own superior line of thought. ‘Meg won the queen,’ she continued, ‘and played a diamond through declarer’s queen. I took my diamonds, put partner in with the ace of spades and she took the rest of her diamonds. We took the first eight tricks.’ With a sneer on her already contorted face, she added, ‘Even Hank was capable of taking the rest.’

‘Interesting, interesting,’ mused the Chairman. ‘And was it not possible that declarer’s diamond card was the ace, or indeed that your partner had a running suit if you just led it?’ He coughed. ‘Indeed, was it not possible, yes possible, that you were setting up spade tricks for declarer and putting yourselves behind in the race to set up your five defensive tricks?’

The Chairman pulled in his chest, determined not to let these two haridans dominate him. ‘And if not a diamond then why not a heart? You have an obvious sequence to lead from, through dummy’s suit, rather than lead a worthless holding round to declarer’s suit.’

‘You weren’t there!’ The veins on the Wicked Witch’s face stood out. ‘I knew from North’s demeanour that he had a problem. I at least can read the auction, even if you can’t. My defence was correct! Ask any good player, if you can find one in this club.’

‘The facts, ladies, as long as we are agreed on the facts, then I can take the hand away for further consideration.’ Far from being ruffled by the antagonism he was facing, the Chairman was starting to enjoy seeing these two on the defensive. ‘Another well-earned 400, I expect you would say.’

‘Indeed we would,’ Wicked and Meg shouted in unison.

The Chairman referred to his notes. ‘Finally, yes finally, we come to this one.’

Dealer West, N/S Vul.

♠ Q75	♠ 63	♠ A104
♥ 42	♥ KJ9873	♥ AQ106
♦ K10743	♦ 92	♦ A65
♣ KQ6	♣ 1092	♣ AJ4

W	N	E
S		

♠ KJ982
♥ 5
♦ QJ8
♣ 8753

‘You, Wicked, you passed as dealer?’ She twitched an eyebrow by way of confirmation. ‘Shy opened a weak two hearts?’ No-one disagreed. ‘And what did you bid, Meg?’

She gave him a sugar sweet smile. ‘Bid? Why should I bid? If partner has a poor hand, then we will defend and pick up undertricks at a hundred a time. If partner has a decent hand, given that she has already passed, then she is surely short in hearts and likely to balance with a double. That is, in fact, what happened, and I have a teeny suspicion that you knew that.’ She gave a little giggle.

The Chairman ignored her and checked his notes. This was the full auction:

West	North	East	South
<i>Wicked</i>	<i>Shy</i>	<i>Meg</i>	<i>Hank</i>
Pass	2♥	Pass	Pass
Double	All Pass		

‘Another, yet another decision that worked very well for you. You had a non-vulnerable game on, but Two Hearts doubled was a massacre. How many down did it go?’

‘We took three clubs, two diamonds, three hearts and a spade, so declarer got four tricks and lost 1100.’ The smile on Meg’s face never moved.

‘So once again, once again, you fall on your feet after an unorthodox action,’ the Chairman commented.

‘Unorthodox! Who are you to say this is unorthodox?’ Wicked’s eyes

were narrowed. ‘Have you suddenly become the Munchkin Meckstroth?’ Meg laughed as the Wicked Witch stared fixedly at the Chairman. He knew that they wanted him to feel uncomfortable in the extreme, and that knowledge strengthened his resolve to remain outwardly calm.

Glinda screwed up her courage. ‘And there was one other thing. Before the last set I heard the Wicked Witch telling her team ‘You can leave the rest to me and Meg. We know how to get the points that we need.’ I think we can see what she meant!’


Meg rounded on her. ‘What an interfering busybody you are! I can see why your former teammates were keen to bring in a different type of character! A harmless remark based on our superior ability to generate swings. You had better watch out. You’ll come a cropper one day, lady!’

The Chairman intervened. ‘Really, madam, really. There is no need for threats! Ah, I see that the other table has finished. I’ll leave you to score up. But I’m sure that I will want to speak to you again.’

Meg and Wicked strolled over to a table and beckoned their teammates to join them. They oozed confidence through every pore. Glinda went over to her charges to help them with the scoring, hoping that somehow a miracle had occurred, but expecting to be doling out sympathy in large quantities.

In the first two boards, no IMPs changed hands, usually regarded as a victory when Hank was a member of the team. Then they came to the 21-point 3NT that Meg had made.

Dealer North. N/S vul.

♠ A84 ♥ 52 ♦ QJ92 ♣ KJ87		♠ KJ3 ♥ Q1086 ♦ A103 ♣ 1092	♠ 10762 ♥ J973 ♦ K86 ♣ 54
	♠ Q95 ♥ AK4 ♦ 754 ♣ AQ63		

‘Sorry. We were, err, minus four hundred,’ said Hank.

‘Flat board,’ said Toto. ‘Was it One Notrump?’


‘You mean Three Notrumps,’ corrected Glinda.

‘No, One Notrump,’ said Toto. ‘The Scarecrow passed, the Irritable Witch of the South opened One Notrump and we all passed. I led a diamond to the Scarecrow’s ten and he switched to a club. There didn’t seem to be anywhere for declarer to go for tricks. She could only come to three tricks: two hearts and the ace of clubs. So we took it four down for plus four hundred.’

Glinda felt a small burst of happiness. At least the Wicked Witch and Meg had not benefitted from their double dummy game bidding.

The next board was the hand where the Wicked Witch had found a surprising and devastating spade lead.

Dealer South. Both vul.

♠ 986 ♥ J109 ♦ KJ ♣ 108753		♠ AQ10 ♥ 652 ♦ A98654 ♣ 6	♠ K32 ♥ Q843 ♦ 1072 ♣ AJ9
			♠ J754 ♥ AK7 ♦ Q3 ♣ KQ42

‘Sorry,’ said Hank. ‘Minus four hundred again.’

‘We’re plus four hundred, a flat board,’ said Toto. ‘You must have gone four down in Three Notrump too.’

‘How did the bidding go?’ Glinda asked, and noted down the sequence:

West	North	East	South
<i>Toto</i>	<i>Unpleasant</i>	<i>Scarecrow</i>	<i>Irritable</i>
-	-	-	1NT
Pass	3♣	Pass	3♦
Pass	3♠	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

‘Three Clubs was five card puppet Stayman,’ he explained. ‘Three Diamonds showed no five-card major. Three spades showed four hearts, but not four spades, and Three Notrump denied a fit.’ Toto paused. ‘I thought I would try a spade, hoping to hit partner’s suit. He won the queen and switched to a diamond. After that it was easy. I must say, their auction really helped me to find it. You did well, Scarecrow, not bidding Three Diamonds. It looks as if we can’t beat it if I lead the suit first!’

‘Well done,’ said Glinda thoughtfully. ‘But did you ask if Three Diamonds denied a four-card major? It is quite likely that South had shown a four-card spade suit in that auction, so you were actually leading round to declarer’s suit.’ Toto’s face reddened. It clearly hadn’t dawned on him. ‘Well done though,’ repeated Glinda. ‘It was a superb choice.’ Toto’s face visibly relaxed.

The fifth board of the set had been played in Two Hearts making nine tricks in both rooms: Shy had played it carefully, and at the other table the Scarecrow had not had any decisions to make.

Glinda thought to herself. ‘Five boards with Hank and the Scarecrow in the team and no IMPs have changed hands. Amazing!’ She smiled but knew that the worst hand of the lot was still to come.

‘I’m really sorry about this one,’ said Hank. We lost 1100 in Two Hearts doubled.’

‘Flat board!’ Toto cried joyfully. ‘But we played in a very different contract, and I think you might be the person to thank, Glinda!’

It took a while to piece it all together, but this is what had happened.

Dealer West, N/S Vul

♠ 63 ♥ KJ9873 ♦ 92 ♣ 1092		♠ A104 ♥ AQ106 ♥ A65 ♣ AJ4
♠ Q75 ♥ 42 ♦ K10743 ♣ KQ6	♠ KJ982 ♥ 5 ♦ QJ8 ♣ 8753	

The Scarecrow had tried to muster concentration one last time. The Unpleasant Witch of the North had passed quickly, then started to make pointed comments about the length of time it was taking the Scarecrow to sort his hand. Trying to filter her out, he started to count his points. Four for the ace of clubs, four for the ace of diamonds, four for the ace of spades, that made twelve. Six for the ace and queen of hearts, that made eighteen. Then he encountered a second club suit. He moved the ace across, added five points on for the ace and jack, finishing with a total of 23.

Next he checked the shape – definitely balanced. He opened Two Clubs, planning to rebid Two Notrump. After a pass from South, it was in fact Toto who bid Two Notrump, passed back to the Scarecrow. He decided to explore for a heart fit by bidding Three Clubs. He felt sure that would be Stayman. Yes, they had agreed to play Stayman over all Notrump bids. Sadly, Toto took this as natural and raised to Four Clubs. The Scarecrow was surprised by this, but decided that his partner must have a lot of the suit, five at least. Given that he had all of the aces there seemed to be no point in asking for them. He jumped to Six Clubs.

The Irritable Witch of the South felt that the time had come to question her opponents. They got past the first two bids without incident, but, when the misunderstanding about Three and Four Clubs came to light, she doubled with glee. ‘And don’t think about taking it out to Six Notrump,’ she warned them. ‘You cannot take advantage of the information that you have gained from the explanations!’

This was the full auction:

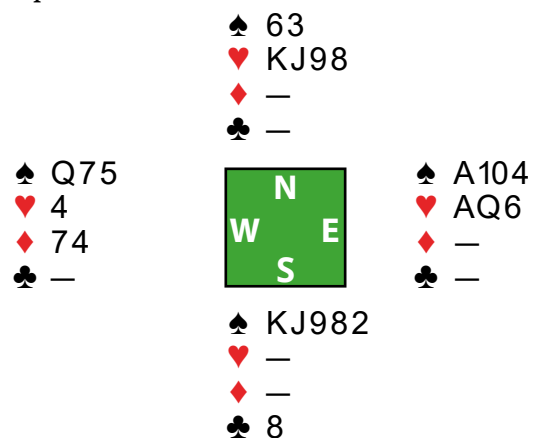
West	North	East	South
<i>Toto</i>	<i>Unpleasant</i>	<i>Scarecrow</i>	<i>Irritable</i>
Pass	Pass	2♣	Pass
2NT	Pass	3♣	Pass
4♣	Pass	6♣	Double
All Pass			

Cackling loudly, she led the ♦Q. The Scarecrow let that run round to his ace. Despite his 23 points and dummy’s ten he seemed to be short of two things: high cards and trumps. Still, he was determined to take as many tricks as he could, and he remembered Glinda’s words. Perhaps Six Clubs was their lucky contract in this tournament.

Desperate times called for desperate measures. He crossed to dummy

with a club and led a heart to the ten. He could hardly believe it when that took the trick. He played a second club to dummy and a third back to hand. His next move was to play a diamond to dummy's ten and then cashed the ♦K. With any luck, there were no more diamonds out. He called for a top diamond. He thought there was probably a trump outstanding, but you could never be sure of these things!

This was the position:



On the ♦7, North and East discarded hearts. The Irritable Witch of the South ground her teeth. If she ruffed, then she would need to play a spade away from the king. She discarded a spade. Confident now, the Scarecrow called for dummy's last diamond. This time North and East both threw spades. Irritable ruffed in and switched to a low spade.

It came as a complete shock to the Scarecrow. There actually had been a trump left. Surely a player as good as the Irritable Witch of the South shouldn't have let him make the previous trick. Not really understanding what was happening, he called for the ♠Q, and a full 30 seconds later, realised he had won the trick. In a daze he finessed the heart. North shrieked. The queen scored, and Toto entered the score of plus 1090. 'Well done, partner,' he exclaimed, his confidence in his choice of partner rising even higher. 'I doubt if even the Tin Man could have bettered that.'

As the tale finished, the Scarecrow's team's conversation was drowned out by the racket from the other table. The Wicked Witch of the West's day had just got a lot worse. 'I told you! I told you not to let the Scarecrow's stupidity divert you! First of all, the contract was cold off on any lead apart from a ridiculous diamond. Second of all, even if you were

determined to let him make it, all you had to do was not double! We could afford to lose 920 on the board. A five IMP swing would have been enough for us to win the match!

As she entered upon a detailed analysis of the performance of her team-mates, the Unpleasant and Irritable Witches gathered their things together and stomped out of the club, closely followed by their captain.

Glinda was overjoyed. 'Justice was done!' she beamed at the Chairman. 'In one way, yes. In one way,' the Chairman agreed. 'But this is not the end of the matter as far as I am concerned.'

Only one person left in the club wasn't smiling. Shy was bewildered to find that they had won the match, but realised that the cloud to this silver lining was that he had another 24-board session with Hank. Could his nerves stand it? He decided to see if Professor Marvel had any concoction that might help.

Answers to “Defend With Julian Pottage”

1

♠ Q7
 ♥ AJ963
 ♦ AK4
 ♣ KJ4
 ♠ A952
 ♥ 105
 ♦ Q107
 ♣ 10762
 ♠ K1063
 ♥ KQ87
 ♦ 83
 ♣ 983
 ♠ J84
 ♥ 42
 ♦ J9652
 ♣ AQ5



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

Partner leads the two of spades (standard second and fourth) and dummy plays low. What is your plan?

The important thing is to assess the spade position. For a start, you know from partner’s lead of the two and the lack of a 1♠ bid on your left that partner started with four spades and declarer with three. Furthermore, if holding Axx or three low cards, declarer would surely have called for dummy’s queen as the best hope of making a trick with the queen.

If partner’s shape is 3-2-4-4, you might be able to defeat the contract by defending passively. If, as is quite likely, declarer has a five-card minor, that will not be good enough. You will need to make three spade tricks, a queen in partner’s hand and a heart trick. To achieve this you win the first trick with the king of spades and return the ten. Partner can win with the ace and switch to a heart. To avoid losing two heart tricks, declarer must finesse. This allows you to win the first heart and revert to spades.

2

♠ AK76
 ♥ 6
 ♦ KQ108
 ♣ QJ105
 ♠ 852
 ♥ A95
 ♦ 532
 ♣ K832
 ♠ Q104
 ♥ KJ10842
 ♦ 764
 ♣ 6
 ♠ J93
 ♥ Q73
 ♦ AJ9
 ♣ A974



WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
-	1♦	2♥*	2NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	
2♥ Weak			

Partner leads the five of hearts. What is your plan?

Given the strong holdings in both minor suits in dummy, it is difficult to see how you can beat this contract without running the heart suit. If declarer has ace and a low heart, it will not matter how you play the suit – it will be ready to run whenever partner gains the lead. Your play will not matter if declarer has the ace and two low hearts either. Holding up the ace will kill the suit. The key situation is when partner has the ace of hearts.

Sometimes the right tactic would be to win the first trick with the king of hearts and fire back a low heart. If your opponent places you with the ace and king of hearts, it would be right to go up with the queen and hope to run the minors without loss.

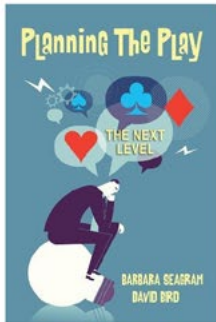
Here, given that South would hardly have made a non-forcing 2NT bid with the ace-king of clubs, the ace of diamonds and a heart honour, you do not need to rely on a misguess. Insert the ten of hearts, making it impossible for declarer to block the suit.



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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:
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BE THE DIFFERENCE



Play bridge wherever and whenever you like!

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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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.

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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.

Hobson's Choice

In a round-robin match in the Open Trials, you have to find the best approach with a minimal responding hand.

As North, you hold:

Dealer West. N/S Vul.

♠ AQ
♥ 6543
♦ J2
♣ J10984

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

1♦ 11-15, 2+ diamonds. If balanced, 11-14 (due to passed hand status).

Your call?

Even with this very weak heart suit, it is right to respond 1♥. You could have a 4-4 fit. In a sense, the 1♦ opening is one-level Stayman. Partner won't raise without 4-card support. If he passes you will have to scramble in a 4-3 fit, but your side will have the majority of trumps and you will only have to take 7 tricks.

You bid 1♥. The bidding continues:

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

1NT 11-14. Doubleton heart, since with 3 hearts would have passed 1♥. Fewer than 4 spades, since with 4 spades would have rebid 1♠.

You do not play any kind of checkback by a passed hand. 2 of a minor is to play.

Your call?

Since you don't play any kind of checkback by a passed hand, 2♣ is simply to play. You are guaranteed support. Partner doesn't have 3 hearts (he didn't pass 1♥), he doesn't have 4 spades (he didn't bid 1♠), and he doesn't have 6 diamonds (he didn't rebid 2♦). He must have at least 3 clubs, and unless his shape is exactly 3-2-5-3 he will have 4+ clubs. With this weak hand and internally solid club suit, 2♣ figures to be better than 1NT even though you are contracting for an extra trick. In addition, if the opponents balance with 2♠ partner will be able to compete to 3♣ if he has 4-card support.

You choose to pass, ending the auction.

You dropped partner in 1NT, so go over to his seat and try to make it.

West leads the ♠10. Standard leads.

♠ AQ
♥ 6543
♦ J2
♣ J10984

♠ 752
♥ 109
♦ KQ64
♣ AK63

Your play?

Clearly you have no choice but to take the finesse. If it loses, things might not be pretty.

You try the queen of spades. It wins. What next?

♠ A
♥ 6543
♦ J2
♣ J10984

♠ 75
♥ 109
♦ KQ64
♣ AK63

If the queen of clubs drops you have 7 tricks, so you must assume that it won't drop. If you go after clubs now and the queen doesn't drop, you will have only 4 clubs and 2 spades. The opponents will easily be able to establish enough tricks to defeat you.

It is better to go after diamonds first. The idea is to steal a diamond trick. If this succeeds, then you can go after clubs, and even if the queen doesn't come down you will have 7 tricks. There will be the danger that the opponents can cash 5 heart tricks in addition to the queen of clubs and the ace of diamonds, but you can't do anything about that.

If you lead a small diamond through the opponent who has the ace, he will be faced with a Hobson's choice. If he goes up ace he catches air, and you will have 3 diamond tricks to go along with your 2 clubs and 2 spades. If he ducks you will have stolen the diamond trick, and you can then turn your attention to clubs and have enough winners.

You have the entries to play the diamonds either way. You can lead a small diamond from dummy now. Alternatively, you can cross to the ace of clubs and lead a diamond up to the jack. Either way, your club entries will be sufficient to collect your tricks. You have to decide which opponent to play for the ace of diamonds.

The one piece of information you have for certain is that West has the king of spades. He is a passed hand. If he has something in hearts, then the ace of diamonds might get him up to an opening bid or some action over your 1♦ opening. In addition, suppose you lead a diamond to your hand and West does have the ace. That decreases the chances that he has the queen of clubs, since with that card also he very likely would have taken some action. Therefore, it would probably be right to take the club finesse. Your entries will be sufficient. West returns a spade. You win, lead a club to the ace (just in case), cross back to the jack of diamonds,

and take the club finesse. These arguments make it clear to play East for the ace of diamonds and lead a small diamond from dummy at trick 2.

You lead a small diamond off dummy. East plays small. Which honour do you play?

It probably isn't going to matter. You would like it if West ducks his ace, but it is hard to imagine he will. Still, playing the king is probably your best shot. He will know you have the queen since there is no way you are attacking the suit this way without the queen. If he thinks your diamonds are solid and you don't have an entry, maybe he can be talked into ducking.

You play the king of diamonds. It holds. What do you do next?

♠ A
♥ 6543
♦ J
♣ J10984

♠ 75
♥ 109
♦ Q64
♣ AK63

You must go after clubs now. Continuing diamonds will only get you 2 diamond tricks, which aren't enough if the queen of clubs doesn't come down. Going after clubs will get you 4 club tricks at least, which will make the contract unless the opponents can run enough heart tricks to defeat you.

You will cash the top clubs, of course. But you should be careful to unblock the jack and the 10 from dummy. It won't matter if the clubs don't split. But if the clubs are 2-2, this will give you the ♣6 as an entry to your hand on the third round of clubs.

You cash the AK of clubs, unblocking the jack and 10 from dummy. The clubs split 2-2, East having the queen. What next?

♠ A
♥ 6543
♦ J
♣ 984

██████████

♠ 75
♥ 109
♦ Q64
♣ 63

You can cash 8 tricks, of course. But with the ♣6 entry you can try knocking out the ace of diamonds for a ninth trick. If the defence continues spades, you will be able to cross to the ♣6 to collect your queen of diamonds and have 9 tricks. On the downside, if the hearts are 5-2 the opponents can cash 5 hearts and hold you to 7 tricks. In theory, this would be risking the contract if the hearts are 6-1, but that is virtually impossible. Most likely the hearts are 4-3, and the opponents might not work out to cash or the hearts might block. The problem is that the opponents will have seen that you have the KQ of diamonds and the AK of clubs, so they should work out to shift to hearts. It is probably better to simply cash your 8 tricks.

You choose to lead a diamond to the jack. East wins the ace, shifts to a small heart, and the defence takes 4 heart tricks so you make 2. The full hand is:

♠ K10984	♠ AQ	♠ J63
♥ AK7	♥ 6543	♥ QJ82
♦ 1085	♦ J2	♦ A973
♣ 52	♣ J10984	♣ Q7

	♠ 752	
	♥ 109	
	♦ KQ64	
	♣ AK63	



didn't fall. Meanwhile, 2♣ would have been a comfortable contract which could stand both black suits not behaving.

How was the E/W defence?

East has to duck the diamond. It can't be right to go up ace, since the defence isn't ready to take the setting trick. It looks ominous that declarer isn't attacking clubs, but maybe declarer has a doubleton club and ♦KQxxx. It is hard to see a layout where going up ace gains.

East has seen declarer show up with KQ of diamonds and AK of clubs. If declarer had a heart card, he would have opened 1NT. The low heart shift is clear.

Should E/W have been in the bidding?

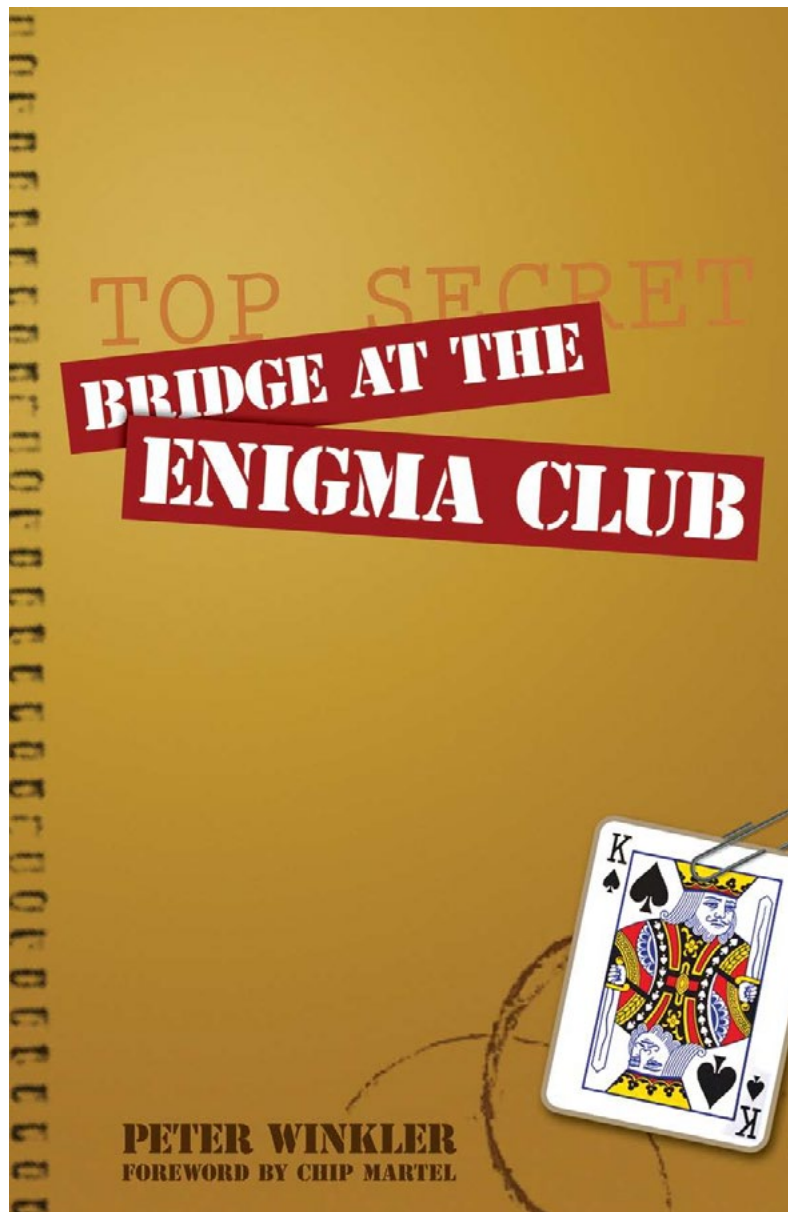
While the West hand isn't worth an opening bid by most standards, West's failure to overcall 1♠ after having passed is strange. Perhaps he judged that since East passed in third seat that there was no point in entering the auction, but with a decent hand and a good spade suit, it must be right to bid. There are many ways that overcalling can gain, and there is very little risk. On this hand East would have raised to 2♠, but with the clubs 2-2 and king of spades in front of the AQ N/S figures to get a plus score whether they declare or defend.

We adjust our structure quite a bit when we have passed in first or second seat. Since we open all 11-counts, we up our 1NT range to 15-17, since a 14-count isn't likely to produce a game opposite a passed hand. When third or fourth seat opens 1♦, we assume there is no game unless we hit some unexpectedly good fit, since once again the strength for game just isn't there. We are willing to drop the auction at the 1-level in any 7-card fit, since that is generally as good or better than contracting for 7 tricks with no trump suit since at least we have the majority of trumps. Therefore there is no need for any kind of checkback, since opener won't be rebidding 1NT with 3-card support. North should have taken advantage of this and gotten to the superior 2♣ contract.

N/S were fortunate that the spade finesse was onside. If it had been off 1NT would have gone down, and gone down several if the queen of clubs

Bridge At The Enigma Club - Peter Winkler

This month's Master Point Press Bidding Battle book prize



Board 14: East dealer; neither side vulnerable

TUSH IS CAUGHT IN A HOBSON'S SQUEEZE



Second in hand, Tush picked up

♠ A J 10 9 ♥ — ♦ 8 7 6 5 3 ♣ 9 7 6 2

and Mustache, to Tush's right, began with a big club, Ricochet. Beard responded 2♦, natural and positive; Mustache bid 2NT, raised by Beard. Mustache now bid 4♣, natural, eliciting a heart cuebid from his partner, and continued with 5NT, meaning "pick a slam." Beard chose 6♦. After two passes Tush doubled, hoping that partner's hand would help her find the heart lead, and that the opponents either didn't have or wouldn't find a profitable place to run.

However, after two passes East pulled to 6NT. Oh well, thought Tush, maybe they're short a trick in notrump.

The auction had been:

West	North	East	South
<i>Beard</i>	<i>Corky</i>	<i>Mustache</i>	<i>Tush</i>
		1♣	pass
2♦	pass	2NT	pass
3NT	pass	4♣	pass
4♥	pass	5NT	pass
6♦	pass	pass	dbl
pass	pass	6NT	all pass

Tush led a passive diamond. The full deal was:

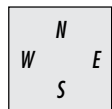
Contract: 6NT by East
Opening lead: ♦8

Beard

♠ 6 5 2
♥ A J 10
♦ Q J 10 9 4
♣ Q 3

Corky

♠ 7 4 3
♥ Q 9 8 7 5 3 2
♦ 2
♣ 8 4



Tush

♠ A J 10 9
♥ —
♦ 8 7 6 5 3
♣ 9 7 6 2

Mustache

♠ K Q 8
♥ K 6 4
♦ A K
♣ A K J 10 5

Declarer cashed the ♦A, ♦K, crossed to dummy's ♣Q, and cashed the rest of the diamonds, ditching all three of his spades. From this even dummy could see that only an overtrick was at issue. When Mustache continued by running the clubs, now discarding spades from the board, it became clear that the thirteenth trick depended on a heart guess. Tush's partner did her best by pitching hearts and spades alternately.

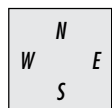
At the point when the last club was to be played, the hands had come down to:

Dummy

♠ 6
♥ A J 10
♦ —
♣ —

Corky

♠ —
♥ Q 9 8 7
♦ —
♣ —



Tush

♠ A J 10 9
♥ —
♦ —
♣ —

Declarer

♠ —
♥ K 6 4
♦ —
♣ 5

There was a short hesitation before declarer cashed his last club with a triumphant look. Tush was down to ♠AJ109; he threw the nine.

Declarer pitched dummy's ♠6, played a heart to dummy's ace and took the now-marked finesse through Corky, making seven.

"Cute squeeze," said Beard. "A well-earned IMP."

"Thanks," said Mustache.

Tush looked right and left and even took an exaggerated peek under the table. "Was someone squeezed?" he inquired.

"You were," said Mustache cheerfully. "On the last club."

"You're kidding me, right?" said Tush. "I've heard of one-suit squeezes, but I had four equals in a dead suit. That would make it a one-card squeeze, and I don't think..."

"Nonetheless, it's a perfectly genuine squeeze," Beard interrupted. "Since you showed a void in the bidding, you had to be down to either four spades or four hearts. Your pitch on the last club would tell me which, guaranteeing my overtrick."

Tush thought about this. It did seem that having to discard on the last club forced him to reveal useful information. Again a non-material squeeze, but clearly worth half a trick here.

"Just a minute. Don't I have to have some sort of choice to be squeezed? If I do this, so-and-so happens, and if I do the other thing, some other bad thing happens."

"Sure," said Mustache. "Sometimes you have two choices, sometimes three, this time you had only one. 'Hobson's choice,' I think is what they call it."

Tush remembered reading about that phrase in grade school. Thomas Hobson was a stable master in Cambridge during the reign of Henry VIII, and the story was, you could spend all day describing the kind of horse you wanted but he always gave you the one nearest the door.

Tush decided, wisely, to be a good sport about it. "So, I guess we should call it a 'Hobson's squeeze,' then." Tush detected a subtle expression of relief on Corky's face.

But he couldn't leave well enough alone. "Come to think of it, wasn't my partner Hobson-squeezed as well? You can also tell from her discard which suit my void was in. A double Hobson's squeeze!"

East mumbled something about Tush having to play first, and the two professors got up to move for the next round.

But as they left, Tush knitted his eyebrows and made a subtle wipeout motion with his hands, indicating (he hoped) to Corky that he did not concede that he had been squeezed!



Board 15: South dealer; North-South vulnerable

TUSH NEEDS AN ENCRYPTED SIGNAL

The next two opponents were a middle-aged couple, well-mannered but businesslike. They looked to Tush like they might be very strong players; had he seen them before at the Nationals, perhaps?

Tush was not prone to preempt at unfavorable vulnerability, but holding

♠ 10 8 3 ♥ A Q 10 7 6 5 4 ♦ J 10 5 ♣ —

as dealer, he could hardly be blamed for calling 3♥. Certainly, it couldn't be right to give these two a free ride in the bidding.

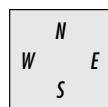
This was doubled by West (the woman), raised to 4♥ by Corky, and passed back around to West. Unfazed, West persisted with 4♠.

West	North	East	South
			3♥
dbl	4♥	pass	pass
4♠	all pass		

Corky led the ♥2.

Contract: 4♠ by West

Opening lead: ♥2



Tush

♠ 10 8 3
♥ A Q 10 7 6 5 4
♦ J 10 5
♣ —

Dummy

♠ Q
♥ K 9 8
♦ 9 7 6 4
♣ 8 7 5 4 3

Declarer put up dummy's ♥K, ruffed Tush's ace, and led a small trump to the queen. Tush was about to follow small when it hit him: this was a classic situation for a trump echo. His partner was likely to get in with a diamond at Trick 3, and a club ruff was beginning to look like it might be just the thing.

But declarer can also see the signal, thought Tush, and if she deduces that trumps are 3-3, she may decide to squander her table entry, return to hand safely and draw trumps. That would not be good for the defense.

But now, Tush had taken far too long. If he played low he had no way to win: declarer would wonder if he had been contemplating an echo, while partner would be barred from acting on the same deduction. So Tush dropped the ♠8.

The full deal in fact was:

	Corky	
	♠ J 7 4	
	♥ J 3 2	
	♦ K 8 3	
	♣ K 9 6 2	
Declarer		Dummy
♠ A K 9 6 5 2		♠ Q
♥ —		♥ K 9 8
♦ A Q 2		♦ 9 7 6 4
♣ A Q J 10		♣ 8 7 5 4 3
	Tush	
	♠ 10 8 3	
	♥ A Q 10 7 6 5 4	
	♦ J 10 5	
	♣ —	

As Tush feared, declarer scrutinized his ♠8, ruffed a heart to hand and laid down high trumps. A few tricks later she was enjoying +420 and a hard-earned IMP against the par club game.

"Nothing I can do about it," said Tush to Corky. "Classic case of tell one, tell all. If I follow with the small trump, she hooks the diamond, but are you going to play a club now? I don't think so."

"Unfortunately, the encrypted signalers may be beating this one," said Corky. "When declarer ruffs the opening lead, the defenders know the whole heart-suit layout and declarer doesn't. This sets up a key for the defense, enabling them to encrypt the trump echo."

Tush was lost. “Encrypt the echo? What are you talking about?”

“Here’s how my regular partner and I would do it,” said Corky patiently. “Often, when you defend a trump contract, you lead your suit and declarer ruffs in at some point. At that moment, since the dummy is exposed and declarer is out of the suit, you and your partner know the exact distribution of every spot card. You now focus on the smallest spot card whose location the declarer can’t deduce. That card becomes the ‘key.’ If leader has it, subsequent signaling is normal. Otherwise, all signals for the remainder of the play are upside-down.

“In the deal we just played, only you and I know who has the three of hearts. Since I have it, signaling is normal, and when trumps are led you echo with the eight. Declarer learns nothing, because you might be denying a trump echo if you happen to be the one holding the key card.”

“This can’t be legal,” said Tush.

“As far as the laws of bridge are concerned, there’s nothing illegal about it. If the opponents ask what your signal means, I tell them: either you have three trumps, interest in a ruff, and no three of hearts; or you have the heart three and no message. Assuming you had a choice, of course.

“Think of it as the card-play equivalent of the rotated asking bid we encountered before. It’s perfectly okay that I can read your trump signal even though declarer can’t; it’s by virtue of my knowledge of the cards in my own hand.

“True, encrypted signaling is specifically banned by the ACBL for pairs play. Luckily, this club is more enlightened.”

The opponents didn’t seem to be expressing any surprise at these revelations. “Have you guys encountered this stuff before?” asked Tush.

“Oh yes, in fact we play it,” said West.

“So you’d have beaten four spades, if you’d been North-South?”

“Sure, but not that way. I’d have doubled four spades with your hand, to get a club lead.”

“Clear-cut,” East agreed. “Ace and a void.”

GENERAL INTEREST

THE DARK SIDE OF BRIDGE

Robert Tischman is just looking for a game of bridge, but when a mysterious stranger persuades him to partner her in a two-session event at the Engima Club, he gets much more than that.

This is a book that can be enjoyed on several levels:

- 1) as a bridge novel with lots of great deals;
- 2) as a glimpse of what the game might be like if technology were applied to it with more imagination;
- 3) as an exposition of the author’s ideas on encrypted bidding and encrypted signals—bids and plays where, in full compliance with the Laws of Bridge, partners can exchange information that cannot be deciphered by their opponents.

Consumer warning: these methods, though fascinating and ingenious, are illegal in many bridge jurisdictions.

“Here you will see more new ideas in bridge than you ever dreamed of. Will you agree with all of them? Probably not (I don’t). But read and enjoy. Chances are, you’ll never look at bridge quite the same way again.”

—Chip Martel, multiple World Champion.



PETER WINKLER (Hanover, NH) is a former cryptographer who now teaches mathematics and computer science at Dartmouth College. He originated the idea of encrypted signals some twenty-five years ago, and has been fighting to have them declared legal ever since.



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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

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2018 Book of the Year

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

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Jeff Bayone

Honors Bridge Club



Cynthia Pickett's Offer

by David Bird

‘Do you have any engagement tomorrow night, Abbot?’ asked the Mother Superior, who was spending a few days at the monastery.

‘Nothing special,’ the Abbot replied.

‘An elderly friend of mine and her sister live in Sutton Scotney, not far from here,’ the Mother Superior continued. ‘They play bridge. If you could drive me over there, we could take them on for a few rubbers.’

This was not the Abbot’s idea of an enjoyable evening, and he made no immediate reply.

‘Cynthia is an excellent pastry cook,’ said the Mother Superior. ‘Her apple and cinnamon pie is a wonder to behold.’

The Abbot considered the matter. How long was it since he has tasted a top-notch fruit pie? With any luck there would be a jug of home-made custard on the side. ‘I’d be happy to accompany you,’ he replied. ‘Perhaps we should phone her tonight, to give her plenty of time to... well, bake the pie.’

It was the Abbot’s custom to arrive slightly late for local bridge matches, to apply pressure on the opponents. On this occasion, there were no such tactical considerations. It was ten minutes before the appointed time as he parked his ancient Morris Minor outside Cynthia Pickett’s small bungalow.

‘How wonderful to see you again, Bernadine,’ Cynthia exclaimed. She studied the Abbot with no particular approval. How could a man of the cloth afford to overeat so much? ‘Do you play bridge regularly?’ she asked him.

The Abbot’s customary response to such a question involved a none-too-short description of his participation in the last Bermuda Bowl. ‘Not very often,’ he replied.

Cynthia Pickett smiled sympathetically. ‘No-one will complain if you try your best,’ she said. ‘Alice and I take the game quite seriously. We play twice a week at the Sutton Scotney golf club.’

The Abbot was somewhat concerned when the four entered the overheated sitting room and took their seats around a card table. Had he been inveigled into this game under false pretences? Where was the fabled

apple pie? There was no scent of recent baking in the air. The game began and this was an early deal:

Dealer East. None Vul.

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

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

W	N	E
S		

West	North	East	South
<i>Cynthia Pickett</i>	<i>Mother Superior</i>	<i>Alice Pickett</i>	<i>The Abbot</i>
-	-	3♣	3♥
3NT	4♥	All Pass	

Cynthia Pickett leaned towards the Abbot. ‘At the golf club we play that an opening three-bid shows a weak hand with a seven-timer,’ she informed him. ‘The official name for it is a pre-emptive jump bid.’

A few moments later, the Abbot was installed in Four Hearts. West led the ♣2 to her partner’s king, and East persevered with the ace of clubs. The Abbot ruffed in his hand and paused to consider his line of play. West surely held two trump tricks, after her 3NT bid, so he would need to avoid a diamond loser. An endplay on West appeared to be the only chance.

The Abbot continued with the ace, king and queen of spades, everyone following. Cynthia and Alice shared a glance. Goodness gracious, did this strange man not even know about drawing trumps? How incredibly

lucky he had been that the spades broke evenly.

The Abbot's next move was to play a trump. Just in case East happened to hold a singleton queen in the suit, he chose to lead the trump king. Cynthia Pickett won with the ♥A and continued with the ♥Q. Since a third round of clubs would concede a ruff-and-discard, she then had to play a low diamond.

The Abbot ran this to his queen and was about to claim the contract when he realized that this custom might not be acceptable practice at the local golf club. Players at that level usually liked every deal to be played out. Three more rounds of trumps, the ♠8 and a diamond to the ace, completed the proceedings.

'Well played, Hugo,' said the Mother Superior.

'It's a pity I didn't start with only two spades,' Alice Pickett observed. 'Then I would have ruffed the third round.'

Cynthia Pickett nodded her agreement. 'At the golf club we usually draw trumps straight away,' she said. 'Playing for a 3-3 spade break instead is well against the odds.'

The Abbot could feel his blood pressure rising. He turned towards his right-hand opponent. 'I go down if you switch to a diamond at trick two,' he informed her. 'That sets up a diamond trick for your partner.'

The two sisters looked towards the Mother Superior. Why on earth had she brought this rude man to see them? Despite not even knowing the rule about drawing trumps, he still felt able to criticise his opponents' defence.

A few deals later, the Abbot picked up this hand:

♠A10753 ♥AKQ ♦AK ♣832

After two passes, he had to decide what to open in the third seat. Playing Puppet Stayman, it would be obvious to open 2NT. Partner could then investigate a 5-3 spade fit if she had a suitable hand. Since it was anyone's guess whether the Reverend Mother played Puppet Stayman, he decided to open One Spade. This was the deal before them:

Dealer South. N/S Vul

♠ KQJ ♥ J1073 ♦ 76 ♣ Q964		♠ 92 ♥ 962 ♦ QJ105 ♣ KJ105	♠ 864 ♥ 854 ♦ 98432 ♣ A7
♠ A10753 ♥ AKQ ♦ AK ♣ 832			

West	North	East	South
<i>Cynthia Pickett</i>	<i>Mother Superior</i>	<i>Alice Pickett</i>	<i>The Abbot</i>
-	-	-	1♠
Pass	2♠	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

Cynthia Pickett led the king of trumps and down went the dummy. 'Did you miscount your points, Bernadine?' she enquired. 'At the golf club we need six points for a response. You only have four points.'

The Mother Superior maintained a straight face. 'My mistake,' she replied. 'When I added it up, I thought it came to six points.'

The Abbot allowed the trump king to win the first trick and won the jack of trumps continuation. It was already quite obvious that Cynthia Pickett knew little about the game. Even so, she had managed to find the one lead that might trouble him.

At trick three the Abbot led a low club from his hand. When West followed with the ♣4, he could not believe his good luck. He reached across the table to play dummy's ♣7. Alice Pickett won the trick and had no further trump to play. The Abbot won her queen of diamonds return with the king and crossed to the ace of clubs. A diamond to the ace allowed him to ruff his last club with dummy's ♠8 and the game was his. Once again he played out the remaining tricks, in case the notion of claiming a contract was unapproved in this company.

‘What an incredibly lucky deal for you!’ Cynthia Pickett exclaimed. ‘If Bernadine hadn’t miscounted her hand, you would have played in One Spade.’

Alice Pickett nodded her agreement. ‘They would have missed a cold game,’ she said.

The Abbot was about to point out that Cynthia could have beaten the contract by playing a club higher than dummy’s 7 on the first round when he noted a warning shake of the head from across the table. ‘Now I think about it,’ he said. ‘I must have miscounted my hand, too. I had 20 points. I should have opened 2NT.’

‘The players at our golf club hardly ever miscount their points,’ Alice Pickett continued. ‘Certainly not both halves of a partnership on the same deal!’

‘I rarely miscount, myself,’ observed the Abbot. ‘On this occasion, I’m inclined to blame it on an empty stomach. We had to leave the monastery before the evening supper, modest as that normally is.’

‘You should have told me, Bernadine!’ exclaimed Cynthia Pickett. ‘If I’d known that, I would have made one of my apple pies. Nothing could be easier, although I’m told that they taste rather good. For the custard, I use a recipe from my dear Mother – may she rest in peace. That’s very popular, too.’

The Abbot shared a glance with the Mother Superior. It seemed he had been brought here under false pretences.

‘I could make you some toast, if you like,’ Cynthia Pickett continued. ‘My home-made damson jam has won a few prizes. Sadly we finished the last jar this morning, but I’ll be making another batch tomorrow.’

The Abbot, who had closed his eyes for a brief moment, declined this kind offer. Play continued and he soon picked up another good hand.

Dealer North. Neither Vul.

♠ 62 ♥ 9643 ♦ AJ83 ♣ K32	<div style="border: 2px solid green; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ J103 ♥ K10 ♦ KQ96 ♣ A865	♠ 98754 ♥ 8 ♦ 10742 ♣ Q109
♠ AKQ ♥ AQJ752 ♦ 5 ♣ J74			

West	North	East	South
<i>Cynthia Pickett</i>	<i>Mother Superior</i>	<i>Alice Pickett</i>	<i>The Abbot</i>
–	1♦	Pass	1♥
Pass	1NT	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♣	Pass	6♥
All Pass			

Cynthia Pickett was somewhat puzzled by the auction. She turned to the Mother Superior. ‘What did your partner’s Gerber response show?’

The Mother Superior had a twinkle in her eye. ‘Over 4♣ Gerber, it would probably show about six aces and three kings,’ she replied. ‘We don’t play Gerber, though.’

‘I thought you rebid 1NT,’ Cynthia Pickett persisted. ‘Alice and I play Gerber in any auction, Most players at the golf club use it only when there’s been a 1NT bid.’

Once again, the Abbot could feel his blood pressure rising. ‘My partner’s 4♣ bid showed either the ace or king of clubs,’ he declared. ‘It’s you to lead.’

Cynthia Pickett led the ♠6 and down went the dummy. ‘Ah yes, thank you, partner,’ said the Abbot. ‘He won in his hand and drew trumps in four rounds. When his next move was the ♦5 from his hand, Cynthia Pickett went in with the ♦A and returned another round of spades.’

The Abbot faced his cards. I can throw my two club losers on the

king-queen of diamonds,' he informed the opponents.

'That was a lucky one,' exclaimed Alice Pickett. 'If I'd held the $\heartsuit A$, you would have had only one discard for the clubs. Perhaps you should have led a club, Cynthia. We make a diamond and a club then, maybe even two clubs.'

'I would have led a club,' her partner replied. 'It was their unusual $4\clubsuit$ bid that confused me.'

In any other game, the Abbot would have lost no time in pointing out that West could have beaten the slam by not playing her $\heartsuit A$. No club discards at all would then have been available.

The final rubber had reached Game All when the Abbot arrived in this contract:

Dealer South. Both Vul.

\spadesuit 1085 \heartsuit KQ976542 \diamondsuit — \clubsuit 94	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto; display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> <div style="width: 100%; height: 100%; background-color: #008000; color: white; display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> N W E S </div> </div>	\spadesuit A76 \heartsuit 83 \diamondsuit A97653 \clubsuit 76	\spadesuit KQ94 \heartsuit AJ \diamondsuit 84 \clubsuit KQ852
\spadesuit J32 \heartsuit 10 \diamondsuit KQJ102 \clubsuit AJ103			

West	North	East	South
<i>Cynthia Pickett</i>	<i>Mother Superior</i>	<i>Alice Pickett</i>	<i>The Abbot</i>
—	—	—	$1\heartsuit$
$3\heartsuit$	$4\diamondsuit$	$4\heartsuit$	$5\diamondsuit$
Pass	Pass	Double	All Pass

Alice Pickett overtook her partner's lead of the heart king and paused for thought. Eventually, she decided to play a second heart. The Abbot ruffed with the $\heartsuit 10$ and crossed to dummy's $\heartsuit 9$, West showing out. When he called for a club from dummy, East split her honours and he won with the ace. A trump to dummy's ace allowed the Abbot to lead a second round of clubs.

The deal was similar to the heart slam that the Abbot had played. It seemed to Alice Pickett that nothing could be gained by rising with the $\clubsuit Q$. If declarer had started with $\clubsuit AJ10x$ or $\clubsuit AJ9x$, he would then have two spade discards from dummy. Perhaps Cynthia held the $\clubsuit J$ and would be able to win the round of clubs.

The Abbot was disappointed to see a low club appear from East. He won with the $\clubsuit J$, and would now have to restrict his spade losers to just one. He ruffed a club in dummy, returned to a trump and ruffed his last club. These cards remained in play:

\spadesuit 1085 \heartsuit Q \diamondsuit — \clubsuit —	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto; display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> <div style="width: 100%; height: 100%; background-color: #008000; color: white; display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> N W E S </div> </div>	\spadesuit A76 \heartsuit — \diamondsuit 7 \clubsuit —	\spadesuit KQ9 \heartsuit — \diamondsuit — \clubsuit K
\spadesuit J32 \heartsuit — \diamondsuit K \clubsuit —			

If West had started with a doubleton spade honour, ace and another spade would endplay her to concede a ruff-and-discard. The Abbot had a complete count of the hand, however, and could place West with an initial $3=8=0=2$ shape. He therefore led the $\spadesuit 6$ from dummy.

Alice Pickett won with the $\spadesuit K$ and returned the $\spadesuit 9$. The Abbot rose with the $\spadesuit J$ and claimed the slam.

'Incredibly lucky, once again,' exclaimed Cynthia Pickett. 'What were the odds of finding Alice with both missing spade honours?'

Very low, indeed, thought the Abbot. Holding both spade honours, any sensible player would have switched to the $\spadesuit K$ at trick two. Not that the present company would thank him for pointing this out.

'You've been extremely lucky all evening,' added Alice Pickett.

Not in every respect, thought the Abbot, as he rose to his feet. He could happily have done without the various dubious contracts he had been allowed to make. He would ask for just one thing in exchange. A large slice or two of home-made apple pie!

The uBid Auction Room

Marc Smith

Marc Smith follows the Soloway Trophy winners

The 2019 Fall Nationals were staged in San Francisco and featured the inaugural running of a new event, the Soloway Trophy. The format was a straight knockout of 60-board matches, and, with entry limited to just 32 teams, even the lower seeds in an exceptionally strong field would be quite capable of pulling off an upset. Indeed, there were no easy matches, and the carnage in the first round emphasized this, with half of the original top 16 seeds losing (including #4, #5, #6, #7 and #8).

We will be following the eventual winners, the original #20 seeds led by npc Josef Blass. His squad included five former Bermuda Bowl winners, Dutch stars Sjoert Brink and Sebastiaan ‘Bas’ Drijver along with Polish-American Jacek Pszczola, and Jacek Kalita and Michal Nowosadzki from Poland. Kalita and Nowosadzki, currently ranked numbers two and five in the WBF Open rankings, were members of the Polish teams that won the Bermuda Bowl in 2015 in Chennai and in 2019 in Wuhan. Kalita had first become a world champion way back in 2004, as a member of the Polish team that won the World University Championships. Pszczola, now an American national and widely known around the bridge world as ‘Pepsi’, won the 1998 World Pairs in Lille playing with fellow Pole Michel Kwiecien. He has since won the World Transnational Teams, the World Mixed Teams and the 2017 Bermuda Bowl. Brink and Drijver were both members of the Dutch team that won the 2011 Bermuda Bowl in Veldhoven. More recently, they won the 2016 World National Open Teams in Wroclaw. That this team was seeded #20 is testament to the strength of the field in this inaugural event honouring one of the game’s true legends and all-round fantastic guys, the late, great Paul Soloway.

The Blass team was one of the ‘giant-killers’ in Round 1, seeing off the challenge of the #13 seeds captained by Eldad Ginossar. In Round 2, they came up against #29 Onstott, who had dispatched the #4 seeds that included Dutch world champions Ricco van Pooijen and Luke Verhees in Round 1.

As usual, readers can bid the deals with their regular partner (using the bidding slips provided elsewhere in the magazine) and then compare

their contracts with those reached at the table by the winners of the Soloway Trophy. Our first deals come from the Blass team’s quarter-final match against #21 Lebowitz.

Hand 1. Dealer West. E/W Vul.

♠ J4	♠ AK1098
♥ AKJ4	♥ Q5
♦ J2	♦ 64
♣ AK952	♣ Q986



(North overcalls 2♦. South raises to 3♦ if able)

West	North	East	South
<i>Drijver</i>	<i>A Grossack</i>	<i>Brink</i>	<i>Lebowitz</i>
1♣	2♦	2♥*	3♦
Double	Pass	4♣	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

Drijver opened a natural One Club and Brink’s Two Heart bid after North’s overcall was a transfer to spades. Drijver doubled to get his hearts into the auction and now Brink showed his club support. Drijver offered a choice of games and Brink chose what turned out to be the second-best option.

Not that Four Spades is a poor contract. Consider the play on a club lead, though. Do you take a first round spade finesse and risk a club ruff, or do you play trumps from the top and risk losing control if the suit splits 5-1? Five Clubs has no such problems, except on this occasion when that would also have gone down – spades were 6-0 offside, so the defenders score a spade ruff in addition to their two diamonds. Unlucky!

The Blass team still gained handsomely on the deal, despite going two down in Four Spades: E/W -200. Curiously, the uncontested auction at the other table went seriously awry:

West	North	East	South
M Rosenberg	Pszczola	Z Gossack	Kalita
1NT	Pass	2♥*	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♣	Pass
4♣	Pass	4♠	Pass
6♣	Double	All Pass	

Played from the East side, the defenders can get two spade ruffs, and the Poles found them both: E/W -800 and 12 IMPs to Blass.

Recommended auction: The Dutch auction above looks eminently sensible, perhaps with East converting to Five Clubs at the end.

MARKS: **Five Clubs 10**, Four Spades 8, Four Clubs/Three Spades 2

Running Score: 2019 Soloway Trophy winners 8

You would think our next deal would be trivial for players at this level, and no doubt most of our readers will be thankful for the 10 marks.

Hand 2. Dealer West. N/S Game.

♠ 83	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; border-bottom: 1px solid black; padding-bottom: 2px;"> N </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; padding: 2px 0;"> W E </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; border-top: 1px solid black; padding-top: 2px;"> S </div> </div>	♠ Q97
♥ AKQ976		♥ J53
♦ 4		♦ AQ107
♣ AQ53		♣ KJ10

West	East
Drijver	Brink
1♥	2♣
3♦*	3♥
3♠*	4♥
All Pass	

After two ostensibly natural bids, Drijver's jump to Three Diamonds was a splinter, showing a club fit. Brink might, perhaps, have simply jumped to Four Hearts to show his minimum 2/1 with a heart fit, but he marked time with Three Hearts. Drijver rolled out fourth-suit just in case 3NT was a better spot, and Brink duly corrected to the obvious game. The defenders cashed their two spade winners and declarer claimed the rest: E/W +450.

For the second time in a row, two top losers in a side suit was not viewed as a handicap to slam bidding:

West	East
Rosenberg	Z Grossack
1♥	2♣
2♥	3♥
4♣	4♦
4NT	5♣
5♦	5♥
6♣	6♥
Pass	

With hearts agreed in a game-forcing auction at the three-level, Michael Rosenberg began cue-bidding with Four Clubs. The inference that his partner's failure to cue-bid in spades denied a control in that suit was evidently lost on Zack Grossack, and Rosenberg obviously expected that the Four Diamond bid would also deliver a spade control. I cannot tell you what the shenanigans over 4NT mean but the end result was Six Hearts off two cashing spades.

Fortunately for the Americans, Pepsi also expected to find a spade control in dummy so he did not fancy leading from Kxx. He instead tried to give his partner a club ruff by leading from five low cards in that suit. South followed suit at trick one, so Rosenberg drew trumps and eventually took a winning diamond finesse for his twelfth trick. E/W +1010 and 11 IMPs to Grossack that could easily have gone the other way.

Recommended auction: ANBMS does not play that a 2♦ response promises five cards, so the auction could be expected to go something like 1♥-2♦-2♥-3♥-4♣-4♥. With his partner's Four Clubs denying a spade control, East can safely sign off in game no matter how good the rest of his hand.

MARKS: **Five Hearts 10**, Five Clubs 8, 3NT 3

Running Score: 2019 Soloway Trophy winners 18

Winning their quarter-final 166-119, the Blass team moved on to a semi-final against the original #1 seeds captained by Warren Spector. Sometimes, it seems, you can have too much system:

Hand 3. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

♠ KQ52
♥ J95
♦ KQ65
♣ 98



♠ J87
♥ AKQ942
♦ A7
♣ A2

West	East
Kalita	Nowosadzki
-	1♥
2♠*	2NT*
3♣*	3♦*
3♥*	4♥
Pass	

Jacek Kalita's Two Spade response was artificial, showing either a mixed raise or a balanced invite. Nowosadzki relayed twice, found out his partner held a balanced 10-12 with three hearts, and signed off in game. The hands fitted perfectly and there were just about twelve top tricks: E/W +680.

West	East
Hurd	Wooldridge
-	1♥
1♠	2♥
4♥	4NT
5♦	6♥
Pass	

John Hurd started with a natural One Spade response, which significantly improved Joel Wooldridge's hand. I have to wonder whether the Two Heart rebid is a typo in the records, as the hand is surely worth at least Three Hearts, and is perhaps even too good for that after a One Spade response. If Wooldridge did, indeed, bid Two Hearts, then he found out his partner had a raise to game facing a minimum. I'm not sure why he bothered with Blackwood, since he is surely never bidding a grand, but he did ask, found no key cards opposite, and then jumped to Six Hearts. E/W +1430 and 13 IMPs to Spector.

Recommended auction: What do you rebid after a One Spade response? Perhaps 1♥-1♠-2NT-3♥-4♣-4♦ is the way to start, although exactly how

to get to slam even after this is less than obvious as the key cards are the KQ of spades. Perhaps responder can somehow be persuaded to use Blackwood?

MARKS: **Six Hearts 10**, Five Hearts 5

Running Score: 2019 Soloway Trophy winners 23

Spector won the third stanza to narrow the Blass lead to 38 IMPs with 15 deals left. This early deal in the final stanza helped to narrow the gap even further:

Hand 4. Dealer West. Both Vul.

♠ -
♥ AKQJ962
♦ 76
♣ 7542



♠ A5
♥ 7
♦ J10932
♣ AKJ93

(North overcalls 4♠. South bids 5♦ if able and North then bids 6♠)

West	North	East	South
Hurd	Nowosadzki	Wooldridge	Kalita
4♥	All Pass		

The auction in this room was surprisingly short, with Michal Nowosadzki electing not to come in over Four Hearts on his 6-2-4-1 shape. North led his singleton club, so declarer was able to dispose of one diamond loser on the ♠A. He eventually lost a trick in each minor: E/W +650.

At the other table, there were six bids before anyone discovered that their bidding box contained green cards:

West	North	East	South
Brink	Kranyak	Drijver	Demuy
3NT	4♠	5♣	5♦
6♦	6♠	Pass	Pass
7♥	All Pass		

Although the Brink/Drijver convention card says simply that a 3NT opening is Gambling with the usual continuations, it would seem that they use it to show any solid suit rather than specifically a minor. John Kranyak did overcall here, and Drijver showed some interest with a Five Club bid that was, presumably, not pass/correct. Vincent Demuy then joined in with Five Diamonds and I have no clue whether Brink's Six

Diamonds meant anything specific, No doubt buoyed by his diamond fit, Kranyak soldiered on to slam in his major, and Drivjer passed, presumably intending to show first-round spade control.

Perhaps Brink was worried about a double-double fit, and thought that perhaps Six Spades was actually making. Surely he did not bid Seven Hearts to make. As it happened, he must have thought he had chances when he first saw dummy and North's spade lead. Away went one diamond, and now the contract would make if he could just bring in the club suit, Alas, by the time Brink led a club from hand, North had already discarded his, so declarer's hopes were short-lived. E/W -200 and 13 IMPs to Spector.

If North can find a low diamond lead from KQxx, the defenders can cash two winners in that suit and then play a club and hold a heart contract to ten tricks. East/West have two heart tricks and two black aces against Six Spades, so defending would have picked up +800 and a 4-IMP gain, so bidding Seven Hearts actually cost 17 IMPs.

Recommended auction: I suppose it doesn't matter how you get there as long as you double Six Spades. Surely an easy 10 marks for readers..?

MARKS: Six Spades-Doubled (N) 10, Six Spades (N) 7

Running Score: 2019 Soloway Trophy winners 23

Spector won the final set 31-16, but it was too little, too late. Blass won the match 135-113 to march on into the final. There, the most successful team in the U.S. bridge history awaited them, the original #3 seeds, Nickell.

The action began immediately, and the score was already 15-10 in favour of Nickell when Board 4 arrived:

Hand 5. Dealer South. Both Vul.

♠ Q1094
♥ J74
♦ 8
♣ KQJ87



♠ AK87
♥ KQ1065
♦ A964
♣ —

West	East
<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Brink</i>
Pass	1♥
2♣*	4♥
Pass	

Curiously, two of my least-favourite conventions put in an appearance on this deal. Bas Drijver passed as Dealer and then used Drury to show a maximum with three-card heart support. Sjoert Brink could not envision anything beyond game facing a passed hand, so bid what he thought he could make. I suppose it is unlikely that partner's minors would be reversed with the opponents silent, but playing Two Clubs (or Two Diamonds) as natural with a maximum and a heart fit is perhaps a better method than traditional Drury.

You don't really want to get to slam on this combination, as you probably need the ruffing club finesse in addition to no spade ruff and, quite possibly, a 3-2 trump split. With both majors 3-2 and the ♣A onside, though, there were twelve tricks: E/W +680.

West	East
<i>Nickell</i>	<i>Katz</i>
Pass	2♦*
4♥	5♣*
5♦*	5♠*
6♥	Pass

Ralph Katz opened with the convention whose name may not be mentioned, showing 11-16 HCP and 4+♠/5+♥. When Nickell jumped to game, Katz decided he was worth one more try, and advanced with a cue-bid of his void. The problem here is that if the cue-bid is the ace then Nickell's hand is huge, but if it is shortage then it is potentially junk. When Nickell co-operated with a diamond cue-bid, Katz even made a grand slam try on his way to the small slam. E/W +1430 and 13 IMPs to Nickell.

Recommended auction: If you play Drury, then I suppose the Dutch auction is not unreasonable. This is also one of those exceptions where you are probably better off in the 5-3 fit rather than the 4-4, so not finding your spades is a plus.

MARKS: Four Hearts 10, Four Spades 9, Five Hearts/Five Spades 7, Six Hearts 5, Six Spades 3

Running Score: 2019 Soloway Trophy winners 33

Nickell led 48-28 after the first stanza. The next deal, from early in the second set, produced a very competitive auction at both tables thanks to some innovative methods.

Hand 6. None Vul. Dealer North.

♠ 3	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ K6
♥ Q9763		♥ K1085
♦ J876		♦ K10543
♣ A62		♣ K7

(North opens 1♣. South bids 1♠/2♠ as needed. North then bids 4♠)

West	North	East	South
Brink	Nickell	Drijver	Katz
-	1♣	1NT*	2♠
4♦	4♠	All Pass	

Bas Drijver's 1NT overcall showed 5+♦ and an undisclosed four-card major. Katz bid a forcing Two Spades and Brink jumped pre-emptively to Four Diamonds, Nickell bid 4♠ on his 3-2-2-6 14-count and there matters rested. Brink led a diamond, ducked to the king, and Drijver switched to hearts, establishing the defensive trick in that suit before the clubs were set up. Although the ♠K was useless, that was still a well-judged E/W +50.

West	North	East	South
Meckstroth	Pepsi	Rodwell	Kalita
-	1NT	2♦*	3♥*
Pass	4♠	Pass	Pass
4NT*	Double	Pass	Pass
5♦	Double	All Pass	

It is rare to see Meckwell lose IMPs on this type of deal. Over North's 14-16 1NT opening, Rodwell's Two Diamond overcall showed diamonds and a major (either way round). Kalita's Three Hearts was a transfer to spades, invitational or better, and Pepsi jumped to game. When this came back to Meckstroth, he knew that his side had a double fit, so he backed in with 4NT, to play in his partner's longer red suit. With good guesses in both red suits, declarer could have escaped for one down, but Meckstroth lost two trump tricks (South scored an overruff with the ♦Q on the third round of clubs): E/W -300 and 8 IMPs to Blass.

Recommended auction: Without methods to get the hearts into the auction, I suspect that most pairs would sell out cheaply on an auction such as (1♣)-1♦-(1♠)-3♦-(P)-P-(3♠) but you would probably be saved from going minus by North raising to game. Would you have found your

spade fit if the majors have been reversed? Both pairs playing in San Francisco clearly would.

MARKS: **Four Spades-Doubled (S) 10**, Four Spades (N) 9, Five Diamonds/Five Hearts 5

Running Score: 2019 Soloway Trophy winners 42

Hand 7. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

♠ 976	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ AK52
♥ 43		♥ AQ1052
♦ KQJ1084		♦ 5
♣ 92		♣ AK3

We start, for a change, at the table where the Nickell pair were East/West.

West	North	East	South
Meckstroth	Pepsi	Rodwell	Kalita
-	-	1♣*	Double*
1♦*	Pass	1♥	Pass
3♦	Pass	3NT	All Pass

Rodwell opened a Strong Club and the Polish system card just lists their defence as 'crash', so I am guessing from his hand that Kalita's double showed either majors or minors. Meckstroth's One Diamond was now an artificial semi-positive, showing exactly 6-7 HCP. Rodwell bid a natural One Heart and Meckstroth jumped to Three Diamonds, which looks fairly descriptive. Rodwell now had to guess and took a punt at 3NT.

Kalita led the ♠3, but the defence is favourite as long as he avoids opening a heart, which is probably not so difficult on this auction. Even though the defenders let declarer score a diamond trick, and Rodwell guessed to play a heart to the ten, the defence still had time to score two tricks in each major plus the ♦A to beat the contract a trick. E/W -100.

West	North	East	South
Brink	Nickell	Drijver	Katz
-	-	1♥	Pass
1NT	Pass	2♣*	Pass
3♦	Pass	5♦	All Pass

Although not alerted in the VuGraph record, it looks like Drijver's Two Clubs was Gazilli or something similar (showing either clubs or any 16+).

Two Diamonds from responder would usually now show 8+ HCP and establish a game force, so Brink's jump to Three Diamonds was presumably non-forcing with at least a six-card suit. It seems that Drijver was in just about the same position as Rodwell was at the other table. His guess was to jump to game in diamonds.

Whilst Five Diamonds is hardly cold, it is certainly better than 3NT in that it has some chance (and is, in fact, cold as the cards lie). Nickell led the ♠J and Katz broke one of the golden rules of good defence when he signalled with the ♠8 (from Q-10-8-3), a card he could not afford. Declarer played trumps and Katz won the second round to continue with the ♠Q. Declarer won again, ruffed a club back to hand, drew trumps, and exited with the ♠9. Katz could win with the ♠10 but now dummy was left with the winning ♠5 on which declarer could dispose of his heart loser. (And, yes, the ♥K was offside.) E/W +600 and 12 IMPs to Blass.

Recommended auction: Without methods, this is a very tricky deal. I would suspect many readers will bid 1♥-1NT-2♠-3♦-3NT, which is hardly unreasonable. Other than the Dutch auction above, I cannot really suggest a way to the top spot.

MARKS: Five Diamonds 10, Three Diamonds 8, 3NT 6

Running Score: 2019 Soloway Trophy winners 52

Blass won the second set 36-30 to trail by 14 IMPs (64-78) at the mid-way point, Nickell then won a very dull third set 14-8 to lead by 20 with 15 deals remaining, How often have we watched the Nickell team come back from 30-40 behind to win a big match in the final set? This match was not only something or a rarity in that they led going into the final set, but that it was their opponents who finished with a storming final stanza.

Our final deal was the last of three double-digit swings picked up by the Blass team in the final set, and was as much a lead problem as a bidding deal.

Hand 8. Dealer East. None Vul.

♠ AK4
♥ 963
♦ A9865
♣ J5



♠ QJ7
♥ A75
♦ QJ2
♣ AKQ6

West	East
<i>Levin</i>	<i>Weinstein</i>
-	1♣
1♦	2NT
3NT	Pass

The diamonds are K10xx with North, so on a non-heart lead declarer has time to set up four tricks in that suit to go with his eight top winners in the other three suits. Brink might, perhaps, have led a heart against game, but declarer would still be able to duck twice and make ten tricks. Brink led a spade: E/W +490.

The opening lead was for much higher stakes in the other room:

West	East
<i>Nowosadzki</i>	<i>Kalita</i>
-	1♣
1♦	2NT
4NT	6NT
Pass	

After the same start, Michal Nowosadzki decided that his hand was just too good for 3NT. Against slam, Rodwell had to find a lead from ♠10xxx ♥KQx ♦K10xx ♣9x. A heart seems all too likely to give away a trick on this auction, so it was no surprise that he also picked out a spade. E/W +990 and 11 IMPs to Blass.

Recommended auction: I have to say that I do not think that a featureless 12-count with a poor suit is worth more than 3NT facing 18-19 balanced. You cannot argue with success, though.

MARKS: 3NT 10, 6NT 8, 4NT 7, Five Diamonds 5, Six Diamonds 3

Final Score: 2019 Soloway Trophy winners 62

Blass won the final stanza by an impressive 51-9 and the match 123-101. Congratulations to Josef Blass, Sjoert Brink, Bas Drijver, Jacek Pszczola, Jacek Kalita and Michal Nowosadzki on victory in an event with such a strong field. An impressive performance indeed.

The Blass team did not always come out on top on the most interesting bidding deals from this event, so readers who bid well have a chance to out-score our featured team this month. I will be back in this chair next month with another selection of bidding problems faced by a top pair or team at a major event somewhere in the world.



The Master Point Press Bidding Battle Set 25

Moderated by Brian Senior

A new year but the same old torture for our long-suffering panellists, whose efforts we really do appreciate. We start with what looks to be an impossible problem:

PROBLEM 1

IMPs. Dealer North. All Vul.

♠ Q5
♥ 6
♦ AQ3
♣ AKJ9653

West	North	East	South
–	2♦*	2♥	2♠*

?
2♦ Weak
2♠ F1

Bid	Votes	Marks
3♣	9	10
3♦	3	6
Double	2	6
Pass	2	6
3NT	1	4
3♠	0	3

Some think it is all simple enough:

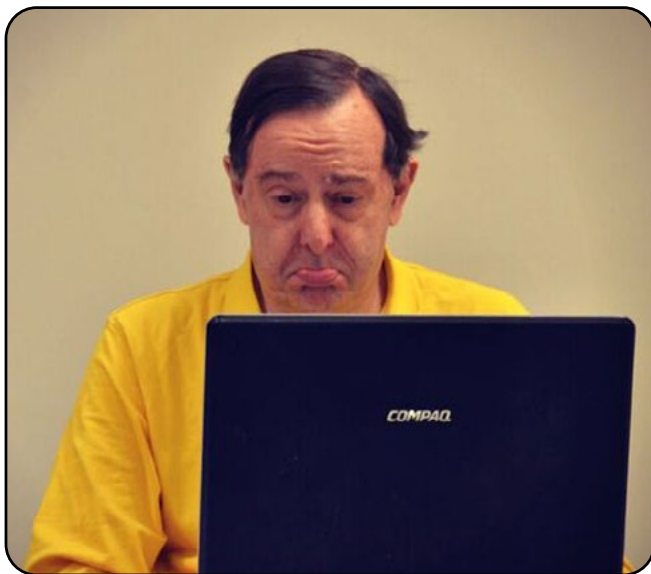
Teramoto: 3♣. NAT and F1.

Cannell: 3♣. This should be forcing on this auction. My next bid might be difficult depending on where the auction wends itself.

Stabell: 3♣. F1 (I hope). Over 3♥ from partner or 3♠ from West, I will chance 3NT and hope

THE BIDS & MARKS

	Bid	No. of Votes	Marks		Bid	No. of Votes	Marks	
1.	3♣	9	10	5.	Double	8	10	
	3♦	3	6		3NT	8	10	
	Double	2	6		3♠	1	4	
	Pass	2	6		6.	1♥	7	10
	3NT	1	4			2NT	5	8
2.	3♠	0	3	1♦	4	7		
	3♦	7	10	Pass	1	2		
	Double	5	8	7.	2NT	10	10	
	2NT	3	6		2♥	5	7	
3.	3NT	2	5	2♣	1	3		
	3♠	10	10	Abstain	1	5		
	Double	5	7	2♦	0	2		
4.	3♦	2	5	8.	Double	8	10	
	3♦	12	10		4NT	4	7	
	3♣	3	5		5♣	3	6	
	4NT	1	2		5♦	1	3	
	Pass	1	2		6NT	1	2	



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

that partner understands that I need a bit of help in the opponents' suits.

Carruthers: 3♣. If I were certain the clubs were running, I could bid 3♦ for Partner to bid 3NT with a spade stop, assuming we bid the opponents' suit in which we have a card/stop rather than the one where we do not. The other problem with doing that is that Partner may assume a good hand with heart support opposite. I don't like bidding no trumps here, despite the perfect (in some circumstances) spade holding. It's a very different matter to bid no trumps with a doubleton queen when the suit is bid on your right rather than your left. Here, a spade lead is almost a certainty.

Sime: 3♣. How else can we play in clubs? (when it is right to do so).

But others are less sure about the forcing nature of the bid:

Apteker: 3♣. Obviously very heavy for the bid which I don't think is forcing and which could backfire if the opponents cleverly pass out. If I pass now, however, I will be unable to convince partner of my strength later and bidding 3♦ to show strength hoping partner can bid 3NT with spades stopped will probably be interpreted as having heart support.

Lambardi: 3♣. Is it forcing? If we believe the opponents, it shouldn't be. But can we establish our rules for a bid being forcing on the opponents bids? Who is trying to find a profitable sacrifice/make here? At all red, it may be them (as it is clearly the case here when partner has overcalled at the 2 level vulnerable). Double seems out of the question with a singleton heart (and 7 good clubs!) and the ubiquitous cue-bid strongly suggests support. Is there a way to ask partner to focus on NT, forgetting his heart holding?

I think these next two have been peaking at each other's answers.

Smith: 3♣. I am hard pressed to come up with a sensible alternative, as anything such as 3♦ or 4♣ sounds very much like heart agreement. I suppose I don't really care whether partner thinks 3♣ is forcing or not. Yes, I have a good hand, but both of my queens are likely to be wasted and opposite a singleton trump 3♣ may easily be high enough.

Bird: 3♣. Even though 2♠ is forcing, I can see no benefit in passing now. I am not even that bothered whether 3♣ is forcing. If partner passes, there may be no game on.

While Marc and David are willing to risk partner thinking that 3♣ is NF, the rest prefer to look for an alternative.

Kokish: 3♦. Reese might have said something like: "What can East have but a long suit of excellent hearts?" while touting a heart raise. If only 3♣ were forcing we'd have no problem, but here we must decide how hard to try for (or just bid) 3NT while keeping both hearts and clubs in the picture in a sensible way. As 4♥ and 5♣ run the risk of three rounds of spades threatening a trump loser, we can't give up on 3NT, so I guess we're left with 3♦, expecting Mr Grumpy to sneak in East's or West's next bid in a future problem.

Alder: 3♦. The ideal bid would be 3♣(ii). Obviously, someone is having a joke despite the vulnerability. South is the likely candidate. But despite our combined power, we might not have a game. Still, I cannot go down without a fight.

Rigal: 3♦. This is remarkably awkward. 3♣ should (I think) be non-forcing, double is penalty, 3♦ and 3♠ stopper showing looking for 3NT. I guess 3♦ might get us to 3NT but at this moment I'm just trying to survive!

Marc mentioned that 3♦ and 3♠ were to do with hearts, while Barry thinks they are stopper-showing – alas, the rest don't go into that issue. I would have thought that 3♦ might be a good heart raise as it is unclear to whom the hand belongs so that we might want to bid 3♥ on not very much, while most non-heart fits could start with a value-showing double – but Barry thinks double would be for penalty. I'd bet he would be in a minority on that one, but I could be wrong.

There were a couple of votes for the double:

Leufkens: Double. Not nice, but no alternative. 3♣ doesn't feel like forcing if everybody is bidding, so risky.

Green: Double. Firstly, is 3♣ forcing over 2♠? If it is then there is no problem, that's what you bid. For me as we are bidding in competition it would not be forcing. Both 3♦ and 3♠ would be heart raises and so my only options are Dble (suggesting clubs and values) and 3NT. With only half a spade stopper I can't stomach 3NT. So I will double and then bid 3NT and I hope that this will show some flaw (else why not 3NT the first time?) partner won't know what the flaw is and so this is not ideal but I don't really see an alternative.

Only Liz was willing to shoot out 3NT with only half a spade stopper.

McGowan: 3NT. I imagine it is South that is having a little joke (F1, really??). If it is partner he is an ex-partner. This may not make, but it might smoke them out.

If we have a clear agreement that 3♣ is forcing, then it is surely an easy bid. If not, I quite like this next answer:

Brock: Pass. I can't see any good coming from bidding 3♣ this time, as, forcing or not, it could well get passed out. Or partner might bid lots of hearts. I will pass and await developments.

Robson: Pass. Obviously we are completely stymied. But South's 2♠ is forcing, so I'll get another go. The trouble with 3♣ (which will receive 10 marks) is the bidding may well go Pass-Pass-Pass (smugly in South's case).

Yes, if we bid and partner takes our 3♣ to be NF, it could easily go All Pass. But if South is messing about North won't know that so will have to

bid if we pass.

It isn't clear that we will know what to do after seeing North's rebid and how South reacts to it, but we may be no worse off than we are now if 3♣ would be NF, while things may develop in a helpful manner.

Partner held: ♠Axx ♥KQJ10xx ♦xx ♣xx and unless he repeated the hearts, 3♣ would have been passed out.

PROBLEM 2

IMPs. Dealer North. All Vul.

♠ AK54
♥ K8
♦ AKQ64
♣ 76

West	North	East	South
–	1♠	Pass	2♠
?			

Bid	Votes	Marks
3♦	7	10
Double	5	8
2NT	3	6
3NT	2	5
Pass	0	2

Again, nothing is ideal. We can make a very heavy suit overcall, a heavy 2NT overcall, jump to 3NT, or double. What's it to be?

Teramoto: Double. Partner will be short in spades. After Dble, I plan 3♦ over 2NT/3♣ and 3NT over 3♥.

Cannell: Double. I need to be involved despite the poor pattern. If we use a lebenstention response structure I might be able to portray

this in a reasonable manner

Apteker: Double. I will bid 3♦ over partner's advance of a Lebenshol 2NT to show this. If partner insists on hearts, it may best with game a possibility opposite as little as ♥QJxxxx and out.

Lambardi: Double. Chances of making game seem negligible but partner could have a long heart suit. Surely we are playing Lebensohl, so I will convert 2NT to 3♦. If he shows some values with 3♣ I will try 3NT which cannot do much worse than 3♣ or 3♦. Can the bidding get out of control? Opener would have to have a ♠/♥ two-suiter and partner very long clubs. Then a 5♣ bid by him would not be a success, but odds are against all that happening.

Sime: Double. If we are playing Lebensohl, and we should be in this situation, double works fine. Over a response of 2NT (usually a weak hand) I bid 3♦. If partner shows some values, I bid 3NT. A direct 3NT is more attractive when Lebensohl is not in our bag.

Four of them mention Lebensohl, and that would certainly make double a lot safer, as partner can show good values with an immediate 3♥ bid, where without the benefit of Lebensohl he might feel the need to jump to 4♥ on a borderline hand, something that we would not be too thrilled about. But not everyone plays 2NT as Lebensohl here.

Alder: 3NT. Double will probably have its advocates, but that ought to promise at least four cards in two unbid suits.

I.e. be a scramble.

McGowan: 3♦. This is horrible, but less horrible than double and I can't bring myself to pass. Provided it does not go All Pass (I shall apologise) I have got the lead and may be able

to double them later without worrying about partner removing to one of my doubletons

Green: 3♦. Even if you played 2NT as natural (and it's not clear to do so or covered as part of ANBM standard) should you? You are very likely to play in 2NT as partner will seldom have enough to raise (they have bid vulnerable after all) and with short spades 2NT is very likely to be the wrong spot. Obviously you give up on the big prize of making 4♥ when partner has ♥QJ10xxx (but you still might not get to game). Not only do you direct the right lead but also the opponents may compete over 3♦ where they may not over 2NT. I admit I'm super strong for 3♦ and would probably bid it without any of my honours in the majors but sometimes you're stuck. Doubling 2♠ for me would not help to get the values across, unless we're playing Lebensohl but even if I can bid 3♦ over the expected 2NT I still don't want to play in 3♥.

Kokish: 3♦. As 2NT would show a two-suiter, we're really obliged to choose between a heavy 3♦, a gentle pass, and a wild 3NT. I'm a 3♦ bidder without much remorse.

Carruthers: 3♦. Seems a bit pusillanimous, yes? In the old days, we could be certain that partner had nothing, or next to it. These days, he could have as much as an ace and a king. I'm hoping he can raise me with an ace or the king-queen of clubs, along with his spade shortage.

Smith: 3♦. At first glance, this seems to be a choice between 3♦ and a natural 2NT. Even if both opponents are fairly minimum, say 12 opposite 5, that still only leaves at most a 4-count opposite, so both 3NT and 5♦ seem a long way off, so I am hardly worried that 3♦ is

not enough. Bizarre as it may seem, it is quite possible that our best result is to defend 2♠ and collect 100, or even concede 110. Indeed, the more I think about it the more tempted I am by pass.

Bird: 3♦. Partner might have six points, but something much closer to zero is more likely. He is short in spades, so 3♦ should be a better spot than 2NT, when partner has a near-bust.

Rigal: 3♦. Unless we can attract a raise what game can we make? Answer: none.

Stabell: 2NT. Natural. Can't really drive to game even though the ♥A in a 1-4-4-4 hand should be enough for 3NT or 5♦.

Leufkens: 2NT. Not great, but alternatives are worse. Do we play Lebensohl after Dble?

Robson: 2NT. Strong, balanced chez moi.

Brock: 3NT. You never know! I wouldn't if the raise was constructive.

A few questions there but few answers. Those who overcall 2NT are obviously happy that it is a natural bid, while Eric states that it shows a two-suiter and Ben queries whether it would be natural. I am reasonably confident that, without discussion, it would be expected to be natural, at least in the UK, but that does not in itself make it best to play it that way.

Then we come to the Lebensohl question in response to a take-out double. Is Lebensohl best, or is scramble, i.e. at least two places to play, the more useful agreement to have? There is a clear majority in favour of Lebensohl, getting across the strength of the hand, as opposed to scrambling to help find the best fit – but then, of course, Lebensohl suits the needs of this problem, and I wonder if the vote would be as clear if a different problem

would best be solved by the use of a scrambling 2NT?

One could, of course, compromise here. Play that a 3♥ response shows values, but that 2NT is initially two places to play, but convert partner's 3♣/♦ response to 3♥ with a weak hand with heart only.

ANBM Standard is not helpful. It states that '2NT is rarely natural in competition (except where defines as such elsewhere). Possibilities include Lebensohl or scramble if game is not viable.

Partner held: ♠ – ♥A97654 ♦10953 ♣532 and 4♥ and 5♦ were easy makes.

PROBLEM 3

IMPs. Dealer East. None Vul.

♠ A5432
♥ 2
♦ AK876
♣ J6

West	North	East	South
–	–	1♥	3♣
?			

Bid	Votes	Marks
3♠	10	10
Double	5	7
3♦	2	5

Should we bid the obvious 3♠ despite the weak suit, risk losing the fifth spade by bidding 3♦, but at least make it convenient for partner to repeat the hearts, or compromise with a negative double?

Alder: 3♠. And hope for the best.

Stabell: 3♠. Can't really see any alternatives here, since I would be stuck on 3♥ from partner

if I start with a double. I intend to pass 3NT, even though it means that we would have missed a good slam opposite as little as: ♠x ♥Axxxx ♦QJxxx ♣Ax.

Kokish: 3♠. A bit much for a negative double, even facing a partner who would not be reluctant to try 3♠ on three in a pinch.

Leufkens: 3♠. I know, ugly. But after Dble and 3♥ from partner there is no bid anymore. Even after 3♦ from partner, what do you want to play facing ♠x ♥AKxxx ♦Qxxx ♣Qxx and how do you get there?

Carruthers: 3♠. Pretty ugly, I know. But how will I recover after Double and see 3♥ from partner? Four Clubs at that point will certainly not show this hand. Three Spades does risk end-playing Partner into raising on an inappropriate (for me, at least) hand. However, 3♦ does no better. If I do Double, would 4♣ then mean choose diamonds or spades? I don't think so. What about double, then 4♠ over 3♥? Might that work? Certainly in the post mortem, when you explain to Partner why he should have pulled 4♠ to 5♦ instead of allowing you to founder in 4♠ with ♠xx ♥AKJxxx ♦QJxx ♣x.

Green: 3♠. I'm torn between 3♠ (the normal action) and double. Double will lose the 5-3 spade fit but might help to get to diamonds or 3NT. 3♠ might put partner in a tricky spot some of the time when they feel they have to raise with a doubleton (presumably with no club stopper).

Cannell: 3♠. Forcing and hoping I am aiming at the most likely game bonus. I think a Negative Double will skew the cause.

Smith: 3♠. Certainly not ideal, but the



Enri Leufkens

alternatives seem to be 3♦ or a negative double. All are flawed, so I choose the option with the biggest upside if it is right. Yes, perhaps partner is 2-5-4-2 and 5♦ is making, but it seems the best chance of game is to find partner with three spades. If I don't bid them now, it seems unlikely that we'll ever find the 5-3 fit.

Apteker: 3♠. Despite the shortage in hearts and the possible wasted ♣J, the hand is still worth forcing to game and therefore bidding naturally.

Teramoto: 3♠ shows five spades and GF. It is important to find a spade fit.

But the problem is that partner will also raise spades with possibly inadequate support.

Lambardi: 3♦. Double being a close option. Cannot bid 3♠ and give partner the chance to support me on Qx. Giving him space to rebid his hearts below 3NT. Will pass 3NT, praying he doesn't have (3-5-3)-Kx hand. Even then we could survive on top tricks + diamonds.

McGowan: 3♦. This may get us to 3NT when partner does not have good spade support... or it may miss a nice spade game. If I bid 3♠ I shall likely have to guess what to do next time. This way I can bid 3♠ over 3♥, pass 4♥ and 3NT, and raise spades in the unlikely event that he bids those. Cut down the guesses. Double might tempt me if I thought it possible that partner might pass....

But the larger minority vote was for the double.

Robson: Double. Can't bring myself to bid 3♠ with such a rubbish suit – and get raised to 4♠ on some ♠Jx holding.

Brock: Double. Partner won't always rebid his suit!

Time: Double. Because partner won't always bid 3♥.

Bird: Double. Bidding 3♠ instead is likely to work only when partner at least three spades. We could end in a horrible spot otherwise. A double is far from perfect, but I will hope for the best.

Rigal: Double. A negative double will get us to spades or diamonds facing length but I'm not sure what the follow up over 3♥ will be. The upsides of double are hearing it go 'all pass'.

That is the problem. Just as the problem with 3♠ is a raise on a doubleton, so the problem with double is what to do over partner's 3♥ rebid. I'm quite taken with 3♦, though as previously mentioned

the problem with that is the loss of the fifth spade.

Partner held: ♠J6 ♥AKQ1087 ♦J1054 ♣3. There was a diamond loser and spades were four-two, but hearts divided evenly so that 4♥ was the only making game.

PROBLEM 4

IMPs. Dealer South. None Vul.

♠ 85
♥ A
♦ AJ1076
♣ A10754

West	North	East	South
–	–	–	2♥*
?			

2♥	Weak	
Bid	Votes	Marks
3♦	12	10
3♣	3	5
4NT	1	2
Pass	1	2

Two-thirds of the panel went for:

Stabell: 3♦. Not perfect, but I have to do something.

Leufkens: 3♦. Finally an easy one. But I don't mind overcalling on five-card suits if necessary.

Carruthers: 3♦. No call really describes this hand adequately, so I'll just start bidding my suits, realising that I may not get another chance. Looking into my crystal ball, I see +110 with +920 available in clubs: ♠Axxx ♥xxx ♦x ♣Kxxxx

Kokish: 3♦. Too much to pass, not enough to show both minors wholesale. I can't see anyone

on this panel choosing double

Cannell: 3♦. I do not want to be too aggressive yet. Maybe later.

Alder: 3♦. I do not think the hand is strong enough for 4NT, but it is too good to pass. Hence my choice.

A string of other panellists mentioned 4NT before rejecting it.

Brock: 3♦. Too good to pass and hardly good enough (or suitable for) 4NT!

Teramoto: 3♦. The hand is not good enough to commit to the five level by bidding 4NT. 3♦ is OK and too good for Pass.

Bird: 3♦. 4NT is surely too much, and a Pass is too cautious. I will reach for a bidding card somewhere in between.

Smith: 3♦. It seems to be either this or pass, as 4NT showing minors is barking. Of course, 3♣ might work out better, but if I bid diamonds first there is some chance of introducing clubs later, whereas the opposite is much more problematic.

Robson: 3♦. I'm not going all-in with 4NT, so 3♦ it is, enabling us to play 3NT and 4♠ when it's right. And I'm certainly not doubling with only two spades.

Green: 3♦. What else? 4NT is a good way to go for 1100 on a partscore deal and I can't pass.

McGowan: Pass. Don't think this is strong enough for 4NT (minors). Do think somebody will do more bidding...

Liz doesn't seem to have even considered the majority choice.

Sime: 4NT. Pick a minor. The old strain over level conundrum – should we overbid to avoid the risk of being in a 5/1 fit when there is a 5/4 fit in our other suit? Missing three aces, partner

is unlikely to drive to a poor slam.

But we are usually talking about going up one level to find the better fit – e.g. a four-level cue-bid to show both majors rather than make a three-level overcall in one of them. This time we are talking about going up two extra levels to hit the better trump suit – and maybe we don't belong in either one?

Apteker: 3♣. Preferring this to 3♦ and thereby keeping both minors in the picture.

Lambardi: 3♣. Cannot bring myself to pass with shortness in hearts and three aces. Not even close to my standard for defensive/offensive ratio to bid 4NT. 3♣ seems to have a very marginal advantage over 3♦ although I may



Liz McGowan

regret it if left to play there. Partner may have just enough to bid 3♦ over 3♣ but not 4♣ over 3♦, plus I have a run-to suit at a lower level in case of a penalty double.

Rigal: 3♣. I'd be much happier at trying this with the minors switched. My plan is to run if doubled for penalties. I can't go past the three level...but maybe the right answer is 'stop 2NT'. Someone once did this to me!

The run-to suit option could be useful if we get doubled, but the chance that partner will respond 3♦ to a 3♣ overcall is very slight. It's closer than the panel vote would suggest, but I think the majority have the right of it, as after 3♦ we have an easy 4♣ at our next turn, while a 3♣ overcall means that we will have to distort our distribution when we next show the diamonds.

Partner held: ♠A10x ♥xxx ♦xx ♣KQxxx and 5♣ was cold.

PROBLEM 5

IMPs. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

♠ A8753
♥ K4
♦ AQ
♣ AQ106

West	North	East	South
–	–	Pass	3♥
?			

Bid	Votes	Marks
Double	8	10
3NT	8	10
3♠	1	4

There was one vote for a 3♠ overcall:

Teramoto: 3♠. It is an underbid, but I would like to hear a raise by partner. A 3NT overcall may lose a good 4♠ contract.

But, while taking on board the fact that a 3NT overcall could lose a spade fit, and even double would miss a five-three spade fit, the rest of the panel opted for something more in keeping with their 19 HCP. They were, however, split right down the middle.

Alder: Double. As mentioned in the first problem, double shows at least two places to play. 3NT could work, but my inflexible heart stopper has me nervous.

Stabell: 3NT. Hamman's rule.

Which is that, when 3NT is one amongst a number of plausible options, it is the right one to choose.

Kokish: 3NT. As this hand type arises not infrequently and none of us knows whether double, 3♠ or 3NT is truly the long-run winner, a useful strategy is to choose the same action every time, or at least until there is evidence to try a different approach. It's easy to see how either of the other choices could work better, but those who believe any of the three options is clearly superior ought to be a used car salesman.

Yes, try to be consistent rather than just guess each time.

McGowan: Double. I am worth another bid next time.

Leufkens: 3NT. Best chance for best game. Thousands of reasons why alternative contracts could be superior, but alternative bids reach silly contracts much more often.

Brock: Double. I don't mind bidding 3NT with Ax sometimes but don't like Kx as I may have



Phillip Alder

to win the first round and they will have communication. If partner bids 4♦ I will bid 4♠ and hope for the best.

Yes, much better to have a stopper which can be held up once rather than one with which we may have no flexibility in the play.

Lambardi: 3NT. Will be wrong when partner has adequate spades or clubs but right whenever he has three hearts or a diamond suit.

Sime: Double. On a good day, partner will bid a black suit. With three spades and four diamonds, he should bid spades anyway.

Carruthers: 3NT. Yes, yes, I know, hearts are 6-2, South ducks trick one and I lose a finesse to North, who has another heart, all the while being cold for 11 tricks in spades. Nevertheless ...

Green: Double. I hope to double and if necessary correct 4♦ to 4♠ to show a flexible hand. Of course I could bid 3NT but with only ♥Kx I prefer to try for alternative contracts.

Cannell: 3NT. Partner, please have the right stuff.

Smith: Double. The realistic options seem to be double and 3NT. Overcalling in spades is not an option: partner will (should) pass 3♠ with a balanced 7-8 count, and this is hardly the suit for a jump to 4♠. If partner bids 4♦ I'll continue with 4♠, hopefully suggesting both black suits.

Apteker: 3NT. While I have the wrong stopper, this seems like our most likely game and at least does not give me another problem after partner's expected minor suit advance if I were to double.

Bird: Double. Take away the ♣A and I would bid 3♠, even on this suit. I am too strong for 3♠, and bidding 4♠ is too committal. A double looks a better bet than 3NT. If partner insists on bidding 4♦, I will go to 4♠ then.

Robson: 3NT. I have a good hand with a heart stopper. If I double and partner responds 4♦, I'll hate myself.

Rigal: Double. Any ways this could go wrong but at least we don't miss the 5-5 spade fit which bidding 3NT might achieve. I'll raise a club response and spade response but over 4♦... hmm.

Well, which side makes the better case? I might overcall 3NT with a weak partner, but double with a strong one. Which is another way of saying that I don't feel very strongly either way.

Partner held: ♠KJxxx ♥10xx ♦xx ♣xxx. Four Spades made while 3NT did not.

PROBLEM 6

IMPs. Dealer South. All Vul.

♠ Q
♥ 98643
♦ AQJ74
♣ K3

West	North	East	South
–	–	–	1♣
?			

Bid	Votes	Marks
1♥	7	10
2NT	5	8
1♦	4	7
Pass	1	2

This time we have a three-way split, with the vote going in favour of what each panellist sees as being his or her tactical priority on the hand.

Before we get on to the main event, there was one odd one out.

McGowan: Pass. I do not want a heart lead. I can worry again next time round.

But, as we will see below, if we don't like to bid that threadbare heart suit, there are a couple of other options available to us.

Brock: 1♦. I don't mind missing a 5-3 heart fit with this hand.

Stabell: 1♦. I really need partner to lead a diamond, so will treat hearts as a four-card suit for now. Will follow up with a double if they bid 1♠ – Pass – 2♣/2♠.

Robson: 1♦. I'll double subsequent spade bids by the opponents.

Thereby getting hearts into the game without overstating our holding in the suit.

Sime: 1♦. This month's theme is how bad does a five-card suit have to be before we treat it as a four-card suit. I will bury the hearts for now, since there is a good chance that partner will be on lead against a spade contract.

It does look as though there is a deliberate theme, doesn't it, but the fact that so many problems involve the strength of a main suit is just happy (?) coincidence.

Then there are those who prefer to show both suits in one go.

Teramoto: 2NT. It shows 5-5 in the red suits. It should be an opening hand when vulnerable. A 1♦ overcall is safe but it makes it difficult to find a heart fit. Also, they can bid easily to show spades and raises.

True. One benefit of a 2NT overcall is that it makes it that much harder for the opposition to get together in spades, a point also made by:

Green: 2NT. Happy to show the red suits in order to pre-empt the spades whilst not focusing too much on the heart suit. The purists might disagree but where possible why not get both suits into the game? A 1♥ overcall is not my cup of tea on this suit and 1♦ is very warped when I have a club in my bag to show this shape.

Cannell: 2NT. Red suits. Such as they are. A One Heart overcall may have partner making an unfortunate lead on defense. At least I get the diamond suit in the mix immediately before the opps bounce around in spades.

Apteker: 2NT. Showing both red suits. If I knew it was definitely the opponents' hand, I would consider bidding 1♦ for the lead.

Lambardi: 2NT. Assuming that shows the red suits. Otherwise 1♦. Obviously, my hearts will

be a big disappointment for partner but the hand is good enough. The less adventurous 1♦ (or 1♥) may give them too much room to sort out their spade holding. Admittedly, should LHO end up playing a spade contract I may regret having suggested a heart lead, but hands/bids are rarely tailor-made anyway.

The plurality, however, were willing to bid the hearts, weak though they may be.

Kokish: 1♥. We're overcalling to buy the hand and make something, not to direct the lead with more modest ambitions. As for 2NT for the reds, how do we spell nyet?

I'm pretty sure that we spell 'nyet', nyet.



David 'Brother Lucius' Bird

Leufkens: 1♥. It's sad, I didn't used to think about these problems: overcall 1M with five, no worries. But when you start delving into it, it gets murky and difficult and you see horror scenario's. So thank you for that, not only do I get inconsistent, I'm getting indecisive/incertain (is this correct English?) as well.

Indecisive, but uncertain in everyone's favourite, easy to learn, language.

Alder: 1♥. Usually, I would jump to 2NT, but that seems too much, especially when vulnerable. I refuse to bid 1♦ – unless North is still counting his points.

Carruthers: 1♥. For the lead. If Partner were a passed hand, I might bid 1♦ instead.

Bird: 1♥. Our most likely game, if partner has some values, is 4♥. If partner is weak, I will perhaps wish that I had overcalled 1♦ instead. Such is life.

Rigal: 1♥. Can't bid 2NT but planning to bid diamonds next seems safe enough and I might be warned to stay low or even stay out!

Smith: 1♥. The options seem to be 1♦, 1♥ and, a very distant third, 2NT, but I really don't think you can afford not to bid the major. I remember this hand from Wuhan. In the Seniors Teams, the English West overcalled 1♦ and our side missed the game in hearts. You actually don't need that much from partner to make 4♥ good: opposite as little as ♠xxxx ♥Axx ♦Kxx ♣Axx, game is just about on a 3-2 trump break. The chances of getting to game opposite that are just about nil if you start with 1♦.

I think I'd bid 2NT at the table. I want to get the fifth heart into the game without guaranteeing that I will receive a heart lead, while the

pre-emptive effect is also not insubstantial. Either 2NT or 1♥ would probably have worked out better than 1♦ in real life, as partner held: ♠Axxx ♥KJ10x ♦109x ♣xx and 4♥ was cold.

PROBLEM 7

IMPs. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ 9
♥ A97
♦ AQ84
♣ AK753

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

Bid	Votes	Marks
2NT	10	10
2♥	5	7
2♣	1	3
Abstain	1	5
2♦	0	2

I've award Liz an abstention and 5 points as her answer of 4♥ suggests that she misread the question.

A slight majority went for the mild overbid of 2NT.

Alder: 2NT. Somewhat endplayed.

Teramoto: 2NT. It shows about 18 points with a stopper.

Leufkens: 2NT. Interesting, reversing with 2♦ has become GF after the overcall. 2♥ is an alternative, but I like my hand enough for 2NT and just hope for not too many spade bids from partner

Carruthers: 2NT. Almost perfect. If my horse leaps majestically to 4♠, I shall hope my aces make up for not having the deuce of spades.

Green: 2NT. I just don't see an alternative. Partner should be aware that a 2NT bid in competition can be shaded with length in the opponents' suit.

Brock: 2NT. Can't really think of an alternative.

Bird: 2NT. This is some way from being perfect, but all other actions seem even further from perfection.

Rigal: 2NT. Not too terrible in terms of high cards and stoppers, so surely the least lie.

Robson: 2NT. An overbid as my hand has deteriorated – but what else?

Smith: 2NT. An overbid and obviously not ideal, but what else can you bid? 1NT shows 12-14, 2♦ sounds like a spade fit, and both 2♣ and 3♣ are seriously flawed too.

I don't see that 2♦ shows a spade fit. Surely we need a bid to show a GF hand with no clear direction. This is cutting edge stuff, I know, but if I had a spade fit I could raise to 2♠, 3♠ or 4♠, or cue-bid then support spades at my next turn, or maybe splinter, or...

Stabell: 2♣. I was presumably planning to rebid 2♦, but that would mean something else now, so I have to go for the slight underbid of 2♣. Bidding 2♥ or 2NT usually means that partner will insist on a heart- or spade contract, so I think it is important to try and sort the strain out first. I still hope to get a chance to bid NT, which should describe my hand well.

But we have too much for a simple 2♣ rebid – 17 HCP. The hand may at the moment look like a potential misfit, but 2♣ will end the auction far too

often. No, if we can't stomach the slight overbid of 2NT – remember that we have a decent five-card suit to compensate for the missing point – this next, a one-round force, looks nearer the mark, for all that it lies about a fourth heart:

Kokish: 2♥. If we were playing weakies, I could bid an only-mildly heavy 1NT, but here we've got to do more, the real choices being 2NT and a 2♥ reverse. I'm a 2♥ guy, preferring to reserve 2NT for hands with at least two spades. If we belong in NT we'll get there soon enough.

Yes, playing weak NT we could have rebid 1NT to show 15-17.

Lambardi: 2♥. Right on values and shape for a suit contract. I'll pass a weak preference for either of my suits and bid 3NT if partner shows game-going values with heart support (via Lebensohl). The hand may be playable in hearts on a 3-4 fit and now and then he may be 5-5 in the majors.

Sime: 2♥. The alternative of 2NT would be more attractive with softer cards. Two Hearts right-sides hearts if we belong there. More importantly, it shows that we have genuine clubs, which may be our best strain.

Good points.

Cannell: 2♥. I moved the ♦4 into the heart suit. Sorry partner. Let's see what partner bids next. Maybe I can unravel this.

Apteker: 2♥. Allows us to get out to 3♣ or some number of clubs or an easy continuation of 2NT or 3NT over a 2♠ or 3♥ rebid by partner. The alternative of 2NT, while right on values, conceals the club length which is a very probably strain.

Yes, while we may get to a poor 4♥ on a

four-three fit, that doesn't have to happen. Meanwhile, as Alon says, 2♥ sets up a good future auction in which we can both limit our hand, and will have shown genuine clubs.

Partner held: ♠K10632 ♥QJ5 ♦102 ♣1082

PROBLEM 8

Pairs. Dealer West. None Vul.

♠ AQ
♥ 853
♦ AK10864
♣ 86

West	North	East	South
–	3♠	4♣*	4♠
?			
4♣	Just clubs		

Bid	Votes	Marks
Double	8	10
4NT	4	7
5♣	3	6
5♦	1	3
6NT	1	2

The biggest vote went to the inevitable, 'all things to all men' double:

Stabell: Double. Partner knows that I don't have a spade stack on this bidding, so will hopefully do the right thing. Otherwise, it's 'only' a bottom.

McGowan: Double. You talked me into it. No idea who might make what but as of now 5♣ does not look promising. Minus 590 will not score well either, but I think that is unlikely. At teams I might try 4NT in case we have a diamond fit.

Brock: Double. Surely this shows convertible values. If partner passes it's probably our best shot. But I'm not much of a pairs player!

Rigal: Double. Cards not penalty – my best guess as opposed to a 5♣ call.

Green: Double. For me double here just shows values. If partner pulls then he is showing extreme shape in which case that's absolutely fine with me. I don't think I can commit to clubs with only a small doubleton and I'm not introducing my diamonds when partner might have a singleton. I suppose one might consider 4NT but I think double is far more flexible.

Smith: Double. Yes, of course we might be able to make either 5♣ or 5♦, but bidding either looks like a blind punt. I'm sure some panellist will claim that 4NT is a 'choice of minors', and perhaps it is, but perhaps not too. Would you really try that at the table without discussion? Perhaps this deal is yet another good example of why natural 4m overcalls are inferior to NLM in this auction: i.e. we have no idea what to do opposite them.

To be fair, I don't think the fact that 4♣ is natural is the problem here. When he looked at his hand, I have no doubt that partner was very pleased to be able to bid clubs naturally. That is not to say that Non-Leaping Michaels is not a good idea, just that if playing NLM we might be in an even bigger pickle on this hand.

Lambardi: Double. Close. Would 4NT be natural in this situation, a strong raise in clubs or a take-outish move showing the red suits? In any case, my double shows values which should be transferable. I cannot hold a spade stack so partner can bid 5♣ or 4NT himself. RHO is

not bidding to make so he cannot be looking at club tricks.

Leufkens: Double. 4NT natural isn't possible in this context (don't believe people who say it is). Double is ugly, but the rest is worse. Especially at matchpoints.

If double is an 'all things to all men' call, that is nothing to what 4NT means. In their regular partnerships they would no doubt all be somewhere between having a cast iron agreement and having a pretty good idea. But that agreement clearly differs for different partnerships.

Kokish: 5♣. If South had passed my 4NT advance would have been natural. In an ambitious partnership we'd know whether 4NT here would be natural, Blackwood, a slam try in clubs, or long diamonds with club tolerance with or without the option of a red two-suiter. In this feature, I believe we're reduced to guessing what a casual partnership would play, which I suspect would be Blackwood. I'm going to bid 5♣, which has ways to win or lose but feels like a middle-of-the-road position.

Robson: 4NT. If South had passed, this would be natural. Let's hope partner things similarly after the 4♠ bid. And if partner bids, we should be fine too.

Yes, had South passed we would have had a big vote for 4NT being natural. I'll stick my neck out and say that it should still be natural – it's better to have any agreement than no agreement – as at least if it always means the same as without the intervention then we can't have a misunderstanding in a slightly different auction. But look at the list of possible meanings for 4NT suggested by the panel:

Apteker: 4NT. Not sure how partner is going to take this whether natural, RKCB for clubs or two places but, if he passes, I will be delighted. If he bids 5♣ I will pass, over five of either red suit, I will punt 6NT and hope.

Sime: 4NT. Whatever it means! Natural, RKCB, Good/Bad/Slam try for clubs, two places to play; they all seem reasonable with this hand. In my regular partnership, the default for 4NT is two places to play, (but it wouldn't arise here as 4♣ is Non-Leaping Michaels). Expert pick-up partnerships would probably treat 4NT as a slam try for clubs. It would be amusing if readers scored ten marks for 4NT simply because enough panellists bid it with different meanings.

Carruthers: 4NT. Just: (i.) diamonds with club tolerance (choose a minor); (ii.) RKCB; (iii.) Natural; (iv.) club tolerance and a red suit; (v.) pick a red suit. Did I miss anything?

Then there are the minority votes.

Alder: 6NT. If 4NT is natural, not asking or a two-suiter, in BM Standard, I will change my advance. But I do not think partner will read it as such. So I might as well plunge. If I am wrong, maybe I can make an extra trick on the next board to get the matchpoints back.

6NT is an overbid. However, Phillip would have liked to bid a natural 4NT and, as nobody knows what 4NT means, I'm going to give him a New Year's present and the point award for 4NT rather than the solo effort of 6NT.

Cannell: 5♣. I like 4NT to show a 'good' 5♣ bid here. Yes, natural might be work great here but the percentages of that seem low. I do not have a 'good' 5♣ call regardless.

Bird: 5♣. Yes, yes, 4NT would ask partner to



pick a minor. My hand is great for playing in clubs, though. I will therefore forget about my recent score of 6 for not offering a choice of the minors. Let the panel enjoy their 10 points for 4NT. I don't agree with them.

And, finally, on his own, but who is to say that he would not be the only panellist to make game on the hand:

Teramoto: 5♦. Play from this side looks better for guarding spades. I hope he will raise to 6♦ if he has good hand.

Partner held: ♠— ♥A4 ♦Q932 ♣KQJ10952

Thanks to the following for providing this month's problems: Pablo Lambardi 1 and 4, Martin Cantor 3 and 7, Marc Smith 5 and 6, Rodney Lighton 8.

Congratulations to Marc Smith, who topped the panel with a perfect 80.

SET 25 – THE PANEL'S BIDS & MARKS

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
Marc Smith	England	3♣	3♦	3♠	3♦	Dble	1♥	2NT	Dble	80
John Carruthers	Canada	3♣	3♦	3♠	3♦	3NT	1♥	2NT	4NT	77
Ben Green	England	Dble	3♦	3♠	3♦	Dble	2NT	2NT	Dble	74
David Bird	England	3♣	3♦	Dble	3♦	Dble	1♥	2NT	5♣	73
Drew Cannell	Canada	3♣	Dble	3♠	3♦	3NT	2NT	2♥	5♣	69
Phillip Alder	USA	3♦	3NT	3♠	3♦	Dble	1♥	2NT	6NT	68
Barry Rigal	USA	3♦	3♦	Dble	3♣	Dble	1♥	2NT	Dble	68
Tadashi Teramoto	Japan	3♣	Dble	3♠	3♦	3♠	2NT	2NT	5♦	68
Enri Leufkens	Netherlands	Dble	2NT	3♠	3♦	3NT	1♥	2NT	Dble	67
Leif-Erik Stabell	Zimbabwe	3♣	2NT	3♠	3♦	3NT	1♦	2♣	Dble	66
Alon Apteker	South Africa	3♣	Dble	3♠	3♣	3NT	2NT	2♥	4NT	65
Sally Brock	England	Pass	3NT	Dble	3♦	Dble	1♦	2NT	Dble	65
Eric Kokish	Canada	3♦	3♦	3♠	3♦	3NT	1♥	2♥	5♣	64
Pablo Lambardi	Argentina	3♣	Dble	3♦	3♣	3NT	2NT	2♥	Dble	63
Andrew Robson	England	Pass	2NT	Dble	3♦	3NT	1♦	2NT	4NT	63
Iain Sime	Scotland	3♣	Dble	Dble	4NT	Dble	1♦	2♥	4NT	58
Liz McGowan	Scotland	3NT	3♦	3♦	Pass	Dble	Pass	–	Dble	48



This Year's winner of the Bidding Battle - see Page 105

WEST

Hands for the
February 2020 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 West. E/W Vul.

♠ J4
♥ AKJ4
♦ J2
♣ AK952

(North overcalls 2♦. South raises to 3♦ if able)

Hand 2. Dealer West. N/S Game.

♠ 83
♥ AKQ976
♦ 4
♣ AQ53

Hand 3. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

♠ KQ52
♥ J95
♦ KQ65
♣ 98

Hand 4. Dealer West. Both Vul.

♠ —
♥ AKQJ962
♦ 76
♣ 7542

(North overcalls 4♠. South bids 5♦ if able and North then bids 6♠)

Hand 5. Dealer South. Both Vul.

♠ Q1094
♥ J74
♦ 8
♣ KQJ87

Hand 6. Dealer North. None Vul.

♠ 3
♥ Q9763
♦ J876
♣ A62

(North Dealer North opens 1♣. South bids 1♠/2♠ as needed. North then bids 4♠)

Hand 7. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

♠ 976
♥ 43
♦ KQJ1084
♣ 92

Hand 8. Dealer East. None Vul.

♠ AK4
♥ 963
♦ A9865
♣ J5



Let the bidding battle begin!

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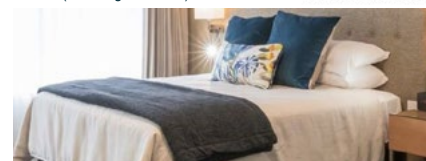
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Comments on Bidding Battle Set 24

Brian Senior examines the responses of the readers and compares them against those of the panel.

PROBLEM 1

IMPs. Dealer West. None Vul.

♠ A
♥ 62
♦ AQ863
♣ AQJ32

West	North	East	South
1♦	2♥	Pass	Pass
?			

Bid	Votes	Marks	Readers
3♣	12	10	31
Double	6	7	7
4♣	0	2	0
3♥	0	0	1
4NT	0	0	1
5♣	0	0	1
Pass	0	0	1

Two-thirds of the panel and three-quarters of the readers opt for the same call of 3♣ and, while double is a tempting alternative, it is hard to say that they are wrong to do so.

No reader went for the jump to 4♣ which I had covered in the original scoring, but there were four actions which garnered one vote apiece but which were not chosen by any of the panel.

Pass goes against the spirit of everything the panel discussed and just looks wrong. Similarly, a 3♥ cue-bid does nothing to describe the hand – I'd have thought that a running diamond suit with something outside would be more the expectation for this call – so I am not going to award anything for either Pass or 3♥. 4NT and 5♣ are both attempts to stress the minors and, up to a point, are therefore at least descriptive. However,

both sound more extreme than the actual hand, and I would have thought that, for anyone who felt that 3♣ was insufficient, the jump to 4♣ was a better option. Again, therefore, no award to either bid.

PROBLEM 2

IMPs. Dealer North. None Vul.

♠ K87632
♥ AK
♦ 1093
♣ J7

West	North	East	South
–	3♦	Double	Pass
?			

Bid	Votes	Marks	Readers
4♠	11	10	30
4♦	4	7	9
5♠	3	6	1
3♠	0	0	2

Eleven panellists and 30 readers opted for the jump to game, while seven panellists and 10 readers wanted to do more. I cannot therefore award anything to the two readers who responded only 3♠, which will end the auction unless partner has substantial extra values and a probable cold game or even slam will be missed.

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		

Bid	Votes	Marks	Readers
3♠	11	10	11
4♠	5	6	5
2♠	2	4	20
Pass	0	2	6

For the panel and the majority of readers, it was just a matter of how many spades to bid. Predictably, the panel was generally the more aggressive group as far as that was concerned. However, six readers opted to pass. I think this would be a far more attractive option at Pairs, when +200 would be a great score if there was no game on our way. At IMPs, +200 is only a small gain against +110/140, while when 2♥ doubled makes for – 670 we have a big loss. Nonetheless, passing would have worked out well in real life and will work often enough that I will award a consolation 2 points.

PROBLEM 4

IMPs. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

♠ AKJ9
♥ QJ83
♦ KQ93
♣ 9

West	North	East	South
–	–	–	2♥*
?			

2♥ Weak Two

Bid	Votes	Marks	Readers
2NT	14	10	24
Double	2	5	12
Pass	2	5	2
2♠	0	2	3
3♦	0	0	1

I think we can all agree that there is no ideal action on this hand. However, while a couple of panellists and three readers were willing to overcall 2♠ on a four-card suit, I see little merit in overcalling a level higher, and in a minor, also in a four-card suit. Hence, no award for the 3♦ overcall – sorry.

PROBLEM 5

IMPs. Dealer East. All Vul.

♠ AKJ102
♥ 8
♦ AQ32
♣ 865

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

Bid	Votes	Marks	Readers
4♥	9	10	21
3♦	4	7	14
4♠	3	5	3
2NT	1	3	0
3♣	1	3	1
4♦	0	0	2
4NT	0	0	1

A sizeable majority want to make a slam try. However, three readers opt for a try which is not chosen by any panellist. I can't award anything to 4♦ because that is definitely a splinter bid in our agreed methods, while 4NT is just a wild effort which deserves to get us too high when we have a number of intelligent options available which will permit us to have a look at slam without having to go past game. No award for either 4♦ or 4NT.

PROBLEM 6

IMPs. Dealer West. All Vul.

♠ 9
♥ A643
♦ AK108
♣ AJ102

West	North	East	South
1♦	1♠	2♥	4♠
?			

Bid	Votes	Marks	Readers
4NT	15	10	15
5♥	2	4	15
6♥	1	3	10
5♠	0	2	1
Double	0	0	1

There were two solo efforts from readers. I feel that double is just wrong, as it surely denies genuine heart support, even if we agree that it shows extra values rather than being for penalty. Five Spades, I think, should show a spade void, but it will probably not come to any harm as partner will rarely have the hand to bid Seven, meaning that 5♠ will not do much worse than one panellist's choice of 6♥. I therefore award 2 points to 5♠.

PROBLEM 7

IMPs. Dealer South. All Vul.

♠ AK102
♥ 4
♦ K92
♣ AQ765

West	North	East	South
–	–	–	2♦*
?			

2♦ Weak Two

Bid	Votes	Marks	Readers
3♣	8	10	16
2NT	7	9	9
2♠	2	6	4
Dble	1	3	9
Pass	0	2	4

Bill March calls this one 'Horrible' He comments that the Aces did some analysis which showed that 2 level overcalls on 4 card suits were a very bad idea He has never done this before. And will just have to resort to 'got club mixed in with spades' ploy. Incidentally, his choice of 2♠ earned him 6 points, his only non-maximum – and he was the joint winner this month with 76.

While no panellist was willing to remain silent when holding a good 16 HCP, four readers opted to Pass. This could work out well as it at least avoids the penalties which we would suffer by overcalling in a ropey suit and going a number down, possibly doubled, so I'll award 2 points, though I do feel that we cannot afford to be shut out when holding so many good cards.

PROBLEM 8

IMPs. Dealer West. All Vul.

♠ A7
♥ J6
♦ AK7
♣ AK9873

West	North	East	South
1♣	Pass	1♠	Pass
?			

Bid	Votes	Marks	Readers
2♦	16	10	31
2NT	2	4	3
3NT	0	2	1
3♣	0	2	7

The panel, to a man (and woman) see 3♣ as being too much of an underbid. However, seven readers chose 3♣ and, as it could be the last making contract, I'll award 2 points.

MASTER POINT BIDDING BATTLE



Results – Set 24

Several readers voiced their thanks and sent New Year good wishes to the ANBM staff and readers.

The magazine obviously enjoyed some recent publicity in China, since we received a dozen entries from the Orient. Welcome! One of them, **Jed Wang** joins regular entrant **Bill March** on 76 points, getting the month's top score. **Dominic Connolly** and **Mark Bartusek** are joined third on 72. For the third book token, see below. The fourth one was drawn and also went eastward: **Ye Xiulong**.

Other Good Scores

- 71 *Bazil Caygill, Dean Pokorny, Lars Erik Bergerud*
- 70 *Da Zhoumin, George Willett*
- 69 *Colin Brown, Carles Acero, Hajdu Lajos*
- 67 *Nelson Pearson*
- 66 *Alex Athanasiadis*

The End Of Year Standings:

<i>Bill March</i>	370
<i>Dean Pokorny</i>	361
<i>Mark Bartusek</i>	349
<i>Dominic Connolly</i>	349
<i>Mike Perkins</i>	344
<i>Alex Athanasiadis</i>	336
<i>Bazil Caygill</i>	333
<i>Colin Brown</i>	332
<i>Todd Holes</i>	332
<i>Dudley Leigh</i>	331

<i>Rodney Lighton</i>	328
<i>Mike Ralph</i>	327
<i>Carles Acero</i>	326
<i>Steven Handley</i>	323
<i>Nelson Pearson</i>	321
<i>George Willett</i>	320
<i>David Barnes</i>	318
<i>Peter Becker</i>	316
<i>Bill Linton</i>	314
<i>Nigel Guthrie</i>	313

Bill March is the winner, **Dean Pokorny** comes second. **Mark Bartusek** and **Dominic Connolly** are joint third, both on the December contest and overall for 2019. It has been decided that their book token shall be added to their yearly prize and divided equally among them. All prizes will be sent out shortly.

Congratulations to all entrants, and we hope you have enjoyed the contest!

EAST

Hands for the
February 2020 The uBid Auction Room

Bid these hands with those on the previous page with your favourite partner; then turn to The Auction Room inside to see how your score compares to that of the experts

Hand 1. Dealer West. E/W Vul.

♠ AK1098
♥ Q5
♦ 64
♣ Q986

(North overcalls 2♦. South raises to 3♦ if able)

Hand 2. Dealer West. N/S Game.

♠ Q97
♥ J53
♦ AQ107
♣ KJ10

Hand 3. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

♠ J87
♥ AKQ942
♦ A7
♣ A2

Hand 4. Dealer West. Both Vul.

♠ A5
♥ 7
♦ J10932
♣ AKJ93

(North overcalls 4♠. South bids 5♦ if able and North then bids 6♠)

Hand 5. Dealer South. Both Vul.

♠ AK87
♥ KQ1065
♦ A964
♣ —

Hand 6. Dealer North. None Vul.

♠ K6
♥ K1085
♦ K10543
♣ K7

(North Dealer North opens 1♣. South bids 1♠/2♠ as needed. North then bids 4♠)

Hand 7. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

♠ AK52
♥ AQ1052
♦ 5
♣ AK3

Hand 8. Dealer East. None Vul.

♠ QJ7
♥ A75
♦ QJ2
♣ AKQ6

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We have set ourselves a target of 50,000+ readers, which should be enough to attract a significant level of advertising. As that number increases we will be able to approach more famous companies who might wish to associate themselves with the bridge playing community.

You can help us to achieve our aims in several ways.

Firstly – and by far the most important – by telling all your bridge playing friends that we exist and making sure they register at our web site, www.newbridgemag.com

Secondly by becoming a sponsor. That could take many forms – I have already mentioned the possibility of being linked to a column within the magazine and you will see from this issue that is already popular. There is also the possibility of linking directly to the title.

Thirdly by becoming a Friend of the magazine. That would involve a donation. Anyone donating £500 would become a Golden Friend.

It is possible to make a donation by credit card – just go to the appropriate page on the web site. A number of readers are making regular donations by bank transfer.

If you would like to discuss any of the above contact me at: editor@newbridgemag.com

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