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23 Mar	Sol House Hotel Costa del Sol Spain	Duplicate & Bowls	7-14
07 May	MS Infinity Luxury Cruise Croatia	Bridge Cruise	7
14 May	Westhill Hotel St Helier Jersey	Duplicate & Tour	7
17 May	Sentido Aegean/Pearl Hotels Crete	Duplicate & Excursion	7-14
02 Jun	Hotel Torretta Tuscany Italy	Duplicate & Tour	10
19 Jun	Royal Park Hotel Sweden	Duplicate & Walking	7
13 Aug	Ramsey Park Hotel Isle of Man	Duplicate	7
26 Aug	Hotel Torretta Tuscany Italy	Duplicate & Tour	7-14
17 Sep	Westhill Hotel St Helier Jersey	Duplicate & Tour	7
17 Sep	Derin Deniz Gulet Cruise Turkey	Luxury Cruise	7
17 Sep	Turunc Premium Hotel Turkey	Duplicate	7-21
28 Sep	IBF Sol House Hotel Spain	Irish Bridge Festival	7-14
01 Oct	Creta Panorama Hotel Crete	Duplicate	7-14
05 Oct	Barceló Punta Umbría Mar Spain	Duplicate & Tour	7-14
15 Oct	Athena Beach Hotel Paphos Cyprus	Duplicate & Bowls	7-21
05 Nov	Barceló Illetas Albatros Mallorca	Duplicate	7-14
15 Nov	Founty Beach Hotel Morocco	Duplicate	7-14
21 Dec	Barcelo Occidental Fuengirola	Duplicate	7-14
22 Dec	Paloma Oceana Hotel Side Turkey	Duplicate & Boule	7-14

UK CALENDAR 2022

DATE	RESORT	HOLIDAY TYPE	NTS
07 Feb	Charingworth Manor Hotel Exclusive Use	Duplicate & Walk	4
20 Feb	The Charlecote Pheasant Hotel	Duplicate & Tour	4
03 Mar	Wroxton House Hotel Nr Banbury	Duplicate & Tour	4
14 Mar	Carlton Hotel Bournemouth	Duplicate	5
31 Mar	Hilton Stratford Upon-Avon	Duplicate & Tour	4
08 Apr	Whitehouse Hotel Worcester	Duplicate & Tour	3
10 Apr	Toorak Hotel Torquay	Duplicate	5
15 Apr	Holiday Inn Hotel Ironbridge	Duplicate	4
24 Apr	The Old Ship Hotel Brighton	Duplicate & Tour	4
06 May	St Johns Hotel Solihull	Duplicate	4
22 May	White Hart Salisbury	Duplicate & Tour	4
30 May	Belton Woods Hotel Grantham	Duplicate & Golf	4
05 Jun	Croyde Bay Hotel Resort	Duplicate	6
16 Jun	Holiday Inn Hotel Ironbridge	Duplicate	4
19 Jun	Chilworth Manor Hotel	Duplicate & Walking	4
10 Jul	Grovefield House Hotel Nr Windsor	Duplicate	4
18 Jul	The Angle Hotel Chippenham	Duplicate & Tour	4
25 Jul	St Kilda Hotel Llandudno	Duplicate	4
31 Jul	The Old Swan Hotel Harrogate	Duplicate & Tour	4
05 Aug	Three Counties Hereford	Duplicate & Tour	4
22 Aug	De Vere Latimer Estate	Duplicate	4

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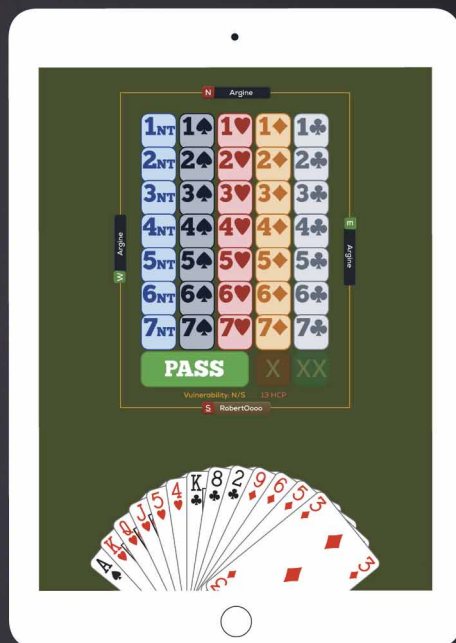
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Happy 2NT

‘Happy 2NT’ my husband cried as midnight chimed referring, of course, to 20-22. We were at our usual hilarious New Year’s Eve with friends from the West London Gay Bridge Club. I say ‘usual’, but it’s definitely an unusual evening, and to reassure anyone raising an eyebrow – I say ‘usual’ – but we didn’t do it last year during lockdown.

So many things make New Year’s Eve enjoyable. We go to glorious Bath, to Bill’s glorious house, and meet our glorious friends. ‘The girls’ know how to make it fun. Dressed to the nines as myriad Dowager Duchesses in fake pearls, high heels and wigs makes a great start. My mother comes to lunch and stays for the afternoon playing bridge while Bill and I do our annual jigsaw contest racing to complete two identical puzzles.

It’s so enjoyable to hear the banter at the bridge table in the background. David encourages with cries like ‘Mother, return my lead’. She’s a good player and doesn’t need the advice, but the terrible table talk produces a delicious hysteria, and my mother is reduced to helpless giggles at being called ‘Mother’ by someone she meets once a year. At least two hands were played by declarer in the wrong suit, and it’s not the drink – their heels are too high to allow them to go regularly downstairs and pluck another bottle from the fridge.

Everyone played with everyone and it was a life-affirming tribute to bridge. It was all so jolly. And jolly stupid. It wouldn’t have passed muster in a club and the sledging was reminiscent of cricket 10 years ago.

I was bought up on social bridge, and my students want to become social players. Many have become good players who I try to persuade into the bridge clubs. A few take the plunge, but there’s an unwilling core, and our New Year’s Eve bridge reminds me

why. Playing at home with a few friends is so friendly. It’s funny and generous and kind. Some people’s experiences at a bridge club can be just the opposite. It’s not about the seriousness of the bridge – it’s the actively unsocial element. New players can waltz, with a smile, around the room and find, at the end, not a single person has asked their names, where they live, whether they will be coming regularly or any other standard welcome.

Indeed, lockdown has been a bit of a revelation. Clubs running online games have found that newcomers often prefer online duplicate bridge – age gaps are irrelevant, digital huffing and puffing is absent, there’s no expectation of a social side, so it doesn’t disappoint. However, as a (now) diehard club player we need to get people into the clubs when they feel safe to come.

It’s a two-fold challenge. First, to draw back previous players, some of whom have learnt to live without bridge – can you imagine (?) – or find online bridge sufficient. Then we need new players. In all cases it has to be more fun than the alternative. Club bridge needs to feel like ‘social bridge’, but a little more competitive. In the best clubs the members are a community – they know whose daughter is getting married and needs help with the flowers, whose grandson just got a first in astrophysics, who needs a lift, who isn’t well, who has a sick family member. That camaraderie and support network is important. So please, try and make yours the friendliest club in England.

AWARDS TIME

The AGM was held in November and awards given to very deserving members who have contributed so much to bridge at a county or national level. Congratulations to all of them – you can see their citations on page 32. □





Opening light third in hand

You might have seen opponents open light in third seat or heard people discussing it. I am often asked about third seat openings. How do you know when it's a good idea, why is it ok in third but not otherwise, and just how is partner meant to know what you are up to???

The first thing that I should clarify is what I mean by a 'light opening'. I am referring exclusively to opening bids of one of a suit, and when most players say 'light' they are referring to a hand that's about a K or Q off an opening hand. Opening a light 1NT could end very badly for you and should never be attempted! I would also advise that you need a decent suit to open light. This will offer you some protection against being doubled for penalties later and increase the chance that leading your suit is the right thing for partner to do.

I have previously discussed how position affects pre-empting style, and a lot of the same considerations apply when it comes to light openings. There is little upside opening light in first or second seat, as partner might still have a good hand and you will just confuse them. It makes little sense in fourth seat, too, as you could take a score of 0 by passing the hand out, so opening isn't very attractive unless you think that you might make a plus score. In third, however, the logic goes that partner isn't going to get too excited with a passed hand and you can therefore get in there. Just like with pre-empting, it's helpful to weigh up the pros and cons of a light opening.

PROS TO OPENING LIGHT IN 3RD SEAT

- ❖ You can tell your partner what to lead by bidding your suit at the one level. If you pass you might have to later bid at a higher level if you want to get the suit in, which could be risky.
- ❖ You might convince your opponents to do less bidding than they should.
- ❖ You might make it harder for your left hand opponent to show their hand than it would be if

you passed. This is particularly true if opening a high ranking suit, as it takes more space away.

- ❖ You might find partner with a good fit for you and make a contract or find a good sacrifice.

CONS TO OPENING LIGHT IN 3RD SEAT

- ❖ Partner might get too excited and bid too much.
- ❖ It's occasionally easier for LHO to show their hand – perhaps they can make a takeout double or a Michael's cue bid. This is unpredictable and a small enough effect that I don't worry about it. If your opponents know what they are doing, assume they'll bid sensibly if you pass.

The list of pros looks longer than the list of cons, so you might be forgiven for thinking that this means I'm all in favour of light opening bids in third seat. Not so, however.

People don't realise it, but making a light opening is far less attractive playing Acol than it is playing a strong NT system, and you should be careful. The big difference is in the strength of partner's two over one response. In Acol, if you open at the one level and partner bids a lower suit at the two level, that shows about 9 or 10 points – enough for game opposite a balanced 15 count. If you make a similar bid playing a strong NT system it shows more – about 11 – because if partner is balanced and has to rebid 2NT they might have only 12 points, not the 15 that an Acolyte would hold. This means that 2/1 auctions are far more frequent in Acol than in strong NT systems.

If you open light with a shapely hand playing Acol it is far more likely that partner will make an awkward two-level response with their nine count, because they like their five-card suit, which is inevitably your singleton. Do you see where I'm going with this? A similar set of issues can arise when LHO overcalls – partner will strain to act with enough to make game opposite a balanced 15 count, so if you have an iffy nine you will end up far too high far too often.

This doesn't mean that I *hate* light openings, just that I think you have to be careful. You should imagine what will happen if partner has an ill-fitting 10 count opposite. If they might make some awkward bid that leaves you really stuck, maybe you shouldn't open. If you have rebids that will fit most scenarios, go for it.

Here are a few hands to think about. What, if anything, would you open on these after partner and your RHO have passed?

W	N	E	S
	Pass	Pass	?

Hand 1	Hand 2	Hand 3
♠ A K 10 6 5 ♥ K 10 9 8 4 ♦ 5 2 ♣ 8	♠ K Q J 7 6 5 ♥ Q 8 ♦ 9 ♣ 8 6 4 2	♠ Q 8 6 ♥ K Q J 7 ♦ J 9 6 ♣ J 10 6

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

Hand 1: I would open this 1♠, planning to rebid 2♥. I actually don't consider this a light opening and would open at any position and vulnerability. The suits are good, and your points are concentrated in them. If you dislike it because you don't have 12 points, consider whether making that low club into a singleton queen would really improve your hand all that much. I would consider this a light opening if you made the ♠K into the ♠Q, and I would open it third in hand.

Hand 2: This is a textbook 2♣ opening and I see no reason to bid anything else. Again, I would open 2♣ in first or second seat as well.

Hand 3: I would pass with this. You might fancy a heart lead, but if you open 1♥ you may well get too high. If you do open 1♥ your only option is going to be to pass whatever partner bids, which may not be a disaster, but if LHO overcalls, partner's bid might already put you too high. And



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what will you do if partner makes a takeout double of the opponent's overcall?

Hand 4: I would also pass this. If you open 1♠ and partner bids 2♦ you will have a real headache, and no good option. Partner might have only four diamonds for this so you can't really pass it, but nothing else seems a good idea either!

Hand 5: I would open 1♥. It could go wrong, if LHO overcalls and partner bids spades at the two level, but then I'll just have to pass and hope to survive. If, however, partner responds 1♠ or 1NT, we can rebid 2♣ and play in a sensible contract. The great hearts and spade shortage give me some hope that we might want to compete if the opponents start bidding spades and I am keen for partner to lead a heart if we do end up defending. □

BRIDGE FOR ALL & ACOLYTES

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Blockages

You are all aware of the nuisance a blocked suit can create when you are declarer. If, for example, diamonds were distributed thus:



Then you'd have four tricks in the suit *if* you could overcome the blockage. Essentially you'd need an outside entry in the North hand to access the ♦QJ after cashing the ♦AK.

In this article we are trying to create blockages for the defenders rather than finding unblocking plays for ourselves.

Here is a simple example. You bid 1NT – 3NT and West leads the ♥Q. How should you play?

Hand 1
South plays in 3NT.
West leads the ♥Q.

♠ A 3
♥ K 6 4
♦ K 9 5
♣ A 10 6 5 2

♠ K Q 9 8
♥ 9 7 2
♦ A Q 4
♣ Q J 9

Your initial **Count and Plan** reveals seven top tricks (three spades, three diamonds and a club). The club finesse cannot be avoided and, were it successful, you'd probably make overtricks. Meanwhile, you have this heart lead to deal with. Should you play the king at trick one? If, instead, you duck, West continues with the ♥J. What now?

Let's look at the full deal:

South plays 3NT. West leads the ♥Q

♠ A 3
♥ K 6 4
♦ K 9 5
♣ A 10 6 5 2

♠ J 6 4 2
♥ Q J 10 8
♦ J 8 3
♣ 7 4

♠ K Q 9 8
♥ 9 7 2
♦ A Q 4
♣ Q J 9

♠ 10 7 5
♥ A 5 3
♦ 10 7 6 2
♣ K 8 3

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The winning play, as you can see now, is to duck two rounds of hearts, winning whenever East was dealt either ♥Ax or ♥Axx, both quite likely distributions. When East wins the ♥A on the third round he can do little. You win the return and take the club finesse, confident that East has no more hearts to play if he does have the ♣K. Essentially, by ducking two rounds of hearts you have blocked the suit for the opposition.

The hand is not cast-iron and made in Birmingham, you may note. West may have been dealt ♥AQJ10x. After you duck the ♥Q he will continue impassively with the ♥J and you may duck again. Now West will gleefully cash the ♥A and the rest of his hearts, making cackling noises as he does so. Oh well, you just have to pay off to the opposition when these things happen.

Now to another deal that needs another thoughtful play on blocking a suit. The bidding goes:

South	North
1♦	2♣
2NT	3NT

West leads a low spade. What is your best play here?

Hand 2
South plays in 3NT.
West leads the ♠6.

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

Your initial *Count and Plan* reveals that you can see seven top tricks, so you have to develop the clubs, via the finesse. What is your precise plan?

The 'obvious' play to trick one is to run the lead around to the ♠J; after all, it is far from impossible that West has led from ♠KQxxx. However, if West has a five-card spade suit headed by only the king or queen and the ♠K this play will lead to defeat. Can you see how?

East will take trick one and play back a spade, forcing the ♠A. If the club finesse loses, West will have enough winning spades left to sink your boat. Here's the full deal:

South plays 3NT. West leads th3 ♠6			
♠	A 8 4	♠	K 9
♥	K Q 4	♥	J 10 7 6 2
♦	8 3	♦	J 10 6 4
♣	Q J 9 7 5	♣	4 2
♠	Q 10 7 6 2	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> click to play online </div>	
♥	8 3		
♦	Q 9 2	♠	J 5 3
♣	K 6 3	♥	A 9 5
		♦	A K 7 5
		♣	A 10 8

The best play is to attempt to block the spade suit by rising with the ♠A at trick one and running the ♣Q at trick two. On the above layout it is impossible for E/W to untangle their tricks and the game succeeds.

The recommended play only fails if West has led from ♠KQxxx and also has the king of clubs. However, with that holding (and maybe a red-suit honour) he might have risked a 1♠ overcall, so this distribution is much less likely than the one portrayed above. Note that if spades are 4-3 any play succeeds. □

Have you got it?
Paul's quiz is online page 68

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Heffalump Traps

In each of the following hands you are sitting South. You are playing in a teams match with IMPs scoring. You should make a plan to give yourself the best chance of making your contract, even if that means giving up on the possibility of making overtricks.

Hand 1

♠ A Q 10 5
♥ 7 4 3
♦ 10 9 8 4
♣ A 8



♠ K J 8 7 4 2
♥ A Q 5
♦ A
♣ K 9 3

You are in 6♠. West leads the ♦Q. Plan your play.

Hand 3

♠ A 4 3 2
♥ 8 7
♦ 10 2
♣ K 8 6 4 3



♠ K Q 8 7 6 5
♥ J 9 4
♦ A J
♣ A 5

You are in 4♠. West overcalled 2♥. West leads the ♥K which East overtakes with the ♥A. East returns the ♥3 and West continues the suit. Plan your play.

Hand 2

♠ A K 4
♥ 9 5
♦ A 9 8 5 4 2
♣ 6 3



♠ 7 6 3
♥ A K 6 3
♦ K Q
♣ A K Q 5

You are in 6NT. West leads the ♠Q. Plan your play.

Hand 4

♠ 8 6 3
♥ K 8 5 3
♦ 9 8
♣ A 10 6 2



♠ A 7 4
♥ A J 9 7 6 4
♦ A
♣ Q 7 4

You are in 4♥ after West makes a 2♦ overcall, and East bids 2♠. West leads the ♠J, and East overtakes with the ♠Q. Plan your play.

CLUB PLAYER'S BIDDING QUIZ

You are sitting West. What should you bid with each hand below on the given auction at matchpoint pairs? Assume love all unless indicated.

Hand 1

♠ A K 9 7
♥ A J 7 4
♦ A Q
♣ 10 4 3

W	N	E	S
			1♣ ¹
?			

¹ Could be short (2+ clubs)

Hand 2

♠ 7 3
♥ A 6 5
♦ Q J 8 4 2
♣ A 8 4

W	N	E	S
1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass
?			

Hand 3

♠ K J 9 8 7 6
♥ Q 10 6
♦ 10 7
♣ A J

W	N	E	S
1♠	Pass	2♣	Dble
?			

Hand 4

♠ A J 10 6 4 3
♥ A K 6 4
♦ –
♣ K 9 7

W	N	E	S
1♠	Pass	2♣	Pass
?			

Hand 5

♠ A 8 2
♥ 3
♦ K Q 8 7 4 2
♣ A 10 3

W	N	E	S
	1NT ¹	Pass	2♦ ²
?			

¹ 15-17, ² Transfer to hearts

Hand 6

♠ Q J 9 7 3 2
♥ J 4
♦ 10 7 5 2
♣ J

W	N	E	S
?			

David Bakhshi gives the answers on page 40

Julian Pottage gives his answers on page 62

New Prize Leads Quiz

by Alan Mould

Opening leads are often subjective and virtually any opening lead can be successful some of the time. However, bridge is in many ways a game of percentages and therefore certain leads will gain more often than others. In each issue you will be given three hands and the bidding on each, and you are asked to *choose your opening leads in both teams and pairs from those proposed by our Quizmaster*. Answers will be in the next issue. In each problem you are on lead as West.

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Please make sure you include your full postal address AND rank even if entering by e-mail

ANSWERS TO DECEMBER'S QUIZ: Page 44

TWO answers - Teams & Pairs

Hand 1

♠ J 10 2
♥ Q J 7
♦ 10 6 4
♣ Q 8 5 3

South	West	North	East
1NT ¹	Pass	3NT	All Pass
¹ 12-14			

A nice straightforward auction.

Choose from: (a) ♠J; (b) ♥Q; (c) ♦4; (d) ♣3

★★★★★

Hand 2

♠ 6 5 2
♥ A 5
♦ 10 9 7 3
♣ J 5 4 2

South	West	North	East
4♣	Pass	Pass	Dble ¹
All Pass			
¹ take-out			

Double was for takeout, but with this balanced rubbish you pass as always as it is a lot easier to take four tricks than 11.

Choose from: (a) a spade; (b) ♥A; (c) ♦10; (d) ♣2

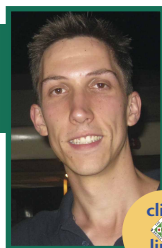
★★★★★

Hand 3

♠ K Q 10 6 3
♥ A Q 8 7 2
♦ 4
♣ Q 6

South	West	North	East
3♦ ¹	1♣	Pass	2♣
All Pass	3♥	5♦	Dble
¹ weak			

Choose from: (a) ♠K; (b) ♥A; (c) ♦4; (d) ♣Q



Strong rebids - Opener's jump shift

Following on from December, when we looked at making a jump rebid in your own suit, we are going to look at jumping in a new suit.

Unlike rebidding your own suit, there are only two ways to introduce a new suit, with a minimum rebid, or with a jump. (This assumes the ranks of suits are such that you are unable to reverse, which we shall be looking at in future months).

We shall take a simple situation where you hold five clubs and four spades, and compare and contrast these two sequences:

West	East
1♣	1♥
1♠	

and

West	East
1♣	1♥
2♠	

(As an aside, a double- or triple-jump to 3♠ or 4♠ by the opener would not be a natural call, they would both agree hearts).

You might say that the first sequence is weak and the second is strong, and to an extent you would be right, but medium hands have to fit in somewhere and they are added into the weak category.

So the first sequence, that of rebidding a suit 'normally' (without a jump) covers minimum hands (11-14) as well as medium ones (15-18).

A jump in a new suit (jump shift) shows a hand that is worth game, so 19+ points or equivalent with compensating shape.

As opener, when you make a jump shift you will always be at least 5-4 shape, and generally have points in your long suits. It doesn't say anything about your holding in partner's suit, other than you don't have four-card support for a major. If the deal is a misfit and you hold a singleton in partner's suit then you must be full value in high cards and have 19 points or more, otherwise you will struggle in the game you end up in.

Let's see some opening hands that might consider making a jump shift after a simple start:

West	East
1♣	1♥
?	

Hand 1	Hand 2	Hand 3
♠ A Q J 3 ♥ K J 6 ♦ 3 ♣ A Q 6 5 4	♠ A K Q 3 ♥ 3 ♦ K J 7 ♣ A Q J 7 5	♠ A K J 10 2 ♥ 3 ♦ 6 ♣ A K Q 10 9 4

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

Hand 1 must avoid temptation and rebid just 1♠.

There is no danger at all this will lead to missing a game in spades – if partner has four-card spade support he will raise even if he has a load of rhubarb, as a 4-4 fit makes the two hands stronger together.

Although the hand contains 17 points and a partial fit with partner, jumping to 2♠ is an overstatement. A simple rebid of 1♠ and then jump to 3♥ at your next go, suggesting this shape with a hand just short of a game force is correct.

Hand 2 is perfect to jump to 2♠, despite the lack of fit with partner. You are showing five clubs and four spades, and if partner doesn't support the spades (as he will do with four) then your next bid will be 3NT, giving partner the choice of final contracts.

Hand 3 has only 17 points, but the powerful distribution, good intermediates and the fact that all of the high cards are supported by other honours mean that this hand is worth a 2♠ rebid, and force to game. Your next bid (if partner bids 2NT, 4th suit forcing or gives preference to your clubs) will be to rebid 3♠, showing not only five

spades but also six clubs. (With 5-5 in the black suits the modern opening bid is 1♠).

Note that the key thing here is that your suits are self supporting (the ♣10 is a good card but the ♠10 is an even better one) so if partner has a strong hand with a misfit and tries a slam, he won't be disappointed.

Hand 4 has 18 points but is still a fair bit short of jumping to 2♠. A 1♠ rebid is plenty. Holding those tenaces in the red suits it is tempting to rebid in no trumps, and many five card major players would no doubt do so. However you can always get to NT later, so show the four-card spade suit now and then a later rebid of no trumps will describe the character of the hand.

Hand 5 again has 18 points, but lacks the internal strength for a game force. The bad club pips means the suit needs some support to run, and a loose jack and queen in side suits hardly gladdens the eye.

A 1♠ rebid is plenty. If it is passed out then be grateful for partner's caution, as he will no doubt have something like

♠963 ♥K8743 ♦Q542 ♣J

and no game will be close to making.

The important thing to realise is that partner will always raise you with a primary fit, or give simple preference with support for your first suit. If the auction draws to an unexpected close then it will be because partner has a horrible misfit, and your 23 or 24 points (perhaps even 25) will not be enough to make game.

If you are ever unsure, just imagine partner has five or six points with a singleton in your first suit and three cards in your second. If you can't expect

to make game facing that sort of hand then you are not worth opener's strong jump shift. □

The Dos and Don'ts of making a jump rebid in your own suit

- Do** appreciate that opener's jump shift is game-forcing, so you need a full-blooded 19 count unless you have exceptional shape.
- Do** remember the purpose of a strong jump shift is to create a game force and then bid gently to the right contract, patterning out at your next opportunity. Don't be afraid to tiptoe up and consult partner which of the strains you belong in.
- Don't** forget that if you make a non-forcing bid (because you are not worth a jump) and partner leaves you in the partscore, then you won't make a game. It is disappointing when powerful hands are left at the one and two level, but if the limit of the hand is eight tricks partner will have got your side a good score.
- Don't** get confused between a jump shift and a reverse bid, although to find out the difference you will have to wait for the next article!

Try Michael's Quiz, page 69


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Marry up the bidding and the play

It's easy to forget that how we play the cards can be determined by the bidding. Try to remember the bidding before playing out the hand and gather all the clues. Let's have a look at this hand and see how the bidding might dictate the card play:

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

Love All. Dealer West.				
W	N	E	S	
1♣	Dble	Pass	4♠	
All Pass				

the ♠J. When you win the heart (in hand) you should lead the ♠9. If West plays low you should play low from dummy. This is sure to hold and you can play a spade again, covering West's card. Note that if you had inserted the ♠Q from dummy West would still make a spade trick later. Here's the full deal.

South plays 4♠. West leads the ♣A			
	♠ A Q 10 5		
	♥ K Q 4 3		
	♦ J 10		
	♣ 10 9 6		
♠ K J 4		♠ 6	
♥ 9 5 2		♥ 10 8 7 6	
♦ Q 8 2		♦ 9 7 6 5 4	
♣ A K Q 7		♣ 5 3 2	
			
	♠ 9 8 7 3 2		
	♥ A J		
	♦ A K 3		
	♣ J 8 4		

Cont/...

You are sitting South. After partner doubles you bid 4♠ with your own opening bid. E/W are playing Acol (4-card suits) with a weak no trump. West leads three top clubs, East following, and then switches to a heart – over to you.

Your hearts and diamonds are solid, but you need to pick up the spade suit for no losers. Your side has 25 points, and the opposition has 15. What can you deduce? West opened, but could they have just 12 points? How should you play the spades?

After the first three tricks you can deduce that West is **balanced** as everybody followed to three rounds of clubs. If West is balanced why didn't West open 1NT in the first place? Aha, he must have more than 14 points – indeed he must have all the remaining points. West must have both the ♠K and



Let's have a look at another example where we can produce the right play by listening to the bidding.

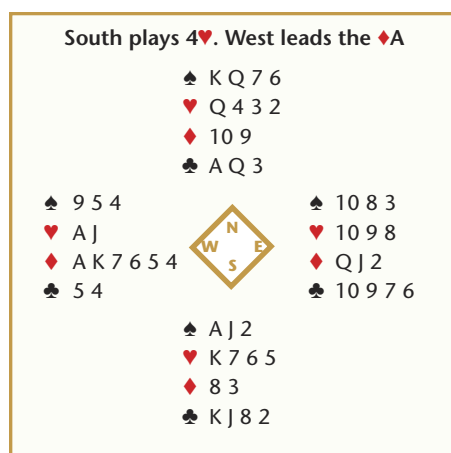


N/S Game. Dealer West.				
W	N	E	S	
1♦	Dble	Pass	3♥	
Pass	4♥	All Pass		

You are sitting South. After partner doubles the 1♦ opening bid you end up in 4♥ and West leads ♦A on which East plays the ♦Q. Playing a queen promises a singleton or the jack, and indicates an ability to win the next trick should partner wish to switch the lead. However, West continues with the ♦K (East plays the ♦2) followed by a spade. You are in a ten-trick contract and cannot afford to lose more than one more trick, so what is your plan?

You cannot do anything about losing the trump ace so you will need to play the trump suit well. With Kxxx opposite Qxxx the correct way to play this combination is to finesse one of the opponents straight away and then play a low card from each hand hoping the ace 'falls on air'. So who do we play for the doubleton ace?

Back to the bidding. West made an opening bid, so he almost certainly started with at least 11 out of the 15 missing points. It looks like East had the ♦Q and ♦J, so West must hold the ♥A as well as his top diamonds to justify an opening bid of 1♦. So now you will have to hope it is doubleton. Win the third trick in hand and play a low trump. West follows suit and you play dummy's queen. It holds. Now play a low heart from each hand and you are delighted when the ace falls. Your remaining king will draw East's ten later. Here's the full deal:



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Rectifying the Count

A normal squeeze will only operate if there is precisely one fewer winner than the number of cards left.

So when you have identified the need for a squeeze, make sure you have all the remaining tricks bar one. To reach this state, you may need to lose trick(s), a process known as *rectifying the count*.

Love All. Dealer South

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

♠ A K 10		
♥ 4 2		
♦ A K J 10 9		
♣ A 4 2		

West	North	East	South
			1♦
Pass	1♥	Pass	3NT ¹
Pass	6NT ²	All Pass	

¹ Played as 19 ² pushy, very pushy

Overbidding to 6NT on our featured deal, you count up 11 top tricks after West leads the ♠Q. You envisage a squeeze-ending, partly because there is no other hope of a twelfth trick, and, more especially, because there are two suits (spades and hearts) that need guarding, and only one opponent can guard each. The opening lead has told you that West guards spades; you must hope he also guards hearts (and only one opponent can hold at least four hearts).

The problem is that you have 11 winners, and there are still 13 tricks to play. To reach the correct

ending (and a good tip is to try to visualise this in your mind), you need to *rectify the count**, in other words to lose an early trick.

The correct line is to win the ♠Q lead and, at trick two, duck a club (key play). Say East wins and returns a spade. You win, and now run all your minor-suit winners. As you cash the last diamond, West will have to discard in the five-card ending (see below), a discard he will not enjoy:

Love All. Dealer South

♠ J		♠ 7
♥ J 10 9 8		♥ 7 6 5
♦		♦ K
♣		

♠ 10		
♥ 4 2		
♦ 10 (led)		
♣ 4		

If West discards a heart, dummy's hearts will all be good. In practice West is likely to let go a spade, in the hope that his partner can guard the suit with the ten. No good this time. You cash the promoted ten of spades, and take the last three tricks with dummy's top hearts. 12 tricks and slam made. ☒

*You can actually succeed without rectifying the count (if you read the ending) using Strip Squeeze technique - another time . . .

The deal is taken from Andrew Robson's *Endplay & Squeeze*, one of his series of invaluable Bridge Lessons books. They are available from the EBU's www.bridge-warehouse.co.uk



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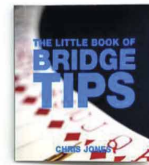
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These hands are all from modern events and David Bird points to some useful lessons to be learned from them. Bid them with your partner and then see how your efforts compare with the experts' bidding.

FEBRUARY 2022 WEST HANDS

(IMP scoring on every deal)

1. E/W Game ♠ A K Q 7 3
Dealer North ♥ A Q 10 4
 ♦ A 8 3
(Gillis) ♣ 7
* South bids 3♣
2. Game All ♠ A 5 4 3
Dealer East ♥ A
 ♦ –
(Townsend) ♣ A K J 10 9 8 6 5
* South bids 3♦
3. E/W Game ♠ J 10 8 6 5
Dealer West ♥ A J 10 6 3
 ♦ Q
(P. Hackett) ♣ A 4
4. E/W Game ♠ A 10 3 2
Dealer East ♥ A 4
 ♦ Q 10 5 3
(Tommasini) ♣ K J 9
5. Love All ♠ 10 5
Dealer South ♥ 4 2
 ♦ Q 5
(Jason Hackett) ♣ K Q 10 7 6 5 4
6. E/W Game ♠ K 10 8 6
Dealer East ♥ Q 7
 ♦ J 8 6 3
(Tommasini) ♣ 9 6 4

Did you beat the experts? – Page 37

Beat Today's Experts

These hands are all from modern events and David Bird points to some useful lessons to be learned from them. Bid them with your partner and then see how your efforts compare with the experts' bidding.

FEBRUARY 2022 EAST HANDS

(IMP scoring on every deal)

1. E/W Game ♠ J 9 5
Dealer North ♥ K J 8 7
 ♦ K Q
(Erichsen) ♣ 8 4 3 2
* South bids 3♣
2. Game All ♠ J 8 7 6 2
Dealer East ♥ 10 3 2
 ♦ Q 7 6 5
(Handley-Pritchard) ♣ 7
* South bids 3♦
3. E/W Game ♠ A K Q 3
Dealer West ♥ K 9 8 7 4
 ♦ A 6
(Mossop) ♣ K 8
4. E/W Game ♠ 9
Dealer East ♥ K 7 2
 ♦ A J 7 6 4
(Green) ♣ A 10 8 7
5. Love All ♠ A 7 6 2
Dealer South ♥ A K J 9
 ♦ A 10 2
(Samson) ♣ A 9
6. E/W Game ♠ 5 3 2
Dealer East ♥ A 10 9 6 5
 ♦ A Q
(Green) ♣ A K 5

Did you beat the experts? – Page 37

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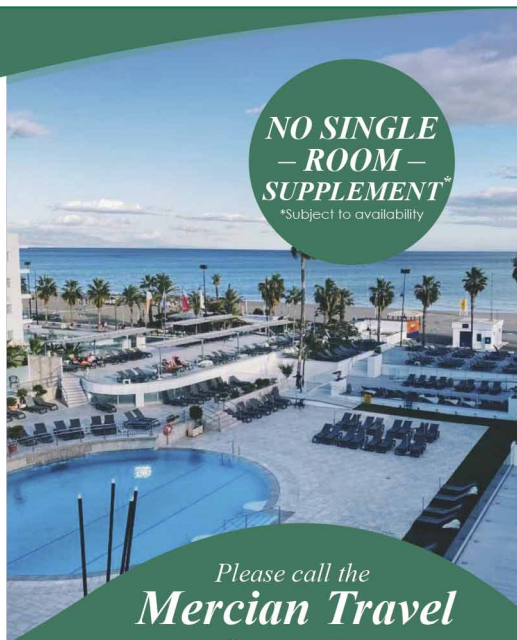
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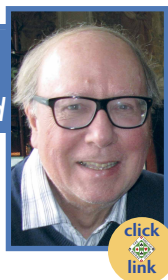
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The Matron's Obvious Double

The Thursday duplicate was into its sixth round when the Matron took her seat against the best pair in the room, Bertie Bellis and Percy Cutforth. 'We've started quite well this time, actually,' she announced. 'I hope you two aren't planning to ruin our scorecard.'

‘We play the same game against everyone,’ replied Percy Cutforth.

Bertie Bellis smiled. 'We'll certainly need to play well against you and Stefan,' he said. 'We scored a near-zero on that slam you made against us last week.'

The Matron strained her memory. They'd made a slam against Bertie, really? Perhaps Stefan had played it.

The players drew these cards:

The Matron led the queen of spades against the heart game. Seeing that declarer might wish to ruff a spade in the dummy, the German master overtook with his king and switched to a trump. Bertie Bellis won with the ace and paused to assess his prospects.

The defenders would not permit a spade ruff, so he was at risk of losing three spades and a diamond. A finesse against the diamond queen was one possibility, but playing for a 3-2 diamond break was a better chance. How about ducking a diamond immediately, while dummy still had a trump to deal with a third round of spades?

Bertie Bellis led the jack of diamonds from his hand, ducking in dummy when the Matron covered with the queen. A second round of spades went to Stefan Götel's ace and he returned another trump. When declarer won and drew the last trump, he was in no hurry to test the diamond suit. If West had started with four diamonds and the king of clubs, she would have no good discard on the last trump. She might even hold four diamonds and the sole remaining spade guard.

Bertie Bellis played all his trumps, followed by the ace of clubs. When diamonds proved to be 3-2 anyway, he discarded his remaining spade loser and claimed the contract.

The Matron surveyed the senior mathematics master uncertainly. 'How did you know the diamond finesse was wrong?' she demanded.

'I didn't,' Bellis replied. 'Playing for a 3-2 break was a better chance.'

Percy Cutforth studied the result sheet. 'A few pairs must have missed that subtle point,' he observed. 'It's a good one for us.'

The Matron reached for her scoring pen with a disgruntled air. 'You were very fortunate that I held the queen of diamonds,' she declared. 'I never like it when we get a bad board just through bad luck.'


Not long afterwards, the Matron faced the Headmaster and his wife.

E/W Game. Dealer South.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>The Matron</i>	<i>Percy Cutforth</i>	<i>Stefan Götel</i>	<i>Bertie Bellis</i>
Pass	1NT	Pass	1♥
All Pass			4♥

N/S Game. Dealer South.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>The Matron</i>	<i>The Headmaster</i>	<i>Stefan Götel</i>	<i>Norma Doulton</i>
4♠	Dble	5♠	5NT
Dble	Pass	Pass	6♣
Dble	6♥	Pass	Pass
Dble	All Pass		

The Headmaster's double showed some points. Stefan Götel raised to 5♠ and Norma Doulton paused to consider her next move. With 6-5 shape in her two suits, she might have bid 6♣. Since there was a two-card length discrepancy, she preferred 5NT, showing two places to play.

The Matron doubled 5NT and could hardly believe it when Norma Doulton bid 6♣ next. It was unlike her to bid so wildly, particularly when vulnerable. She doubled the club slam and saw no reason to staunch the flow of her doubles when the Headmaster corrected to 6♥.

Norma Doulton ruffed the ace of spades lead and paused to consider her play in the trump suit. It was hardly likely that Stefan would go to 5♠ when holding ♥Q9x. If anyone held all three missing trumps, it would surely be the Matron. She placed the king of hearts on the table, happy to see East show out. The jack of trumps was covered by the queen and ace, declarer returning to her hand with the trump ten. After unblocking the ace of diamonds, she led a low club towards the dummy.

Whether the Matron took her king of clubs or not, the slam was secure. If she ducked, the club jack would win and declarer could discard two club

losers on dummy's diamond honours. When she chose to win with the club king, the Headmaster's wife fanned her remaining cards, claiming the doubled slam.

'Well done, Norma,' exclaimed the Headmaster. 'How much does that come to?'

'1660, is it?' his wife replied.

The Matron leaned to her left, shaking her head when she saw the other results on the score sheet. 'Just as I thought, partner,' she said. 'Several pairs sacrificed in six spades. It only cost 300; just 100 at two tables.'

Stefan Götel made no reply. If the Matron had not doubled everything in sight, a sacrifice would have been clear on his cards.

The Matron could sense that Stefan was holding back his views on the deal. 'Everyone would double six hearts on my hand,' she informed him. 'My clubs were sitting over Norma's 6♣ bid, and... well, you'd bid at the five-level!' □



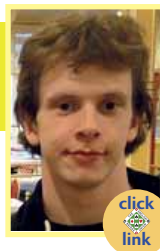
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Ducking

You've probably heard the term before, spoken by lofty experts to explain how they went off in their cold contracts. But what is ducking? Ducking is simply when you choose not to win a trick, even though you could.

But why would anyone want to do that? Our primary objective in bridge is to take as many tricks as possible. And ducking actively goes against that idea. I can understand if you are sceptical of such a technique and find yourself one of the many bridge players that has sworn against the practice.

But if you are, I have bad news for you. In my series of articles, we have already seen ducking work to great effect. And that gives me the excellent opportunity to reuse material.

South plays 3NT

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

This hand appeared in my article on giving count. With spades 3-3, declarer has six winners and needs to score three tricks from clubs. West's ♥2 lead goes to the queen, king, and ace, and declarer's next move is to play the ♣K out of hand. Are you, East, really going to take the trick?

If you do, you will have let the contract through. Sure, you can cash three heart tricks, but what then?

The answer is concede because declarer has enough to make his contract. And he has enough to make his contract because he has access to the club winners on dummy.

You see, it isn't about winners on this hand. The issue is communication. Dummy's clubs are more than enough for declarer to make his contract, and because dummy lacks any other high cards, his only entry to dummy is in the club suit itself. And if you duck the ace until the third round, that entry is removed.

Bridge often comes down to a game of communications, and I don't mean the kind you give with signals and discards. Declarer is trying to communicate with dummy, and you are trying to communicate with partner. There is no point in one hand having a bunch of tricks if the other hand can't reach it, and so we must do our best to keep communication with the hand opposite while also being aware of our opponents' communication.

Ducking your ace works here because you can do so until declarer has no more communication in the club suit. When you take your ace on the third round, declarer has no more clubs to play, and his access to dummy is no more. If you had started with Ax in clubs, you would have had no play.

So, it seems that ducking can be useful as a way to block our opponents' communication, but surely that is all it is good for. Obviously, we couldn't use the technique to help with our own communication . . . or could we?



**Please recycle
this magazine
when you have
finished with it**

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

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

Sitting West, you lead the ♠6 (fourth highest), declarer calls for the queen and partner does us proud by playing the ace (third hand high). He then returns the nine.

Obviously, your instincts are to win the trick. Notions such as third hand high and the general idea of winning tricks flood your mind. But what will happen if you win this trick? Sure, you can play another spade and establish the rest of the suit, but then what? As it is, you may find it difficult to cash your established spades.

Your only possible entry is the ♥K, but as you can see, it is poorly placed and will never actually score a trick. On this deal, the ♠K is your only entry, and you must preserve it. Duck the ♠K – smoothly and without dither! This establishes your spade tricks just the same, while also keeping the ♠K as an important entry.

Ducking the ♠K will look a little silly if partner hasn't got any more spades, but your only chance of beating the contract is with your spade tricks. When partner eventually wins with the ♣A, he will know to continue spades. He knows that you led the suit for a reason.

So, it seems that ducking can be useful in many types of communication play. But surely that is the end of it. Right? Let's look at the next hand.

Partner, West, leads the ♠J, and declarer ducks the first two rounds because he recently read an article about such techniques. He takes the third spade with the ace and comes to hand with the ♣J, making it clear his strength in the suit. Next, he plays a diamond to the king.

Obviously, this is the part of the hand where you are meant to duck. But why? Clearly,

communication isn't the issue. Looking at all four hands, there doesn't seem to be any issue at all. Declarer has eight tricks: one spade, two hearts, one diamond, and four clubs. All he needs to do is take the heart finesse. And that is exactly what will happen if you take the ♦A. Instead, consider what will happen if you duck the trick.

Declarer still has only eight tricks, but now he has two possibilities for a ninth. The heart finesse and the diamond finesse. If the ♦K holds the trick, it is very likely that declarer will return to hand and take the finesse again. And with your AJ hanging over dummy, that will work extremely well. For the defence that is.

Now, I'm not saying that all of this is obvious, or that it will always work, but I am trying to get across a point. Ducking doesn't give up a trick. While it is true that our goal in defence is to score as many tricks as possible, we are not necessarily trying to score them as quickly as possible.

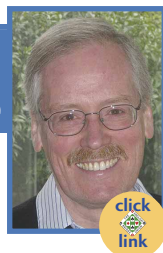
When we duck, we are not losing the trick, we are saving it for the opportune moment. On this hand, there is no rush to take the ♦A. We have a spade to cash but that is all – not enough to defeat the contract – and by holding onto the ♦A, we deny declarer useful information and make his correct play much harder to find.

Don't be goofy. Duck the trick.

Obviously, declarer still won't know where the ♦A is, and he may choose to finesse in hearts. But why would declarer ever think you have the ♦A? That would mean you ducked the trick, giving up on a winner.

And who would ever do that?





What has history taught us?

You are in 4♥ and need to start drawing trumps at trick two. This is the layout of the heart suit:



You have no clues from the bidding, so it is a classic *Eight Ever, Nine Never* situation. The best bit of advice on how to play it came from Alan Truscott. He said it was possible that West, with no good or safe lead, might decide to start with a trump. But he would never lead a trump from a holding of ♥Q5, ♥Q52 or ♥Q542, so there must be an extra small percentage in playing for West to have started with the queen.

The only reasons for rejecting the finesse might be if cashing the ace and king enabled you to cross-ruff with the remaining trumps, or if playing the ace-king and getting off lead with the third trump endplayed whoever won the trick. The latter is what modern generals call an *exit strategy*.

It is different in rubber bridge where there is a well-known tactic of playing for the queen to be sitting over the jack. The logic is that the queen might have been played on top of the jack the last time that deck was used – that's two deals ago – and imperfect shuffling means it could still be there. The shuffle may have done its work, of course, but surely the odds are now better than 50-50 that the queen is sitting in the hand to the left of the jack. This ploy is not considered unethical by the rubber bridge community.

Many players can remember all the hands they have played during a session, especially if they started playing bridge in the era before hand records. So it may not be too difficult for them to recall that the queen didn't cover the jack two deals ago, but a different finesse was taken and the queen

was covered by the king. Now, despite the shuffle, the queen is more likely to be under the king than over the jack. If somebody can remember how all the honour cards were played the last time a particular pack was used, will they not have an advantage?

Such a case came up in the '30s. Willard S Karn was one of the top-ranked American players in 1931 and '32, and a founding member of the team known as the Four Horsemen. In 1933 Ely Culbertson, anxious to maintain his position as the leading authority on bridge, hired a 'card detective' to investigate Karn's success at rubber bridge. The detective reported that Karn would rearrange the cards when gathering a trick, especially when he would be the next to shuffle. The bridge club committee dismissed the charges, but the accusations of cheating were enough to cause Karn to retire from the game. Five years later Karn sued Culbertson and his cronies for one million dollars,

The New York Times

March 19, 1938


KARN SUES FOR \$1,000,000

Charges Plot to Culbertsons and other Bridge Experts

Willard S. Karn, who was rated among the master contract bridge players in 1932, started suit yesterday in Supreme Court to recover \$1,000,000 from Ely Culbertson, the latter's divorced wife, Mrs. Josephine Culbertson, Crockford's, Inc; Oswald Jacoby, Lee Langdon, Walter Malowan, William J. Huske and Waldemar Von Zedwitz. Mr. Karn contends that the defendants unlawfully conspired to eliminate him from the bridge world.

Nothing like that could happen with duplicate bridge, could it? The cards weren't used for a previous deal, were they? And, with dealing machines, imperfect shuffling isn't relevant, is it?


Love All. Dealer South

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

Cast your mind back to the cards that you took out of the board before the bidding: Were they – in the order they became visible to you – ♥A (on the bottom), then ♠K, ♠10 and ♥6?

If so, it seems that the person who played the board before you was also in a spade contract, maybe 4♠, maybe 6♠. They won the opening heart lead, cashed the ♠K and ran the ♠10. The finesse must have lost to East, because the next card declarer played was the ♥6.

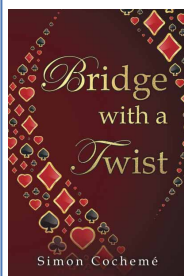
Now you can appreciate that the answers are: ‘No, the cards weren’t used on a *previous* deal, they were used for *this* deal at a *previous* table’ and ‘*Any* shuffling at all is relevant’.

Bols Bridge Tips were sponsored by the Bols Royal Distillery from 1974 to 1994. This particular deal was written up by Toine van Hoof in 1994. His tip was: *Shuffle Your Cards* before you put them back in the board. 

IBPA BOOK OF THE YEAR AWARD

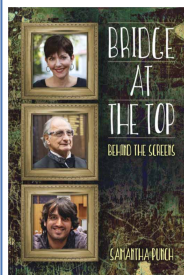
Simon Cochemé's *Bridge with a Twist* was the joint winner of the prestigious 2021 Book of the Year award presented by the International Bridge Press Association (IBPA). In its review the IBPA wrote:

A witty and informative look at the world of bridge - its language, its history, and some of its techniques.



- ♥ *Are pigeons more intelligent than some bridge players?*
- ♥ *What do a wooden man, a grandfather, a daydreamer and a donkey have in common?*
- ♥ *Did Zia really go nine down in 3NT?*

Scotland's Samantha Punch was the other joint winner for her book *Bridge at the Top: Behind*



the Scenes. The citation noted, *Samantha has interviewed the world's top bridge personalities on wide-ranging topics. As a bonus, each subject offers their favorite bridge tip. Top players, sponsors and coaches talk frankly about the top echelons of bridge.*



Clever play

Playing teams, South opens 1♥. What do you respond with the North cards?

Love All. Dealer South

♠ 8 7 4
♥ 5 3
♦ Q 7 6
♣ A K 10 7 3

♠ A K 3
♥ A 10 4 2
♦ K J 9 8
♣ 8 4

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

With nine points and a five-card suit, you are too strong for one no trump playing Acol. Respond 2♣. South rebids 2NT, which is game-forcing and showing 15+ points, and North raises to 3NT.

West leads the ♣5. How do you plan the play?

When the defence lead dummy's first suit to a no trump contract, they will normally hold five of them, since with four, they would prefer an unbid suit. West would have led the queen from QJ9, so you can expect one of these cards to fall singleton. Put up the ace, and the jack falls.

Now play a diamond to the king and a diamond back to the queen and ace. East switches to the ♥Q which you duck and West contributes the six. East

continues with the ♥7, won by West's nine and the king is returned, which you win, discarding a club from dummy. Next you lead a club to the ten, on which East discards a spade.

This is what you have seen so far:

♠ 8 7 4
♥ 5 3
♦ Q 7 6
♣ A K 10 7 3

♠ A K 3
♥ A 10 4 2
♦ K J 9 8
♣ 8 4

♠ 5
♥ Q 8 7
♦ A 5
♣ J & out

Cash the king of clubs now, and East discards another spade. The key to making this contract is how you view the diamonds. What do you think is the shape of the opponents' hands? West began with five clubs, and East one. What about the hearts? The play in the suit suggests that East began with four since the lowest heart was continued on the second round and he still holds the jack promised by the queen. East may well have switched to a spade holding five spades and four hearts rather than lead declarer's bid suit, so, although you can't be certain, it looks likely that East was 4-4-4-1 and you should try finessing the diamond. The full deal follows:



South plays 3NT. West leads the ♠5

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

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

--	--	--

HEATHER'S HINTS

- ♣ If the defence lead a low card in a suit bid by declarer or dummy it is likely to be a five-card suit. In general, with a choice of leading a four-card suit that the opponents have bid, the defence will select an unbid suit even if they hold fewer than four of them.
- ♣ Playing Acol, if your partner opens one of a suit and you hold nine points and a five-card suit (that you can't mention at the one level) you should respond two of your suit. There is too much danger of missing game if you respond 1NT since partner will pass with a balanced 15-16 points. It does mean that you will sometimes be in game with a combined 24 count, as here, but at least your five-card suit may provide a source of tricks. ☐



SUIT COMBINATIONS

by Paul Bowyer



- A** How should you play this suit combination for three tricks in no trumps assuming plenty of entries to both hands...
- B** How should you play the suit if, instead, South held ♠432?

A. This is sometimes called 'the 75% solution*'. To make three tricks you require West to have one of the missing honours (either the queen or the jack). Thus, you finesse the nine on the first round and, assuming it were to lose, you finesse the ten next. This way you pick up three tricks unless East started with both the queen and the jack. To have West holding either one or both honours is roughly 75%, hence 'the 75% solution'

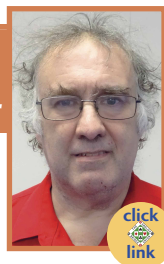
Note that you'd make four tricks if West started with ♠QJx.

* It's actually a 76% chance. If you want to know why, ask an actuary.

B. This time you have the ♠432 opposite the ♠AK109. Now you have a variety of plays. You could, for example, cash the ace-king and play another; that would bring home the bacon on any 3-3 split or when either opponent held a doubleton honour.

However, the best play is to finesse the nine first. Should it lose, you should cash the ace next (just in case East started with ♠QJ alone) and then finesse the ten. According to the eminent *Encyclopaedia of Bridge*, you have a 78% chance of three tricks by this method.





Trouble at the table

Shangara Singh asked about Stayman. South opened a weak 1NT. Partner passed. North bid 2♣, described as 'Stayman'.

♠	10 8 7 6 3
♥	J 9 4 2
♦	J 4
♣	5 4

I expected 11+pts as he hadn't qualified standard Stayman, but he held only two, so the majority of points were with us.

Is the Stayman bidder only required to announce/self-alert the convention as Stayman, or should he further qualify it when not 'as expected'?

By 'as expected' I mean 11+pts when partner opens a weak 1NT, or 8+pts when partner opens a strong 1NT.

You should treat a self-explanation of 'Stayman' online as the same as an announcement when playing face-to-face.

In the EBU (in the Blue Book), the announcement of 'Stayman' just means that 2♣ asks for a four-card major. As an opponent you cannot assume anything more – for example you cannot assume the 2♣ bidder has a four-card major, and you cannot assume they are interested in game.

If you need to find out more about the 2♣ bid, you can ask: online, you can click on the explanation for a fuller explanation.

In deciding the rules about announcing Stayman, the EBU decided 'Stayman' is defined by what it asks, not what it shows.

We do not think there is such a thing as 'standard Stayman' and we don't think it is standard that 'Stayman' shows a point count. If 2♣ asks for four-card majors, regardless of what it shows, it is announced as 'Stayman', even if it might be 'non-promissory' or 'garbage'. If 2♣ is a form of Stayman which asks for five-card majors, it should be alerted, and explained as such.

John Guest asks about two separate cases with a similar theme.

1 Standard club session. After two passes South opened 1♣ with nine HCPs, two doubletons and ♣QJxxxx. E/W missed their heart game having overestimated South's points. I thought his bid was fine as a protective bid in third seat.

2 Improvers' club session. West opened 2♥ self-described as weak. North passed and N/S missed a game. It emerged that West had only four points and a six-card heart suit. East passed with 15 points and two hearts. North felt he had been cheated.

Both the players involved have a habit of making 'instinctive' bids, so although their bidding on weak hands is not part of a solid agreement, their regular partners could be said to 'know' they do these things.

In both cases, the partner probably knew that the hand was possible. So they have an understanding to open these hands. But in an open game, both these opening bids are permitted agreements. Nevertheless there is still the question of disclosure.

1. Opening 1♣ on six clubs and nine HCP is not 'very light'. At level 4, it is permitted to agree to bid 1♣ (in third hand) on a balanced nine HCP. But a special agreement to open light in third seat should be on the system card.
2. It is legal at level 2 to open a natural 2♥ with a six card suit and any agreed strength. In an open game four HCP is not unusual and should be disclosed if the opponents ask the strength. In an improvers game, you may want to impose restrictions on the agreed strength, or to require more detailed announcements if the bid may be weaker than five HCP.

But North should not feel cheated if the opponents have legal agreements and have disclosed them properly.

David Butler wrote to the editor: I refer to the 12-board EBU tournaments in which 14 minutes are allocated for the playing of two boards. I was defending a 2♦ contract. After the eighth trick we had run out of time.

The result was 'adjudicated' by the system as +1. Declarer had already won six tricks and the system decided he would win another three tricks.

After running through the replay of the hand up to the point where the ♦6 was played, I could see and analyse the remaining cards. I called the Director and explained that I believed it should be = and not +1. After a while the Director reported that he could not assume declarer would do anything 'silly'. I accepted the Director's ruling without argument but it left a 'bitter taste' and I was not convinced.

Why should it be assumed that declarer will do the right thing in this situation? The other two declarers did not.

The 'timed' feature of our BBO games has many advantages in terms of keeping the games going, but does lead to issues of how to adjust curtailed boards. I have looked at the hand. This is not an easy adjustment/ruling and, at the time, no one was able to give the ruling all the attention it deserved. The right line would be clear to this declarer. The question is whether declarer deserves the credit for nine tricks when he failed to make those tricks in time.

The director will have seen the adjustment that the platform made, seen that there was a reasonably obvious line for nine tricks, and concluded that nine tricks was the right adjustment. But some declarers only made eight tricks, and the declaring side was probably at fault for the table running out of time.

The referees who have reviewed some of these rulings have concluded that TDs should be more ready to give artificial adjustments (such as 60/40

or 50/50), especially when the side responsible for the slow play appears to have gained from the adjustment.

Bernard Clayton had a query: Bidding is taking place. West has bid [and North passes] and East takes out and places on the table the STOP card. After a little thought he says he would like to retract that. Can he or does he have to make good the bid?

The use of the stop card is not a bid. The stop card is not part of making a bid (in the laws on when a bid is made). Having shown the stop card, East can change his mind and make a non-jump bid or pass.

If a player shows the stop card and then notices that the bid he intends to make is not a jump bid, he cannot do anything but pick up the stop card, mutter some apology, and make the bid he always intended to make. There is no automatic penalty for using the stop card and then not making a jump bid. There would only be an adjustment or penalty if the use of the stop card suggested something to their partner.

Creating unauthorised information is not against the laws of bridge and is not subject to an automatic penalty. It *is* against the law for a player to use the unauthorised information from his partner's actions.

Keith Goldie had a query by a player who was sure that the 4♣ response to a 1NT opener should be alerted.

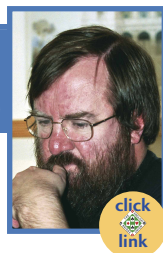
On the first round, artificial suit bids are alerted even if above 3NT. So in the example below East's 4♣ is alertable when 4♣ is artificial.

W	N	E	S
1NT	Pass	4♣ ^A	

This is in the Blue Book 4 B 3 (a).

See www.ebu.co.uk/documents/laws-andethics/blue-book/blue-book.pdf □

Robin Barker is the EBU's Deputy Chief Tournament Director. He is editor of the White Book and looks forward to answering your questions. Please email him – robin@ebu.co.uk. The author, English Bridge and the EBU are not responsible if the information provided is incorrect or incomplete.



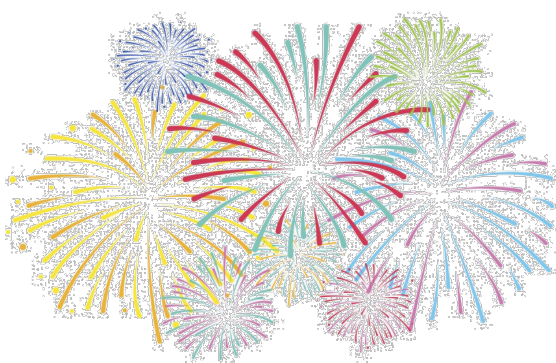
showing hearts. With some relief South could pass. West's 4♥ was intended as support for partner's long hearts, but was interpreted as showing a major two-suiter. East used Roman Keycard Blackwood and West showed one keycard for hearts.

I led a diamond and expected declarer to claim when dummy appeared. But the problems others had in 7♠ were as nothing compared to the problems our man had in 6♥, so he took a while to plan the play. There are some layouts on which 6♥ will make, but this was not one of them and the upshot was down three for 17 IMPs to our side.

Do you see now why you should not make calculations on the basis that your counterparts at the other table will behave rationally? This is a world in which disaster lurks around every corner. □

EBU BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The current Board of Directors is as follows: Ian Payn (Chairman), Cathryn Fox (Vice-Chairman), Kay Preddy (Treasurer), Adrian Darnell, Rob Lawy, Ron Millet, Tony Russ, Patrick Shields and Gayle Webb. Gillian Fawcett stepped down in December.



CAMROSE TROPHY

England set the pace at the first weekend of the Camrose Trophy, played on RealBridge in mid-January. The team put England in first position after winning four out of the five matches against the home nations (including an extra team fielded by Scotland as the host), narrowly missing out on a full sweep with a small loss to Ireland in the first match. Tom Townsend & David Bakhshi topped the Cross-IMPs leader board.

Congratulations to the players Dame Janet de Botton & Artur Malinowski, Espen Erichsen & Glyn Liggins and Tom Townsend & David Bakhshi. The team's NPC was Peter Hasenson.

The result will be carried forward to the second weekend due to be played in early March. Representing England will be Premier League winners, *Team Black* which comprised Andrew Black, David Gold, Simon Cope, Peter Crouch, Andrew McIntosh and Tom Paske.

SIMS PRIZE DRAW ~ Cash prizes!

Each club hosting a Sim Pairs event is entered into a prize draw, with the opportunity to win £200. The winners at the draw, which took place in November at the Annual General Meeting, were:

Prizes from the Sims

Caterham BC, Surrey
Woodberry BC, London
Aylesbury Aces BC, Oxfordshire
Abingdon BC, Oxfordshire
Horley BC, Surrey
Northfield BC, Warwickshire
New Hertford BC, Hertfordshire
Bromley North BC, Kent.

Make sure your club enters the 2022 Sims to be eligible for the Club Draw

www.ebu.co.uk/sim-pairs

DIARY REMINDER & DEADLINE

Please remember **if you would like to receive a free diary** with the September issue of *English Bridge* you will need to positively opt in. The deadline is 30 June 2022. You can do this online through MyEBU, by ringing 01296 317200, or by sending an email to karend@ebu.co.uk



GARDEN RIVER CONGRESS

If you're feeling frisky for flora and want the holiday of a lifetime, the EBU has packaged a very special river cruise trip starting at the end of May.

Aboard the beautiful MS Arena, boasting floor to ceiling windows, this river boat has been commissioned to take bridge players through Holland and Belgium stopping at the world's ultimate flower show which only takes place every 10 years. In 2022, the Floriade World Horticultural Expo is being held in the Dutch town of Almere and will be spread over five themed zones and is a celebration of all things botanical - pretty and edible.



As well as the Floriade there are trips to the windmills of Kinderdijk and the National Botanic Gardens of Belgium and the Plant Palace. What a treat. Plus, you won't be surprised to hear, rather a lot of green-pointed bridge.

Players and non-playing partners, those travelling alone or with friends are all welcome. Bridge partners will always be available. There are plenty of single cabins with a low single supplement. To secure a place, for just £50 deposit, contact our travel partner, First for Bridge, on 01473 917309.

www.arenatravel.com/bridge-holidays/spring-cruise-congress



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Red – Anticipated F2F Events

FEBRUARY 2022

- 4-7 Womens European Trials Stage 2, YCBC, London
- 7-10 Junior Squad Sim Pairs, various clubs
- 12-13 Harrogate Spring Congress, RealBridge & BBO
- 18-20 Junior Camrose, RealBridge
- 18-20 Peggy Bayer, RealBridge
- 18-20 Wroxton House Party – EBU Really Easy weekend
- 19-20 Tollemache Final, RealBridge
- 26-27 Ranked Masters Pairs, RealBridge
- 27 Masters Pairs, various clubs

MARCH 2022

- 4-6 Camrose Trophy, 2nd weekend, RealBridge
- 5-6 Wiltshire GP Congress, Bath
- 5 Leicestershire GP event, tba
- 5 Manchester GP Swiss Pairs, tba
- 6 Kent GP Swiss Pairs, RealBridge
- 6 Merseyside & Cheshire GP Swiss Teams, tba
- 7-10 Club Stratified Sims, various clubs
- 11-14 Seniors European Trial, tba
- 14 National Pairs regional heats, tba
- 14-18 Ecats Sim Pairs, various clubs
- 18-20 Norfolk & Cumbria Joint Congress, RealBridge
- 27-9 World Bridge Team Championships, Italy

APRIL 2022

- 3 Portland Pairs
- 4-7 British Spring Sim Pairs, various clubs
- 9-10 National Pairs final, RealBridge
- 15-18 Easter Festival, London
- 15-17 Northern Easter Festival, Ilkley, Yorkshire, tba
- 22-24 Lady Milne Trophy, Wales
- 23-24 Portland Bowl finals
- 23 Staffordshire & Shropshire County Swiss Pairs, tba
- 29-3 Schapiro Spring Foursomes, Delta by Marriott, Warwick
- 29-3 Cheltenham Online Bridge Congress

MAY 2022

- 3-8 Lambourne Jersey Congress
- 8 Garden Cities Regional Finals, RealBridge
- 9-12 EBED Spring Sim Pairs, various clubs
- 14-15 National Swiss Teams, RealBridge
- 20-22 Teltcher Trophy, Northern Ireland
- 28-29 Corwen Trophy, RealBridge
- 29-4 Overseas Cruise Congress, Holland & Belgium

JUNE 2022

- 3-5 Spring Bank Holiday Congress, tba
- 11-12 Pachabo Cup, RealBridge
- 11-12 Yorkshire Congress, Harrogate
- 18 Garden Cities final
- 19 Oxfordshire Congress

JULY 2022

- 1-3 Riviera Congress
- 8-10 Summer Seniors Congress



EBU CONGRESSES AND COMPETITIONS

All events are Green Pointed unless stated

Enter via 01296 317203, comps@ebu.co.uk or at www.ebu.co.uk/members

Harrogate Spring Congress

12 – 13 February
Online



Swiss Pairs (RealBridge)
Swiss Teams (RealBridge)
9-High Pairs (BBO) – BP

Really Easy Weekend

18 – 20 February
Wroxton House Hotel
Oxfordshire



Wroxton House Party

10-table limit
Designed for novice players
Blue-pointed duplicates
& seminar

Ranked Masters Pairs

26-27 February
RealBridge

For 2022, for purposes of movements, Premier Life Masters merge with Life Masters, and National Masters with Regional Masters. All groups have separate ranking lists, trophies and prizes.

Separate competitions for:

Premier Grand Masters
Grand Masters
Premier Life Masters
Life Masters
National Masters
Regional Masters

Masters Pairs

27 February
For players below Regional Master
Regional venues

In 2022 the Masters Pairs will be held at host clubs. Entry fees will be set by the clubs, so cheaper than previous years. Clubs retain part of entry fees, so you're supporting your local club. List of venues and entry information at www.ebu.co.uk/masters-pairs#clubs

National Pairs

Club Heats – 13 March
RealBridge or F2F



Final

9 – 10 April
RealBridge
98 boards

Player of the Year

Easter Festival

15 – 18 April
ILEC Conference Centre, London



Championship Pairs
Stratified Swiss Teams
Swiss Pairs

Monday Jack High Swiss Pairs

Player of the Year

Northern Easter Festival

15 – 17 April
York Marriott Hotel, Ilkley, tbc



Mixed & Open Pairs – BP
Improvers Pairs – BP
Swiss Pairs
Swiss Teams
Improver Teams

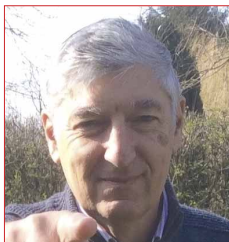


EBU Awards 2021

These awards were announced at the 2021 AGM. The Silver Award is given in recognition of long service and an outstanding contribution to the administration of the game of bridge. The Tony Priday award is given for outstanding contribution to bridge and enhancing the game in all its aspects. The Dimmie Fleming Awards are given in recognition of hard work for bridge as volunteers in administration at county level, typically giving 10 or more years of service.

ROBERT PROCTER

Silver Award



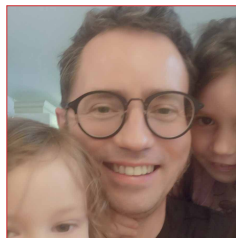
Robert Procter has contributed a huge amount to the development of bridge in Oxfordshire and surrounding counties. His infectious enthusiasm has resulted in an increased uptake of bridge at all levels. He has been a hard-working member of the Association's management team for at least ten years and was active behind the scenes for many years before that. Robert became OBA Chairman in 2011 and continued until 2018. He continues on the committee to this day, heading the Promotions team. He is also an active and effective participant in the Midland Counties Working group.

Robert has given a huge proportion of his time to encouraging newcomers. He introduced new events for beginners and improvers and strongly encouraged participation. These events included festivals, High Fives, Nine and Under and similar grade-limited events. He continues to raise the profile of bridge throughout the county and was instrumental in setting up the OBA Facebook page. His passion for the game has not been daunted by successive lockdowns – he has been a vital force for good in the continuance of the online game.

Robert is forward-thinking and creative. Currently, much of his energy is given to imagining how the game can continue to grow and flourish.

REALBRIDGE

Tony Priday Award



When the Covid pandemic started and people were flooding onto the existing online bridge platforms, Graham Hazel and Shireen Mohandes recognised the shortcomings of what was then on offer and used their extensive backgrounds in technology and gaming to provide something that not only addressed those shortcomings but also went far beyond most of our expectations. The resulting bridge-playing platform allowed the EBU to run congresses in ways that are as close as possible to their live equivalents. In doing so they have also played a real role in helping people to play social bridge, often with people from different parts of the world, and in this way they have helped players survive the worst effects of the pandemic.

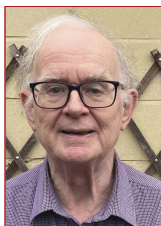
This award is made in recognition of the pivotal role RealBridge has played in providing a really social aspect to online bridge as well as providing serious online bridge events with greatly improved security.



MORE AWARDS OVERLEAF



EBU Awards 2021



JOHN WILCOX (LEICS)

Dimmie Fleming

John was first on the County Committee in 1993. He has fulfilled many positions including two stints as Chairman. He has been the Minutes Secretary for eight years in two separate spells.

He has been League Secretary since 2017. He had two years as Fixtures Secretary in the 1990s and 10 years as the EBU shareholder. Over the years he has probably been best known as a County TD.



DICK PATHAN (LEICS)

Dimmie Fleming

Dick joined the County Committee in 1978 as Secretary, a position he held for seven years. He then had a break, re-joined in 1996, and is still on the Committee 25 years later.

He has been Chairman for two periods. He has run the County teams for the past 12 years as well as organising teams for national events such as the Tollemache and the 2021 Pachabo, for which he acts as a non-playing Captain. He is a County TD and has enjoyed an outstanding playing career.



MALCOLM CAREY (SUFFOLK)

Dimmie Fleming

Malcolm was a founding member of the Suffolk Contract Bridge Association in 1979. He has been on the Executive Committee ever since, and is now completing 42 years' service to the county. Between 1979 and 1987 he held various posts, including General Secretary and then the county's Competitions Secretary. For 32 years, from 1987 to 2019, Malcolm was Suffolk's Chief Tournament Director, and in that role directed hundreds of SCBA events. He is currently one of Suffolk's two EBU shareholders, and has been for many years. He was Suffolk's Chairman from 1993 to 1994. Malcolm has been a driving force behind the development of Suffolk bridge from the county's foundation in 1979 through to the present day and the County owes him a huge debt of gratitude for his many years of dedicated service.



SARAH MATHEWS (HEREFORDSHIRE)

Dimmie Fleming

Sarah Mathews has been closely involved with bridge in Herefordshire for the last 25 years as a county player and director; a teacher of hundreds of new bridge players; founder of The Birches Bridge Club; and as the organiser and administrator of many significant county events from the early 1990s into the 2010s.

Sarah ran the Herefordshire Green Point event, which welcomed 80 to 90 pairs a year, virtually single-handed both when it was a single county event and then when it joined forces with Gloucestershire, having assisted with the transition. She also looked after all the Tollemache administration, letting the team concentrate on the bridge. She also initiated, organised, directed and led the scoring team for the county-wide Open Swiss Teams for more than 15 years.

Over 20 years ago, Sarah recognised the need to bring more players into the game. She created her own training programme and demand grew quickly. Sarah insisted that her pupils become members of the EBU and as she saw them develop into better, committed players she actively encouraged them to play at other clubs in the county.

Sarah provided a way into the game for people looking for a new challenge, many approaching retirement age and at the same time they made many new, life-long friends. She truly changed peoples' lives and has introduced hundreds of people to the game.

MORE AWARDS OVERLEAF

EBU/EBED Awards 2021



WILLIAM CLENNELL (SURREY)

Youth Bridge Award

A special award was given to William Clennell in recognition of his outstanding contribution to Youth Bridge during 2020/21.

William has organised a weekly duplicate exclusively for Juniors between January and July of this year, with more than 150 people signing up from across the country and beyond.

William is President of Cambridge University Bridge Club and he organised the Cambridge University Summer Online League in 2020, although this was not restricted to Cambridge University, and had 11 teams taking place which was a hugely successful junior event.



HOLLY KILPATRICK (OXFORDSHIRE)

Tom Bradley Award

Holly started teaching children at the Dragon School in Oxford some 10 years ago, but quickly expanded to run the Oxfordshire Junior Bridge Club on Sunday afternoons. Her first pupils were youngsters from the Dragon School including Henry Rose, now a junior international, but it soon turned into a family event with parents joining their several children in the church hall.

Holly was ably assisted by other volunteers from OBC, but as with most activities, the bulk of the work falls on the organiser. She arranged larger Sunday events with children from outside both her area and county, which were fun (worth travelling for) and well run (plenty of cake). When lockdown closed all bridge Holly and Kathy Talbot started monthly online events for children. These became very popular with children turning up on time across many time zones.

Undaunted by regulations, Holly trawled the Covid legislation and reopened her junior bridge club, now based at Oxford Bridge Club, face to face, since she could tick all the required boxes (hard work though). She has taken many groups of children to the Schools Cup, and last year, when the Schools Cup was held online, it was won by Eton for the first time in 55 years, containing two of Holly's ex-students. Many of her youngsters have become members of England's U16 squad, and all these come from non-bridge playing families. A remarkable achievement.

2022 SIMULTANEOUS PAIRS – Bonus Blue Points

8 – 10 Feb	Junior Squad Sims	25 – 28 July	British Summer Sim Pairs
7 – 10 Mar	Club Stratified Sims	5 – 8 Sep	EBED Autumn Sim Pairs
4 – 7 Apr	British Spring Sim Pairs	10 – 13 Oct	British Autumn Sim Pairs
9 – 12 May	EBED Spring Sim Pairs		



Beat Today's Experts

1. E/W Game. Dealer North

	♠ 6 2		
	♥ 9 6 2		
	♦ J 10 9 7 5 4		
	♣ A 10		
♠ AKQ73		♠ J 9 5	
♥ A Q 10 4		♥ K J 8 7	
♦ A 8 3		♦ K Q	
♣ 7		♣ 8 4 3 2	
	♠ 10 8 4		
	♥ 5 3		
	♦ 6 2		
	♣ K Q J 9 6 5		

West	North	East	South
Gillis	Gold	Erichsen	Black
	Pass	Pass	3♣
Dble	Pass	4♥	Pass
4NT	Pass	5♦	Pass
6♥	All Pass		

Ten pairs reached Stage 2 of the EBU European Open Trials – the source of our deals this time. South opens 3♣. This is not the time to say ‘He’s only got six clubs.’ Opening 3♣ non-vulnerable is normal bridge, particularly in the third seat. How should Espen Erichsen respond to partner’s take-out double?

He is easily worth a jump to 4♥. Every honour card in his hand is likely to prove useful. Apart from that, a response of 3♥ might have to be made on very few points, even sometimes on a three-card heart suit. East’s 5♦ showed one key-card.

West	North	East	South
Rosen	P. Hackett	Atthey	Mossop
	2♦	Pass	Pass
Dble	Pass	2NT	Pass
3♣	Pass	4♦ ^A	Pass
4♥ ^A	Pass	4♣	All Pass

Neil Rosen’s 4♥ showed controls in both hearts and clubs, but they stopped short.

Awards: 6♥/6♣ (10), games (5), 3♣ doubled (2).

2. Game All. Dealer East

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

West	North	East	South
Townsend	Green	H-Pritchard	Tommasini
	All Pass	Pass	3♦
6♣			

What do you make of Tom Townsend’s leap to 6♣? It is eminently reasonable. As you see, Ben Handley-Pritchard held only one of the four missing black-suit honours. The fifth spade in the East hand gave 6♣ a fair chance, but it was one down as the cards lay.

At the other table, Gad Chadha used a technique known as ‘walking the dog’:

West	North	East	South
Chadha	Bell	Lee	Norton
		Pass	1♦
2♣	2♥	Pass	3♦
4♣	4♥	Pass	Pass
5♣	Dble	All Pass	

Chadha allowed himself to be dragged to 5♣ and was rewarded by a double. He ruffed the diamond lead and ran all the trumps bar one. Mike Bell retained his spades and two tricks had to be lost in that suit. That was +750 for East/West.

Awards: 5♣ (10), 6♣ (6).

3. E/W Game. Dealer West

♠ J 10 8 6 5
♥ A J 10 6 3
♦ Q
♣ A 4

♠ 9
♥ 2
♦ J 9 8 7 4
♣ J 10 7 6 5 3

♠ A K Q 3
♥ K 9 8 7 4
♦ A 6
♣ K 8

♠ 7 4 2
♥ Q 5
♦ K 10 5 3 2
♣ Q 9 2

West	North	East	South
<i>P.Hackett</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Mossop</i>	<i>Black</i>
1♥	Pass	2NT ^A	Pass
3♦ ^A	Pass	4NT	Pass
5♥	Pass	7♥	All Pass

Paul Hackett chose to open in hearts rather than spades, which turned out well. In response to David Mossop's Jacoby 2NT, he showed his singleton diamond. Mossop could then bid RKCB, finding two aces without the trump queen. He duly leapt to 7♥, easily made.

West	North	East	South
<i>Townsend</i>	<i>Green</i>	<i>H-Pritchard</i>	<i>Tommasini</i>
1♠	Pass	2NT ^A	Pass
3♣ ^A	Pass	3♦	Dble
3♠	Pass	4NT	Pass
5♥	Pass	6♥	Pass
6♣	All Pass		

It was less easy after a start of 1♠. Here, the 3♣ rebid showed any minimum. Why Townsend did not bid 3♥ at his third turn, I cannot tell you; perhaps he was deterred by his poor trumps. With spades agreed, East's 6♥ is often played as asking for third-round heart support. West did not have it, and the partnership had no knowledge of the 5-5 fit in hearts.

Awards: 7NT/7♠/7♥ (10), 6♠/6♥ (7), 6NT (5), games (1).

4. E/W Game. Dealer East

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

♠ Q 8 7 4
 ♥ Q 9 8 3
 ♦ 9 8
 ♣ Q 6 5

♠ 9
 ♥ K 7 2
 ♦ A J 7 6 4
 ♣ A 10 8 7

♠ K J 6 5
 ♥ J 10 6 5
 ♦ K 2
 ♣ 4 3 2

N
 S
 W
 E

West	North	East	South
<i>Tommasini</i>	<i>Townsend</i>	<i>Green</i>	<i>H-Pritchard</i>
1♠	Pass	1♦	Pass
2♥ ^A	Pass	1NT ^A	Pass
3♦	Pass	2NT	Pass
		3NT	All Pass

Ben Green's 1NT rebid showed clubs, and 2♥ was fourth-suit forcing. All roads then led to 3NT, although the great fit means that 6♦ is a reasonable contract. Green won the heart lead with the ace and ran the diamond queen to the king. Hearts were continued, declarer winning the third round. Declarer ran the diamonds, North throwing a heart, and then knew it was safe to take a club finesse through North. That was +660.

West	North	East	South
<i>Black</i>	<i>P.Hackett</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Mossop</i>
2♦ ^A	Pass	1♦	Pass
3♦	All Pass	3♣	Pass

The E/W convention card says only ‘inverted raises’ for the 2♦ response. Gold rebid in clubs rather than showing the heart stopper. On the face of it, there was no reason for Black’s 3♦ to be forcing. It was a surprising misunderstanding for a pair at this level.

Awards: 5♦/3NT (10), 6♦ (8), 6NT (3), part scores (1).

5. Love All. Dealer South

♠ K J 8
♥ Q 10 8
♦ K J 9 8 7 3
♣ 2

♠ 10 5
♥ 4 2
♦ Q 5
♣ K Q 10 7 6 5 4

♠ A 7 6 2
♥ A K J 9
♦ A 10 2
♣ A 9

♠ Q 9 4 3
♥ 7 6 5 3
♦ 6 4
♣ J 8 3

West	North	East	South
<i>Jason Hackett</i>	<i>Erichsen</i>	<i>Samson</i>	<i>Gillis</i>
3♣	Pass	6♣	Pass
			All Pass

What response would you make on the East cards to partner's 3♣? There is no reason to fear a substandard hand when partner pre-empts in the second seat, and John Samson's 6♣ was well judged. Erichsen led the ♦8, run to the queen, and 13 tricks were made. A flat board, would you think?

West	North	East	South
<i>Malinowski</i>	<i>Townsend</i>	<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>H-Pritchard</i>
3♣	Pass	3NT	Pass
			All Pass

I am a huge admirer of David Bakhshi, who has won top events in the USA with several different partners. I am not an admirer, huge or otherwise, of his 3NT bid here. If the club suit is not running, 3NT may be very poor; you would want to be in 5♣. If instead there are seven club tricks, you will have a chance in 6♣.

Awards: 6♣ (10), 3NT (6), 7♣/5♣ (3).

6. E/W Game. Dealer East

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

West	East
<i>Tommasini</i>	<i>Green</i>
1♠	1♥
3NT	2NT

Was the ascent to 3NT necessary? It's a poor contract, as you see. Both tables reached it, and the two E/W pairs lost 300 for three down.

If you play a 15-17 INT, it is normal to open 1NT on a 5·3·3·2 shape even when the five-card suit is a major. Had East restrained himself, he could have played in 1NT (as low as it is possible to be, on these cards.) He decided to upgrade the hand to an 18-count, because of the maximum count and the potential of the five hearts. Many would do the same, but perhaps they should subtract a point for the diamond honours in an unproductive doubleton. Opposite an announced 18-19 HCP West will go to game, expecting his ♥Q to be a useful card.

A similar evaluation problem arises if you play a 12-14 1NT. After 1♥-1♠, you must choose between a 1NT rebid (15-17), or 2NT (18-19).

Awards: 1NT (10), 2NT (7), 3NT (5).

The top three pairs: Ben Handley-Pritchard & Tom Townsend, Ben Green & Stefano Tommasini, Ben Norton and Mike Bell (yes, three Bens!) will represent England in the 2022 European Nations championship.

Our featured experts scored a commendable 51 out of 60. If you were not far behind (or even ahead of them...) you did well. Let's look for some tips.

TIPS TO REMEMBER

- ❖ Pre-empt makes life difficult for your opponents. Do not look for excuses to pass instead.
- ❖ The Jacoby 2NT has become a near indispensable part of responding to 1♥ or 1♠. Look on the internet to see different schemes of rebidding for the opener. □



Answers from page 10



click
link

Hand 1		
	♠ A Q 10 5	
	♥ 7 4 3	
	♦ 10 9 8 4	
	♣ A 8	
♠ –		♠ 9 6 3
♥ K J 6 2		♥ 10 9 8
♦ Q J 7 5		♦ K 6 3 2
♣ 10 7 6 5 2		♣ Q J 4
	♠ K J 8 7 4 2	
	♥ A Q 5	
	♦ A	
	♣ K 9 3	

6♠. West leads the ♦Q.

You have bid for slam despite having slender values, so making your contract could prove rewarding for your team.

You have 10 top tricks, and can make an extra trick by trumping a club in the dummy (short trump hand). Your second extra trick can be made by leading towards the ♥Q if East holds the ♥K, but if West has the ♥K then you may end up losing two heart tricks, so it is worth looking for any other possibilities.

Following West's ♦Q lead, he is assumed to also have the ♦J, while East can be placed with the ♦K. It will therefore be possible to establish an extra trick in diamonds.

Can you see how?

You win the ♦A, and draw trumps ending in the dummy. You can next lead dummy's ♦10. If East plays the ♦K, you can trump then cross back to the ♣A and lead the ♦9. When East plays low, you can simply throw the ♥5. West wins the ♦J, but dummy's ♦8 will provide a discard for your ♥Q. If East plays low on the ♦10, you throw the ♥5 on this trick. Say West switches to clubs, you win the ♣A and lead the ♦9. If East plays the ♦K, then dummy's ♦8 will have been established. If East plays low, then you discard your ♥Q and later trump ♣9 to make your slam.



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

6NT. West leads the ♠Q.

You find yourself in another slam, but this time it is likely that your opponents will also reach a slam at the other table. Looking at your combined hands, 6♦ may turn out to be an easier contract to make, so making 6NT may be necessary to avoid a big loss.

You have 10 top tricks, and can win at least two extra tricks in diamonds. However, West's lead will remove one of dummy's spade entries, which has the potential to cause problems for you if there is an uneven diamond split.

If diamonds divide 3-2, then you will have 13 top tricks, and if they split 5-0, then you will have two diamond losers, so you should concentrate your efforts on dealing with a potential 4-1 split. This could be an issue due to the blockage in diamonds. While you count three winners, you cannot simply run through three rounds, and will first need to unblock the ♦KQ. You win the first trick

with the ♠K, then lead the ♦2 to the ♦Q. If you next win the ♦K, then cross to the ♠A to cash the ♦A, you will have no problems if diamonds are 3-2, but if they are 4-1, you will be unable to lose a diamond trick then return to dummy, as dummy will have no more entries.

When you lead to the ♦Q, if both opponents play a low diamond, then you will have to hope for a 3-2 split. However, when East plays the ♦10 on the first round, you can now play the ♦K and overtake with dummy's ♦A. If the ♦J dropped, you would still have 13 winners, but when East discards, you can use dummy's ♦9 to force out the ♦J, turning the ♦8 into a winner (if the ♦9 wins the trick then you lose the fourth round of diamonds instead.). West can win the ♦J and play any suit he chooses, but you still have an entry to the dummy with the ♠A, and can win a total of five diamond tricks to make your slam.



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

4♠. West made a 2♥ overcall. West leads the ♥K, which East overtakes with the ♥A. East returns the ♥3, and West continues hearts at trick three.

You have reached a game that might not be duplicated at the other table, so you should try to ensure the success of your contract.

You have six top tricks, and expect to win three more spade tricks through length, so trumping in the dummy could be an easy way to make a tenth trick.

When East overtakes West's ♥K lead with the ♥A then returns the ♥3, his play is consistent with holding a doubleton heart, so West will win trick two as cheaply as possible and then lead his highest remaining heart.

If you trump with one of dummy's low trumps, then East will overtrump, and you will later lose a diamond unless clubs are 3-3 and you can establish

a winner on which to discard your ♦J. If you trump with dummy's ♠A instead, then you will have the same problem if it turns out that trumps split 3-0, as East's ♠J will now be promoted into a third round winner.

However, there is a more straightforward solution. Try the effect of throwing dummy's ♦2 on the third round of hearts. You can now win any continuation that West makes, and draw trumps in three rounds before cashing the ♦A. You will then be able to trump the ♦J in the dummy to make your tenth trick, having only lost the first three tricks.

This loser-on-loser play is a simple but effective way to transpose losers when there is the danger of being overtrumped.



Hand 4		
		♠ 8 6 3
		♥ K 8 5 3
		♦ 9 8
		♣ A 10 6 2
♠ J		♠ K Q 10 9 5 2
♥ Q 2		♥ 10
♦ K J 10 7 5 4 2	<div style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> N W E S </div>	♦ Q 6 3
♣ K 8 5		♣ J 9 3
		♠ A 7 4
		♥ A J 9 7 6 4
		♦ A
		♣ Q 7 4

4♥. West made a 2♦ overcall and East bid 2♠. West leads the ♠J, East overtakes with the ♠Q.

You have bid for game in a competitive auction, so predicting the outcome at the other table may not be straightforward, but it could certainly pay to make your contract if you can.

You have five top tricks, and expect to win four extra tricks in hearts. You will hope to make at least one extra trick in clubs, but with two potential losers in spades, it might be that you cannot also afford to lose two tricks in clubs.

You cannot afford to have your ♠A be trumped by West, so you win the first trick with the ♠A. It could prove useful to rid your hands of diamonds, so you cash the ♦A at trick two then lead the ♥4 to the ♥K (retaining your finesse position in case East has ♥Q102). When both opponents follow, you can trump the ♦9 in your hand then cash the ♥A.

At this point, you could play on clubs, hoping to have only one loser in the suit. However, it would be

much better if you could get the opponents to attack clubs instead. You can guarantee your contract at this point if you delay playing clubs and exit with a losing spade. East can win two rounds of spades, but if he plays a fourth round of spades or a third round of diamonds, then you will be able to throw the ♣4 from hand and trump in the dummy, ensuring a maximum of one loser in clubs.

If East instead makes the more likely switch to clubs, then you can play low from hand and watch to see which club West plays on this trick. If West plays the ♣5 or ♣8 then dummy's ♣10 will be a winner. If West plays the ♣K, then you can win the ♣A and your ♣Q will also be a winner. If West was able to play the ♣J, then you could win the ♣A and the combination of ♣10 and ♣Q would ensure that you only lose one trick in clubs. □



Answers to December's Problems

The first hand was reported by Tom Townsend in his column and comes from a high level online tournament. My thanks to him for letting me reproduce it. Hand 2 comes from my old friend Alan Jones and hand 3 from a rapidly becoming friend given the number of hands he kindly sends me – Dave Simmons.

Hand 1

♠ 9 7
♥ A 7 6
♦ A 9 8 2
♣ K Q 9 5

South	West	North	East
3♥	4♣ ²	6♥	2♠ ¹
Pass	Dble ³	All Pass	Pass

¹ 5 spades & a minor, weak (could be v weak!)

² Pass or correct to diamonds ³ Looks clear, but . . .

Choose from: (a) ♠9; (b) ♥A; (c) ♦A; (d) ♣K

North-South are multi internationals and indeed world champions. This contract is not going to be that far away, whatever it looks like from your hand. Yet there seems no suit in which the opponents have any tricks – partner has spades and one minor and you have values in both minors. So where are their tricks coming from? Think about that and the lead is clear.

(a) ♠9: 2 marks. Leading partner's suit – how can that be wrong? Well it definitely is in this case. Does it sound like North is worried about spades?

(b) ♥A: 10 marks. Once you have completed the analysis above and determined that trumps are their source of tricks, this lead becomes obvious.

Ace and another heart is one of the only ways to beat the contract, and then only by one trick – I told you it was close! .

(c) ♦A: 5 marks. Well OK this beats it, but only because declarer is 1·6·1·5 rather than (say) 2·6·0·5 when this would have let it through. If you are going to lead an ace it must be better to lead the heart ace to look at dummy – dummy might be void in diamonds.

(d) ♣K: 6 marks. You are setting up a trick – what harm can this do? Actually a lot at the table since declarer had AJ10xx opposite a void.

Pairs Bonus: ♥A – 5 marks. You get no matchpoints for -1660 so the heart ace is definitely right.

Hand 2

♠ J
♥ 10 9 2
♦ Q J 10 4
♣ A Q J 5 2

South	West	North	East
1NT ¹	Pass	2♥ ²	Pass
2♠	3♣ ³	4♠	5♣
Dble	Pass	5♠	Dble
All Pass			

¹ 12-14; ² transfer to spades; ³ Dble or 2NT (minors) are possible bids as well

Choose from: (a) ♠J; (b) ♥10; (c) ♦Q; (d) ♣A

You have succeeded in driving the oppo to the five level and then doubled them as well. Can you now capitalise on this?

(a) ♠J: 2 marks. I suppose it could be right to lead this once in a blue moon. But it will only be so when declarer needs to ruff something in hand and the defence can get enough trump leads to stop it,

and that seems a rare circumstance. It looks like dummy has a lot of trumps to have bid like this.

(b) ♥10: 6 marks. Again this could be right in order to set up some tricks, but it could also squash some tricks.

(c) ♦Q: 10 marks. In all honesty why are you looking further than this lead – top of a run of three honours? Did you think I was trying to set a trick question? This is safe and helps to set up tricks.

(d) ♠A: 1 mark. This is just wrong. For a start it is quite likely to get ruffed (North did pull a penalty double of 5♣, remember, so is highly unlikely to have more than a singleton). Secondly it may well set up declarer's king – yes, declarer rather than partner is quite likely to have this. South doubled 5♣ and our partner doubled 5♠ – both are indicative as to where the ♣K is. Heaven preserve me from players who say, 'You supported me at the five level, I thought you had to have the king of my suit'. When partner bid 5♣, they did so because they thought it was the right thing to do, not because they had a particular card. This time declarer did have the ♣K and a club was the only suit to let it through.

Pairs Bonus: ♦Q – 5 marks, for the same reasons.

Hand 3
 ♠ A J 7
 ♥ A 8 7 4 3
 ♦ K 9 7 2
 ♣ 7

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

¹ 1♥ alternative, preferred by many experts

Choose from: (a) ♠A; (b) ♥A; (c) ♦2; (d) ♣7

An unattractive collection to lead from. What is the best of a bad job?

(a) ♠A: 1 mark. AJx is a horrible holding to lead from – there are just so many ways you can blow a trick. This time it was particularly unfortunate as dummy had KQxxx and declarer was . . . void. Oops!

(b) ♥A: 4 marks. Well it is the unbid suit and no one has tried NTs so maybe partner has the king... But frankly I don't like this lead much either. You need good reasons to lead unsupported aces against suit contracts and there is not one here.

(c) ♦2: 5 marks. I don't like this much either as it is round into declarer's second suit.

(d) ♣7: 10 marks. And I do not like this one either! I don't like leading trumps much and really do not like leading singleton trumps, but I have to lead something, and this just seems the best of a bad job. Yes, it might take trump finesses for declarer, but on the bidding declarer was going to get those right anyway if they had an entry to dummy. Plus anything else I lead might well (and indeed does) give an entry to dummy.

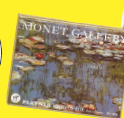
Pairs Bonus: ♣7 – 5 marks. The same lead for the same reasons. □

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE WINNERS:

Master: Robin Prestwich, Wetherby

Open: David Calcutt, Winkfield Row

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SEND IN YOUR LEAD CONUNDRUMS

Why not take advantage of Alan's expertise and send in hands where the lead has foxed you? Email the editor, lou@ebu.co.uk and if suitable, Alan would be delighted to use them.

Christmas Quiz Answers

by Andrew Robson



You are South in each problem. Which of the selected bids would you find at the key moment and why?

♠ A K J 4
♥ 6 2
♦ J 3
♣ 10 8 6 4 2

Q1 Love All. Pairs.				
W	N	E	S	
	1♦	Pass	1♠	
Pass	3♦	Pass	?	

Choose from: (a) Pass; (b) 3♥; (c) 3♠; (d) 3NT; (e) 4♦.

A tester to start – with no fewer than five possible calls.

Partner has shown 16+ points (or an upgrade) and six+ diamonds, so passing (even at pairs where you shouldn't push for close games) would be timid. The big question is: do we belong in 3NT, and if so, how to investigate; also, how to 'right-side' the contract (declare 3NT from the right hand)?

The main issue is hearts, however a 3♥ bid by us would unfortunately be showing hearts, not asking about them. We could punt 3NT but there are two problems with that: we may be wide open in hearts, or, if partner has a positional heart stopper eg ♥Kx, we have just wrong-sided the contract – with the lead going through partner's ♥K.

The only way around this is to bid 3♠. Yes, it's certainly unorthodox to repeat a four-card suit (the bid is 100% forcing though, so you won't get left there). However, 3♠ may get the job done. Partner will bid 3NT with hearts (and perhaps clubs) stopped; if partner raises 3♠ to 4♠, you may judge to pass and play to the miracle

♠Qx, ♥xx ♦AKQxxx ♣KQx

opposite, or convert to the safer 5♦. However, that's a problem for next time.

Of the other contenders, I don't dislike an honest raise to 4♦. Although 4♦ bypasses 3NT (and is 100% forcing), it does allow partner to bid 4♠ on the way to 5♦ with three spades, which you will pass

(the 4-3 spade fit may play well). As I say, I don't like 3♥, as you will so often end up in 3NT off the heart suit. And bottom of the list is the 3NT punt, surely wrong-sided no trumps.

(a) Pass – 5 marks;

(b) 3♥ – 4 marks;

(c) 3♠ – 10 marks;

(d) 3NT – 3 marks;

(e) 4♦ – 6 marks.

♠ J 9 7 2
♥ J 2
♦ A 2
♣ A Q 9 7 3

Q2 Love All. Pairs.				
W	N	E	S	
			1♣	
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠	
Pass	2♦ ¹	Pass	?	

¹ Fourth suit forcing. (Note, I am convinced FSF should be forcing to game, not merely one round)

Choose from: (a) 2♥; (b) 2NT; (c) 3♣.

Partner has set up a game-force, and wants us to continue describing our hand, the presumption being that we have already shown a five-four shape (although 4-1-4-4 is possible).

I really don't like 3♣. In general, the more space you consume in an uncontested auction, the more you are saying about your hand; it would be rare to bid 3♣ here without a sixth card. The two contenders for top marks are 2NT (you do have a diamond stopper after all), and 2♥.

I prefer 2♥. If you belong in no trumps, it will probably be better played by partner's side (unless partner has ♦J10x); most of the time, bidding 2NT will 'wrong-side' no trumps. Bidding 2♥ does *not* show three cards; it is very much a cheap, waiting, preference bid, typically with a doubleton; with three cards (in a 4-3-1-5 shape), you should strain to jump to 3♥ here. Over 2♥, partner can now reveal

why she is forcing to game. If she now bids, say, 3♣, she has shown a forcing-to-game club raise; you can now ‘grope’ with 3♦, implying your actual 4-2-2-5 shape; your next bid will be 3NT to show a diamond stopper.

- (a) 2♥ – 10 marks;
- (b) 2NT – 7 marks;
- (c) 3♣ – 2 marks.

♠ 2	Q3 Love All. Pairs.			
♥ A Q J 9 8 5 3 2	W	N	E	S
♦ –			1♠	4♥
♣ A 9 7 3	4♣	Pass	Pass	?

Choose from: (a) Pass; (b) Dble; (c) 5♣; (d) 5♥.

It was certainly reasonable to jump to 4♥ last time. Although you are stronger than many jumps to 4♥ in this position, it is the practical shot. Now what?

To meekly pass is surely losing bridge when you rate to have a cheap save – or even a make – at the five-level. You could unilaterally bid 5♥ – or try 5♣. Or you could double, which must logically say, ‘I am good for my 4♥ offensively, but I also have a trick or two if you fancy defending.’

I think double is your best call – as defending could so easily be best. As usual, it’s your most economical and flexible action.

I think 5♣ is bottom of the list, as it implies a fifth club; you probably don’t want to play this hand in 5♣ even facing some clubs. I wouldn’t be proud of a 5♥ bid, bidding your hand twice; but it may work well in practice.

There’s a fifth option too (which I didn’t include): 4NT. Experts would play this bid as, ‘I have a 5♥ bid, but have a four-card minor on the side, in case we belong there.’ As I say, I think your clubs aren’t really good enough to go that route; plus it gives the opponents an extra round of bidding to help them judge correctly; so we’ll leave 4NT well alone.

The main lesson is this: if you are good for your last bid, don’t simply bid one more, try the more flexible double.

- (a) Pass – 4 marks;
- (b) Dble – 10 marks;
- (c) 5♣ – 3 marks;
- (d) 5♥ – 5 marks.

Now for my favourite quiz format – as subscribers to my daily BridgeCasts will know well. Which of the following three South hands would bid according to the sequence given? What should the other two do differently? Assume you are playing duplicate pairs. In each case neither side is vulnerable. Six marks for the correct answer – in Andrew’s judgement – and two marks each for giving the correct alternative bidding for the other hands.

Q4

Love All. Pairs.			
W	N	E	S
			1♣
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♣

Hand A	Hand B	Hand C
♠ Q 2	♠ J 9 7	♠ 4 2
♥ K Q 6 3	♥ A 7 6 2	♥ A Q 6 3
♦ J 8	♦ 3	♦ 7 3
♣ A J 8 7 3	♣ A K 7 3 2	♣ K Q 9 8 2

Clearly you have a tricky rebid over 1♠ with Hand A – a problem not hard to have anticipated. In that light, I think it was a mistake to open 1♣. I would open 1NT to avoid this rebid problem. Yes, your hand is unbalanced, but the doubletons are fairly no trumpy, and your rebid problems have now evaporated.

With B, you have to open 1♣ but you should raise 1♠ to 2♠ (despite the lack of a fourth spade). In truth, this is clear, especially when you reflect that your chances of partner holding a fifth spade are quite good – playing Acol partner should respond the cheaper of fours, so with four spades and a four-card red suit, partner would bid the cheaper red suit.

That leaves C as the correct answer. You are correct to open the bidding with such a rich 11 – all the honours in the long suits. And your clubs are robust enough for the five-card rebid. Yes, rebidding a five-card suit is rarely ideal, but you are not going to bid out your shape with 2♥ holding such a minimum opener.

- Hand A opens 1NT. 2 marks
- Hand B opens 1♣ but raises 1♠ to 2♠. 2 marks
- Hand C is correct. 6 marks

Q5

Love All. Pairs.			
W	N	E	S
1♦	1♥	Dble ¹	2♦ ²
2♠	Pass	Pass	3♥

¹ Negative, promising precisely four spades; ² Unassuming cue bid, showing a good raise (10+ points or an upgrade) with hearts

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

I agree with the Unassuming Cue Bid of 2♦ with all three hands – B is certainly worth the upgrade. West raising to 2♠, surely showing four spades, is an interesting development. With East-West having advertised an eight-card spade fit, you should be reluctant to defend 2♠ as you have an eight-card heart fit (use the Law of Total Tricks: there are 16 total trumps, therefore quite likely 16 total tricks, therefore either 2♠ or 3♥ should make).

However, Hand C is very defensive with those ‘quacks’ in the opposing spades and diamonds. I would pass 2♠ (I expect the Law to overestimate the number of tricks that can be made by each side). I don’t think either 2♠ or 3♥ rates to make.

Hand A is a classic ‘Law’ 3♥ bid – if 3♥ doesn’t make, 2♠ probably will. As such, it is the correct answer.

Hand B is an oddity. Holding four small spades facing partner’s presumed singleton, and a singleton diamond, the hands may fit like the proverbial gloves. Best is a bid of 3♣, naturalish and looking for game. Partner will picture you with this sort of hand and will go 4♥ with good clubs and hearts; but sign off in 3♥ with poor clubs or wasted diamond values.

Hand A is correct. 6 marks

Hand B bids 2♦ then 3♣. 2 marks

Hand C bids 2♦ then pass. 2 marks

Q6

Love All. Pairs.			
W	N	E	S
			1♥
Pass	4♣ ¹	Pass	4♦

¹ Splinter bid showing a singleton (or void) club and a raise to (at least) 4♥

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

Your 4♦ over partner’s 4♣ shows slam interest. In principle, it is a control-showing bid, ideally ♦A. However, perhaps, space short, you may have ♦K. Indeed, space is so short (4♦ being the only bid below game that shows slam interest) that many top players (guilty) would play a 4♦ bid here is ‘Last Train’, showing slam interest and saying nothing at all about diamonds.

Whether or not you and your partner ‘catch the Last Train’, the key is that 4♦ shows slam interest, and that rules out Hand B – a hand which has declined markedly in value facing partner’s club splinter (shortage and wasted values facing a splinter are the worst). With B, you should hurriedly (so to speak) sign off in 4♥.

Hand A, on the other hand (again, so to speak), ADORES the 4♣ splinter. There is no need to faff about with 4♦. Simply bid 4NT, preferably Roman Key Card Blackwood. You’ll soon find out what you need to know.

Which means the correct answer is C. Yes, you have some semi-wasted values in clubs. However, having *length* in the splinter bid suit is *huge* (extra ruffing tricks, and fewer potential losers outside). If partner has a minimum splinter and signs off in 4♥ over 4♦, you’ll pass. But if partner has extra values and co-operates, perhaps via a 4♠ control-bid, you’ll go slamming via 4NT Roman Key Card Blackwood.

Hand A opens 1♥ then bids 4NT. 2 marks

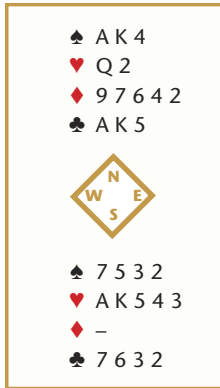
Hand B opens 1♥ then signs off in 4♥. 2 marks

Hand C is correct. 6 marks

Here are two declarer-play problems. You are playing Teams. Five marks for the correct answer in each case.

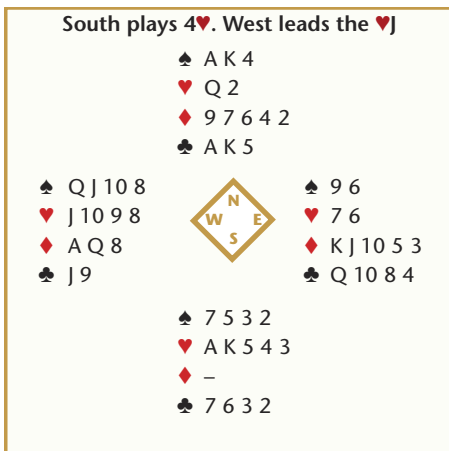
Q7

You reach 4♥ after an unopposed auction. Plan the play on the ♥J lead.



You do not need to rely on a 3-3 split in any suit. As long as neither black suit is 5-1, nor diamonds 6-2, ten tricks are secure. The key is to play an unusual dummy reversal, planning to score all your low hearts in hand by ruffing diamonds. Win ♥J lead in hand (this is crucial). Cross to (say) ♠A and ruff ♦2; cross to (say) ♣A and ruff ♦4; cross to (say) ♠K and ruff ♦6; finally, cross to ♣K and ruff ♦7 with your remaining high heart in hand. With dummy's ♥Q still to come, that's ten tricks and game made via six hearts (the sixth heart trick is the big one) and the four black-suit tops.

Here is the layout:



Q8

You reach 6♠ after East opens 1♥, you overcall 1♠, West raises to 2♥ and North leaps majestically to 6♠. West leads the ♥3. Plan the play.



Your ♥QJ form a ruffing finesse position if West holds a high heart (presumably ♥K). Discard a diamond from dummy (key play). East wins the ♥A and hurriedly switches to the ♦K. Win the ♦A, draw trumps finishing in hand, and lead the ♥Q, discarding the ♦8 if West plays low. If West covers with the ♥K, ruff, cross to hand and cash the ♥J discarding the diamond.

The alternative line is to ruff the heart at trick one and rely on a third club trick. This will require the ♣QJ to be doubleton or trebleton – surely inferior to playing West for the ♥K, likely from the lead of a low heart.

To finish, here are two opening lead problems. There are five marks for Andrew's chosen lead in each case, and consolation marks for reasonable alternatives. You are playing teams.

Q9



W	N	E	S
			1NT
Pass	2♥ ¹	Pass	3♠ ²
Pass	4♣	All Pass	

¹ transfer to spades;
² max, with four spades

The choice appears unappealing and your aim should be to avoid giving a trick. In fact, though, there is the opportunity to gain a trick. Lead the ace of spades. This gives you a look at dummy, enabling you to find a crucial switch if necessary. More than that, if dummy has, for instance, ♠KJ9xx and declarer has ♠108xx, declarer may now play to drop ♠Q on the second round (playing you to have led

♠A from ♠Ax); whereas if you'd led a different suit, declarer's best percentage play in spades would be to run ♠10. Note, if declarer proves to have the ♠K after all, your lead has not cost, as you will still win the ♠Q later. You'll regret leading ♠A when your partner has the bare ♠K, but how likely is that? Leading your ♠3 is definitely a good shot too, for if dummy holds eg ♠KJ9xx, declarer will surely play you for ♠A not ♠Q and rise with dummy's ♠K; I slightly prefer ♠A because it gives you the chance to switch.

As between the other suits, diamonds is by far the least appealing (partner has precious little, so probably won't have ♦A/Q). Clubs is also dangerous, giving away a trick much of the time. Hearts is safer, but would you lead a 'mud' ♥3, looking like a low card for 'like', or the nine, which may be misinterpreted as a short suit?

Marks: ♠A 5; ♠3 4; ♥9 2; ♥3 2; ♣3 1; ♦2 0.

Q10

♠ A 6 5 3
♥ 8 5 3
♦ Q 3
♣ A 10 8 2

	W	N	E	S
				1♥
	Pass	3♥	Pass	4NT ¹
	Pass	5♣ ²	Pass	6♥
	All Pass			

¹ Roman Key Card Blackwood;

² Showing zero or three of the 'five aces' (including the ♥K)


North-South are experts.

How strange! The opponents have bid to slam via Blackwood, yet you hold two aces. Did North give the wrong response to 4NT? Did South miscount? Did North show zero yet South thought North showed three?

All the above seem most unlikely. My guess is the Machiavellian expert South has a black-suit void and was planning to bid six all along; South went via 4NT to create the impression of not holding a void (for who bids 4NT with a void?). You should resist the temptation to lead an ace for fear that is declarer's void and should settle for a safe trump. If it does turn out the opponents have had an accident, it is very unlikely one of your aces will run away. Perhaps the layout is as follows:

South plays 6♥. West leads a trump

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

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

♠ -		♠ -
♥ A K 10 9 7 6		♥ -
♦ A K 10 8		♦ -
♣ K 6 5		♣ -

The lead of either black suit ace (or a diamond if declarer reads it) gives declarer the slam.

Marks: a heart 5; an ace 2; a diamond 1. ☐

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Second place
Andrew Cairns from Kent

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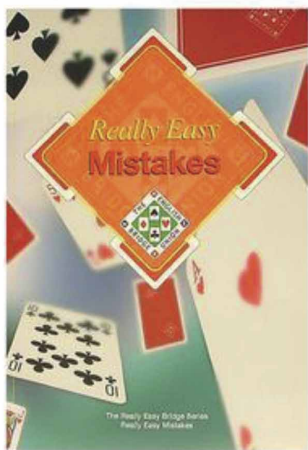
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CHANNEL TROPHY

by Lucy Norman

Amongst the multitude of face-to-face events struck down by Covid this year was the Channel Trophy. Due to be played in Belgium in mid-December, it was instead held on RealBridge, with categories for U26, U26 Women, U21, and, after the switch to digital format, U16. For each group, there were four rival teams: England, France, Netherlands, and Belgium, although England fielded a second team in the U16 (EBU) as Belgium had no team. Played as a round robin, each team played two 12 board sets against each other team – three matches in total.

Despite being eligible for the U16 category, my partner, Lottie Bedford, and I found ourselves playing in the U26 Womens team. This deal is an excellent illustration of concepts such as restraint, calculated competitiveness and partnership trust:

E/W Game. Dealer South			
	♠ A 10 8 5		
	♥ K 4 3		
	♦ 9 8 7 5		
	♣ 10 4		
♠ 9 3		♠ K 7 2	
♥ A 9		♥ Q J 8 7 6 5 2	
♦ A K Q 10 4		♦ J 6 3	
♣ A J 7 2		♣ –	
	♠ Q J 6 4		
	♥ 10		
	♦ 2		
	♣ K Q 9 8 6 5 3		

There were a variety of different openings made by South, but against us the selected bid was 4♣. While it might not have been my choice, it was definitely an annoyance. I sat West with an 18 count and four well-placed clubs. I had a very difficult decision to make. With my major suits doubling was not an option. I could Pass or bid 4♦. I favoured a Pass to keep the bidding open for suit investigation if partner had a long major, as she did here, or to let partner double (which would have been most welcomed). Plus, if partner happens to have nothing then there is no contract for us to go down

in! North passed, and Lottie bravely opted for 4♥.

From my point of view this was a free bid, produced with no encouragement – slam must be a possibility, but Blackwood does not determine whether there are two spade losers. I chose 5♣ as a cuebid. Partner had nothing to add with her seven count, even a last train 5♦ would be too positive, so she bid 5♥. I had no choice but to trust her – if there was a slam on, she would have bid 5♦ or bid the slam herself, so I passed.

We were rewarded for our restraint – 5♥ makes exactly whereas 5♦ can fail on an, admittedly not simple to find, spade lead. Even if they both make 5♥ produces a two IMP plus score . . .

England's U26 Womens team were the winners of their group with the other teams coming second to France in each division. The EBU team struggled, but gained valuable experience for future matches. □

U26 team

Oliver Powell & Aaron Hutton
Kripa Panchagnula & Jonathan Clark
Ewa Wieczorek & Charles Bucknell
NPC: Nick Sandqvist, Coach: Stephen Kennedy

U26 Womens team

Dido Coley & Kim Hudson
Charlotte Bedford & Lucy Norman
Megan Jones & Lily Kearney
NPC: Neeraj Tanna

U21 team

Imogen La Chapelle & Henry Rose
Jamie Fegarty & Thomas Gardner
Andy Cope & Oscar Selby
NPC: Michael Byrne

U16 team

Tom Furness & David Sargent
Aman Parekh & Rufus Barnett
Thomas Bradkin & Jay Vyas
NPC: Giorgio Provenza

U16 EBU team

Ben Cadge & Marco Vann
Harriet Cork & Antoinina Mauve
Phedra Kingston & Andrew Bradkin
NPC: Alan Shillitoe

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TEACHING CAN BE VERSATILE, EVEN WHEN F2F

When Alison White joined a bridge class for the first time in the autumn she faced a dilemma. Her teacher Lorna Watson was just beginning to venture back to in-person classes and socialising, but Alison had a big trip to Australia planned, a much-postponed holiday to visit family, as travel became possible.

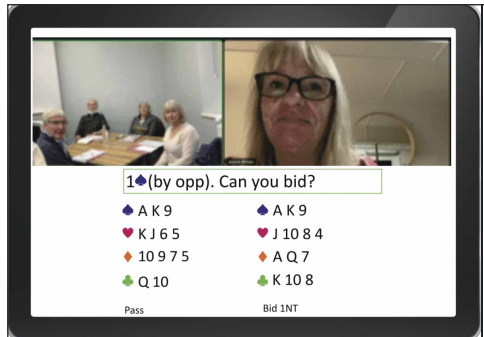
Once she had begun the course she realised that missing a lesson or two would hamper her progress. As a teacher herself, specialising in dyslexia, she was familiar with Google Classroom and was delighted to discover that Lorna was making use of it.

‘I knew that people were still cautious, and I had asked them not to attend lessons with sniffs and coughs, so I had to ensure that anyone missing a lesson could catch up. I record all presentations shown in class with the students’ questions included, and I add them straight away to the classroom so they can watch again in their own

time. Other materials from many different sources are also added to the Google Classroom. With everything in one place, it means it is easy to catch up on a missed lesson,’ Lorna explained.

Once Alison was ready for her trip she had material on her iPad for the plane and then joined the group’s lesson from Sydney with Zoom. The UK morning lesson was evening time for her so she had already watched a recorded slide presentation in advance and done the exercise ahead of the others. Alison tells us that ‘it worked a treat’.

All Lorna’s students have been made familiar with BBO and are now trying to play together between classes. ‘Online bridge and the versatility of recording lessons and slide presentations have made teaching much more flexible. Pupils can miss classes for any number of reasons but easily catch up, and if we had to return to online lessons we’d all be ready. Let’s hope it doesn’t come to that.’ □



On-screen slide presentation/lesson



Filming the presentation/lesson



In the Old Days . . .

I was first introduced to bridge in a barrack room at Floriana in Malta. We usually played Solo, but one evening Sid White, the blacksmith said 'Why not Bridge?'

We said, 'Certainly, but who knows how to play?' So he explained.

He began by telling us the ranking of suits, how spades were the highest suit, then followed hearts. 'There's also no trumps,' he added, 'but that's rather too advanced for beginners.'

There was a bit about bidding and scoring, and then we made a start.

The game seemed quite pleasant and presented no difficulty until the blacksmith blandly bid 'Four Imperial clubs,' over four spades.

'Four what?'

'Four Imperial clubs,' he repeated firmly.

'But didn't you say spades were higher than clubs?'

'Normally they are,' he admitted, 'but I said *Imperial* clubs.'

'But what is an *Imperial* club?'

'Better than a spade,' he said briefly, 'it counts double an ordinary club, whether up or down. It's your bid.'

Somewhat abashed, none of us bid again, and our professor played the hand.

Later the same night, the situations were reversed. He held the spades and my partner and I held clubs. He got up to four spades.

'Four *Imperial* clubs,' I said with an air of finality.


The blacksmith said, 'Um,' then 'Just a minute,' and finally, looking me full in the face, he bid 'Four Royal spades.'

I put my hand down, looked him full in the face, and said, 'Sidney! You never mentioned that suit before. I suppose when you've got diamonds you'll call them Majestic!'

'I was trying to keep the game on elementary lines,' he answered, without a blink. 'I couldn't tell you all the rules at once: they'd only mix you up. And there's no such suit as Majestic diamonds.'

'That's fair enough,' said his partner, a corporal from York.

It could be, and no one could say that Sid was wrong. No one in the barrack room, that is. There was no such inability on the part of the more advanced trio with whom I next played.

But perhaps I should have guessed, for was it not the same Sid White who told a beginner at draughts that if he twice moved a king to the centre line and back it became an emperor, had an extra draught put on its crown, and could then move two squares at once in any direction? 



This story was taken from *Contract Bridge Journal*, June 1947 and was written by Capt. Charles Gibson. If you come across an interesting reference to bridge in literature please send us an extract together with its source for possible publication.

SENIORS CONGRESS



The Seniors Congress took place on RealBridge in early December. The Championship Pairs was won by James Bond & Gabriel Hearst (*pictured*), who finished ahead of Paul Hackett & Paul Murray. Clive Owen & Charles Outred were third.

The Swiss Pairs competition – for those eliminated from the Championship Pairs, or joining the congress later – was won by Alan Broskill & Robin Jepson, ahead of second-placed Celia Oram & Derek Oram. Pat Alexander Carine & Liz Kelly and Michael Kaltz & Jim Niblett were joint third.

The Swiss Teams event was won by the team of Trevor Ward, John Hassett, Malcolm Pryor, David Muller, Dave Robinson & Tony Sowter finishing 21 VPs ahead of joint second-placed teams: Jeremy Dhondy, Fred Hotchen, Steve Preston & David Huggett and Tony Waterlow, Jacqui Tobias, Celia Oram & Derek Oram.

OVER THE POND

Congratulations to *Team Leslie* (Tim Leslie, Ollie Burgess, Michael Byrne, Mike Bell & Ben Norton) on reaching the quarter finals of the prestigious Soloway Knockout. On the way to reaching the quarter finals the team beat some tough competition – first the *Moss* team (including world-class pairs Lauria-Versace and Nowosadzki-Kalita) and then the *Amoils* team (including another world-class pair Bessis-Lorenzini).

English players Maggie Knottenbelt & Heather Dhondy also triumphed, winning the NABC Whitehead Ladies' pairs in the US National in Austin, Texas, with a whopping score of 66.86%.

GERARD FAULKNER SALVER

The 2019-20 Seniors Knockout has now concluded. For the second year running the competition for the Gerard Faulkner Salver has been won by Brian Senior (Captain), Tony Forrester, Paul Hackett, Sandra Penfold and Norman Selway.

They played the *Kaufmann* team in the final (Peter Kaufmann, Christopher Pope, Andrew Prothero, Ted Reveley, Alan Stephenson and David Stevenson).

YEAR END ONLINE CONGRESS

The Championship Swiss Pairs was won by Ben Norton & Stefano Tommasini, ahead of Kevin Castner & Phil King. Juniors Henry Rose and Imogen La Chapelle came third in the very strong field of 70 pairs.

The Swiss Teams was won by *Guttmann* (Davies Guttmann & Heinrich Berger, Michael Strafer & Simon Weinberger). In joint second place were *Woodcock* (Andrew Woodcock & Catherine Draper, Catherine Seale & David Gold) and *Draper* (Ian Draper & Jeremy Willans, Neil Rosen & Anne Rosen).

Giles Ip & Mark Hill topped the Open Pairs, ahead of Peter Crouch & Joe Sivayogan, with Andrew Murphy & James Paul coming third.

Mike Rawlins & Naomi Gibbs came first in the Mixed Pairs, ahead of Patrick Shields & Diana Nettleton, with Kevin Castner & Marusa Gold in third place.

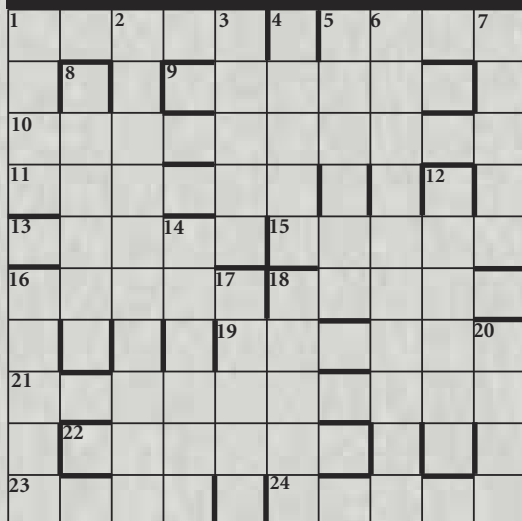
Congratulations to Chris Hart & Christine Wood who won the Jack High Swiss Pairs, just beating Ann Rooke & Tom Tomaszczyk who came second, ahead of third-placed Michael Nunn & Rita Evans.

The Kent/EBU Year End Improvers Pairs were won by Michi Ashikaga & Ray Connew, with Paul Hide & Richard Watkins in second place and Gary Jennison & Helen Jennison in third place.

CROSSWORD NO 34

Compiled by MERMAN

Answers online, p67



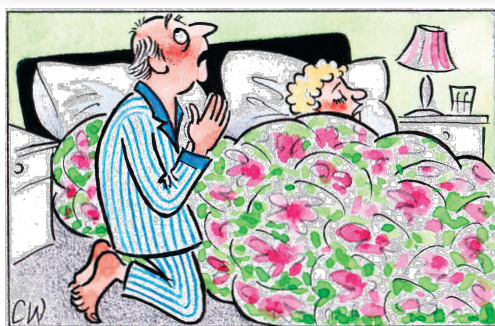
ACROSS

- 1 Starting with her index finger first, provided a fleeting impression (5)
- 5 Little rascals wanting something more to say — it's a fiddle (4)
- 9 Foregoing unknown religious community (6)
- 10 See 5d.
- 11 I sit out, having captured queen's physical features (6)
- 13 Cook uses this club — busy place to work (5)
- 15 Remains to be accepted by my old club (5)
- 16 Drink fit for a queen in retreat (5)
- 18 Filthy lucre — it's a sore point (5)
- 19 Opponents getting little support when adopting right course (6)
- 21 Arranges fixture first — they will provide lights (10)
- 22 Pinocchio's one editor returning to obstruct the course of negotiations (6)
- 23 Jobs on list causing trouble (4)
- 24 Gay icon that's not been cleaned lately (5)

DOWN

- 1 Generally dry channel in communications system if promotional material replaced (4)
- 2 Sat dieting getting stirred up (10)
- 3 Setting for part of game (5)
- 4 Note little car on motorway (5)
- 5, 10a Friendly winner in Strictly performance may be effective during the pandemic (6,10)
- 6 Hashtag "Catastrophe" — one's avoided getting angry (10)
- 7 Close like a cup (5)
- 8 Having bad luck in plan to secure one's hearts (6)
- 12 Impudent fruit replaced limousine with English king (6)
- 14 Secure means of closing some level crossings (6)
- 16 Border check (5)
- 17 Bare heart getting remedial treatment (5)
- 18 International organisation's effort not mentioned in the auction (5)
- 20 Notice that yes, parking's provided (4)

CAPTION COMPETITION



Send your entries for the cartoon above to lou@ebu.co.uk or Editor, Raggett House, Langport, Somerset, TA10 0DD by 28th February.

Thank you for all the red suit transfers I received for the one below. Congratulations to John Shaw for my favourite caption, shown below the picture. Other close contenders were William Parker's *'Rudolf — I think we've found a fit'*; and Mike Wood's *'Ho Ho Ho, a take-out double with a good fit'*.



Santa entered the Christmas pairs

Our sponsor Fortnum & Mason will be rewarding the winner with some wonderful Handmade English Chocolates. Created entirely by hand by Fortnum's master confectioners, these chocolates are made to a unique recipe, unchanged since the 1920s.

FORTNUM & MASON

EST 1707



MEMBERS SUSPENDED

An EBU Disciplinary Committee considered the following charges against Linda Greenland (deri31) & Ken Richardson (ruff dog) at a hearing in early November.

- ❖ That when they played in online games on the Bridgebase Online (BBO) platform, organised by the Leeds Bridge Club and the Oliver Cowan BC, they had knowledge of some aspects of each other's hands obtained by illicit communication with each other.
- ❖ That they took advantage of this information to make calls and plays which they were unlikely to have made had they not known the layout of the hands, to the benefit of their bridge scores in those sessions.

The defendants denied the charges. A disciplinary hearing was held. The Disciplinary Committee found the charges proved to their comfortable satisfaction, and that the defendants' conduct constituted an offence under paragraph 3.2(iv) of the EBU Disciplinary Rules, being unfair or dishonest play. The Committee imposed a sanction of suspension of EBU membership for a period of three years.



FILIP KURBALIJA
1954 – 2021

Filip was a top class bridge player. He played for Wales in the Home Countries Championship (Camrose) no less than 55 occasions between 1987 and 2014 and more recently in the Seniors (Teltscher Trophy) on four occasions, the last in 2020, with his wife Diane.

Filip represented Wales in European and World competition starting with the Rosenblum World Teams in Lille in 1998 and including five European Championships and one European Seniors Championships during his career.

He also notched up several prestigious English wins, including the Spring Fours twice, and the Summer Meeting's Swiss Teams and Swiss Pairs.

Jeremy Dhondy first played with Filip in a BBL Premier League match more than 25 years ago. The temporary partnership got on well, won the match and continued to play for many years in various events. 'I even managed to get him to smile a few times but whether it was amusement or pity I never discovered' said Jeremy. He noted that Filip was a partner who tried hard the whole time with fine skills of concentration. He was also good company when the bridge wasn't on.

RESULTS OF INTERNATIONAL TRIALS

Bermuda Bowl Open

Ben Norton &
Mike Bell
Michael Byrne &
Kieran Dyke
Tom Townsend &
David Bakhshi
NPC Paul Barden
Coach Claire Robinson

Venice Cup

Sally Brock &
Fiona Brown
Nicola Smith &
Nevena Senior
Catherine Draper &
Gillian Fawcett
NPC David Burn

Lady Milne

Diana Nettleton &
Nevena Senior
Helen Erichsen &
Fiona Brown
Nathalie Shashoua &
Sally Brock
NPC David Burn
Coach Oliver Burgess

Camrose Trophy

Andrew Black &
David Gold
Andrew McIntosh &
Tom Paske
Simon Cope &
Peter Crouch
NPC tbc



ROBERT H NORTHAGE

1938 – 2021

After a career teaching physics in Bath, Robert returned to Quorn, in Leicestershire, where he had been raised.

As well as his interest in bridge he was a very strong chess player and returned to captain the Loughborough club where he had played at school. For a while he wrote a regular chess and bridge column for the *Loughborough Echo*.

In bridge Robert represented the county in the Midland League teams, normally partnering John Wilcox, and enjoyed many successes in county competitions.

Robert joined the LCBA Committee as General Secretary in 1995 and served in this post for 20 years. He expanded the role, taking on an enormous workload on behalf of the Association. In addition to his support for various sub-committees he had a particular interest in laws and ethics, along with acting as a Competition Controller of some of the county bridge competitions. He trained as a county level director in 1995 and had been one of a select panel who directed county pairs and teams events consistently until a couple of years ago.

The fact that Leicestershire runs a successful Green Point weekend featuring pairs and teams competitions is due to Robert's efforts in resurrecting and organising the event.

Robert was also an EBU Shareholder on behalf of the county whilst Secretary and played an active role in Shareholder meetings.

Robert was made a Life member of the LCBA in 2011 and given an EBU Dimmie Fleming award in 2014 for his services to the Association.



GERARD FAULKNER

1937 – 2021

Gerard was the first to acknowledge the longevity of this bridge career. He was a formidable player who held most of the national titles over the years, but also a first class administrator. He was Chairman of the EBU twice, and held several other roles, guiding the union steadfastly and without drama. As in his professional career as a Senior partner of his legal practice, he acquired and retained the respect and affection of all his closest colleagues.

The epithet that was probably most applied to Gerard was *old school*. He had a reputation, which he was proud of, as a technophobe. He never owned a mobile phone nor computer, his concession to modern communications being a fax machine! And yet, such was the breadth of his personal network, I was rarely the original bearer of news, when I called him.

I think I must have first met him away from the table at an early meeting between the Union and Better Bridge in Britain. The meeting was hosted by Palmer Bayer, and between him and Gerard, what might have been an extremely fractious affair turned out remarkably productive.

I am sure that wine was discussed (as well as drunk) and not long afterwards Gerard encouraged me to join him at wine auctions for the nectar was another of his great passions. He had a formidable palate and an eye for good buys. He was also keen on jazz and classical music.

For all his appearance and reputation, Gerard was far more open to new ideas than one might expect and he had a mischievous sense of humour, often difficult to anticipate. Santi, his adored partner of over 40 years, died in the autumn shortly before him, so their parting was brief.

Steve Eginton

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Send your letters to the editor, Lou Hobhouse
Raggett House, Bowdens, TA10 ODD, or e-mail lou@ebu.co.uk
The editor reserves the right to condense letters. Publication does not mean the EBU agrees with the views expressed or that the comments are factually correct.

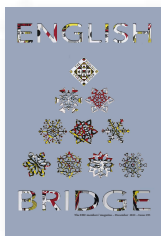
NO AUTOMATIC PASS

Thanks to Robin Barker for clearly spelling out (*Ask Robin, December 2021*) that it is not correct to say that one should **never** bid over partner's hesitation [followed by a pass]. I fear that this will come as something of a surprise to many club players, but when you consider how it could be misused, as explained at the end of the reply, it becomes obvious.

Nigel Richardson

As a reminder to readers, Robin said 'To say "I would never bid over my partner's hesitation..." is not correct. You should bid as required by the law – only passing if this is a normal action. To pass because partner hesitated is not what the law requires and may be depriving the opposition of a good score – partner could use a hesitation to stop you competing.'

COVID



How imaginative of the EBU to put all the versions of Covid on the front cover of the magazine!

Andrew Kambites

RIP THE STOP CARD

It seems that the stop card has become a casualty of the pandemic. It is a constant source of irritation that the stop card remains firmly in the box when bids requiring it are made. The

EBU blue book states the circumstances when a stop card **must** be played. Is it bad form to bring the breaking of this rule to the attention of the player concerned?

Katrina Foote

In a friendly club, it is not wrong to explain the stop card procedure to a new player, as long as this is instructive rather than critical. Inexperienced players can take a while to learn these procedures and should not be made to feel unwelcome. If the opponents are experienced, or the failure to use the stop card causes damage, then it is the director's job to instruct the opponents in correct procedure, not the players.

THANKS TO THE FINANCE TEAM

In the September 2021 edition of *English Bridge*, part of Ian Payn's opening article gave thanks to various people who kept the flag flying through recent times. Might I add recognition of the great work done on behalf of the treasurers of this world by the EBU's Gail Nancarrow and Clare Burnage, who sorted out the dollar/pound transactions involved with BBO and ensured that we clubs got our share? It all seemed seamless, but I bet it wasn't really! Thanks all.

John Davie

soon-to-be-ex Treasurer, Ely BC

HEAVY-HANDED

Recent issues of *English Bridge* have named and shamed those found guilty of cheating at bridge (mainly online).

In stark contrast, if you are aware of an incident of the more serious offence of cheating in an academic or professional exam, you can send the evidence to the institution concerned, and that's the end of it, from your viewpoint as a witness. The institution will cite GDPR and the privacy of student data, so you never normally hear whether the institution even bothered to investigate the incident, let alone found the student guilty or punished them.

Is the EBU not being a little heavy-handed in exposing cheats in what must be the most widely read bridge publication in England?

Gavin Wilson

We always publish the names of those guilty of misconduct, unless they are under 18. This is based on legal advice. At the AGM the shareholders voted to publish after appeal, not after a guilty verdict at a hearing. Far from being heavy-handed, publication is a necessary part of the process – a disincentive to behaving badly.

Perhaps a more appropriate analogy than academia (where a cheat only cheats to benefit himself, not normally to outdo others) would be other sports and games, where publication is routine.

Ian Payn

EBU Chairman

UGH TO ROBOTS

While there is an EBU game without bots in the afternoon, there is no choice in the evening. Playing online has already made

bridge less sociable but to then play bots makes it even less so. They never greet you, nor compliment when you play well!

Should the EBU offer a robot-free game in the evening? If there's a sitout, supply bots but don't score the boards.

Giving masterpoints to pairs with bots seems unfair. Unlike human partners, not only do they behave like well-oiled machines, they aren't even EBU members!
Shangara Singh

*The bots **are** EBU members! If you go to 'NGS' on the EBU website and set the County to 'Direct', you can see the robots. They are normally about a Jack or Queen – a rank earned through play. They are treated exactly as members, so those who play with them have to score similarly to any other Queen or Jack they might play with. Bots go up and down like the rest of us.*

The problem with discounting scores against a robot pair is that

players who beat them get annoyed. You normally satisfy about 2/3 of the field, but really annoy 1/3 – similar to club bridge playing against a pair of Jacks or Queens.
Ed

We did try having two games at the same time but it diluted both of them. Feedback suggests we have a reasonable balance. There are plenty of clubs running games with no robots which you could perhaps join.
Gordon Rainsford



BEST BEHAVIOUR AT BRIDGE

A quick reminder

- ♥ Greet others in a friendly manner prior to the start of play on each round.
- ♥ Be a good 'host' or 'guest' at the table.
- ♥ Make your system card readily available to your opponents and fill it out completely.
- ♥ Make bridge enjoyable for yourself, partner and opponents.
- ♥ Give credit when opponents make a good bid or play.
- ♥ Take care of your personal grooming.
- ♥ Ensure that your mobile phone is turned off.
- ♥ Enjoy the company as well as the game.

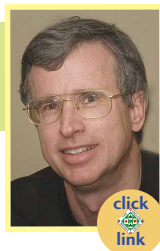
Remember that it is rude to criticise your partner or opponents in public, to be less than polite at the table, to gloat over good results or object to a call for the tournament director or to dispute or argue about a director's ruling, or generally to make any personal and disparaging remark.

Please call the Director if you think you may have been affected by bad behaviour.

You will be helping others as well as yourselves.

Club Bidding Quiz

by Julian Pottage



Julian's answers to questions from page 10

Hand 1

♠ A K 9 7
♥ A J 7 4
♦ A Q
♣ 10 4 3

W	N	E	S
			1♣ ¹

?
¹ Could be short (2+ clubs)

Double. A combination of factors make this a better choice than a 1NT overcall. First, 18 points is too strong if you are playing 1NT as 15-17. Second, the club opening might be natural, in which case the lack of a club stopper is a flaw. Third, you will find a major fit more easily.

Hand 2

♠ 7 3
♥ A 6 5
♦ Q J 8 4 2
♣ A 8 4

W	N	E	S
1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass
?			

2♥. Perhaps you would not have opened this hand or have opened 1NT. Having opened 1♦ you must find a rebid. With three card heart support and two low spades, raising hearts is fine, better than rebidding 2♦. You cannot rebid 1NT if that shows 15-17 and the raise is better even if your methods would allow a 1NT rebid.

Hand 3

♠ K J 9 8 7 6
♥ Q 10 6
♦ 10 7
♣ A J

W	N	E	S
1♣	Pass	2♣	Dble
?			

3♣. With a six card spade suit and support from partner you should be willing to compete to the three level. It is best to do so before the opponents have found their best fit. This is not a game try because you could bid one of the other suits or maybe redouble if you had a better hand.

Hand 4

♠ A J 10 6 4 3
♥ A K 6 4
♦ –
♣ K 9 7

W	N	E	S
1♣	Pass	2♣	Pass
?			

4♠. As well as 15 HCP, you have really good shape, with a good six-card suit and a void. You really want to count AJ10 as more than five points and the void is worth about three points too with the known 9+ card fit. At the table partner had only five points (so would have declined any game invitation) but you could make 12 tricks!

Hand 5

♠ A 8 2
♥ 3
♦ K Q 8 7 4 2
♣ A 10 3

W	N	E	S
	1NT ¹	Pass	2♦ ²
?			

¹ 15-17, ² Transfer to hearts

3♦. Just because an opponent has opened a strong 1NT, you do not want to let the opponents play quietly in 2♥ if that is their plan. While you could double to suggest something in diamonds or pass knowing that you will get another bid, it is usually best to get in before the opponents have exchanged too much information.

Hand 6

♠ Q J 9 7 3 2
♥ J 4
♦ 10 7 5 2
♣ J

W	N	E	S
?			

2♠ or Pass. The correct opening depends upon your methods. If you are playing a 2♠ opening as strong then you cannot open 2♠. Weak twos occur more frequently and are a better method. While you have only five HCP (and one of those a singleton jack), you have good shape (6-4), a reasonable suit and are non-vulnerable. □

Landmark Promotions November – December 2021

Avon

Regional Master

Alan Francis Millichamp

Bedfordshire

Master

David Miller

Berks & Bucks

Life Master

James Chapman

Master

Tessa Carmont

Antoinette Jackson

Sally James

Liz McDowell

Barbara Oates

Cambs & Hunts

Master

Doug Few

Andrew Hawthorn

Allison Kaye

Channel Islands

Life Master

Barbara Hunter

Jill Morgan

Master

Tania Bacon

Cornwall

Master

Chris Marwood

Cumbria

Master

Robert Harvey

Derbyshire

Life Master

Paul Madden

Regional Master

Toni Smith

Master

Graham Buckle

Devon

Master

Grace Carleton

Ruth Nemes

Gill Seymour

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Master

Simon Hult

Dorset

Life Master

Eugene Sheehan

Master

Lucy Norman

Essex

Master

Gemma Fewster

Valerie Kingshott

Declan Mulrone

Gloucestershire

Master

Helen Morris

Steve Tedd

Hants and I.O.W.

Master

Robert Burns

Kate Henderson

Bill May

Frank Price

Julia Wood

Jackie Woods

Hertfordshire

Master

Debbie Birdsey

John Davies

Anne Dunn

Chrissy Harrison

Chris Pratt

Kent

Life Master

Elaine Cockerell

Michael Griffiths

Master

Nick Baxter

David Clyde

Peter Davis

Nick Gowllett

Peter Kenward

Ivy McGeorge

Jill Sage

Nic Swainson

Abdol Tavabie

Tony Urwin

Brenda Wood

Gary Wood

Lancashire

Master

Susan Fillary

Janis Galbraith

Angela Lawton

Lewis Magid

Pat Newcombe

Jackie O'Hanlon

Leicestershire

Master

G Challinor

Linda Dunwoodie

Dora Hague

Jennie Rea

Val Ruddock

Lincolnshire

Master

Joanne Hill

Janice Troughton

London

Regional Master

Bridget Rampton

Master

Alexis Cochrane

Adrian Haberberg

William Hotopf

Tim Leslie

Boris Nedev

Manchester

Master

Philip Barclay

John Bridgman

Andy Brocklehurst

Espen Gisvold

Ken Plant

Eamonn Scott

David Welsh

Merseyside & Cheshire

Master

Dave Stretch

Middlesex

Life Master

Natalie Hoff

Master

Jenni Bowley

Eddie Mann

Shangara Singh

Norfolk

Life Master

Stuart Langridge

Mervyn Scutter

Master

June Savage

Northamptonshire

Master

David Bailey

Brian Harrison

Maureen Lloyd

Phil Lloyd

Cliff Orme

Adrian Wood

Nottinghamshire

Master

Mildred Aimson

Kevin Barrett

Oxfordshire

Master

Christopher Alcraft

Richard Budgen

John Cooper

Rodney Jones

Sue Waddington

Elizabeth Woodhouse

Somerset

Master

Patricia Ewing

Staffs & Shropshire

Master

Stuart Clark

Guy Kershaw

Karen Kinsey

Suffolk

Regional Master

Bim Wilson

Sam Wilson

Master

Andrew Birley

Surrey

Master

Christine Attwood

Dave Cowell

Terry Dillon

Robert Donkin

David Fletcher

Ken Haines

Katherine Kreuter

Su Llewellyn-Davies

Gillian Lowe

Keith Scott

Madhu Shah

Ian Trickle

Nick Wilkinson

Sussex

Life Master

Matthew Read

Master

Vicky Armstrong

Brian Cutler

Mark Elliott

Angelika Harvey

Martin Harvey

Robin Levett

Carole Powell

Mary Rexstrew

Warwickshire

Life Master

Alan Patel

Regional Master

Joanne King

Master

David Owen

Alan Reed

Westmorland

Master

Andrew Peill

Wiltshire

Regional Master

Sriram Chari

Tina Cottee

Master

Roger Button

Ann Constable

Anita Feiger

Mike Peacock

John Whittleton

Worcestershire

Regional Master

Pete Cole

Yorkshire

Regional Master

Meg Jenkins

Bill Shakespeare

Master

Pranjit Bhattacharyya

Keith Broadhead

Judith Fleming

Penny Hepworth

Roger Holmes

Mark Kerr

Bill McArdle

Peter Nattress

Stephanie Ryan

Michael Sturge

John Walsh

Alice Zao

UK ESCAPES

We're delighted to be running our British Bridge holidays again and have a fantastic selection of escapes coming up for 2022. Here's just a taste of what to expect...



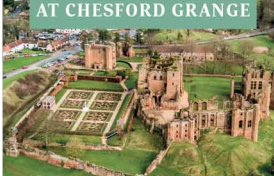
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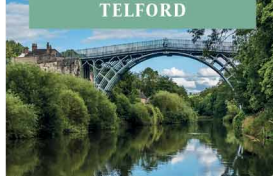
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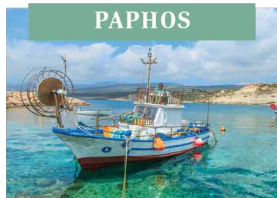
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PAPHOS



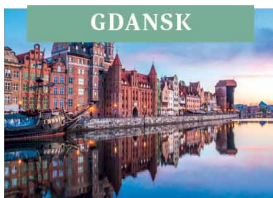
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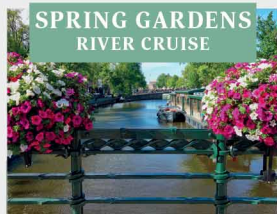
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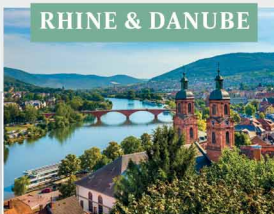
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What does declarer have?

When we begin playing bridge, we all learn lots of rules, such as third hand high, play through strength, lead low from an honour, etc. For the most part, following the rules will be the right thing to do, but there are always exceptions, and working out when we should break one of those golden rules often requires us to reconstruct the missing hands.

This deal from the Funbridge Teams Tournament is a case in point. If you do not reconstruct the unseen hands, it is unlikely you will find the winning play. Would you have worked out the way to defeat declarer's game?

Game All. Dealer South. IMPs			
		♠ 7 2	
		♥ J 10 9 6 3	
		♦ 5 2	
		♣ K Q 10 3	
♠ 6 3			♠ A 9 8 4
♥ Q 4 2			♥ K 7 5
♦ 9 3			♦ J 10 8 6
♣ A J 8 6 4 2			♣ 7 5
		♠ K Q J 10 5	
		♥ A 8	
		♦ A K Q 7 4	
		♣ 9	

West	North	East	South
			1♠
Pass	1NT	Pass	3♦
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

You lead a trump and partner wins with the ♠A and returns the ♠9. Declarer wins and draws two more rounds of trumps, partner following. Declarer then cashes the ace, king and queen of diamonds before playing the ♣9. How would you defend?

The bidding and the play so far make it likely that declarer started with 5-5 in the pointed suits. It also

seems likely that partner holds the master ♦J. If partner had started with only one club, he might have switched to it at trick two, so the odds are high that declarer has the singleton. Having come to this conclusion, you rise with the ♣A.

If we were just following rules, you would automatically play a low heart next, but let's stop and think this through. We are fairly sure that declarer has a doubleton heart. If he holds both the ace and king, you cannot beat the contract. If partner holds the ace and declarer the king, you can play any heart: partner will win and cash his diamond winner for one down.

What if partner holds the ♥K and declarer the ace? Think about how the play will go if you exit with a low heart now. Partner's king will get swallowed by declarer's ace and declarer will then exit with a second round of hearts. You will be able to win with the ♥Q, but will then have to give dummy the lead with either a heart or a club. Away will go declarer's remaining diamonds and the contract will be made.

Now see what a difference it makes if you exit, instead, with the ♥Q after winning with the ♣A. If declarer ducks, you will play a second heart and partner will eventually score the setting trick with his ♦J. If declarer wins the first round of hearts with the ace, partner will later gain the lead with his ♥K and, again, will cash a diamond winner to defeat the contract.

Unthinkingly following the general rules of sound card play will work much of the time. On some hands, though, you have to break those rules. Knowing when to do so usually requires you to put on your thinking cap and build a mental picture of the closed hands. You just have to avoid becoming trapped by the misguided idea that counting a hand is something that only experts can do. □



Harrogate Reunion

First, a question!

♠ A K Q 7
♥ K 8 6 2
♦ A J 6
♣ 4 3

N/S Game. Dealer West. MP Pairs			
W	N	E	S
1♦	Dble	Rdble	1♠
2♥	2♠	?	

What now? Our redouble was 9+ HCP though we have 17 HCP! Partner's 2♥ is not strong but we should make 4♥ easily enough. Or would the vulnerability incline you to double the 2♠ for penalties?

The 2020 Bridge Club Live Annual Reunion, delayed by 18 months due to the pandemic, eventually took place in Harrogate at the end of October. More than 60 bridge players took part and a few non-playing spouses also attended.

On the Saturday evening, Angie Mathers (Surrey) and husband celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary with everyone in the bar after the bridge. It was great to share the moment.

On the Sunday morning, a walking guided tour was led by Harry of Harrogate around the town, who enthusiastically extolled the town's history.

I ran a couple of short seminars over the weekend. I started by dissecting how, at the previous reunion near Venice two and a half years ago, I had gone seven off in 3♥ for -700 despite having a 4-4 trump fit – See *English Bridge August 2019!* Before discussing some general questions thrown from the floor and from folks from home, I recited some of my favourite messages from members over the last 22 years, such as 'I plonked the ♥A on table, shut my eyes and saw the stiff K come down on my left' and some captured table chat such as:

'Dont keep bidding game'

'Which one?'

'The ones we went off in'

The hand at the start of this article was from the Sunday evening session for those players who had still not played enough bridge. I held the East hand and I could see at least 500 and possibly 800 or 1100 or more, so I doubled the 2♠ bid.

Dick Jordan (London) was in the South seat, partnering Joke Allen, BCL's technical support guru. The full deal is opposite.

Bridge Club Live offers

- Fast, fun & friendly bridge ;
- Use of Audio and Video chat;
- Dedication to Best Behaviour at Bridge and to fair play;
- Drop-in Drop-out Match Point Pairs and social games;
- Private social tables;
- Individual, Improvers and IMP Pairs Tournaments, and Teams events;
- Full programme of special competitions (Swiss Pairs, Leagues, KOs);
- Full bidding and play records;
- System cards;
- Forums & reunions;
- Free coaching by senior members;
- Free dedicated teaching area for teachers and students;
- Free participation in dedicated sessions for your F2F club;
- Clear graphics;
- Daily personal results;
- Messaging facility;
- Spectating and kibitzing;
- Grading scheme;
- 25 years of experience providing support to members.

South plays 2♠ dbld. West leads the ♦K

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

My partner led the ♦K and this was ruffed in dummy. The ♥A followed and then a heart ruff, a second diamond ruff, a second heart ruff, a third diamond ruff, and a third heart ruff. Then a successful club finesse and after ♣A, I had the last four tricks in trumps for 2♠ dbled+1 and a minus 870 score appeared on the Bridgmate. I sure like to show my partners something new!

A trump lead works better even though singleton trump leads usually turn out badly. If I then play out all my trumps to prevent any cross-ruffing, we could get, as I lead my last trump, to:

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

Declarer can take the last trump in hand and then run ♣J and ♣10 and take one trump, five clubs and ♥A for seven tricks and one off for -200 and still a very good score as the other tables saw E/W play in 4♥ and all but two pairs made it. Of course, declarer must unblock both the ♠J and the ♠10 from

dummy but should get the idea about what East is up to as soon as West shows out on the second round of trumps.

After three rounds of trumps, I would need to find the switch to the ♦A. This would probably be ruffed in dummy straight away, in which case, declarer can't now take more than two top clubs, ♥A and ♠9 in hand for up to three off and +800 for E/W, provided that West has kept diamonds and thrown hearts. If West has thrown a diamond, declarer can decline to ruff any diamonds and escape for two off for +500 to E/W, but it still beats the +420/450 available in hearts. Perhaps I should have let partner play in 4♥! □

CROSSWORD NO 34

Compiled by MERMAN

Answers from p57

1	W	H	I	F	F	4	M	5	S	6	C	A	7	M
	A	8	M	N	9	P	R	I	O	R	Y	U		
10	D	I	S	T	A	N	C	I	N	G				
11	I	S	T	H	M	I	I	S	12	C	G			
13	C	H	I	14	V	E	15	M	A	S	H	Y		
16	L	A	G	E	R	17	U	L	C	E	R			
	I	P	A	L	19	E	N	T	R	E	20	E		
21	M	A	T	C	H	B	O	O	K	S				
	I	22	D	E	R	A	I	L	S	Y	P			
23	T	O	D	O	B	24	D	U	S	T	Y			



Paul Bowyer's Blockages Quiz from page 8

Hand 1
South plays in 4♥.
West leads the ♠Q.

South	North
1♥	3♥
4♥	All Pass

♠ K 5 4
♥ A J 7 5
♦ Q J 6 5
♣ 10 8



♠ 8 6 2
♥ K Q 10 6 3
♦ A K
♣ K Q 6

Hand 2
South plays in 3NT.
West leads the ♥4.

South	North
1♣	1♦
1NT	3NT
All Pass	

♠ A 4 2
♥ J 6 5
♦ K J 7 5
♣ Q 5 3



♠ J 9 7
♥ A 7 2
♦ Q 10 8
♣ A K J 6

Your **Count and Plan** reveals plenty of winners (five hearts, four diamonds and at least one club). Meanwhile you have to deal with this decidedly awkward ♠Q lead through dummy's exposed king. How might you avoid four losers?

Your **Count and Plan** reveals six top tricks (one spade, one heart and four clubs) with diamonds able to be established for three more. The problem, as ever, is whether the opposition can run away with five tricks before you can establish nine.

What should you play from dummy at trick one? Suppose you play low from dummy and see East play the ♥10. Should you win this or duck this?

ANSWERS

Hand 1: This is horrible. Unlike a no trump hand, West cannot have led from the ♠AQJ, so playing the king is hopeless. Your only chance is that West has five spades and that East has precisely ♠Ax. That isn't all you need as East has to have the ♣A as well (or West would have an entry to give his partner a spade ruff).

You duck two rounds of spades, therefore, and are relieved that East has to play his ace on air at trick two. When East turns up with the ♣A as well you claim your game.

Lucky? For sure, but you must grab the arm of Lady Luck as she walks past your door.

Hand 2: It is against the odds that West has led from ♥KQxxx – the heart honours are likely to be split. It is best to play low from dummy at trick one and see what East does.

When East produces the ♥10 it is best not to duck. Sure, if hearts were 5-2 and East held the ♦A you'd be fine ... unless East found an embarrassing spade switch. Best is to take the ♥A, hoping to block the suit, and to knock out the ♦A. If the layout is as below you'd have found the only way to succeed. Note that if you duck the heart at trick one, East would return a heart; if you duck again, West would overtake and clear the hearts. The defence would have five tricks. □

South plays 4♥. West leads the ♠Q

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

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South plays 3NT. West leads the ♥4.

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

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Michael Byrne's Quiz from page 12

You open 1♥ and partner responds 1♠. What do you rebid?

		Hand 1	Hand 2	Hand 3	Hand 4
West	East	♠ 2	♠ A 7 6	♠ Q 3	♠ 3
1♥	1♠	♥ K Q 8 7 4	♥ A K 10 9 7 4	♥ A Q 8 7 6	♥ A K J 9 8 3 2
?		♦ A K Q J	♦ A Q J 6	♦ K J 9 5	♦ A Q J 10 5
		♣ Q J 2	♣ –	♣ A Q	♣ –

Hand 1 should rebid a simple 2♦. If partner passes this there will be no chance at all you have missed game, since he will be short in hearts (no simple preference), and your hand will not play particularly well in either no trumps or diamonds. Even if partner has as much as

♠KJ843 ♥6 ♦1073 ♣K754

(giving you 25 points between the two hands) the misfit means you will have no chance at all in 3NT.

Hand 2 can force to game with 3♦. You are a point short, it's true, but your fantastic shape more than makes up for it. You have a partial fit with partner, and can comfortably expect to make 4♥ whatever he has.

Hand 3 should rebid 2NT. The texture of the hand (8 out of 18 points in the short suits) makes this suitable for NT, and a 2♦ rebid could lead to a missed game facing say

♠KJ54 ♥2 ♦Q103 ♣J9543.

It also makes it easier to get to spades when that is right, and partner can always bid 3♥ over 2NT to show three-card support. If for some reason your side does belong in diamonds then partner can always bid the suit over 2NT.

Hand 4 can rebid 3♦, which will no doubt leave the bean counters suffering shock and horror – only 15 points! This hand could just bid 4♥ and put its cards away, but it costs nothing to bid 3♦ first before pulling to 4♥ to show 10 or 11 red cards. Hopefully partner will value the ♦K and ♥Q strongly if they have either, and a slam might be reached. The danger of just bidding 2♦ is you might be left to play there when partner has

♠Q7643 ♥7 ♦K93 ♣J8732

and explaining how 12 tricks were only made because of good breaks won't leave partner feeling great about life!

