

# ENGLISH BRIDGE

Festival of Bridge

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£120,000

GOAL  
£60,000

Bridge – It's a Big Deal  
raised £120,000 for



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**OVERSEAS CALENDAR 2025**

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15th Feb	5* Paloma Oceana Hotel Side Southern Turkey	Duplicate	up to 28 nts
11th Mar	4* Melia Hotel Benidorm Costa Blanca Spain	Duplicate & SM Bowls	up to 14 nts
27th Mar	4* Hotel Santana St Pauls Bay Malta	Duplicate & Tour	up to 14 nts
22nd Apr	4* La Zenia Hotel Orihuea Costa Spain	Duplicate & Tour	up to 14 nts
5th May	4* Melia Hotel Benidorm Costa Blanca Spain	SBU Congress	up to 7 nts
11th May	5* Mediterranean Hotel Rhodes Greece	Duplicate	up to 14 nts
27th May	4* Hotel Torretta Montecatini Tuscany Italy	Duplicate & Tour	up to 10 nts
3rd Jun	4* Hotel Onabrava & Spa Santa Susanna Spain	Duplicate & Tour	up to 14 nts
5th Jul	3* Westhill Country Hotel Jersey	Duplicate & Tour	up to 7 nts
10th Aug	3* Ramsey Park Hotel Ramsey Isle of Man	Duplicate	up to 7 nts
27th Aug	4* Hotel Torretta Montecatini Tuscany Italy	Duplicate & Tour	up to 10 nts
21st Sep	4* Koral Beach Hotel Oropesa del Mar Spain	Duplicate & SM Bowls	up to 21 nts
24th Sep	4* Melia Hotel Benidorm Costa Blanca Spain	Irish Bridge Festival	up to 14 nts

**UK CALENDAR 2025**

19th Jan	Marsham Court Hotel Bournemouth	Duplicate	up to 5 nts
6th Feb	Holiday Inn Hotel & Spa Winchester	Duplicate	up to 4 nts
24th Feb	Charlecote Pheasant Hotel Stratford-upon-Avon	Duplicate	up to 4 nts
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24th Mar	Dunston Hall Hotel & Spa Nr Norwich	Duplicate	up to 4 nts
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14th May	The Royal Hotel Bideford North Devon	Duplicate & Walk	up to 4 nts
26th May	Belton Woods Hotel Grantham	Duplicate & Golf	up to 4 nts
1st Jun	Croyde Bay Resort Hotel North Devon	Duplicate	up to 6 nts
16th Jun	Old Swan Hotel Harrogate	Duplicate	up to 5 nts
24th Jun	Marsham Court Hotel Bournemouth	Duplicate	up to 5 nts
11th Jul	The Lambert Hotel Watlington Thame	Duplicate	up to 4 nts



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# English Bridge

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Education, in ascending difficulty:

EBU News Quiz   Features   Laws & Ethics   Reports



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**AA** **WORTHING 2025 BRIDGE EVENTS** **AA**

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## Steering the EBU

The last year has seen several very exciting events, but perhaps the most innovative and extraordinary has been the fantastic response to the late Tony Russ's initiative to both raise the profile of the game, through a festival, and to raise money for Cancer Research UK (CRUK). Our clubs and counties organised a variety of events – café bridge, new teaching sessions, special tournaments etc – and we are immensely proud of what has been achieved. At the same time we are, of course, very grateful to all our staff and the army of volunteers who have given their time and effort so generously to this cause.

There are more details overleaf, but the big news is that the ambitious target to raise £60,000 has been exceeded by 100%! By the time you read this I will have had the great pleasure of presenting CRUK with a cheque for over £120,000. Our bridge community has not only raised the game's profile but has done so much good for the cause of cancer research. We are now planning celebrations for the centenary of bridge in 2025 and I look forward to a repeat of this enthusiasm and energy next year.

### 100% QUALIFICATION FOR THE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

The European Championships, held in June and July in Denmark, were also a moment of great triumph. The four teams (Open, Women's, Seniors and Mixed) qualified for the World Championships next year, while all five youth teams also qualified a few weeks later in Wroclaw. The venue for the Youth

World Championships has yet to be decided as I write, but the adult World Teams Championships will return to Herning in Denmark. That we qualified across the board is fantastic news, and that the venue is Denmark is more than convenient!

### OUR WONDERFUL WOMEN'S TEAM

The World Bridge Games, aka the Bridge Olympiad, takes place every four years. This year the venue was Buenos Aires and, as David Bird writes in the report on p20, our Women's team did fantastically well, just missing out on a semi final place by 2 IMPs against the mighty China. It was Nicola Smith's 26th time representing England in a world championship. Congratulations to all our teams.

### SENDING OUR TOP PLAYERS TO EVENTS

Most teams comprise six players and a non-playing captain. The cost can very great, and we are unable to fund all the teams for all their expenses. The partly-funded teams are supported through a combination of self-funding and sponsorship and we remain both reliant upon fundraising and very grateful to all our sponsors. The Youth teams, who work incredibly hard to raise funds, are also supported by the Junior Squad Simultaneous Pairs which takes place in the first week of February and I do hope your club takes part.

### PLANNING FOR 2025

By the time you read this we will have begun engaging with all our shareholders about our plans and goals for 2025 and will be publishing the details of those plans in the coming months. □





# BRIDGE - IT'S A BIG DEAL!

**THANK YOU to everyone who organised & joined in the *Bridge - It's a Big Deal!* Festival of Bridge**  
**Your effort and contributions made the festival a great success!**

**Thousands of you took part in over 300 events across England and Scotland raising over £100,000! (target was £60K)**

This achievement couldn't have been reached without the effort of the volunteers, clubs & counties around the country that have put in time and effort. Thank you to every single person who has been involved, from larger national events to the smaller ones. This has been a great fund-raising effort, but also has raised the profile of bridge throughout the country.

The festival, which also included many Scottish events, saw excellent collaboration between clubs and counties organising joint events and both affiliated and non-affiliated clubs taking part.

### Map of Events Over 300 in total



*Bridge - It's a Big Deal!* was the brainchild of former EBU Vice-Chair Tony Russ. Tony had a vision of bringing bridge players together to celebrate this wonderful game while also raising money for a great cause.

Tony himself was diagnosed with cancer earlier this year and sadly passed away this August. He will be greatly missed but his legacy will remain in the success of this event for the whole bridge community.

**Tony Russ**  
Former EBU  
Vice-Chair



**THANK YOU to the bridge professionals who supported the event.**



"A massive well done to you and all involved. Great support for a great cause"



"That is just amazing. What a great event, fantastic participation by so many people. Proud to have been a small part of it"



**BRIDGE**  
  
**IT'S A BIG DEAL!**



"A great day of bridge and a successful fundraiser for a worthwhile charity."



Chelmsford Bridge Club held a charity event for Bridge is a Big Deal. Players' contributions were matched by the club.



Wigan Bridge Club: "Great fun had by all on our fundraising event on our fund-raising event on Sunday 15th September. Many thanks to our very generous members."



Abbey Smith: "From the taster sessions I have filled two new beginner courses, the social bridge attracted some new players to duplicates"



Kings Sutton: "All in all it was a most enjoyable evening and one which a number of players asked to be repeated and perhaps made an annual event"



RESEARCH FUNDS RAISED	
THURSDAY SIMS (incl table money)	£ 200
TUES CHICAGO MIRAHEIM etc.	420
SAT DUPLICATE	288
OTHER DONATIONS	80
	25

Pocklington Bridge club, in collaboration with the Dunnington and Allerthorpe clubs, have run a series of events – we have 11 potential future members



"Over 80 visitors, of whom 15 expressed some interest in playing bridge at the club, or attending beginners' lessons this autumn"



See additional photos on the EBU website: [ebu.co.uk/festival-hub](http://ebu.co.uk/festival-hub)

# English Bridge Union members are powering progress



Supported by



**£8**

the cost of a cardholder, could buy a box of microscope slides so our scientists can study the inner workings of cells. The more we understand about cancer, the more ways we have to beat it.



**£50**

the price of a club table, could buy special chemicals called restriction enzymes. They act like molecular scissors to cut long strands of DNA, allowing our scientists to find out more about the genes that can cause cancer.



**£120**

the cost of six table covers, could fund a research nurse for one day. Research nurses are clinical experts who raise awareness of our trials and support patients.



**£400**

or the cost of 10 board cases, could buy a microscope camera. It means our scientists can take images of cancer cells in tumour tissue samples. They share them with researchers across the world, uniting to beat cancer.



**£4,000**

or around the cost of a Duplimate VI Dealing Machine, could fund a research group at the Francis Crick Institute for one day as they work collaboratively to unravel the mysteries behind cancer and other diseases, improving people's lives worldwide.



Cancer Research UK is the world's leading cancer charity. Over the last 40 years, cancer survival in the UK has doubled.

Cancer Research UK's ambition is to accelerate progress and see 3 in 4 patients surviving the disease by 2034.

The support of the individuals, communities, groups and corporates coming together, like the English Bridge Union, can help the charity towards this vision.

**Cancer Research UK**



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**Together we are beating cancer**

## The Festival Team

An enthusiastic team put many hours of planning and work behind the scenes into creating a fun and engaging event nationwide. We hope to bring you many future initiatives and will incorporate the learnings from this year. The team was made up of (from left to right); Samantha Kelly (Communications Officer), Fairlie Ruggles (Media/Marketing Advisor), Jonathan Lillycrop (Club Liaison Officer), Diana Nettleton (Board Member), Gordon Rainsford (Chief Executive), Espen Gisvold (EBU Member).





## Can you hear me?



Have you ever had a student fall asleep during your lesson? Or found they are watching the cricket on their phone under the table? Chatting quietly with their neighbour while you spout bridge wisdom? I certainly have. Adults may have more maturity and social inhibitions than children, but they get bored and distracted just as easily. How do we forestall it? Even the best bridge lesson imaginable can be lost if we don't make good use of one of our greatest assets – ourselves. How we stand, speak and interact in the classroom can make an average lesson sing and an outstanding one fall out of tune.

Where do you place yourself? It's not hard if you are teaching four in a home but if you have three or more tables in a larger room it's worth some thought. It's natural to place yourself to one side of the whiteboard and I recommend staying right there for this part of the lesson. Sometimes teachers rely on the graphics to focus students' attention and wander round the room as they're speaking. This is not ideal for the average bridge learner for whom hearing is often the primary concern. It is also easier from the front to catch faces showing puzzlement or ennui – you can then adjust your pace. Resist, if you can, the temptation to feel it is more important to 'get through' a topic than to ensure you are taking the class with you. If you are lucky enough to have a helper, station them at the back.

This plenary section runs a risk of enabling low level whispering – *what's the contract? who's the dealer? how many points do you need?* Even when it's on-topic, you've not only lost the attention of those talking but also of their neighbours. Partly because I don't have A1 hearing myself, I call this the point of zero tolerance. If anyone says anything (other than asking a question of you), I intervene. It's a truth universally acknowledged that if they don't know something then others in the class will also need clarification. Pounce on this – '*Jane, can I help you?*' and you kill two birds with one stone.

But that is the easy bit. Transitioning to a class activity can be more tricky. At one small signal the class erupts into chatter – you might turn your back to pick up boards or bend to your computer and you signal the plenary is over. Make sure it really is, as calling for quiet again is clumsy but you can't not do it. Shouting instructions over chatter – *don't start playing until I've checked your bidding! – North is by the window! – there is no overcalling on these boards!* – risks important things being missed.

Once they are playing, rather than being entirely static I become entirely active, prowling round the tables. This enables people to ask for help and you can hear conversations, one of the best ways of assessing learning. When you want to call the class back together, return to your position at the front.

Some teachers (your author included) love the sound of their own voice so make sure you use it to its full potential. Ask a friend to sit in and comment on your clarity and pace. Use range, only projecting fully for key points but drop the level at other times. Lower tones can be more effective at building concentration. Too consistent a tone can be boring, soporific or grating. In my experience hearing is not so much impaired by low volume as by lack of clarity in diction and background noise. It is perhaps not natural to make a bridge lesson funny but if you have the knack, use it – if not try and talk through a smile for a lighter tone.

Adults differ from children in one curious respect. They have an automatic, uncritical 'buy-in' to their teachers. I've rarely heard an adult student criticise their bridge teacher. They like to validate their decision to take the course perhaps? This tendency puts a greater onus on us as teachers to be reflective about our practices – to teach to the inner disengaged child rather than the outwardly respectful adult. Sounds complicated but if we relish the glorious unpredictability of teaching a class face-to-face – keeping a number of strategies up our sleeves – all will be well. □

## BID AND NATTER

Hats off to Stratford-upon-Avon Bridge Club who have introduced a new type of assisted play session. Bid and Natter is not a discussion about what's for dinner, but a chance to bed down bidding knowledge.

After a player makes a bid they sit quietly while the other three players at the table discuss what they believe the bid means in terms of points and shape. After hearing the discussion the bidder can leave the bid on the table or undo and try an alternative. The next player then bids and again the other three at the table natter about the meaning of this bid (including passes). This continues until there are three passes and the play and scoring follows as normal.

The bridge hands played were specifically selected to cover most of the topics in EBED's Year 1 and 2 Red and Green books.

The sessions were well attended with four or five full tables at each. Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive and the club has been asked for more. If you run assisted play sessions at your club why not try Bid and Natter at one of the sessions and see what you think?



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## LICENSED BRIDGE

WHEN you see the 'LB' sign in an advertisement in the magazine, it means that:

- The organisers of the holiday have applied for, and received, a licence from the EBU.
- They may choose to give Master Points in accordance with EBU scales.
- These Master Points will be accepted and added to player records.
- The bridge will be played in line with EBU regulations and bye-laws, thus affording all players the protection of playing within the jurisdiction of the EBU.

All county events advertised have an EBU licence.

**NOTE:** Members playing in events licensed by another National Bridge Organisation will not be able to have Master Points credited to their records save for events in Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland, New Zealand and Australia. The conversion of Green Points to Gold Points will only happen at English events, the BGB Gold Cup and Home Internationals.



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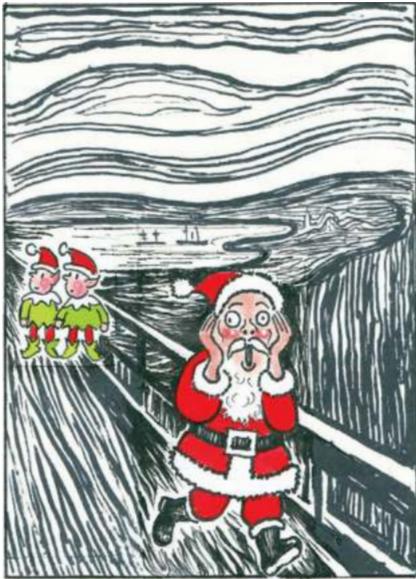
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# CAPTION COMPETITION

Send your entries for the cartoon to the left by email to [lou@ebu.co.uk](mailto:lou@ebu.co.uk) or Editor, Raggett House, Langport, Somerset, TA10 0DD by 31st December. Thank you for all the captions I received for the one below. Congratulations to Kevin Sullivan for his brilliant offering – and my favourite – shown beneath the picture. Other close contenders were Frank Fallon's rather naughty 'Well known for bringing a good pair to any team event'; Chris Duncan's 'She never bothers to alert a jump to a minor'; and James Andrews' 'Just like her bidding, she's always too high'.



*She's the TD's nightmare; insists on doing this every time she makes a slam*

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## CROSSWORD NO 45

Compiled by **MERMAN**      Answers online, p46

1		2		3		4	5		6
	7							8	
9				10					
11									
			12	13	14				
15							16		
		17		18					
19						20			
	21								
22									

### ACROSS

- Us and them fighting back, fit as a fiddle and showing bottle (10)
- I'm just up – wandering around in something like a onesie (8)
- Advance to oppose right's emergence (4)

- I opened in diamonds (5)
- Arsenal mostly play in them (6)
- Heartless shrubby label (6)
- Dropped a club to finish the hand (6)
- Moving at first from one side to the other, molten rivers of precious metal (6)
- Animal pair dancing tango to start with (5)
- What goes into new shoe? (4)
- Chicago Cats on 42nd Street (8)
- The drudgery involved in the professor's vital study (10, two words)

### DOWN

- Dated a lamp that's been badly fitted (10)
- Getting the best signal, one day North will be asked for diamond lead (5)
- Not one idea put into the latest news report (6)
- One responsible for seraglio had lunch out, having left for European Union (6)
- Slipped the top behind the covers (4)
- It's an awful sorrow the way the suit split (10)
- Getting into difficulty with oboe player's final cadenza – bottle required (8)
- Jockey Lester is indefatigable (8)
- With a change of suit, one of the thirteen is in danger (6, two words)
- Fundamentally incredible daftness in one's conduct? Yes
- Loves to have endless love around moulding (5)
- Said world to have turned (4)

## PLAYERS OF THE YEAR 2023-24



Congratulations to Peter Crouch and Simon Cope, joint winners of the final Player of the Year Championship, held in 2023-24.

The Championship awarded points to players finishing in the top positions of major competitions, and the two topped the table with 50 points after winning three of the events – the Premier League, Spring Fours and Crockfords Cup, and runners-up in the Gold Cup.

The full list of points scorers, and information on the 2023-24 competition, which started with the Gold Cup finals, can be seen on the Player of the Year page: [www.ebu.co.uk/competitions/player-of-the-year-championship](http://www.ebu.co.uk/competitions/player-of-the-year-championship).

		Gold Points
1=	Simon Cope	50
1=	Peter Crouch	50
3=	Alexander Allfrey	34
3=	Espen Erichsen	34
3=	Richard Plackett	34
3=	Andrew Robson	34
7	Andrew McIntosh	23
8	John Atthey	20
9=	Andrew Black	17
9=	David Gold	17
9=	Tom Paske	17

### \*NEW\* PAIRS PLAYER OF THE YEAR

The Player of the Year Award has been replaced by the Pairs Player of the Year which covers 11 events this year, and will give a wider range of players the opportunity to win. All the competitions which contribute are open to everyone and do not require qualification in earlier heats. Further details & qualifying events: [www.ebu.co.uk/article/pairs-player-year-award](http://www.ebu.co.uk/article/pairs-player-year-award)

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## SASSOON ON ONLY CONNECT



Watch bridge player and tournament director Rob Sassoon to find out how he and his friends fare on BBC 2's quiz show *Only Connect*. Called *The Tea Totallers* owing to their avid tea drinking, the team are back again over New Year, and recent shows are available through BBC iPlayer. We wish them

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## LAWS & ETHICS UPDATE

Clubs should be mindful that the NGS regulations for exemptions should be followed when a tournament director or host/mentor opts to exclude themselves from the scheme for a session.

1. Exemptions are limited to one player or pair in an event and is at the discretion of the event organiser.
2. Exemptions are only for unfamiliar partnerships: a partnership may not exempt a session if they have previously played together three or more times.
3. To use the exemption, the player seeking to exempt themselves must complete a form which is available in their My EBU members' area. This has to be done as soon as the host/TD knows that they will be playing and, in any case, no more than 30 minutes after the start of the game (this 30-minute leeway is offered for the benefit of hosts who are not confirmed to be playing until the end of the first round of the game).
4. This form must be filled out in addition to selecting the appropriate option in the scoring program.

Clubs do have the option to run code 12 sessions which count for master points but are excluded from NGS. When running these sessions clubs must make all players aware in advance that the session will not count for NGS.



## MEMBER SANCTIONED

A Disciplinary Committee accepted the guilty plea and sanctioned a member who admitted to rude behaviour towards opponents and the tournament director after a ruling was given that the member disagreed with. The behaviour was considered to be in breach of the Best Behaviour at Bridge policy and therefore an offence under paragraph 3.2 (ii) of the Disciplinary Rules.

The sentence imposed was a nine-month suspension of membership which was reduced as required by Rule 10.2 (vii) to three months for an admission of guilt in response to the letter seeking comment.

## MEMBER SUSPENDED

A Disciplinary Committee accepted a guilty plea and sanctioned a member who admitted to abusing NGS exemptions. The behaviour was considered to be in breach of the NGS regulations and therefore an offence under paragraph 3.2 (ii) of the Disciplinary Rules. The member was suspended from EBU membership for 18 months, reduced to six months as required by Rule 10.2(vii) for admission of guilt in response to the letter seeking comment.

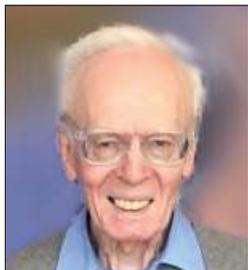
The disciplinary committee considered the member's position as a TD and as an experienced player aggravating factors in determining the sentence. The panel directed that the sanction would be communicated under Rules 13.2 – 13.4 but publication under Rule 13.1 would indicate the nature of the offence but not identify the offender in accordance with Rule 10.2(vii).

## MEMBER REPRIMANDED

A Disciplinary Committee met to consider the charge that Gad Chadha uttered an expletive directed at his partner during the Open Trials that could be heard clearly by his screenmate and an opponent at a neighbouring table.

The behaviour was considered to be in breach of the Best Behaviour at Bridge policy and therefore an offence under paragraph 3.2 (ii) of the Disciplinary Rules. The panel found Mr Chadha guilty and imposed a three-month suspension of membership which was successfully appealed. The Appeal Committee decided that a reprimand was the standard sanction based on sentencing guidelines published in the Disciplinary Panel Manual and thus substituted a formal reprimand as the sentence. The panel directed that the normal publications be made.

The panel considered mitigating circumstances and decided to suspend the sentence for nine months, only to be actioned in the event of a further proven offence. The panel directed that the nature of the offence be published under Rule 13.1 but not identify the offender in accordance with Rule 10.2(vii).



**BOB ROWLANDS**  
1942 – 2024

English bridge has 'lost one of its greats' wrote Andrew Robson. Bob Rowlands played in five Camrose matches winning all of them. Despite retiring from international competition aged 34, Rowlands won an impressive number of domestic tournaments including the Gold Cup, the Crockfords Cup, the Spring Foursomes and the Lederer Memorial Trophy among others and had great success with his regular partner Peter Lee.

He was a member of the EBU's Law and Ethics Committee for four years and the Selection Committee from 1984 to 2005. At the time he was the youngest person to become a grand master and even now is still in the top ten of all time EBU master point winners, despite not playing much in the last 10 years.

He was very supportive of younger players. He was awarded the Diamond Award in 2016, not just for his many successes but also for his involvement in junior bridge. Earlier he received the John Armstrong Award for those who play bridge in the best spirit. Andrew Robson described him as 'a lovely man who loved to chat' with 'a dry sense of humour very common among top bridge players'.



**JEFFREY ALLERTON**  
1970 – 2024

Jeffrey Allerton was the husband and frequent bridge partner of Frances Hinden, who he met when they were both reading Mathematics at Cambridge and with whom he won a long list of tournaments including Brighton's Harold Poster Cup and the Four Star Teams as well as the Hubert Phillips Bowl Knockout Pivot Teams four times.

Jeffrey won the 1994 European Junior Championship and the 1995 World Junior Championship with his partner Tom Townsend, along with Danny Davies, Philip Souter and the Hackett twins, Jason and Justin. Jeffrey was the only member to remain an amateur, choosing to have a 'proper job' as a successful accountant.

He represented England in the 2018 European Championships and the 2019 Bermuda Bowl, partnering Chris Jagger. Despite preferring a strong no trump, he played a weak no trump with Chris, producing exciting swings.

His domestic successes included the Gold Cup as well as the Spring Foursomes twice, latterly in 2022. The last win was particularly noticeable because he had just completed a course of radiotherapy and chemotherapy.

He was, as Julian Pottage wrote, 'quieter and more introverted than many bridge players', but a born gentleman who would cross London to carry his future wife's suitcase.

presence with a cheery grin that perhaps belied her prowess at the bridge table – something she would take full advantage of. She was a grand master who won the National Womens Teams (Whitelaw Cup) in 2004 and was part of Taunton's team that won the Nicko Plate in 2012.

She was always keen to popularise the game and help new players, spearheading a *Fast Forward to Bridge* course in Somerset.



**SHEILA CODA**  
1943 – 2024

Sheila Coda was a stalwart of Somerset bridge, recognised by the EBU's Dimmie Fleming award in 2019. She worked tirelessly for the county administration and represented the county for years. Sheila was a charming and diminutive

## COMPETITION NEWS

### WINTER MIDWEEK ONLINE CONGRESS

This new congress is imminent, taking place from the 3-5 December, on RealBridge. It takes the place of the previous Seniors Congress and is open to all EBU members. It is an excellent opportunity to try out a green point event from the comfort of your own home. What have you got to lose? Why not give it a try?

If you have not played in an EBU event before you may enjoy either the Swiss Pairs or Swiss Teams. For the Swiss Teams event, you and your partner will need teammates.

Swiss events are a special type of competition designed so that you play other players of your own level. The first round you will have a random starting position and could play against anybody else who has entered. However, the result of your first round determines who you play against next. Each round progresses in the same way.

### YEAR END LONDON 2024

Join us between Christmas and New Year (27-30 December) for four fabulous days of bridge.

The Year End Congress will remain in London, returning to the popular venue of Marlborough Primary School, near South Kensington tube station. This was the venue for the Easter Congress earlier this year.

As usual there will be stratified Swiss Pairs and stratified Swiss Teams. There will also be Mixed/Open Pairs and Improver events.

### ALGARVE CONGRESS

The first Overseas Congress of 2025 will be taking place in Vila Galé Tavira, Tavira, Portugal, from 3-10 February and is sponsored by First For Bridge.

Join us for a fabulous week at the elegant Hotel Vila Galé Tavira, ideally located in the centre of the town. It is just 100m from the nearest shops, tapas bars and restaurants and close to the stunning Ria Formosa Natural Park. The highly rated hotel is built in traditional Portuguese style and offers excellent facilities including indoor and outdoor swimming pools and a spa, making it an ideal location for a winter bridge congress.

For all events, you can book online via My EBU. Or, please email [comps@ebu.co.uk](mailto:comps@ebu.co.uk) or call 01296 317203.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### Red – F2F Events

#### ■ DECEMBER 2024

- 3-5 Winter Midweek Congress, RealBridge
- 14 OODGP Swiss Teams, RealBridge
- 13-15 Channel Trophy, YCBC, London
- 27-30 Year End Congress, Marlborough Primary School, London, SW3

#### ■ JANUARY 2025

- 3-5 2nd World Online Womens Teams, Realbridge
- 3-5 Camrose Trophy 1st weekend, Prestwick
- 3-5 Manchester Congress, Altrincham
- 3-5 Midlands Counties Congress, Solihull
- 10-12 Teltscher Trophy Trials, York
- 13-16 British Winter Sims, F2F, BBO, RealBridge
- 17-19 Lady Milne Trials, York
- 19 Jack High Pairs, Realbridge
- 25-26 Chester Congress, Deva Bridge Club
- 26 OODGP Swiss Pairs, RealBridge

#### ■ FEBRUARY 2025

- 1-2 Tollemache Finals, Telford Hotel
- 3-10 EBU Overseas Congress, Algarve
- 3-6 Junior Squad Sim Pairs, various clubs
- 7-9 Harrogate Spring Congress, Harrogate
- 8 Jack High Pairs, Realbridge
- 14-16 Junior Camrose & Peggy Bayer, Newport
- 16 OODGP Swiss Pairs, RealBridge
- 22-23 Ranked Masters Pairs, RealBridge
- 25 Masters Pairs, F2F, BBO, RealBridge
- 28-2 North Devon Congress, Barnstaple

#### ■ MARCH 2025

- 1-2 Norfolk GP Congress, Norwich
- 1-2 Wiltshire GP Congress, Bath
- 1 National Schools Championships, Loughborough
- 1 Manchester GP Swiss Pairs, Altrincham
- 1 Leicestershire GP Swiss Pairs, Leicester
- 2 Kent GP Swiss Pairs, Tunbridge Wells
- 2 Herts GP Swiss Pairs, St Albans
- 3-6 Club Stratified Sims, various clubs
- 7-9 Camrose Trophy 2nd weekend, Belfast
- 8-9 Hampshire GP Congress, tbc
- 8 Jack High Pairs, Realbridge
- 15 OODGP Swiss Teams, RealBridge
- 23 National Pairs regional finals, online
- 30 Jack High Pairs, Realbridge

#### ■ APRIL 2025

- 5-6 Portland Bowl Finals, London
- 6 Portland Pairs, RealBridge
- 7-10 British Spring Sim Pairs
- 11-13 Devon GP Congress, Torquay
- 11-13 Lady Milne Trophy, Bristol
- 12-13 National Pairs Final, RealBridge
- 18-21 Easter Festival, London

KEEP CHECKING THE WEBSITES FOR LATEST INFO



# 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](http://www.ebu.co.uk/members)

## London Year-End Congress

27 – 30 December  
Marlborough Primary School,  
London SW3



**Stratified Swiss Pairs**  
**Stratified Swiss Teams**  
**Mixed or Open Pairs**  
**Jack High Swiss Pairs**

Pairs  
POTYA

## Overseas Congress

3 – 21 February  
Hotel Vila Gale, Tavira, Portugal



**Pre-Congress Pairs – BP**  
**Swiss Pairs, Swiss Teams – GP**  
**Open Pairs – GP**  
**Pivot Teams – BP**  
**IMP Pairs – BP**

## Harrogate Spring Congress

7 – 9 February  
Cedar Court Hotel, Harrogate



**Swiss Pairs**  
**Swiss Teams**  
**Really Easy Pairs – LP**

Pairs  
POTYA

## Ranked Masters Pairs

22 – 23 February  
RealBridge

Since 2019, 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

25 February  
For players below Regional Master  
Various clubs, BBO, RealBridge

The Masters Pairs will be held at host clubs as well as online. 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](http://www.ebu.co.uk/masters-pairs#clubs)

## Easter Festival

18 – 21 April  
Marlborough Primary School,  
London SW3



**Stratified Swiss Teams**  
**Swiss Pairs**  
**Open Pairs – BP**  
**Championship Prs – GP Top ½**

Pairs  
POTYA

## REGULAR EBU EVENTS at clubs (SIMS) and/or on RealBridge (red)

Super Sunday Special, every Sunday – LP - RealBridge

13-16 Jan British Winter Sims – BP	15 Mar, OODGP Swiss Pairs – GP	21-24 Jul British Summer Sims – BP
19 Jan, Jack High Pairs – BP	30 Mar, Jack High Pairs – BP	2 Aug, OODGP Swiss Pairs – GP
26 Jan, OODGP Swiss Pairs – GP	7-10 Apr British Spring Sims – BP	31 Aug, OODGP Swiss Teams – GP
3-6 Feb Junior Squad Sims – BP	26 Apr, OODGP Swiss Pairs – GP	1-4 Sep EBED Autumn Sims – BP
8 Feb, Jack High Pairs – BP	11 May, OODGP Swiss Pairs – GP	6-9 Oct Autumn Sims – BP
16 Feb, OODGP Swiss Pairs – GP	12-15 May EBED Spring Sims – BP	11 Oct, OODGP Swiss Pairs – GP
3-6 Mar Club Stratified Sims – BP	7 Jun, OODGP Swiss Teams – GP	23 Nov, OODGP Swiss Pairs – GP
8 Mar, Jack High Pairs – BP	12 Jul, OODGP Swiss Pairs – GP	6 Dec, OODGP Swiss Pairs – GP

# CRETE OVERSEAS CONGRESS

by Chris Benneworth

Over 80 guests ranging in age from 23 to 91 joined us for the EBU Autumn Overseas Congress, held in Crete. Regulars were joined by players for whom this was their first Congress – we hope they enjoyed the experience of competitive but friendly bridge.

Kernos Beach Hotel, on the outskirts of Malia, was well equipped with loungers and sun-shades on the poolside and beach, so that those who wanted to bask in the sunshine could enjoy it, while there was plenty of space for those who simply wanted to enjoy the warm air. The quality and range of food in the restaurants, and willingness of the hotel staff, was fantastic. There was a range of shops, restaurants and bars within walking distance, while further on were the old village centre of Malia and the impressive ruins of Malia Palace, the third largest Minoan palace in Crete. The hotel proved to be an excellent base for those who wished to travel a little further afield – possibly using local buses into

the capital, while the Happy Train gave the opportunity to see Malia and the nearby coastal villages or take a ride into the mountains ringing the coast. The organised day trip to the Minoan Palace of Knossos was very popular – a guided tour around the famous ruins, with the chance to visit the archaeological museum in Heraklion afterwards or simply browse the old town and its port.

The bridge programme is well established. After the pre-congress pairs, the first two days see ten 8-board matches of Swiss Pairs, then three single session midweek events, with the congress ending with ten 8-board matches of Swiss Teams. The Swiss events are green-pointed. Nichola Cockerill-Smith & Stuart Davies started the event by winning the pre-congress pairs, and ended by winning the Swiss Teams with Catherine Thompson & Lesley Bridson. The Swiss Pairs was won by Roberta Arundel & David Linehan. Special mention must also go to Andrew Urbanski & Colin Jones, who were runners-



up in both Swiss events. Full results and pictures of all the winners can be found on the EBU website at [www.ebu.co.uk/results/1467](http://www.ebu.co.uk/results/1467).

We were enormously grateful to the Greek Bridge Federation, who loaned the equipment for the event, and especially to Ioannis Kotsopoulos, who organised its transfer to and from the hotel. As a small thank you, eight guests from Heraklion BC played in the pivot teams, open pairs and IMP pairs. Steve Cane provided some words of welcome in Greek. Mother and daughter pair Evgenia Pepisinaki & Evagellia Petraki won the open pairs.

The hand which generated most discussion at the congress was this one, board 24 from the pivot teams. As West you are the opener and hold:

♠8 ♥KQ10976542 ♦– ♣AK5

What should you bid? Clearly 4♥ is likely to be making but it doesn't need much in partner's hand for a slam, so that rules out opening 4♥. This feels like an immensely strong hand, so it's tempting to open 2♣, forcing to game. However, this cannot be part of your partnership agreement, as it doesn't comply with the EBU definition of strong – the requirement to hold 16+ HCP or 13+ HCP in 10 cards in two suits – you only have 12 points in 12 cards in two suits! At the table, North also held a powerful hand and, while E/W can make 4♥, N/S have an excellent save in 4♠; this sometimes pushed E/W to 5♥, which can go off with best defence, but often made, even when doubled. You can see the full hand by following the links on the EBU results page.

Bookings are already strong for the next Overseas Congress – in the Algarve in early February – and we'd love to see you there. □



[www.ebu.co.uk](http://www.ebu.co.uk)



# EBU Congress Algarve

3rd - 10th February 2025

Vila Galé Tavira,  
Tavira, Portugal



8 days from £950<sub>pp</sub>



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## Women's team reach the QF

The World Bridge Games took place in Buenos Aires, Argentina in late October. Sixteen teams from each of the Open, Women's, Seniors and Mixed events would qualify from the 6-day round robin into the knock-out stages. All four of our teams started disappointingly. After two days, England were 14th out of 17 in Group A of the Open, 12th out of 24 in the Women's, 23rd out of 24 in the Seniors and 14th out of 29 in the Mixed. Things could only get better.

but Gulzar Bilal cashed the ♥A first. This reduced the number of club ruffs to just one, and England collected +400. (Bizarrely, as the suits lie, 6♣ is cold, but not 6♦.)

West	North	East	South
Sarki	D. Gold	Mohammad	Black
		Pass	1♠
2NT <sup>A</sup>	3♠	4♦	4♠
5♣	Pass	Pass	5♥
6♣	6♥	Dble	All Pass

### THE OPEN GAMES

In Round 6 England had this fine board against Pakistan:

Love All. Dealer East

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

♠ -  
♥ 9  
♦ A K J 8 4 2  
♣ K Q J 9 3 2

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

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

West	North	East	South
Paske	Bilal	McIntosh	Syed
		Pass	1♠
2♦	2♠	2NT	4♠
5♣	Dble	5♦	All Pass

There were two reasons why Tom Paske, in the open room, preferred a 2♦ overcall to an unusual no trump bid. He needed extra information to decide how high to go. Also, if he tipped his hand with a start like 4NT, the opponents might diagnose a cheap sacrifice. A club lead would have beaten 5♦,

In the closed room Andrew Black's descriptive bid of 5♥ was magnificent. Over West's 6♣, David Gold then went to 6♥ with his great heart fit. West cashed the ♦A and switched to the ♣J, hoping that East might overtake with the ace and deliver a spade ruff.

Not today! Black ruffed, crossed to the ♥Q and finessed the ♠Q, West showing out. A heart to the ace was followed by a finesse of the ♠9. After drawing East's last trump with the king, a diamond ruff in dummy was the entry for yet another spade finesse. That was +1210, for a splendid 17 IMP swing.

With the top eight teams to qualify for the knock-out, England improved to 9th place with two matches to play. They lost big IMPs on the early boards against the Netherlands, and Peter Crouch then attempted a recovery:



Open Team: Peter Crouch, Simon Cope, Tom Paske, Andrew McIntosh. Not pictured: David Gold, Andrew Black, Tommy Garvey (Coach)

## THE WOMEN'S GAMES

Our world-class women's team started slowly, as is their custom. After 13 matches they were 10th. Moving into top gear, they won their last ten matches, and most of them by large margins!

England finished the round robin in a splendid second place. Congratulations to Nicola Smith & Nevena Senior, who were 3rd out of 71 pairs in the Butler ranking, with an outstanding +0.96 IMPs average per board. It was Nicola's 12th time at the event, which was previously called the Olympiad. Helen Erichsen & Fiona Brown were 14th on +0.55 IMPs; Sally Brock & Heather Dhondy were 16th with +0.48 IMPs. Everyone did well!

We had visions of an eventual medal for our Golden Girls, but in the round-of-16 England trailed New Zealand by 110-60 with only one 16-board set to play. England scored +13, +10 and +10 on the first three boards. This was the killer board, near the end:

### N/S Game. Dealer North

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Paske</i>	<i>Van den Bos</i>	<i>McIntosh</i>	<i>Van Lankveld</i>
	1♠	Pass	2♣ <sup>A</sup>
Pass	2♦ <sup>A</sup>	Pass	2♥ <sup>A</sup>
Pass	2♠ <sup>A</sup>	Pass	2NT <sup>A</sup>
Pass	3♦ <sup>A</sup>	Pass	4♣
All Pass			

We can have nothing but admiration for the Netherlands' bidding. 2♣ was a game-forcing relay, and 2♦ showed a minimum, denying 4+ diamonds. 2♥ was a further relay, with the 2♠ response showing four hearts. 2NT asked partner to complete the jigsaw, and 3♦ painted a 5·4·2·2 shape. How wonderful is that? Andrew McIntosh led the ♦J and +620 was made.

West	North	East	South
<i>Van Prooijen</i>	<i>Cope</i>	<i>B. Drijver</i>	<i>Crouch</i>
	1♠	3♦	4♦
Dble	Rdble	5♦	6♠
Dble	All Pass		

Simon Cope won the club lead in dummy, and it seemed it would be +1660; declarer would discard a diamond from dummy on the fourth round of hearts. The cruel 4-0 trump break swung a huge number of IMPs the other way, and all hopes of England qualifying were over. On another day, Crouch's 6♠ might have launched a famous rescue operation.

Our congratulations go to David Gold & Andrew Black, who finished 3rd out of 51 pairs in the Butler ranking, with the exceptional average of +0.76 IMPs per board.

### E/W Game. Dealer North

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Brock</i>	<i>Terry</i>	<i>Dhondy</i>	<i>Wu</i>
	Pass	Pass	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♦	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♣	Pass	4♦	Pass
4♥	Pass	5♥	Pass
5NT	Pass	6♠	All Pass

Sally Brock won the ♥J lead with the king and played the ♠AK and a trump to North's jack. The ♣8 switch went to the 9, 10 and ace. Brock then cashed the ♦A and the last two trumps. South

## THE SENIORS GAMES

reduced to ♠QJ ♥1085. When the ♥Q and ♥7 were led, North showed out and dummy's ♥A won. The ♦K then forced South to abandon her ♥10 or a club from the QJ. That was +1430. Well played!

At the other table, 6♠ was bid, and the ♦5 led. Declarer did not find the winning line and England gained 17 IMPs. They took the sensational final session by 69-13 for a memorable 6 IMP win, and would face China in the quarter-finals.

It was déjà-vu against China. After five of the 16-board sessions, England trailed 140-108. This board comes from the last set:

**Love All. Dealer South**

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

West <i>Brock</i>	North <i>Liao</i>	East <i>Dhondy</i>	South <i>Wang</i>
			1NT
Pass	Pass	2♣ <sup>A</sup>	2♦
3♦	Pass	3♣	Pass
4♣	All Pass		

East's 2♣ showed the major suits. Five other declarers, including Ke Guo in this match, went down in 4♣. Could Heather Dhondy make it? The defenders played the ♦K and ♦Q, ruffed by declarer. The ♠Q was covered by the king and ace, North discarding a club. What now?

Heather played a spade to the 8 and 10, ruffing the ♦J return with her five. After a club to the queen and ace, she played the ♣J to South's king. On any return, she would be able to draw trumps and claim the remaining tricks.

That was 10 IMPs to England and a thrilling last set ended with the scores at a heart-breaking: China 157 England 155. As Mark Horton wrote in the daily bulletin, it would have made a worthy final.

The England Seniors team were never close to qualifying, having endured a flight cancellation and various illness problems. Let's enjoy a highlight from their 30-11 victory against Argentina:

**E/W Game. Dealer North**

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

West <i>Pryor</i>	North <i>Palazzo</i>	East <i>Scerri</i>	South <i>Macri</i>
	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♦	Pass	2♥ <sup>A</sup>	Pass
2♠ <sup>A</sup>	Pass	3♣	Pass
4♣	Pass	4♦	Pass
5♦	Pass	6♣	All Pass

Ed Scerri's 2♥ rebid was Kokish (either hearts or strong balanced). Malcolm Pryor's 2♠ was a relay, and 3♣ then promised at least 5-5 shape. Clubs were agreed, and two first-or-second round cue bids in diamonds paved the way to 6♣, easily made. Minor-suit slams are notoriously difficult to reach and this one was bid only twice in the Seniors championship. At the other table, Argentina made twelve tricks in 3NT, after a lead of the ♠A.

## Winners – World Bridge Games

	1st	2nd	3rd
Open	Poland	Italy	Switz'd
Women	Türkiye	Sweden	USA

## THE MIXED GAMES

The England Mixed team qualified comfortably in 6th place. Stefano Tommasini played well on this deal from a win against the USA:

**E/W Game. Dealer North**

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Tommasini</i>	<i>Hampson</i>	<i>M. Gold</i>	<i>Seamon-Molson</i>
	1♥	Pass	2♥
2♣	4♥	4♠	Dble
All Pass			

Hampson led the ♥2 to the king and ace, ruffed by declarer. After a trump to the king and a trump to North's ace, Tommasini won the heart return in dummy, pitching a diamond. When diamonds were played, South won the second round and returned a trump. Declarer then played a club to North's jack and dummy's ace. The finishing touch was the ♣9, run to North's king.

That was a triumphant +790, worth 12 IMPs against 2♣+2 at the other table. (Team member, Ben Norton, points out that if South forces with a third heart after winning with the ♦A, declarer will work on clubs before drawing the last trump.) 15 of the 28 tables saw North playing in hearts, and England's +790 was the second-best score on the board (after an 800 penalty from 5♥ doubled).

Diana Nettleton and Ben Norton were our top pair in the Butler rankings. They finished 9th out of 95 pairs, with the splendid average of +0.80 IMPs per board.

In the round-of-16, England faced France. At

half-time they led by 70-67, but eventually succumbed by 87-112. □



Women's Team: Derek Patterson (NPC), Sally Brock, Helen Erichsen, Nevena Senior, Nicola Smith, Heather Dhondy, Fiona Brown



Seniors Team: Tony Sowter, Ed Scerri, Malcolm Pryor (playing captain), Dave Robinson.  
Not pictured: Roger Bryant, Stephen Green



Mixed Team: Graham Osborne, Diana Nettleton, Ben Norton, Frances Hinden (playing captain), Marusa Gold. Not pictured: Stefano Tommasini

## Winners – World Bridge Games

	1st	2nd	3rd
Seniors	USA	India	France
Mixed	Poland	China	Germany

## GOLD CUP



The prestigious Gold Cup, organised by Bridge Great Britain, has been won by the *Gillis* team – Denis Bilde, Boye Brogeland, Simon Gillis, Christian Bakke & Zia Mahmood, pictured. Odin Svendsen also played in the team in earlier stages.

The team defeated Frances Hinden, Graham Osborne, John Atthey, Neil Rosen, Derek Patterson & Chris Jagger in the final, played at the Young Chelsea Bridge Club. The defeated semi-finalists were the *De Botton* and *Allfrey* teams.

## GERARD FAULKNER SALVER



The 2023-24 Seniors Knockout (Gerard Faulkner Salver) has finished. The team of Paul Hackett, John Holland, Alan Mould, Norman Selway, Sandra Penfold, & Brian Senior beat the team of Kay Preddy, Gerald Soper, Jeremy Willans & Colin Wilson.

## CROCKFORDS CUP



The Crockfords Cup final took place in mid-September and was won by the *Plackett* team. Andrew Robson, Alexander Allfrey, Peter Crouch & Simon Cope (pictured) played in the final. Richard Plackett and Espen Erichsen played in earlier rounds. The team won six matches in the final.

In second place was the *Hinden* team – John Atthey, Neil Rosen, Chris Jagger, Derek Patterson, Frances Hinden & Graham Osborne. In third place were the *Barton* team.

## CROCKFORDS PLATE

The Crockfords Plate – the consolation competition for those who lost in the round of 16 – was won by Jackie Davies, Ryan Stephenson, Nigel Dent & Jakub Mitke, ahead of the team of Miles Cowling, Derek Maggs, David S Jones, Graham Hartley & Tim Brierley.

## NATIONAL HANDICAP PAIRS



The National Handicap Pairs Championship was held in early September, with 12 clubs hosting heats around the country. This year the event was run as part of the Bridge – It's a Big Deal! Festival.

Congratulations to Catherine Thompson & Lesley Bridson from Harrogate Bridge Club, who finished in first place, with a handicapped score of 64.03%.

In second place were Frank Jenkinson & John Sagar from Workington Bridge Club. Barbara Adam & William Ewart from Wakefield Bridge Club came third.



## NORTHERN MIDWEEK CONGRESS



### SWISS TEAMS

The Northern Midweek Congress took place at the end of August. The Swiss Teams competition was won by the team of Richard Bowley, Simon Cope, James Thrower & Aleksandar Lishkov. In second place were the team of Martin Taylor, Justin Hackett, Clive Owen & John Sansom and in third were Neeraj Tanna, Claire Robinson, Duncan Thomas & Alex Wood.

### SWISS PAIRS



Aleksandar Lishkov & James Thrower were also the winners of the Swiss Pairs. In second place were Bob Loveridge & Nicholas Sutcliffe with John Atthey & Magnus Spence-Jones in third.

### OPEN PAIRS

Denis Talbot & Kathy Talbot won the Open Pairs. In second place were Simon Cope & Richard Bowley, ahead of third-placed pair Jackie Davies & Andy Baruch.



### JACK HIGH SWISS PAIRS



The Jack High Swiss Pairs was won by Roy Fey & Peter Jones. In second place were Karen Jones & Barbara Eastabrook, with Mark Hatfield & Robert Blackburn in third place.

## WBF ONLINE WOMEN'S TEAMS



Following the success of the inaugural event in February this year, the 2nd WBF Online Women's Teams event will take place from 3rd to 5th January 2025 on RealBridge.

This transnational tournament is a great opportunity for women players worldwide to participate in international competitive bridge without travel time or cost.

**For further information:**

<https://tinyurl.com/wbfwomensol2025>

## ONLINE ONE-DAY GREEN-POINTED SERIES

**Swiss Teams - September** – Trevor Ward & Rob Cliffe, playing with Derek Maggs & Jackie Davies won the event with five wins. The team just pipped, by one VP, the team comprising Stefano Tommasini & Stephen Kennedy and João Paulo Campos & Adriano Rodrigues.

**Swiss Pairs - October** – Paddy Murphy & Mark Roderick enjoyed a comfortable win, ahead of Owen Leigh & Colin Jones in second place and Bill Pencharz & Jerry Cope came third.

## ONLINE ONE-DAY BLUE-POINTED SERIES

**Jack High** – The EBU national event was run by Cumbria CBA and played on RealBridge in mid-September. The morning session was jointly won by Norman Stutters & Caroline Cooper (N/S) and Terry Carpenter & Stephen Coltman (E/W). The afternoon winners were David Hitcham & Ross Haddow (N/S) and Chris Diston & Georgie Bovill (E/W).





## Responder's rebids when opener is non-minimum

Following on from the previous article, we must now focus on auctions where opener has shown a non-minimum opening hand. This would be at least 15 or 16 HCP depending on the type of auction being discussed.

Here is a reminder about the patterns in the structure of a constructive auction:

- ❖ The opening bid is the start of the conversation.
- ❖ The response shows a willingness to engage in that conversation.
- ❖ Opener's rebid clarifies their hand type.
- ❖ Responder's rebid takes control of the auction, either by making a decision about where or how high to play or by asking an appropriate question.

And some general rules to help you decide what to do when rebidding as responder:

- ❖ Previously-bid suits are non-forcing (unless the auction is already game-forcing).
- ❖ NT bids are non-forcing (unless you are already known to have 25+ points combined).
- ❖ New suits are forcing (though sometimes not if your partner just bid NT)
- ❖ New suits at the three level are forcing to game.
- ❖ Responder's reverse is forcing to game.

Let's look at some examples. As you look through them, you will start to notice patterns. Don't worry about memorising what all of the bids mean! Just understanding the general principles about forcing and non-forcing bids will take you a long way.

### OPENER SHOWS 5-4 AND REVERSING VALUES

The first example occurs after you have made a 1-level response. Remember that reversing shows a good 16 or 17+ points; therefore, to force to game after opener has reversed, you only need 8/9+ points. Six or 7/8 points would be an invitational hand.

West	East
1♦	1♠
2♥	?

**Pass** = Doesn't exist – 2♥ is forcing!

**2♠** = Invitational with (5)6+ spades. If you only have five spades, it is either because your values are concentrated in the suit, such as:

♠AK753 ♥764 ♦32 ♣1095

or because you have no convenient alternative, such as:

♠KJ1063 ♥853 ♦K ♣8643.

**2NT** = Invitational and it must contain a club stop – the opponents are extremely likely to lead a club against a NT contract here! An example would be:

♠KJ73 ♥754 ♦643 ♣KJ10.

**3♣** = *Fourth suit forcing* as all three of the other suits have been bid in a constructive auction. Over a reverse, everyone plays this as game-forcing as you already have plenty of invitational bids available. As a new suit at the three level in this case, it looks game-forcing anyway! Hands that make such bids might be hands without a stop in the fourth suit:

♠AQJ6 ♥J86 ♦Q32 ♣5753

which would like to play in 3NT if opener has a club stop. Also hands that would like to right-side a NT contract when you hold an anti-positional club stop such as this hand:

♠QJ96 ♥J86 ♦Q32 ♣A53

where you would want your partner to be declarer in 3NT with:

♠108 ♥KQ75 ♦AJ1097 ♣Q2

to ensure a second stop on a club lead. There are also hands that want to know whether opener has any extra shape such as:

♠KQ1075 ♥75 ♦A4 ♣J1093

where you would like to know whether opener has three spades. Finally, hands where you know which suit should be trumps but would like to investigate slam, such as here:

♠A1083 ♥AKJ8 ♦Q3 ♣J107

A straightforward way of thinking about this is that fourth suit forcing bids show a hand that knows the partnership has a game on but still does not know what the final contract should be (or perhaps who should be declarer).

3♠ = Game-forcing with six spades. This one is less normal-looking but remember that you can already show an invitational hand by bidding 2♠, so the only reason to jump is if you are stronger and want to set the suit. This could be a hand such as

♠KQJ1084 ♥8 ♦K64 ♣1094.

3NT = To play (must contain a club stop!)  
Something like:

♠Q764 ♥763 ♦A6 ♣KJ106.

### Notes:

- ♣ The **lowest non-forcing bid** in each strain shows an invitational hand.
- ♣ **To bid no trumps** responder must have a **stop in the fourth suit** as the opponents are almost certainly going to lead that suit.

### BIDDING AFTER A GAME FORCE

In the next example, you make a 2-level response, so once partner reverses, you are already forced to game. Now, the schema is much simpler as no invitational bids are required.

West	East
1♦	2♣
2♥	?

2♠ = Fourth suit forcing. Remember that in auctions where you are already forced to game, all bids that are not game are looking for more information in order to make a final decision. Therefore, since 3♣, 3♦ and 3♥ all suggest the trump suit, they are available for use as slam tries: when the strain is known, the level must be in doubt; and if game is certain, the consideration must be about slam. Therefore, 2♠ can be used for all queries about shape with a hand such as

♠7432 ♥K53 ♦7 ♣AKJ107

in case opener is 1:5:6:1 or 4:4:5:0, otherwise looking for spade stops.

2NT = Slam interest with a spade stop, likely to be in the 13-15 range or with some doubt about strain. A hand such as:

♠KJ10 ♥64 ♦KQ7 ♣AQ1097

might bid this way; so could

♠A1096 ♥Q4 ♦K8 ♣A9743

which would be keen to play in 6♦ opposite a hand such as

♠K2 ♥AJ72 ♦AQJ1072 ♣5

or 6♣ opposite

♠2 ♥AJ72 ♦AQJ102 ♣KQ5

but happy to play in 3NT opposite

♠K2 ♥KJ72 ♦AQJ107 ♣QJ.

3♣/3♦/3♥ = As mentioned above, these are natural slam tries. A 3♣ bid might be:

♠743 ♥K3 ♦A7 ♣AKJ1074;

a 3♦ bidder:

♠643 ♥3 ♦K972 ♣AKJ74;

and a 3♥ bidder:

♠A64 ♥K972 ♦6 ♣AK742.

3NT = No slam interest with a spade stop, likely to be an upgraded nine or 10-12 HCP. An example of a hand that could bid 3NT here would be:

♠KQ8 ♥742 ♦62 ♣AJ983.

### Notes:

- ♣ **To bid no trumps responder must have a stop in the fourth suit**, as the opponents are almost certainly going to lead that suit.
- ♣ **To discourage opener from bidding again, the only non-forcing bids are game bids**; the auction is already game-forcing, so the weakest possible action is to bid a game.

### OPENER REBIDS FIRST SUIT WITH A JUMP

In the next example auction, opener has shown 16-18 (or has upgraded with 15 HCP) and 6+ cards in the first-bid suit. Responder may game-force with 8+, especially as space is getting tight...

West	East
1♣	1♠
3♣	?

Pass = This time it **does** exist. 3♣ is **not forcing**. If you replied 1♠ with a minimum hand this may be your best spot.

3♦/3♥ = Game-forcing as it's a new suit at the three level. **It does not promise a 4-card suit**: remember that opener was clearly strong enough to reverse into a second suit if they had one, so there would be no point in using these bids to attempt to find a 4-4 fit – you already know you don't have one! With:

♠AQ83 ♥743 ♦QJ10 ♣864

you would bid 3♦, hoping that opener held a heart stop and could bid 3NT next. With:

♠AQ853 ♥43 ♦QJ10 ♣864

you would be hoping to hear 3♠ next (showing three spades) or if not, 3NT (showing a heart stop).

3♠ = This one is a funny one: it's game-forcing. You need to be able to give partner the choice between 4♠ (with two or three spades) or 3NT (without). Without much space, this is the bid for that; this is normally possible as a hand with 8+ HCP has enough to game-force opposite the 3♣ rebid. A hand such as:

♠AKJ863 ♥62 ♦753 ♣98

would comfortably bid in this way. With:

♠KQJ863 ♥62 ♦753 ♣98

you should pass instead.

3NT = Requires stops in both unbid suits, something like:

♠QJ83 ♥K73 ♦QJ10 ♣854

would do this.

### Notes:

- ❖ **To bid no trumps responder must have a stop in both unbid suits**, as the opponents are almost certainly going to lead one of them. Otherwise, responder bids a suit with a stop.
- ❖ To discourage opener from bidding again, the only non-forcing bids are game bids; weak hands are allowed to pass instead. Remember a *repeat of responder's suit is game-forcing*.

## OPENER REBIDS 1NT

In the following example, you have responded at the one level and opener has shown 15-17 balanced. Be aware that these auctions are quite complicated without the use of any conventions (such as checkback); playing natural methods, the following approach is recommended:

West	East
1♣	1♥
1NT	?

**Pass** = Weak, at most seven points, and exactly four hearts. Your partner has denied 4-card heart support by bidding 1NT, so you know that you do not have a heart fit. You also know that you do not have a game, so you have no reason to bid further. Your hand might be something like:

♠64 ♥AJ83 ♦J754 ♣753.

2♣/2♦/2♥ = All non-forcing and weak. For 2♣ and 2♥, this seems self-explanatory – this hand:

♠4 ♥AQ73 ♦8743 ♣10973

would be able to bid 2♣ to slightly improve the contract. A 2♥ bid would be showing at least five hearts (knowing that partner has two or three, 2♥ is likely to be an improvement over 1NT), such as:

♠7 ♥KQ732 ♦7652 ♣J108.

The difficult one to remember is that 2♦, despite being a new suit, is weak and non-forcing! Look back at the general rules listed above: *New suits are forcing (though sometimes not if your partner just bid NT)*. This is an example of one of those situations. Your partner has made an extremely descriptive bid promising 2+ cards in diamonds, so with a hand like:

♠4 ♥KJ73 ♦Q9864 ♣1075

which was not strong enough to bid its longest suit initially (for fear of not being strong enough to reverse into the major later), 2♦ is very likely to be a better contract than 1NT. If you and your partner have agreed to open 1♥ with four hearts and four clubs, it will not be possible for you to have such a hand as you could have responded 1♦ rather than 1♥ initially.

2♠ = Conversely, this is game-forcing as it is a reverse by responder. A good 9+ HCP is usually enough to force to game here but do use your judgement; 10+ should always force to game. It shows a real second suit since opener, with 4·2·3·4, would open the lower suit and rebid NT (advocated by EBED and me!); if your partnership agreement is instead to open 1♠ with that shape, you may prefer for this bid only to promise a 3-card suit and to provide a handy way of forcing to game. A hand such as:

♠KQ73 ♥AJ1073 ♦4 ♣532

would make this bid, hoping for partner to show 3-card heart support (or 4-card spade support if possible) next.

2NT = An invitational hand, so 8-9 HCP, and could contain four or five hearts. This bid is a big weakness of playing a natural system and I encourage you to consider liberal upgrades and downgrades here as you can be in danger of playing too high or missing 5-3 heart fits. But sometimes, you are simply dealt a middle-of-the-road hand such as:

♠86 ♥KQ1098 ♦765 ♣QJ10

which has a great source of potential tricks in hearts and a useful holding in clubs, and is

therefore a contender for a game, but also does not have enough strength or distribution for an upgrade to a game-force.

3♣ = Natural and invitational. Could be 4-4 in hearts and clubs, such as:

♠3 ♥AJ64 ♦9854 ♣K1075

or five hearts and four clubs such as:

♠3 ♥AJ765 ♦765 ♣K1075

or four hearts and longer clubs, such as:

♠3 ♥AJ76 ♦765 ♣K10753

(remember that finding a major fit takes priority over agreeing a club fit).

3♥ = Game-forcing with five hearts. It allows partner an opportunity to choose between 3NT (with two hearts) and 4♥ (with three hearts). For those who learned natural methods over a 1NT opening before they learned transfers, this might look familiar: it is exactly the same idea of giving your partner a choice of games. Make sure you are confident with this one as it initially looks invitational! A typical hand might be:

♠86 ♥AK1098 ♦K65 ♣1098.

3NT = To play, with exactly four hearts. Don't worry about stops: when your partner has a balanced 15-17, you are likely to have a stop in every suit. Fishing around for more information tells the opponents where your weaknesses are whereas, currently, they have to decide whether to lead a diamond or a spade. A hand such as:

♠53 ♥AQJ7 ♦K643 ♣732

would bid 3NT despite not having a spade stop.

4♥ = To play with 6+ hearts. You can be liberal with your point count here: with a 6-card suit opposite a strong balanced hand, 8 HCP is enough for game to be a sensible bet. Since you have no invitational bid with 6+ hearts, any hand unable to take the leap to 4♥ should simply settle for a 2♥ bid.

♠8 ♥AKJ753 ♦765 ♣986

would bid 4♥ here, whereas:

♠Q7 ♥QJ7653 ♦Q76 ♣53

should stick to 2♥.

### Notes:

- ♣ All suits at the lowest level, aside from responder's reverse, are non-forcing after opener has already narrowly defined their range.
- ♣ 3 of responder's original major is game-forcing with exactly five cards, to allow opener to pick between 3NT and 4♥/♠.
- ♣ With a 6-card major, responder must choose

whether to show a weak or game-forcing hand. I recommend dividing between 6-7 HCP and 8+HCP. □



# Harrogate Spring Congress

Cedar Court Hotel  
Harrogate  
7th - 9th February  
2025

More info:  
[ebu.co.uk/competitions/harrogate](http://ebu.co.uk/competitions/harrogate)

or email:  
[events@ycba.co.uk](mailto:events@ycba.co.uk)





## Ducking ~ 1

This article is about how to establish long suits, mainly played in no trumps, by ducking an early round. The reason for losing an early trick is usually because there is a lack of entries.

Let's look at a simple example, just to establish the basic principles. Consider Hand 1, below, played in 3NT by South after the uncontested auction (North first) 1♠ – 1NT – 3NT. West leads the ♥6 and you can see, as declarer, the following:

**Hand 1**  
South plays in 3NT.  
West leads the ♥6.

♠	A K 9 7 4
♥	A 7 4
♦	A J
♣	K 4 2



♠	3
♥	Q 5 2
♦	9 7 6 4
♣	A 8 7 6 3

Note that it is just as good to play the ♣K first and duck the next round of clubs. The important point is to retain the ace until the third round as an entry to the closed hand. Here's the full deal:

**South plays 3NT. West leads the ♥6**

♠	A K 9 7 4	Online readers can click here
♥	A 7 4	
♦	A J	
♣	K 4 2	

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

♠	3
♥	Q 5 2
♦	9 7 6 4
♣	A 8 7 6 3

On some deals you have to show some patience to establish your suit.

How might you go about playing 3NT as South on this next one? The bidding isn't really relevant, but I'll give it anyway. You open 1♦, partner responds 2♣, you rebid 2NT and partner raises that to game. West fishes out the ♥6 and you contemplate the dummy:

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

♠	10 7 4
♥	A 5
♦	Q 10 4
♣	A 9 6 5 2



♠	A K 2
♥	K Q 8
♦	A 7 3 2
♣	7 4 3

Your preliminary *Count and Plan* reveals two spades, three hearts, one diamond and one club in top tricks. Where are the extra two tricks coming from?

Well, long suits are the usual source of extras in no trumps, so clubs looks like it may provide the necessary – always assuming that the suit splits nicely.

You may take the heart lead in hand with the queen, if you like, but don't assume that the ♥A is going to remain as an entry to the long clubs. As soon as the enemy gain the lead they will shoot it down. The way to make the game is to lead, and duck, a club at trick two. Winning the inevitable heart return with dummy's ace, you must lead another low club, conceding the trick. The ♣A remains as a way to access the dummy and the two extra winning clubs – always assuming that the suit splits in your favour. Here's the full deal:

**Hand 3**  
South plays in 3NT.  
West leads the ♥6.

♠	9 4 2
♥	A 5
♦	A K Q 7 4
♣	J 5 2

♠	A K Q
♥	Q 10 3
♦	8 6
♣	Q 8 6 4 3

Your *Count and Plan* reveals eight tricks on top via three spades, two hearts and three diamonds. Attempts to set up clubs will surely fail as E/W are likely to take three hearts and two clubs (to say nothing of the fact that you may well lose three club tricks by playing the suit).

Now, you could play off the top diamonds, hoping for a 3-3 split. Were that successful, you'd make five diamond tricks and ten in all. However, what if diamonds were 4-2? Now you could set up a fifth diamond by conceding one, but you'd have no entry card to reach it.

A knowledge of the odds may help here. A 3-3 break is roughly 36% and a 4-2 break roughly 48%, so your chances of five diamond tricks are not good. At matchpoint pairs you might just go for the basher's line of going for an overtrick, but you are going to fail if luck is not with you. Cooler heads – and those playing 3NT in other forms of the game – will know to win the ♥A at trick two and immediately duck a diamond. Now the contract will make unless diamonds are 5-1 or 6-0 as there is still communication between dummy and the closed hand. □

**South plays 3NT. West leads the ♥6**

♠	10 7 4	Online readers can click here
♥	A 5	
♦	Q 10 4	
♣	A 9 6 5 2	

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

♠	A K 2
♥	K Q 8
♦	A 7 3 2
♣	7 4 3

There is another type of deal where declarers have to decide whether to ensure their contract or to play for overtricks at the possible risk to the contract. In matchpoint pairs this can be a headache as overtricks can be important. However, in other forms of bridge (teams-of-four, rubber bridge and the like), securing the success of the contract is paramount.

How might you play this one? After a 1NT – 3NT sequence, West leads the ♥6. You play low from dummy, East takes the king and returns the ♥9 to dummy's bare ace. What now?

**South plays 3NT. West leads the ♥6**

♠	9 4 2	Online readers can click here
♥	A 5	
♦	A K Q 7 4	
♣	J 5 2	

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

♠	A K Q
♥	Q 10 3
♦	8 6
♣	Q 8 6 4 3

**Have you got it? Paul's quiz is online p70**



# Christmas Quiz 2024

by Michael Byrne

## COME ON! GIVE IT A GO

Send your entries by email or post no later than 31st December. By email: [lou@ebu.co.uk](mailto:lou@ebu.co.uk) or by post:

Lou Hobhouse, Raggett House, Bowdens, Langport, Somerset, TA10 0DD.

## The Worshipful Company of Makers of Playing Cards

has again very generously donated a double-pack of the most recent Master's playing cards. This set celebrates 200 Years of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution, and continues an annual tradition of Masters' cards dating back to 1882.

The twin packs of cards are presented in a blue leather case, and are limited to 350 sets. The cards also come with an informative leaflet about the cards and the history of the RNLI.

Each set is backed with the RNLI's anniversary logo combined with the Livery Company's crest. The kings show four lifeboatmen who have been awarded two gold medals; the queens are notable women in the 200-year history; and the jacks depict four of the eight RNLI Museums. The 2s and 4s show the modern RNLI Lifeboats; and the 3s show vital equipment used by life-saving crews.

### First prize



### Second prize

**£50 EBU credit**  
In the event of a tie the winners will be picked randomly

**B**idding. The questions on bidding assume standard Acol with a weak NT and 4-card majors. Imagine you sat down to play a duplicate with me and we had no further discussion. Part of the fun will be deciding what 'standard' bidding means. My decision is final!

For the first set of questions, say whether these sequences are plausible (P) or inconsistent (I). A *plausible* auction would be one where you could construct a hand that would sensibly bid in this fashion, and an *inconsistent* one would be one where the bidding only makes sense if someone has made an error or mis-sorted their hand! **2 marks each**

1	W	E	2	W	E	3	W	E
	1♠	2♠		3♥	3♠		1♣	1♠
	2NT	4♥		4♠	5♦		2♣	2NT
				6♠			3♣	3NT

4	W	E	5	W	E
	1♦	1♠		1♣	3♣
	2♦	3NT		3♥	4♦
	4♥	6♦		5♠	6♣

**6** Look at the auction below and see how many of the sets of hands would bid this way. For those hands that should bid differently, point out the mistakes in the auction. **3 marks each**

W	E
1♥	1NT
2♣	3♣
Pass	

**a**

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

**b**

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

Continued overleaf

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**c**

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

**d**

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

**e**

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

**7** Below are four hands for East. Choose which ones match the auction, and how any remaining hands would have bid differently. **5 marks**

W	E
1♦	1NT
3♥	3NT

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

**8** Below are four hands for East. Which hands match which auctions? **4 marks each**

<b>a</b>	W	E	<b>b</b>	W	E	<b>c</b>	W	E
	2♣	2♦		2♣	2♦		2♣	2♦
	3♣	4♣		3♣	3NT		3♣	4♣

<p><b>Hand i</b></p> <p>♠ 8</p> <p>♥ Q J 9 8 3</p> <p>♦ J 10 7 3</p> <p>♣ Q 7 4</p>	<p><b>Hand ii</b></p> <p>♠ 8 7 3 2</p> <p>♥ Q 9 3</p> <p>♦ Q 7</p> <p>♣ K 9 4 3</p>
<p><b>Hand iii</b></p> <p>♠ 8</p> <p>♥ J 9 7 6 3</p> <p>♦ 9 8 5 3</p> <p>♣ A 8 3</p>	<p><b>Hand iv</b></p> <p>♠ 8 6</p> <p>♥ Q 2</p> <p>♦ J 5 4</p> <p>♣ A K J 10 7 3</p>

**C**ard play. What is the correct way to play these suit combinations for the number of tricks shown?

♥ A J 8 4
♥ K 9 6 3

**9a** Four tricks are needed. Should you (**3 marks**):

- Cash the king then finesse the jack if nothing of interest has happened?
- Cash the ace then run the jack if nothing of interest has happened?
- Lead low to the jack on the first round unless the queen makes a guest appearance?

♥ A 10 3
♥ Q 7 5 2

**9b** Three tricks are needed. Should you (**3 marks**):

- Lead low to the queen then low to the ten?
- Lead low to the ten then cash the ace?
- Cash the ace then lead low to the queen?

♥ K 9
♥ A J 7 6 3

**9c** Four tricks are needed. Should you (**4 marks**):

- Play king, ace and another?
- Play king, then the nine to the jack?
- Lead low to the nine?
- Run the jack?

**10** West leads the ♠10 in response to partner's overcall and East overtakes with the jack. You win the king and must plan to make nine tricks. **8 marks**

W	N	E	S
	1♣	1♠	3NT
All Pass			

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

*Continued overleaf*



**11** The ♦4 is led to the queen and East's king. East continues with the ♦A and another diamond which you win with the ♦J, West playing the ♦6 and ♦9. You throw a club and heart to the ♥K and ♥A. East leads the ♣2. What is your play to make nine tricks? **8 marks**

W	N	E	S
	1♥	Pass	1NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

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



- ♠ A 10 2
- ♥ 5 2
- ♦ J 8 5 3 2
- ♣ A 6 2

**12** Partner leaves you in 4♣ after their 2NT enquiry, despite you promising a minimum. The defence take two top diamonds and switch to a trump. You play low from dummy, East plays low and you win with the ♠8 in hand. What is your play to make ten tricks? **8 marks**

W	N	E	S
			2♣
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♣
Pass	4♣	All Pass	

- ♠ A 3
- ♥ A K 3
- ♦ Q 5
- ♣ A K Q 10 7 3



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

## F<sup>un</sup> Stuff.

**13** Bridge idioms – which bridge expressions are these, cleverly disguised? Some of the expressions are useful, others less so. **4 marks each**

**13a** *'When the opponents do not immediately find agreement with each other (but eventually settle down together) you may begin your campaign of defence by using their chief weapon against them.'*

**13b** *'When 76.92% of your hand is split unequally yet both are considered biddable, then a rosy view should be taken in the auction, this can also apply when you and partner are in total agreement with each other.'*

**13c** *'Equally valid in Cluedo as well as bridge, seemingly giving your opponents a present of information, equivalent to showing the same photo from your holiday that you showed previously in order that they learn no more.'*

**13d** *'Confusion casts a spell over the start of play, and rather than try and solve it with a guess you begin with a temporary way to delay the decision.'*

**13e** *'The cupboard runs dry when you see something both refactorable and square.'*

**13f** *'A dark cloud falls over somewhere that is close in a way to Slovakia and Lebanon'*



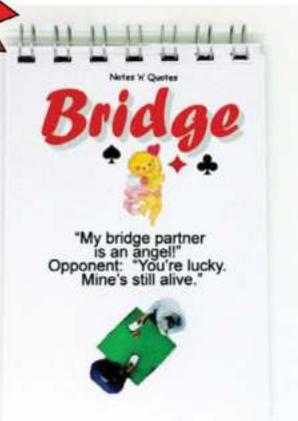


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## Bridge is a thinking game

In my last article I played in a friendly EBU congress, and this time is just the same. I find myself at the EBU Summer Meeting. Still a friendly congress, but with a lot of prestige. The Swiss Pairs consists of twelve rounds, and every board counts when you're aiming for a top position. At the end of day one, I pick up the following hand at all non-vulnerable:

♠	K 10 7 4
♥	10 7 4
♦	A 7 3
♣	6 5 3

My right hand opponent opens 1♣ and I am content with pass. My left hand opponent responds 1♥ and my partner doubles for take-out in the 'sandwich' position. Take-out you say? That sounds good to me. As I consider whether to bid one or two spades, opener surprises me by calling 1♠ himself.

It may look strange, but I want to bid 2♠ over this. Partner's double promised four spades, so I know we have an 8-card fit. The advertised 4-1 break isn't fantastic, but I would still rather play the hand in 2♠ than defend 2♣ or 2♥ – especially non vulnerable when one down is only minus 50.

I'm also not worried about partner taking this as artificial. He did make a take-out double of 1♥ and if I wanted to make a forcing call, I could have bid 2♥. When I bid 2♠, partner fingers the alert card in his bidding box, but decides that 2♠ is natural.

My left hand opponent bids 3♥ over my 2♠, partner passes, and my right hand opponent calls 3NT. I have nothing to add, so 3NT becomes the final contract. The auction has been:

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

Now I need to find an opening lead. The obvious choice is a spade, but declarer has shown a stop, and a spade lead would give a trick away if declarer holds ♠AQ. Leading away from kings is often dangerous (especially when I do it), but partner doubled to tell me that he has spades, and I should make use of that information.

I lead the ♠4 (4th highest from an honour), and dummy goes down.

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

Declarer plays low from dummy and partner plays the ♠A. Well done, partner! That's the kind of defence I like to see! Declarer follows with the ♠2, and partner continues the good work by returning the ♠J. Declarer covers this with the ♠Q and I take the ♠K (declarer discarding a heart from dummy).

Flushed with success, it would be easy to keep playing spades without thinking – but people have told me that bridge is a thinking game, so let's give this due consideration. Since I hold the ♠10, I know that partner's return of the ♠J wasn't top of a sequence. Partner must have been returning his highest spade as a way to retain the lead in case we needed to finesse through declarer more than once.





If this is the layout, partner has done well by returning the ♠J. If he had returned the ♠5, declarer could have played the ♠6 and forced me to win the trick and preventing the defence from continuing the suit. Clearly, partner has been reading my articles (especially the ones on third hand high).

This analysis seems to suggest continuing spades, but this is only the case when partner has the ♠8. Partner may have returned the ♠J with a slightly weaker suit.



If this is the layout, partner still does best to return the ♠J, allowing us to take four tricks straight away without giving up the lead. Obviously, we know that we don't have the ♠8, but partner doesn't. Partner may have switched to the ♠J to cater for this layout and it would be a great shame to undermine partner's thoughtful play with a thoughtless spade return.

Let's think about the entire hand.

Partner doubled 1♥ for takeout so he must have some points. There's twenty-two missing points between him and declarer, so he's likely to be light for his double, but he still has to have something. Partner could have the ♦K and maybe even the ♦J. If partner has those cards, declarer probably has the top clubs as well as the ♥K. If we don't cash our tricks now, declarer might take the rest.

If we're going to attack diamonds, we should begin with the ♦A to give partner the chance to show encouraging attitude. But I don't think that really matters. If we cash the ♦A and partner discourages, we will have already blown the suit. It is possible that partner has the ♣A. But there can't be a great rush to play a club as declarer will have to play clubs himself.

That said, I don't think partner has the ♣A. I don't even think partner has the ♦K. I think partner has the ♥K ...

First off the auction. Dummy bid 3♥ over my 2♣ and declarer chose to play in 3NT. He has done so with only Qxxx in spades. Qxxx isn't the most reliable of stops (especially when the opponents have shown an 8-card fit). Would he have really bid 3NT if he also had Kx in hearts? I don't think so. Declarer's failure to raise to 4♥ heavily suggests that he has a singleton.

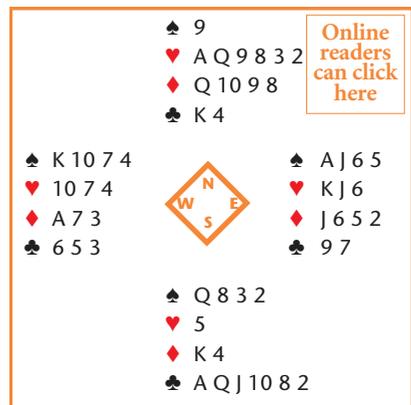
There's also declarer's play ...

Declarer had to make a discard from dummy on the second spade, and he chose to discard a heart. Would declarer really do that if he had Kx in hearts? Wouldn't he have kept all his hearts in the hopes of running the suit? I think you know the answer.

With the thinking done, I switch to the ♥7.

The great thing about a heart switch is that it can't cost the contract. Declarer can win the ♥A and cash all his clubs, but he will have no further tricks. Once he plays on diamonds, I will go up with the ♦A and play another heart, putting partner in so we can cash the rest of the spade tricks.

In practice, declarer tries the ♥Q and partner dutifully covers with the ♥K. Another spade from partner lets us take the rest of that suit and declarer ends with only seven tricks when the full hand is as follows:



3NT down two for +100 scored very well once entered into the Bridgmate – beating everyone who only beat it by one and only losing to those who managed to defend 4♥ doubled. It's a good thing I took my time to think about the hand. ☐



# Heffalump Traps

In each of the following hands you are sitting South. You are playing in a teams match with IMPs scoring. You should 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**

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

N		E
W		S

♠ A 4  
♥ J 9 5 2  
♦ A 9 8 5 4  
♣ K 8

You are in 6♦. West leads the ♥10. Plan your play.

**Hand 2**

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

N		E
W		S

♠ A Q  
♥ K 6 5  
♦ Q J 5 4  
♣ A J 10 6

You are in 3NT. West leads the ♥J. Plan your play.

**Hand 3**

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

N		E
W		S

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

You are in 4♠. West opened 1♥ and East passed. West leads the ♥J and East plays the ♥7. Plan your play.

**Hand 4**

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

N		E
W		S

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

You are in 4♣ after West made a 2♦ overcall. West leads the ♦K, East overtakes with the ♦A and returns the ♦2. West wins the ♦9 and plays the ♦Q. Plan your play.

David Bakhshi gives the answers on page 54

# CLUB PLAYER'S BIDDING QUIZ

You are sitting West. What should you bid with each hand below on the given auction at matchpoint pairs? **Love All.**

**Hand 1**

	W	N	E	S
♠ AK109832				1♣
♥ A64	?			
♦ 842				
♣ -				

**Hand 2**

	W	N	E	S
♠ J42				1♠
♥ 106	2♦	Pass	3♣	Pass
♦ AK8732	?			
♣ J8				

**Hand 3**

	W	N	E	S
♠ A10874				Pass
♥ K3	Pass	1♥	Pass	2♥
♦ Q106	?			
♣ 765				

**Hand 4**

	W	N	E	S
♠ A				1♠
♥ AQ876532	?			
♦ -				
♣ AK92				

**Hand 5**

	W	N	E	S
♠ A84				1♥
♥ AK	?			
♦ Q42				
♣ AQJ104				

**Hand 6**

	W	N	E	S
♠ 8762				1♣
♥ K98542	Pass	3♦	Dble	2♦ <sup>1</sup>
♦ Q6	?			Pass
♣ 9				

<sup>1</sup> Weak

Julian Pottage gives his answers on page 63



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# 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.

## DECEMBER 2024 WEST HANDS

(IMP scoring on every deal)

1. Game All ♠ 10 9 8 3 2  
Dealer South ♥ A Q 7  
♦ –  
(Feldman) ♣ 10 9 6 3 2  
\* North opens 1♦, South bids 1♥, North rebids 2♦
2. Love All ♠ A 5 3  
Dealer East ♥ J 7 6 5  
♦ A Q J  
(Demuy) ♣ A K 9
3. Game All ♠ J 8 6 3  
Dealer East ♥ Q J 5  
♦ 4 2  
(Hanlon) ♣ J 6 5 2
4. Game All ♠ A K 4  
Dealer West ♥ –  
♦ A 9 8 6 3  
(Cullin) ♣ K 10 9 8 7  
\* South bids 2♥, North bids 3♥
5. E/W Game ♠ 8 4 3  
Dealer North ♥ A 4  
♦ A K 8 3  
(Zatorski) ♣ A K 9 8  
\* South opens 1♥
6. E/W Game ♠ Q 10 8  
Dealer North ♥ 10 6 2  
♦ 9 8 7 3  
(Patreuha) ♣ A Q 10  
\* North opens 4♠

Did you beat the experts? – page 51

# 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.

## DECEMBER 2024 EAST HANDS

(IMP scoring on every deal)

1. Game All ♠ A K 7 4  
Dealer South ♥ 6 5 2  
♦ J 4 3  
(Hinze) ♣ A Q 4  
\* North opens 1♦, South bids 1♥, North rebids 2♦
2. Love All ♠ 9 8 2  
Dealer East ♥ A K 10 4 3  
♦ K 7  
(Kranjak) ♣ J 6 2
3. Game All ♠ A K Q 10 4  
Dealer East ♥ A K 9  
♦ A K 10 8  
(Amoils) ♣ 3
4. Game All ♠ Q 10 8 7 5  
Dealer West ♥ A 10 7 4  
♦ K Q  
(Michielsen) ♣ 6 3  
\* South bids 2♥, North bids 3♥
5. E/W Game ♠ A J 10 6  
Dealer North ♥ 8 7 6 5 3  
♦ J 5  
(Pachtmann) ♣ J 5  
\* South opens 1♥
6. E/W Game ♠ A 6  
Dealer North ♥ K Q 8 5 4 3  
♦ K 10 2  
(Ward-Platt) ♣ 7 2  
\* North opens 4♠

Did you beat the experts? – page 51

# New Prize Leads Quiz

by Alan Mould

Remember that with the new format, if you think it matters you need to specify which card of a suit you are leading.

To help you with your leads, it will be assumed that we play top from a sequence, top from a doubleton, second from three or more small cards and fourth highest from an honour (including a 10), unless there's a good reason to make a non-standard lead.

## COMPUTER LEADS

Alan Mould has teamed up with Nathan Piper to get computer-generated simulations to provide best lead scenarios. Details on methodology can be seen by [clicking here](#).



A twin-pack of Piatnik playing cards, kindly donated by **Gibson Games** is the prize on offer. For information visit [www.gibsonsgames.co.uk/collections/all-cards](http://www.gibsonsgames.co.uk/collections/all-cards)

There are TWO categories in our competition: up to and including Master, and those with higher ranking. Please indicate the category for which you are entering with your answers. In the event of a tie, the winner from each category will be randomly selected. The editor's decision is final.

Entries to the Editor, Leads Quiz,  
Raggett House, Bowdens, Langport, Somerset,  
TA10 0DD  
or e-mail [lou@ebu.co.uk](mailto:lou@ebu.co.uk)  
by 30 December 2024.

**Please include your full postal address AND rank even if entering by e-mail**

**ANSWERS TO SEPTEMBER'S QUIZ: page 58**

## TWO answers - Teams & Pairs

### Hand 1

♠ Q J 3 2  
♥ J 9 2  
♦ J 7 4  
♣ A 7 3

South	West	North	East
1NT <sup>1</sup>	All Pass	Pass	Pass
<sup>1</sup> 15-17, not that this is very relevant.			

*What is your lead playing teams, and playing pairs?*

### Hand 2

♠ 10 8 6 5 2  
♥ Q 7  
♦ A 7 6 3  
♣ 7 3

South	West	North	East
2NT <sup>2</sup>	Pass	2♠ <sup>1</sup>	Pass
3NT	All Pass	3♣ <sup>3</sup>	Pass

<sup>1</sup> Five spades and 4+ in a minor, weak; <sup>2</sup> Enquiry; <sup>3</sup> Natural.

*What is your lead playing teams, and playing pairs?*

### Hand 3

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

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

The auction is old-fashioned Acol style, so 2♣ was 9+, natural and 3NT showed 17-19 balanced.

*What is your lead playing teams, and playing pairs?*



## Weak Two or something else?

These days pre-empting has moved on from what we learnt when we started playing the game. Everyone is keen to use their favourites gadgets and tools as often as they can, but over-using them is nearly as bad as not using them at all. We must try and strike the right balance between making life hard for the opposition and easy for ourselves.

The first thing to note is that although a top end weak two will look very close to a light opening bid, there is a category of hand that shouldn't open anything at all, because the hand is inappropriate. The type of hands I am talking about contain features like these:

- ♣ four cards in another major suit, meaning you might play in 2♥ when your side can make 4♠;
- ♣ a poor suit and high cards outside, meaning you will take defensive tricks but not if you are declarer. (This is particularly true of doubleton queens, which will be finessed into when you are defending, but will fall under the opponents' ace and king when you are declaring);
- ♣ a very shapely hand, giving the hand too much playing strength to open with a weak two.

Let's have a look at some example hands that we might hold. We shall assume you are the first player to speak and neither side is vulnerable (more on that later).

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

**Hand 1** looks a little like a weak two opening, *but* the suit is modest (hardly a crime) and it has a very strong 4-card spade suit. If you open 2♥ you will frequently miss a better contract in spades. Give partner:

♠ Jxxxx ♥ x ♦ Kxx ♣ AKxx

and you might well go down in 2♥ when 4♠ is making.

Although the hand just about fulfils the rule of 19, I would be reluctant to open 1♥ since the main anchor suit (hearts) lacks a bit of stuffing. The best thing to do is to pass the hand and show your suits later. When you hold the majors you will always have a chance to come back in, and if you subsequently overcall in hearts partner might well infer you have some spade length for your failure to pre-empt.

**Hand 2** is fine for a weak 2♥ opening. It's true that more than half your points are outside hearts, but the intermediate cards in the trump suit (♥1097) give it a little back up strength, and you have a singleton to give it a bit of bite. The ♠A will also win a trick when you are declarer at least, so it's not wasted.

**Hand 3** is an excellent weak two opening in diamonds, with a good suit and nice 6-4 shape. Although you would be reluctant to pre-empt with a major suit on the side, holding a side suit of clubs is less important since you don't often win the auction with clubs. If any of you don't play a weak two in diamonds (preferring to use 2♣ and 2♦ as both strong bids in the French style) I would advise you to start now, as it's such a useful tool. There are many hands where, when you open 2♦, you keep the opponents out of a major suit fit, because neither of them can double as they only have support for one of the majors. England's best matchpoint player (and a former columnist in this magazine) used to say it was his favourite opening, and those that didn't play it were missing out.

**Hand 4** would be perfect for a weak two in spades, but it has too many points! Even those that play the designated range as 6–10 would surely appreciate that holding a void and a spade suit that will play for one loser facing a small singleton is too good. One way to look at it is ‘what will my partner do with a weak no trump hand and a doubleton in my suit?’. If you open a weak two then you will play in 2♠ which is clearly not going to be enough, after all if partner had opened a 12-14 NT then you would have transferred to spades and raised them to game.

This hand is an automatic 1♠ opening and I don’t think it is close at all. (Those of you that are keen followers of the ‘losers’ trick count will no doubt consider it to be an opening bid with extra values!).

**Hand 5** looks like a great weak two in diamonds, with all the points in the suit, singletons in both majors and a feeble club suit that you don’t mind hiding. Am I going to tell you that you might miss a club contract if you pre-empt in diamonds? No, actually (as the frequency of such an occurrence will be very low). Instead I am going to tell you that this hand is suitable for pre-empting but you should open 3♦. As many of you that play duplicate will know, people pre-empt on all sorts of hands and 6-card suits are actually quite common. It’s definitely allowed and there is no need to feel bad about it. You should only do so under the right circumstances (good suit, shapely, minimal defence, non-vulnerable) but this hand ticks all of the boxes.

The trouble with opening a weak 2 is that partner won’t appreciate your side belongs in 5♦ when they have a mediocre hand such as

♠Qx ♥Axxx ♦xxxx ♣KQx

where your side can make nine or ten tricks against an easy 4♠ the other way.

**Hand 6** isn’t quite the worst weak two hand I could come up with, but it’s pretty close. This hand is inappropriate in so many ways that I can barely describe them, but I’ll try. The suit is terrible, and you have three or four possible defensive tricks outside it. It’s the sort of hand where you open a weak two and go for a penalty then try and work out what the opponents can make – the answer will normally be nothing. It’s amazing how often a singleton queen combines with some innocuous holding in partner’s hand to slow

down the opponents in their contract –108xx for example. Just pass and have a clear conscience at the end of the auction.

When you are deciding whether or not to open, a good rule of thumb is:

*If I open a weak two and partner raises me to game in a competitive auction, how will I feel?*

Here if you open 2♥, the next hand does anything and partner bids 4♥ you will feel pretty bad. That feeling is called *guilt* at having opened such a terrible suit and led your partner astray.

When deciding whether or not to open a weak two there are so many factors to consider, and I can’t cover them all in this one article. That’s why we will be back next issue, and continue to look at all the factors affecting pre-empts, including the ones we have only briefly touched on today, such as position and vulnerability.

### Some Dos and Don’ts of weak two openings

**Do** open weak twos when you have a good suit and little defence outside. The strength of the hand is less important than the ability to send a helpful message to partner.

**Do** feel free to pass if your hand falls into the point count for a weak two but has too much strength outside or a 4-card major that you might belong in.

**Don’t** open a weak two if your hand will produce game opposite a weak no trump hand with doubleton support. If you do you will score a lot of 170s.

**Don’t** open a weak two when the hand is very pure (all of the points in the long suit) and very shapely as you normally are better off opening at the three level. □

### TRY MICHAEL’S QUIZ, ONLINE PAGE 69





## Just Good Enough

The Matron took her seat against the Headmaster and his wife. ‘I wasn’t too happy to see chips on the menu at lunchtime, Norma,’ she observed. ‘It was the second time this week. They’re not at all healthy, as we both know.’

The Headmaster’s wife smiled. ‘Yes, but the boys like them. It’s the end of term on Friday. We don’t want them going back to their parents, saying that the food is no good.’

Unimpressed by this reply, the Matron reached for her cards. Norma wouldn’t adopt such a flippant attitude if she was responsible for the boys’ welfare.

This was the deal before them:

**N/S Game. Dealer South.**

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

West	North	East	South
The Matron	The Headmaster	Stefan Götel	Norma Doulton
Pass	3NT	All Pass	1NT

The Matron led the ♥5 and down went the dummy. Norma Doulton considered her prospects. She had eight minor suit tricks, and an immediate ninth if the lead was from the ace. Stefan Götel won

with the ♥A and she contributed a smooth ♥J, hoping to deter a spade switch.

A couple of seconds later, East’s ♥6 was on the table. ‘I won’t be greedy,’ said Norma, tabling her ♥K and displaying her hand. ‘Just the nine tricks.’

The Matron usually liked all deals to be played to a finish, but here four tricks in each minor were indisputable. ‘What did you have in spades, Stefan?’ she enquired.

The German master, hoping to avoid this question, had already reached for the next board. ‘Er... four to the king, I think,’ he replied. ‘It was a clever play by Norma. I could hardly switch when you might have king-ten to five in the heart suit. The Rule of Eleven left declarer with only one card higher than your five.’

The Matron stretched across the table to view her partner’s curtain card. ‘You had four spades to the king-jack, so a spade switch beats it,’ she reprimanded. ‘I never use the Rule of Eleven myself. It’s very unreliable, as this board shows.’

A few rounds later, John Hutson and Neil Phillips took their seats against the masters’ top pair, Bertie Bellis and Percy Cutforth. Although good boards were hard to find against such opponents, the two fourth-formers rated such encounters as a highlight. They learnt so much from them.

‘You did well last week,’ observed Bertie Bellis. ‘You finished third, didn’t you?’

‘Yes, Sir,’ Hutson replied. ‘If you hadn’t made that diamond slam against us, we would have been second.’

The maths master smiled. ‘One of my better efforts,’ he replied. ‘If you hadn’t found that spade lead, it would have been easy.’

The players drew their cards for this deal:

**E/W Game. Dealer North.**

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

West	North	East	South
John	Percy	Neil	Bertie
Hutson	Cutforth	Phillips	Bellis
Pass	1♦	Pass	1♥
All Pass	2♥	Pass	4♥

John Hutson led the ♥3 and down went the dummy. He noted the raise on just three trumps, a tactic that he and Neil had recently introduced into their own game.

Bertie Bellis won with the ♥J and noted that the defenders might now prevent a club ruff if trumps were 3-1. Was there a chance of setting up the diamonds? It seemed he might be an entry short. When he cashed the ♦K and continued with a club, West rose with the queen and persisted with the ♥5.

‘Six, please,’ said Bellis. If East produced the ♥9, trumps would be 2-2 and a club ruff could not be prevented.

When East discarded a spade and the ♥6 won, declarer had an extra entry to dummy. He ruffed a diamond with the ♥Q and crossed to the ♥K. After discarding a spade on the ♦A, pleased to see the 4-3 break, he ruffed another diamond in his hand. A spade to the ace allowed him to discard his last spade on the established ♦9, and the game was home.

‘You found the best lead again,’ said the maths master. ‘In fact, I’ve just realised something.’

‘What’s that?’ said the two boys.

‘If the ♥5 and ♥6 are swapped, your lead would beat the contract!’ □

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## Clever play

Playing teams, South opens 1♥ and West doubles. North responds 2NT, showing a sound raise to at least 3♥, and South makes a cuebid of 3♠. North co-operates with a 4♦ cuebid and South tries Roman Keycard Blackwood. North shows the two missing keycards and the queen of trumps, but when South tries 5NT and partner has just one king, they settle for 6♥. (North showed the ♥Q because of the unexpected extra length.)

The lead is the queen of diamonds, how do you plan the play?

N/S Game. Dlr South

♠ 10 9 5  
♥ K 10 9 7 5  
♦ A K 10  
♣ J 10

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

W	N	E	S
			1♥
Dble	2NT <sup>A</sup>	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♦	Pass	4NT
Pass	5♠	Pass	5NT
Pass	6♦	Pass	6♥
All Pass			

Unfortunately for you, partner's king is of little use, whereas the king of either black suit would have been perfect. You know where all the high cards are from the bidding, and unfortunately they are on the wrong side. Is there any chance for this contract?

You can use your knowledge of the location of all the high cards to your advantage, and play the hand

on almost double-dummy lines. You will need to start by eliminating diamonds and trumps and endplay West by finessing a spade.

Win the opening lead and ruff a diamond with the ace. Cross to the ten of trumps (both opponents following) and ruff the king of diamonds high. Why ruff? You can't afford to discard from either black suit or the threat is removed. Now lead a trump to the nine, and run the ten of spades to West's queen.

This is where you have got to:

♠ 9 5  
♥ K 7 5  
♦ -  
♣ J 10

♠ A J 8  
♥ J  
♦ -  
♣ A Q 5

West is now endplayed to give you a trick, but you are not quite home yet. If West gets off lead with a diamond, you can discard a spade from dummy, cross to the ace of spades and take the ruffing spade finesse to dispose of dummy's club.

If West gets off lead with a club, you can win the ten, and now cross to the ace of spades (a Vienna Coup), and run dummy's trumps discarding two spades and squeezing West in the black suits. If West gets off lead with a spade, you now cross to the ace of clubs and run dummy's trumps discarding two clubs for the same effect.

This was the full deal, and it's worth playing it online to see the squeezes in action. If you are reading this online you can click the link and BBO will let you play it through and go back to watch other endings. You can also see me play it.

Cont/...

South plays 6♥. West leads the ♦Q

♠ 10 9 5  
♥ K 10 9 7 5  
♦ A K 10  
♣ J 10

♠ 4 2  
♥ 8 2  
♦ 6 5 4 3 2  
♣ 9 7 6 4

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

Online readers can click here



### HEATHER'S HINTS

- ❖ When the opponents double your one level opening, 2NT is always a sound high-card raise of the suit you opened to at least the three level. If you had a natural 2NT bid over one of a minor, you can start with a redouble.
- ❖ Use the opponent's bidding to place the high cards and form your plan accordingly. West was unlucky that the normal take-out double of 1♥ turned out to reveal all you needed to know to make the contract.

### WEARSIDE COUNTS 75 YEARS



Wearside Bridge Club celebrated 75 years with a series of special events to coincide with the *Bridge – It's a Big Deal!* week, culminating with a dinner and evening of bridge for over 50 members at its clubhouse in Sunderland. The total raised for the charity during the week was nearly £1,100.

The club, founded in 1949, is fortunate to have its own premises since the mid-1950s. It has over 100 members ranging in age from 10 to 98.

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### CROSSWORD NO 45

Compiled by MERMAN

Clues and grid, p12

1	M	E	2	T	H	3	U	S	4	E	5	L	A	6	H
	A	7	J	U	M	P	S	U	I	8	T	E			
9	L	E	N	D	D	10	I	N	D	I	A				
11	A	R	E	N	A	S	U	S	R	R					
	D	O	D	12	A	13	T	14	I	C	K	E	T		
15	A	B	A	T	E	D	H	16	O	L	B				
	P	O	17	S	R	18	S	I	L	V	E	R			
19	T	A	P	I	R	O	20	H	O	S	E				
	E	21	M	U	S	I	C	A	L	S	A				
22	D	O	N	K	E	Y	W	O	R	K					



## Trouble at the table

We have a club session where we are limited to Level 2 systems. After a 1♣ opening, announced as ‘may only have two cards’, responder bids 1♦, alerted meaning having four hearts. Is a 1♦ bid showing four hearts allowed at level 2?

Also, after an opening bid of a suit, responder bids 1NT, alerted as having 4-11 points. Is a wide ranging response of 1NT allowed at level 2?

There are more events being played at Level 2 both face-to-face and online. The regulations changed in August 2024, with the new Blue Book.

In response to a 1-level suit opening, natural bids are permitted and can be any agreed strength, and be forcing or non forcing.

The following artificial responses are permitted (see Blue Book 6C4):

- a) 1♦ negative responses to a strong 1♣ opening;
- b) a catch-all 1NT response;
- c) a response of 2NT or a bid above three of opener’s suit which shows support and 10+ HCP;
- d) a response above 3NT which is ace-asking.

So, transfer responses (1♦ showing hearts) is not permitted, but a wide-range catch-all 1NT response is permitted.

Mike Willoughby asked about alerting on this hand. 2♠ was considered natural when it was bid.

West	East
1♣	1♥
2♥	2♠
3♣	4♣

The exact meaning of the 4♣ was unclear, but definitely forcing. Given the context that the 2♠ bid was likely to be an advance cue bid, should 2♠ be alerted? Should 4♣ be alerted?

2♠ should be alerted, and if asked, explained as ‘values in spades, not necessarily 3+ cards’ (or similar).

4♣ should not be alerted (because it is above 3NT and not on the first round).

If 4♣ wakes up opener to think 2♠ should be alerted, opener can draw attention to the failure to alert now, or at the end of the auction. If responder thinks 2♠ should have been alerted, they should say something at the end of the auction.

Nick Webb asked about an incident at a club event. It has been slightly fictionalised to protect the guilty.

We finished boards 9 and 10 well ahead of time, and my partner left the table. RHO asked me a series of questions about my partner’s bidding on board 10, and I tried to answer. Then RHO took the cards out of partner’s slot of a board on the table and fanned them in front of me. While I was looking at them LHO said ‘That’s board eleven, the director has swapped the boards already’. So I’d seen my partner’s hand for the next board. We called the director and explained what had happened. I claimed that as a non-offending party, we shouldn’t be penalised, but should instead be allowed to play with board 11 rotated. How should he have ruled?

I would rule that RHO was in breach of Law 7B3:

*No player shall touch any cards other than his own (...) during or after play except by permission of an opponent or the Director.*

If you did not give permission (you do not say you did) then the opponent is entirely at fault (even if it had been board 10).

You can play the board by changing seats (or rotating the board).

If opponents have not played the board, I would rule that they cannot play the board and award them AVE-/AVE+.

If the opponent's action had prevented you from playing the board, I would impose a procedural penalty (Law 90B5 says this is a procedural offence that should be penalised).

**D**ave Simmons asked: When is a board considered to be started? At club bridge, it is common for a TD to assign 50/50 – or whatever – if a table hasn't yet started their final board of the round within (say) three minutes of the bell. In reality, most clubs have playing directors, and it is unrealistic to attempt to apportion 'blame' for slow play, even though we all 'know' who the culprit is likely to be – 40% for second offence maybe? So, is the board started when the players take out their cards from the board; when the opening bid is made; or the opening lead is made?

A board is considered to be started when the auction period has started for either side (Law 17A) – that is when any of the four players has withdrawn their cards from the board.

This interpretation is a bit strict for practical purposes (eg with a playing director) but it is a good rule that a board must be played if any of the four players has looked at their hand.

The purpose of such a rule is to avoid a player looking at their hand, deciding they do not know what to do, and thinking indefinitely rather than making a call. If the board did not start until the player had made a call, this tactic would allow the board to be cancelled and would secure the player 50/50.

If a table (starts and) finishes a board late in round N, the director should allow all tables to play round (N+1) but a playing director should break off from playing to check the tables which started late to ensure they have time to play the last board of round (N+1). You can assign 40/60 if a board is cancelled and one pair was late finishing the previous round. To my mind it is more important that most tables can get to play all the boards in a timely manner – if you try and impose actual score penalties, it will not solve the problem on the day.

**D**avid Lawrence refers to the explanation as to when to ask questions in the May 2024 *English Bridge*.

While this clearly explains the rules for F2F bridge I do not believe it is valid when playing online using RealBridge. As far as I know it is not possible for the opening leader to lead face down (blind to the other players) in RealBridge. Would you please clarify the rules for RealBridge.

On RealBridge, the situation is not so easily controlled, because of the lack of a face-down lead.

It is important that the defender-not-on-lead does not ask questions until partner has led, as such questions could suggest a lead, and could be seen to suggest a lead.

It is less important when declarer asks a question, but I think declarer should wait until the opening lead has been made, so as to not distract (deflect) the opening leader from their choice of lead.

This means that both will be asking questions when dummy is visible (which is undesirable as I explained in the face-to-face situation) but this is the lesser evil.

**If you have a question for Robin please email him at [robin@ebu.co.uk](mailto:robin@ebu.co.uk)**

**R**obin 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](mailto:robin@ebu.co.uk).

The author, *English Bridge* and the EBU are not responsible if the information provided is incorrect or incomplete.



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## No trumps disaster

The United Kingdom and the United States have often been called ‘two nations divided by a common language’, and there are a few differences between British and American bridge parlance. One of these is the only denomination that isn’t a suit name, called ‘no trumps’ over here and ‘no trump’ over there. Either is grammatically sound, of course, but the Americans go a step further when they refer to ‘notrump’, a bizarre locution that always causes me to wonder whether Silver and Cohn’s greatest hit was actually ‘Yes, we have nobanana’.

Until I heard about this column’s disaster, it had not occurred to me that the American usage actually had the advantage of being less ambiguous than the British.

- 1 Diamonds;
- 2 Showing restraint at the vulnerability – in other circumstances West might have launched a pre-emptive jump overcall of 3♣, but then there would have been no story;
- 3 Artificial, any hand worth a game force;
- 4 Natural;
- 5 Showing diamond support and shortage in clubs;
- 6 First- or second-round control in hearts;
- 7 Showing even shorter clubs – a void rather than a singleton.

At this point South went into a profound study. The casual observer might have thought that this was because he was deciding whether to make a pessimistic bid of 5♦, an optimistic bid of 6♦, or keep the auction going by some other means in case a grand slam could be found. But nothing was further from the truth – South, as we have all done from time to time at the bridge table, had begun to doubt the evidence of his senses.

Could partner really have a void in clubs? Could the opponents really have remained silent with 13 of a suit between them? Or had partner temporarily forgotten a cornerstone of the method and shown clubs at his first turn, solid clubs at his second turn, and nothing else worth mentioning at his third?

Eventually South decided that the second alternative was more likely than the first, so that 5♣ became the final contract. He came to a couple of spade tricks and a heart, he went eight down, and he conceded what is known as ‘400 the hard way’. That didn’t cost him as much as a mishap of this nature normally would, because at the other table N/S also lost a common score in an uncommon fashion – minus 200 in six diamonds redoubled – so the loss was a mere 5 IMPs.

‘Declarer played in notrump’ means only one thing. Until recently I would have thought that so did ‘declarer played in no trumps’, but now I am not so sure. □

**E/W Game. Dealer South.**

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

This deal arose in a league match at the Young Chelsea bridge club, and set a record that may be equalled but cannot be broken. N/S were operating an *avant garde* method, and the auction started:

West	North	East	South
Pass <sup>2</sup>	2♣ <sup>3</sup>	Pass	1♦ <sup>1</sup>
Pass	4♣ <sup>5</sup>	Pass	2♥ <sup>4</sup>
Pass	5♣ <sup>7</sup>		4♥ <sup>6</sup>



## Beat Today's Experts

### 1. Game All. Dealer South

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

West	North	East	South
Feldman	Milgrim	Hinze	Aker
Pass	1♦	Pass	1♥
1♠	2♦	2NT <sup>A</sup>	Pass
3♣	Pass	3♣	All Pass

Our deals come from the 2024 Spingold Championship, held in Toronto. Greg Hinze had no sound action available on the first round, but his partner should now bid. Jason Feldman entered the fray with 1♠. Hinze's 2NT indicated a sound spade raise with 4-card support. What should he say on the next round, when partner rebids 3♣?

East is a previous winner of the World Mixed Swiss Teams. Sorry, but as I see it, his 3♣ was a limp effort. 'I've already shown a good raise, and I have eight losers.' Yes, but you have AQx in partner's second suit. The cards lay very favourably, and all thirteen tricks were made.

West	North	East	South
Rigal	Lavee	Rubin	Wolpert
Pass	1♦	Pass	1♥
1NT <sup>A</sup>	2♦	4♣	All Pass

Barry Rigal's passed-hand 1NT showed the unbid suits, and Ron Rubin's easy 4♣ bid picked up 9 IMPs

**Awards: 4♣(10), part scores (3), 2♦ by N (3).**

### 2. Love All. Dealer East

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

West	North	East	South
Demuy	Donn	Kranyak	Jansma
2NT <sup>A</sup>	Pass	1♥	Pass
3♦	Pass	3♣ <sup>A</sup>	Pass
		4♥	All Pass

better idea is to use the Jacoby 2NT, showing at least game values and a 4-card fit.

The basic scheme is for opener to show a side-suit singleton with a new-suit rebid, otherwise the general strength with 3♥ (16+), 3NT (14-15) or 4♥ (less than 14). Demuy/Kranyak, use a modified version, where 3♣ is either a club shortage or a balanced minimum. The 3♦ control bid showed continued slam interest, and East signed off. Well bid! Ten tricks were made.

West	North	East	South
Meister	Hurd	Lahrmann	Bathurst
3♣ <sup>A</sup>	Pass	3♥	Pass
3♣	Pass	4♦	Pass
4NT	Pass	5♥	Pass
6♥	All Pass		

West's 3♣ was Puppet (5-card) Stayman. East should perhaps not have cuebid his ♦K on an 11-count with three losers in each black suit. Declarer managed eleven tricks, but lost 10 IMPs.

**Awards: 4♥(10), 3NT(7), 5♥(5), slams(2).**

*Continued overleaf*

When they have 19 HCP and a 5-4 fit, many responders head for slam regardless. A

### 3. Game All. Dealer East

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Hanlon</i>	<i>Rubenstein</i>	<i>Amoils</i>	<i>M. Rosenberg</i>
2♦ <sup>A</sup>	Pass	2♣	Pass
4♣	Pass	6♣	All Pass

We move to the Spingold Round-of-16. You think that Les Amoils was extremely lucky to find partner with that helpful dummy? Think again! The partnership use a 2♥ response as a

double negative, in rough terms around 0-3 HCP. So, Tom Hanlon's 2♦ already promised something. Add his leap to 4♣, denying the ♣A or ♣K, and East could reasonably hope for twelve tricks, easily made.

West	North	East	South
<i>Grue</i>	<i>Hans</i>	<i>Moss</i>	<i>Hung</i>
1♦ <sup>A</sup>	Pass	1♣ <sup>A</sup>	Pass
3♣	Pass	2♣	Pass
4♣	All Pass	4♦	Pass

I've always had a high regard for four-letter surnames – what a splendid sight! East opens a Precision 1♣, with 1♦ denying eight HCP. West had a second negative of 2NT available, so 3♣ showed some values. However, Brad Moss dropped the bidding in game. 11 IMPs away.

**Awards:** 6♣ (10), 5♠/4♣ (6).

### 4. Game All. Dealer West

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Cullin</i>	<i>Vroustis</i>	<i>Michielsen</i>	<i>Delimpalta</i>
1♦	Pass	1♣	2♥
Dble <sup>A</sup>	3♥	4♣	All Pass

We have reached the quarter-finals. Per-Ola Cullin uses a support double to show a hand of any strength with 3-card spade support. Marion Michielsen holds the precious ♦KQ, and knows from the N/S bidding that her partner is short in hearts.

She leaps to 4♣.

After winning the ♥K lead with the ace, declarer plays a club to the king and ace. She wins the ♦2 switch with the king, ruffs a heart, returns to the ♦Q and ruffs another heart with the ♠K. Dummy's ♦A is ruffed and overruffed. Michielsen then ruffs her last heart with the ♠A.

North discards the ♣J on the next diamond, declarer ruffing with the ♠5. North is then thrown in with the ♣Q and has to lead from his ♠J93. Michielsen puts in the ♠10 from her Q108. making ten tricks whether it wins (it does) or not. +620.

West	North	East	South
<i>Patreuha</i>	<i>Poon</i>	<i>Ward-Platt</i>	<i>J. Liu</i>
1♦	Pass	1♣	2♥
3♣	3♥	Pass	Pass
3♣	All Pass		

In the Polish Club system West's 1♦ is limited to 15 HCP. They do not use support doubles, and 3♣ just implies extra shape. Kiki Ward-Platt stops short of game and makes +140 for 10 IMPs away. However, this team went on to reach the final.

**Awards:** 4♣/3NT (10), part scores (4), slams (3).

## 5. E/W Game. Dealer North

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

West	North	East	South
Zatorski	Kranyak	Pachtmann	Demuy
Dble	Pass	1♠	Pass
1NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

Piotr Zatorski rates his hand as suitable for play in a trump contract, and starts with a double. His 1NT rebid then slightly overstates his values. Ron Pachtmann raises to 3NT, and indeed the partnership does hold 25 HCP. It is a hopeless game, though. This is because of East's unproductive five cards in hearts, also the lack of intermediate values in both hands.

Declarer won the second heart and finessed the ♠10 to the king. Demuy switched to the ♣7, North winning with the queen. A second club to the jack was followed by a losing finesse of the ♦8. Declarer finessed on the ♠2 continuation and went three down vulnerable.

West	North	East	South
<i>Compton</i>	<i>L'Ecuyer</i>	<i>Leonardon</i>	<i>Street</i>
1NT	All Pass	Pass	1♥

Both Souths play 5-card majors, but make a lead-directing opening in third seat. With his barren 18-count, Chris Compton is happy to bid just 1NT. He duly collects +90, winning 9 IMPs.

**Awards:** 1NT/1♥ dbled by S (10), 2NT (5), 3NT (3).

## 6. E/W Game. Dealer North

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Patreuha</i>	<i>L'Ecuyer</i>	<i>Ward-Platt</i>	<i>Street</i>
All Pass	4♠	5♥	Dble

We are watching the Spingold final. What action would you take as East? Ward-Platt bid 5♥, doubled by South, and the ♦4 was led. The dummy was not so bad: three

trumps and the ♠AQ over South's king.

Nicolas L'Ecuyer won with the ♦A and switched to the ♠7. North was seemingly marked with the ♠K, but declarer rose with the ♠A. Paul Street ruffed and switched to the ♣4. Declarer can escape for two down by playing the queen. No, the ace was chosen. A trump went to the queen and ace, South continuing with king and another club, to dummy's queen. The ♥10 was inexplicably run to South's bare ♥J, and a final diamond loser made it 1100 down.

Why was the 5♥ bid wrong? First, 4♠ was a pre-empt and not guaranteed to make. Second, the East hand was essentially balanced – usually a warning against high-level competition. Third, with losers in every suit, the potential vulnerable penalty was huge.

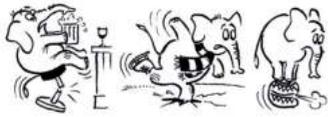
At the other table Duboin opened 4♠ and Pachtmann passed on the East cards. It should go two down, but the defence slipped a trick. East's phantom sacrifice at the other table cost 15 IMPs, their side losing the final by 12 IMPs. A lesson to us all.

**Awards:** Pass (10), 5♥ (0).

Our Spingold stars score three bulls-eyes and three arrows way off target, a total of 36/60.

### TIPS TO REMEMBER

- ❖ The Jacoby 2NT is a useful convention, allowing low-level slam investigation.
- ❖ Beware of coming in at a high level when you have a balanced hand. □



## Answers from page 38



Hand 1

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

### 6♦. West leads the ♥10.

You have reached a good slam that might be missed at the other table, so making your contract could lead to a positive swing for your team.

You have eight top tricks. Diamonds will provide two extra tricks if they split 2-2 or 3-1, but can you avoid a loser if they split 4-0? Missing ♦J10, you can only avoid losing a trick if West has ♦J1063. Can you see why?

Dummy's ♦KQ will allow you to beat West's ♦J10, but ♦A will only be sufficient to beat one of the ♦J10, so you should plan to protect against West holding all four trumps.

Your first decision comes at trick one. Should you play low from the dummy, and hope that West has the ♥K, or should you play the ♥A, then play on

hearts after drawing trumps?

West's ♥10 lead is consistent with a sequence headed by the ♥10, top of a doubleton, or a singleton. Given that you can see the ♥9, West's lead will not be top of a sequence. If West has two hearts it will not matter when East wins the ♥K, but if West has led a singleton, it will be crucial to avoid East winning the ♥K and returning a heart for West to trump.

You should therefore win the ♥A, and lead the ♦2 to the ♦A. When East discards, you lead the ♦4 towards dummy. West can play the ♦10, beaten by the ♦Q, but you now lead the ♠2 to ♠A, then lead the ♦5. You draw West's last two trumps (winning ♦7 if West plays ♦6), then play the ♥Q to force out East's ♥K, creating the two extra tricks you need to make your slam.

# Heffalump Traps

by David Bakhshi



Hand 2

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

## 3NT. West leads the ♥J.

You have reached a 3NT contract with plenty of high cards, so making your contract should prevent an adverse swing.

You have five top tricks and can definitely make three extra tricks from diamonds, and at least two extra tricks in clubs. Does it matter which suit you try first?

If you win the first trick and play on diamonds, you run the risk that East wins the ♦A, and switches to spades. This is a potential risk for you, since West might hold the ♠K, in which case the defenders can remove your only stopper in the suit. If that happens, you will need to find East with the ♣K so that you can make extra club tricks without losing

the lead again.

If West wins the ♣K, then the defenders will continue spades to defeat your contract.

If you win the first trick in the dummy, and start playing on clubs, your contract will be guaranteed. Can you see why?

You lead the ♣9 from the dummy, and if the finesse wins, you can repeat the finesse, starting with dummy's ♣Q. If West wins the ♣K on either round, your ♠AQ will be protected from attack. If West plays a spade, then you will have a second stopper (and trick) in the suit, and if West plays a second heart, then you can now force out the ♦A, knowing that you can win any return, and win at least ten tricks.



## Hand 3

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

### 4♠. West opened 1♥ and East passed. West leads the ♥J and East plays the ♥7.

You have bid aggressively to reach a poor game, so making your contract is likely to produce a sizeable gain for your team.

You only have four top tricks, but also have three inescapable losers – one heart and two diamonds, so you will need to avoid losing a trick to the ♠K. If you can win six spade tricks, you will still need another winner, which can be made by trumping a heart in the dummy.

In isolation, the best chance of winning six spade tricks is to finesse by leading towards the ♠AJ, hoping to find East with the ♠K, but if West has the ♠K then the only hope is to find that West's ♠K is singleton. Is it possible to deduce which opponent has the ♠K?

East's pass of West's 1♥ opening allows you to assume that East has no more than five points. West's ♥J lead affords the assumption that East has the ♥Q, but also leads to a second assumption. West's heart holding is either headed by the ♥J, or the ♥KJ.

In both cases, it would be more attractive to lead a diamond if West held the ♦AK, so East presumably has one of those cards. If East has the ♥Q and the ♦A or ♦K, then East cannot also have the ♠K.

You can let West win trick one, and assuming West plays a second heart, you win the ♥A at trick two. Needing West to hold the singleton ♠K, you cash the ♠A. When West's ♠K falls, you lead the ♥6, and trump with dummy's ♠Q. East will discard the ♣3, but you now lead the ♠8, and draw trumps, finessing East's ♠10 on the way.

# Heffalump Traps

by David Bakhshi



Hand 4

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

**4♣. West made a 2♦ overcall. West leads the ♦K, East overtakes with the ♦A and returns the ♦2. West wins the ♦9 and plays the ♦Q.**

You have alighted in a normal 4♣ contract, so making your game should prevent any losses.

You have nine top tricks, and can hope to make an extra trick by trumping a diamond in the dummy. However, following West's 2♦ overcall, and the play to the first two tricks, this plan might need to be revised. Why might your initial plan no longer be successful?

West is known to have at least five diamonds for the 2♦ overcall, but East's play of overtaking and returning a diamond is consistent with a doubleton diamond. If you trump with the ♠5, East will no doubt overtrump, and will likely return a black suit.

If East plays a club, you will have to decide whether to win the ♣A or play low.

East probably will not have the ♣K for this play, so you can win the ♣A and run all of your trumps, hoping to find West with the ♣K, and at least three hearts (in which case West will be squeezed), and if East returns a trump, you can draw trumps, cash the ♣A and play your trumps as above.

On this layout, you will be unsuccessful as long as East keeps ♥1082 for the last three tricks, but there is an easier way to make a tenth trick. You can try the effect of discarding the ♣6 when West plays the ♦Q at trick three. It does not help West to play a fourth diamond, but you can win any switch, cash ♣A, then trump the ♠2 in the dummy.

You can now draw trumps and make your game having trumped a club in the dummy instead of being overtrumped in diamonds. □



## Answers to September's Problems

This issue I held the first hand in a recent Gold Cup match, John Holland the second in the Tollemache final, and the third is from online play with robots, sent to me by my ever-reliable correspondent Dave Simmons.

### Hand 1

♠ J 10 6 4 3  
♥ Q 9 5 3  
♦ Q 6 4  
♣ 4

South	West	North	East
2♣ <sup>2</sup>	Dble <sup>3</sup>	1NT <sup>1</sup>	Dble

<sup>1</sup> 12-14, <sup>2</sup> clubs & another suit, <sup>3</sup> Take-out. You might consider this a bit thin, but your side has the balance of points and you have a shortage in their suit – you have to bid.

We have made what may look to some like a very thin take-out double of 2♣. However, it is completely sound – you have the majority of the values between you and you are short in the opponents' suit – you *must* act. It is slightly scary that partner has passed it for penalties when we have no ace or king, but partner knows what they are doing. What is the best lead?

a) ♠4: 6 marks, ♠J: 4 marks, ♠other: 1 mark.

Well, if I wasn't going to lead the right suit, I suppose I would lead this one. I prefer the 4th highest to the ♠J in this case as partner could easily be short in the suit and you don't want to start crashing honours.

b) ♥3: 5 marks, ♥other: 1 mark. Again, I suppose this is OK, but ...

c) ♦4: 4 marks, ♦other: 1 mark. I like this less than either major as it is slightly more likely to be declarer's second suit and so slightly more likely that you are helping them to make tricks. However, there is no doubt the right lead is:

(d) ♣4: 10 marks. We have been here before. When you are defending a low level doubled part score, and even more so when you have the balance of the values, it is essential to get the trumps out. You may say this will help declarer pick up partner's trump holding but after the bidding declarer is not going to get the trumps wrong.

At the table dummy hit with ♣Axx and partner had KQxxx! Declarer ducked the first club so John Holland won the queen and continued the good work (as you would expect) with a second club. Two off for 500. Any other defence means declarer can scramble another trick with a ruff and get out for one off.

For once, I am reasonably confident that Nathan's computer will agree with me 😊

**Pairs Bonus:** ♣4: 5 marks. The same lead for the same reasons. This is one of those hands where the lead at teams is actually more important than at pairs. +200 will be 90% plus anyway, so the correct lead only gains you a few points, whereas it is 9 IMPs at teams.

### Computer simulations – best lead:

♣4: 87.2% chance of defeating the contract (teams) and highest average tricks taken (6.94) with this lead (pairs proxy).

### Hand 2

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

South	West	North	East
Pass	1♠ <sup>1</sup>	Pass	2♠
3♥	All Pass	Dble	Redble <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Playing 5CM and strong NT; <sup>2</sup> Max 2♠ bid & interested in penalty

This is sort of a Sherlock Holmes hand ('When you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth'). There are three suits I wouldn't lead, so that leaves the fourth.

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

(a) ♠A: 4 marks, ♠other: 2 marks. Just because you have bid and supported the suit doesn't mean you have to lead it! Partner's bidding has shown your side has the majority or thereabout of the values, and the opponents' bidding has shown they are not wildly distributional. There is no need to go around flashing out aces (or underleading it) when the contract is liable to be close. I wonder if the computer will continue its fetish for ace leads?

(b) ♥K/2: 2 marks. This is actually worse than a spade lead. Why would you want to lead trumps from this holding?

(c) ♦5: 3 marks, ♦A/10: 1 mark. The same arguments as for a spade lead. Why do you want to lead/underlead aces against close suit contracts? Which leaves us with:

(d) ♣any: 10 marks. This is what John Holland led at the table. If ever there was a hand and an auction to be passive on, this is it. It was a winner at the table. Declarer won and played ace and another heart (partner having Qx). John exited with another club and in the fullness of time declarer had to play spades with Jx in dummy and Kxx in hand so that was simply one off.

**Pairs Bonus:** ♣any: 5 marks. The case for a passive club lead is even stronger at pairs.

**Computer simulations – best lead:**

♣any: 66.2% chance of defeating the contract (teams) and highest average tricks taken (4.91) with this lead (pairs proxy).

South	West	North	East
1♠	Pass	2♥ <sup>1</sup>	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♣ <sup>2</sup>	Pass	4♦ <sup>2</sup>	Pass
4♥ <sup>2</sup>	Pass	5♣ <sup>2</sup>	Pass
6♠	All Pass		

<sup>1</sup> game forcing; <sup>2</sup> cuebids

The opponents have conducted a lengthy and informative auction to 6♠. Can we take advantage of that?

(a) ♠6/5: 2 marks, ♠Q: 1 mark. I am sure I don't need to explain why giving up your probable trump trick is a bad idea.

(b) ♥8/7/6: 3 marks, ♥J: 2 marks. And this is not much better. This just helps declarer to set up dummy's longest suit.

(c) ♦4: 10 marks, ♦K: 1 mark. If you are going to lead diamonds, the ♦4 not the ♦K is the right card. And it has a lot going for it. Dummy had cue bid diamonds so will have a control. Leading a diamond now puts declarer under pressure immediately before they know whether they need to take the finesse. And that was exactly what happened at the table. Dave Simmons informed me the robot led the ♦4, and fearing a ruff on the return he put up the ace with AQxxx on dummy and J10x in hand. When he had a trump loser from AKJ10xx opposite xxx that was one down.

(d) a club: 8 marks. This is the obvious 'safe' choice and if I wasn't going to try the ♦4 this would be my choice ...

**Pairs bonus:** ♦4: 5 marks. As I never tire of saying you get a bad score whenever the opponents bid and make slam against you, so the same lead for the same reason for me.

**Computer simulations – best lead:**

♦K: This just wins in teams with a 4.5% chance of defeating the contract.

♣any: 0.52 tricks – highest average tricks taken with this lead (pairs proxy).

The full results of the computer simulation can be found online, on page 72. □

EBED now runs three youth camps and is planning to add a fourth in 2026 somewhere further North. The most recent was the Autumn Camp, held at Woldingham School in Caterham, which proved to be a beautiful and relaxing place. At all three of our camps, there is teaching available for young people with no experience of the game, and learning and playing opportunities for parents.

The Easter Camp will take place on 5-6 April in Cleobury Mortimer, Shropshire. The Summer Camp in Northampton is booked for 29-31 August. Telephone entries can be taken by Lisa Miller: 01296 317217

Many young people who attend the camps do not have any bridge in their schools. EBED has a new initiative: Thursday afternoon bridge from 4.15pm-6.15pm (drop in anytime) on RealBridge every week. The EBED team: Charlie Bucknell, Abbey Smith, Joan Bennett, Clive Turner and I are there and provide informal teaching. There is enough support available for young people to join in with no experience.

The top group at the Autumn Camp had a wide range of ability from those who have been through our Silver course, through to the U16 and the U21 squads. Charlie Bucknell (*pictured*) and Stephen

Kennedy, two former junior internationals (and the England U21 squad coaches), were outstanding at teaching and entertaining the top group.

Sebastian and Jacob (*pictured*) won the first round of the Grand Prix for the Tony Friday Trophy. This event takes place over six rounds: three at the different camps and three on RealBridge.

Aside from the bridge, there were a couple of activity sessions. The young people made the most of the facilities including an astro for football and ultimate frisbee, as well as table tennis and a sports hall. Parents and grandparents were able to take part in all the bridge classes and competitions as well as the art classes.

Sue Johnson, better known for her videos and animations, shows off her skills with a paint brush (*pictured*). She has been given the Tom Bradley Award for her inspiring work teaching bridge to young people in London.

Annabel and Sophia (*pictured*), two of Sue Johnson's protégés, won the main pairs competition on Friday night. In addition to the tuition and the two main competitions, there were two Speedballs and a Swiss Pairs. I would strongly encourage any parents or grandparents to suggest to the younger members of their families to give the camps a try. They are a hoot!



# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Send your letters to the editor, Lou Hobhouse, Raggett House, Bowdens, TA10 0DD, or e-mail [lou@ebu.co.uk](mailto: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.

## MORE DOLLYS

The first item in my *Ask Simon* piece in May contained an error. I had asked a statistician what the odds of holding 925 in a suit were and he told me it was about one in a thousand deals. Chris Chambers (a counter, not a calculator) wrote to tell me he had analysed all the deals he played in 2023 and had held four times as many Dollys as I had predicted.

I went back to my statistician and he told me I had asked for the odds in *a suit*, not *any suit*. So the results should indeed be reduced by a factor of four, or maybe a tad more, because a hand could contain two or three Dollys. My apologies.

**Simon Cochemé**

PS If your holding of 925 in a suit combination contributes to the success of a contract, ruffing declarer's losers perhaps, then it is known as a working 925.

## REASONS TO PLAY



**Bill Norman**

## TEACHING 5-CARD MAJORS

As a qualified EBED teacher I play both 4- and 5-card majors. I have been having discussions

with an ace-graded player from Stamford BC about 5-card majors because several members wish to learn the system. Everyone knows the rest of the world plays 5CM and, with the explosion of online bridge and with Acol members mingling with 5CM players, is something being done by EBED, such as a teacher's manual? I can't be the first to ask. **Valerie Sleaford**

*The U16 England squad system is based around 2/1 and 5-card majors, and we teach 5CM at our Youth Camps. We are developing learning and teaching resources for young people and their potential teachers in conjunction with New Tricks Bridge. This will include handbanks, videos and quizzes. While the style of content will be aimed at our younger players, it will be a good resource for anyone who would like to learn or teach 5CM. The new New Tricks website for youth players will be going live shortly. EBED has no plans to publish a book at present.*

**Richard Croot**  
EBED CEO

## CAN BUT DON'T TRANSFER!

With reference to the letter from Sue Maxwell, sometimes a suit take-out is certainly a better place to be than in 1NT – I just object to the word 'weak'.

I don't move to a take-out from 1NT unless a double appears. My partner and I also don't play transfers with 1NT (we do transfer when appropriate after 2NT) – shock, horror at most tables!

We find this works for us and we get, on average, better results by *not* playing transfers. Indeed, we find that a lot of partnerships forget they are playing transfers, half the partnership remembers and the other half forgets, or they don't play the full transfer system because it is complicated.

I do appreciate that the EBU deems it wise to teach a complicated system to complete beginners – I'm just not sure why. **Helen McNeil**

## SEASONAL G-RATINGS

I have established via the NGS leaderboard that the most successful seasons are the Winter or Winters, closely followed by the Spring or Springs while the Summer or Summers are lagging behind.

There are no EBU Members called Autumn or Autumns – they seem to *fall* by the wayside. **Dave Robinson**

## OFF TO AFRICA?

Your readers will be delighted to know that those intending to spend part of the Northern winter in sunny South Africa can now use the map of African bridge clubs, each with contact details, on the [bridgefor.africa](http://bridgefor.africa) website. Bridge for Africa (BfA) is a new South African bridge nonprofit which uses internet technology to assist players to play more and better bridge, and help clubs with their marketing and administration. Players can also contact BfA for help with finding South African clubs.

**Brian Paxton**  
[info@bridgefor.africa](mailto:info@bridgefor.africa)

## Congratulations to the newly-promoted

### Grand Master:

Paul Mollison, Essex

### Avon

#### Master

Ian Burgess  
Isobel Larcombe

### Bedfordshire

#### Master

Martin Evered

### Berks. & Bucks.

#### Master

Andy Armstrong  
Steve Breed  
Marilyn Croft

Tim Davies

Lee Kemp

Paul Riley

Clive Seigal

### Cambs & Hunts

#### Life Master

Clive Stops

#### Master

Sandra Wildmore

### Channel Islands

#### Regional Master

Karen Fooks  
Phil Stevenson

### Devon

#### Master

Ann Hill

### Direct Overseas

#### Master

Aceylan Ahmet

### Direct UK

#### Regional Master

Linda Benneworth

### Dorset

#### Master

Mike Shepherd  
Gillian Thompson

### Essex

#### Grand Master

Paul Mollison

#### Master

Mandy Bridge  
Mark Hopkins  
Ailsa Wildig

### Gloucestershire

#### Master

Tim Redding

### Hants & I.O.W.

#### Life Master

Nigel Dent

#### Master

Richard Hawkes  
Brian Knight  
Bruce Wassell

### Herts

#### Regional Master

Anthony Osborne

#### Master

Philip Davey  
Jan Palmer Sayer  
John Whiting

### Isle of Man

#### Master

Alex Carine  
David Phillips

### Kent

#### Master

Jacky Ceeney  
Eamonn Courname  
Susan Feist  
Kim Flannery  
Julia Lippiatt  
Heather Nettleton  
David Prescott  
Valerie Thompson

### Lancashire

#### Master

Averil Balnaves  
John Michael Duxbury  
James Andrew Horrocks  
Susan Johnson  
Peter Mayes  
Angela Scott  
Maureen Whitehead

### Lincolnshire

#### Regional Master

Louise Lewis

### London

#### Life Master

Lorna Vestey

#### Master

Simon Alterman  
Gordon Clark  
Peter Cox  
Penny Croucher  
Fabien Dunlop  
Michel Glen  
Graham Jones  
Minoo Sanhi-Court  
Erol Telvi

### Manchester

#### Regional Master

Gideon Harvey

#### Master

Barry Jefferies  
Judi Kemp

### Merseyside/Cheshire

#### Regional Master

Jakub Mitke

#### Master

Jane Baker-Jones  
Steve Bentley  
Paul Evans  
Graham Sharpe

### Middlesex

#### Regional Master

Magnus Spence-Jones

### Norfolk

#### Life Master

Chris Mallon

#### Master

Walid Haddad

### North East

#### Master

Ron Clements  
Peter Howe  
Len Metcalfe  
Marjorie Waugh

### Northamptonshire

#### Master

David Blount  
Mick Coogan  
Patrick Gookey  
Brian Haite  
Nicky Keir  
Dave Price

### Nottinghamshire

#### Regional Master

Sue Wright

#### Master

Michael Preen  
Elizabeth Walker

### Oxfordshire

#### Master

Marion Hebblethwaite  
Pat Silver

### Somerset

#### Master

Steve Douglas  
Richard Holmes

### Staffs & Shropshire

#### Regional Master

David Berry  
Jan Bhageerutty

#### Master

Libby Dale

### Suffolk

#### Life Master

Michael Moseley

#### Master

Bob Gardham  
Judy Gardham  
Racheal Reed

### Surrey

#### Life Master

Martin Lee

#### Regional Master

Ronald Wood

#### Master

Gina Chulack  
Peter Danckwardt  
Barbara Davies  
Stephen Fordham

Valerie Hart

Karen Johnson

Roger Lee

Simon Lucas

Claire Price

Richard Ridgway

Philip Thomas

David Wright

### Sussex

#### Regional Master

Terence Fishlock

Nick Goddard

Rosemary McKinnel

Andy Osborn

#### Master

Sally Blockley

Julie Jones

Frederick Pannell

Tony Sayers

### Warwickshire

#### Life Master

Andy Cope

#### Master

Kala Chauhan

Thierry Jones

Suzanne Naylor

Debbie Welch

Edward White

### Westmorland

#### Life Master

Robin Rose

#### Master

Ken Orford

### Wiltshire

#### Master

Jean Fairfax-Ross

Jean Raggett

Jill Wyatt

### Worcestershire

#### Master

Gerald Link

### Yorkshire

#### Life Master

Lesley Bridson

#### Regional Master

Robert Cave

#### Master

Ann Booth

John Bovey

Justine Davies

John Ebsworth

Stephen Farey

Irene Gordon

Ali Husain

Margaret Sewell

Carol Swales

Trevor Thicke

Janet Walker

# Club Bidding Quiz

by Julian Pottage



## Julian's answers to questions from page 38

<b>Hand 1</b> ♠ AK109832 ♥ A64 ♦ 842 ♣ –	W	N	E	S
	?			1♣

1♣. Just because you have a 7-card suit you do not have to make a pre-emptive overcall. You have two aces, which are good defensively. You also have a void, which means that you do not need all that much in partner's hand for game. Even a slam is possible facing the right cards despite the opposition opening the bidding.

<b>Hand 2</b> ♠ J42 ♥ 106 ♦ AK8732 ♣ J8	W	N	E	S
	2♦ ?	Pass	1♠ 3♣	Pass Pass

4♣. Partner's high reverse creates a game force, which means you do not have to jump to avoid missing game. You choose to do so as a 'fast arrival' bid because you are minimum and have no control in the unbid heart suit.

<b>Hand 3</b> ♠ A10874 ♥ K3 ♦ Q106 ♣ 765	W	N	E	S
	Pass ?	1♥	Pass	Pass 2♥

2♠. While you cannot be sure that North intends to pass, it is certainly a possibility. If so, you do not want to let the opponents play quietly in 2♥ when your side could easily have an 8-card spade fit. If North does bid on again, you would rather have a spade lead than a club lead.

<b>Hand 4</b> ♠ A ♥ AQ876532 ♦ – ♣ AK92	W	N	E	S
	?			1♠

Dble. Your hand is far too strong for any normal sort of overcall. If your partner bids the expected 2♦ or the hand on your left raises spades, you can bid hearts strongly next time. If you are a big optimist, you might pot 6♥ expecting the heart finesse, if there is one, to work – but you may be unable to get to dummy to take it.

<b>Hand 5</b> ♠ A84 ♥ AK ♦ Q42 ♣ AQJ104	W	N	E	S
	?			1♥

Dble. It is customary these days to play that a 2NT overcall directly over an opposing one bid shows not a balanced hand but rather the two lowest unbid suits. With a balanced hand too strong for a 1NT overcall you therefore start with a double.

<b>Hand 6</b> ♠ 8762 ♥ K98542 ♦ Q6 ♣ 9	W	N	E	S
	Pass ? ! Weak	3♦	1♠ Dble	2♦ <sup>!</sup> Pass

4♥. While you should take into account that partner is hoping you have some values, you have not the 4-card heart suit you might have had but six of the suit, and some shape on the side. At the table 4♥ made, even with trumps breaking 3-1. □

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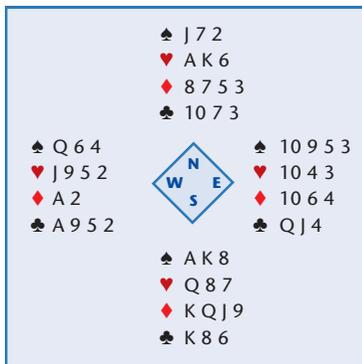
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## Taking advantage!

Members of Bridge Club Live were saddened recently by the passing of our most frequent and well-loved player. Margaret Jessop from South East London was 91 and over the last 20 years played more than 430,000 boards in BCL. Until lockdown, she also played regularly at her local club.

On the board below, South took full advantage of a defensive error in our main Match Pointed Pairs room. In this room, players can play any number of rounds of four boards each, scored across a large field.

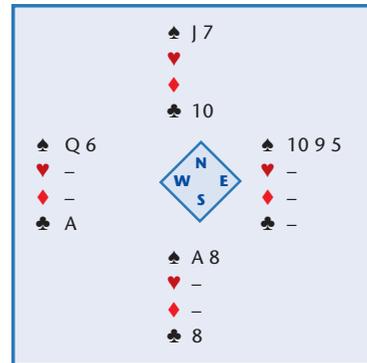


South played in 3NT after West had doubled his opening bid of 1♦. West led the ♣2 and South was now assured of making his contract assuming the

lead was 4th highest and if the ♦10 could be found.

Taking the ♣J with the ♣K, declarer advanced the ♦K and, when this was ducked, the ♦Q. After taking the ♦A, West led the ♣5 to the ♣Q and when East returned a spade rather than a club, declarer saw a possible overtrick as West should have the ♠Q for his double.

Rising with the ♠K, declarer cashed out his hearts and remaining diamonds. West had to keep the ♠Q protected and the ♣A, so the ending came down to:



South now exited with a club. West was forced to take the ♣A and lead away from ♠Q6, giving declarer his vital overtrick for a 98% score on the board. □

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## Trump management

Judging when to draw trumps is often the critical decision when declaring a suit contract. On this deal from a Funbridge team game, you will need some luck to bring home your contract. Even with the key finesse working you will still need to time the play correctly. At first glance, you may appear to have plenty of trumps...

**Love All. Dealer North. IMPs**

	♠ 8 6 5 2		
	♥ J 10 9 2		
	♦ A K		
	♣ 10 8 3		
♠ A K Q 10 7 3	♠ J 9 4	N	♥ 6 4 3
♥ 8	♥ 6 4 3	W	♥ 6 4 3
♦ J 9 8 6 3	♦ Q 10	E	♦ Q 10
♣ J	♣ A Q 6 5 2	S	♣ A Q 6 5 2
	♠ -		
	♥ A K Q 7 5		
	♦ 7 5 4 2		
	♣ K 9 7 4		

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

You open 1♥ and the opponents pre-empt to 4♣ by the time the bidding gets back to you. You double and partner removes to 5♥, ending the auction. West leads the ♠A. How do you play?

You might have hoped for a little more in dummy but it is what it is. Let's start by counting tricks. You have five trump winners in hand, and two top diamonds. You can take two diamond ruffs in dummy, so you will need to score two club tricks to bring your total to eleven. In order to score two clubs, you may have to lose the lead twice. If the defenders play spades every time they are in, forcing

you to ruff in the long hand, it appears that you are in danger of losing control. However, you will be able to take advantage of their defence to reverse the dummy, scoring four ruffs in hand and four trump winners in dummy. With eight trump tricks you will then need only one club trick to go with two top diamonds. What should be clear is that you cannot afford to touch trumps before working on the club suit.

What is the club position? It looks as if West has a spade suit headed by the ♠AK. If he also held the ♣A, is it not likely that he would have overcalled 1♣ rather than making a pre-emptive jump to the three level?

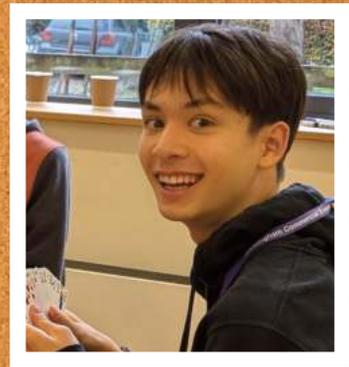
You cross to the ♦A and play a club, intending to rise with the king if East plays low. At the table, East goes up with the ♣A and West follows with the ♣J. East returns a club, so you play low and unblock the ♣10 from dummy when West ruffs.

West continues with a spade, but you are in control now. You ruff, unblock the ♦K, return to hand with a trump, West discarding, and ruff a diamond in dummy. With West out of trumps, you cross back to hand with the marked club finesse against East's queen and cash your second club winner before ruffing your last diamond in dummy. You claim the remaining tricks with trumps in your hand.

Note that if East had played low on the first round of clubs, you would have won with the king and played a second club. If East wins and plays a trump, you can knock out his other high club and score seven trumps and two tricks in each minor. If East forces you with a spade, you will reverse the dummy and score eight trumps to go with three winners in the minors. Either way, you score 11 tricks as long as you do not touch trumps before working to establish club tricks. □

# AUTUMN BRIDGE CAMP – WOLDINGHAM SCHOOL

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# India's Quiz from page 26

**Q** What is your rebid as responder in the auction below with each of the following hands?

**A**

West	East
1♥	2♦
2♠	?

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

**B**

West	East
1♣	1♥
2♦	?

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

**C**

West	East
1♦	1♥
3♦	?

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

**D**

West	East
1♦	1♠
1NT	?

Hand 10	Hand 11	Hand 12
♠ Q J 9 7 3	♠ Q J 9 7 3	♠ Q J 9 7 3
♥ K 10 6 4	♥ K 10 6 4	♥ K 10 6
♦ 8	♦ 8	♦ 9 8
♣ 9 7 5	♣ A 7 5	♣ A 7 5

**Hand 1 – 3♠.** You are interested in slam in spades but unable to commit. However, you are already in a game-forcing auction, so there is no need to go through fourth suit forcing first. Merely making a bid below game is inviting your partner to have a conversation.

**Hand 2 – 3♦.** Here, you would like to know more about opener's shape or club holding but would also like to express your long suit. You can do all those things with 3♦. If opener is 5·6·1·1, they will bid 3♠ next; if opener is 4·5·3·1, you would like to play in diamonds, and 3♦ will be raised to 4♦; if opener is 4·6·1·2, you are likely to do best in a 4-3 spade fit and can bid 3♠ after partner bids 3♥ next! And if opener is 4·5·1·3 or 4·5·2·2 with a club stop, you would prefer 3NT.

**Hand 3 – 3♣.** Were you tempted to bid 3NT? Notice that your club stop is anti-positional and you would therefore like opener to be declarer with a holding such as ♣KJ7. That way, a club lead would ensure three club stops instead of the two you would be entitled to if your hand were declaring. If partner denies a club stop, you can go back to 3NT safe in the knowledge that your stop is still a stop.

**Hand 4 – 3♥.** This is game-forcing, remember: looking to find out whether partner has 2-card heart support.

**Hand 5 – 3♣.** Simple preference for clubs over diamonds since partner's clubs are longer than their diamonds. No stop in spades and not enough strength to bid fourth suit forcing.

**Hand 6 – 2♠.** Despite your spade stop, do not go rushing straight into NT just yet: partner could still have three hearts!

**Hand 7 – 3♥.** Don't forget that this one is forcing to game. You are giving partner the choice between 3NT and 4♥.

**Hand 8 – Pass.** You are not strong enough to bid 3♥ as you will not have enough combined strength for game, especially when opener could easily have a singleton heart.

**Hand 9 – 3♠.** You would like to go to 3NT but have no club stop. Space is tight but you have one

investigative bid – use it! Partner has denied holding four spades, thus eliminating the risk of being raised. Perhaps if partner has no club stop, they will show three hearts; failing that, you already know you have a diamond fit.

**Hand 10 – 2♥.** Conveniently, you have a lower-ranking bid to run to over 1NT, giving partner the

choice between playing in 2♥ or 2♠.

**Hand 11 – 3♥.** The downside of having 2♥ available as weak means that to show a game-force, you must jump to 3♥ instead, taking up space.

**Hand 12 – 3♠.** Without a second suit to force with, this is your way of giving partner the choice between 3NT and 4♠. □

## Michael Byrne's Quiz from page 42

With both sides vulnerable you are the dealer - are you going to keep your powder dry or strike the first blow?

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

## ANSWERS

**Hand 1 – Pass.** Bidding 2♥ is wrong on that suit quality, and there is too big a chance you will go for a penalty, or simply buy the contract and lose 200 on a part score deal.

**Hand 2 – 2♠.** Although the hand is minimum (*'only 5 points'* I hear you shrieking) it has an excellent spade suit and powerful 6-4 shape. With a singleton in the other major it's attractive to try and keep the opponents out of their heart fit.

**Hand 3 – 2♠.** The hand does contain four cards in the other major but some sense of discretion is required and you should open 2♠. You can't let

four hearts to the seven keep you from preempting with your strong spade suit. Even if partner has five hearts and two spades, your side might well belong in spades.

**Hand 4 – 1♥.** The hand contains far too much playing strength for a weak two, and you are two suited, you might need to get the diamonds in later on.

**Hand 5 – 2♦.** It's not the greatest suit but you do have the intermediate cards so you should only lose the ace and king even if partner is void. □

# Paul Bowyer's Quiz from page 30

## Q1

**Hand 1**  
South plays in 3NT.  
West leads the ♠J.

W	N	E	S
			1NT
Pass	2♥ <sup>A</sup>	Pass	2♠
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

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

**Preliminary analysis:** You have reached 3NT after an auction involving a transfer bid. The ♠J lead is not particularly welcome as the defenders both threaten to set up that suit as well as removing dummy's entry. East takes the ♥A and returns the suit to the king on table. What is your plan?

## ANSWER

Your mandatory *Count and Plan* shows two spades, one heart, one diamond and two clubs on top. To make three extras, you need spades to break 3-3 and the heart finesse, and neither defender to hold more than four diamonds. This is extremely unlikely, but you have little choice – it's the only thing to play for.

After trick two, won by dummy's ♠K, you should duck a spade. West will take that and cash two more diamonds before getting off lead, probably with a club. Now you can win, test the spades, which do break, and then play a heart to the queen. On this layout, this extremely fortunate contract succeeds.

You can look at the full deal opposite.

♠ A K 6 4 2	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;"> <a href="#">click to play online</a> </div>
♥ J 7 3	
♦ K Q	
♣ 8 6 2	
♠ Q 10 7	♠ J 5 3
♥ 8 5	♥ K 10 9 4 2
♦ J 10 9 7	♦ A 5 2
♣ Q J 7 4	♣ 10 5
♠ 9 8	
♥ A Q 6	
♦ 8 6 4 3	
♣ A K 9 3	

Note that ducking a club to set that suit up is pointless as it would give you insufficient winners, even if clubs break 3-3. You'd have two spades, two hearts, one diamond and three clubs, with good fortune, and that's not enough tricks. There's no way of making three heart tricks against best defence.

**Question 2 overleaf**

# Paul Bowyer's Quiz from page 30

## Q2

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

W	N	E	S
			1♥
Pass	2♦	Pass	2NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

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



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

**Preliminary analysis:** West leads the ♠J against 3NT, which looks friendly enough. East puts the ♠K on that, so you take your ♠A and take stock. A 3-2 diamond split will see you have plenty of tricks on this one. Is there a problem? What is your plan?

## ANSWERS

Your *Count and Plan* shows two spades, after the lead, one heart, three diamonds and one club. Should diamonds split 3-2, a solid 68% shot, you'd make six diamond tricks and an overtrick. At matchpoint pairs there's a strong case for playing off the top diamonds, accepting your fate should they break badly. However, in a teams game or at rubber bridge, overtricks are unnecessary frippery – securing the contract is all-important. To that end, you should take the ♠A at trick one and duck a diamond.

Winning the return, you can run the remaining diamonds and make two spades, one heart, five diamonds and one club for nine winners. Here's the full deal:

[click to play online](#)

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

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

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

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

# COMPUTER SIMULATION OF SEPTEMBER LEADS QUIZ RESULTS

By Nathan Piper

## Hand 1

♠ J 10 6 4 3  
♥ Q 9 5 3  
♦ Q 6 4  
♣ 4

South	West	North	East
2♣ <sup>2</sup>	Dble <sup>3</sup>	1NT <sup>1</sup>	Dble
<sup>1</sup> 14-16, <sup>2</sup> clubs & another suit, <sup>3</sup> Take-out. You might consider this a bit thin, but your side has the balance of points and you have a shortage in their suit – you have to bid.			

## ASSUMPTIONS

**South** has 4+ clubs & 4+ of another. No 6-card suit.

**North** has 14-16 points and balanced (including 5-4-2-2 & 6-3-2-2 with a minor). Clubs is not the shortest suit.

**East** has 16+ HCP, no 5-card major, four good clubs or five clubs.

### Best lead in each suit:

♣ 4 87.2%, 6.94 tricks \*(teams & pairs)

♠ J 82.5%, 6.64 tricks

♥ 3 79.7%, 6.52 tricks

♦ 4 78.3%, 6.48 tricks

### Other leads:

♠ 10 82.5%, 6.64 tricks

♠ 4 81.3%, 6.58 tricks

♠ 3 81.3%, 6.58 tricks

♠ 6 81.3%, 6.58 tricks

♥ 5 79.7%, 6.52 tricks

♥ 9 78.5%, 6.47 tricks

♦ 6 78.3%, 6.48 tricks

♥ Q 73.7%, 6.29 tricks

♦ Q 73.0%, 6.27 tricks

### Comments:

A moderately easy hand to simulate – at least for the opponents' hands. It's a bit less clear what partner has but tweaking the assumptions didn't change the results much – which improves confidence.

The high numbers for all leads show how heavily outgunned declarer is. The simulator doesn't think this is the time to attack with a red suit. It's quite likely that these suits are frozen or that, despite the double-dummy engine knowing where our queens are, there aren't the entries to finesse them unless we help.

The trump lead is a comfortable winner at teams and has a crushing advantage at pairs. The simulator very rarely leads trumps so here, with a passive spade available as an alternative, it's clearly trying to prevent ruffs. Normally there might be a double-dummy caveat about the singleton lead picking up partner's honour, but the auction has already revealed where our trump honours lie. Given that most of the enemy strength will be on the table, underneath partner, it's also quite possible that we're simply leading through strength to strength. For example, partner has the AQ over dummy's K (enabling us to play three rounds of trumps immediately) over 16% of the time.

## Hand 2

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

South	West	North	East
	1♠ <sup>1</sup>	Pass	2♠
Pass	Pass	Dble	Redble <sup>2</sup>
3♥	All Pass		
<sup>1</sup> Playing 5CM and strong NT; <sup>2</sup> Max 2♠ bid & interested in penalty			

## ASSUMPTIONS

**South** has 4+ hearts and is not 4-4 with four of a minor.

**North** has 8-10 HCP, with a classic take-out double shape, or 9+ HCP with a flawed take-out double and not a 1NT overall.

**East** has exactly three spades..

### Best lead in each suit:

♣6 66.2%, 4.91 tricks \*(teams & pairs)

♠A 61.2%, 4.78 tricks

♦5 60.8%, 4.76 tricks

♥K 47.3%, 4.48 tricks

### Other leads:

♣7 66.2%, 4.91 tricks \*

♣3 66.2%, 4.91 tricks

♦A 60.1%, 4.74 tricks

♦10 59.3%, 4.72 tricks

♠10 57.4%, 4.68 tricks

♠9 57.4%, 4.68 tricks

♠8 57.4%, 4.68 tricks

♠6 57.3%, 4.68 tricks

♥2 46.5%, 4.45 tricks

### Comments:

A fairly easy hand to simulate so we can be pretty confident of the results. I tried various tweaks to the assumptions, none of which made any essential difference to the outcome – which is a very clear win for clubs. The high chances of beating the contract suggest why – the opponents are likely to fail unless we help them out.

I know what you're thinking: I thought the computer loved ace leads? Aces are generally good because they are a very flexible way to mount an attacking defence – retaining all attacking options until after we've seen dummy and seen partner's signal. But we don't want to attack on this hand – we just want to avoid giving tricks away. Seeing the dummy is likely just to confirm that we should have led a club!

It's interesting that the computer prefers a small diamond to the ace. I looked through the generated hands and found that there were many cases where a low diamond gained. With Qx opposite and the king in dummy the ace lead would butcher your second trick. With xx opposite, the diamond suit is tricks for declarer so you may need to retain the ace while setting up partner's ruff. A low diamond also gains when partner has the queen or jack and declarer has the other two honours, or when partner has the KJ and declarer has the Qxx(x). The overall advantage is very small though and there are lots of obvious situations where the ace is better.

### Hand 3

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

South	West	North	East
1♠	Pass	2♥ <sup>1</sup>	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♣ <sup>2</sup>	Pass	4♦ <sup>2</sup>	Pass
4♥ <sup>2</sup>	Pass	5♣ <sup>2</sup>	Pass
6♠	All Pass		

<sup>1</sup> game forcing; <sup>2</sup> cuebids

### ASSUMPTIONS

**South** has 6+ spades, 14+ HCP, control in clubs and high-card control in hearts..

**North** has 3+ spades, 5+ hearts, 14+ HCP, controls in diamonds and clubs.

**East** has no side suit void, no 8-card suit, not AKxxx or better in a minor.

### Best lead in each suit:

♦K 4.5%, 0.51 tricks \*

♣8 4.3%, 0.52 tricks \*

♥8 2.1%, 0.47 tricks

♥7 2.1%, 0.47 tricks

♥5 2.1%, 0.46 tricks

♠5 1.1%, 0.12 tricks

### Other leads:

♦4 4.4%, 0.50 tricks

♣7 4.3%, 0.52 tricks \*

♣5 4.3%, 0.52 tricks \*

♣10 4.3%, 0.52 tricks\*

♥J 1.4%, 0.44 tricks

♠6 1.1%, 0.12 tricks

♠Q 0.0%, 0.04 tricks

### Comments:

Slam hands are very often difficult to simulate. It's very hard to define exactly what the criteria for each bid is and, just as importantly, what hands are ruled out by each bid. How much we trust the opponents to bid accurately is also a factor that can't be coded up. Assuming that the opponents have bid sensibly has cost me many slams in the past – as has assuming they haven't!

Cont/. . .

The results for the assumptions above have the computer slightly favouring attacking diamonds rather than leading a passive club and hoping for a diamond later. When I experimented with slightly different assumptions I got quite different results, ranging from a big win for diamonds to a narrow win for clubs with everything in between. Hearts were always a long way back in third and spades were always worst (no surprise there!). Clearly this isn't a good hand for simulation so my confidence level in the result is correspondingly low.

Assuming we're going to lead diamonds, which should we lead? The computer thinks the king is very slightly superior as it picks up singleton queens in the South hand. The norm these days is low from Kx against slams – to help partner; if you lead the king and partner has the ace they have to guess

whether to play you for a singleton (overtake and give a ruff) or a doubleton (encourage). That doesn't apply here after North's diamond cuebid – and in any case the computer doesn't have to worry about its double dummy partner guessing wrong. The  $\spadesuit 4$  could also win against a human declarer by putting declarer to an early guess, but never against a double-dummy declarer.

One final thing to point out is that the results are lower than they might be at the table because our  $\spadesuit Q$  may get picked up by the double-dummy analyser – but is a pretty safe trick in real life. This also means that we know that we only need to get one side suit trick whereas the computer is allowing that it might need two side suit tricks – which might make a key difference.  $\square$

