

BRIDGE

Number: 213

September 2020

Julian Pottage's Double Dummy Problem

RUFF AND SMOOTH

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

♠ Q 6 5 4 3
♥ A K Q J
♦ K
♣ A Q 6

Contract 6♥ by South
Lead: ♦A

BRIDGE is ceasing publication.

The last issue will be number 216 - December 2020.

See page 5 for more information.

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Sally Brock Looks At Your Slam Bidding

Sally's Slam Clinic

Where did we go wrong?

This month's deal was sent in by Geoff Simpson:

Dealer West. N/S Game.

♠ A 10 9 6 3
♥ 9
♦ A J 8 5
♣ A Q 9

♠ 5 4
♥ K J 8 7 5 4 3 2
♦ 2
♣ 10 6

♠ Q J 8 7 2
♥ Q
♦ 10
♣ K 8 5 4 3 2

♠ K
♥ A 10 6
♦ K Q 9 7 6 4 3
♣ J 7

At the table the players bid:

West	North	East	South
3♥	3♠	Pass	4♦
Pass	4♥	Pass	4NT
Pass	5♣	Pass	7♦
All Pass			

After North shows enthusiasm for diamonds (with the 4♥ cue-bid), South can risk 4NT and, on hearing of three key cards opposite, can bid the grand slam. His club loser will go on North's ♠A, and he should be able to ruff two hearts in the dummy. North-South were lucky that

West opened only 3♥ – a slightly conservative choice at favourable vulnerability with an 8-card suit. After a 4♥ opening it is harder.

North is perhaps more likely to double than bid 4♠ and over either double or 4♠.

All South can really do is cross his fingers and jump to 6♦.

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

All Pass

* alerted bids – see text for explanations

Slam of the month

This month's number one slam deal comes from an online match in Australia:

Dealer West. Love All.

♠ 9 4 2
♥ A J 4 3 2
♦ A
♣ K Q 10 8

♠ 10 6
♥ Q 10 6
♦ J 9 8 6 3 2
♣ 7 6

♠ 8 3
♥ 9 8 7 5
♦ K Q 10 4
♣ 9 4 3

♠ A K Q J 7 5
♥ K
♦ 7 5
♣ A J 5 2

The hand was discussed in a Bridgewinners forum by Barbara Travis.

The bidding was:

This was an excellent auction to the top spot. The first two bids are clear (though some slightly old-fashioned souls who still play strong jump shifts might have started with 2♠ as South). The first main issue is whether North bids 2♣ or 2♠. Generally, with a weak hand North should raise immediately, but with extras should start with 2♣ – but exactly where you draw the line is a matter of personal interpretation. I like the simple raise. South's 2NT is generally played as forcing these days, and North's 3♣ shows the actual distribution. This makes it easy for South to raise to 4♣, North to cue-bid and South to use RKC for clubs. North then shows three key cards and South asks for the ♣Q, which North shows with 5NT. That is enough for South to be able to count thirteen tricks in no-trumps. Note that if South had not held the ♥K he would have been able to bid 7♠ instead – since the 3♣ bid showed a 3-5-1-4 shape, he would be able to count on a diamond ruff in dummy. ■

BRIDGE

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SEVERANCE

<p>♠ K 10 7 ♥ 2 ♦ 9 8 7 ♣ A Q 9 5 4 3</p>	<p>♠ A 8 ♥ K Q 10 ♦ 6 5 4 3 2 ♣ J 10 2</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 10px auto; width: 40px; text-align: center;"> N W E S </div> <p>♠ Q 9 6 5 4 3 2 ♥ A 9 5 4 3 ♦ K ♣ Void</p>	<p>♠ J ♥ J 8 7 6 ♦ A Q J 10 ♣ K 8 7 6</p>
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Contract 5♠ by South
Lead: ♥2

11. SEVERANCE © Mr Bridge 01483 489961. Printed in the UK on 100% cotton.

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SEVERANCE

The Solution to August's Double Dummy Bridge Problem

1. Win the heart with a picture card in dummy
2. Lead a club honour from dummy, which East does best to cover, obliging you to ruff
3. Lead the ♠Q, which West does best to cover; you capture the ♠K with the ♠A
4. Lead dummy's remaining club honour and discard the ♦K
5. Ruff the return and lead a low spade, which West wins
6. Ruff the return and cash the ♠9 to finish drawing trumps
7. Cross to dummy's remaining heart picture and run the ♥10
8. Assuming the lead is still in dummy, ruff something to hand to take the last two tricks with the ♥A and then the ♥9

If you do not get rid of the ♦K by losing a club to West, East will get in with the ♦A to give West a heart ruff. ■

DEAR READER



The time has come for me to take off my hat and retire.

Publication of **BRIDGE** will continue until issue 216, Christmas 2020. My holidays and events will run as advertised on my website. No more will be added to my portfolio and once they have taken place Mr Bridge Limited will close.

Subscribers to **BRIDGE** will be contacted with regards to receiving a refund of any outstanding subscription balance. See page 5 for more information. If you have not received an email by 21 August 2020, do call my office on ☎ 01483 489961.

Coronavirus has prevented us from safely playing bridge in person for the last few months and it may be many more before we can return to playing together again. When that time comes, instead of organising the events for everyone, I can be sat with you, enjoying your company and playing bridge, who knows?

One of my sons, Bernard Magee, has recently set up an online subscription-based bridge service which I hope you will enjoy and benefit from.

All that remains is for me to say a huge thank you to my loyal office staff who have worked for me over the years, always ready to please and assist. Thank you too, to the writers who have made **BRIDGE** the great read that it is today. Thank you also to my wonderful team of bridge hosts and helpers, who have gone above and beyond, always striving to exceed your expectations and of course to all of you who have attended my programme of bridge weekends and overseas holidays.

I have really enjoyed my time as your Mr Bridge and I have loved having you all with me on my journey.

All good wishes

Mr Bridge

BRIDGE is ceasing publication.

The last issue will be number 216 - December 2020.

My office is in the process of contacting all subscribers by email.

If you have not heard anything by 21 August,
please ☎ **01483 489961** and advise which of the
following options you would like to take.

Option 1

Donate your remaining balance to Mr Bridge's favourite small charity; Little Voice Foundation.

Little Voice works directly with an impoverished urban community in Addis Ababa in Ethiopia to support the economic development of women, to provide primary education to children and vocational opportunities to youth. We take a holistic, community-centered approach to ending the cycle of poverty.

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Option 2

Donate your remaining balance to Mr Bridge's favourite large charity; Cancer Research UK



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<https://www.cancerresearchuk.org>

Option 3

Request a refund of any money owing after the final issue.

Please have your payment card to hand to process the refund.



Can I Tell An Opponent To Bid Differently?

Q I have an interesting hand from today's Stratford-upon-Avon Bridge Club online session. Hand 16.

The bidding was:

West	North	East	South
2♠	Pass	Pass	3♣
3♦	3NT		

I was North. West had previously opened a weak 2♥ with five hearts and a 12 count.

I ended up in 3NT and because of the bidding played it wrongly but cannot make it anyway.

Do I just put it down to bad luck, or should I tell West to start bidding correctly?

West's hand was:

♠ A 9 7 3 2
♥ A Q
♦ J 10 9 7 5
♣ 8

Name and address supplied.

A Whether it was bad luck, bad bidding or anything else is not for me to answer. But bridge is a competitive game and some people follow the rules of bidding far more closely than others do. Both approaches get their successes. Many

people complain when an opponent bids in a way that they would not but unless they have been misinformed they have no valid complaint and to tell the opponent he must bid differently is completely unacceptable.



Q As the expert in such matters, could you please provide us with guidance on a hand that cropped up on BBO on Tuesday?

The bidding went:

West	North	East	South
1♦	2♣	2♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		

We, as defenders, expected the 2♥ bid to be forcing for one round and so didn't compete further and defended accordingly. 2♥ made plus 1.

It turned out that the 2♥ bid was made on just 4 points with a poor 7-card heart suit. Our opponents later said that they double on all strong hands after an overcall – and so new suits are not forcing for one round and can be quite weak.

My question is simply are they required to announce or alert the fact that the 2♥ bid is non-forcing and potentially

weak? They didn't. So we called the director at the end of the session who gave us an average instead of a near bottom.

Name and address supplied.

A A non-forcing change of suit response is alertable in all events in England and Wales (and I am pretty sure in Scotland, Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland as well), whether online or face to face. Online, of course, they should also explain why they are alerting by writing non forcing in the Explain box.

Sometimes, as here, opponents explain why they do something as though that proves something. It does not, of course, since you have no reason to suppose they play this way.



Q Please could you confirm that a double of 1NT in the following sequence is alertable if it is a take-out of ♣♦♥♠. 1♣♦♥♠-Pass-1NT-X.

Name and address supplied.

A It is alertable. While it is normal to play it for take-out the EBU wanted a simple unambiguous rule for

alerting doubles and doubles of 1NT, 2NT or 3NT are for penalties, or require an alert.



Q I have played a little bit online as needs must. I presumed that the laws of bridge would apply in the same way (where possible).

In the normal game one is not allowed aides-mémoire? Essentially not allowed to consult one's own convention card?

Playing online, although no one would know, is it permitted to look at your convention card?

I ask, because I presumed you should not, but I read in the EBU magazine that Simon Cocheme commented on the fact that it was easy to play a new convention online as it was written down and you did not need to remember it.

Name and address supplied.

A There need to be certain adjustments to the laws when playing online and there are regulations covering them.

One of the EBU regulations is that you are permitted aides-mémoire. So it is legal to consult something when playing online.

Continued on page 8...▶

Bernard Magee's Acol Bidding Quiz

This month we are dealing with hand evaluation as the auction progresses. You are West in the auctions below, playing 'Standard Acol' with a weak no-trump (12-14 points) and four-card majors. It is your turn to call.

1. Dealer West. Love All.

♠ A 9 8
♥ A 2
♦ 8 7 6
♣ A K 8 7 5



West	North	East	South
1♣	1♠	Pass	Pass
?			

4. Dealer East. Love All.

♠ A 7 6 5
♥ K 4 2
♦ Q J
♣ 9 8 6 5



West	North	East	South
1♠	Pass	1♥	Pass
?		2♦	Pass

7. Dealer West. Game All.

♠ Q 2
♥ A K 8 7 6
♦ K 9 6 5 4
♣ 7



West	North	East	South
1♥	2♣*	3♣	3♠
?			

* weak jump overcall

10. Dealer West. Game All.

♠ Q 4 3
♥ K 9 8 7 6
♦ A Q J 2
♣ 7



West	North	East	South
1♥	1♠	2♣	2♠
Pass	Pass	3♥	Pass
?			

2. Dealer West. Love All.

♠ A 9 8
♥ A 2
♦ 8 7 6
♣ A K 8 7 5



West	North	East	South
1♣	1♥	Pass	Pass
?			

5. Dealer East. Love All.

♠ A 7 6 5
♥ K 4 2
♦ 9 8 6 5
♣ Q J



West	North	East	South
1♠	Pass	1♥	Pass
?		2♦	Pass

8. Dealer West. Game All.

♠ 7
♥ A K 8 7 6
♦ K 9 6 5 4
♣ Q 2



West	North	East	South
1♥	2♣*	3♣	3♠
?			

* weak jump overcall

11. Dealer West. Game All.

♠ Q 3
♥ K J 8 7 6
♦ Q 2
♣ K Q 8 7



West	North	East	South
1♥	1NT	Dbl	2♠
Pass	Pass	3♣	Pass
?			

3. Dealer West. Love All.

♠ A 9 8
♥ A 2
♦ K 7 6
♣ A K 8 7 5



West	North	East	South
1♣	1♠	Pass	Pass
?			

6. Dealer East. Love All.

♠ A 8 7 6 5
♥ 7 2
♦ A Q 6 5
♣ 6 5



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

9. Dealer West. Love All.

♠ 4
♥ A K 8 3 2
♦ Q J 9
♣ K Q 7 6



West	North	East	South
1♥	Pass	1♠	Dbl
?			

12. Dealer West. Game All.

♠ A Q J
♥ Q 2
♦ Q 10 7
♣ K Q 10 9 7



West	North	East	South
1♣	Pass	1♥	1♠
?			

My Answers:

1.....
2.....
3.....

My Answers:

4.....
5.....
6.....

My Answers:

7.....
8.....
9.....

My Answers:

10.....
11.....
12.....

Answers on page 45

Answers on page 47

Answers on page 49

Answers on page 51

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◀...Continued from page 6.

Q I was very surprised when I read your reply to Derek Adams of Cardiff in the July issue of BRIDGE concerning following suit with a singleton at trick one.

In your reply you say it is an accepted principle that the third person to play at trick one can stop and take as long as they need to think about the whole hand.

Well yes, but, the third person can play his card in tempo like everybody else and then leave his card face up on the table if he needs to have a good think. As you know perfectly well, nobody can play to the next trick until all the players have turned their cards face down.

I have never heard of your 'principle' and I have been playing bridge for 48 years. Having said that I have played at many EBU tournaments at Brighton, Bournemouth, Scarborough and Harrogate not to mention many in Scotland where I now live. In fact I have played against you at Peebles at least once in recent years.

So, I for one think you are wrong despite your eminent credentials as a TD and bridge player. I think it is unethical to play slowly when holding a singleton no matter what the trick. If

you agree, I think you should retract your answer in the next edition of BRIDGE.

Damien Byron,
Club Manager,
New Melville BC, Edinburgh.

A It is certainly not unethical to play slowly in a position where the authorities have decided sensibly and with logic you are allowed to think about the whole hand. If we followed your rules then opening leader is allowed to think before playing a card, without any inferences being available therefrom, declarer is allowed to think before playing a card from dummy, without any inferences being available therefrom, but third player is not. If declarer has A-x-x in dummy and x in hand in a suit contract, would you suggest that he is not allowed to think at trick one before playing his ace? Of course he is allowed to do so.

Your suggestion of "playing a card in tempo like everyone else and then leave his card face up on the table" is wrong since it is not like everyone else: opening leader and declarer do not have to play in tempo.

Furthermore, you know what happens. Declarer plays a card, turns his card over, leads to the next trick and the next person follows and they then tell him to turn his card face down. They should not?

True, but that is what would happen. It is impractical as well as unnecessary.

The authorities have decided sensibly that third hand should not be disadvantaged and this is much better than the alternatives.



Q I've been having a number of discussions with my partners about what constitutes 2♣/Benji. It seems that you can use it for semi pre-emptive hands, as long as the suit is not clubs, provided that you don't declare the hand as strong if it has less than 15 or 16 points.

I thought I'd email as I used to play with Mr Bridge at Chobham back in the 80s and recall him psyching an Acol 2♣ bid in front of me when I had 25 points. Steve Roberts, Ferndown, Dorset.

A It is permissible to play a 2♣ opening as either strong or distributionally strong with diamonds, hearts or spades. But the important thing is that it must be described accurately. It must not be described as strong: it must not be described as Benjamin. Just describe it as it is exactly. ■

Email your questions for David to:

davidstevenson@mrbridge.co.uk

Please include your postal address

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DEFENCE QUIZ

by Julian Pottage

(Answers on page 39)

You are West in the defensive positions below playing matchpoint pairs with both sides vulnerable. While you usually aim to beat the contract, you may also need to consider the risk of conceding overtricks.

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



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

You lead the ♠7: ♠4, ♠Q and ♠A. Declarer leads low to the ♣A and calls for the ♦Q, on which go the ♦5 and ♦2. What is your plan?

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



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

¹ 12-14

² Five or more spades

³ Minimum with four-card support

You lead the ♥3, covered by the ♥7, ♥Q and ♥A. Now declarer leads the ♠J. What is your plan?

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



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

¹ 12-14

² No four-card major

You lead the ♠3, covered by the ♠6, ♠J and ♠Q. Declarer now leads the ♦2. What is your plan?

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



West	North	East	South
		Pass	1NT ¹
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

¹ 12-14

You lead the ♣4: ♣J, ♣8 and ♣2. Declarer calls for the ♦J, on which go the ♦3, ♦2 and ♦Q. What is your plan?

DECLARER PLAY QUIZ



by David Huggett

(Answers on page 35)

You are South as declarer playing rubber bridge or teams, aiming to make your contract. In each case what is your play strategy?

1. ♠ 7
♥ A 9 8 2
♦ Q 10 8 6
♣ A K 9 3



♠ A 3
♥ Q 7 3
♦ A K 5 4 2
♣ 7 6 5

You are declarer in 3NT. West leads the ♠Q. How do you plan the play?

3. ♠ Q J 10 9 7 6 5
♥ K 6 5
♦ Void
♣ J 10 9



♠ A K 8 3
♥ 7 4 3
♦ Q 8
♣ A K 8 7

You are declarer in 4♠. West leads the ♦J. How do you plan the play?

2. ♠ K 8 2
♥ K 6 5 2
♦ Q 6 4
♣ A 9 8



♠ A J 10 5 4
♥ A 7
♦ A K 5
♣ K Q 6

You are declarer in 6NT. West leads the ♦J. How do you plan the play?

4. ♠ J 6 5
♥ 2
♦ Q 10 9 8 2
♣ K Q 4 2



♠ A 9 8 2
♥ A 9 8 5
♦ A 3
♣ A J 6

You are declarer in 3NT. West leads the ♥3. How do you plan the play?

Catching Up

with Sally Brock

Life trundles on. I played in an online tournament with Tom. Apart from one half-set I thought we played pretty well but we seemed to do badly. It was strange to play like that. I didn't know who our teammates were, and we didn't go through the hands afterwards. It was all very anonymous, but I did enjoy playing with Tom.

The third Lockdown League finished. We lost our first few matches and were struggling against relegation for most of it, but in the end we managed to stay up in the First Division. The Young Chelsea Super League finished too. This has been going on since well before the Lockdown. We played a few matches across the table, but then moved to playing online. We were doing quite well for most of the season but could never close the gap between us and the de Botton team who won comfortably.

With the easing of the Lockdown we have been seeing friends. We had dinner in the Sheehans' garden, and lunch with Gilly in hers. Unfortunately, it is all we can do to fit two people onto my balcony, so I won't be able to reciprocate until we are allowed to entertain in each other's houses.

Briony and I went shopping in Westfield, which is within walking distance of my flat. About half the shops were open – most had sales – and we had fun, but it was quiet. One of Briony's passions in life is pick'n'mix – those rather revolting sweets that look like fried eggs etc – and that was open, so she was a happy girl.

I had a birthday. We were going to have a picnic in Hyde Park but the weather was so bad that we postponed it for a couple of days. Still, it was fun when we actually did it. Briony and I spent a day making some nice stuff: blue cheese and asparagus mini-quiches, fried chicken, crudités, sausages, prosciutto with melon. I like cooking for other people and haven't been doing much of it recently.

I am happy enough to walk reasonable distances, and enjoy driving my car with the roof off now the weather is good, but I really don't like the idea of public transport – especially the underground. I can imagine using buses again, but I think it will be a long time before I travel by tube. ■

Seven Days

by Sally Brock

MONDAY

First up today is my weekly session with my Austrian friend Jovi. We vary who we play with and today it is my friend Karen who is in Sydney and Gilly in Wales – quite an international flavour. This time I play with Karen against Gilly and Jovi. As always it is good fun with some decent bridge. The hands were not so interesting, but there were a couple of back-to-back hands where each side went for 1100 after intervention over 1NT. Nothing ventured ...

Then it is lunchtime and afterwards my weekly session with Debbie – every other week her partner Kath joins us too. This week she has specially asked if we could work on dealing with hands where their side doubles a weak NT and the opponents run. I asked

David Burn if he could write me a script for that and he duly obliges (he is such a nice man). So for the whole two hours I open a weak no-trump, Debbie doubles, David makes some escape noise and Kath is in the hot seat. They seem to find it helpful – I shall probably regret it when they next play against me.

Then it is the first Lockdown League match of the new season. I play with Barry, with Heather and Joe in the other room. For a change we win comfortably – by 16 IMPs.

In the evening I have a Charlie Bigham's fish pie in front of the TV with Briony. At the moment we are watching *New Amsterdam*.

TUESDAY

I start with the first of my two weekly sessions with Fawzi. Then I am free

till the evening. A good time to start writing articles. I also decide to have a really good tidy of my bits and pieces of fabric. I have a tendency to spread into every space available. But I colour-sort it all, and then put it into neat envelopes. I am desperately awaiting a new sewing machine. These are very difficult to get hold of in the Lockdown. I found one online on the Kitchen Aid website (arrived at via googling sewing machines). After a few days I had not had confirmation so went back to the website and they didn't sell sewing machines. I contacted PayPal but they said they couldn't do anything until it had failed to arrive. Eventually, it did (fail to arrive) and they took the money, but PayPal paid me back. I'm hoping this attempt will be more successful. Fingers crossed. I'm at a bit of a loose end without one.

In the evening we play against Graham and Frances – probably my favourite semi-social practice of the week. We get through a lot of hands and are able to discuss anything that crops up without anyone getting upset or defensive.

This deal would perhaps have won me a prize for the best-ever dummy.

Dealer East. Love All.

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

West	North	East	South
		3NT*	5♦
Dbl	All Pass		

* see text

East's 3NT opening shows a strong 4♥ or 4♠ opening. Partner assays 5♦ with his good playing strength, and West's double closes proceedings. We are playing with a Skype connection open and as expected I get an extra loud 'Thank you, partner' as I put the dummy down. What would you lead from that West hand? It is tempting to lead a heart but, expecting to have the balance of points, a trump would have been a better idea. After a heart lead my partner has no problem in setting up his club suit and is soon writing down +550. It would have been a different story after a trump lead, and trump continuation when West gets in with the ♠A.

WEDNESDAY

I have an online session with Sue at 9.45, but after that we dash off in the car to go shopping in Oxford Street. It is a pleasure as there are sales in all the shops but hardly any people – when you go normally it is hard to know who are tourists and who are not.

I really like the Marks & Spencer in Oxford Street (for some reason hugely better than other M&S stores I go to). I buy some summer clothes and then we go to Selfridges to look for Birkenstock sandals which is what Briony is after – in the end they seem pretty good and cheaper than I thought so I buy a pair too. Then it's back home for an online practice with Sabine and Roy. They are in Copenhagen and their life is more or less back to normal. In the evening I play Lockdown League with Frank – and it is not a success – we must try harder. Then it's back to the TV show *New Amsterdam*.

THURSDAY

My early morning lesson is cancelled, so I can get up in a more leisurely fashion (ie two cups of tea instead of one; sit on my balcony and finish my book before having my shower). Then I have a whole lot of ironing to do (in front of *New Amsterdam*), and some bridge articles to write before playing online with Fiona against Maggie and Heather.

Fiona and I have the agreement that however the bidding goes if we bid over an opposing no-trump bid, we use the same defence as we do after a 1NT opening, ie 2♣ = majors, 2♦ = one major, 2♥/♠ = that major with a minor. This doesn't come up often at high levels, but it does this week:

Dealer East. E/W Game.

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

West	North	East	South
		2NT	Pass
3NT	4♦	Pass	4♥
Dbl	All Pass		

After East upgrades her hand to a 2NT opening (I agree – A-J-10-x-x is undervalued at 5 HCP) West raises to 3NT and my partner takes advantage of the favourable vulnerability to show a single-suited major. I bid 4♥ (to play facing hearts), doubled by West. On most opening leads this would have gone three down for a small profit to us; but West chooses a club and so I can make a loser-on-loser play to escape for two down and a 7 IMP gain. I discard a spade on the club, setting up a trick for my ♣K (my eighth trick).

In the evening we have our second round match in the Midsummer Swiss Teams. Thankfully, it goes better than the first one, which we lost by a wide margin. We win this by slightly more than we lost the other, so we are above average. Afterwards we get a drink and go through the hands with Paul and Claire.

FRIDAY

A quiet morning, with a short Zoom with my old school friends. Then I walk to meet Margaret for lunch, stopping off at a couple of places on Kensington High Street on the way. We get a cup of tea from the restaurant stall and settle down to talk about this and that. After a while Debbie joins us too. A nice interlude. Then I walk home, swearing at those Birkenstocks that are giving me blisters. Then at 4.30 I have my weekly session with my Dublin women – always something to look forward to. As soon as that's over I need to rush off to Chris and Binkie's where I'm meeting Barry, first to play in the Lockdown League, and then to have a barbecue. I am expecting to walk but Briony comes home (from shopping in Bicester Village) and offers me a lift. My rucksack is heavy with a couple of bottles of wine so I accept gladly. We do pretty well at the bridge and even better at the barbecue. Though it does rain a little, we walk home, working off some of those calories.

SATURDAY

I somehow sleep very badly, but need to get up early for a practice session with Fee, against Hanna and Siyu. ►

BRIDGE is ceasing publication.

The last issue will be number 216 - December 2020.

See page 5 for more information.

Seven Days by Sally Brock, continued...

◀ Afterwards we hang loose for the rest of the day until playing in a self-made mini-tournament in the evening. We play with four pairs: eight boards against each other pair. We Skype at the same time and then again at the end to go through the hands. It is great fun and not very serious – generally all accompanied with glasses of wine. This week the hands were not that interesting, though, so I have nothing further to report.

SUNDAY

My good friend Karen McCallum is an expert in pre-emptive bidding, so it is good to 'catch her speeding' on this deal from our friendly Sunday morning practice (she is living in Sydney at the moment so there is not a big window of opportunity to play against her time-wise).

Dealer West. Love All.

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

West	North	East	South
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♥
Pass	Pass	Dbl	Pass
Pass	3♦	Dbl	3♥
Dbl	All Pass		

so looking at the hand now, I am surprised that Barry (West) didn't open 2♦ before Karen (North) could. Her opening shows a weak two in either major, usually only a 5-card suit. I think she probably has hearts, so decide to pass and hope to double for take-out later ... which I do. Barry has no problem with that and passes content, and now Karen knows she is in trouble. She hopes it will play better in diamonds, but must have been very unhappy when I double that and her partner removes back to hearts (perhaps he should have made an SOS redouble – which would have led to a better spot in spades). Barry leads the ♥K, which declarer wins to play a club from the dummy. I bravely duck this so partner wins with the queen and draws the rest of the trumps. Barry then leads a diamond through the dummy, and I cash three diamonds and three clubs. Declarer is a bit shell-shocked after this and goes wrong in a two-card ending so I manage to make trick 13 with the ♠Q. All declarer makes is the ace of trumps! 2000 for us and 17 IMPs!

In the afternoon I have a one-hour teaching session with a Dublin quartet. One of the original Friday afternoon foursome has treated her husband to a set of four lessons as a birthday present. Great fun as usual. Then in the evening we go to dinner with David and Frances. It is so good to be able to entertain in person – even if numbers are limited. We start by playing a Lockdown League match (our opponents wanted to play our Monday evening match on Sunday – and as David is in our team, it seemed OK to oblige). Barry is an irrepressible optimist when it comes to bidding slams. He was worried that we had missed one on this deal:

Dealer West. Game All.

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

West	North	East	South
1NT	Pass	Pass	2♠
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

When the ♠K is singleton onside, and the ♣J establishes easily as a trick, twelve tricks are there. Barry apologised for not making a slam try (not that I would have accepted). In the other room South passes 1NT out in my seat so we gain 10 IMPs for missing this 'slam'. It is not as dangerous as it looks to bid on a fairly weak hand in the pass-out seat after a strong no-trump. And the upside is that you don't have to defend after partner inevitably leads your singleton. Although we lose a game swing on the final board, we still win the match by 7 IMPs.

The evening goes from strength to strength (delicious food and excellent company), after which I drop Barry home and go back to my place as I have an appointment with an osteopath near me at 8am. I have previously found osteopaths to be magicians when it comes to making aching shoulders and backs better almost instantly – let's hope this one is as good. ■

We actually play similar methods,



Slam Bidding

Part 2

Why do you play bridge? No doubt some of you would place the social side high on your list: good company, forming friendships. But what are your objectives when you have the cards in your hands? Some players yearn excitement (particularly junior players). Bidding a good slam that nobody else gets to certainly brings a thrill. Here I need to issue a word of caution. It is easy to look at the bridge column in your newspaper and see a report of a beautifully bid slam. What you don't see is write ups of all the poor and failing slams bid by the same pair.

There is nothing wrong with playing bridge for excitement if that gives you maximum enjoyment. However in my articles on judgement I will be concentrating on those who want to hone their judgement to achieve the best results that they can. I remember one of the juniors I used to teach describing my bridge as boring. I took it as a compliment. Yes, I played percentage bridge. I was aggressive and took risks in the competitive auction because it is winning bridge to push opponents into error. In contrast, in the uncontested auction I tried to bid only games and slams that satisfied the mathematical odds.

Bidding Small Slams



In theory you should aim to bid a small slam if you have a 50% or greater chance of success. Let us see what assumptions are involved with this.

If you are playing teams, it assumes that your opponents are in a sensible contract. If you are playing a high standard match where you can be confident of this then 50% is a sensible

figure. Of course, there is nothing more frustrating than to bid a slam which unluckily fails on a finesse only to find that your opponents had a bidding misunderstanding and languished in a part-score. Simply playing in game would have gained you lots of IMPs. As it is, you lose IMPs to their incompetence. Playing against all but the best opposition I would rather avoid a genuinely 50% slam.

If you are playing pairs, bidding a 50% slam assumes that the whole field will be in game or slam. In practice there is always somebody in a silly contract so in the same way as it pays to avoid 50% games in pairs so it pays to avoid 50% slams. At least that keeps you ahead of pairs who have played in a part-score after a misunderstanding or got a negative score by bidding to a silly contract.

So how do you judge if a slam is 50% or better? It can be hard even with the sight of all four hands, so how on earth can you work it out when you cannot see partner's hand? Look at Layouts A and B. How good do you think these slams are?

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

Contract: 6NT		Contract: 6♠	
North	South	North	South
	1NT		1NT
6NT		2♣	2♣
		6♠	

At first sight, 6NT in Layout A looks like as close to 50% as you could imagine. You need to find the position of the ♠Q. In practice, it is better than that. The bidding has given nothing away. West is faced with a blind lead. He is highly unlikely to lead away from the ♠Q but some of the time he will have a number of small cards in several suits and he will have no reason to think that leading a spade will compromise his partner's ♠Q. And what if he chooses to lead a rubbish club? You can reason that if he had rubbish clubs and rubbish spades he might have chosen to lead a spade so this is some indication that he might have the ♠Q. This is certainly not conclusive but it does raise the practical chances of 6NT above 50%. Please don't ask me to put a figure on it. This doesn't lend itself to mathematical percentages.

Layout B is very hard to judge. Your first impression might be that this is an excellent slam requiring only a 3-2 trump break (which is 68%). What you must also consider is the danger of a club ruff before you get a chance to draw trumps. What if West leads a singleton club to his partner's ♣A? Or what if West chooses to lead the ♣A and continues clubs at trick 2, giving East a ruff? This certainly brings the practical odds of this slam below 68%, but please don't ask me to calculate a precise percentage. Even if I could come up with a figure by putting a wet towel around my head and dredging up memories of my 50 year old maths ►

◀ degree, it won't help at the table. Personally, I find people who can calculate percentages to two decimal points as impressive but irrelevant.

Please note that I have given you two examples where the bidding is extremely short and simple and carries no meaningful information about other suits. In real life often pairs have complex and revealing auctions on the way to a slam, making such calculations even harder.

So how can you judge in real life? Judgement is key but you have some aids, in particular Key Card Blackwood.

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

North	South	North	South
	1NT		1NT
2♣	2♠	2♥	3♠
4NT	5♦	4NT	5♦
5♠		6♠	

In Layout C when South opens 1NT North knows that his side has at least 33 points. He chooses to use Stayman and finds a 4-4 spade fit. With opponents having at most seven points it is impossible that two aces are missing but North has at his disposal a better weapon than simple Blackwood. He has agreed with his partner that in this sequence 4NT is Key Card Blackwood where the ♠K counts as an ace. The 5♦ response to 4NT shows that South has only one key card so North realises that an ace and the ♠K are both missing. The implication is that South must have every other missing honour card. Therefore 6♠ is at best on a finesse for the ♠K. North therefore signs off in 5♠. Note that the spade slam is in practice a little worse

than 50% because occasionally the defenders will find a diamond ruff.

It is worth commenting that knowing that his side had all the missing honour cards except an ace and the ♠K North could have taken a different approach. 6NT avoids the possibility of a ruff and looks exactly 50%. Certainly, 6NT is a better contract than 6♠, and the reason is not the extra 10 points.

Of course if North/South were playing ordinary Blackwood rather than Key Card Blackwood the fact that the vital ♠K was missing would not have surfaced. It is highly likely that if you are playing duplicate pairs that many of the pairs will bid 6♠. Thus whether you get a near top or a near bottom is down to chance. There is nothing you can do except console yourself with the thought that avoiding slams that are slightly worse than 50% will gain over time.

If you know that a small slam is at best on a finesse then don't bid the slam.

In Layout D North starts with a transfer bid of 2♥, showing five spades. South is expected to bid 2♠ but instead he jumps to 3♠. This is called 'breaking the transfer' and shows 4-card spade support. Now North is only interested in three cards, the ♥A, ♣A and ♦K. Key Card Blackwood shows that South has just one ace, so one is missing. What should North do now? Well South has 12-14 points and his ace accounts for only four of them. North cannot find out about South's other points so he is left guessing but it seems that if South has the ♦K the slam is likely to be laydown (disregarding an unlikely diamond ruff at trick 1) whereas if South doesn't have the ♦K the slam is theoretically on a finesse. North is guided by the following principle:

If you know that a small slam is at worst on a finesse then bid the slam.

Note that North seems to be unlucky because South has all the side-suit kings except the one he wants, so 6♠ is on the diamond finesse if the defenders cash the ♣A at trick 1; fortunately, it is laydown if they don't cash the ♣A because declarer can cash the ♥A-K, discarding North's losing club. The practical odds of making this slam are well over 50%.

Bidding Grand Slams

When it comes to bidding grand slams, the following hand which occurred in a county match tells a precautionary tale.

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

West	East
1♥	1♠
3♠	4♣
4♦	4NT
5♠	5NT
6♦	7♠

4♣ and 4♦ were cue bids, showing the aces in the suit bid. East then bid his version of Blackwood and found out that West had all the missing aces and one king. East assumed West had five hearts as well as four spades and thought he could count 13 tricks: 5 spades, 5 hearts, the two minor-suit aces and whichever minor-suit king West had. The trouble is that West did not have five hearts and there were only 12 tricks available with no chance of a thirteenth. How costly was that? Look at the maths.

East/West (vulnerable) took back -100 to their teammates. Their teammates were really optimistic. The other team had missed slam completely and they had high hopes of a substantial gain. Unfortunately -100 and -680 totalled -780 and a loss of 13 IMPs. If our East/West had contented themselves with a small slam then +1430 and -680 would have come to +750 and a gain of 13 IMPs. A huge swing of 26 IMPs.

And suppose the grand slam had succeeded. Our East/West would have scored +2210. +2210 and -710 comes to +1500 which is 17 IMPs. In practice, bidding the grand slam stood to gain only 4 IMPs when opponents missed the slam completely and when the grand slam failed it cost 26 IMPs. Not very good odds. How demoralising. I am aware that many readers play only duplicate pairs but the same logic applies. You have just 31 points between the two hands. Inevitably

some pairs will miss slam completely. You might as well make sure of outscoring them.

It is easy to adopt a very negative attitude towards bidding grand slams. When feeling cynical I adopt the following attitude towards grand slams:

If I am going to be declarer then I only bid a grand slam if I can count 13 tricks. If partner is going to be declarer I only bid a grand slam if I can count 15 tricks.

In truth, I will try to be a bit more positive than that. Suppose a rather frisky partner (who plays for the England under 20 team) is not vulnerable and opens 3♥.

I hold Hand E.

Hand E

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

Partner could hold any of these hands:

Hand F

♠ 8 2
♥ Q J 10 9 8 7 2
♦ 7 4
♣ 8 2

Hand G

♠ 8 2
♥ Q J 10 9 8 7 2
♦ 7 4 2
♣ 8

Hand H

♠ 8
♥ Q J 10 9 8 7 2
♦ 7 4
♣ Q 8 2

Hand J

♠ 8
♥ Q J 10 9 8 7 2
♦ 7 4
♣ 8 4 2

With Hands F and G 7♥ is very good. With Hand F there appears to be a spade loser but he can ruff a couple of clubs in his hand and dummy's fifth club is likely to be good. Equally if the leader's partner has five clubs he will be able to take a ruffing finesse for the ♣Q.

If partner has Hand H, making 7♥ is trivial. Only with Hand J is 7♥ a bit of a dubious spot. You would have to draw trumps, cash the ♣A (in case of a singleton ♣Q offside) and then having returned to hand finesse for the ♣Q.

So most of the hands that partner could hold make 7♥ an excellent contract. The worst scenario is that the grand slam is on the club finesse. I cannot realistically find out but these odds for a grand slam are good enough, particularly since surely everybody will bid the small slam.

To bid a grand slam the odds you need are substantially more than 50%. If in doubt, content yourself with a small slam.

5 or 7 hands

Sometimes there is a different factor to consider. With the sight of both hands what contract would you choose for Layout K?

Layout K

♠ K Q 6 5
♥ A 2
♦ A Q J 10 9 6
♣ A



♠ A J 10 9 4 3
♥ 7 4 3
♦ 7 3
♣ 6 2

At first sight it looks unlikely that 7♠ is the best spot; after all it is at best on the diamond finesse. Thinking positively, if the diamond finesse works you will easily make 13 tricks, setting up dummy's diamonds to discard your heart losers. But now consider what happens if the diamond finesse fails. On a club lead you will still make 12 tricks, but on a heart lead you will be held to 11 tricks as East takes the ♦K and cashes a heart. So on a heart lead you will make either 11 or 13 tricks, never exactly 12. It is called a '5 or 7 hand' because you will make either 5♠ or 7♠. If that is the case, 6♣ cannot be the optimum contract. If you are going to bid a slam, you might as well reap the full reward when the diamond finesse works. So how might the bidding go? South might open a weak 2♠, showing 5-9 points and a 6-card suit. North uses his version of

Blackwood and finds South has the ♠A. North could try asking for kings but he finds South has none. I would not even bother about asking for kings. I would jump to 7♠ once I was reassured that South has the ♠A.

So watch out for '5 or 7 hands' and also for 'four or six hands' when it is highly undesirable to stop at the five level.

Taking The Bidding Above Game Level

If you bid to 4♥ or 4♠ and need a finesse for your contract, sometimes it will succeed and sometimes it will fail. That is an occupational hazard of playing bridge. Sound advice is to look for a slam above game level only if you judge that the chances of making a slam are substantially better than the risks of going off at the five level, but I tend to be more cautious than that. Consider the following North hands after the sequence below.

Hand L

♠ Q J 7
♥ A Q J 3
♦ 2
♣ 9 8 7 3 2

Hand M

♠ Q J 7
♥ A Q J 3
♦ 7
♣ K Q J 8 7

West	North	East	South
3♠	?		1♥

North would have bid 4♥, under pressure, with Hand L so North felt obliged to do more with Hand M and bid 5♥ (or perhaps bid 4NT and stop in 5♥ when two aces were missing). South has the ♠K doubleton. West cashed the ♠A, gave East a spade ruff and East cashed the ♣A to beat 5♥. 4♥ from the North Hand M would have been an underbid but it would have been my choice. The five level was not safe, especially in view of the expected bad breaks after an opponent's pre-empt.

No doubt you are used to bidding game and feeling a slight tang of disappointment when a necessary finesse fails, but now suppose you voluntarily bypass your major suit game, taking the bidding to the five level in the search for a slam. ►

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◀ I would suggest that if you need a finesse for 5♥ or 5♠ and it fails your frustration will be far greater. Indeed I know of no more demoralising result in bridge than to go off in a freely bid 5♥ or 5♠.

If you can make a slam try below game, maybe by making a cue bid, allowing you to bail out below the five level that has a lot to commend it. Blackwood always takes the bidding above 4♥ or 4♠.

I would also use these hands to illustrate another important principle. **If opponents pre-empt, your priority is to find the best game, not investigate borderline slams.** First, their pre-empt makes it harder to investigate a slam properly. Second, even if you do bid to a theoretically good slam, the pre-empt makes bad breaks far more likely. A slam requiring a 3-2 trump break is excellent if there has been no opposition bidding. By contrast, if one opponent has opened 3♠ then 6♥ by your side needing trumps to break 3-2 is not nearly as good.

Cue bidding below game level

If you want to avoid getting to the five level, it is very helpful if you can make slam tries below game and still bailout in 4♥ or 4♠. The following hand comes from a county match.

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

Auction 1		Auction 2	
West	East	West	East
1♠	3♠	1♠	3♠
4NT	5♣	4♣	4♣
5♣	Pass	Pass	

In one room (Auction 1) West saw no reason not to use his version of Blackwood. This seems sensible enough, after all only rarely will East have no key cards so the five level is likely to be safe. West was unlucky. North had the ♠K and 5♠ was one off.

In the other room (Auction 2) a more thoughtful West decided to cue bid the ♣A. He fully expected East to cue bid a red ace after which he also intended to use Blackwood. As it was, East could only reply 4♠, denying a red-suit ace. This meant there was no point in West going beyond game, leading to a well-deserved game swing.

In slam bidding Blackwood certainly has its place. Cue bidding also has its place and is underused by club players. Blackwood takes control, asking partner questions and making the decisions. Cue bidding starts a discussion with partner. It enables you to make a mild slam try. As you see, it also can allow you to keep the bidding lower.

I suppose some of you will shrug your shoulders at this example, saying that you would play 4♣ as Gerber so there is no danger of the bidding getting too high. Of course this hand demonstrates why many players like Gerber. I do not play Gerber here because I don't want to lose the huge advantages of cue bidding. ■

The Slam Bidding Quiz is on page 19.

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Simple Take-Out Doubles

Part 3

In the last two months we have looked at the simple take-out double of a natural one of a suit. This month there are a few new situations to consider.

a. Is there any difference if the double is in fourth seat?

If the bidding starts, for example, 1♠–Pass–Pass, a double is still for take-out, but because we don't want to be easy opponents and let our opposition play at the one level, if you are short in the suit opened you can double with fewer than opening values, say 9+. Because of this the values needed for a jump response increase by about 3 HCP. This principle is sometimes referred to as 'transferring a king' or even 'transferring an ace'. The other thing to keep in mind is that partner has not overcalled, so he cannot have a decent 5-card suit and a hand that could have overcalled at the one level. Suppose the bidding goes: 1♦–Pass–Pass–Dbl. What would you respond holding:

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

With Hand A you would respond 2♠ if partner had doubled in direct position, but if he doubles in fourth seat it is enough to bid a simple 1♠. You would expect partner to bid again with 15 points or more.

With Hand B you would bid 2NT if partner had doubled in direct seat, but here a simple 1NT is right. If partner

has doubled with 10 or 11 HCP and diamond shortage, that will be high enough.

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

You would have doubled on Hand C on the first round if your opponent had opened 1♥. By jumping to 2♠ you show a chunky 4-card suit and minimum opening values.

Hand D is too strong for 1NT, even after a fourth-in-hand double, so bid 2NT showing 13-14 HCP. If you had more, you would have overcalled 1NT; if you had less, you would have settled for 1NT.

b. The opponents open a short club

One of the biggest changes in English club and tournament bridge since I started to play is that a lot of people have changed from traditional Acoll to a more American strong no-trump, 5-card major style. (I think they are misguided – but that is the subject of another article.) Playing this style a 1♣ opening is often 'prepared' or 'short'. Some people play 'better minor' (where 1♣ always shows at least three) while others prefer 'short club' (where 1♣ is opened with all weak NT hands so can be a doubleton – or even a singleton if 4-4-4-1 – and may even have five diamonds). If opponents are playing that a 1♣ opening might be on a doubleton, it doesn't really make sense for the take-out double to show short clubs since they might not have clubs

at all. In this situation the 'blueprint' for a minimum take-out double is a weak no-trump with at least 3-3 in the majors. This doesn't mean that you can't double if you are 4-4-4-1, but does mean that partner should be rather cautious in responding in a 4-card suit.

Imagine that the bidding has gone: 1♣–Dbl–Pass–? (where 1♣ could show fewer than three clubs):

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

With Hand E you would jump to 2♠ if partner doubled a natural 1♣ but here 1♠ is fine. Remember that if partner had opened a weak NT (which is his most likely hand) you would not have bid at all.

With Hand F you should bid 2♠. This is usually a 5-card suit after this type of double (as partner has not suggested holding more than three spades).

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

Just because opener's clubs might not be real, does not mean they are never real, so you should not pass the double with such a poor 5-card suit.

You do not have enough to respond 1NT with Hand G, so bid 1♦ instead. ▶

◀ You are unlikely to come to much harm.

Hand H is worth a cue-bid, 2♣, as before. If partner responds 2♦ you can bid 2♥, which forces him to make another bid (if you have agreed to play the modern style where this is not forcing, then you would have to bid 3♥); if he responds in a major, raise him to game.

c) The opponents bid more

So far we have only looked at situations where an opponent opens, we double and the next hand passes. In practice, that is quite rare. More often than not responder bids something over the double. Should that happen, the main difference is that it is now not necessary for the partner of the doubler to bid at all. Most bids are unchanged but a simple bid obviously shows some values whereas if responder had passed it might have shown no values at all.

i) Responder raises opener

Now the opponents have found a fit, it is more likely that we have a fit and it is therefore safer for us to bid. Bear in mind, however, that partner is going to be on lead if the opponents buy the contract, so do not bid on a poor hand unless you are happy for partner to lead your suit. Generally speaking, if your opponents have opened and raised a major, you should feel free to bid the other major – if you have decent values without the other major, you can double asking partner to choose a suit. You would generally have both minors to double. If instead your opponents have opened and raised a minor, with one major then bid it, but with both majors (or neither) then start with a double and partner will bid a 4-card major.

So, suppose the bidding goes: 1♥–Dbl–2♥–?

What would you bid with:

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

Hand I has a chunky 4-card spade suit,

so just bid it. If partner ends up on lead against a heart contract you would like him to lead a spade.

Hand J is worth a bid but you'd rather not have to guess which minor to bid. Instead, you should double, asking partner to bid his/her best minor.

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

Hand K is on the thin side, but you have a good 5-card suit which you would like partner to lead, so take a risk and bid 3♣. Partner should not take you too seriously. 5♣ is a long way off, so he should be cautious about doing too much bidding.

Hand L is difficult. You do have four spades, but they are of very poor quality. Your hand is worth a jump to 3♠ but you don't want to do that with such a poor suit. It is best to start with a double. Partner will probably bid a minor because he will not expect you to have four spades. But then you bid 3♠. This tells him that you have four spades but a hand with invitational values. He can pass, raise, or bid a minor if he has only three spades.

ii) Responder bids a new suit

The fashion has changed over the years. When I was a young player (over 40 years ago), it was normal for a double after, say, 1♥–Dbl–1♠, to be a penalty double, showing a 4-card spade suit. This was because a lot of people used to psyche in this situation, and it was important not to be talked out of your best fit. These days psyching has largely gone out of fashion, and now it is more normal to play a double in a similar way to that described above, ie as take-out. However, if you have five

of RHO's suit, you can bid it naturally – just in case. Suppose the bidding has gone: 1♦–Dbl–1♠–?, what would you bid holding:

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

Hand M is a clear 2♥ bid. It may seem a bit aggressive to bid at the two level with only 6 HCP, but partner should have enough that you have nearly half the points, more or less. If the opponents bid further in spades, you would welcome a heart lead.

On Hand N bid 1NT with your balanced 10 HCP. Remember that partner should have spade length and maybe diamond shortage so it is more important that you have diamonds well stopped rather than spades.

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

Hand O is certainly worth a bid but you don't want to suggest a heart lead, or even strongly suggest a heart contract. Double 1♠ (take-out in the modern style as explained above) and be happy with whatever partner bids.

If your RHO had passed you would have jumped to 2♠ with Hand P. Just because he bid 1♠ is no reason for you to be silent. Remember that partner should have at least three spades unless he has significant extra values, so 2♠ should be an OK partscore, even on a 4-1 (or occasionally a 5-0) break.

Next month we will look at take-out doubles over higher opening bids. ■

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BRIDGE is ceasing publication.

The last issue will be number 216 - December 2020.

See page 5 for more information.

Sally Brock's Simple Take-Out Doubles Part 3 Quiz

(Answers on page 43)

What do you bid on the following hands with the auctions given? The vulnerability and scoring method should not affect your answers.

Hand 1

♠ K J 9 8
♥ A 7 2
♦ Q 6 3 2
♣ 8 2

Hand 2

♠ 6 2
♥ A Q 6 3
♦ K 10 2
♣ Q 7 5 4

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	Dbl	1♥
?			Pass

Hand 3

♠ A Q 2
♥ 8 7 3 2
♦ K 10 2
♣ Q 10 4

Hand 4

♠ Q 4
♥ 10 4 3
♦ K Q J 10 4 3
♣ A Q

West	North	East	South
?	1♣*	Dbl	Pass

*May be short

Hand 5

♠ K J 10 3 2
♥ 5 4 2
♦ Q 2
♣ 6 5 2

Hand 6

♠ 8 6
♥ A 6 2
♦ K 10 4 3
♣ Q 10 5 3

West	North	East	South
?	1♥	Dbl	2♥

Slam Bidding Part 2 Quiz

by Andrew Kambites

(Answers on page 33)

- 1 You are East, vulnerable against not. What do you bid after this start to the auction?

Hand 1A

♠ A J 8 5 4 3 2
♥ 2
♦ K 6 5
♣ 7 3

Hand 1B

♠ A Q J 5 4 3 2
♥ 2
♦ K 6 5
♣ K 3

Hand 1C

♠ A Q J 5 4 3 2
♥ 2
♦ A 6 5
♣ A 2

West	North	East	South
1♣	4♥	?	

- 2 You are East, vulnerable against not. What do you bid after this start to the auction? If you choose Key Card Blackwood, say what you will do:
i) If no key cards are missing.
ii) If one key card is missing.

Hand 2A

♠ A K 7 5 4 3
♥ J 6 4
♦ K Q 3
♣ 4

Hand 2B

♠ A K 7 5 4 3
♥ Q 6 4
♦ A 3
♣ A 3

Hand 2C

♠ A K Q 4 3 2
♥ 8
♦ A K Q
♣ A K J

West	North	East	South
4♥	Pass	?	

- 3 You are East, vulnerable against not. What do you bid after this start to the auction? If you choose Key Card Blackwood, say what you will do:

- i) If no key cards are missing.
ii) If one key card is missing.

Hand 3A

♠ J 7 3 2
♥ 6
♦ A J 7 3 2
♣ 7 3 2

Hand 3B

♠ J 7 3 2
♥ 6
♦ A K J 7 2
♣ A 7 2

Hand 3C

♠ K Q 6 4 3
♥ 3
♦ A K J 5 3
♣ A K

West	North	East	South
1♠	4♥	?	

- 4 You are East, vulnerable against not. What do you bid after this start to the auction? If you choose Key Card Blackwood, say what you will do:
i) If no key cards are missing.
ii) If one key card is missing.

Hand 4A

♠ K 10 8 7
♥ A 4 3
♦ 9 6
♣ A 9 6 5

Hand 4B

♠ K 10 8 7
♥ 8 4 3
♦ K 6
♣ A 9 6 5

Hand 4C

♠ 10 5 4 3
♥ A 4 3 2
♦ A Q 3
♣ J 2

West	East
1♠	3♠
4♦*	?

* First-round control

READERS' LETTERS

CLARIFICATION

One of the letters in the June issue of **BRIDGE** referred to Andrew Robson's system whereby 1NT (within range) is always opened with a 5-card major.

It was not made clear that the reason for this is that he teaches 'repeats' whereby a rebid of an opening suit promises a 6-card suit (as when playing 5-card majors).

Another interesting aspect of the Robson teaching (I discover in lockdown) is his attitude towards a 'reverse' bid that would suggest a minimum 16 points.

Robson would favour the value of showing a 5-4 shape even with less than 16 points even though a 'reverse' bid had been made.

Readers may have a view on the subject of 'reverse' bids that could be of interest.

Mike Gurney,
Holt Bridge Club,
Hempstead, Norfolk.

GRUMPY OLD MAN

As I get older, I am sure I get grumpier but I could not believe what I read in the August issue of **BRIDGE**, under Readers' Letters – Double Dose 1. This really got me cross.

Firstly – To sign up to Bernard's new website at £11.99 was not "an enormous leap of faith". It is a ridiculous comment. Also; "Bernard has provided an admirable free service for many of us but that doesn't mean we will gladly fork out £11.99". WELL DON'T

THEN. It is a free country.

Secondly – To compare Bernard with Andrew Robson is invidious. I have followed Andrew Robson for years and have learned a huge amount from him. I have subscribed to Mr Bridge also for years but this is the first time I have participated in Bernard Magee's coaching. I have also learned a lot. Of course Andrew and Bernard's teaching is not identical, I would not expect it to be. Also, to be a good teacher, you do not necessarily have to be one of the best players in the world.

Thirdly – even more ridiculous is the statement "As a man, I feel I am not in the target segment". I really do not understand this statement at all or why it is relevant.

Fourthly – "I feel a re-think of the strategy is needed". I wonder what strategy he is recommending? A free service no doubt.

My view is as follows. I think Bernard has done a great job during lockdown (and has raised a significant amount for charity – not mentioned by the correspondent) and I wish him the very best of luck with his new website. His aim to get more people to play and enjoy bridge and be part of a "community" is admirable. I have already played with two new people on BBO with the set hands and have thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

Andrew Robson is, I think, coming out with a new

website soon and I shall probably subscribe to that too and maybe that makes me "sufficiently wealthy". I do not feel it. After all to subscribe to both is probably the same cost as one pint of beer and a small glass of wine per week.

Bridge is a great game and should be nurtured. Both Andrew and Bernard in their different ways encourage people (of all sexes!) to play the game and to get better. More power to their collective elbows I say.

Bob Carrick,
a Very Grumpy Old Man,
by email.

VALUE FOR MONEY

The reason I and the many others had no hesitation taking 'an enormous leap of faith' and signing up to Bernard's new website is that never in the many (21 in my case) years during which we have had dealings with Mr Bridge have we been let down. Be it magazines, literature, seminars, weekends or cruises, everything has fulfilled or exceeded expectations. If I have ever had difficulty with anything, for example installing a CD, the patient help from the office has been exemplary.

I subscribe to and admire Andrew Robson too. Andrew charges £9.59 per month for providing 7 recorded sessions of about 5 minutes per week. Bernard charges £13.99 per month for 2 sessions of about 50 minutes and one of nearly 120 minutes per week, plus set hands, a forum and a private facebook group, most of which have live interactivity with Bernard.

Yes, there are slight differences in their approach to Acol bidding, but there is not just the one Acol system; it's more of an approach,

and my mind is sufficiently flexible to cope with and enjoy the differences. Indeed, I'm pleased Bernard will be playing Strong NT and 5 card majors this Friday. Even if one doesn't care to play a system, one will on occasion be playing against it.

Yes, it is possible that 70% of Bernard's audience is female. I suspect this is a function of the demographic and that the same is true of Andrew's, as it is of every bridge club I have played in.

I am not alone in being immensely grateful to Bernard and his team (and I include all of the Mr Bridge team) for helping us survive this lockdown with our sanity more or less intact, having had a lot of fun with him.

Lesley Colligan by email.

COUNTER BALANCE

I have just received issue 212. I am at a complete loss to understand why the magazine saw fit to publish Gavin Wilson's mean-spirited comments about Bernard Magee. It was bad enough to read it on the online forum, but who on earth made the editorial decision to publish it in **BRIDGE** without also presenting a more balanced review of BMB? I thought it smacked of sour grapes from start to finish.

I will not be renewing my subscription to **BRIDGE** and I am very happy to be subscribing to the Bernard Magee Bridge website.

David Wilcox by email.
[The decision for the inclusion of Gavin Wilson's letter was entirely my own. Ed.](#)

SEE NEXT ISSUE

I greatly enjoy Julian Pottage's tea towel problems. Could he perhaps explain his cryptic titles please?

Michael Wood,
Cambridge. ■

♠ A Q 7 5
♥ J 9 5
♦ K J 8 4
♣ 8 2

If partner opens 1♥ and rebids 2♣ over your 1♠ response, you give jump preference to 3♥. If partner opens 1♦ and rebids 2♣ over your 1♠ response, again you give jump preference, this time to 3♦.

JUMP RAISE

A bid in the suit partner has just bid at more than a minimum level eg 1♠-Pass-3♠ or 1♦-Pass-1♥-Pass-3♥. A jump raise normally shows primary support and more playing strength than a single raise. Example hands for the above sequences are:

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

JUMP SHIFT

A single jump in a new suit by responder eg 1♦-Pass-2♠. The bid is normally forcing to at least game unless made by a passed hand. In the modern style, responder usually has

either a very good suit or support for opener's suit or a semi-balanced hand with stoppers in the unbid suits. By a passed hand, a jump shift promises near opening values, a fair suit and primary support for opener. Example hands for the sequence given are:

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

JUMP SHIFT REBID

A single jump in a new suit by opener eg 1♥-Pass-1♠-Pass-3♦. The bid is normally forcing to at least game. You should have at least five cards in your first suit, at least four cards in your second and close to the maximum values for a one-level opening. Possible hands for this sequence are:

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

JUNIOR

In international competition, a player under the age of 25.

JUNK

A worthless hand or suit.



KEY CARD BLACKWOOD

An improved version of Blackwood, also known as Five Ace Blackwood, in which the king of trumps counts the same as an ace. The king of trumps and the four aces are all 'key cards'. Replies to 4NT are almost the same as with ordinary Blackwood:

- 5♣ Zero or four key cards
- 5♦ One or five key cards
- 5♥ Two key cards
- 5♠ Three key cards

If there is a subsequent 5NT enquiry, the king of trumps does not count as a king but the queen of trumps does.

KIBITZER

An onlooker at bridge or other games.

The word is derived from the German-Yiddish generic term for a northern European wader, most usually a lapwing. See the adjacent illustration by Marguerite Lihou.

KILL

To remove the entries to a hand and thus render it worthless.

KISS

Acronym for 'Keep It Simple, Stupid'.

KISS OF DEATH

A penalty of 200 points on a partscore deal at duplicate, usually a disastrous result almost certainly being worse than any contract that the opposition could make.

KITCHEN BRIDGE

Social bridge played using very basic, natural bidding methods.

KNAVE

An old name for the fourth-highest ranking card in a suit. Since the king has a 'K' on it, it would cause confusion for this card to do so too, so the jack is the name now.

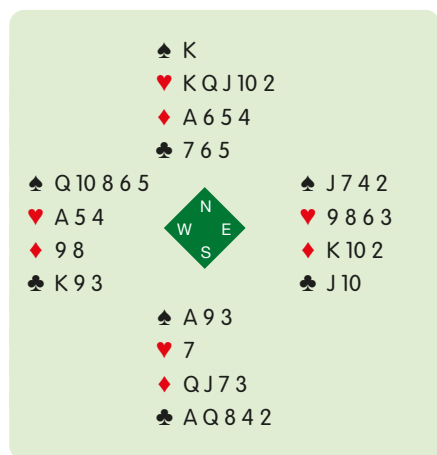


KNOCK

1. At rubber bridge, this is a slang term for 'Pass'.
2. At duplicate, when partner makes a conventional bid, you might tap on the table 'knock' to alert the opponents.

KNOCK OUT

To force an opponent to play a master card (eg 'To knock out the ace'). In a no-trump contract, it is common for each side to knock out its opponents' high cards early in the play.



South plays in 3NT. West leads the ♠6, which 'knocks out' the ♠K. Declarer plays on hearts, leading high cards from dummy to 'knock out' West's ace. The defenders then play a second and (if South ducks) a third round of spades to knock out South's ♠A.

KNOCK-OUT TOURNAMENT

Head-to-head competition for teams of four with the losers of each match eliminated.

KOCK-WERNER REDOUBLE

An SOS redouble named after its Swedish inventors, which asks partner to choose another suit when the opponents have doubled. The principle is that at low level you should be content to play in any making doubled contract and so would not want to redouble in a natural sense and allow the opponents to escape into some other contract.

West	North	East	South
2♣	Pass	Pass	1♦
Pass	Pass	Rdbl	

On this auction, East's Kock-Werner redouble asks West to bid again. East is going to have a singleton or void in clubs and at least five cards in each major.



LANDY

A conventional defence to a 1NT opener whereby 2♣ shows at least 5-4 in the majors. In reply, partner usually shows preference between the majors or, with equal length, bids an artificial 2♦, asking for the overcaller's longer major. For example:



West	North	East	South
2♦	1NT	2♣*	Pass
	Pass	2♠	End

*Landy

LATE PAIR

Various duplicate movements make provision for a pair arriving after the start of a session, but its admission is at the discretion of the director.

LATE PLAY

Completion of a board not played during the allotted time.

LAWS AND ETHICS

COMMITTEE (OF THE EBU)

The Committee of the English Bridge Union established in accordance with the Union's Constitution to be responsible for licensing arrangements for systems and conventions, and to deal with all matters concerned with the Laws and Ethics of duplicate bridge in England.

LAWS OF CONTRACT BRIDGE

The international code last revised in 2014 in accordance with the rules for playing rubber bridge. Four bodies jointly promulgate the laws: The

Portland Club, The European Bridge League, The American Contract Bridge League and The World Bridge Federation.

LAWS OF DUPLICATE CONTRACT BRIDGE

The international code for the playing of duplicate bridge. The World Bridge Federation, in association with the same bodies as the Laws of Contract Bridge, promulgates the laws. The latest revision was in 2017 (published in Britain by the English Bridge Union in conjunction with The Portland Club).

LAW OF TOTAL TRICKS

This theory asserts that the number of tricks available to both sides if they play in their best fit is equal to the total number of trumps in both sides' best trump fit. Suppose there is a nine-card heart fit for North-South and an eight-card diamond fit for East-West. This totals seventeen trumps. Therefore, if, on best play and best defence, North-South can make ten tricks in hearts, East-West should be able to take seven tricks in diamonds. With the same fits, if North-South could make nine tricks, East-West should make eight tricks and so on.

You can use this information in deciding how to bid on competitive auctions.

For example:



West	North	East	South
Pass	2♥	3♦	1♥
?			4♥

It is likely (though not certain) that the opponents have a nine-card heart fit. You expect partner to hold six diamonds for the three-level overcall, giving your side a ten-card diamond fit. With nineteen total trumps, you expect nineteen total tricks. Therefore, if 4♥ is making ten tricks, you expect 5♦ to be down two. This tells you ►

◀ that it would be a mistake to bid 5♦ if you are vulnerable against not. You do not want to concede 500 to stop the opponents from making 420.

At other vulnerabilities, if you can make nine tricks (when 4♥ is making) or eleven (when 5♦ is), you are likely to show a profit by bidding 5♦.

LAYDOWN

Term for a contract that is so certain that declarer could claim after the initial lead.

LAYOUT

The placement of the cards.


LEAD

The initial card played to a trick. On the first trick, the player to the left of declarer leads. Thereafter, the player who won the preceding trick leads. The other players have a duty to follow suit, if they can, to the suit led.

LEAD-DIRECTING BID

A bid made suggesting an initial lead in that suit. For example:

♠ 8 5 3
♥ 7 4
♦ A K Q 6 4
♣ 8 5 3



West	North	East	South
1♦		Pass	Pass

Expecting that North-South will buy the contract in one of the majors, West opens light in third seat to suggest a diamond lead.

LEAD-DIRECTING DOUBLE

A double of a conventional or cue bid to suggest a lead of that suit. For example:

West	North	East	South
2NT	Pass	3♥*	Dbl

*transfer to spades

South's double asks for a heart lead. Since it is unclear whether the final contract will be in spades or no-trumps, South needs length (normally at least five cards) and strength in hearts for the double.

LEAD-INHIBITING BIDS

A psychic bid of a suit not held in strength, hoping to discourage the opposition from leading the suit.

♠ A K J 4
♥ A K Q 8 5 2
♦ Void
♣ 10 5 2

You open 1♥ and partner raises to 3♥. The technical bid is 3♠, giving partner a chance to cue bid 4♣. The lead-inhibiting bid is 4♣, feigning strength (or shortage) in clubs.

LEAD OUT OF TURN

A lead from the wrong hand (ie an initial lead by any player other than declarer's LHO or a subsequent lead by any player other than the one who won the preceding trick). The laws apply.


LEAD THROUGH

A player who leads to a trick leads through the player on his left. So South could lead through West.

LEAD THROUGH STRENGTH

In general, a player sitting in front of dummy and unsure which suit to lead, should lead through dummy's stronger holding, in the hope or knowledge of leading up to partner's honours in the suit. For example (with North as the dummy):

♠ A Q 2
♥ 8 5 2
♠ 7 4 3
♥ 7 4 3



West, on lead with no definitive information to guide him, should lead a spade.

If for example East has K-J-x in each major, the king-jack will be well placed in spades, over North's ace-queen, but useless in hearts under South's holding.

LEAD UP TO WEAKNESS

In general, a player sitting over dummy, and unsure which suit to lead, should lead up to dummy's weakness

in the hope or knowledge of leading up to partner's honours in the suit.

For example (with North as the dummy):

♠ A Q 2
♥ 8 5 2



♠ 7 4 3
♥ 7 4 3

East, on lead with no definitive information to guide him, should lead a heart. Any honours West has in hearts will be useful over South's holding whereas it will be hard work to establish a spade trick in view of North's strong spades.

LEADING FROM HONOURS

The standard leads from honour combinations are:

- Ace from A-K (but king from A-K doubleton),
- The higher of two touching honours,
- Top of a doubleton,
- Low (eg fourth highest) from other combinations.

Notes:

- Some players prefer to lead the king from A-K.
- Against a suit contract, it is usual not to underlead an ace.
- Against a no-trump contract, the lead of an honour usually guarantees the possession of at least three honour cards unless the lead is from a short suit. From a long suit headed by just two (touching) honours, the standard lead is a low card (eg fourth highest).

LEAP

A jump bid often used to describe a jump to the probable final contract, inviting partner to pass at his first opportunity eg the final bid in the sequence 1♦-1♠-INT-4♠.

LEAPING MICHAELS


A conventional way of showing a two-suited hand after a weak opposing bid. A jump in a minor that shows the minor bid and the unbid major.

For example:

West	North	East	South
			2♥
4♣			
'weak			

West's 4♣ shows at least five clubs and at least five spades. East usually corrects to 4♠ or raises to 5♣. West might hold:

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



Playing Leaping Michaels, a cue bid of the suit opened (3♥ in this example) would ask for a stopper rather than denote a two-suited hand.

LEAVE IN

To pass and, especially, to pass a penalty double by partner.

LEBENSOTHL CONVENTION

A convention to improve definition, originally used when partner opens 1NT and the next player overcalls in a suit at the two-level.

The basis of the convention is the use of a bid of 2NT as a conventional request for opener to bid 3♣. This then creates an extra echelon of bids — direct bids, and bids after the Lebensohl 2NT.

One sequence shows game-going values (traditionally the direct bid) whilst the other is employed on competitive hands (or invitational hands if a competitive bid in the suit was available at the two-level). By agreement, a double may show a traditional penalty double or may show a raise to 2NT.

For example if your partner opens 1NT and the next hand overcalls 2♥:

2♠	Natural, competitive
2NT	Asks opener to bid 3♣; usually weak with a minor or invitational with spades
3♣/3♦/3♠	Game-forcing

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

On both hands, you bid 2NT over the intervening 2♥. On the first hand, you intend to convert 3♣ to 3♦, which will ask partner to pass. On the second, you intend to rebid 3♠ to invite game.

Responder may also use the convention on balanced hands to show or deny a stopper in the suit overcalled or to show or deny four cards in the other major. The most logical system (though perhaps not the most widely played) is:

3NT direct	Stopper in suit overcalled and no interest in other major
Cue bid	No stopper in suit or interest in other major
2NT and then 3NT	Stopper and interest in other major
2NT then cue bid	No stopper but interest in other major

Many pairs who play Lebensohl also use it after the opponents open a weak two and partner doubles for take-out.

West	North	East	South
	2♥	Dbl	Pass
?			

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

With the first hand, you have little interest in game and so bid 2NT, Lebensohl, on the way to 3♦. On the second you want to show positive values without going past 3NT. You do this by bidding 3♦ directly.

LEG

Colloquial term for a game in a rubber.

LENGTH

The number of cards held in a particular suit.

LEVEL

1. This is the number of tricks above the book (six tricks) that a player names in the bidding. For example, bids of 2♣ or 2♦ are bids at the two level, while contracts of 5♥ or 5♠ are contracts at the five level.
2. A way of categorising which conventions are legal in a particular type of competition, with the more complex conventions only allowed in higher-level competitions.

LHO

Abbreviation for Left-Hand Opponent eg West is South's LHO, North is West's LHO.

LIE OF THE CARDS

A reference to the position of the cards around the table eg 'I could not succeed on that lie of the cards'.

LIGHT

To be light means to go down in a contract.

To bid light means to bid with values below the acceptable range.

LIGHTNER DOUBLE

A double of a freely bid slam by the player not on lead to the first trick and that calls for an unusual lead. The suit called for is normally dummy's main side suit and often shows (against a suit slam) a void in the suit or (against a no-trump slam) two fast winners in the suit.

♠ 7 5 3	
♥ 10 7 5 4 2	
♦ Void	
♣ A 8 5 3 2	



West	North	East	South
	1♠	Pass	3♦
Pass	3♠	Pass	4NT
Pass	5♥	Pass	6♣
Dbl			

On a diamond lead, you expect to defeat the slam with a diamond ruff and the ♣A. ▶



LIMIT BID

A bid that defines a player's hand accurately in terms of both strength and distribution, for example, an opening of 1NT, or the 2♠ bid in the sequence: 1♠-Pass-2♣-Pass-2♠.

LIMIT RAISE

A raise of partner's suit in which you bid the full value of your hand on the assumption that partner has the lower range of values for his bid. It is not forcing.

For example:

West	North	East	South
1♥	Pass	3♥	

East's 3♥ is a limit raise, indicating four hearts and about 11 points or 8 losers.

LIMIT RESPONSE

A response that defines the shape and strength of the responder's hand, eg 1♠-Pass-2♠.

Limit responses are usually raises and no-trump bids.

LINE

- 1 The horizontal line dividing a rubber bridge score sheet, hence the expressions 'above the line' relating to penalties, overtricks and bonuses, and 'below the line' for tricks bid and made.
- 2 The sequence of play that declarer takes (as in 'the best line of play').
- 3 When (typically) players bid four-card suits in ascending order, they are bidding 'up the line'.

LITTLE SLAM

Another term for small slam – a contract to make twelve tricks.

LMX

A conventional defence to an opening three bid whereby a bid in the lower minor (LM ie 3♦ over 3♣ and 4♣ over 3♦/3♥/3♠) is used as a take-out request immediately after the opening bid and a double (X) is used in the fourth seat. Very few pairs use this defence any more, preferring a simple take-out double in both second and fourth seat.

LOCAL POINTS

Points issued by the home bridge unions such as the English Bridge Union and affiliated bodies such as clubs and county associations for success in club sessions, county events and certain tournaments. 100 local points are equivalent to one master point.

LOCKED (IN OR OUT OF HAND)

To be unable to get the lead in or out of dummy or declarer's hand without loss. As declarer, you want to avoid such a position.

LONG CARDS

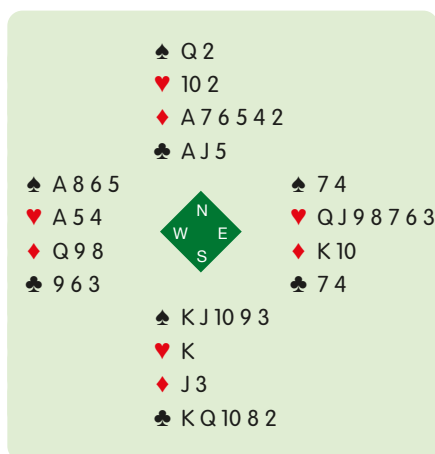
Cards left in a suit when the other players' cards in the suit have gone. For example, if you have A-K-Q-7-3 and the suit breaks 5-3-3-2 round the table, you can cash the A-K-Q to leave the seven and three as long cards.

LONG HAND

The hand with the greater length in a particular suit, especially the trump suit.

As a rule, ruffing in the long trump hand does not generate extra trump tricks. Nevertheless, you may wish to ruff in the long hand to interrupt the run of an opponent's suit, to set up dummy's suit or to prepare the way for a throw in or squeeze.

You must take particular care about ruffing in the long hand if the long hand has only four trumps or if a defender is likely to have four trumps:



As South, you play in 4♠ after East has pre-empted in hearts. West leads ace and another heart. If you ruff, you will go down on the normal 4-2 trump

break: West wins the second round of trumps and leads a third round of hearts, reducing your trumps to fewer than his.

Instead, you should throw a diamond at trick two – it is a loser anyway.

LONG SUIT

A suit with four or usually more cards in the same hand.

LOOSE DIAMOND

An arrangement to open 1♦ without a genuine diamond suit. This is common with variations of the Precision system.

LOSE THE LEAD

The gaining of the lead by an opponent, whether by design, by force, or by accident.

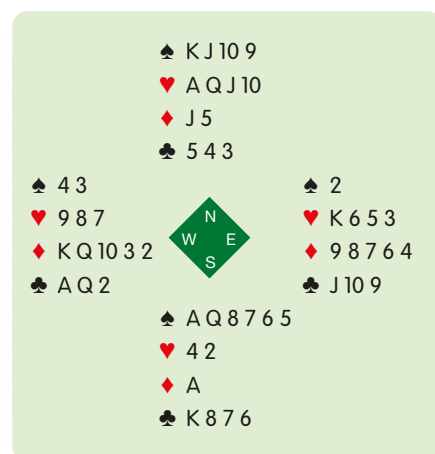
LOSER

A card that you expect neither to win nor contribute to winning a trick. For example, if you have a doubleton 6-4 of clubs and partner has neither the ace nor the king of clubs, the six and four of clubs are losers.

LOSER ON LOSER

(See also: Losing Trick Count)

To discard one losing card on another, as illustrated in the following examples:



As South, you play in 4♠ and receive the lead of the ♦K. If East obtains the lead with the ♥K, there is the danger of three club losers in addition to a heart loser.

Therefore, after drawing trumps ending in dummy, you play dummy's ♦J (you can presume from the lead

that West holds the ♦Q) and discard a losing heart.

You can then establish heart tricks by taking a ruffing finesse into the safe hand.

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

Playing in 6♥, you receive the lead of the ♦K. If you try to ruff the third or fourth round of clubs low, you will incur an overruff and subsequently lose a spade. You can, however, ruff a club once with the jack and then return to hand with a spade to play another club; but this time, instead of ruffing, you make the loser on loser play of discarding your remaining spade from dummy. Dummy can then ruff a losing spade in safety.

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

South plays in 4♠ and West leads three rounds of top hearts. If you ruff the third round, you will lose control of the trump suit on the probable 4-2 break.

You should, therefore, discard a loser in clubs on the third round and dummy's trump holding is able to take care of any continuation in the suit.

There are many other variations

when the loser on loser play is good declarer technique.

LOSING TRICK COUNT

A method of evaluating the playing strength of a hand, for trump contracts, based on the number of expected losers.

You count the number of losers as follows: With three or more cards, the number of losers in a suit is normally equal to the number of missing high honours (the ace, king and queen) eg A-x-x counts as two losers, K-Q-x or K-Q-x-x count as one loser.

With a doubleton, the queen normally counts as a small card in the above calculation, and similarly with any singleton, other than the ace, the suit counts as one loser.

Exceptions to the above are that Q-x-x counts as two and a half losers, A-Q doubleton as half a loser.

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

The first hand has six losers: one in each major and two in each minor. The second has eight losers, three in spades, two in hearts, one in diamonds and two in clubs.

The maximum number of losers a hand may have is thus twelve, and the most the two combined hands could have is twenty-four. Subtract the combined number of losers from the total possible number of losers and the result equates to the number of tricks that should be available. Thus, a six-loser hand opposite an eight-loser hand would have fourteen losers between the two and therefore they should make ten tricks (24-14=10).

The main advantage of the Losing Trick Count over the Milton Work Count is that the Losing Trick Count is more accurate with good trump fits.

LOVE ALL

Neither side vulnerable. Both sides non-vulnerable.

LOVE SCORE

Neither side vulnerable and, in rubber bridge, no partscore.

LOW CARD

Any card other than an honour card and sometimes denoted by an 'x' on hand records. Low cards, though they often do not win tricks in their own right (unless they are trumps) have a number of useful purposes. They can guard your honour guards, they can enable you to reach partner's hand and, when you are defending, they can be good cards with which to signal.

LOW REVERSE

A rebid by opener in a higher-ranking new suit at the two-level. This bid is normally forcing for one round if the response was at the one level and forcing to game if it was at the two level. For a low reverse, it is usual to have significantly better than a minimum opening, at least five cards in the suit opened and at least four cards in the reversing suit:

♠ K 6
♥ 7 5
♦ A Q 10 3
♣ A K J 8 5

This hand would be fine for the sequence 1♣-Pass-1♥-Pass-2♦.

LOWER MINOR

A conventional defence to an opening three-bid. Using this convention, a bid of the lower unbid minor (3♦ over 3♣ or 4♣ over anything else) is a take-out request. The advantage of this defence is that you can use all other suit overcalls, 3NT and a double in their natural sense. The disadvantages are that you can rarely stop below the four level and that you cannot pick up a penalty when one member of the partnership has good values and the other holds good trumps. Most pairs now prefer to use double for take-out.

LUCAS TWOS

A conventional opening of 2♥ or 2♠, showing a weak hand with at least five cards in the suit and with a side suit. Requirements about the strength of ▶

◀ the hand and the length of the second suit can vary according to the vulnerability and partnership style.

LURKING

Lurking means passing or bidding cautiously early in the bidding in the hope that the opponents will bid too high or double you in a making contract.



MAJOR PENALTY CARD

At duplicate, some penalty cards are major penalty cards, requiring their play at the first legal opportunity and giving rise to lead penalties if the offender's partner gains the lead.

MAJOR SUITS

Hearts and spades, often called 'the majors'.

MAJOR TENACE

The holding of the highest and third-highest cards in a suit (A-Q). This combination will always yield one trick and, if the missing card lies in front of the tenace or if you can force the opponent with the missing card to open up the suit, you can make two tricks.

MAKE

1. If you shuffle the pack of cards ready for the next deal, you 'make' them.
2. To obtain enough tricks for the contract.
3. If you win a trick, you 'make' it. For example, 'You make five spade tricks and three heart tricks.'

MAKE UP A TABLE

For a fourth player to join with three others to play a game of bridge.

MANNERISM

A peculiarity of action or behaviour (such as scratching one's ear) that one should carefully avoid at the bridge table. Most mannerisms are unconscious and not known by the player himself.

MARKED CARD

A card that at least one player knows to be in a particular hand. For instance, whenever one of the unseen hands shows out of a suit, all the remaining unseen cards in that suit become marked in the other player's hand. Marked cards can also arise by inference from the play. If West, who has bid spades, leads the ♠Q, the ♠J becomes a marked card in West's hand.

MARKED FINESSE

A finesse when the missing card is known to be onside.

MASTER

1. This can mean an expert or canny player.
2. It is also a player who has won 50 Master Points.

MASTER CARD

The highest outstanding card in a suit. Saying 'the jack is a master' means that the jack will win a trick if led, implying that the ace, king and queen of the suit have all gone.

MASTER HAND

The hand with control of the trump suit.

MASTER PAIRS

An event, usually by invitation, for players of the highest standard.

MASTER POINTS

Points issued by the English Bridge Union, other National Bridge organisations and affiliated bodies such as clubs and County Associations for success in certain tournaments. In the UK, there are two types of Master Points: Local and National. Local Points are available in all tournaments including club duplicates. National Points are available only in certain major tournaments. The accumulation of Master Points is necessary to attain the various grades in the ranking system of the EBU and other home bridge unions.

MATCH PLAY

Head-to-head competition between two teams.

MATCHPOINT(S)

In a duplicate pairs event, the result of the conversion of a pair's absolute score on any board to a ranking score. In the UK, you earn two matchpoints for every pair you beat and one for every pair with the same score. To 'matchpoint' is to do this conversion.

Here is an example:

N/S	E/W	Cont	By	Ld	Trks	Sc	Mpoints
7	3	4♠	N	♦Q	11	450	5 3
9	2	4♠	N	♥5	12	480	8 0
6	5	6♠	N	♦Q	11	-50	0 8
10	8	4♠	N	♦Q	11	450	5 3
4	1	3NT	S	♦3	10	430	2 6

Pair 9, who played N/S against pair 2, achieved a top score. Having beaten all the other 4 N/S scores, they get 8 matchpoints. Pair 7 gets 5 matchpoints; they get 4 matchpoints for beating two scores (the 430 and -50) and 1 matchpoint for tying with pair 10's 450. Pair 4 scores 2 matchpoints. They beat the -50 but lost to all the other pairs. You could calculate the E/W scores the same way, though it is easier just to deduct the N/S score from 8 (the top on the board).

MATCHPOINT TACTICS

On a minority of deals, you should play differently at matchpoints than you would at rubber bridge or IMPs. What matters is how many scores you beat, rather than how much you beat them by, which can affect tactics.

1. When the contract is safe, do not just settle for your contract. Look for overtricks. Likewise, when you are defending, do not give up just because the contract is cold – saving an overtrick can be worth many matchpoints.
2. If you are in a normal contract (one you expect most other pairs to reach), you should risk your contract for an overtrick if the chance of making the overtrick is well over 50%.
3. If you are defending and the contract is normal, do not adopt desperation measures that risk giving away an overtrick in an attempt to defeat the contract.
4. If you are in an unusual contract and you have the chance to outscore those playing in a normal contract,

it is worth taking a risk to do so.

5. If the opponents outbid you when you are confident of making a contract, look to double them so as to collect a penalty worth more than your contract (even if this means you risk doubling them into game).
6. Do not push for thin games. Positive scores are important.
7. At game level, aim for the highest scoring game (3NT rather than five of a minor).

MEAN SCORE

Another term for the datum, a score computed for a board at duplicate play, from which one can determine IMPs.


MCKENNEY

A system of signals and discards to show suit preference. For many players, the McKenney signal arises in two main defensive situations, normally against trump contracts:

1. You give it on the lead of an ace or a winner, when it is obvious from the bidding and sight of dummy that the leader needs to switch. The play of a high card in the suit led calls for the higher-ranking of the other two suits, excluding the trump suit; a low card calls for the lower of the other two suits.
2. After the lead of a singleton to your ace, when you return the suit for a ruff, you play a significantly high or low card to indicate the suit of a second entry to your hand, in order to give partner a second ruff.

The McKenney discard works on the similar principle, except that playing it is a matter of partnership agreement and it is available against no-trump contracts as well. A low card asks for the lower of the two remaining suits, other than the suit of the discard; a high card asks for the higher of the other two suits. Here is an example:

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



South plays in 4♠ after West opened 3♥ and East raised to 4♥. When West leads the ♥A, it is clear that a heart continuation will be unproductive. Accordingly, East's card gives a McKenney signal, in this case the ♥J, a high card, to ask for the higher-ranking side suit, diamonds. Reverse East's minors and the signal would be with the ♥3, which West should be able to read as low.


MENACE

A word primarily used in the context of Squeeze Play. A menace is a card that might become a winner if an opponent discards from the suit.

MERRIMAC COUP

The sacrifice of an honour, usually a king, as an entry-killing manoeuvre. For example:

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



♠ K Q 4	
♥ A K 4 3	
♦ Q J 3 2	
♣ 5 4	

Against 3NT, West leads the ♠6 and East wins with the ace. He then plays the ♦K to force out dummy's ace. Although this play gives up a trick, it takes out the only entry to dummy's club winners.

MICHAELS CUE BID


The use of the simple cue bid, ie a direct overcall in the suit opened by an opponent (as in the sequence 1♣-2♣ or 1♠-2♠), to show a two-suited hand. The cue bid over a minor-suit opening shows both majors while the cue bid over a major-suit opening shows the other major and a minor suit.

After the overcaller shows both majors, advancer normally shows preference, jumping if appropriate. After the major/minor cue bid, if advancer does not have support for

the major, it is usual to play 3♣ as 'pass or correct' while 2NT is an enquiry with a stronger hand. The original convention admitted hands with 5-4 shape but the modern style demands at least 5-5. Some partnerships allow the cue bid on weak or strong hands (but not those with intermediate strength) while others allow it on any hand with sufficient values to bid and the right shape.

Here is the Michaels Cue Bid in action:

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



West	North	East	South
2♦	Pass	2♥	1♦

MILTON WORK COUNT

The 4-3-2-1 honour point count used by most players. Milton Work invented this based on the McCampbell count of 1915.

MINI NO-TRUMP

An opening 1NT bid showing 10-12 high card points.

MINI SEQUENCE

A sequence of only two touching cards eg J-10-x.

MINI SPLINTER

A single jump showing a singleton in the suit bid and primary support for partner.

West	North	East	South
1♣	Pass	1♠	Pass
3♦			

Since a simple reverse of 2♦ would be forcing, West does not need 3♦ as a natural bid. Playing mini splinters, 3♦ shows a raise to 4♠ with a singleton diamond; 4♦ would denote a similar hand but with a void diamond.

MINOR PENALTY CARD

At duplicate, a low card played inadvertently may become a minor penalty card. The penalties are less ▶

◀ severe than those that apply for a major penalty card.

MINOR SUITS

Clubs and diamonds, often called 'the minors'.

MINOR SUIT SWISS

A rare convention whereby responses of 3♥ and 3♠ (and optionally 3♦ after 1♣) to an opening bid of one of a minor show good trump support, sound values for at least 3NT and some slam interest. The convention has the advantage that responder can show his support and values without taking the bidding beyond 3NT. You may use the Swiss response to show a strong holding in the suit bid or to show specific hand-types.

MINOR TENACE

A holding of the second and fourth highest cards in a suit ie K-J.

MIRROR DISTRIBUTION

Having the same or very similar distribution as your partner. Mirror distribution tends to be bad news as it means you cannot ruff anything.

MISBOARDING

Term used when the hands go back into the wrong slots in the board at duplicate play. If this means that the next table is unable to play the board, then the director may fine the guilty pair or pairs. By leaving the board in the middle of the table during play and touching only your own cards, you minimise the risk of misboarding.

MISDEAL

A misdeal occurs if a card turns face up during the deal, or any player receives the incorrect number of cards. A redeal is necessary following a misdeal.

MISERE

A player is said to have followed a misere (slang) line if his play was inferior, especially highly inferior. 'Butcher' and 'Carve' are similar terms.

MISFIT

Description of a situation when both hands of a partnership have

distributional hands with shortages in each other's long suit(s).



Here East is short in West's majors while West is very short in East's diamonds.

The usual rule, when you diagnose a misfit, is to stop the bidding at a low level.

MITCHELL MOVEMENT

A simple pairs movement in which the N/S pairs remain stationary, the E/W pairs move to the next higher table and the boards to the next lower table after each round. If there is an even number of tables, the middle round is a 'skip' round, with boards moving as normal but E/W pairs moving up two tables. Alternatively, a 'relay' movement uses the first and last tables sharing boards and a relay set of boards between the middle tables. If there is one pair short of having an even number of tables, it is usual to make the N/S pair at the last table the missing pair, thereby avoiding sharing.

MIXED PAIRS

A competition in which each pair comprises a man and a woman.

MIXED RAISE

A jump cue bid of opener's suit to show a hand with 4-card support for partner's overcall and the strength for a value raise (unassuming cue bid). For example:



West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♠	Pass
3♣			

MIXED TEAMS

A competition in which each team

includes at least one man and one woman, often, though not necessarily, with changing partnerships.

MODIFIED GRAND SLAM FORCE

After the trump suit has been agreed, a bid of 5NT, bypassing 4NT, enquires about the top three trump honours. There are various modifications of the convention, but the most common are EITHER:

6♣ shows none of the top three honours in the agreed suit

6 of the agreed suit shows one of the top three honours in that suit

OR

6♣ shows one of the top three honours in the agreed suit

6 of the agreed suit shows none of the top three honours in that suit

With two of the top three honours, in both cases responder bids the Grand Slam.

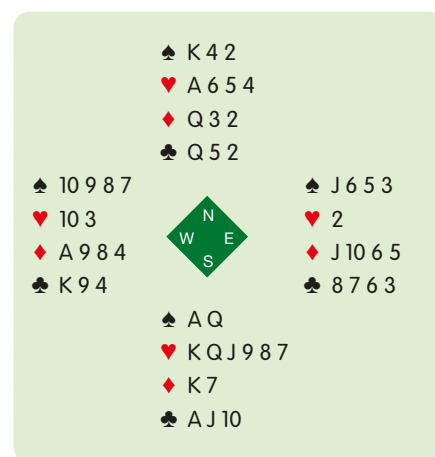
MONSTER

A very powerful hand.

MORTON'S FORK COUP

A term used to describe a play where, like the victims of Henry VII's Lord Chancellor, Cardinal Morton, a defender is given only losing options.

Here is an example:



As South in 6♥, you receive a trump lead. You win with the ace and use high hearts from hand to draw trumps. It looks as if you might lose a diamond and a club (if the finesse fails). However, if you play a small diamond from hand towards dummy's Q-3-2, West has no recourse. If he rises with the ace, this will establish dummy's

queen for a second club discard (the ♠K will take care of one losing club). If West ducks, the queen wins and you can go on to discard the ♦K on the ♠K, just losing one club.

MOVE

The change of seats by certain players in a duplicate pairs or teams at the end of each round.

MOVEMENT

A schedule determining the movement at the end of each round. In a Mitchell movement, half the pairs will move. In a Howell movement, all but one of the pairs will move. The boards will always move.

MOVEMENT CARDS

Cards placed on each table in a duplicate event directing players to their next table at the end of each round.

MOYSIAN FIT

A 4-3 trump fit is a Moysian fit. The term comes from Alphonse Moyse Junior, whose bidding style meant that he often wound up in a trump contract with only a 4-3 fit.

MUD

Standing for Middle-Up-Down, this is a method of leading from a three-card suit (with no honour holding in the suit) by leading the middle card and on the next play of the suit following with the highest card. Partner is therefore able to identify that the lead is not from a doubleton.

For example, with 7-6-5, you would lead the six and later play the seven and five in that order.

MULTICOLOURED TWO DIAMOND OPENER (MULTI)

A conventional 2♦ opening bid used to show three or four distinctly different types of hand, including at least one weak and one strong type.

The most popular version of the convention shows either a weak two-bid in a major, or a strong two bid in a minor or a strong balanced hand. Other strong options are a minor two-suited hand and an unspecified three-suited hand (4-4-4-1 or 5-4-4-0).

Responder usually bids 2♥ (or 2♠ if

holding support for hearts) to allow opener to clarify which type of hand he holds. Opener passes 2♥ with a weak two in hearts or bids 2♠ with a weak two in spades. Other opener's rebids over 2♥ show strong hands.

MULTI CUE BIDS

A system of control-showing cue bids, also known as Italian Style Cue Bids, by which you initially treat first- and second- round controls as of equal importance.

The purpose is to establish at the lowest possible level that the partnership possesses first- or second-round control in every suit, with a subsequent 4NT enquiry available to confirm that the partnership has sufficient first-round controls.

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

West

1♦

3♣

East

2♠

4♥

East's 4♥ shows first- or second round control of hearts and, just as importantly, denies first- or second-round control of clubs (East would make the cheaper cue bid of 4♣ if holding a club control). This enables the players to stop safely in 4♠.



NATIONAL BRIDGE ORGANISATIONS (NBOs)

Responsible for organised bridge within their countries and for submitting entries to the major international bridge competitions. Devolution came to bridge in the UK in 2000, so the EBU, SBU, WBU and NIBU are now all NBOs.

NATURAL

A suit bid that guarantees some length

in the suit named, or a no-trump bid suggesting the hand is playable in no trumps.

NEGATIVE DOUBLE

A double after partner has opened the bidding and right-hand opponent intervenes with a suit call, to show values and, usually, four cards in an unbid major.

It is for take-out, not penalties. It also goes by the name of Sputnik double because players first used it in 1957, the same year as the launch of the Russian spacecraft, Sputnik.

♠ 7 6
♥ K 10 7 4
♦ Q 9 5
♣ A 8 5 3

This hand is suitable for a negative double if partner opens one of a minor and RHO overcalls 1♠, or if partner opens 1♠ and RHO overcalls two of a minor.

At duplicate, negative doubles have become almost universal in this situation.

NEGATIVE INFERENCE

An inference about the lie of the cards that you draw by considering why an opponent did not choose an alternative bid or play. For example:

West	North	East	South
1♣	Pass	1♥	Pass
2♣			

The other players can infer that West does not have a four-card spade suit since it would be normal to show the suit in preference to rebidding the clubs.

NEGATIVE RESPONSE

A response denying values, often after a strong artificial opening, eg a 2♦ response to an Acol 2♣ or a 1♦ response to a Precision 1♣. It can also be a response denying the hoped for shape or card in response to an asking bid, eg a 2♦ reply to a Stayman enquiry.

◀ NEUTRAL CARD

A card played that gives no signal and provides no inference about the strength or distribution of the suit.

A middling card in a suit-preference situation is one example of a neutral card.

When the defenders know their own plan, they will play neutral cards to avoid giving unnecessary information to declarer.

NEUTRAL LEAD

Another term for a passive lead, ie one that gives nothing away.

NEW SUIT

In the bidding, a suit the partnership has not shown before. In the play, a suit that has not been played before.

NEXT STEP FOR KINGS

An agreement whereby, after the response to an ace-asking 4♣ or 4NT, a bid of the next step, provided it is not the agreed trump suit, asks for kings. Other names for such an arrangement are Rolling Blackwood and Rolling Gerber.

NIBU

See Northern Ireland Bridge Union.

NO BID

Term signifying 'Pass'. Traditional in Britain before the introduction of bidding boxes.

NO-TRUMPS

Highest-ranking denomination at bridge.

In a no-trump contract, the highest card in the suit led wins the trick. The trick scores are higher in no-trumps than other denominations, making a no-trump game (3NT) the lowest game contract.

No-trump contracts tend to be profitable when the partnership has a stopper or two in each suit and lacks an eight-card or longer fit in one of the majors.

NO-TRUMP FOR TAKE-OUT

An old defence to weak three openings whereby an overcall of 3NT serves as a take-out request allowing all other calls to be natural, including a penalty double.

NON-FORCING

A bid that does not demand a continuation from partner.

Most game bids and limit bids are non-forcing. One-level opening bids, overcalls and pre-emptive bids of any sort are generally non-forcing.

In this auction, all four first-round bids are non-forcing:

West	North	East	South
1♥	1♠	1NT	2♠

NON-FORCING SEQUENCE

Any sequence of bidding that is not forcing, such as the following examples:

West	North	East	South
1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♥			

West	North	East	South
		1♥	Pass
1NT			

West	North	East	South
2♣	Pass	1♥	Pass
2♥		2♦	Pass

West	North	East	South
2♣	Pass	1♥	Pass
3♦		2♦	Pass

NON-PLAYING CAPTAIN (NPC)

Most international teams of major bridge-playing countries appoint captains who are not a playing member of the team. Their main responsibility is to decide who plays in various stages of the contest, at which tables they play and the tactics to follow. He or she also represents the team in discussions about playing conditions, protests and appeals, and at social events, press conferences, etc.

NON-PROMISSORY STAYMAN

A variation on Stayman with standard replies by opener but which allows responder to use Stayman on a balanced hand not containing a four-card major. If a 2NT response to 1NT is conventional, responder has to find some other way to invite game in no-trumps, one solution being to start with 2♣. Using non-promissory

Stayman, after opener rebids 2♥, responder rebids 2♠ if holding four spades; 2NT instead would deny four spades.

NON-VULNERABLE (NOT VULNERABLE)

In rubber bridge, the condition of a side that has not yet won a game. At duplicate, the board indicates whether you are non-vulnerable, sometimes with a green band or the absence of a red band. The bonuses for making a game or a slam are lower when non-vulnerable, as are the penalties for going down in a contract.

NORMAN 4NT

A slam convention in which one shows aces and kings with one bid. An ace counts as one point and a king as a ½ point.

Responses adhere to the following scale:

- 5♣ Fewer than 1½ points
- 5♦ 1½ points (one ace and one king, or three kings)
- 5♥ 2 points (two aces, four kings, or one ace and two kings)
- 5♠ 2½ points (two aces and one king, or one ace and three kings)
- 5NT 3 points, etc

NORTH

One of the compass positions at the bridge table. In duplicate, North usually assumes the responsibility for scoring the table's result and for correctly placing boards on the table.

NORTHERN IRELAND BRIDGE UNION

Regulatory body for duplicate bridge in Northern Ireland.

NOTTINGHAM CLUB SYSTEM

A simple English 1♣ system popular in the Nottingham area. The system uses an artificial 1♣ opening (16-21 points) and five-card majors.

NUISANCE BID

A bid aiming to disrupt the opposition's auction. Any pre-emptive bid is a nuisance bid. Overcalls made on weak hands with little expectation of buying the contract are also nuisance bids. ■

Answers to Slam Bidding Part 2 Quiz on page 19

- 1 You are East, vulnerable against not. What do you bid after this start to the auction?

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

Hand 1C
 ♠ A Q J 5 4 3 2
 ♥ 2
 ♦ A 6 5
 ♣ A 2

West	North	East	South
1♣	4♥	?	

- Hand 1A: 4♠. Of course it could go horribly wrong if West has a singleton spade and a minimum opening bid but if you pass you could lose a double-game swing with North making 4♥ while you could make 4♠. Bridge is a game of risks.
- Hand 1B: 4♠. This time with more confidence, but if you are considering 5♠ can you be sure that is safe?
- Hand 1C: 6♠. Even if 4NT in your system would be Blackwood, there is no agreed suit so it cannot be Key Card Blackwood. I would describe 6♠ as a justifiable risk. West must have something for his opening bid.

- 2 You are East, vulnerable against not. What do you bid after this start to the auction? If you choose Key Card Blackwood, say what you will do:
- If no key cards are missing.
 - If one key card is missing.

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

West	North	East	South
4♥	Pass	?	

- Hand 2A: Pass. West won't hold three key cards for his 4♥ opening bid.
- Hand 2B: 4NT. Key Card Blackwood.
- 7♥. You can expect partner to ruff dummy's spades good and discard any minor suit losers. The worst case scenario is that opener has three small spades when your grand slam might depend on a 2-2 spade break. Note that if you have a spade loser even 6♥ might fail, as the defenders might well score their spade and cash the minor-suit winner they are likely to have set up on the opening lead.
 - 6♥. This could fail on a minor suit lead but that would be unlucky.
- Hand 2C: 4NT. Key Card Blackwood
- 7NT. This might give you more options than 7♥ (or 7♠) because it could make if either major breaks favourably. You certainly have points to spare.
 - 6♥. Probably better than 6NT because with a key card missing you might have difficulty getting to partner's hearts unless they are trumps.

- 3 You are East, vulnerable against not. What do you bid after this start to the auction? If you choose Key Card Blackwood, say what you will do:
- If no key cards are missing.

- If one key card is missing.

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

West	North	East	South
1♠	4♥	?	

- Hand 3A: 4♠. It might go off but you must show your fit.
- Hand 3B: 4♠. The five level might not be safe. Concentrate on the best game after an opposition pre-empt.
- Hand 3C: 4NT. Key Card Blackwood with spades agreed.
- 7♠. If partner has three small diamonds, your grand slam might depend on the diamond finesse – but that is a worst case scenario.
 - 6♠. Again it might be cold or just be on the diamond finesse.

- 4 You are East, vulnerable against not. What do you bid after this start to the auction? If you choose Key Card Blackwood, say what you will do:
- If no key cards are missing.
 - If one key card is missing.

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

West	East
1♠	3♠
4♦*	?

* First-round control

Answers to the Slam Bidding Quiz on page 19

Continued...

Partner will be shapely to make a slam try after an auction that starts 1♠-3♠

Hand 4A: 4♥. Cue bid. Surely you have the perfect hand for partner. If he cannot make a slam opposite these three prime cards, why is he trying for a slam?

Hand 4B: 5♣. Cue bid, denying the ♥A. Again your cards should be what he wants, so it is reasonable for you to go past 4♠.

Hand 4C: 4♥. That is the disciplined bid because once partner starts cue bidding you are virtually obliged to make a return cue bid if you can do so under game. However, the omens are not good. You know the ♣A is missing and what do you make of his 4♦ cue bid? You have the ♦A so it looks as if partner is void in diamonds! In that case your ♦A-Q may be exactly what he doesn't want. On second thoughts I am tempted to break discipline and bid 4♠. Of course that denies the ♥A but is it likely that partner has opened the bidding at the one level and can make a slam with just one useful card opposite (the ♥A)? Don't forget that cue bidding is not only control showing, it demonstrates enthusiasm for slam. The knowledge that your ♦A-Q is opposite a void has considerably dampened your enthusiasm.

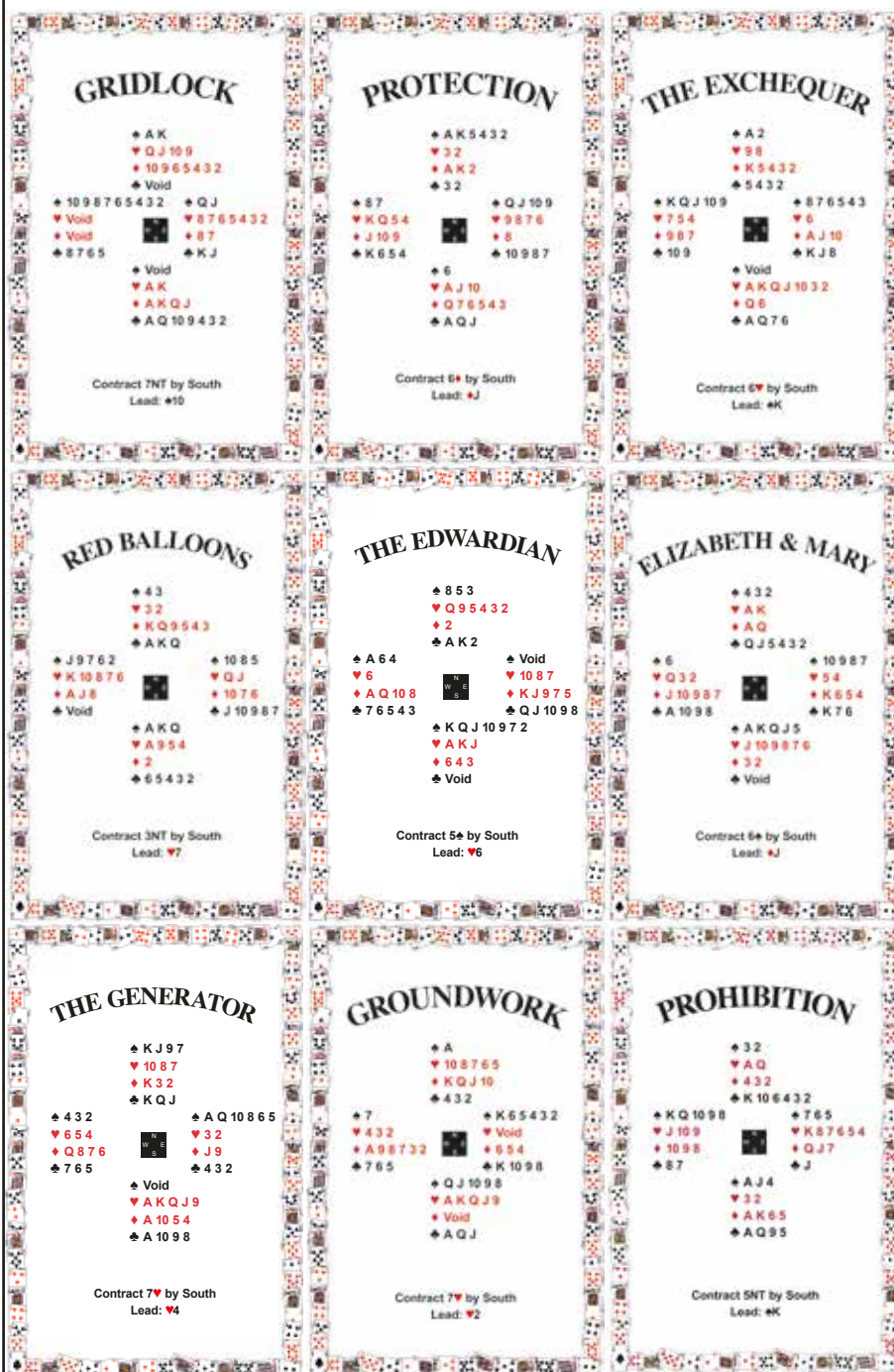
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Answers to David Huggett's Play Quiz on page 9

1.

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

♠

♥

♦

♣

♠	Q J 10 8 5
♥	J 4
♦	J 9 3
♣	J 8 2

♠

♥

♦

♣

N

E

W

S

♠	A 3
♥	Q 7 3
♦	A K 5 4 2
♣	7 6 5

♠

♥

♦

♣

You are declarer in 3NT. West leads the ♠Q. How do you plan the play?

Barring accidents it looks as though the contract will be assured as long as diamonds do not break 4-0 with East, when there will be a loser in that suit. However, a closer look will reveal that if the diamonds break 3-1 with the jack being in the three-card holding then the suit will be irrevocably blocked. Furthermore, there is no hope of making the contract unless you can engineer five diamond tricks because losing the lead would enable the defenders to cash at least four spade tricks. Although it might not seem obvious, you have to duck the opening spade lead and throw a diamond from dummy on the continuation, thus unblocking the suit if the split is 3-1. If the defenders switch after the spade queen holds, declarer can if need be cash the ♠A to engineer the unblock himself.

2.

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

♠ Q 9 7 6 2

♥ Q 3

♦ J 10 9 7


♣ J 2

♠ A J 10 5 4

♥ A 7

♦ A K 5

♣ K Q 6



You are declarer in 6NT. West leads the $\spadesuit J$. How do you plan the play?

You have eight tricks outside the spade suit so the crux of the play is trying to guarantee making four spade tricks and if you give it insufficient thought that looks almost too easy. Indeed more or less any play will succeed if the suit breaks 4-1 so you have to address your mind to those times when the suit breaks 5-0. It may not look so easy at first but if you start with a low spade from dummy and play the ten from hand – unless of course the queen appears – you are bound to make four tricks because if East shows out you will have a known finesse against the nine. It is a simple safety play not often found in books!

3.

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


Diagram: A green diamond shape with the letters N (North), S (South), E (East), and W (West) inside, representing a central position or a specific card in a game.

You are declarer in 4♠. West leads the ♦J. How do you plan the play?

The contract is a very sound one and in such cases it is imperative to search for anything that could go wrong. Here it appears that you must make seven trump tricks and three club tricks but there is a danger that West could get in with the queen of clubs and play a big heart. Then if the ace is wrong you will lose not only the club but maybe three hearts as well. It may be imperative therefore to keep West off the lead and you can do this by the simple expedient of discarding a club from dummy at trick one! Later after having drawn trumps you can take a ruffing finesse against the queen of clubs, knowing that even if it loses your

heart king in dummy is safe from attack.

4.

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

You are declarer in 3NT. West leads the ♥3. How do you plan the play?

It looks as though the hearts are breaking 4-4 which is some comfort at least but even so it appears that you will have to play on diamonds to gain those extra tricks you need. Suppose you win the opening lead and play the diamond ace followed by a low one. If West plays low you are on a guess, for if West has the king you want to play the queen, while if he holds the jack you want to play the ten. It appears to be a guess – and it is if the suit breaks 3-3 – but you have to consider the case when diamonds break 4-2. A doubleton king with East will do you no good, even if you guess right, for you will still have two losers but a doubleton jack will be fine, but only if you play the queen from dummy – so that is what you must do. ■

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The Diaries of Wendy Wensum

Episode 101: The impact of playing strength

Spouse had not enjoyed his afternoon shopping trip. 'What is it about department stores?' he inquired rhetorically in exasperation. 'All I wanted was a pair of trainers. I liked the style and colour, but needed size 9. Did they have size 9? Of course not, there was every other size in abundance, but not one pair of size 9.' Men do like instant gratification, don't they?

Walking to bridge that evening, Spouse was still a bit grumpy and continued moaning about trainers and department stores. On reaching the club we went straight to the bar, where Spouse ordered a glass of claret and a pint of real ale. Tasting the latter seemed to revive his spirits. It was the second and final session of the Riverside's annual Swiss teams event. Play commenced and after three rounds of six boards, our usual team, comprising of Jo, Kate, Millie and me, were placed in fourth position with only the last round to play. As we waited for the assignments, I confided in Millie that I hoped we could avoid Spouse's team, relating the tale of Spouse and the trainers as explanation. The inevitable then occurred. Spouse's team were our opponents and during the set this remarkable deal appeared.

I was South and looked suspiciously at my 5-0-0-8 distribution with only two obvious losers. The clubs were self-supporting but with any sort of help from Millie, a spade contract might achieve a better score. A slam could easily be available, but what should I open? Five clubs would be a possibility but a spade contract could easily be missed. It was a game-going hand, so perhaps I should open with a game forcing Acol 2♣. I was looking at 14 HCP with one ace and two kings (four controls: A=2, K=1). The current EBU regulations required that a strong bid should contain 16+ HCP or 12+ HCP and at least five controls. Was I allowed to open a game force on this hand? What a dilemma. I decided to pass; with this distribution, it seemed unlikely that the board would be passed out. Spouse opened 1♥ and Millie passed. Travis bid 3♦ alerted by Spouse as showing precisely three-card heart support and forcing to game. I could if I wished double to show spades and a minor. Again I decided to pass and await developments knowing that the 3♦ response was forcing. Spouse bid 4♥. Millie and Travis both passed. It was clearly decision time for me; I bid 5♣. Not to be outdone, Spouse bid 5♥. Millie and Spouse again both passed. It was now more than a battle

of the sexes; it was far more important, husband versus wife. I concluded that 5♥ might well make and I defiantly laid down the 6♣ bidding card. West and Millie passed, the latter looking pale and distressed. Travis produced an instant penalty double to end the auction.

West	North	East	South
Spouse	Millie	Travis	Wendy
			Pass
1♥	Pass	3♦ ¹	Pass
4♥	Pass	Pass	5♣
5♥	Pass	Pass	6♣
Pass	Pass	Dbl	All Pass

¹ Game Force with three hearts

Spouse faced the ♥K and I ruffed in hand. Hoping that spades would behave, I played the ♠A and then the ♠K, so far so good. Holding my breath, I led the ♠J, Spouse followed and I trumped in dummy and was relieved when the ♠Q appeared on my right. With just the ♣A to lose, the contract of 6♣ doubled was home and dry. At first there was general disbelief and dumbfounded silence, quickly followed by a bout of hysterical laughter from the four of us, which produced a warning from the TD regarding Best Behaviour at Bridge. All tension was instantly dissipated.

Dealer South. E/W Game.

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



Appeals Committees

At the end of the round, Jo and Kate rejoined our home table to score-up. It turned out that their auction on the same board was rather different from ours. On the South hand Sarah opened a simple 1♣. Jo, in the West position, overcalled an unusual 2NT showing a hand with intermediate values and the two red suits. George passed and Kate jumped to 4♥. Sarah bid 5♣. With a void in clubs, Jo bid 5♥, which became the final contract.

West	North	East	South
Jo	George	Kate	Sarah
			1♣
2NT ¹	Pass	4♥	5♣
5♥	All Pass		

¹ Intermediate red two-suiter

Sarah, wondering whether to lead the ♠A or the ♣K, eventually decided on the former. Still on lead she continued with the ♠K. On the encouraging signal from partner, she led another spade, ruffed by George. The club return was won in Kate's hand with the ace and she then removed George's remaining trumps. With the diamond suit to run, Kate claimed the rest of the tricks. The 5♥ contract was one off for a fortunate but excellent IMP score on the board enabling us to scrape home in the match.

In the pub later, Millie was very critical of computer dealing in general and that board in particular. In order to quell another long discourse on the issue, Jo intervened with a proposal for another round of drinks. This received instant and unanimous approval.

Was the result on the board sufficient for us to win the Swiss Teams?

No, but we finished in a respectable third place.

I hurried home, concerned about Spouse as he and Travis had not joined us at the pub. He had not had a good day, no trainers and losing a key bridge match against his wife's team. I needn't have worried. I arrived to find him cheerfully lounging on the settee watching TV, a pint of beer beside him. He turned and greeted me with, 'You know, I should have bought a pair of slippers this morning. There were some nice ones at the store.' It certainly was not the greeting I had expected. ■

What are appeals committees, what are they for, does my club need them and why does my club not have one? In this article we shall look at these committees and answer these and other questions.

Suppose you bid 4♥ on some bidding sequence and your LHO thinks for a time, takes the double card nearly out of the box, then puts it back and gets hold of his pass card and finally doubles. It is clear to all concerned that his double is not based on four trump tricks. Partner passes, RHO bids 4♠ and despite doubling it you do not get a good score since 4♥ is making. As seen in many of these articles, players must not use the mannerisms and hesitations of their partners in making their decisions so you call the director. While it is accepted that LHO did all this, the director comes back and tells you that he considers the 4♠ bid reasonable and he is not going to adjust the score. Is there anything further you can do?

The laws allow for appeals, in other words you may appeal against the director's decision if you feel that it is wrong. How the appeal is dealt with is different in different jurisdictions, at different levels of the game and so forth. The most common method is to have an appeals committee; this generally consists of three (or possibly five) good players who will apply their judgement on the situation. They do not need to be experts on the laws since the director will explain the laws to them as necessary. In the example given they will apply their judgement

to see whether passing the double was a Logical Alternative, as explained in other articles, and whether the obvious doubt by doubler suggested bidding 4♠ rather than passing. They will then consider whether to amend the director's ruling or not. It is a generally accepted principle that they start with the director's ruling and consider whether it was wrong and needs to be changed. The whole business reminds one of reviews in cricket and VAR in football but appeals in bridge have been around for far longer.

What happens if you feel the director has the law wrong? The law allows you to appeal to his superior but in small events, certainly in clubs, there usually is only one director. If you cannot get him to change his mind, you could ask to appeal his ruling. While he is allowed to say no, it would be very rare. Then you and the director can explain the problem to the appeals committee and let them sort it out.

It seems as though you could appeal any ruling you do not like but it is normal for an appeal to be accompanied by a deposit, something between £10 or €10 and £50 or €50. This will be returned unless the appeals committee considers the appeal had no merit or was frivolous. This makes it likely that only sensible appeals will be made. In some cases, the appeals committee can impose further procedural penalties reducing your score if they consider your appeal was without merit. These penalties, whether procedural or retaining the deposit, are only applied to appeals without merit. ►

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◀ If you make an ordinary appeal and lose, your deposit will be returned and you will not be penalised.

Especially with weighted scores you do get occasions when both sides consider they have been hard done by. However, an appeals committee will be very loath to give much consideration to a side that has not been prepared to appeal and risk their deposit. So if both sides feel hard done by they should both be prepared to risk their deposit. The appeals committee will be told who has appealed and they decide whether the deposit should be returned.

An appeals committee can adjust the score in any way they deem fit so it is not unheard of for the side appealing to be given a worse score. If they think the director is probably right they will generally uphold his ruling, but if they feel he has got it wrong then they will change the result. This does not always mean that they will change it to something suggested by either side or the director, though in practice most appeals either uphold the director or change it to what the appealing side want, or sometimes part of what they want.

In main events, the director will have a method of setting up appeals – but what happens if there is an appeal in a club?

These are very rare in all but the leading clubs and sometimes the director will not know what to do. There are really two approaches possible.

The first approach is for the director to get three of the better players from

different pairs and not involved with either side. He then sits this committee down on one side of a couple of tables, puts the involved players and himself on the other side, introduces everyone and explains his view of the facts and the ruling he has given, and makes clear who is appealing and whether a deposit has been taken. The players then have their say, the appealing side first, and the committee asking any questions they feel relevant. Then the players withdraw, the committee asks the director to explain any relevant law, then they deliberate, come to a conclusion and tell it to the director, who then informs all the players.

The second approach is less satisfactory but may be necessary if the director cannot form a committee, possibly because of time problems. Each side should write their comments down, the director writes the facts down and each side checks it, and then the director submits the appeal by phone or email to someone else. The local county, district or area can often help, if not the national authority certainly can, and you can email me. The Welsh and English Bridge Unions publish the names of referees who deal with appeals.

One important thing is that appeals are not designed to correct rulings that are wrong in law since they are heard by players whose judgement is sound but knowledge of the law may not be.

Nevertheless, an appeal might be the route to bring a wrong book ruling into the limelight although some people prefer to write to me c/o Mr Bridge. ■

Answers to Julian Pottage's Defence Quiz on page 9

1.

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

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

You lead the ♠7: ♠4, ♠Q and ♠A. Declarer leads low to the ♣A and calls for the ♦Q, on which go the ♦5 and ♦2. What is your plan?

You know from the play to the first trick that declarer has the ♠J (partner would have played the lower of touching honours). While the ♠J could be bare, the odds are against it. If declarer has a low spade, you need to put partner in for the next spade lead, which can only be with the ♥A. Furthermore, since a heart switch will be safe if partner has the ♥K, you should take the ♦K and switch to a heart. Only if declarer has the ♥A-K and the ♠Q as well as the presumed ♠A-J and ♦A will you lose the ♠K by failing to cash it.

2.

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

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

¹ 12-14

² No four-card major

You lead the ♠3, covered by the ♠6, ♠J and ♠Q. Declarer now leads the ♦2. What is your plan?

The play to the first trick has been quite revealing. Partner would have played the ten from J-10-x or the ace from A-J-x. This means declarer must have started with A-Q-10. As on the previous deal, you want the next spade lead to come from partner's side of the table. The difference is that declarer has not crossed to dummy (with one of those heart winners) to take a diamond finesse. Why do you think that is? It is because partner holds the ♦A. You need bravely to play low. This gains not just on the actual layout but also if partner happens to hold the singleton ♦A.

3.

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

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

¹ 12-14

² Five or more spades

³ Minimum with four-card support

You lead the ♥3, covered by the ♥7, ♥Q and ♥A. Now declarer leads the ♠J. What is your plan?

This time the play to the first trick has been less revealing. Partner might

or might not have the ♥K. If declarer has the ♥K, it will do you no good to continue hearts from your side of the table. Fortunately, when you win with the ♠A, you are going to see a discard from partner. If it is a low club, you will hope that two heart tricks are available. In fact, it is the ♠10, a high card surely denoting possession of the ♠K. This being the case, after taking your ♠A (on the first or second round) you can underlead the ♠A to get a heart lead through.

4.

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

West	North	East	South
Pass	3NT	Pass	1NT ¹
Pass		All Pass	

¹ 12-14

You lead the ♠4: ♠J, ♠8 and ♠2. Declarer calls for the ♦J, on which go the ♦3, ♦2 and ♦Q. What is your plan?

You know the ♠K is on your right and you know it is not bare (with three low clubs, partner would have played low to show an odd number). Does this mean you want partner on lead? A count of points tells you this is not on – declarer needs the ♥A to have an opening bid.

Fortunately, your clubs are strong enough to enable you to generate sufficient winners. So, although doing so sets up declarer's ♠K, you continue clubs by cashing the ♠A.

You can then knock out the ♠K even if the ♠8 was a singleton. Unless declarer has seven tricks in the majors, you will beat the contract. This is also the best way to cut down on overtricks if declarer does have seven tricks in the majors. ■

Maid Marian's Treat

'You always seem to have so much fun when you and Nazir play bridge at the Drunken Pheasant,' said Maid Marian. 'Can't you take me there, just once?'

'Too risky,' Robin Hood replied. 'If news reached the Sheriff that you'd been seen in my company, he would have you seized the moment you next attended court.'

'You often disguise yourself,' Marian retorted. 'Do you think, just because I'm a woman, that I can't do the same?'

The following Thursday, Robin and a rather strange-looking young lady walked into the Drunken Pheasant.


'Good to see you, Robin,' exclaimed the Landlord. He surveyed the outlaw's partner uncertainly. 'Nazir couldn't play today?'

'He'll be partnering Friar Tuck,' Hood replied. 'My young friend Lucy, here, is just learning the game. She's a bit nervous.'

Marian prodded Robin playfully. 'Flamin' cheek, I call it!' she said, feigning a country accent. 'When we were playin' two nights ago, he went down in an easy 3NT. Finessed the wrong hand for the queen of diamonds.'

The Landlord nodded politely. 'It's easily done,' he replied.

The event was into its fifth round when Robin and Marian faced an elderly married couple on this board:

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

West	North	East	South
Agnes	Maid	William	Robin
Cabot	Marian	Cabot	Hood
			1♠
Pass	1NT	Pass	3♣
Pass	3♦	Pass	4♣
All Pass			

Agnes Cabot, who could recognise an honour sequence when she saw one,

led the jack of spades.

'Thank you, er... Lucy,' said Robin Hood when the dummy went down. His elderly opponent might not realise it but she had found a good opening lead. Now, how could he reach dummy to take a discard on the diamond ace?

If he led a low club towards the jack, all would be well if West held the king of clubs. If the jack lost to the king with East, though, he would surely return another trump.

Hood soon spotted the play that was required. He won with the trump ace and then led the queen of clubs from his hand. William Cabot won with the king and returned a trump to declarer's king. Hood crossed to dummy with the jack of clubs and discarded a heart on the ace of diamonds. A total of two clubs and a heart had to be lost but the game was his.

William Cabot turned towards Robin Hood. 'My king of clubs was under your ace-queen,' he said.

Hood suppressed a smile. 'I couldn't be sure,' he replied.

'He let me make a trick with my king of clubs,' the elderly East informed his wife. 'It could be a good one for us.'

Maid Marian reached for the scoresheet. 'No one else has made it so



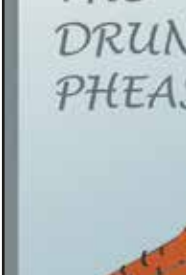
This was the board before them:

West	North	East	South
Nazir	Maid	Friar	Robin
	Marian	Tuck	Hood
1♠	2♥	Pass	1♥
All Pass			4♥

Robin Hood paused to consider the position. If the club queen was onside, as seemed likely, he would be able to discard a spade and score an overtrick. Still, Nazir might have covered the ♣9 if he held the club queen. No doubt Tuck would find it amusing to win

This was the deal before them:

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A stylized illustration of a pheasant, shown in profile facing left. It has a long, patterned tail, a green head with a red eye, and a white collar around its neck. The body is primarily orange-brown with dark spots. The illustration is set against a light blue background within a grey border.

West	North	East	South
<i>Maid</i>	<i>Sam</i>	<i>Robin</i>	<i>Unlucky</i>
<i>Marian</i>	<i>Liggat</i>	<i>Hood</i>	<i>Reginald</i>
	1♣	Pass	2♥
Pass	3♣	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♥	Pass	6♥
All Pass			

'I played it rather cleverly, combining two chances,' said Unlucky Reginald. 'No one can ask more than that.' ■



How Do You Ask For Aces After Partner Has Bid No-Trumps?

Q After a no-trump opening bid (1NT or 2NT) followed by Stayman or transfers, it seems to be fairly standard that a 4NT continuation is quantitative. If so, how does responder ask for aces?

With a hand with slam potential and five hearts, how does responder explore for a heart fit before making a quantitative 4NT?

Similarly, if after partner's 2NT, responder has a slam orientated unbalanced hand and four spades so bids Stayman, and partner responds spades, how does responder ask for aces? 4NT is quantitative (opener does not know that responder has found a fit).
Mike Johnson by email.

A As responder, if you want to ask for aces after a 1NT opening and Stayman/transfer, you bid a new suit at the four level, as a splinter or cue bid (depending upon partnership agreement) and ask for key cards on the next round. So the final bid in this sort of sequence, 1NT-2♣-2♥-4♣-4♦-4NT, would be asking.

After a 2NT opening and Stayman response, again responder bids something en route to 4NT if wanting to ask. In the case of a 2NT-3♣-3♠ start, the something

should be 4♥ – this cannot be showing five hearts and not four spades (because you would simply transfer with that), so 4♥ is available to show agreement for spades. It is trickier after 2NT-3♣-3♥ because responder might want to bid 3♠ naturally in case opener is 4-4 in the majors. You could agree that 2NT-3♣-3♥-3NT shows four spades (just as 1NT-2♣-2♥-3NT does), in which case 3♠ is available to show a slam try in hearts.



Q West opened a weak 2♠, which at the table was passed out.

♠ A K 2
♥ K J 9
♦ 9 8 7 3
♣ A 8 3



♠ 10 3
♥ A Q 10 8 6 2
♦ K 6 4
♣ J 2

South agreed that they should have overcalled 3♥ – being in the pass out seat. North thought

their hand was too flat to either double or bid 2NT. We play Lebensohl.

What is your suggested bidding?

Angela Buckley by email.

A Opposing pre-empts are designed to make your life difficult and sometimes they leave you no easy way to reach the best contract.

The North hand is a marginal 2NT overcall – if you go with Bernard's advice to deduct a point when 4333 shape then the hand is definitely not good enough.

South might reopen with 3♥ non-vulnerable. The trouble with bidding on a hand with these values is that partner will raise to 4♥ with the strength you need just to make 3♥. With a double spade stopper and no ruffing value, North might bid 3NT if South does overcall 3♥.

At matchpoints you might prefer to play in hearts because a club lead will probably stop any overtricks in 3NT; you will often make 4♥ if the ♦A is onside and the suit is not 5-1.



Q Within Andrew Kambites' excellent article on "Splinter bids and trial bids", could

you please explain how you would bid his Layout P, using strong opening 1NT and 5-card majors. I cannot bid other than 1NT – Pass.
Neil Richardson by email.

A You ask about this layout playing a strong no-trump:

♠ K 8 6
♥ 8
♦ A 8 4 2
♣ 10 6 5 3 2



♠ A Q 10
♥ J 3 2
♦ 9 3
♣ A K Q J 7

With 17 points in high cards alone and adding at least 1 point for the excellent five-card club suit, South might reasonably treat the hand as too strong for a 15-17 1NT. You can then have the same 1♣-2♣-2♠-5♣ auction as weak no-trump players might have.

I agree that if South fails to upgrade the hand (so opens a 15-17 1NT) then North does not have enough to look for game.

Continued on page 44... ►

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Answers to Sally Brock's Simple Take-Out Doubles Part 3 Quiz, on page 19

What do you bid on the following hands with the auctions given?
The vulnerability and scoring method should not affect your answers.

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

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	Dbl	1♥
?			Pass

Hand 1 Over a second seat double you would have bid 2♠, but you should 'transfer a king' when partner's double is in fourth seat. Here 1♠ is enough.

Hand 2 If partner had doubled in second seat this hand would be worth 2NT, but as he was in fourth seat 1NT is enough.

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

West	North	East	South
?	1♣*	Dbl	Pass

*May be short

Hand 3 If the opening bid had shown at least three cards, partner's ideal minimum double would have been 4441, and you would have been tempted to investigate a 4-4 heart fit, but as 1♣ can be 'short' partner is more likely to be balanced and to show your points with 2NT is a better idea.

Hand 4 If partner had opened a weak NT you would have bid 3NT, so bid 3NT now.

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

West	North	East	South
?	1♥	Dbl	2♥

Hand 5 Even though without the raise you would not have jumped to 2♠, it is OK to allow yourself to be forced up a bit when your RHO raises.

Hand 6 You would like to compete in a minor but don't want to guess which minor to bid in case partner has only one minor, so double 2♥ and let partner choose.



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◀...Continued from page 42.

Q During lockdown, I have been playing quite a lot of casual bridge on BBO, which is a real roller-coaster as you know nothing about your partner. This can be great fun, but it can also be very exasperating.

Yesterday, my partner opened 1♠ (five card suit) and with:

♠ K 8 5 4
♥ A 10 9 7 3
♦ 7
♣ K 7 4

I responded 4♦. At my next turn I showed two controls over partner's 4NT and when he/she bid 6♦, my initial thought was, 'oh dear! Partner has interpreted my splinter bid as a suit'.

Before bidding again, I checked the profile of my partner and, for the first time ever, partner was describing him/herself as 'world class'. So was partner's bid showing the ace of diamonds looking for a grand slam, or was it asking me if my splinter was a void, again wanting me to bid the grand if it was?

I signed off in 6♠ – a great contract with only 25 points. His/her hand was:

♠ A Q 9 3 2
♥ K 5
♦ 8 3 2
♣ A Q 8

I suspect that the 6♦ bid meant the latter of the two options, but I just wondered if you would have bid the hand as my 'world class' partner did? Chris Bickerdike by email.

A If I had a void in this situation, I would show that in reply to 4NT. While it is not always right to show the void, here your earlier splinter means that partner knows where the void is.

What Bernard suggests for showing a void is that you simply bid one level higher than you would have done. So if 5♥ is your normal reply to show two key cards then you would bid 6♥ to show two key cards and a void.

Other people have different methods, using 5NT as one of the void showing replies, thereby keeping the bidding a bit lower (not that this is a problem when spades is the agreed suit).

I am not sure what I would make of the 6♦ bid. You did well to draw a world class partner.

♣♦♥♠

Q LHO opens 1♦, partner doubles and RHO bids 1♠. I have a balanced 7 points with a diamond stop. Without the spade bid I would bid 1NT this being the usual response, with 6-9 points. opposite an opening hand which the double infers.

Assuming that you agree so far, my question is does the spade bid make any difference? Does my 1NT still show 6-9 points and if not what does it show?

As a supplementary question should I also have a spade stop? Colin Jones, Surrey.

A With the 1♠ bid, I do not think you would be bidding 1NT with only 6 points. I would make the range 8-10, maybe 7-10. You need a diamond stopper, but can reasonably expect partner to have a spade

stopper so do not need cover there. Sally Brock's article this month covers in more detail what to do after partner has doubled.

♣♦♥♠

Q I would appreciate your advice as to the best way to play these cards to get four tricks.

♠ A 10 9 3 2

W N
S E

♠ Q 6 5 4

Spades were trumps and there were no problems with entries.

Hugh Ball, Eastbourne.

A Assuming you have no clues from the bidding to help you, the normal play is to cash the ace planning to play towards the queen on the second round. You will fail in your objective only if a defender is void or if West has K-J-x.

In real life you will quite often have some clue from the bidding. If West has made a one-level opening bid or if East has pre-empted then you might be inclined to place the king on your left and so lead the queen initially.

♣♦♥♠

Q In a matchpoint duplicate session we went badly down in 3NT because we had no stopper in hearts. The bidding sequence was:

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

Does my 2NT bid guarantee a stopper in all unbid suits?

I thought it just meant 15-17 points and normally a balanced hand with no guarantee about stoppers.

My partner thought I was showing stoppers in spades and hearts and therefore bid 3NT which did not work.

Please can you tell me if my 2NT re-bid guarantees stoppers in all unbid suits, or not?

Bruce Paul by email.

A As an opponent has bid hearts, your 2NT rebid does promise a heart stopper.

I recommend playing that double of 2♥ shows a hand with 15+ points but no suitable rebid. Playing a double this way is even more useful after a one-level response because then you can use it not only on hands with no stopper in the opposing suit but also on hands too weak for a 2NT rebid, retaining the 18-19 range for a 2NT rebid after a one-level response.

If you do not wish to do that, you have to bid 3♥ asking for a heart stopper.

Since you are expecting a heart lead, you do not need a spade stopper.

♣♦♥♠

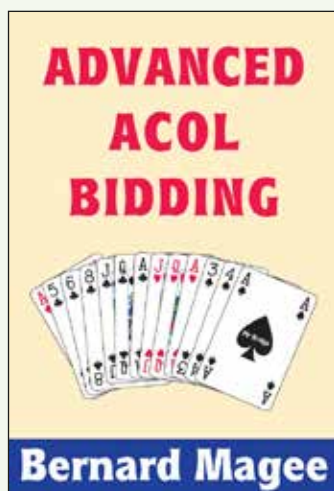
Q Regarding your excellent "A to Z of Bridge" and the entry for BID, should "Pass" also count as a bid? ("No bid" is a solecism). Peter Calviou by email.

A The laws of bridge say that 'Pass', 'Double' and 'Redouble' are all calls rather than bids. For an action to be a bid it has to name a level and a denomination.

Continued on page 46... ▶

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Answers to Bernard Magee's Bidding Quizzes 1-3 on page 7

1. Dealer West. Love All.

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



West	North	East	South
1♣	1♠	Pass	Pass
?			

Pass. You open the bidding 1♣ and are planning to rebid 1NT, but left-hand opponent overcalls 1♠ and your partner does not bid. This is key; your partner's lack of bid leaves you in a very difficult situation. East should strive to bid with club support – you should aim to stretch a little with support, once the auction is competitive. So, if you place your partner with fewer than six points and most likely fewer than three clubs, what should you call?

Pass. It is always difficult to want to pass with hands like this, but when South passes, there is a good chance that North-South do not actually have a spade fit because it is usual to raise to 2♠ with three-card support. What this means is that the opponents might not be in their best fit.

As you can see from partner's hand, North-South's best fit is hearts; instead you leave them in 1♠, which they will make, but perhaps only just.

If you try 1NT you might find yourself doubled and going a couple off. If you double for take-out your partner (on another hand) might respond 2♥ and you would not be happy.

2. Dealer West. Love All.

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



West	North	East	South
1♣	1♥	Pass	Pass
?			

Dbf. While you could be forgiven for thinking that this is a misprint and that the first two questions are the same, this time the overcall is 1♥ and your holding in that suit is subtly different.

The shorter you are in the opponent's suit the more you should want to reopen the auction because the likelihood is that they have found their best fit.

With 15 points and shortage in hearts the right re-opening call is double. Partner, please choose your best suit, but bear in mind that I have already bid clubs.

Here, East will bid 2♦ and you have found a reasonable spot. You might feel that you could also have got to 2♦ this way on problem 1, but then you would not have been able to deal with a response in the unbid major. Here, if partner had a hand to bid 1♠, you would be comfortable.

3. Dealer West. Love All.

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



West	North	East	South
1♣	1♠	Pass	Pass
?			

1NT. This time you have 18 high card points – your plan had been to rebid 2NT; now with your partner's pass, you should bring that down one notch. Considering that East might have zero points, your no-trump rebids after an overcall change. As you saw on question 1, with 15-16 points you can choose to pass.

With 17-19 you rebid 1NT – the reason for the higher strength required is to keep the auction low when partner is really weak.

1NT is certainly high enough with these two hands – six tricks may be the limit in the play. ■

◀...Continued from page 44.

Calls include bids but not the other way round.

Colloquially, players do sometimes misuse the term 'bid', for example asking 'what would you bid?' when they mean 'what would you call?'



Q I wonder if you can help me with my understanding of the bidding on the following:

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

West	East
1♥	1♠
1NT	4♣
All Pass	

Has West fully described his hand or should he have bid on? Did 4♣ from East say that his hand was weak?

In the play, the lead was a diamond and East made 13 tricks.

Mike Bass by email.

A West's 1NT rebid is a limit bid. Once one player has made a limit bid, the onus is on the other player to steer the partnership towards the correct contract. East needs to do something other than rebid 4♣.

East can envisage a slam if West has three aces. A raise from 1NT to 4NT sounds invitational, so that is not the way forward (though it would have worked on this layout because the West hand is both maximum and contains three aces).

If you do not play any sort of enquiry over the 1NT rebid, the next best thing

is for East to jump to 3♦. West would bid 3♥ over 3♦; East does not want to bid 4NT over that because West would count the ♥K as a key card, so East next bids 3♠. Frustratingly West then bids 3NT, meaning that a 4NT bid would sound like a quantitative raise, so East continues with 4♦. West finally gives preference to 4♣, which means East can bid 4NT to check on key cards.

The auction might be easier if East has a 2♣ Checkback bid available. There is an article on Checkback in the Mr Bridge library.



Q Could you please advise us as to the correct bidding sequence for this deal?

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

This was what happened originally:

West	North	East	South
			1♣*
1♥	Pass	3♦	Pass
4♦	Pass	5♦	All Pass

The contract made with an overtrick.

James and Angela Cassidy by email.

A Playing a weak no-trump, I would be rather tempted to open 1NT on the South

hand because of the values in the red doubletons. Since 1♣ appears to have been alerted (you have put an asterisk), I shall assume North-South are playing a strong no-trump, in which case 1♣ is impeccable. The 1♥ overcall is obviously fine.

If the 1♣ opening was a prepared bid, North-South might reasonably play 2♠ from North as a weak jump shift rather than as a fit-showing jump. The hand is weak, I admit, though the vulnerability is favourable. Anyway, I can live with the pass.

On the East hand I would usually play that a fit-showing jump of 3♦ shows at least four hearts and at least five diamonds, though it does not seem a bad choice on the actual hand despite the lack of a fourth heart. I guess from West's pass of 5♦ that 3♦ did not promise heart support on the East-West methods – time for a change or at least clarity of method perhaps. West's raise to 4♦, showing something in diamonds and extra values (because it takes the bidding past 3♥) seems a good choice.

The bid I really do not understand is East's 5♦. With first-round controls in both black suits and a two-suit fit in the red suits, the hand seems very suitable for a slam. A 4♣ cue bid would seem a much better choice than a simple 5♦. If East did not fancy slam chances, the next best thing would be to play in the higher scoring heart suit.

Once East cue bids 4♣, West might bid 4NT to check on key cards. An expert partnership might have an agreement that the kings of both hearts and diamonds count as key cards on this auction. If East simply bids

5♥ to show two key cards, West might pass. If East bids 5NT or whatever the partnership method is to show two key cards plus a void then you get to 6♥.

In summary, this is not an easy hand to bid. Most pairs would get no higher than 4♥.



Q In BRIDGE 211 (July 2020) a reader asked about the rule of 22. I think this was covered some time back now and is basically an extension of the Rule of 20 and is designed to check whether your Rule of 20 opening is sound or not. To do this you add the number of "quick tricks" (ie ace = 1 or ace-king = 2) you have to your Rule of 20 total and if this comes to 22 (vulnerable) or 21 (non-vulnerable) then you have a sound rule of 20 opening bid.

It is designed to ensure that your hand contains an adequate number of quick tricks as some Rule of 20 openings can be weak in fast winners.

Simon Gibbon, Totnes, Devon.

A Thank you very much for the reminder. It is coming back now.

To the best of my knowledge Ron Klinger was the first person to publicise the rule of 22 (I believe he suggests the rule of 21 non-vulnerable). The idea of incorporating quick (defensive) winners into the assessment is that a sound one-level opening bid will deliver some transferable values, cards that are likely to win tricks whatever the trump suit (if any).

This is hand 4 from Bernard's bidding quiz in BRIDGE 211 (July 2020):

Continued on page 48... ►

BRIDGE is ceasing publication.

The last issue will be number 216 - December 2020.

See page 5 for more information.

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Answers to Bernard Magee's Bidding Quizzes 4-6 on page 7

4. Dealer East. Love All.

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

West	North	East	South
1♠	Pass	1♥	Pass
?		2♦	Pass

3♥. When you pick up this hand your evaluation should include how you feel about your doubleton queen-jack of diamonds. As the auction continues, that holding's value might well change – here, when your partner bids diamonds, it is not unreasonable to expect those cards to pull their weight and therefore evaluate the hand as 10 points and as good as 8 losers. This evaluation suggests that you should give jump preference to 3♥ and your partner would take that on to game.

The game makes because the hands fit together well – four tricks from diamonds and (on a normal 3-2 break) five from hearts.

5. Dealer East. Love All.

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

West	North	East	South
1♠	Pass	1♥	Pass
?		2♦	Pass

2♥. Once again, this question looks very similar to the previous one, but the switch of your minor suits is crucial. This time

your doubleton queen-jack is in clubs and, as the auction has gone, you cannot expect those cards to be worth very much. Your partner is likely to be short in clubs, since he has bid two other suits, so you should downgrade the holding and be evaluating your hand as less than 10 points and closer to the nine losers you started with. Both these evaluations would suggest a simple 2♥ preference.

Here, East would pass 2♥ and you would finish at a comfortable level – your clubs are worthless in the play and if either red suit breaks 4-1 then 8 tricks may be the limit.

6. Dealer East. Love All.

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

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

2♥. You start off feeling positive about your hand: 10 high card points and two reasonably nice suits. However, as the auction progresses, it turns out that your partner has the other two suits, which means you should be starting to bring down your expectations.

Your three high cards are now looking isolated, with the length in the suits unlikely to carry weight. Put that opposite a possible minimum opening hand and you should want to stay low. Go back to your partner's first suit, 2♥, and often the auction will finish there.

Stay low on a misfit is an important maxim. ■

◀...Continued from page 46.

♠ K 8 7 6 5
♥ Void
♦ K J 4
♣ K 8 5 3 2

The hand has 10 cards between the two longest suits and 10 points in high cards, totalling 20 before you account for the quick winners. It has only 1.5 quick winners (0.5 for each king), so 21.5 in total, meaning it just falls short of the target of 22. Taking the poor intermediates into account as well (no tens or nines), the recommendation was to pass as dealer.

♣♦♥♠

Q I was on lead against a 3NT contract after the opponents bid: 1NT-2♣ (Stayman)-2♦-3NT I held:

♠ J 7 6 4 3
♥ Q 2
♦ 7 5 2
♣ 9 6 3

In Bernard's YouTube presentations No.33 he said that with this sort of hand, leading from a poor 5-card suit would be his second choice because even if it could be established there was little chance of ever getting back to hand to enjoy the winners. Knowing that partner should have about 10-12 HCP, his first choice would be to try and find partner's best (hopefully long) suit. So I led the ♥Q and about 2 minutes later was writing down -460. On the ♠4 lead, dummy turns up with a singleton ♠K

and partner holds ♠A-Q-10-8, so it's +50. As the cards lay any non-spade lead and the opposition have 11 off the top.

As a matter of interest, nay amazement, 7 other pairs played in 3NT, all got the ♠4 lead but somehow all made their contract but without any overtricks. The 4 other pairs all played in a diamond part score so our net result was an outright bottom. C'est la vie.

Does the fact that LHO had used Stayman alter Bernard's reasoning?

What would you have led? Paul Jesper by email.

A For a heart lead to do any good your partner will need quite a strong five-card suit because you are expecting dummy to come down with a four-card major, which is most likely to be hearts. This is not very likely in any event, all the more so because with a strong heart suit, partner might have overcalled 2♥.

A spade lead would work well if the opponents have a doubleton spade in each hand and is less likely to give away a trick.

The Stayman auction slightly increases the attractiveness of a major suit lead because opener has denied a major.

If the defenders made only four tricks on a spade lead, they must have blocked the suit. To avoid the blockage the defender with A-Q-10-8 needs to play the queen on the second or third round and the leader needs to play the jack on the fourth round.

♣♦♥♠

Q What is your take on the following deal from the online Northallerton Bridge Club?

Dealer South. Game All.

♠ K 10 6 4 3
♥ Q 2
♦ 5 4 2
♣ 10 7 5

♠ 7
♥ J 9 8 7
♦ A K 10 8 7 3
♣ A 3

♠ Q J 9
♥ K 6 5
♦ 6
♣ J 9 8 6 4 2

♠ A 8 5 2
♥ A 10 4 3
♦ Q J 9
♣ K Q

West	North	East	South
			1NT
3♦	All Pass		

North-South were a visiting American pair and I was West.

Making nine tricks for 110 gave East-West 87.5%.

Alex Mathers, Northallerton

A If you play a 2♣ overcall as both majors and a 2♦ overcall as one major, either you overcall 3♦ or you pass – I assume you did not have a natural 2♦ overcall available. The 6-4 shape means you are worth taking some action, even though both sides vulnerable is the best time to defend. Given your singleton spade, it is quite likely you will get the chance to double 2♠ for take-out on the next round (and you can correct 3♣ to 3♦), so passing over 1NT would not necessarily mean passing throughout.

It looks as if 3♦ should have failed by a trick (two tricks in hearts and one in each of the other suits to lose) – you got a good score because the opponents defended incorrectly. If you do not bid on the first round, you end up defending 3♠ (South would probably jump to 3♠ to show four spades and a minimum – you would

not pass out 2♠ anyway). So long as your side does not open up the heart suit, you should beat 3♠ by a trick.

♣♦♥♠

Q Please could you give your advice on bidding the following hand and some general principles?

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

West	East
Pass	1♦
1♥	2♣
2♠	All Pass

West was playing FSF for one round only and would pass a 2NT rebid from East. East panicked and passed.

The main question is what should West re-bid? What are the merits of:

- 2NT
- 3♣
- FSF (normally we play FSF as forcing to game – if the hand has previously passed can it be for one round only?)
- Pass

Angela Buckley by email.

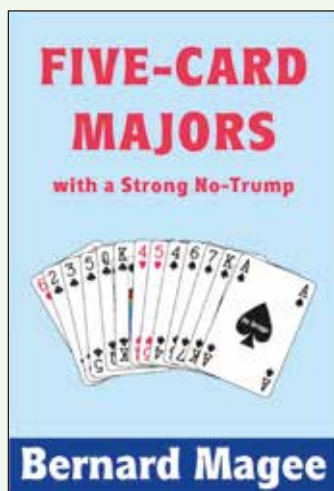
A West can rebid either 2NT or 3♣. The spade holding suggests the former while the club holding suggests the latter. I do not feel strongly either way.

Since West is a passed hand, a 2♠ fourth suit forcing bid is forcing for one round only even if the partnership normally plays FSF as game forcing. If you have a clear natural bid available (in this case a choice of two), it is better to make a natural bid.

Continued on page 50... ▶

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Answers to Bernard Magee's Bidding Quizzes 7-9 on page 7

7. Dealer West. Game All.

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

West	North	East	South
1♥	2♠*	3♣	3♠
?			

* weak jump overcall

Pass. Singletons and doubleton honours are two aspects of a hand that can change their value throughout an auction. How are you feeling about those aspects of this hand?

Your spade doubleton is looking useless and a singleton in partner's suit is not so good for declaring.

You certainly have a shapely hand, but bidding over 3♠ would be a gamble. You do better to leave things to your partner – after all you have a pretty minimum opener if you consider the ♠Q as potentially worthless.

As you can see here, the club singleton comes in handy in defence – 3♣ is likely to go off, as might you at the 4-level. If you manage to make a contract at the 4-level, then 3♣ might go two off! At this vulnerability +200 would beat a 4♦ partscore.

8. Dealer West. Game All.

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

West	North	East	South
1♥	2♠*	3♣	3♠
?			

* weak jump overcall

4♣. Once again, you have a very similar hand to the previous one, but the differences are marked. This time your doubleton queen is in partner's suit and

your singleton is in the opponents' suit. Both these elements should make you want to bid on.

Now your choice of call here will depend on your agreements – if double is for take-out in this situation then that is your best call. However, many partnerships, once the opponents have found a fit and they have bid two suits themselves, would start playing doubles as more penalty orientated.

Playing natural Acoll in an untried partnership you might do best to show your club support. It looks a little odd doing this with just two clubs, but East will often have six clubs for his 3♣ bid – he had a doubling option himself on the last round, so by choosing 3♣ he is showing strength and length in the suit.

4♣ is the practical bid and East can then raise to game.

9. Dealer West. Love All.

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

West	North	East	South
1♥	Pass	1♠	Dbl
?			

Rdbl. You again have a singleton and this time in your partner's suit, which is not good. However, your auction is disturbed by a take-out double from South. With both majors bid, he is obviously aiming for a minor suit contract. Take a look at your minor suit holdings – pretty strong.

This is the perfect situation for a strong redouble – your side probably has the majority of points, which means there might be the opportunity for a penalty double of whatever suit they choose to play in. The redouble sets the scene; any subsequent doubles would be for penalties. With a misfit for your side, the opponents probably have a misfit too and whichever denomination they choose to play in they will struggle. ■

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◀...Continued from page 48.

Once West does bid 2♣, East should admit to having a spade stopper and continue with 2NT.

In third seat, if I was playing a weak two in diamonds, I would open that on the East hand. The suit is good and this avoids any rebid problems.



Q On this interesting deal on Bridge Base Online, my partner was North, we made our contract and scored +5.1 IMPs:

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

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

Afterwards I suggested that he should have opened 1♥ and rebid 2♥, as he was distorting his shape. His rationale was that he would not be able to bid hearts then spades due to insufficient HCP for a reverse so would never be able to show his spades. His bid only lied about the

sixth heart and allowed me to choose the best suit without going up a level.

It is hard to argue the point when we ended up with a top. Was it good judgement by partner, or were we fortunate?

If you were in North's position would you open 1♠, and if not, why not?

Mike Johnson by email.

A With a 5-6 shape and minimum values, opener has three options:

(i) treat the hand as 5-5, opening 1♠ and rebidding 2♥

(ii) treat the hand as 4-6, opening 1♥ and rebidding 2♥

(iii) ignore the fact that the hand is minimum, opening 1♥ and rebidding 2♠.

This particular hand has good hearts and not so good spades, so I would definitely go for option (ii). Indeed, if you want to save yourself a guess every time, I would regard (ii) as the default – you do not often lose control when you have six trumps.

On best defence, the limit is 8 tricks whether you have spades or hearts as trumps, so your gain from scoring 140 is probably due to getting some help from the opponents rather than your choice of trump suit.



Q I am a lower intermediate level player.

My partner and I agree to lead the "top card" of each other's suits – this allows us to work out the lie of the suit – much in the

same way as leading the fourth highest in no trumps.

I worry that leading any other card in the suit gives no information about distribution or strength, therefore denying an opportunity to take advantage of the lead.

There are of course reasons to lead a different suit on occasions but we find it helpful to usually lead the highest card of a suit we have bid.

John Adams by email.

A Leading the top card sometimes gives less information than leading a low card.

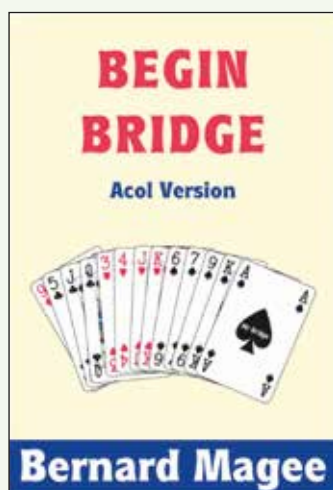
While many people used to lead high from small cards 'top of nothing' and I am not going to try to dissuade you from doing that, leading high from suits with one honour or two is rather unhelpful.

If you lead the top card whether you have touching honours or not, your partner is often guessing what strength you have in the suit besides the card you have led. It is much better to lead low if you have length with one honour and only to lead the top card if you are short in the suit or have touching honours. Given that you are leading high from low cards, partner can tell when you lead low that you have an honour or a shortage.

Leading a low card from three or more to an honour is not just better at telling partner your holding but may also save you a trick because you may be able to use your honour later to capture a lesser honour in declarer's hand. ■

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Answers to Bernard Magee's Bidding Quizzes 10-12 on page 7

10. Dealer West. Game All.

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



West	North	East	South
1♥	1♠	2♣	2♠
Pass	Pass	3♥	Pass
?			

Pass. Your partner has shown a reasonably strong hand by responding at the 2-level and then supporting your hearts. With any fitting hand, or better than minimum opener, you would push on to game; this is not one of them. The ♠Q looks worthless and your singleton is in your partner's suit – you should pass. You are evaluating your hand in the light of the auction as a very minimum opener.

11. Dealer West. Game All.

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



West	North	East	South
1♥	1NT	Dbl	2♠
Pass	Pass	3♣	Pass
?			

Pass. Let's analyse the auction so far: your partner's double is for penalties – doubles of no-trumps tend to be strength orientated, as opposed to doubles of suits that tend to be about shape. South escapes to 2♠ and then your partner rebids 3♣. How strong are you expecting your partner to be?

He should be reasonably strong: 10+ and long clubs.

Rather like the last problem, if you

have a better than minimum hand, then you might go on, but here, your queen doubletons do not look inspiring; worse than that, the 1NT overcall does not make you think your hearts are going to carry their weight. Very often the North hand will have the ♥AQ for that bid. Your 13-count is feeling more like an 11-count so you should pass, even with your good fit. The defence have four tricks off the top against 3♣, so passing definitely works out best.

12. Dealer West. Game All.

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



West	North	East	South
1♣	Pass	1♥	1♠
?			

2NT. The initial hand evaluation would be 16 high card points with a strong five-card suit and a weak heart doubleton; the plan is to open 1♣ and rebid 1NT. However, the auction changes the hand evaluation considerably: your partner's 1♥ bid makes your ♥Q seem better and South's 1♠ bid makes your spade holding very much better.

From a reasonable 16-count, I would evaluate this hand as closer to 18 points – you expect to make 3 spade tricks from your holding in that suit; you also hope the ♥Q will bolster partner's holding. You have strong enough clubs to hope to establish the suit and then there is the extra ten in the diamond suit. A jump to 2NT is enough – shows your strength and gives your partner the chance to show six hearts if he has them. Here, East will raise to 3NT and you will expect to make, with South a strong favourite to hold the ♠K.

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