



NEWSLETTER

AUSTRALIAN BRIDGE FEDERATION LTD.

Editor: Brad Coles (editor@abf.com.au)

No. 213 February 2022

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ABF FOUNDATION FUNDRAISER

PRO-AM BRIDGE TOURNAMENT

ONLINE AUCTION, WITH PROFESSIONALS AND LEADING PLAYERS AUCTIONED TO PLAY WITH THE HIGHEST BIDDER!

Gold-Point Sessions at 19:00 (AEDT) ON RealBridge on Tuesday 15 February 2022

Directed by Matthew McManus

The ABF Foundation will be auctioning a session to play with professionals and leading players in a Pro-Am Tournament.

The list of players is on the Foundation website.

Proceeds will support the ABF Foundation, established in 2020, to assist participants of all skill levels to enjoy and promote our fascinating game. The Foundation hopes to provide scholarships, promote regional bridge and bridge for youth right through to the retirement community; indeed, it will support any activity that is considered positive for the future of bridge.

Enquiries to:

foundation@abf.com.au

or

proam@abffoundation.org.au

BIDDING CLOSING SOON

Hurry, the bidding closes Saturday 12 February.

This is a unique chance to play with one of Australia's leading pros and players.

They include winners of many national events and international representatives. In the Summer Festival of Bridge in January, for example, National Championships were won by Arjuna de Livera, Ron Klinger and Sartaj Hans.

Check out the list and make your bid online at

www.abffoundation.org.au

Andrew Peake



Current bid: \$100

Arjuna de Livera



Current bid: \$200

Avi Kanetkar



Current bid: \$100

Avon Wilsmore



Current bid: \$100

Bruce Neill



Current bid: \$100

David Beauchamp



Current bid: \$125

George Bilski



Current bid: \$100

George Smolanko



Current bid: \$100

Ish Del'Monte



Current bid: \$100

Jonathan Free



Current bid: \$200

Justin Mill



Current bid: \$200

Kate McCallum



Current bid: \$150

Kim Frazer



Current bid: \$150

Liam Milne



Current bid: \$200

Liz Havas



Current bid: \$100

Matt Mullanphy



Current bid: \$200

Michael Courtney



Current bid: \$120

Nevena Djurovic



Current bid: \$100

Paul Marston



Current bid: \$120

Phil Gue



Current bid: \$150

Ron Klinger



Current bid: \$200

Sartaj Hans



Current bid: \$300

Susan Humphries



Current bid: \$200

Warren Lazer



Current bid: \$125



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DEADLINE FOR APRIL EDITION

ADVERTISING: 15 MARCH
ARTICLES: 12 MARCH

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**IMPROVE
YOUR
DEFENCE**

with
Ron Klinger

Solution on page 27

W/All

♠ A J 8
♥ 10 4 2
♦ K 10 9
♣ A K 4 2



♠ K 7 6 3
♥ K
♦ A Q 8 4 2
♣ 9 8 3

North opened a strong 1♣ (15+ points). East showed diamonds. After a relay auction in which South showed 8+ HCP with four spades and five or more hearts, North bid 3NT, all pass. The artificial auction had made South declarer.

West leads the ♦6 against 3NT: nine - queen - three. How should East continue?



Paul Lavings Bridgegear

paul@bridgegear.com

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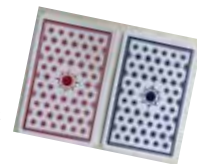
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**AUSTRALIAN BRIDGE
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Novice Online Edition \$25 per year



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Allison Stralow

president@abf.com.au



A Happy New Year to you all from the ABF Board.

As I reflect on the continued disruptions to face-to-face bridge, I am encouraged by the support online tournaments have received. Online games continue to foster the love of bridge and afford players the opportunity to enjoy the game. The online Summer Festival of Bridge saw 802 players competing in various categories over two weeks. Congratulations to all the winners. I also thank the Directors, Scorers and Ian Thomson and Jane Rasmussen for their work behind the scenes which made the event such a success.

The next event on the Calendar is the Gold Coast Congress, which will be held face-to-face from 18-26 February. Although the numbers are fluctuating due to WA restrictions and COVID concerns, the GCC team is putting everything in place for a safe and successful event. It's not too late to enter if you want to join us for the 60th anniversary. Although I will need to self-isolate for 14 days on my return to Western Australia, I feel this is a small sacrifice that will enable

me to connect again with the bridge community. While some players are understandably cautious, I am pleased to be playing face-to-face bridge at a national level. I also look forward to the ABF Council meeting where I will not have to look at a screen all day, and can socialise and discuss issues in person.

2022 will see our Australian Open, Women's, Seniors' and Mixed Teams competing at the 45th World Bridge Teams Championships in Salsomaggiore Terme, Italy from 27 March - 9 April 2022. The ABF Board has appointed Ian Thomson as the Chef de Mission – Head of the delegation of Australia Bridge Teams. Given the current climate, we believe this will provide the teams with extra support and ensure players minimise their health risks and maximise their performance at the bridge table. Player profiles are interesting reading and I encourage you to visit

www.abf.com.au/member-services/player-profiles/

I wish all the teams every success as they compete as our Australian Teams in 2022.

I believe the ABF will come out of the pandemic stronger as it has given us the opportunity to make and embrace changes. Our players, employees, contractors and volunteers have demonstrated amazing agility and enthusiasm to address challenges and turn them into positives. Thank you all.

If you have any feedback on the above or any other issues you wish to raise with the ABF Board please email

president@abf.com.au

Suggestion Box

We are looking for your ideas to improve your bridge experience and enjoyment



The pandemic has shown us that as a bridge community we can be more agile than we ever imagined. Your ideas will help us continue to improve your bridge experience and enjoyment. The QR code above will take you to a simple way of sharing your creativity or something that needs attending to. Using the above you will have the option of leaving suggestions anonymously, or leave us your contact details and we will get back to you.

Players in Gold Point events and selected congresses will also receive a very brief post-event survey as to whether you enjoyed yourself and or suggestions for improvement.

Board Member Rob Ward, leading the rollout of this important program said, "We are conscious our players receive many consumer surveys, so our questions are few but vital for shaping our future. We look forward to your input."

HOW WOULD YOU PLAY?

with
Barbara
Travis



Solutions on page 26

QUESTION 1

♠ K 6 3 2
♥ 8 4 2
♦ 8 3 2
♣ K 6 3

♠ A Q J 10 5
♥ A 3
♦ A Q J 5
♣ 7 5

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			1♠
pass	2♠	pass	4♠
all pass			

West leads the ♣Q, ducked all round. West continues with the ♣J, which also wins the trick. West plays a third club - king - ace, ruffed.

How would you play?

QUESTION 2

♠ A K 6 3
♥ A 6
♦ A Q 6 5
♣ Q 7 4

♠ Q J 7 5 4
♥ 5
♦ K 3
♣ A K 8 6 5

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			1♠
3♥	4NT	pass	5♦
pass	5♥	pass	6♣
pass	6♦	pass	7♠
all pass			

West makes a preemptive jump overcall, and leads the ♥K. You can count 12 top tricks and, if spades are 2-2 or 3-1, you have 13 tricks with clubs 3-2 or a club ruff. How would you play?

QUESTION 3

♠ K Q
♥ 6 5
♦ K J 5 3 2
♣ Q 9 4 3

♠ A 6 3
♥ A K
♦ A 7 4
♣ 10 8 7 6 5

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			1NT
pass	3NT	all pass	

You are playing Teams, where making the contract is more important than overtricks.

West leads the ♥J, from his solid major suit, and you win the king. How would you play?



MARKETING REPORT

with Peter Cox
marketing@abf.com.au



Ciao Italia

The World Bridge Federation is recognised by the International Olympic Committee, but has not yet been included in an Olympic Games. In Australia, bridge is not recognised by the AOC, and is not classified as a sport by governments. One of the problems is that bridge is not an easy game for the uninitiated to understand, like poker or even chess, and therefore not attractive as a spectator television sport.

Another difference between Bridge and many other sports is that our star players are not celebrated as champions and role models for our sport.

ABF Marketing is seeking to:

- Raise the profile and recognition of our international representatives
- Create stars and champions, as in other sports
- Encourage recognition and engagement with our fans
- Provide inspiration for all Australian bridge players

The 45th World Bridge Championships are hopefully occurring face-to-face in Salsamaggiore Terme, Italy from 27 March to 9 April, and Australia is sending Open, Seniors, Women's and Mixed teams.

To increase the visibility of our players, they were all asked to complete Player Profiles, of which most are now on the ABF web site. Many made highly entertaining reading, and showed the diversity of backgrounds, the personalities, and the bridge achievements of many of our leading players.

Here are a few that caught my attention for different reasons.

STEPHEN BURGESS

I have to start with Stephen Burgess, who has won the most Australian National Open Teams events in Canberra with seven wins, equal to the great Tim Seres and Peter Gill, and one more than his long-time partner Paul Marston. He has represented Australia 17 times, and now in the Seniors again for Italy. Stephen's career is colourful, from a very successful Options dealer to being a publican. His tales are wonderful, including playing with First Wife to be in 7♥ redoubled, and you will have to read his profile to know the outcome.



SARTAJ HANS

Sartaj learnt bridge at Uni in India before coming to Australia in 1999 and winning many national titles with great partners like Bobby Richman, Paul Marston, Tony Nunn and Peter Gill. However, he is businessman and now a family man with 2 kids with his wife Sophie who is also a leading player. They have just won the prestigious 2022 NOT along with a number of recent events. His section on bridge philosophy is inspiring and should be read by all bridge players.



LIZ HAVAS

Liz was a pharmacist, a keen sports woman and won her first national title in 1974. Since then she has won 51 national titles and has represented Australia in 20 international events. Liz and Barbara Travis were the only women's pair to have ever represented Australia in Open bridge. Her story is interesting and is part of Australian bridge history for over 50 years.



ANDY HUNG

Andy was born to Taiwanese parents and moved to Australia in 1993. He tells about playing bridge at school and while studying Aerospace Engineering, but chose a career in bridge. He is an accomplished bridge teacher and editor as well as a champion player winning a number of national titles. At age 34 he and bridge partner Nabil Edgton have had great success and his story is entertaining and inspiring.



RON KLINGER

Ron is very much an icon of Australian bridge as a player, teacher, journalist and author. His number of titles and international appearances is staggering and he has played with many of Australia's leading players. After lecturing in Law at Sydney University and teaching bridge he has written over 60 bridge books and has penned bridge columns for Australia's leading newspapers including from 2002 for the Sydney Morning Herald.



NABIL EDGTON

Nabil was born in Australia from a Moroccan mother and an Australian dad who first taught him to play bridge. He and his brother Adam were outstanding from a very early age. He was then taught by Peter Gill and now plays with Andy Hung, and at age 29 has already won numerous titles including the last two Gold Coast Teams, Open Playoffs and the NOTs. Perhaps unusually for a bridge player he loves playing lots of sports and you will recognise him at any tournament about 6'6" tall with curly hair, shorts and sandals. He is a role model for young players and if only we could clone him the future would be bright for bridge.



You will find the Player Profiles at

[www.abf.com.au/member-services/
player-profiles/](http://www.abf.com.au/member-services/player-profiles/)

Good luck to all the Australian teams in Italy.

What makes a bridge club successful?

This is an important time for bridge clubs recruiting new players to take beginners classes in February-March. Rather than just giving my advice, I am going to provide the advice from of couple of club operators on how to make a club successful.

BARBARA TRAVIS

Barbara had been an outstanding Australian player for many years when she decided to start her own club in South Australia. In only four years she has built Bridge At Beaumont up to over 280 members in a highly competitive and concentrated market in Adelaide. She was up against the second largest club in Australia with over 1000 members and without owning a premises.

Barbara runs games three days a week at the Beaumont Bowling Club in Linden Park and teaches bridge on a regular basis including to children over the holidays.

Barbara advises:

Greet people, remember and use their names. Ring and check on them. Make sure they know you can help find a partner (most of the time) and be honest if you can't.

Make the club bright and welcoming (i.e. I have colourful tablecloths), have lots of sanitiser around, keep things obviously clean, make space between tables – all giving a sense of as much safety as possible. People have come back to bridge because they felt safe at the club and it felt as close to normal as possible (per player feedback).

I've also had masks available (I did have a free supply), offered to sell better quality masks (Australian Olympic team style) and sourced strap extenders for sale for those wearing hearing aids. Players felt that I was actively trying to look after them.

JAN CLYNE

Jan built up her Bayside club in Melbourne from 93 members in 2012 to 260 in 2019 before retiring. Here is her advice for a successful bridge club:

I wish such a simple question had a simple answer, but it doesn't; running a club where members are happy and safe is a combination of a lot of aspects. Here is a list of some of the most important:

Create a community, a respectful community.

Make everyone feel welcome and safe.

Greet everyone by name.

Listen to your members, give them what they want.

Run a tight ship, stick to time and enforce gently.

Provide lots of lessons and opportunity for new members to practice their new found skills, encourage them to play.

Involve your strong players in mentoring – this will make them less threatening to new players.

Encourage and help new members to find a buddy to play with and follow up after the game.

Create a safe environment where players (new and old) can ask questions about hands played during the session.



We need your HELP. Please send us videos of hand analysis at all levels from beginners to advanced.

Contact marketing@abf.com.au and we will provide you with simple instructions on how to make a video, or you can provide a Powerpoint Video which is even easier. Sophie Ashton, in the winning team for the recent NOT and a number of other events, has made a sample hand without needing any instructions.

There have been lots of interesting hands at the SFOB or any other event, including just from your own club game. If you want the view of a leading Australian player on how it should have been bid, played or defended send your request and we will try and get them to answer it.

MYABF UPDATE

with Julian Foster

julian.foster@abf.com.au



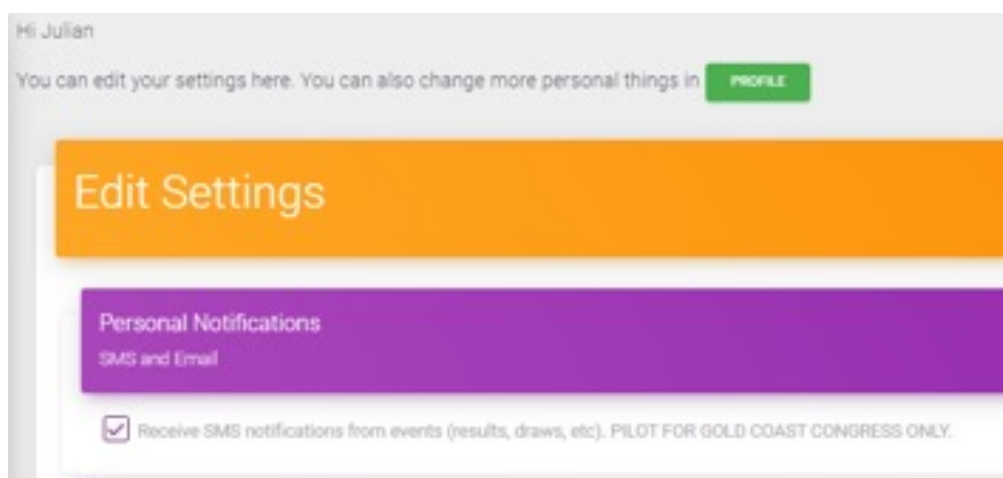
MYABF users are steadily approaching the 5,000 mark. The upcoming Gold Coast congress has obviously contributed to quite a few new registrations.

SMS notification service

The existing SMS notification service struggled with the higher volumes of messages required at the Gold Coast Congress 2020. As a result, it is in the process of being upgraded and delivered through MYABF.

Note that **at this stage this is a pilot service for the Gold Coast Congress only**. The existing SMS notification service remains in operation for other events.

To subscribe for the service, there is now a new option in your Settings page:



Tick the box to receive SMS messages for the Gold Coast 2022 Congress (this has already been done for players who had previously subscribed and who had MYABF accounts on 10 January).

See more details in the Pre-Bulletin for the Gold Coast.

More about Bridge Credits

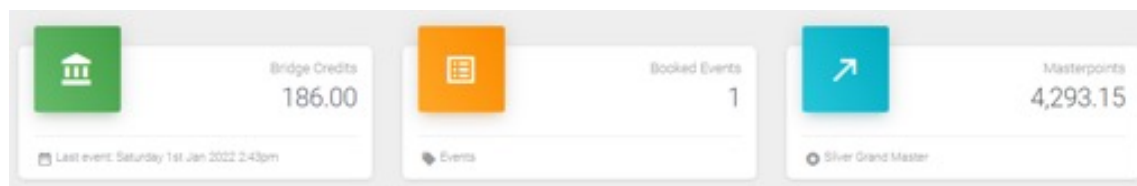
Firstly remember that Bridge Credits are not anything special. **They are just Australian dollars in an on-line account**. You can choose to use it as a prepayment account if you want or you can ignore it and just pay for entries as you go.

Recently we have received quite a few queries regarding payments, refunds, etc. I was surprised that those users had not realised they could view their account statement themselves. You can access it from the main dashboard in two ways:

(1) MAIN MENU

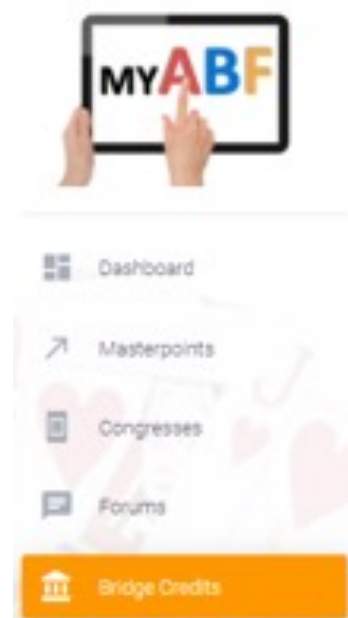
Click on the Bridge Credits menu item to open your statement (pictured right).

(2) SHORTCUTS AT THE TOP OF THE DASHBOARD



These three boxes are all hyperlinks. Click anywhere in them and they will take you to:

- Your Bridge Credits statement
- List of your booked events (including any you haven't yet paid for)
- A copy of your masterpoint statement



What your Bridge Credits statement looks like:

Date	Counterparty	Type	Description	Credits in	Credits Out	Balance
01 Jan 2022	ABF - SFOB	Entry to an event	Mixed Pairs - Julian Foster (ABF: 518891)		60.00	186.00
01 Jan 2022	ABF - SFOB	Entry to an event	TBIB Open Swiss Pairs - Julian Foster (ABF: 518891)		60.00	246.00
01 Jan 2022	NSWBA	Entry to an event	Open ITS Stage 1 - Julian Foster (ABF: 518891)		54.00	306.00

The screen is like a bank statement listing all your bridge credits transactions. Note that only online transactions go through here so if you choose to pay for a Congress entry using a direct bank transfer it doesn't go through MYABF at all and you won't see anything in your statement.

What can you do in your account?

Option	What it does
	Manually add money to use as a prepayment account. It can then be used for any entries you wish. It saves needing to key in card details every time you do an entry to something.
	Set up auto top-up (click the Off to turn it to <u>On</u>) to operate your account a bit like a public transport stored value card – i.e. it will top-up by a set amount whenever it drops below \$20.
	Transfer credits to another player. This might be something you could do if a partner or teammate has paid an entry for you.
	Obtain a csv download of your statement.

So how do Congress entries work?

Firstly note that ***you do not have to separately purchase bridge credits before putting in an entry*** (this seems to be a common misconception).

When creating an entry the default payment method is listed as "My Bridge Credits". Think of this as "Pay online – using dollars in my account if I have any, otherwise by credit card". Just complete the entry screen and press Confirm & Pay. If you don't have money in your account you are simply taken to the credit card payment screen. The system adds that money to your account and then immediately applies it to pay for the entry, which returns your account back to zero again.

All entries paid online appear in your statement. Each person you pay for (including those marked "TBA" at the time) will be shown as a separate line item – and will include the person's name. This allows you to see exactly who in your pair/team that you have and haven't paid for; as well as how much. For example:

07 Dec 2021	ABF - SFOB	Entry to an event	Open Matchpoint Swiss Pairs - Julian Foster (ABF: 518891)
07 Dec 2021	ABF - SFOB	Entry to an event	Open Matchpoint Swiss Pairs - Jenna Gibbons (ABF: 636096)

If a whole entry is withdrawn then players who paid by credits will have them returned to their account. They can use them for anything else, or they can request a refund (via MYABF Support).

Julian Foster, My ABF Project Manager

BIDDING JUDGEMENT

with Paul Marston



When slam in a suit is close:

Control bidding used properly

This is the third and final column on bidding judgement. In the first column, we looked at bidding judgement in notrumps. In the second column we looked at bidding judgement in a suit. In particular, we looked at the Golden Rule of Duplication.

In this column we will look at what to do when you cannot be certain about slam in a suit.

JUDGING WHEN TO BID SLAM IN A SUIT

33 HCP will always produce good prospects for slam. If you can count 33 HCP, you should take control, usually by using Key Card Blackwood (best is 1430). However, you can get by on less under certain circumstances.

SHARP SLAMS (WITHOUT A SHORTAGE)

A good fit and 30 HCP will do, even if you have no shortage, but only if your outside values are mostly aces and kings, not queens and jacks.

A QUICK WORD ABOUT SYSTEM

Here it is assumed you are playing that a two-over-one is forcing to game. It is more effective than the old-fashioned 10+ HCP. And it is easier to learn.

With the help of Nevena Djurovic, I have been teaching these modern methods in our online beginners' course with great success.

Since June 2020, we have taught more than 1200 new chums and most of them are still playing, either at clubs around the country or online. We host more than 400 online tables per week, and it is growing. All my books now follow this simple effective structure.

FAST ARRIVAL

In a game force, a direct raise of partner's major generally denies a shortage. The direct raise to game, fast arrival, also shows minimum points. A slow raise therefore shows extra values, say 16-18 TP. (Fast arrival does not apply in the minors.)

Here, East can establish that the partnership is in the ballpark of 30 HCP. Then he needs to check whether his outside values are suitable for slam:

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

1♠	2♥ ¹
3♥ ²	4♥ ³
pass	

- Five hearts, game force.
- Heart fit, 16-18 TP, no singleton.
- Sorry, but my outside values quack.

To make slam with 30 HCP without a shortage you need your outside values to be sharp. Here East can see that they are not, hence the sign off.

Indeed, slam is a poor bet, requiring the diamond finesse and some luck in the blacks, about 30%.

So, what would you do as East if your hand was suitable for slam? You can't simply take control, because you don't know if partner's outside values are sharp, as they must be for slam to be a good bet when you have 30 points and no singleton.

The answer is you make a control bid. **A control bid shows a control in the bid suit, and says that slam is close.**

In return, the partner should head for slam if he too has sharp outside values. This next East hand has the same HCP as the previous deal, but this one is dressed to impress. Indeed, slam is about 90% on:

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

1♠	2♥ ¹
3♥ ²	4♣ ³
4NT ⁴	5♠ ⁵
5NT ⁶	6♦ ⁷
6♥ ⁸	pass

- Five hearts, game force.
- Heart fit, 16-18 TP, no singleton.
- My cards are slam-suitable.
- Me too! RKCB.
- Two key cards + ♥Q.
- Bid a grand if you have something extra.
- I have a diamond control.
- That's it from me.

Now, let's make the West hand quacky (queens and jacks). Now slam is a mere 23% shot:

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

1♠	2♥ ¹
3♥ ²	4♣ ³
4♥ ⁴	pass

1. Five hearts, game force.
2. Heart fit, 16-18 TP, no singleton.
3. My cards are slam-suitable.
4. Sorry, mine are not.

SPLINTER SLAMS

As we covered in the last column, you can make slam on a good deal less than 33 TP with a good fit and a shortage. All you need now is 26 TP in the other three suits.

So, the big question is, how do you know when your partner has a shortage.

Once you are in a game force, a jump in a new suit confirms an eight-card fit with partner's suit and shows a shortage.

WEST	EAST
♠ A K 9 7 3	♠ 8 2
♥ J 8 2	♥ A K Q 7 6
♦ K Q 5 4	♦ A J 3
♣ 6	♣ 9 7 2
1♠	2♥ ¹
4♣ ²	4NT ³
5♣ ⁴	6♥

1. Five hearts, game force.
2. Heart fit, club shortage.
3. Key Card Blackwood.
4. One ace.

Ignoring clubs, East counts 15 TP, plus 12 from partner mean you hit the 26-mark. All that remains is to check on aces.

OK, but what happens if you switch a key card? Slam is still a great bet, but how do you get there?

The answer is you make a control bid:

WEST	EAST
♠ A K 9 7 3	♠ 8 2
♥ Q J 2	♥ A K 9 7 6
♦ K Q 5 4	♦ A J 3
♣ 6	♣ 8 6 3
1♠	2♥ ¹
4♣ ²	4♦ ³
4NT ⁴	5♦ ⁵
6♥	pass

1. Five hearts, game force.
2. Heart fit, club shortage.
3. A control bid to say I am close to 26 TP.
4. I've got an extra honour, so I want to be in slam. RKCB.
5. Three key cards.

But it's not so good if you switch the minors. Now the strength is opposite the shortage:

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

1♠	2♥ ¹
4♣ ²	4♥

1. Five hearts, game force.
2. Heart fit, club shortage.
3. Only 2 points for ♣A leaves you with no chance of 26 TP.

Splinters work just as well as over minor suit responses, but now you need four card support. Generally, it comes down to a choice between 3NT and slam in the minor.

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

1. Four clubs, game force.
2. Club fit, heart shortage.
3. Sorry, my heart honours are wasted for slam.

GOLD STANDARD

If knowing about shortages is the gold standard, why don't we have more ways to show a shortage?

Well, we do. There is the Jacoby 2NT:

WEST	EAST
♠ A K 8 3 2	♠ Q 10 5 4
♥ 9	♥ Q 6 3
♦ A 7 2	♦ K 8 3
♣ J 10 5 4	♣ A K 3
1♠	2NT ¹
3♥ ²	4♣ ³
4♠ ⁴	pass

1. Opening values with four spades.
2. Heart shortage.
3. Slam is close. Anything to add?
4. No, sorry, running on empty.

With a bare 12 HCP, West signs off in 4♠. Indeed, 12 tricks calls for a 3-3 break in clubs with the queen onside, an 18% shot.

With extra values, West presses on to slam.

WEST	EAST
♠ A K 8 3 2	♠ Q 10 5 4
♥ 9	♥ Q 6 3
♦ A 7 2	♦ K 8 3
♣ Q J 8 2	♣ A K 3
1♠	2NT ¹
3♥ ²	4♣ ³
4NT ⁴	5♦
6♠	pass

1. Opening values with four spades.
2. Heart shortage.
3. Slam is close. Anything to add?
4. Yes, I have 14 HCP. RKCB.

This time 12 tricks are sure. You draw trumps and throw a diamond from dummy on a club. For more discussion about the proper use of control bidding, see pages 88-89 and 99-100 in *The Language of Bidding*, 6th edition.

Len Dixon turns 100

Megan Doherty



Long-time Canberra Times bridge columnist, Len Dixon, turned 100 on 27 December. To mark this occasion, the Canberra Times ran the following tribute in their 12 December issue.

The Canberra Times

TO SERVE THE NATIONAL CITY

Len Dixon learned to play bridge in a tent on the beaches of Ceylon, in between his shifts as a radar operator for the Royal Air Force during World War II.

The card game suited the analytical mind of the kid from the East End of London who would end up migrating to Australia and becoming one of the very early computer programmers for the Commonwealth government.

"We were a card-playing family, but the card games we played at home were mainly continental. I think we even used to play cards in the air raid shelters in London before I joined the war," he said.

The long-time bridge columnist for The Canberra Times is preparing to turn 100, on December 27. He already has had his Jewish 100th, which, based on a lunisolar calendar, fell on November 30, his family celebrating at the National Jewish Centre in Forrest.

Mr Dixon has a particular take on turning 100.

"I feel as if I'm a batsman in the 90s and I don't want to get out until I make the century," he said.

"But, other than that, it's not very exciting. I'm very relaxed about the fact I'm going to die."

Not yet, though.

There is much to be admired about the sharp-as-a-tack 99-year-old still writing bridge columns every week for The Canberra Times, as he has done since 1968. Give or take a few and taking into account the

occasional holiday, Mr Dixon estimates he's written about 2700 columns for the newspaper.

His family is preparing a 100th birthday celebration at the Canberra Bridge Club in Deakin on December 19. Daughter Jo has organised for the cake to be decorated with an edible image of his very first column in The Canberra Times from 53 years ago.

"I'm going to eat my words," he said, droll as ever, but with a twinkle in his eye.

Jo Dixon said, apart from his family, the three pillars of her father's life have been the Jewish community, the bridge community and The Canberra Times.

His life in the national capital is the tale of a migrant who contributed mightily to his adopted home.

Mr Dixon's father was a tailor's presser, an Eastern European Jew who came to England as an orphan with his older sister, Mr Dixon's paternal grandparents killed in a pogrom, a violent attack against Jews in the Russian Empire.

Mr Dixon, who had a younger brother, knew little about the early life of his father, who died when he was 14. But he does remember his father teaching him arithmetic, so that when he went off to school he was doing long multiplication while his peers were drawing pictures. Years later, Mr Dixon would be invited to join Mensa, in its very early days, and was found to have an IQ "one more than Einstein": 161.

Mr Dixon's widowed mother made sure he matriculated and a young Len became a computer programmer with the London County Council in the 1950s, at a time when no one had even heard of such a job.

Not long later, Mr Dixon was lured to Australia, to help it come to terms with the nascent computer age.

"I was recruited by the Department of Defence in 1962 at which time I was the chief computer programmer of the London County Council," he said.

"There was virtually no one in IT in Australia in those days. They had to go and look for people abroad and they couldn't go to many places because, to become a Commonwealth public servant in those days, you had to be a British subject and, what with other problems in Australian history, you had to have a white skin. So they were really confined to two places, Canada and Great Britain."

Mr Dixon moved to Canberra with his wife Ruth and their three daughters, Sara, Jo and Felicity, to become second-in-command in computing for the Department of Air. They stayed first at the Rex Hotel and then moved into the Northbourne Flats, "which in those days were posh", Jo remembers.

Mr Dixon says it was a culture shock moving from swinging London to sleepy Canberra, almost 60 years ago.

"I was reasonably happy. My late wife, who persuaded me to come – but for her I wouldn't have been looking for another job – she persuaded me to apply, she persuaded me to accept the offer I got and as soon as she arrived here, she wished she hadn't come, because it was moving from a city to a village," he said.

"But she eventually had a trip back about five years after we came and decided she preferred Canberra after all."

The family bought a house in Duffy Street in Ainslie and have remained in the inner-north suburb ever since. Mr Dixon still lives in his own house, in the same street as daughter Jo. "I prefer to live on my own but we've got this arrangement where I spend most of my day here and go home at night," he said.

Mr Dixon was a national master when he was recruited in 1968 to write a bridge column by then editor of The Canberra Times, John Allan.

He still plays bridge and is, invariably, the oldest person at the table. It's a game that has become so much part of his life. Mr Dixon and his wife Ruth, who died in 1984, were even recruited to teach and direct bridge on Fairstar cruises, getting free travel to share their love of the game.

As he approached his 100th, Mr Dixon was happy to have his family near. Granddaughters Ruby and Lily have arrived from London. His only grandson, Sam, is hoping to come from the UK to Canberra early next year, with Mr Dixon's first great-grandchild. His other granddaughters, Gracie and Stella live in Adelaide, with mum Felicity. The Dixons' oldest daughter Sara, died in 1975.

Turning 100 often means reflecting on how one got to such a distinguished age. Playing bridge and doing the daily cryptic crosswords have kept his mind sharp but Mr Dixon was not one for existential introspection.

"I don't know," he answers, when asked what is the secret to long life.

"The important thing is not to worry about it."



Len with his daughter Jo and granddaughters Ruby and Lily. Picture: Megan Doherty

2022 National Seniors Teams

Peter Buchen



Getting distracted by the queen of trumps

There were 26 entries in the 2022 National Seniors Teams, held online as part of the ABF's Summer Festival of Bridge.

Compared to F2F play, matches were reduced from 20 boards to 12 boards with two days of qualifying (eight matches) rather than three (nine matches). That was a necessity, as the playing sessions were spread over five time zones, from Western Australia's 9am start to New Zealand's 2pm.

At the end of the qualifying rounds the leaders were:

1. EWART (Neil Ewart, Ian Robinson, Chris Hughes, Kim Morrison) 116.21 VP.
2. THOMSON (Ian Thomson, Ron Klinger, Andy Braithwaite, Arjuna de Livera, Terry Brown, Peter Buchen) 109.78 VP.
3. DE LUCA (Attilio de Luca, Russel Harms, Roger Januszke, David Lusk, John Zollo) 107.69 VP
4. JEFFERY (Peter Jeffery, Les Grewcock, Steven Bock, Dennis Zines) 103.14 VP

In the semi-final matches EWART defeated JEFFREY 101 to 84 imps and THOMSON defeated DE LUCA 161 to 87 imps.

All the knockout matches were over four stanzas of 12 boards each.

The board below was perhaps unlucky for EWART, or was it a case of too much science?



Winning team members Ian Thomson and Ron Klinger

Board 29 ♠ A Q 10
N/All ♥ 9 5
 ♦ K Q J 5
 ♣ A K 6 3

♠ 8 6 2
♥ 7 4 3 2
♦ 10 8 7 6 4
♣ 7

♠ 9 5 4 3
♥ 10 8 6
♦ 9 2
♣ Q 9 5 2

♠ K J 7
♥ A K Q J
♦ A 3
♣ J 10 8 4

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
de Livera	Ewart	Braithwaite	Robinson
pass	1♣	pass	1♦ ¹
pass	1NT ²	pass	2♠ ³
pass	3♣	pass	4♦ ⁴
pass	4NT ⁵	pass	5♦ ⁶
pass	6♣	pass	6NT
all pass			

1. Hearts, but not spades.
2. 17-19 balanced, without four hearts.
3. Clubs.
4. Asking for keycards.
5. Zero or three.
6. Asking for the ♣Q.

Ewart - Robinson sitting NS play a very sophisticated system which allowed them to locate the 4-4 club fit after North had shown 17-19 HCP. South took control of the auction, setting and asking for keycards in clubs. All the keycards were present but the ♣Q was found to be missing. South settled for a final contract of 6NT.

In the other room Klinger - Thomson were sitting NS:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Morrison	Klinger	Hughes	Thomson
pass	2♦ ¹	pass	2♠ ²
pass	2NT	pass	3♣ ³
pass	3♦ ⁴	pass	3♠ ⁵
pass	3NT	pass	7NT
all pass			

1. 18-20 balanced.
2. Puppet to 2NT.
3. Asking for a major.
4. No five-card major, with at least four hearts or three spades.
5. Four hearts.

After North open a balanced 18-20 2♦, South enquired for a major fit, not found, and simply settled for 7NT. That was 13 imps to THOMSON who went on to win the final by 125 to 94 imps.

See *Australian Bridge Magazine* for a more detailed report on this event.

Slam bidding at the ANC

by Peter Gill



Don't underestimate the importance of Blackwood

This slam from Round 10 proved to be a problem for several pairs:

Board 37	♠ Q 10 5		
N/NS	♥ J 10		
	♦ A K		
	♣ A K Q 9 8 2		
♠ J 7 6		♠ 8 2	
♥ 9 6 4		♥ 8 7 2	
♦ J 5 3		♦ Q 9 8 7 4 2	
♣ J 7 6 5		♣ 10 3	
	♠ A K 9 4 3		
	♥ A K Q 5 3		
	♦ 10 6		
	♣ 4		

The aim is to reach 7NT. You can then claim 13 top tricks if you want.

in the WA vs SA match, Phil Markey opened 1♣ as North for SA. Justin Williams replied 1♥, transfer to spades. Phil rebid 3NT, showing a hand too good for a non-forcing 3♣ rebid, with long strong clubs.

WEST	NORTH Markey	EAST	SOUTH Williams
	1♣	pass	1♥ spades
pass	3NT	pass	?

Many top pairs play 4NT immediately after any natural 3NT as quantitative, merely inviting slam. Justin therefore could not bid 4NT because he knew it was a slam hand, so a droppable 4NT bid was out. A non-forcing 4♥ call by Justin similarly was inadequate. Justin therefore simply punted 6NT.

The solution is for Justin to bid 4♣, to set clubs as trumps. It doesn't matter that he doesn't plan to play in clubs, because he is heading for 6NT or 7NT. This way, the partnership can cue bid and then use Roman Keycard Blackwood (or Kickback, or Minorwood, or Redwood, or whatever method

their partnership uses). When all the keycards are found, 7NT becomes an attractive resting place.

At the other table, West for WA on a different auction blasted 6NT without finding a way to get RKCB into the auction. A flat board, 1470 at both tables.

The Victorians in 3rd place also avoided using RKCB, using cue bids to rest in 6♠.

The other five lower-placed teams all reached the grand slam. Two reached 7♠ (not quite as cold as 7NT) using 1430 en route. Both tables reached 7NT in the Tasmania vs Northern Territory match. The auction below by Hilton Francis and John Bailey for Tasmania was effective:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	1♣	pass	1♠
pass	2NT	pass	3♣
pass	3♠	pass	4NT
pass	5♠	pass	7NT
all pass			

2NT was 19-20, 3♣ was checkback, 4NT was 1430. The other two 7NT contracts were reached after North opened 2NT or 2♣ and South got 1430 into the auction.

My message: bypass 1430 at your own risk.

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Bridge Vid

with
Peter Hollands



Defending without signals, part one

Today's lesson is about defending without count or attitude signals. With many people now playing online, possibly in casual games with strangers, you may find yourself unsure about what signals your partner is playing. This is particularly the case if you play with the robots on BBO, who do not signal at all. I'll go through some of the thought processes that you should be using.

Signals shouldn't be the be-all and end-all of how you defend; they should just be a nice addition to your arsenal that you can use when necessary. A more important technique is to think about the inferences from the bidding, and the inferences from the play: what line of play is the declarer taking, and what line of defense is my partner taking. If you try and work out why a player is playing in a particular way, it can give you a lot of information about their hand.

Also, and I can't emphasize this enough, you must take some time to count. To get to the top of your game you must count as many things as you can: count points, count shape, possibly count tricks and other things. There are lots of things you can count and you should practice this often. Every time you play, spend those extra few seconds trying to count out the hand.

Finally, something that's very underrated: try to make life easier for your partner. If you're defending without signals, this is even more important. It doesn't matter if your partner's a world-class expert, if you treat them like a rank beginner and make life as simple as possible, they will thank you. Defense is really hard, and if you've managed to work out how to beat a contract, you want to make sure that your partner also knows. You want to do everything in

your power to make sure they're on the same wavelength as you.

Those are the sorts of things I like to think about when defending without signals. Here are a couple of examples. Sitting South, we hold

♠ 6 4 3	♥ 6 4	♦ A 8 5 3	♣ A K 6 2
WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
		1♦	pass
1♥	pass	1NT	pass
3♦	pass	3♥	pass
4♥	pass	pass	?

Even though I'm passing a lot, I like to use this bidding time to try and work out what's going on. Already in this auction we know a lot of information, so don't just sit there and wait – when it gets to the play you're going to be rushed, so if you take the time when you're not actually doing much, you can work out a lot about the auction.

What do we know? East has 12-14 balanced and they have four diamonds. Even if they play better minor (opening 1♦ with three) after 1♦-1M-1NT that hand can no longer only have three diamonds. The only hand with three diamonds that would open 1♦ is the 4-4-3-2, and with that hand East would have supported the hearts immediately.

West's jump to 3♦ is an invitational hand with diamond support. East was happy to accept the invite, and showed three-card heart support along the way. West bid the heart game, rather than 3NT, so he presumably has a fifth heart.

What does partner hold? East and West have told us that they have a diamond fit, so my partner has only one diamond. If we can get off to a diamond lead,

we should be able to give partner several diamond ruffs, using the ♣AK as entries. That looks like we're going to beat that a lot of tricks, so instead of just passing it out I would double. I'm hoping partner leads their singleton, if they have one. If they don't have any diamonds, the double might be a bit dangerous, but then they might stumble upon a club lead and we will still beat 4♥.

Even though we are defending without signals, one assumed signal that lots of people play is that when you give them a ruff, it's suit preference (a low card asks for the return of the lower suit). Some people don't play that, but the vast majority do, so even if you don't discuss it, it's something you can assume. But don't be upset if partner doesn't follow your signal (the robots on BBO, for example, will not understand this signal).

Partner naturally leads their singleton, which you win and return a low diamond. Partner ruffs and obediently returns a club. You should win with the lower of your touching honours. When your ♣K wins, partner will know you have the ace. You give partner a second ruff, win the club return, and give a third ruff for three off.

If you think your partner won't recognise your suit preference signal, it may be a good idea to cash the ♣K at Trick 2 so that partner will be certain where your entry lies. This will waste one of your entries for diamond ruffs, which will cost you 200 or 300 points in a doubled contract, but it may still be a worthwhile investment to ensure nothing goes wrong. If the contract isn't doubled, and you're only playing for 50s, then you certainly should think about helping partner by cashing the ♣K.

Here's another hand (we are South):

♠ 10 7 4 ♥ J 5 ♦ A J 10 8 2 ♣ K 9 3

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1NT	pass	2♦ hearts	pass
3♥	pass	4♥	all pass

East has transferred to hearts and West has made a super accept. Partner has led the ♣5, and we need to work out what sort of hand partner has led from.

♣5 lead



♠ K Q 8
♥ Q 10 8 6 2
♦ Q 5
♣ J 7 6

♠ 10 7 4
♥ J 5
♦ A J 10 8 2
♣ K 9 3

The ♣5 looks like a middlish club. We know partner has at most two hearts, so they're unlikely to be leading a shortage. We know that people don't underlead aces against suit contracts, so it looks like West has the ♣A.

If declarer has ♣AQ and we stick in the king, we've given away a trick. If declarer has ♣A10 we're entitled to one club trick now, but I need to play the king to ensure that trick. If declarer has ♣A10x, we should get our club trick eventually whether I play the nine or the king. If declarer doesn't have the queen or the ten (♣A8x), then playing the king will give up a trick, helping to set up dummy's jack.

Even if playing no other signals, partner should still be leading fourth best. If partner has led their fourth highest club, that means they have three clubs higher than the five. We can see the J76 and the K9, so there are only the AQ108 missing. Declarer has the ace, so partner's three higher clubs must be the Q108.

Another possible way of working this out is the rule of 11. Subtract partner's card from 11 (11-5=6), and that's how many higher cards the other hands will hold. There are six cards above the five, and we can see five of them (the J76 and K9). That just leaves one for declarer, which we suspect is the ace.

Also consider that if partner does not know about fourth-best leads, and has just led their lowest card, that means West would have the four and the two. So we don't need to worry about West having just A10 doubleton.

If you've done all that, you can work out that the ♣9 is the correct club to play if East plays low (finessing against dummy's jack). Declarer's ace is forced out, as expected. Eventually partner gets on lead with the ♠A, and we reap the rewards of our initial nine of clubs play, cashing the ♣KQ and ♦A for one off.

Partner's lead was from ♣Q1085, so if we had played the ♣K at Trick 1, then dummy's ♣J would have prevented us from running our clubs. It's important to take the time to work out what good partners lead from, rather than just instantly playing third hand high.

In the next issue:

- inferences from partner's failure to lead an honour,
- inferences from declarer's play at Trick 1,
- making favourable assumptions about the hand,
- using the auction to count partner's points.

<https://bridgevid.com>

Peter uploads new videos to his Bridge Vid channel almost daily.



A GAME AT THE CLUB

Barbara Travis

www.bridgeatbeaumont.com

All vulnerable, sitting West, you hold:

♠ K 10 9 8 7 ♥ J 5 ♦ Q ♣ K J 8 4 2

You are playing weak twos, so the auction proceeds:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
pass	4♥	4♠	pass
?			pass

You know this a good hand, but just how good is it, given partner has been 'forced' to bid 4♠. You think slam could be on but it's tricky, especially since you have no control in the heart suit.

The bid you can make to show slam interest, with concern about the suit an opponent has overcalled or opened, is 5♠, but only if it is a 'free' bid (rather than a competitive bid). Freely raising partner to the five-level in a major asks for control in the suit bid by the opponent. (5♥ would have been a cue bid, showing heart control and slam interest.)

If partner has two hearts, they pass 5♠. If partner has a singleton heart (or the king), they can bid 6♠.

I don't think the hand is quite good enough for the bid, but my partner was very curious about whether she should have tried for slam (which made) and, if so, how to try.

With the next hand, first there is the auction:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♦	2♣	pass	2♠
pass	3♣	all pass	

You are East, on lead, holding:

♠ J 9 8 2 ♥ A J 2 ♦ Q 7 2 ♣ 8 5 2

If you plan to lead a diamond (partner's suit), the card you should lead is the ♦2. Look what happened when East led the ♦Q:

♦ 10 9 3
 ♦ A J 8 5 4 ♦ Q 7 2
 ♦ K 6

Declarer's ♦10 was promoted into a trick!

These scenarios crop up regularly. Here's another hypothetical case (seen some time ago):

♦ 9 6 2
 ♦ A K 5 4 3 ♦ J 8 7
 ♦ Q 10

West had bid the suit, and East led the Jack. Jack - queen - king... and now declarer's nine had become a trick in the suit!

Some players tell their partners that they should lead the highest card in their bid suit. That rule should apply in only two situations:

- (a) with a doubleton
- (b) when you have supported, so your length is known, so now you lead high with three low cards, but low from an honour

Leading should be about helping partner to solve the length position (count of the suit) and also the honour situation.

This hand required some delicate handling:

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

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
pass	1♣	1♠	3♣ ^{limit}
pass	pass	3♦	pass
3♠ ¹	pass	pass	4♣
4♠	all pass		

1. There were some misgivings about bidding 3♠. The two queen-doubletons in partner's two suits appeared to be excellent cards for partner, so some thought was given to bidding 4♠.

South led the ♥6 to North's ace. North then cashed the ♠A, and tried the ♣K, declarer ruffing. The two issues were about retaining trump control and how to play the diamond suit. At this stage, I would have thought that South was marked with the ♦K for his limit raise.

However, drawing trumps – which takes four rounds – then leading low towards the ♦Q will not work. The opposition can win and force out your last trump with a third round of clubs. Now the diamond suit is blocked, and you have no re-entry to hand.

This is a hand where you need to organise your side suit before playing on trumps. Lead a small diamond towards the queen at Trick 4. Should North win the king, you will be tapped in trumps again, but now you can cash the ♦A then ruff a diamond with dummy's ♠Q, hoping diamonds are 3-3 or the Jack is doubleton. Then you draw trumps and have the remainder of the tricks. On the other hand, if South wins the ♦K, you can trump the club return, cross to dummy's ♦Q, then draw trumps. You are still relying on the diamonds being 3-3 or jack-doubleton, but you have untangled your entry position (because you still had trump transportation).

I watched declarer go down a lot of tricks, because she fixed on the idea that North held the ♦K. Once you have made your plan, check it for flaws! If it passes your double-check, then proceed.

For good measure, here's a hand where I failed the double-check test!

	♠ 6		
	♥ Q 7 6 5 2		
	♦ A J 10 8		
	♣ Q 10 6		
♠ A K 5 4 2		♠ J 10 9 3	
♥ K J		♥ A 9 8 3	
♦ 5 4 2		♦ 3	
♣ A J 3		♣ K 9 4 2	
	♠ Q 8 7		
	♥ 10 4		
	♦ K Q 9 7 6		
	♣ 8 7 5		
WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			pass
1NT	pass	2♣	2♦
2♠	3♦	3♠ ¹	pass
4♠	all pass		

1. I would have bid 4♠ now, given the opponents are busy bidding diamonds (your shortage), so partner's points should all be working.

North lead the ♥5 which ran around to my jack, giving me a discard. I was planning to discard the potential club loser, because I could ruff two dia-

monds. What was my error? I forgot I hadn't already lost the diamond trick; I hadn't checked my plan!

I led the ♠A and ♠K before I realised I had stuffed up. When I led a diamond, South won and cashed his ♠Q, leaving me only one trump in dummy for ruffing diamonds. So now I needed the club finesse for the 11th trick. When it failed, despite making ten tricks and my contract, I had managed an equal bottom instead of an equal top ☹ Those overtricks count!

Finally, stay alert. I nodded off here. North reached 4♠ (having shown 16+ HCP), after East made a pre-emptive overcall in clubs.

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

I didn't really know what to lead, given that North had the strong hand, but I chose the ♥9. Trick 1 went nine - two - queen - six. I had struck gold, so I relaxed.

Partner returned the ♣J - king - ace. From Trick 1, I knew that declarer held the ♥J (partner would have won with the lower of his touching honours). Obviously, I should continue with another heart. Partner will win and return a heart, promoting my ♠Q. However, in my relaxed state, I continued with the ♣Q which declarer ruffed. As declarer cashed his ♠A and ♠K, I was feeling very sheepish, thinking I had let the contract make.

Suddenly declarer claimed one off, losing another heart and one diamond, and I breathed again.

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

Whilst I was lucky on that hand, it serves as an excellent lesson about remaining alert and keep thinking about your options on any hand, both as declarer and defender.



Joan Butts



Teaching Beginners Bridge: The Fourth Lesson

More about Responding

The theory behind the lesson (points to stress):

- “Where” and “How high” to bid
- Limit vs unlimited bids
- Forcing or not

General Lesson Plan

1. Focus on raising partner’s major suit openings with a fit, as first priority.

Introduce the concept of shortage points in a side suit, only when a fit is known. Show the students why shortages improve hands once there’s a fit. Teach them that the more trumps dummy holds, the more losers in declarer’s hand may be trumped. Use the “cards on the table” method and “transitions” (moving key cards around) to illustrate the point.

2. Next show them responding without a fit, when responder bids their own suit. Highlight that a new suit forces partner to find another bid. If the response can be made at the one level, it shows 6+ points, but more points are needed at the two level. There’s no need to be specific about exactly how many points are needed to bid own suit at the two level; just say “a good hand” at this stage.
3. If responder holds none of the above, but enough points to respond something, try 1NT. Treat the 1NT response as a last option, with a checklist of bids that take preference, eg If you can’t raise partner’s suit, and if you can’t bid your own suit at the two-level, but you have enough points to respond, then the bid you make is 1NT.

Play Point: Finesse

Define a “finesse”. It is best explained thus: winning a trick with a card that is smaller than one of the high cards still held in an opponent’s hand.

Point out the correct technique, i.e. that you must make the first play from the correct hand, and not to expect the finesse to work more than half the time. The finesse is by far the hardest play technique to master for all students.

What students will find hard about the fourth lesson

The concept of responding in a new suit being forcing, as is the idea of keeping the bidding low with good hands while looking for a fit. Students want to jump with a lot of points.

Understanding that opening a major promises five+ cards but responding in a major may show only four (or more) cards is hard to fathom. To respond in a four-card major before showing a minor suit fit is also tough for new students who have been taught to show a fit.

The 1NT response is very confusing too, and that, along with responding with own suit at the two level, requires revisiting in intermediate lessons.

A Spiral Curriculum

This approach is the way to go... whereby you introduce a concept in its simplest form first, then later (maybe months or years later), return to the topic in more depth. The ideas of bidding with majors, minors and notrumps may be revisited many times, “spiralling” upwards each time.

I find this removes the mistaken idea that students have of not needing to examine a topic further, eg. Stayman. How often do they say, “Oh I’ve done that,” when in fact they need to understand it in much greater depth.



TEACHING TIPS with Ian Dalziel

A NEW WAY OF TEACHING FINESSING



Ian Dalziel is a teacher and regular columnist for "Mr Bridge" magazine in the UK, where this column was originally published.

They say pawns are the soul of chess; I believe the finesse is at the soul of bridge. Those who quickly grasp finessing will readily absorb the other aspects the game. Anyone who struggles with the finesse will have to work much harder to become a reasonable player.

After giving a lesson on finessing, I watched as one of my students faced this combination at the table:

♥ K J 6
♥ Q 7 5 ♥ 9 8 3 2
♥ A 10 4

She played low from hand and, when West also played low, she played the jack after some hesitation. She beamed when it held the trick. I, too, was thrilled – however, my joy was short-lived. She promptly led low from dummy and ‘finessed’ the ten. When this lost to the queen she turned to me and said ruefully, “You were right, the finesse only works 50% of the time!”

So, it’s quite a challenge for the bridge teacher to make finessing understandable. The thought of playing a card which might lose instead of a card which will surely win seems, to many, a needless risk. Most of the standard finesses only involve three to five key cards, yet some misplay the following combinations for a lifetime:

♥ Q x x opposite ♥ A x x
♥ K Q x opposite ♥ x x x

Others think that

♥ K x opposite ♥ x x

isn’t a finesse as it only involves two cards – the king and the ace. Yet these same people are capable of incredibly complex calculations and procedures in other fields.

How can it be that so many otherwise clever people find bridge so difficult? I believe there is such a thing as ‘card sense’, and it isn’t that common. Those who possess it don’t need bridge teachers like me; just give them a good book, send them to the nearest bridge club and they will do just fine.

The majority have to be taught everything; very little comes naturally. Just as well, or I would be out of a job! Some absorb information like a sponge. Others progress incredibly slowly, but still enjoy the game immensely and we don’t want to lose them – for anyone can play an acceptable game eventually if they get the right kind of teaching.

Bridge teaching can be very frustrating. You give a spoken lesson on finessing, using the most modern techniques of PowerPoint or plasma screen, and explain it brilliantly. You then give them prepared hands and it becomes clear that some haven’t understood a word you said. The truth is that most people learn best with the cards in their hands. However, even if they manage to play eight boards in the session, each person will only be declarer twice, which isn’t much experience. They should, of course, learn by watching others, but rarely do. It’s not a very efficient way of learning, for they need a lot more practice.

My solution is to have them working in pairs with flash cards. This needs twice the number of tables, but means they can practice a lot of finessing. South is shown two printed hands and North has a booklet with questions and answers. Each suit is taken in turn; North reads out the questions, South answers and North checks. If an answer is wrong, they discuss till they fully understand it. Then they swap roles for the next hand.

The teacher is on hand to help, but is rarely needed – they teach themselves. A suited pack of cards is on each table so any combination can be played out if required, but they rarely need to. The discussion is incredibly helpful; the students love it as no one is inactive or bored. In fact, 30-45 minutes is long enough – after that they have a tea break which is followed by random hands (see my previous column).

My definition of a finesse is “an attempt to win a trick with a card lower than one held by opponents”.

A finesse exists when the number of tricks depends on ‘what lies where’ and ‘who plays what’ – when the maximum and minimum tricks differ. When dummy goes down and you can ‘spot the finesses’, that’s half the battle. Beside these suits, put an imaginary flag which reads Handle With Care.

Before I produced the flash cards, I did the same thing with cards in wallets, but can you imagine how many wallets we’d have to make up for 12 pairs?

Anyone wishing a PDF copy of my flashcards and Q&A booklets at no charge should email

ildalziel@gmail.com

Previously published in Mr Bridge, UK



YOUTH BRIDGE NEWS with Lauren & Barbara Travis

South Australia's Summer Series for school students

What better way to spend one's school holidays than sitting at a table, learning bridge? For 22 students (and one teacher) in Adelaide, this was the activity of choice. The SABF coordinated a free kids' bridge program designed to teach 8- to 17-year-olds the basics of our fantastic card game. Barbara and Lauren Travis, with the assistance of Penny Bowen, Peter Turnbull, George Bartley, Bertie Morgan, David Gue and Jamie Simpson, taught the four-day program at Bridge at Beaumont. The kids came from all over Adelaide (and two from Sydney) and were generally grandchildren of club bridge players, with a couple of Lauren's students thrown in.

They learnt mini bridge, followed by opening bids, raises, other responses and some card play techniques. Lots of them practised at home in the evenings and one even taught her parents a few tricks! It seems that we already have some bridge addicts, so watch out for the South Australian Youth Team in a few years!

Hugo, age 9½, said "It was great! I loved it! It was exciting to play a new game involving numbers, predictions and logic. And there are teams in bridge, two teams of two and it helps you figure stuff out. In short, I really liked it!" (Hugo, unprompted, took a finesse on the first hand he declared. When complimented on his finesse he said that he didn't know what it was but that his play had seemed obvious. We look forward to seeing how long until he executes a squeeze.)

We managed to hold one of the three planned 'mentor' sessions on a Tuesday morning, with five of the youngsters playing. Once again, the kids exceeded our expectations, with one opening with a weak two, despite not yet having had any lesson on the topic! (Apparently, back in December, more than a month ago, he'd asked about two-level and higher opening bids.)

The first Youth Sunday was held Sunday 30 January, with seven of the group (and more to return in due course). We had one newcomer, who had taught himself bridge by reading Paul Marston's *Introduction to Bridge*. His partner opened 1NT and, with a 5-5 in the majors, he asked if he could transfer! Unfortunately, his RHO overcalled 2♦, thwarting his plans. Naturally, we'd have had to teach the rest of the table transfers as well. Meantime, at the other table, there was a 1NT opening bid and Stayman was used. It's going to be a challenge to keep up with their knowledge. (We hadn't taught them any responses to 1NT openings yet.)

The two-hour session was long enough, especially allowing for some fatigue from the kids having watched Ash Barty win the Australian Open the night before.



BRIDGE INTO THE 21st CENTURY

by Paul Lavings, paul@bridgegear.com



PARTNER RAISES 1♥ TO 2♥ IN COMPETITION

What would you call on the following hands, nil vulnerable:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♠	2♥	2♠	1♥ ?
1. ♠ J 2	♥ A K 8 7 6 4	♦ K 10 6	♣ 4 2
2. ♠ 7 6	♥ A K 10 9 3 2	♦ A 9 2	♣ A 4
3. ♠ J 6	♥ A Q 10 6 5	♦ A J 2	♣ 7 5 2
4. ♠ 9 8 2	♥ A Q J 8 2	♦ 6	♣ K J 9 3
5. ♠ 6 3	♥ A K Q 6 3	♦ Q J 4 2	♣ 10 3
6. ♠ 6	♥ A K 7 6 5	♦ Q 10 6 5	♣ K 7 2
7. ♠ 6	♥ A Q J 8 6	♦ 6 3	♣ A J 9 6 5
8. ♠ 7	♥ A K Q 10 8	♦ K 10 9 6 4	♣ A 4
9. ♠ —	♥ A K 10 9 8 5	♦ K J 2	♣ K 10 9 8
10. ♠ 2	♥ A J 10 7 6 5 2	♦ 6 5	♣ A K 3

SOLUTIONS

1. 3♥. In this and similar auctions, when partner has raised you to the two-level, it is automatic to bid 3♥ with a six-card suit. Your sixth heart is like an extra trick so you are worth the extra level.

Don't be concerned that your opponents could well make 4♠; your 3♥ will make it more difficult for them to judge. For example, if your LHO now bids 3♠, is that an invitation to 4♠ or simply competitive? The fact is that no one knows who can make what, so taking up space gives you more ways to win.

In his ground-breaking 1992 book, *To Bid or Not to Bid*, Larry Cohen wrote of The Law of Total Tricks: the total number of trumps = the total number of tricks. If both sides have an eight-card trump fit then 8+8=16, so the number of tricks will also be 16. The LOTT is remarkably accurate at low levels. On this hand, if both sides make eight tricks then it is right to bid 3♥. You score -50 instead of -110, and if they bid 3♠ you go +50.

2. 3♦. You are too good to bid 3♥, which is terminal. You need to make a try for game, and the only sensible choice is 3♦ – any values in diamonds would certainly be a plus. A trial bid is normally a four-card suit, but it can be a three-card suit.

3. Pass. You have no reason to bid on with no extra shape or strength, so take the opportunity to describe your hand by passing. Partner is still there to bid 3♥ with the right sort of hand.

4. 3♥. Despite only 11 HCP, it looks right to bid 3♥. You have nice shape and your three small spades indicate you will be able to ruff a spade in dummy. The opponents could make 4♠ if they have a secondary fit in diamonds and your 3♥ bid will shut out a possible 3♦ trial bid.

5. 3♥. Perhaps I am guilty of bidding 3♥ too readily but I have a bit of shape, strong hearts and all my points are in long suits. You may not make 3♥, but the opponents don't know this and may guess to bid 3♠ and fail.

6. 3♥. Partner may have quite a good spade holding, but more likely not. On this auction the opponents can have nine spades between them, which means 2♠ is odds-on to make at least eight tricks.

7. 3♣. A long suit trial bid. You will make 4♥ if partner has values in hearts and clubs; ♥K and ♣KQ would be gold with five heart and five club tricks. On the other hand partner could have ♠KQ and ♦K where 4♥ is hopeless. Invite game showing your second suit, and leave it to partner to make the correct decision.

8. 4♦. In an uncontested auction a jump to 4♦ would be some sort of try for slam. In this auction you want your side to make the right decision if the opponents bid 4♠ over your 4♥. ♦AQ in partner's hand means your side makes 11 tricks in hearts, and there is even room for ♣K which gives you 12 tricks in hearts.

With your strong two-suiter 4♦ creates a forcing auction: if opps bid 4♠ your side must now double or bid on to 5♥. Passing out 4♠ undoubled is not a possibility. Note that if opponents have 10 or 11 spades and matching shortages they could make 10 tricks in spades, so if your side bids on to 5♥ you may show a handsome profit even if 5♥ fails but 4♠ makes.

9. 3♠. Just as in Hand 8 you foresee a problem if opponents bid 4♠ over your 4♥. Your 3♠ bid shows a singleton or void in spades and creates a forcing situation if opponents bid 4♠.

Let's say your LHO bids 4♠ over your 3♠ and partner passes. Partner should double 4♠ with spade values or if they do not want you to bid on to 5♥. When your partner passes 4♠, your choice now is to double 4♠ or bid on. With a void in spades my choice would be to bid 5♥.

10. 4♥. You think you will make 4♥, so just bid it. If opponents carry on to 4♠ then let them play there. In defence you can supply two club tricks and hopefully a heart so the odds are that 4♠ will fail. It is surprising how often you think opps will bid on in competitive auctions, but when you take up a lot of space they pass you out in your contract.

KEEPING TRACK

with Brad Coles

Sometimes a contract looks straightforward, but after a few tricks you find yourself in unexpected trouble. On these occasions, you may be able to recover if you've trained yourself to always keep track of the full layout. Declarer missed his second chance on this deal from a weekly Teams match on BBO:

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

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
		2NT	pass
3NT	all pass		

At one table, South led a small club, and declarer simply conceded a heart for a quick claim of nine tricks. At the other table, declarer received the less helpful lead of the ♦2. Assuming a fourth-best lead, the best line is probably to set up the diamonds – declarer can try to force an entry to dummy by playing the ♥Q at some point, and if that is ducked then there are various chances for a ninth trick. In practice, South will already be endplayed after winning the diamond at Trick 3.

At the table, that line seemed a bit complicated, so declarer took the simpler line of banking on the clubs. He won the ♦A (North following with the jack) and finessed the ♣10. South won with the jack and continued with the ♦4 to North's ten and declarer's king. Declarer now cashed the ♣A, crossed to the ♠K, and led another club intending to finesse. When North showed out, discarding a spade, declarer had to win the ♣K and think of another plan.

Have you been keeping track of the layout of the hand? If it helps, South followed to the first spade with the three (reverse count), while North followed with the seven. Then, on the third club, North's discard was the ♠2.

We know South has four clubs, and it looks like the diamonds are also 4-2, so South has five cards in the majors and North has nine. If North had five hearts and four spades, he would be unlikely to discard a spade, as this would allow declarer to set up a spade trick (or worse, if North doesn't know where the queen is, it may allow the suit to run immediately). The spade discard strongly suggests five or more spades. For what it's worth, the count cards are also consistent with spades being 5-2, so all signs point to South being 2-3-4-4. Let's take a look at that layout:

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

Can you see a way home in this position? We have taken five tricks, with two aces to come. South has taken one trick, and is ready to cash three more.

Declarer tried the ♥Q, and South was able to win the king and cash his three winners for one off. If North had held the ♥K, it would have made no difference – declarer would still have only eight tricks.

We can always make this contract if we endplay the opponent who holds the ♥K. On the above layout, the winning play is to cash the ♠A, removing South's exit card, and play the last club (pitching a heart from dummy). South will be on lead holding ♥Kxx and the two top diamonds. If he cashes the diamonds before leading a heart, then we can win the ♥J and cash the long diamond. If he leads the heart without cashing the diamonds, we win the ♥J and throw him on lead again with a diamond. Lastly, if he exits immediately with the ♥K, we win the ♥A, cross to the ♥J, and use the diamonds as a stepping stone to the ♥A.

On the alternative layout, with North holding the king, we simply have to play ♠A and another spade, forcing North to win and lead away from the ♥K.

Which line should we take? Given that North has four hearts to South's three, the odds slightly favour playing North for the ♥K (although playing South for the king would have been more entertaining for the kibitzers). On the actual deal, North will cash two spades and lead a heart for two off, but it's better to go down on a 57% play than a 0% play. In the long run, good card play technique will pay off.

WORKSHOPS WITH WILL

with William Jenner-O'Shea

RAISING A FOUR-CARD SUIT WITH ONLY THREE TRUMPS

Most people play that a one-level bid by responder shows at minimum a four-card suit. Many people wait to have four-card support to be assured of a fit before they raise. Since playing in a 4-3 fit is not always fun, this is a sensible approach, and it is how many people are taught to play.

Consider this hand where you open 1♣ and partner responds 1♥ showing a 4+ suit:

♠ 3 ♥ Q 9 3 ♦ A J 9 2 ♣ K Q 4 3 2

	OPENER	RESPONDER
	1♣	1♥
	?	

Since a 2♦ bid would now be a Reverse (and require 16+ points), your choices seem to be 1NT, or 2♣. Bidding 1NT with a singleton spade looks horrible, and those clubs are moderate, not great, and they could be worse.

There is another option. Opener can raise responder's hearts with only three trumps. Note that this is not the most desirable choice. If you have a better bid available, then prefer to do that (eg. 1NT or 2♣).

I only tend to raise the 1♥ response to 2♥ when I have three trumps, and usually a shortage or weakness elsewhere that makes the 1NT rebid look less attractive. It is usually an unbalanced hand, but might be a balanced hand with a weak doubleton.

You and your partner should discuss whether or not you agree to play this style. If you choose to play this style, then opener's raise can be three or four cards, and shows just 12-14 points.

If responder has a minimum hand, up to 11 points, then they should pass.

You will sometimes play in a seven card fit at the two-level, but it will probably be ok! In the example above, you have a singleton spade, and 1NT wouldn't have been better. Your partner might be able to scramble some spade ruffs in the play.



If responder wants to bid higher and has five+ cards in their suit, they know there is a fit whether you have three or four cards, and can bid 3♥ or 4♥ (or 4NT on a good day).

If responder is interested in game, say 12+ points, but only has four hearts, then they can use a 2NT enquiry to basically ask, "did you raise me with three or four cards". The simplest structure is that opener repeats the suit (hearts) if they have four cards (3♥ with a minimum hand, or 4♥ with a maximum, or jump to splinter if you play splinters). If responder only has three cards, they show some other feature of their hand.

After the 2NT enquiry, a 3♣ bid would show a hand with good long clubs, and only three hearts. A 3♠ or 3♦ bid would show a side-suit (usually four cards), and also confirm that you only have three hearts.

Usually the responder only needs to know whether or not you have three trumps, and they can set the final contract once they know.

Here is another example hand:

♠ K 9 2 ♥ 3 2 ♦ A K Q 9 7 ♣ J 3 2

You open 1♦ and partner responds 1♠. While 1NT is an option, the two weak suits make a 2♠ raise look better, despite only having three cards in spades. If partner bids 2NT (asking) you should bid 3♦ to confirm only three spades, and long, good diamonds.




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HOW WOULD YOU PLAY?

with Barbara Travis

Solutions to problems on page 5

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

Against your 4♠ contract (South), West leads the ♣Q, ducked all round. West continues with the ♣J, which also wins the trick. West plays a third club - king - ace, ruffed. What is your plan?

The lesson in this hand is that you should trump with the ♠10 at Trick 3.

Now you cash the ♠A, then lead the ♠Q to dummy's king. When trumps are 2-2, you have an extra entry to dummy to take the diamond finesse twice.

You lead a diamond, finessing the queen and, when that wins, you cross back to dummy with the ♠5 to dummy's ♠6 to repeat the diamond finesse. Cash the ♦A, and trump the fourth diamond, making ten tricks, just losing two clubs and one heart.

If there is no danger of creating a trump loser, look after your entries to the weaker hand by using higher trumps, keeping trump entries.

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

West leads the ♥K against 7♠. You can count 12 top tricks and, if spades are 2-2 or 3-1, you have 13 tricks with clubs 3-2 or a club ruff. How would you play?

In case the clubs don't break, you should think about a dummy reversal (of sorts). Win the ♥A, then ruff a heart. Now you cash the ♠Q and have to re-plan when trumps are 4-0. The odds are significantly higher that East will

have a singleton club than a singleton diamond (you have eight clubs but only six diamonds), so you should cash the ♦K then cross to the ♦Q. Now you trump the small diamond in hand.

Now you can just cash the ♠J, cross to dummy with your last trump, drawing both of the remaining trumps, and you have the rest of the tricks with the ♦A and the top three clubs.

Your 13 tricks come from four trumps in dummy, two ruffs in hand, the ♥A, three diamonds and three clubs.

Taking that early ruff (Trick 2) can often be a precaution in case of bad breaks.

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

You are playing Teams, where making the contract is more important than overtricks.

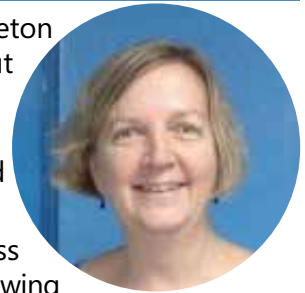
Against your 3NT (South), West leads the ♥J, from his solid major, and you win the king. What is your plan?

You can count seven top tricks, so you need to ensure two more tricks, and the only viable source of extra tricks is diamonds (because you only have one remaining heart stopper).

You can cash the ♦A and then hope for five tricks by finessing the jack. However, when playing teams, it can be wise to be cautious – ensuring the contract, rather than overtricks.

Not only that, you have to consider your entry position, in terms of unblocking all your winners. If you cash the ♦A and finesse, if East wins the ♦Q and returns a heart, you cannot untangle all your winners. There is a potential blockage in the spade suit.

The safest line is to win the ♥K at Trick 1, then unblock the ♠K and ♠Q in dummy. Now you lead a diamond to your ace, then play a second diamond. When West follows suit (even if it is a crafty queen), duck! That ensures four diamond tricks and your contract.



IMPROVE YOUR DEFENCE

with Ron Klinger

Solution to problem on page 2



ARRESTED FOR VAGARIES

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

At one table, the auction went:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
pass	1♣	1♦	1♥
pass	1NT	pass	2♦ ¹
pass	2♥ ²	pass	4♥
all pass			

1. Artificial, game-forcing.
2. Three-card heart support.

Lead: ♦6. East collected two diamond tricks at once and declarer later lost a heart and a spade as well. That was one down, East-West +100.

North-South were playing Acol with a 12-14 1NT opening and so North could not open 1NT. Had North been able to open 1NT, South could transfer to hearts and then show the spades. North would choose hearts and with 4♥ be played by North, there is no defence to defeat the game as the ♦K is protected from attack. A diamond loser from the South hand can be discarded on the second round

of clubs and so declarer loses only one spade, one heart and one diamond.

The outcome is simply the vagaries of the bidding system. Interchange the ♠J and the ♠10, and North could open an Acol 1NT, leading to 4♥ by North, while a strong 1NT pair would open 1♣ as North and reach the failing 4♥ by South.

At the other table, North opened a strong 1♣ (15+ points) and East showed diamonds. A relay auction followed in which South showed 8+ HCP with four spades and 5+ hearts. The bidding ended in 3NT, but the vagaries of the North-South relay methods had made South declarer.

West led the ♦6: nine - queen - three. How should East continue?

If East returns a low diamond at Trick 2, 3NT will fail. Declarer cannot develop the hearts or the spades without giving the lead to the defence. Then three more diamonds can be cashed.

East erred by playing the ♦A at Trick 2, followed by a low diamond. East expected to come in with the ♠K to cash the rest of the diamonds. As South had a six-card heart suit, East's hopes were dashed. After winning Trick 3 with the ♦K, South played a low heart from dummy and captured the ♥K. Declarer carefully crossed to the ♣K to play the unblocking ♥10 (just in case RHO's ♥K was a falsecard from king-jack doubleton). When East showed out, South ducked to keep communication, allowing West to take the ♥J, but West was out of diamonds. West shifted to a spade, but declarer did not need the spade finesse. He rose with the ♠A and made one spade, one diamond, two clubs and five hearts for +600 and +12 imps.



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