

ENGLISH



BRIDGE

The EBU members' magazine – December 2019 – Issue 286



OVERSEAS CALENDAR

DATE	RESORT	HOLIDAY TYPE	NTS
21 Dec	Sentido Perissa Side TURKEY	Duplicate	7-14
04 Jan	Playa La Arena Hotel TENERIFE	Duplicate	7-42
18 Jan	Sol House Torremolinos SPAIN	Duplicate & Relaxed	7-14
01 Feb	Rubicon Palace Hotel LANZAROTE	Duplicate	7-14
05 Feb	EBU Hotel Quirinale Rome ITALY	Congress	7
07 Feb	Paloma Oceana Resort Side TURKEY	Duplicate	7-35
25 Mar	Sol House Torremolinos SPAIN	Duplicate Relaxed & Social	7-14
14 Apr	Hotel Astoria Stresa Lake Maggiore ITALY	Duplicate	7
17 Apr	Irish Bridge Festival Athena CYPRUS	Duplicate	7-14
02 May	Luxury Cruise MS Infinity CROATIA	Duplicate	7
03 May	Westhill Country Hotel St Helier JERSEY	Duplicate	5
05 May	Sentido Aegean/Pearl Beach CRETE	Duplicate Relaxed & Social	7-14
06 May	SBU Iberostar Albuferea Playa MAJORCA	Congress	7
02 Jun	Hotel Torretta Montecatini Tuscany ITALY	Duplicate	10
10 Jul	Ramsey Park Hotel ISLE OF MAN	Duplicate	6
02 Sep	Hotel Torretta Montecatini Tuscany ITALY	Duplicate	10
15 Sep	Westhill Country Hotel St Helier JERSEY	Duplicate	5
19 Sep	Turunc Premium 5 Star Hotel TURKEY	Duplicate Relaxed & Social	7-28
19/26 Sep	Luxury Gulet Cruise TURKISH RIVIERA	Social	7
04 Oct	Creta Panorama Hotel CRETE	Duplicate	7-14
18 Oct	Athena Beach Hotel Paphos CYPRUS	Duplicate Relaxed & Social	7-28

UK CALENDAR

DATE	RESORT	HOLIDAY TYPE	NTS
23 Dec	Whately Hall Hotel Banbury	Duplicate	4
23 Dec	Holiday Inn Brentford Lock/Kew Gardens	Duplicate	4
24 Dec	Holiday INN Ironbridge/Telford	Duplicate	4-9
24 Dec	Daventry Court Hotel Northamptonshire	Duplicate	4-9
27 Dec	The Old Swan Hotel Harrogate	Duplicate	3
30 Dec	The Royal Cambridge Hotel City Centre	Duplicate	3
30 Dec	St Johns Hotel & Spa Solihull	Duplicate	3
20 Jan	ST Kilda Hotel Llandudno Wales	Duplicate	4
24 Jan	Holiday Inn Maidenhead/Windsor	Duplicate	3
02 Feb	Mayfair Hotel Bournemouth	Duplicate & Relaxed	5
17 Feb	ST Kilda Hotel Llandudno Wales	Duplicate	4
01 Mar	Guyers House Hotel Nr Bath	Duplicate	3
15 Mar	Carlton Hotel Torquay	Duplicate	5
29 Mar	The Redcliffe Hotel Paignton	Duplicate	4
05 Apr	The View Hotel Eastbourne	Duplicate	4
10 Apr	Holiday INN Ironbridge/Telford	Duplicate	4
12 Apr	Mayfair Hotel Bournemouth	Duplicate Relaxed & Social	5
17 Apr	Whitehouse Hotel Worcester	Duplicate	3
20 Apr	Royal Victoria Snowdonia	Duplicate	4
26 Apr	Cheltenham Chase Hotel	Duplicate & Relaxed	4
04 May	Belton Woods Hotel Golf & Spa	Duplicate	4
08 May	Stratford Manor Hotel	Duplicate & Relaxed	3
11 May	ST Kilda Hotel Llandudno Wales	Duplicate	5
18 May	Carlton Hotel Bournemouth	Duplicate	5
22 May	Holiday INN Ironbridge/Telford	Duplicate	4
24 May	Fishguard Bay Hotel Wales	Duplicate	6

Holiday Types

Duplicate bridge holidays, morning and evening friendly duplicate club standard bridge with master points awarded.

Relaxed bridge holidays, assisted play evening session with morning tutorials and workshops sessions, no master points awarded.

Social bridge holidays, evening organised chigago and rubber with morning sessions, tutorials, seminars and workshops.

English Bridge

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INSIDE GUIDE

From the Chairman	5	■
ACOLytes – Sarah Bell	6	●
Christmas Quiz – Andrew Robson	8	■
Heffalump Traps – Bakhshi's questions	10	■
Club Bidding Quiz – Pottage's questions	10	■
Basic Cardplay – Paul Bowyer	12	●
Traps for the Unwary – Michael Byrne	14	●
Beat Today's Experts – Bird's questions	16	■
Crocs on Defence – Stephen Kennedy	18	●
Bridge Fiction – David Bird	20	■
Acol Unveiled – Chris Jagger	22	●
Bridge Tips – David Gold	24	●
Bridge with a Twist – Simon Cochemé	26	■
Good bye Jeremy, Hello Ian	28	■
Prize Leads Quiz – Mould's questions	30	■
Calendar and Competition News	32	■
Ask Robin – Robin Barker	34	■
World Championships – David Burn	35	■
Digital playing reviews – Clark & Panchagnula	39	■
Beat Today's Experts – Bird's answers	47	■
October's Leads Quiz – Mould's answers	50	■
Heffalump Traps – Bakhshi's answers	52	■
Amazing Club No 2 – Samantha Kelly	55	■
Letters to the Editor	56	■
Crossword, Caption Competition	57	■
Overseas Congress Sicily – Chris Benneworth	58	■
EBED News & Junior Bridge	59	■
Landmark Promotions	60	■
Club Bidding Quiz – Pottage's answers	62	■

ONLINE EXTRA

Bridge Club Live	65	■
Funbridge	66	■
World Championships – David Bird	67	■
Kennedy's extra quiz	71	■
Bowyer's extra quiz	72	■
Byrne's extra quiz	73	■
Premier League – David Bird	74	■
Blast from the Past – 1947 Quiz	76	■

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The Carnival is Over

This is my final article as Chairman of the EBU, although I shall remain on the Editorial Board for a while. Indeed, by the time you read this there will be a new chairman. I'd like to thank my Board, committees and all the staff at Aylesbury for their hard work and help over my tenure.

CHANGES

During my term of office we have seen a number of changes and initiatives, not all of them successful. We were unsuccessful in getting VAT exemption or making bridge a sport but the merits of the latter caused as much discussion among bridge players as Brexit has over the last couple of years. We are living in a time of significant change in the world of bridge. The average age of EBU members is going up and one effect is a reluctance to travel as much, and possibly the new generation of bridge players is less fiercely competitive. That has led to a reduction in tournament numbers but not club games where attendance is not just holding up, but is increasing.

Where it is possible and convenient day time bridge has proved popular whereas evening bridge is not doing so well. The dearth of public transport in the evenings in rural areas on dark winter nights accelerates the trend.

We have seen the development of online bridge and the EBU has a growing Online Knock Out and Plate – why not enter this year – see <https://www.ebu.co.uk/competitions/onlineko>. It also has regular online games with Funbridge. I'm sure the online game will grow and the WBF are making moves towards this at the top level but it will take a lot for those people who go to clubs to make, or want to make, this change because an important reason for their visits is the social aspect – rather lost in front of a computer monitor.

THE YOUNG ONES

We badly need more, and younger, players. A good feature of the last few years is that there are more youth players. We have international teams at three junior age ranges and an increasing number of counties and clubs running junior teaching and

training. EBED runs an award scheme. However, juniors are not, for the most part, avid club players so getting new members to the clubs is vital. To do this we need a national body concerned with courses and, in particular, training teachers so that there is good coverage across the country. Historically this is not something the EBU did well but EBED has taken on the challenge with good results, and there is more to do. Clubs need to participate, running courses with trained teachers. If this happens it is more likely that the graduates will play in the club.

IT'S THE END OF THE WORLD AS WE KNOW IT

The advance of technology may mean an online game for some but it also means that in clubs instant scoring is easy, hands are on the internet for those interested in looking at where their partners went wrong, and the curse of the half table can be avoided. It is one plank in place to help clubs survive and grow. Counties too must do their bit. They need to think strategically about how bridge can prosper in their area.

GOODBYE, MAX

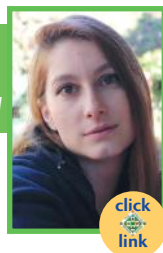
Max Bavin, who died recently, worked for the EBU for upwards of 25 years and became not only our Chief Tournament Director but also the World Bridge Federation's Chief TD. He was highly respected for his knowledge of the laws and even in retirement people would go to him for authoritative and accurate interpretations. Max – we will miss you for all your strengths (*obituary*, p46).

NOWHERE TO RUN, NOWHERE TO HIDE

Finally thank you to all the members who have been helpful and supportive. Bridge occupies a lot of the mind so I wasn't that surprised when, in Scarborough for the congress and doing a bit of shopping, someone came up to me at a clothes rack to talk about some suggestions for the event's future. I'm also grateful to his wife for managing to interest him in buying a shirt.

Good luck to my successor!





Overcalling

Overcalling means bidding a suit when an opponent has opened. If you want to get into an auction and can't make a takeout double, this is your other route in. Overcalls are different to opening bids in terms of what they show because you are entering a live auction, where your opponents have announced some interest in the hand, rather than kicking off an auction that no one has yet attempted to lay claim to.

Overcalling a suit at the lowest level always promises at least five cards in that suit, not four like an opening bid in Acol. This is related to the differences in opening vs overcalling 1NT. You can't overcall 1NT with 12-14 points because once opponents have announced that they have values you are much too likely to be penalised, thus a 1NT overcall shows 15-18 points, regardless of the opening NT range that you play.

This means that hands that open four card suits playing Acol cannot overcall the suit once the opponents have opened – they can bid 1NT (or double with the intention of bidding NT later to show a stronger hand than 15-17). This leaves 12-14 balanced as the only hands with four card suits that you might want to come in on. If you have a shortage in the opponent's suit you can double, and if you don't you shouldn't be in the auction!

An overcall at the one level does not promise an opening bid: you can overcall just to tell partner that you have a good suit and are happy for them to compete with suitable shape (such as a useful singleton or four-card support) and to encourage them to lead that suit if you defend the hand. A good general rule is that you can stretch to get a good suit into the auction but should have a good hand if your suit is poor. I would overcall at the one level on almost any hand with a suit holding of AQ10xx or better but if my suit were xxxxx I'd need a decent opening hand to consider making a bid. Spot cards are important when evaluating suit quality: AQ432 is a massively weaker suit than AQ1098.

Overcalling at the two-level shows more than overcalling at the one level (note that we are not talking about jump overcalls here). This is partly because you are more likely to be penalised and partly because it is less likely to be right to compete at a higher level in a lower-ranked suit than your opponents' and thus less important to get it in to the auction. You need to have a six card suit or a very good five card suit (no weak NTs with Kxxxx please). Vulnerable I'd have an opening hand, non-vulnerable you can stretch a bit more. Sometimes you will pick up a really good hand with a moderate, not amazing suit, such as a 15 count with KJ9xx. I'd prefer to make a takeout double or overcall 1NT if my hand was suitable for one of those actions but if it was not I would overcall, although I'd still avoid a terrible suit such as Kxxxx.

Have a look at each of the following hands. Sitting North, should you overcall your major at the one level over a 1♦ opening?

Dealer West.			
W	N	E	S
1♦	?		

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

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

Hand 1. I would overcall 1♠. Don't be put off by the five diamonds, you have a good five card spade suit that deserves a mention.

Hand 2. I would not bid: I am weak and my heart suit is too poor. If my spades were xx and my hearts KQxxx I would overcall but it isn't worth stretching to bid on a seven count with a bad suit.

Hand 3. Bid 1NT, not 1♠. Your spades might be great but you don't have a five card suit.

Hand 4. Double, don't bid 1♥. Your hearts are bad and your spades are good and you have a singleton in right hand opponent's suit, all of which point towards doubling to keep both majors (and clubs) in the game.

Hand 5. Bid 1♥. You have a near-opening hand with a moderate five card major so get it in to the auction.

OVERCALLING AT THE TWO-LEVEL

Do you think you should overcall your suit after a 1♠ opening on these hands?

Dealer West.			
W	N	E	S
1♠	?		

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

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

Hand 6 & 7. These hands have the same shape and the same number of points but I would not overcall 2♦ on Hand 6, whereas I would on Hand 7. The difference between these hands is in the quality of the diamond suit. Hand 6 has a poor suit, whereas hand 7's suit is very good.

Hand 8. This is a clear 2♥ bid. Don't be put off by the defensive spade holding: you have a great six card major and a shapely hand so it's time to bid.

Hand 9. Pass. Although you have six clubs they are not very good and the hand itself is weak: 10 points with many of them in short suits. There is nothing about this hand that appeals to me enough to make me want to bid.

Hand 10. Although the diamond suit is good enough to bid I would double to keep my great four card heart suit in the game: we could easily belong in 4♥ and it will be much harder to get there if I start with 2♦. ☐

Bridge for All & ACOlytes

The content of ACOlytes may occasionally differ from Bridge for All teaching materials produced by EBED, and the author may make some changes according to personal teaching style. Bridge for All teaching and practice books can be purchased from www.bridge-warehouse.co.uk/collections/bridge-books-and-flippers



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Christmas Quiz 2019

by Andrew Robson

Andrew Robson is this year's master compiler to test your bridge brain. Send in your answers for a chance to **win our most coveted prizes:**

The Worshipful Company of Makers of Playing Cards

has very generously donated a double-pack of the most recent Master's playing cards. This set commemorates the 50th anniversary of the first manned Moon landing and a celebration of mankind in space, and continues an annual tradition of Masters' cards dating back to 1882.

Each pack is edged in silver gilt, and the twin packs of cards are presented in a beautiful black leather case, and are limited to 350 sets. Unusually, the card backs are different, with one pack featuring Neil Armstrong and the other an astronaut on the moon, as seen from the landing vehicle. The court cards feature the most famous astronauts from 12 different countries, involved in space exploration, including our own Tim Peake. The Jokers picture the International Space Station; the Luna Module; the Mars Rover; and the Space Shuttle Columbia.

First prize



Second prize

£50 EBU credit

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

♠ A 4 2
♥ J 7 3
♦ 9 7 3 2
♣ 8 7 6

Q1 Game All. Pairs.

W	N	E	S
3♥	Dble	Pass	?

Choose from: (a) Pass; (b) 3♠; (c) 4♦.

♠ A 9 3 2
♥ J 2
♦ A Q 9 8 2
♣ 7 4

Q2 Love All. Teams.

W	N	E	S
			1♦
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♣ ¹	Pass	?

¹ Fourth Suit Forcing, 'We're going to game, please describe your hand further.'

Choose from: (a) 2♦; (b) 2♥; (c) 2NT.

♠ A 10 3 2
♥ A J 8 7 3
♦ Q 8 4
♣ 2

Q3 Love All. Teams.

W	N	E	S
		1♣	1♥
1♠	2♣ ¹	2♠	?

¹ Unassuming cue bid, showing a good heart raise – at least ten points with three (+) hearts.

Choose from: (a) Pass; (b) 3♦; (c) 3♥.

♠ A 3
♥ A Q 9 8 2
♦ Q 2
♣ K J 5 2

Q4 N/S Game. Teams.

W	N	E	S
			1♥
Pass	4♣ ¹	Pass	?

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

Choose from: (a) 4♦; (b) 4♥; (c) 4♠.

Cont/...

Which of the following three South hands would bid according to the sequence given? What should the other two do differently? Assume you are playing Duplicate Pairs. In each case neither side is vulnerable. Each question is worth six marks for the correct answer, and a further two marks for giving the correct alternative bidding for the other hands – in Andrew's opinion.

Q5

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

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

Q6

Love All. Pairs.			
W	N	E	S
1♠	Dble	2♠	3♣

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

Q7

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

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

Q8

Love All. Pairs.			
W	N	E	S
			2♠ ¹
Dble	3♠	4♥	Dble

¹ Weak two

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

On the final two questions (playing Pairs) you are again South. You face an all-too familiar Pass, Double or Bid dilemma.

In the auction given, one of the three hands should Pass, one should Double and one should bid on. Ten marks for identifying all three. Three marks for getting one correct and two wrong (two correct and one wrong is, of course, impossible). Again, all in the judgement of Andrew.

Q9

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

¹ 12-14, ² Stayman

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

Q10

E/W Game. Teams.			
W	N	E	S
1♠ ¹	2♥	4♠	?

¹ Five-card major

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

Happy Christmas!



COME ON! GIVE IT A GO

Send your entries by email or post not later than 31st December. By email: lou@ebu.co.uk or

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

Heffalump Traps

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

♠ A J
♥ A K
♦ K Q 10 8 3
♣ A K 7 4



♠ K Q
♥ Q J 6 4
♦ A 5 2
♣ 8 6 5 2

You are in 7NT. West leads the ♠10. Plan your play.

♠ A K 10 6
♥ 9 5
♦ 8 6
♣ Q 10 6 2



♠ J 9 2
♥ K 8 3
♦ A J 3
♣ K 8 7 3

You are in 2NT. West leads the ♥4. East wins the ♥A, then returns the ♥J. Plan your play.

♠ 7 4
♥ J 8 3
♦ J 10 6
♣ A O 6 4 2



♠ K 8 3
♥ K Q 5
♦ A K Q
♣ K 9 7 5

You are in 3NT. West leads the ♠J and East covers with the ♠Q. Plan your play.

♠ A 10 7 3
♥ A 8 2
♦ K 8
♣ K 9 4 3



♠ K 6
♥ Q 6
♦ A 10 9 6 5 4 2
♣ A 8

You are in 6♦. West leads the ♥3. Plan your play.

David Bakhshi gives the answers on page 52

CLUB PLAYER'S BIDDING QUIZ

ON EACH of the following problems, you are West. What should you bid with each hand on the given auction at pairs, Love All?

♠ K 5
♥ A Q
♦ Q 9 6 4
♣ O 8 7 5 4

W	N	E	S
?			

♠ 9 2
♥ 10 7 4
♦ K Q 4
♣ K J 10 8 2

W	N	E	S
		1♠	Pass
?			

♠ Q 3
♥ A Q 9
♦ 6 4 3
♣ A Q 9 3 2

W	N	E	S
		1♠	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♥	Pass
?			

♠ 8 7 5
♥ K J 8 4
♦ J 10 7 2
♣ K 5

W	N	E	S
		1♥	Pass
2♥	Pass	3♣	Pass
?			

♠ Q 9 5 2
♥ A K J 8 6 3
♦ 4
♣ K 4

W	N	E	S
		4♠	5♦

♠ A 9 7 4
♥ A Q 2
♦ K Q 3
♣ A K 10

W	N	E	S
2NT	Pass	4NT	Pass
?			

**Julian Pottage gives the answers
on page 62**

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First Trick Crisis 3

When should you play an honour card from dummy on the opening lead? Yes, that is too broad a question, so let's put it into context. We'll start with an easy example, just to get you into the mood.

West kicks off with the ♠3 lead against 3NT and this is what you can see:

South plays in 3NT. West leads the ♠3.

♠ J 5
♥ A 7 5
♦ K J 9 5
♣ K 8 5 3

♠ Q 8 4
♥ K 4 2
♦ A Q 6 2
♣ A 7 4

As ever as declarer you should **Count and Plan** before calling for a card. Here, you can see two hearts, four diamonds and two clubs on top. A spade winner would be handy as it would swell the coffers to nine winners. So, do you play the jack from table? The answer is **No**.

This combination is one where a spade trick is guaranteed by playing low from dummy and waiting patiently. However the defenders play, you must score a slow spade trick and your contract. However, playing the jack could lead to the defence running off the first five tricks. Here is the full deal:

South plays 3NT. West leads the ♠3

♠ J 5
♥ A 7 5
♦ K J 9 5
♣ K 8 5 3

♠ K 10 6 3 2
♥ 10 9 6
♦ 10 8 4
♣ 6 2

♠ A 9 7
♥ Q J 8 3
♦ 7 3
♣ Q J 10 9

♠ Q 8 4
♥ K 4 2
♦ A Q 6 2
♣ A 7 4

Those advocates of passive leads against 3NT will be allowed to plead that a spade lead is the only one to allow 3NT to make; any other lead will defeat it. Well, they have to be right sometime.

What if we modify the deal a little? West leads the ♠3 against 3NT and you see:

South plays in 3NT. West leads the ♠3.

♠ J 5
♥ A Q 5
♦ K J 9 5
♣ K 8 5 3

♠ K 8 4
♥ K 4 2
♦ A 10 6 2
♣ A 7 4

Your **Count and Plan** shows you eight winners as before (one spade after the lead, three hearts, two

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diamonds and two clubs) with a notorious two-way finesse in diamonds available for extras.

Is there any point in playing the ♠J at trick one this time?

The answer is **Yes**, as it's a *cost-nothing* play; you are assured of one spade trick in any case and the jack offers you a small chance of you keeping the protected king. That may allow you a sure-fire way to make your contract. Suppose this is the full deal:

South plays 3NT. West leads the ♠3

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

♠ K 8 4	
♥ K 4 2	
♦ A 10 6 2	
♣ A 7 4	

When the ♠J holds trick one you can ensure 3NT by running the ♦J from table. If East has the queen you'd make ten tricks; if West has it he can do you no damage when on lead. The ♠K is safe from any further attack from the Western quarter.

Nine tricks come from one spade, three hearts, three diamonds and two clubs.

Note that if East had the ♠A and won trick one then it would be irrelevant whether you called for the ♠J or not. Now you'd hold up the king until the third round and take the diamond finesse the other way, cashing the ace and running the ten. If East had the ♦Q he'd either have no spade left to return or spades would be 4-4, so 3NT would still make.

The only distribution where you need to guess the diamonds to fulfil your contract is where West has led from ♠Axxxx and East holds ♠Qxx. Now you can't hold up in spades and you can't allow either opponent on lead. In this case you'd just have to be a good guesser. It's still worth noting that the play of the ♠J at trick one doesn't cost you anything. □

Have you got it?
Paul's quiz is online, p72

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Coping with Interference - Part 6

In the past few months we have been looking at various competitive auctions where the opponents intervene to try and make your auction more difficult.

Most competitive tools you use are designed to ensure that your auction runs smoothly and gets you to the same contract you would have done without the interference. But of course sometimes you can make the opponents pay for trying to disrupt your bidding, and take them for a penalty.

The Redouble is designed to do just that – to turn the auction on its head and make the hunter become the hunted.

If the opponents double your one level opening bid then a re-double (which is by far the least used card in the bidding box) is principally used to show values, about 10+. Various hand types start with a redouble:

- ♣ A good three-card raise of partner's major, that doesn't want to stress any of its side suits by bidding them
- ♣ A balanced hand with no suit to stress
- ♣ A hand with shortage in partner's (major) suit and no long suit of its own, that is keen to defend and take a penalty from the opponents.

If partner opens 1♥ and the next hand doubles all these hands are suitable for a redouble:

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

Hands 1 and 3 are the classical hands looking to double the opponents for penalties on the next round, while Hand 4 has no suit it wishes to introduce. It might well look to take a penalty later, depending on the vulnerability and what partner does.

Hand 2 is simply too strong for a weak raise to 2♥, and bidding either minor suit will distract partner. Redouble and then bid 2♥ on the next round – you will get to game where it exists or else play in a safe part-score. A redouble will also scare your opponents off competing further in spades.

Now that was the easy bit – the real question is, what happens on the next round?

When we have started:

1♥/♠ Dble Redble

who takes the decision to double later and what do we do if not?

Let's look at a typical sequence and some continuations of the auction:

W	N	E	S
1♥	Dble	Redble	1♠
?			

Opener has three main options:

- ♣ Opener can double for penalties – this would indicate four trumps, or three good ones in a decent defensive hand (for example 15+ balanced would be keen to double even with only an average trump holding)
- ♣ Opener can bid a suit, either a new one or rebid his own one. In each case it would not only show a shapely hand (typically 5-5 to introduce a new suit, or six cards to rebid one's own suit) but also indicate weakness, a light opening bid with little defence.
- ♣ If opener can't do either then he passes the decision round to partner, who will decide. A pass in this position simply says 'I have a normal

strength opening bid and I can't double, please do something'.

Note that this pass is **forcing** - it makes no sense for responder to redouble and say 'I have a good hand let's get them!' only to pass out a part-score at his next go.

When it comes round to him responder does the same process – he will double for penalties or bid a suit depending on what he has. Note that a double by responder tends to be four goodish trumps and a defensive hand (short in partner's suit) as he is the one that suggested taking a penalty in the first place.

One of the key things about taking a penalty is not only how satisfying it is but also how lucrative. The best penalties come from total misfit hands where game would struggle your way, so picking up a medium penalty of 200 (one off vulnerable) or 300 (two off non-vulnerable) can still be a useful swing, and a great board at duplicate pairs, as many people are far too reluctant to wield the axe.

An important factor is the vulnerability. When the opponents are 'at red' (meaning they are vulnerable and you are not) then taking them two off doubled for +500 will beat any game contract you could have made. If you only get them one off for +200 then that still beats any part-score you could have made, the so called *Kiss of Death*.

In terms of the play, one important thing about defending low level doubled contracts is that it is normally correct for the hand with short trumps to lead them and free up partner's holding, drawing the opponents' in the process. If the opponents are playing the hand after a redouble then it is quite common for them to have 16-18 points between them (if you have an opening bid facing a ten point redouble for example) and if trumps are extracted then they have nowhere to run.

It is true that, if you are on lead with a singleton in partners' suit, then leading it will normally be right, but partner switching to trumps later on is often correct. □

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The Dos and Don'ts of redoubling

- Do** use the re-double card whenever you can, even if you can only double one of the suits the opponents might run to, perhaps partner can double the others.
- Do** remember that when you redouble you lay claim to ownership of the hand, when the opponents take it out you must take some action if you are the last player to speak.
- Don't** rebid your second suit after partner has redoubled when you have a normal strength opening bid – if you can't double the opponents then pass it round to partner and let them make a decision.
- Don't** be scared to pass partner's penalty doubles even if it is at a low level. The best penalties come from the two level when the hand being forced to declare has nothing at all!

Have you got it? Try Michael's quiz online, page 73 when you've finished the article



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Beat Today's Experts

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

DECEMBER 2019 WEST HANDS

(IMP scoring on every deal)

1. Love All ♠ A 9 5
Dealer South ♥ K 8 6 5
 ♦ J 7 2
(Natt) ♣ K 7 5
* South opens 3♦
2. Love All ♠ 2
Dealer North ♥ Q 6 3
 ♦ K J 9
(Norton) ♣ K Q 10 6 5 3
3. Love All ♠ J 5
Dealer West ♥ K Q J 8 4
 ♦ Q 10
(Duffie) ♣ A K Q 4
4. Love All ♠ A K 4 2
Dealer West ♥ K Q 8 2
 ♦ A J 9 7
(Duffie) ♣ 9
5. N/S Game ♠ Q 9 5
Dealer West ♥ A K 7 6 3 2
 ♦ A 7 2
(Coppens) ♣ 5
6. E/W Game ♠ A K Q J 8 4
Dealer South ♥ J 3
 ♦ 10 6
(Coppens) ♣ A 8 4
* South opens 3♥

Did you beat the experts? – Page 47

Beat Today's Experts

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

DECEMBER 2019 EAST HANDS

(IMP scoring on every deal)

1. Love All ♠ K Q J
Dealer South ♥ A 10 9 7 2
 ♦ 5
(Norton) ♣ 10 8 3 2
* South opens 3♦
2. Love All ♠ J 7
Dealer North ♥ A K J 10
 ♦ A Q 4 3 2
(Natt) ♣ A 4
3. Love All ♠ 4
Dealer West ♥ 2
 ♦ A K 8 6 5 4 2
(Youngquist) ♣ J 10 5 2
4. Love All ♠ 10 9 7 5
Dealer West ♥ A 7
 ♦ Q 5 4 2
(Youngquist) ♣ A 10 7
5. N/S Game ♠ A 7 6 2
Dealer West ♥ Q J 9
 ♦ Q
(Bijsterveldt) ♣ A K 9 4 2
6. E/W Game ♠ 3
Dealer South ♥ 4
 ♦ A K Q 9 7 3 2
(Bijsterveldt) ♣ K J 9 7
* South opens 3♥

Did you beat the experts? – Page 47

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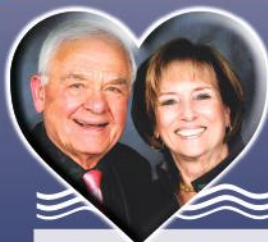
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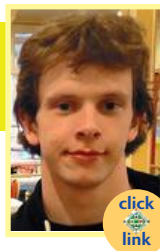
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Leads against Suit Contracts

Defence is still a difficult subject which might be surprising since we had such a good look at leads against no trumps last issue. If you recall, we considered which suits were likely to establish tricks for us and which were least likely to give a trick away, and much of the same logic can be applied to suit contracts. But with the introduction of a trump suit comes another consideration: trumps themselves.

The trump suit is the boss suit and likely to be declarer's best, so you aren't likely to establish any tricks by leading one. But that doesn't mean you never should. A trump can often be a very safe lead. What do you lead here?

♠ 6 4 3	W	N	E	S
♥ K J 8				1♠
♦ A 10 7 5 4	Pass	3♣	Pass	4♠
♣ Q 6	All Pass			

There are a couple of suits we can rule out immediately. Against no trumps, a diamond lead would be stand out, but underleading aces against suit contracts is dangerous. If declarer has a singleton, you might allow him to score his king and never score a single trick yourself.

Underleads of kings are also less appealing against suits. You risk giving away a trick to declarer's queen without the chance to establish multiple tricks since declarer will eventually ruff. And leading from both the king and jack is just far too likely to give away a trick, so a heart is no good either.

The ♣Q could work well. Partner could hold an honour and you might score a ruff. But that's not very likely since partner shouldn't have many points, and it isn't difficult to see how the ♣Q could cost a trick. Leads from queens are usually safe but leading unsupported honours is always risky.

And that leaves us with one suit left to consider. A trump lead won't ever establish a trick for your side but that's okay. A trump lead is usually safe and because you aren't underleading any honours, it won't give a trick away.

That said, trump leads aren't always safe. What would you lead here?

♠ A Q 6	W	N	E	S
♥ 8 5				1NT
♦ Q 8 6 4	Pass	2♣ ¹	Pass	2♥
♣ Q 7 5 2	Pass	4♥	All Pass	
		¹ Stayman		

A spade lead can be ruled out immediately, and with an equal choice in the minors, you might elect for a safe trump lead. But is it so safe? It's true that you are unlikely to give away a trick when leading from nothing but that isn't the case here. On this auction, partner should have three trumps. What if he has Qxx? Declarer will have to find the trump queen to avoid a loser. What if partner has AJx? Declarer will have to find the trump jack to avoid two losers.

I'm sure you can see what I'm getting at. Trumps is declarer's key suit, so he'll probably have a decision to make. Don't make it for him. A trump lead will be safe when partner doesn't have a good holding but will make life easy for declarer whenever he does. I would pick between one of the minors. Leading away from a queen isn't so bad.

A trump lead was much safer on the previous example because we had three trumps, leaving a maximum of two for partner, and because the opponents might have had nine trumps, making a trump lead very safe.

I've talked a lot about how safe trump leads are, but that isn't the only reason to lead one. If declarer has chosen to play in a trump suit, he probably plans to use the trump suit to its best advantage. And that means ruffing things. A trump lead could get in the way of that.

What would you lead here?

♠ Q 8 7	W	N	E	S
♥ 8 6 5				1♥
♦ Q J 4	Pass	1♠	Pass	2♣
♣ A Q 10 5	Pass	3♥	Pass	4♥
	All Pass			

A diamond lead looks obvious. Top of a sequence is another good mantra, but consider how the hand is likely to play. Where are declarer's tricks coming from? The auction has told us that declarer has a second suit of clubs but, as we can see, this suit lies badly for declarer. Since declarer's likely source of tricks isn't going to play well for him it wouldn't be surprising to see him ruff clubs in the dummy. The full hand could look something like this:

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

On a diamond lead, declarer can take as many club finesses as he wants and ruff at least one club in dummy, taking a ruffing finesse if he so chooses. He might even try a dummy reversal, ruffing spades in hand, and then an endplay.

Either way, his only way to make the contract is by using the trump suit. If you lead trumps at trick one and again whenever you gain the lead, he won't get to use any of dummy's trumps. When you can see that declarer's side suits lie badly for him, or any situation where declarer will have to take ruffs, lead a trump. And when you choose to lead a trump to cut down ruffs, lead a low one. You never know how important your spot cards can be. Declarer might pull off something silly if you lead the eight. □

Have you got it? Try Stephen's quiz online page 71 when you've finished the article

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Just One Glass

It was the last duplicate session before the Christmas holidays. As a special concession, with a view to educating the boys on the proper use of alcohol, a small glass of cider had been provided for each contestant.

'I'm not sure that was a wise idea,' declared the Reverend Benson, as the fifth round was about to start. 'The bidding has been much wilder than normal, so far.'

The Headmaster had expected such an outdated view from his partner. Half a pint of Bulmer's couldn't do any damage, surely? Some of the boys would be going out into the wide world shortly and would not be seen dead with a mere half-pint in their hand.

Two senior masters, Bellis and Cutforth, took their seats at the table. The Headmaster feigned a welcoming smile. Could the movement not have spared him this encounter, just for once? When was the last time he had even managed to end as declarer against them?

Percy Cutforth led the ♦Q and Bertie Bellis won with the ace. After a few moments thought, the senior maths master returned the ♥3. West played the ♥J, forcing dummy's queen.

The Headmaster drew trumps with the ace and queen, continuing with the ♣4 from his hand. Percy Cutforth rose immediately with the ♣A and returned the ♥7. When the Headmaster spent a few moments, wondering which card to play from dummy, Bertie Bellis showed him the ♥A10. 'One down, is it?' he said.

The Headmaster nodded resignedly and returned his cards to the board. He and Charlie had done nothing wrong whatsoever but would end with a hopeless score on the board. Just because they had played it against the only pair capable of finding a fancy defence. He could imagine the boys studying the scores tomorrow. 'Oh, look. The Headmaster took a complete zero, going down on Board 5. That glass of cider must have gone to his head!'

Later in the evening, the Headmaster faced one of the brighter pairs from the fifth form:

N/S Game. Dealer North.

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

Diagram: A diamond-shaped diagram with 'N' at the top, 'S' at the bottom, 'W' on the left, and 'E' on the right.

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

West	North	East	South
Percy Cutforth	Reverend Benson	Bertie Bellis	The Headmaster
Pass	1♣	Pass	1♠
All Pass	4♦	Pass	4♠

Game All. Dealer South.

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

Diagram: A diamond-shaped diagram with 'N' at the top, 'S' at the bottom, 'W' on the left, and 'E' on the right.

♠ A 9 5 4	♠ A K Q 10 6 2	♠ 10 2
♥ A K Q 10 6 2	♥ 10 2	♥ A

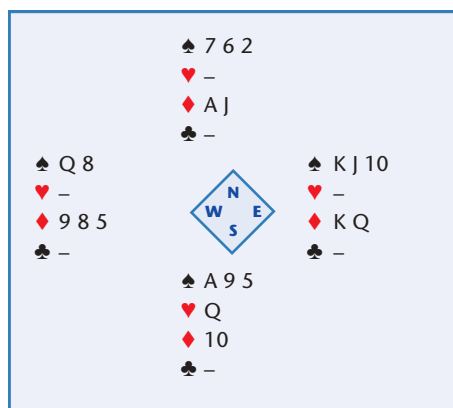
West	North	East	South
Reverend Benson	Neil Phillips	The Headmaster	John Hutson
Pass	2NT	Pass	2♣
Pass	6♥	All Pass	4♥

John Hutson realised that he was bit light to open 2♣. However, if partner had as little as the ♠Q opposite, that might be enough for game. He rebid 4♥, hoping to show a limited 2♣ opener, and was raised to 6♥.

The Reverend Benson led the ♣10 and Neil Phillips displayed the dummy. ‘If you have a game in your own hand, twelve tricks should be easy,’ he observed. ‘My fault if we’re too low.’

Hutson inspected the dummy with no great enthusiasm. Eleven tricks were on view but prospects for a twelfth were close to hopeless. No doubt the Headmaster would blame his overbidding on the pathetically small glass of cider they had been awarded.

He won the club lead with the ace and drew trumps in two rounds, East throwing a diamond. He then crossed to the ♥9 and discarded a spade and a diamond on the ♣KQ. A club ruff in hand, followed by one more trump, left these cards in play:



Hoping for some miracle to occur, Hutson played his last trump and discarded a spade from dummy. He noted that the Headmaster was looking somewhat uncomfortable, almost as if his trousers were too tight. Perhaps he had no good discard.

Deciding that he could hardly throw a diamond honour, the Headmaster discarded the ♠10. The diamonds were clearly still guarded, so Hutson’s next move was a low spade from his hand. The Headmaster won with the jack and returned the ♦K. Hutson then claimed the last two tricks with the ace and nine of spades. The slam was his.

Neil Phillips looked puzzled as he inspected the score-sheet. ‘No-one else has bid it,’ he announced.

‘What did you have for your 2♣ bid?’

The Reverend Benson reached for the South curtain card. ‘A 17-count with five losers!’ he exclaimed. ‘No-one could wish for more damning evidence of the power of alcohol. I wrote to our MP only the other day, recommending that the minimum drinking age should be raised to 25.’

The Headmaster displayed no interest in this arcane suggestion. ‘We needed a diamond lead,’ he said. ‘Even a spade lead would have beaten it. You left both the key aces intact.’

Hutson and Phillips exchanged a glance. Charlie Benson’s opening leads were usually quite good. That glass of cider at the start must have been too much for him. □

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Enjoy the chance to play with a professional in the *Keep Bridge Alive Pro-Am* in February. Play, dine and mingle with world champions in the setting of one of London’s historic hidden gems, Stationers’ Hall, a Grade I listed building completed in 1673.

Coming up for auction are experts from the USA, Ireland, Germany, Norway, Denmark, Bulgaria, and the UK. The auction will be held online, ending on the 7th February, with the tournament taking place on the 20th February in the evening. <https://tinyurl.com/s9tnogl>

THE LORDS HAVE IT



Congratulations to the House of Lords who won their annual bridge match against the House of Commons for the first time since 2016. Representing the Lords were, *top row*, James Cooper, Lord Howard, Lord Hamilton, Richard Cumming-Bruce and, *seated*, Kitty Teltscher, Baroness Byford (Captain), Lord Kalms and the Earl of Caithness.



Weak No Trump – Responses 1

Last edition we considered the case for playing a weak no trump. Now let's look at what system we play over this.

At the two level much of the basics will be familiar: in essence, Stayman, and four suit transfers. At the three level, we play a range of shortage bids, which will be covered next time.

STAYMAN – AND CONTINUATIONS

W	N	E	S
1NT	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♦	Pass	?	

After a 2♦ response to Stayman we have a range of options:

- 2♥/2♠ Weak, 5-card suit with four in the other major
- 2NT Invitational, and the only way to invite, so may or may not have a 4-card major
- 3♣ Looking for slam with a balanced hand (saying nothing about clubs)
- 3♦ 5-5 majors, game forcing (partner bids a 3-card major, or 3NT with 2-2 in the majors)
- 3♥ 5-5 majors, invitational (non forcing)
- 3♠ 5-4 majors, with five spades, invitational (with 4-5 majors you start with a transfer).

Most of this is self explanatory, and allows you to bid all those difficult hands that can get overlooked. For example, without the 3♦ bid, you would have to start off transferring to spades and then bidding 3♥. This only shows 5-4 in the majors, so when partner bids 3NT you have a difficult choice as to whether to remove it. Even if partner has **guaranteed** three cards in a major (and we certainly haven't), it leaves you poorly placed to investigate slams. By using the 3♦ bid you can find a fit at the three level and still have room to make a slam try below game.

One essential aspect is the 3♣ bid. This denies a singleton, and is balanced or semi balanced, so could include, for example, a 4-2-2-5 shape hand

with slam interest. We play a degree of complexity over this, but even without it, it is a great way of investigating slam when you haven't got a major fit. For example, the 1NT opener bids 3♦ with four or five diamonds, 3NT without (and therefore 3-3-3-4), and 4♣ with a five card club suit.

After 1NT-2♣, 2♦-3♣, 3♦ it is known there is no major suit fit. Thus responder uses 3♥ and 3♠ as cue bids agreeing diamonds (which is great – you have shown slam interest and agreed diamonds and yet can still stop in 3NT). If instead responder bids 3NT, this is a mild slam try with clubs, while 4♣ is a stronger hand with at least four clubs.

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

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

Normally you might want a combined 33 points for 6NT, but with a suit fit less is required. East enquires for a major, and when West denies a major, asks about minors. West shows his diamond suit naturally, but East has no support for this, so bids 3NT. West knows that East must have a mild slam try with clubs (as otherwise why would he have used the 3♣ bid?), so carries on with 4♣, and a good slam is reached.

What about the other responses to Stayman? The principles are the same whichever major opener responds in:

W	N	E	S
1NT	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♥	Pass	?	

- 2♠ Invitational, non forcing with four spades
 2NT Invitational, non forcing without four spades
 3♣ Balanced slam try with interest in a different suit
 3♦ Slam try in hearts with a balanced hand
 3♥ Invitational
 3♠ Slam try with four hearts and a singleton in a minor (a hand with 1·4 in the majors will be covered in the next issue). Opener can bid 3NT to find out which singleton, or 4♥ without interest in slam.
 3NT Non forcing, but shows four spades
 4♣/♦ Singleton or void, with 5·5 in the majors.

TRANSFERS – AND CONTINUATIONS

W	N	E	S
1NT	Pass	2♦	Pass
2♥	Pass	?	

- 2♠ 5+ hearts, four spades, forcing for one round, at least invitational
 2NT Non forcing, invitational
 3♣/3♦ 5+ hearts, 4+ minor, natural, game forcing
 3♥ Invitational
 3♠ Slam try, self agreeing hearts (good 6+ hearts), either short in spades or no singleton
 3NT Choice of game
 4♣/4♦ Slam try, agreeing hearts (good 6+ hearts), with a shortage in the bid suit
 4NT Invitational to slam, 5·3·3·2.

After 1NT-2♦, 2♥-2♠, opener bids 2NT, 3♥, 4♥, 3♠, or 4♠ as natural and non forcing. A really good hand with a fit in either major can bid 3♦ (which allows responder to investigate slam if interested, or bid 4♥ if not, without giving away information to opponents). A good hand without a fit bids 3♣ (which allows responder to bid out his hand, showing 4·6 or 5·6 in the majors, or 4·5 (3·1) shapes). Over 3♣, responder will mostly bid 3NT, but the extra time to get to game is of little use to defenders, as the hand that can double 3♣ is on lead anyway (this is an important principle in a system – we are reluctant to add bids that give lead-directing double opportunities). An example hand might be as follows:

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

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

East transfers to hearts and then bids a game forcing 3♣. East shows three card support, and responder has a mild slam try. We play 3♠ is a spade singleton, 3NT is 2·5·2·4, and 4♣ is a diamond singleton. Thus responder shows the nature of his slam try. AQ opposite the shortage is not a good holding, but West can perhaps afford to cooperate just once over the slam try. East has done enough so signs off in 4♥, staying comfortably low. Note that if East's spades and diamonds were reversed, he would bid 3♠ showing a slam try with the singleton spade. West would then drive to slam.

The 2♥ transfer to spades works in a similar way. Either major suit transfer can be broken with a nice hand and four-card support to 3♥/♠ if minimum, and 2NT if maximum. The principle here is to keep the breaks quite simple, as generally when bidding game you want to avoid giving too much information to the opponents – it helps them to beat the contract. However, slams depend on accuracy, so responder can utilise system if interested in slam. A full Romex style (which we use on other major sequences where we have shown a fit by the three level, eg 1♥-3♥) works as follows:

W	N	E	S
1NT	Pass	2♦	Pass
3♥	Pass	?	

- 3♠ Long suit (at least four cards) slam try in any suit. Opener bids 3NT to find out which suit
 3NT Spade shortage or balanced hand (4♣ asks, with 4♥ showing the balanced slam try)
 4♣/4♦ Singletons.

With a long major responder can simply bid 4♥ and 4♠ directly. In addition, 4♦ is a transfer to hearts, allowing a more pre-emptive way to get to game whilst transferring declarership to opener.

Over the 2NT transfer break we play a 'retransfer', so 1NT-2♦-2NT-3♦ asks partner to bid 3♥, either to play, or responder may go on. In addition we play a modified version of the Romex described above using the extra space created by the transfer break being lower.

Cont/ p25



Always lead your side singleton

I have noticed so many times players being lucky enough to be dealt a singleton (non-trump) against a suit contract and finding a reason not to lead it. Yet it is almost always right to simply lead your singleton. Common reasons given for not leading a singleton that I hear a lot are:

'I had an attractive sequence in another suit.'

'I had a natural trump trick, I didn't want to ruff.'

'I wanted to start a forcing game.'

With this in mind I wish to share a couple of hands from the recent World Championships in China. You deal as West and pick up:

♠ 6
♥ 7 5
♦ A K Q 9 6 3
♣ 10 4 3 2

Everybody is vulnerable and you decide to open 1♦ (this hand is better than a lot of balanced 12 counts). LHO doubles, partner bids 1♠ and RHO bids 2♥. You pass and LHO bids 4♥, ending the bidding. The auction has been brief:

W	N	E	S
1♦	Dble	1♠	2♥
Pass	4♥		

The Polish player from the eventual winners of the open event was in this position and led a top diamond to take a look at the dummy. Unfortunately, the contract could no longer be defeated. Here was the full deal:



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

South plays 4♥. West leads the ♦A

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

On the singleton spade lead partner wins the ace and gives you a ruff with the ♠9, suggesting you underlead the diamonds – partner can see there is no hope unless you have the ♦AKQ. You ruff the spade, bravely underlead your diamond and take a second ruff to defeat the contract. It is not so hard to imagine this scenario, right?

So how many times was 4♥ by South defeated across four different series in the world championships? Yep – you guessed it – **ZERO**. Everyone led a top diamond.

Here is another example from the World Championships. At many tables the hand below, sitting East, was on lead to 4♥ after an auction which went something like this:

W	N	E	S
	1♣	1♦	Dble ¹
Pass	2♥ ²	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

¹ Showing 4+ hearts, ² Minimum hand with 4-card heart support

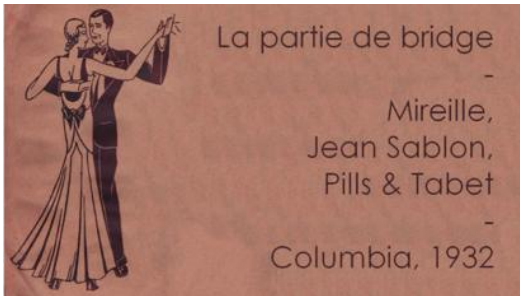
♠ A 8 7 3
♥ A 2
♦ Q J 10 9 8 7
♣ 6



Reflections on Times Passed

Part of my article, *Ancient and Modern* (June 2016), was about the ubiquity of bridge in the literature and popular culture of the first half of the 20th century. Two readers got in touch with me with additional examples.

Dr Roy Caldwell, from Canada, told me about a French song from 1932, *La Partie de Bridge* (The Game of Bridge), sung by Mireille and Jean Sablon. It doesn't just mention bridge, it's *all* about bridge. You can listen to it on the internet.



The full lyrics are up there too. Translated, they include:

***Come and play bridge at our table.
Bridge is a gentle and marvellous game.
Bridge is adorable.***

(*table* and *adorable* rhyme in French, of course) and:

***It's my deal. Come on, cut, cut.
Spade; Two diamonds; Three no-trumps.***

The song also appears on a compilation album called *Now that's what I call Disco* '33. (I have used a bit of poetic licence there, the French title was the more prosaic *Chronique de la Chanson Française* (1933).



Eleanor Stewart drew my attention to the P G Wodehouse short story, *The Best Sauce*, published in 1911. It tells of a paid companion, Eve, who realises (spoiler alert) that she has failed to follow suit.

Terrified of upsetting her gorgon employer, she gets up and insists that Peter Rayner, one of her opponents, should have something to eat from the side-table. Eve slips the offending card into a cheese sandwich and gives it to him. The sandwich is eaten, the card is missed, the game is abandoned, and true love blooms.

Sounds familiar? In a story entitled *The Vanishing Trick* (published in *Bridge in the Menagerie* in 1965) the Hideous Hog, fearful of losing a large sum of money at rubber bridge, conceals a card in his caviar sandwich and consumes the evidence. Maybe Victor Mollo had read the Wodehouse story, or perhaps it is an example of great minds thinking alike.



Wodehouse also had a poem, *A Bridge Tragedy*, published in 1905, in which the writer is left distraught and single because he trumped his loved one's ace. It ends:

***As bride I hoped to claim her,
But now my fond embrace
She scorns. And who can blame her? -
I trumped her only ace.***

I wondered if there was a fictional reference to bridge earlier than 1905? The answer is yes, at least one; *The Bridge Fiend* is a short story, written in the format of a play, by E F Benson (of *Mapp and Lucia* fame). It was published in *The Lady's Realm* in 1903.

Tony Ring, a founder member of The Wodehouse Society, found me a paragraph on Wodehouse's prowess at bridge in an article by his adopted step-daughter Leonora.

I think that you could say that he plays Bridge. Often I say to him: 'But, my sweet, why didn't you lead your ace of spades sooner?' and he answers, coldly: 'I played it the second I found it.' The other night one of his partners, in a furious voice, said: 'Had you any particular reason for your diamond discard, partner?' 'Just a happy accident,' said Plummy, pleased that his play had caused comment.

Ring also directed me to *Jeeves and the Greasy Bird* (1965), which confirms that Jeeves played bridge once a week at his club, the Junior Ganymede. In the short story Jeeves returns early from the club, complaining that he had been twice taken out of a business double, and didn't have the heart to continue.



Grand Slam is a 1933 film about bridge, starring Paul Lukas and Loretta Young. It is 67 minutes long and tells of the exploits of a Russian waiter and his American wife who become the 'Bridge Sweethearts of America'. The main characteristic of the system they promote seems to be being nice to your partner, and thus is perfect for married couples. I am sure that any resemblance to Ely and Josephine Culbertson is not coincidental. You can watch the whole thing on the internet.



Have a look at this treatise on how a whist expert should play. The recommended behaviour would be regarded as extremely unethical at bridge, but described here as gaining a 'legitimate advantage'!

The best chess-player in Christendom may be little more than the best player of chess; but proficiency in whist implies capacity for success in all these more important undertakings where mind struggles with mind. When I say proficiency, I mean that perfection in the game which includes a comprehension of all the sources whence legitimate advantage may be derived.

Our player confines himself not at all; nor, because the game is the object, does he reject deductions from things external to the game. He examines the countenance of his partner, comparing it carefully with that of each of his opponents. He considers the mode of assorting the cards in each hand; often counting trump by trump, and honor by honor, through the glances bestowed by their holders upon each. He notes every variation of face as the play progresses, gathering a fund of thought from the differences in the expression of certainty, of surprise, of triumph, or chagrin. From the manner of gathering up a trick he judges whether the person taking it can make another in the suit. He recognizes what is played through feint, by the air with which it is thrown upon the table. A casual or inadvertent word; the accidental dropping or turning of a card, with the accompanying anxiety or carelessness in regard to its concealment; the counting of the tricks, with the order of their arrangement; embarrassment, hesitation, eagerness or trepidation – all afford, to his apparently intuitive

perception, indications of the true state of affairs. The first two or three rounds having been played, he is in full possession of the contents of each hand, and thenceforward puts down his cards with as absolute a precision of purpose as if the rest of the party had turned outward the faces of their own.

It would be understandable if this had been about playing poker, where grimaces and the like, feigned or otherwise, are acceptable. As an aside: the much-used expression 'poker face' is clearly a misnomer, and would be better named a 'bridge face'.

By the way, the text comes from the first chapter of *The Murders in Rue Morgue* by Edgar Allan Poe, published in 1841.

Our last look at history concerns dates. My campaign to have a hand with two six-card suits called a *Hastings* is going well (it is a *Pure* or *Perfect Hastings* when the hand is exactly 1066). Similarly any 4441 hand is a *Botticelli* and a *Pure Botticelli* when 1444, that being the year of his birth. There have been objections to this, since some websites have him born a year later, but the websites are clearly wrong – 1445 would mean a hand with 14 cards. □

COCHEMÉ IS FUNNY – OFFICIAL



We are so delighted to report that Simon Cochemé has been given the *Alan Truscott Memorial Award* for his humorous articles over the last two decades. The award is one of half a dozen or so that the IBPA (International Bridge Press Association) give every year. The bulk are awarded to journalists for articles on 'best bid', 'best played' or 'best defended' hands.

Interviewed after receiving the award, Simon said, 'I rank it higher than the *Booker/Pulitzer Prize* and just behind the *Nobel Prize*.' No doubt!

Alan Truscott (1925-2005) was a British international and author who went to the States and was bridge correspondent for the *New York Times* for 38 years. The award is given to an individual or organisation for 'something he would have approved of'.

Thank You . . .

Jeremy Dhondy



Jeremy Dhondy has just completed a mammoth six-year stint as the unpaid and overworked Chairman of the English Bridge Union, starting when the NGS was in its infancy and Universal Membership was still a controversial subject. His involvement with the EBU stretches back even further. Let's take a look.

You've been a bridge player since your schooldays. When and how did you begin to get involved with the EBU?

My first involvement was with the Conventions Working Party in 1985, a sub-committee of the Laws & Ethics Committee. It came from the 1980s when applications for new methods flooded in. I later became its Chairman and, in my best move, abolished it as the flood became a trickle. Today's book of regulation on what you can and can't play is half the length it was a decade ago and I insisted that it could not be updated more than once a year.

What have been the main changes over your time?

Sixty or more years ago playing cards at home was common. My first young players championship had three heats totalling 150 pairs. Those numbers have been lost and there are many other activities available. I don't play online games like *Fortnite* but many younger than me do and the amount of bridge in schools and universities has declined sharply. Losing younger players has meant a fall in the number of the more competitive players in the tournament world. Technology has also increased markedly. Playing and getting your results instantly, or perhaps by the time you have driven home, is common. Having someone competent with IT in the local club has become necessary.

What is your legacy?

That's probably for others to say but the EBU is on a sound financial footing and it has a campaign showing the first signs of success to teach more people (with the help of EBED) and get more members to clubs. I'm pleased the EBU is now taking a bit more care maintaining its history and has both a physical and online archive.

How will you spend your well-earned rest?

I shall not be bored. I will still be involved in some bridge matters – developing our archive and playing – but I'll give the politics a rest. A few trips overseas, some to watch test cricket, are on the agenda.

Any words of advice for Ian?

Sally Bugden, the previous chairman, was always there to offer advice if wanted but never interfered. I'd like to aspire to do the same.

Any things to finally note?

If bridge is to survive it must change with technology. It should simplify its regulation. A game can be impenetrable to newcomers if the auction goes 1♣ (may be two, may have five diamonds), 1♦ (alert, shows hearts), 1♠ (intervention, natural, at last), Dble (alert, shows exactly three hearts) etc. The variety of systems played is, in some ways, a curse. Those who write the laws (not the EBU however often they are blamed) need to have an eye to how well they are understood. How many directors in clubs understand the concept of a comparable call?

Priorities for the next 10 years include teaching more youngsters and more in the 50-60 age group. We had 200 juniors when I first became chairman. We have 800 now but France and Poland, for example, measure their numbers in thousands. In both cases with governments far more supportive than ours. □

And Please Welcome . . .

Ian Payn



Ian Payn has been Vice-Chairman of the English Bridge Union for just over six years, so he has a wealth of experience to bring to his new position as Chairman. We shot a few questions at him.

Firstly, congratulations on becoming Chairman of the EBU.

Thank you.

How did you get involved with the EBU?

I had been Chairman of the Young Chelsea Club in London, and after a five year stint, having negotiated a final extension to the club's lease and eased the club back towards solvency (with, of course, a lot of support from others too numerous to mention) I decided it was time to move on. Then I was tapped up by none other than Jeremy Dhondy and things moved on from there. That was in about 2011. In the meantime I have also been Chairman of London Metropolitan Bridge Association.

You seem to be one of life's Chairmen...

Well, that's probably because you wouldn't want me to be the Treasurer.

What's your bridge history?

Well, I've been around quite a long time without making a huge impact. Sure, I've won things from time to time and used to play a lot, so I've become a vaguely familiar face without attracting much attention. I started playing after leaving university, first with friends, then later at the Beckenham BC. That was a very good way to learn, because Beckenham was full of good players who were always encouraging and willing to partner inexperienced players. South East London/North Kent produced a lot of players at that time who went on to play at a high level. I then spent some

time working in bridge clubs – St John's Wood and the London School of Bridge – before leaving to rejoin the real world, where I have been the director of a large barristers' chambers for some while, after a decade or so dabbling in IT.

Where do you play?

I'm a member of a nice club in Battersea (near where I live with my wife, Anne, in Fulham) called the Monday Club. I play in the usual knock-outs and a couple of congresses a year. I also play in the Premier League (strictly Division 2 stuff) and at the time of writing have just qualified for the second stage of the European Open Trials. I don't know who was more surprised by that, my partner, David Burn, or me. Certainly it never occurred to us that our participation would stretch to a second weekend.

And away from the table?

Pub quiz, reading (both fact and fiction), old films, crosswords and sitting around. All chair-based activities.

And what's in store for the EBU?

More of the same, only better. There's nothing fundamentally wrong with the way the EBU is run but there are always issues which have to be addressed. Under my predecessor the Board has always been as progressive as possible, and I want to continue, and if possible improve upon, the atmosphere of openness and accountability we've tried to foster. The Board and I aren't elitist – we're all just EBU members, and we're all in this (whatever 'this' is) together.

Ian Payn. Thank you.



New Prize Leads Quiz

by Alan Mould

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



SEND IN YOUR ENTRY!

Numbers have fallen. Please take part – you have a good chance of winning! Sending an email is easy peasy – but don't forget two answers – teams and pairs. lou@ebu.co.uk

An twin-pack of Piatnik playing cards is the prize on offer. For information on Piatnik cards visit www.gibsonsgames.co.uk/collections/all-cards

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

Entries to the Editor, Leads Quiz,
Raggett House, Bowdens, Langport, Somerset,
TA10 0DD
or e-mail lou@ebu.co.uk
by 31 December 2019.

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

ANSWERS TO OCTOBER'S QUIZ: Page 50

TWO answers - Teams & Pairs

Hand 1

♠ A Q J 8 2
♥ 10 4 2
♦ K 9 7 6 5
♣ –

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

¹ Might have bid 2♥, Michaels.

² Good raise to 3♥ or higher.

A lot of points resting on this lead, so you had better get it right.

Choose from: (a) ♠A; (b) ♠2; (c) a heart; (d) ♦6

★★★★★

Hand 2

♠ Q J 6
♥ A K 10 4 2
♦ K Q 7
♣ Q 8

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

We have bided our time patiently, and have finally pounced on 4♥. Is this simply a matter of how many it is going off, or do we have to get this hand right?

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

★★★★★

Hand 3

♠ 5 2
♥ A K 10 9 7 2
♦ Q 6 5 3
♣ 3

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

Choose from: (a) ♠5; (b) ♥A/K; (c) ♥10; (d) ♦3.



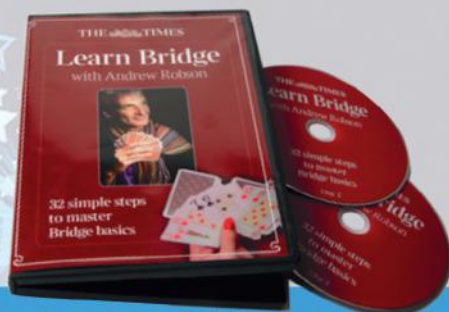
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COMPETITION NEWS

SUMMER MEETING 2020

After a very successful Summer Meeting at the new venue in Eastbourne this year, next year's Summer Meeting will once again be held at the Devonshire Park complex in Eastbourne, but significant changes are planned in response to feedback following the discussion that took place at the event and subsequently on the EBU Tournaments Forum.

The main change is that the weekend events will start earlier and Saturdays will finish at about 7pm, allowing time for a leisurely meal, daily commuting or a theatre visit. There will also be changes to the mid-week schedule, which will be announced as soon as they have been finalised. We hope to see you there.

ONLINE KNOCKOUT TEAMS

Entries are now open for the Online Knockout Teams, the only EBU competition played exclusively online. For teams of four, from a squad of six all of whom are members of their own federation and a majority of one of the 'home unions'. There is a Plate competition available for teams which lose their first match, so everyone is guaranteed at least two matches.

Entries close – 13th January 2020.

MASTERS PAIRS AND NATIONAL PAIRS

Encouraged by the response to the changes this year to the Masters Pairs, which gave the opportunity for clubs across the country to hold heats, we have decided to incorporate similar changes into the National Pairs competition.

Whatever your ranking there is a competition for you. If you are ranked below Regional Master then you might be eligible to play in the Masters Pairs.

If you fancy something a bit more challenging, why not try the National Pairs, which has regional trophies and prizes and is also part of the Player of the Year Championship.

If you would like your club to host an event for either of these competitions please contact nick@ebu.co.uk.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

■ DECEMBER 2019

- 20-22 Channel Trophy, Utrecht
- 27-30 Year-End Congress, ILEC, London
- 28-30 Blackpool Year-End Congress

■ JANUARY 2020

- 3-5 Midland Counties Congress, Solihull
- 3-6 European Open Final Stage & European Women's Stage 1, YCBC, London
- 4-5 Manchester Congress
- 10-12 Camrose Trophy, 1st weekend, Scotland
- 11-12 Lady Milne Trial Stage 1, YCBC, London
- 12 Essex CBA Swiss Pairs, Barleylands
- 13-16 British Winter Sim Pairs
- 17-20 European Women's Trial Final Stage, YCBC, London
- 25-26 National Point-a-Board Teams, YCBC, London
- 25-26 Lady Milne Trial Final, West Midlands BC
- 25-26 Chester Congress, Chester
- 31-4 European Senior Trial, YCBC, London

■ FEBRUARY 2020

- 3-6 Junior Squad Sim Pairs
- 5-11 Overseas Congress, Rome
- 7-11 European Mixed Trial, YCBC, London
- 15-16 Junior Camrose & Peggy Bayer, Wales
- 15-16 Tollemache Cup Final, venue tbc
- 21-23 Harrogate Spring Congress, Harrogate
- 29-1 Ranked Masters Pairs, venue tbc
- 29-6 EBL Winter Games

■ MARCH 2020

- 1 Masters Pairs
- 6-8 Camrose Trophy 2nd weekend, N. Ireland
- 7 Bedfordshire GP Swiss Pairs
- 9-12 Club Stratified Sim Pairs
- 13-17 Olympiad Open Trial, YCBC, London
- 13-15 Norfolk Congress
- 15 National Pairs Regional Finals
- 20-22 Cumbria Congress, Keswick
- 21-22 Hampshire Congress, Otterbourne
- 29 Portland Pairs, various venues

■ APRIL 2020

- 3-5 Really Easy Spring Break, Wroxton
- 3-5 Devon Congress, Torquay
- 3-7 Olympiad Mixed Trial, YCBC, London
- 6-9 British Spring Sim Pairs
- 10-12 Northern Easter Festival, Ilkley
- 10-13 Easter Festival, ILEC, London
- 17-19 Lady Milne, Coventry
- 18-19 National Pairs Final
- 18-19 Portland Bowl Final, London
- 24-3 Lambourne Jersey Festival of Bridge,
- 24-28 Olympiad Senior Trial, YCBC, London
- 25 Garden Cities Regional Finals
- 25 Staffs & Shrops Congress



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ILEC, West Brompton, London



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

Blackpool Year-End Congress

28 – 30 December
Blackpool Conference Centre & Spa



Stratified Swiss Pairs
Stratified Swiss Teams
Mixed or Open Pairs – BP

National Point-a-Board Teams

25 – 26 January
Young Chelsea Bridge Club



Weekend of Point-a-Board.
Qualifying rounds – Saturday
Finals – Sunday
Enhanced Green Points in finals

Player of
the Year

Overseas Congress

5 – 11 February
Hotel Quirinale, Rome



Swiss Pairs, Swiss Teams
Open Pairs – BP
Men's, Ladies', Mixed Pairs – BP
Pivot Teams – BP

Harrogate Spring Congress

21 – 23 February
Cairn Hotel, Harrogate



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

Ranked Masters Pairs

29 – 1 March
venue tbc

For 2020, for purposes of movements, Premier Life Masters merge with Life Masters, and National Masters with Regional Masters. All groups have separate ranking lists, trophies and prizes.

Separate competitions for:

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

Masters Pairs

1 March
For players below Regional Master
Regional Venues

In 2020 the Masters Pairs will be held at host clubs. Entry fees will be set by the clubs, so cheaper than previous years. Clubs retain part of entry fees, so you're supporting your local club. List of venues and entry information at www.ebu.co.uk/masters-pairs#clubs



Trouble at the table

Martin Silverman wrote: I came across a situation recently that I had not experienced before, and would be grateful for some clarification. I was declarer in a 3NT contract, and at trick nine, my left hand opponent was on lead. He tabled his cards, stating that he would take the ♠A and the ♦K and concede the last three tricks. His partner then said that he did not accept his partner's concession. The director was called and a judgement made in the opponents' favour. I am not challenging the decision, simply interested in your take on the matter. The issue concerned left-hand opponent's reason for the concession, which was that he had miscalculated the position of the final two spades.

The defenders are allowed to claim but they should be careful. If one defender claims a number of tricks and concedes the remainder, there are a number of possible continuations:

- ❖ The defender's partner immediately objects to the concession: there is no claim or concession. There is unauthorised information, and the TD should be called; but play continues. (Law 68B2);
- ❖ Declarer (or dummy) suggests that play continues, and all four players agree. Play continues but now there is no unauthorised information. (Law 68D2 (b));
- ❖ Declarer objects to the claim, play ceases and the TD rules on the claim. (Law 70);
- ❖ Neither side object to the claim and concession, play ceases and the board is scored. (Law 69A);
- ❖ Neither side object to the claim and concession at the time, and play ceases. Later, one side or the other objects to the claim or concession, and the TD has to rule on agreement withdrawn (Law 69B) or concession cancelled (Law 71).

In your case, the objection appears to be immediate so the director should have allowed play to continue (first option). But the director appears to have ruled as in the last option – the defenders are still entitled to tricks they were bound to win (on any normal play of the remaining cards.)

Goodie Gill asks: I opened with 3♦ as East, South said Pass, my partner (West) examined his hand and approached the box and touched the green [Pass] card but he did not pull it. Instead he instantly pulled out the 3NT card and placed it on the table. N/S objected. What is the correct ruling please?

A call is not made unless the card is taken out of the box (clear of the other cards). Touching a card does not make the call.

West is allowed to make up their mind and bid 3NT. East has unauthorised information from the dithering but this is of no consequence here, because East will pass and become dummy.

Peter Dawson asks: Opponent opens 1♣ and you, the next caller, jump bid to 2♥. Is this type of jump overcall alertable? Obviously, it may be weak or strong depending on your system.

I looked under alerts in the Blue Book, but could not identify it. Please would you direct me to the appropriate place.

Natural jump overcalls are neither alerted nor announced, regardless of strength (weak or intermediate or strong).

It is hard to point to a regulation that a call is not alertable: natural bids are only alerted if the meaning is unexpected (Blue Book 4B1(b)) – no strength of jump overcall is regarded as unexpected.

World Championships

by David Burn



click
link

Bronze medal at Venice Cup

The English women's team usually progresses through a tournament by starting very badly in the qualifying round robin phase, gradually gaining momentum before losing to someone hopeless, then beating a couple of good teams and finishing in a comfortable qualifying spot. In a break with tradition the team in the 2019 Venice Cup in Wuhan, China, started very well before gradually losing momentum, recovering by beating a couple of hopeless teams, getting thrashed by someone good and finishing in a comfortable qualifying spot. Not that it matters much how you get there – the main thing is to reach the knock-out stages, after which you will face three very good opponents in 96-board matches over two days.

At the end of the round robin the top three teams in turn choose their opponents from the teams who finished 5th to 8th. There are two infallible rules in these circumstances.

- ♣ Rule 1: Never pick the Netherlands.
- ♣ Rule 2: If your choice of opponents is between the Netherlands and God, see rule 1.

China chose Japan, surprising but very worthy qualifiers who found the experience and power of the host nation altogether too much. Norway chose the Netherlands, and duly lost. Poland chose

England, leaving USA-1 to face Sweden, a draw neither team would have wanted in which the Europeans overcame an early and significant deficit to prevail by 26 IMPs, having trailed until the final nine boards.

England made steady progress against a Polish team who entered the tournament with realistic hopes of a medal. The following deal was an English gain that need not have been. When England were East-West this was the bidding:

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

West	North	East	South
Dhondy	Dufprat	Senior	Zmuda
1♣ ¹	1♠	2♥	2♠
3♥	Pass	4♥	All Pass

¹ 2+ clubs, balanced or natural

Cont/. . .



On the podium. England's bronze medal-winning Womens team. From left Gillian Fawcett, Catherine Draper, Nicola Smith, Heather Dhondy, Yvonne Wiseman, Nevena Senior, David Burn (NPC) and David Gold (Coach)

South led a spade to dummy's ♠A and Nevena Senior faced an uphill task that became worse when she ran ♥J at trick two, losing to South's ♥Q. It is difficult for a defender when declarer starts by drawing trumps to realise this is what the defence should be doing. If Zmuda had returned a heart Senior would have found the mountain too high, but South played a second round of spades. Now Senior did well to appreciate her only chance – ruffing the spade in dummy, she immediately ducked a club to South's ♣9. Belatedly Zmuda played a trump, Senior drew the rest and ran the clubs, taking four tricks in that suit, four trumps in her hand, ♠A and a spade ruff on the table.

At the other table West did not open, and the Polish pair stopped in 3♥. The play took a convoluted course – declarer's first move on winning dummy's ♠A at trick one was to call for a low diamond. Yvonne Wiseman as North ducked smartly (though playing standard signals she did not put in ♦9) and Nicola Smith, in with ♦10, found the expert shift to ♥Q. Declarer won that, ruffed a spade, ruffed a diamond, ruffed a spade (re-promoting South's trump trick), ruffed a diamond, cashed ♥K and threw North in with a spade to lead a club away from the... jack. Down one, 10 IMPs to England, who won the quarter-final by 217-165.

China, as round robin winners, had the right to determine the match from which their semi-final opponents would come. Debate centred around whether they had violated Rule 1 above by choosing the Norway-Netherlands encounter, and indeed they trailed for a couple of segments before turning on the after-burners and winning very comfortably. That left England to face Sweden, which turned out to be worse than facing a hurricane – 40 IMPs behind after the first set of 16 boards, England could do nothing against the controlled aggression and technical excellence of their opponents. Even when it looked as though the tide might turn...

E/W Game. Dealer North.

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

The Swedish East-West bid to the excellent but doomed 6♠, declarer losing an extra undertrick in her frustration after two club finesses had lost. Maybe England could stay out of slam? Indeed they could:

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

¹ constructive, about 9-11 with six spades,
² good 5♥ bid

The only trouble with that, of course, was that West was scarcely going to lead the ace of diamonds and when she didn't, 5♥ doubled made for 10 IMPs to Sweden. Most of the pundits, including your author, had made China very strong favourites to retain the Venice Cup on home ground, but after seeing the Swedish performance in this match I was not at all sure any more.

Meanwhile, England were left to fight for the bronze medal against the Netherlands. This is a match nobody really wants to play, but the Dutch are a strong and friendly team against whom we have competed many times over the years. The first set was inconclusive – 43-37 to the Netherlands. The second was better – 89-56 to England. The third was worse – 107-102 to the Netherlands. The fourth was dull – 126-118 to the Netherlands. The fifth and last was nervous – the lead changed hands seemingly on every deal until, with one board to play, the score stood Netherlands 157 – 153 England. Then came:

E/W Game. Dealer West.

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

West	North	East	South
Van Zwol	Senior	Verbeek	Dhondy
Draper	Bruijnstee	Fawcett	Dekkers
1NT ¹	2♠	3♣ ²	Pass
?			

¹ 15-17, ² diamonds

The auctions began identically at both tables, but did not end that way. The Dutch West bid 3NT and nine tricks were duly taken – by the defenders, for 500 to England. Catherine Draper bid 3♦ and

Gillian Fawcett passed it – declarer couldn't quite succeed, but down one was good for a 9-IMP gain and a place on the podium. Sweden won the final by 20 IMPs. What did we know?

♦ ♦ ♦

SILVER MEDAL FOR SENIORS

♦ ♦ ♦

A week before the England Senior team were due to travel to Wuhan for the d'Orsi Trophy, the championship of the world, Peter Shelley very sadly found himself unable to travel for family reasons. It's not easy organising a trip to China months in advance, so for David Kendrick to play with Trevor Ward as a last-minute replacement was a remarkable effort. David Muller and Malcolm Pryor had no experience at this level of any kind – only John Holland and Alan Mould had previous knowledge of what a world championship was like. With the ambition, then, of a respectable performance in the qualifying round the team opened its account by losing to the highly fancied Poland. Then it started winning matches, some of them heavily, and from the half-way stage occupied a place in the top four from which it was never dislodged. That was respectable.

USA-2, who had won the round robin, committed the unpardonable error of picking the Netherlands as its quarter-final opponent (*see the report on the Venice Cup*). It lost. France, a team some of whose members had played in the Bermuda Bowl not all that long ago, chose Denmark and lost by a single IMP. India selected Chinese Taipei and prevailed by the comfortable margin of 3 IMPs, leaving England to face the host

nation. A match that was close all the way, but that England had led throughout, took an unpleasant turn in the dying stages and with three boards left England trailed by 18 IMPs. Then China missed a slam bid by everybody else including England, cutting the margin to 7. In an attempt to recover, the culprits bid a game so bad that even Kendrick didn't attempt it – when it failed, the margin was a single IMP to China. The last board was:

Board 96. E/W Game. Dealer West.

♠ Q 8 5
♥ K 6 4 3 2
♦ 10 9 7 6
♣ 8

♠ J 9 7 3
♥ A Q 8 5
♦ 8 5 4
♣ 5 2

N

W

E

S

♠ A 2
♥ 10 9
♦ K 3
♣ A K 9 7 6 4 3

West

Kendrick

Pass

Dble

All Pass

North

Sun

Pass

Pass

Pass

East

Ward

1♦

2♠

3♣

South

Tao

2♣

3♣

Cont/. . .

On the podium. England's silver medal-winning Seniors team. From left John Holland, Trevor Ward, David Kendrick, Alan Mould, Malcolm Pryor, David Muller, David Jones (NPC)

Photo: World Bridge Federation

www.ebu.co.uk

December 2019 English Bridge 37

Declarer lost a trick in each suit and made his contract, for 110 to China. That looked a solid result, but the Chinese East player at the other table was in range for his side's 1NT opening. Nobody had anything to contribute to the auction after that, and Mould, as South, led three rounds of clubs. East ran ♥J, losing to the king, and Holland returned a diamond rather than the spade we all saw would immediately beat the contract by two. Palpitations eased when we realised that a diamond would have the same effect even if declarer judged to go up with the ace – when he finessed instead, he was down three for 300 and a 4-IMP victory to England. That was respectable.

USA-2 had chosen, if it won its quarter-final, to play the winners of England-China. This meant we now faced the Netherlands while India took on Denmark. The latter prevailed by a comfortable margin in the end – a set the Indians won 57-12 brought the margin down to 11, but the Danes retaliated by winning the next set 56-3 and were never in any serious trouble. England broke on top against the Dutch, 16 up after two segments, but the third was 72-27 to the Netherlands and England was adrift by 29. In the most one-sided session of the entire event England took the fourth set by 87 IMPs to 8. You had to admire the Dutch pair on the wrong end of a serious battering:

Board 96. E/W Game. Dealer West.			
<div> <div>♠ 9 7 5 4 2</div> <div>♥ 10 9 3</div> <div>♦ J 10 9 2</div> <div>♣ 10</div> </div> <div> <div>♠ Q 3</div> <div>♥ A Q J 7 2</div> <div>♦ K 6 4</div> <div>♣ A K 8</div> </div> <div> <div>♠ A K 8</div> <div>♥ 6 4</div> <div>♦ Q 8</div> <div>♣ Q 9 6 5 4 2</div> </div> <div> <div>♠ J 10 6</div> <div>♥ K 8 5</div> <div>♦ A 7 5 3</div> <div>♣ J 7 3</div> </div>			
<div> <div>♠ A K 8</div> <div>♥ 6 4</div> <div>♦ Q 8</div> <div>♣ Q 9 6 5 4 2</div> </div>			
West	North	East	South
Holland	Mulder	Mould	Vergoed
1♥	Pass	1NT	Pass
4NT	All Pass		

The scores were level at this point; 'slam on a finesse', people tend to shrug, but in 6♣ you may make even if North has ♥K as long as he also has ♦A (one of those Morton's Fork things, left as an

exercise for the reader). When England missed it the momentum appeared to have been halted, until:

West	North	East	South
		1♣	Pass
1♥	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♦ ¹	Pass	2NT	Pass
3♣	All Pass		
¹ Relay, intended to establish a game force			

I don't know which of the Dutch players was actually at fault in their system. I do know that not a word of reproach was uttered – all East said when the screen went up was "Nice dummy, partner." England won the semi-final going away, a respectable performance.

An almost disbelieving England team took their places at the final table on the final day against Denmark, a side who wouldn't necessarily have expected to be there either, but who had shown great character and no little skill. They showed a lot more of both when they won the first set by 43 IMPs, a combination of ill fortune and misjudgement yielding four large swings and a couple of small ones in the minus column with only bits and pieces in reply. You might or might not find this one in the opening lead problems section of the magazine at a future date:

♠ 10 4	W	N	E	S
♥ A 5		1♣ ¹	Pass	1♠
♦ K 10 6 5 3	Pass	2♣	Pass	2NT ²
♣ J 8 5 3	Pass	4♣	All Pass	
¹ May be short, ² forcing				

It's considered uncouth these days to bang down unsupported aces. No one ever got rich leading from four to the jack, while a diamond away from the king is risky and a trump may do serious damage to partner's ♠Qxx. But if you don't lead anything you'll lose the match on slow-play fines, so the English West went for the risky diamond. Declarer made the contract, as he would have done on a spade lead also – only the vulgar ♥A or the impoverishing club would get you a plus score. At the other table they played the other way up, and partner led an untroubled club from ♣1092.

England stuck to their guns – 14 back in the next set, 11 in the one after that, a small loss in the fourth followed by a larger win in the fifth left the Danes with 9 IMPs of their early lead going into the last

Cont/ p44

Bridge Apps

tested out by Jonathan Clark & Kripa Panchagnula

Digital Playing



A couple of issues ago we looked at apps designed to teach bridge. This time around we are looking at the various ways to play bridge online, and who better to put the apps and websites through their paces than two of our U26 stars - Kripa Panchagnula and Jonathan Clark.

IBRIDGEPLUS



This is a one-player app, just playing against robots. It is only available on iOS devices, but there is a similar app called WizBridge+ which is available on all mobile devices. There are four game modes: teams, Chicago, rubber and duplicate. The last option is the only version in which your scores are compared against other people which is also done anonymously.

SYSTEM: 5/5

The app comes with a multitude of systems that the robots can play, ranging from various types of Acol to 2/1, strong club to some basic continental standard systems and you can play whatever tickles your fancy. Each system comes with a detailed pdf which can help you decide what to play but all the bids are explained during the auction too. You can also set different systems for you (NS) and opponents (EW) to play.

ACOL: 5/5

The app comes with seven different kinds: basic, standard, intermediate, advanced, Swiss, Benji and

'Bernard's Acol Bidding' so you can choose to play whatever you are comfortable with!

COST: 3/5

You can get 16 boards for free which can be replayed over and over. Batches of 100 hands can be bought for £0.99 a go which are device specific but once exhausted they are removed. Lifetime access to all 2.6 billion deals, which are synced across devices, can be purchased for £13.99.

NAVIGATION: 4/5

It is very easy to navigate; all the buttons are fairly self-explanatory and neat.

DESIGN: 5/5

Text comes in two styles: modern (sans serif) or classic (serif). The colour scheme and various other settings can be customised to your preference.

BIDDING AI: 3.5/5

Usually good, but the bids have pretty wide definitions so it can sometimes be tough to judge the right spot. It also doesn't cue bid that often and won't always pre-emptively support you. If you happen to protect in the pass-out seat, it sometimes thinks you have more than you do so you can end up too high or in the wrong strain.

CARD PLAY AI: 4.5/5

This can be customised to low, medium or high simulation so it is good. Defensive carding can be customised to however you prefer: reverse and standard attitude and count, discards etc.

EXPLANATIONS

All bids in the auction are explained if you click on them.

Overall mark: 4.3/5

App store rating: 4.4/5

Google Play rating: Not available on Google Play

BRIDGE BASE ONLINE



Probably the most used online bridge playing app, BBO is available on all laptop and mobile devices. Mostly used for playing with and against people, it can also be used as a one-player game and scores compared against friends or strangers in challenges. The other feature is watching Vugraph, where international events across the world are shown online.

SYSTEM: 3/5

Most people will play 2/1 or SAYC but you can come across all kinds of weird and wonderful systems. If you want to only play with and against Acol players, there is a special Acol club which can be navigated into, but there might not be tables in play or it may be slow to fill.

Robots will only play 2/1, and for a detailed description there is a system file online which includes its carding agreements. However, there is no need to read the bidding section (unless you want to!) as the bids are described when the robot bids and your potential calls are described as you hover over your intended selection.

COST: 4.5/5

One of the best features about BBO is that it is free to use. However, if you would like to play against robots (bidding practice is free), you will have to put some money on your account. Basic is \$1 per week, advanced \$1 per day. Juniors can get them for free if they email: aurora@bridgebase.com and provide some form of identification.

NAVIGATION: 3/5

It is intuitive. There are several links but only a few ever need to be used, and there is not much difference between the main and relaxed bridge club.

DESIGN: 3/5

The laptop version recently changed to become more in line with the mobile app, but the old one can still be accessed. There are a few customisable settings, but these are only to do with how the cards are shown (pictures/diagram) or auto play singletons and sound effects etc.

MANNERS: 4/5

Usually pretty good but, as in real life, you can come across some unpleasant people. The main complaint is not playing fast enough which can be taken out of proportion as some people are just a bit impatient and don't let declarer think, but this doesn't happen too often.

BIDDING AI: 3.5/5

The robot's bidding is a tad old-fashioned; it will get you in the right spot most of the time, but if you try to be clever or make a bid without checking its description correctly the auction could get out of hand. It also doesn't cue bid often, so you will miss out on some good, low point count slams.

CARD PLAY AI: 3.5/5

The difference between basic and advanced robots will be the number of simulations they make before playing a card. They will lead 4th best, small from xxx, passive vs NT and shortage vs suits. These rules are almost religiously followed so not returning the suit you led at trick one is fairly normal! They play standard attitude and count, but nothing on discards. However, given that the simulations are double dummy, it will do seemingly bizarre things like leading a stiff K offside or solving a 2-way finesse position as it assumes declarer will always get it right.

EXPLANATIONS

With the robots all bids are explained – you just need to hover over them. Some may not mean what you expect! Against people, bids are self-alerted, and partner cannot see this until the end of the hand.

Overall mark: 4/5

App store rating: 2.7/5 (very wide ranging, most low ratings due to bugs in previous versions)

Google Play rating 4.1/5

BRIDGE CLUB LIVE



BCL is available to play through its website – there is no dedicated app. It is also the only one reviewed which contains no robots. The hands are played live, against other real people and scored up instantly.

SYSTEM: 4/5

When you sign up, you can tick various systems that you are able to play, and this is attached to your profile. This allows you to play with compatible partners.

COST: 3/5

There is a free version, which only allows you to enter the Bridge4Free MPs room. Here you can play up to 96 hands a day and eight boards gets you on the leader board. There are two paid subscriptions: social (£36/year) which gives you access to more rooms, comment boards, emailed results, coaching, full hand records including the bidding and play at all tables; full (£72/year) which allows more system disclosure and entry to various IMP/MP tournaments and gives you a rating which works similarly to the NGS.

NAVIGATION: 2/5

There are a lot of links, but very few need to be used. Once in the bridge room, you can sit at an empty seat, or choose to spectate (see all the hands) or kibitz (select one hand).

DESIGN: 1/5

The lobby page (before joining a table) is very cluttered, but it does filter tables with empty seats to the top. The right-hand side of the page has a results section and a chat section neither of which can be minimised even while playing hands (the results section becomes the bidding box during the auction).

MANNERS: 4/5

Generally pretty good, the website does have an ethics policy and members violating it can be

warned or removed from the site if deemed severe enough.

EXPLANATIONS

The website generally follows the WBF alerting rules (these can be found in the main hub, before entering the lobby or bridge rooms) and you must alert partner's bids much like you would at the table.

Overall mark: 2.8/5

App store rating: only playable through website
Google Play rating: only playable through website

SYNREY

Available on computer and mobile devices, this is another app where you can only play against robots but compare your scores against other humans. There are various game modes: IMP challenges (12 boards), MP challenges (12 boards), tournaments, robot challenges (two boards) and friend challenges.

SYSTEM: 2.5/5

The robots only play 2/1, but there is a detailed convention card online.

COST: 3/5

The daily challenges are free and coming in the top few people will earn you some coins which can be spent on buying robot challenges which can be sent to friends and tournament entries. Coins can also be bought in the following way: 25-\$0.99, 135-\$4.99, 300-\$9.99, 1650-\$49.99, 3300-\$99.99.

NAVIGATION: 4/5

This is very easy as there are only a few options to go through to start playing.

DESIGN: 4/5

Quite nice, very clean as there are very few options, but can't be customised.

BIDDING AI: 4.5/5

Usually better than basic BBO robots as the auctions are more cooperative, but you can be punished for taking some aggressive actions. There is a limit on how far you can deviate from the bid description – for example it won't let you open weak 3s on 0 counts, even in the third seat.

Cont/...

Sometimes they will also remove you from 3NT for no apparent reason to 4♣/♦. Perhaps it thinks you don't have enough stops, but beyond that it is good.

CARD PLAY AI: 4/5

They lead 4th best and give standard attitude and count, and suit preference in some situations. At MPs, they will always cash out when it's right but at IMPs they may let a few overtricks through. However, they can also solve a few guesses for you when you lead up to honours, as they like to rise in front of them.

EXPLANATIONS

All bids are explained – click for a description.

Publisher's comments

Synrey bridge aims to make it easy for beginners to learn bridge. It has 'Trick-Taking Bridge' and 'Mini Bridge'. Those two games help more than 100,000 beginners a year learn bridge in China.

Overall mark: 3.7/5

App store rating: N/A, Not enough reviews

Google Play rating 4.2/5

BRIDGE V+

Bridge V+ is available on Android, iOS & Windows 10. Users play against AI which is internal to the app itself, so no internet connection is required. Users can play either rubber scoring or Chicago using any of the two billion preloaded hands. Users can play the same hands as each other using a hand ID code.

Additionally, for bridge learners, the app has an auto-bid/play option designed to allow players to focus solely on one area of their game and the app allows the player to request hints/take-backs at any point in the bidding or play.

Bridge V+'s engine has been taught in an 'organic' way. They use hand simulations to test their bridge engine, and make alterations if they are found to improve the engine's performance.

SYSTEM: 2.5/5

If you uncheck all the system settings, the app plays 4-card majors, 16-18 NT and strong twos. It



also plays Stayman, Gerber, Blackwood, and Strong Jump Shifts by default.

In the app options you can toggle: 5-card majors, Weak NT, Jacoby transfers, Weak 2s, Strong 2♣, and 11-12 2NT for both you and the opponents.

ACOL: 2.5/5

The app gets most of the basics of Acol right with a few notable exceptions. For example, doubling a weak NT is for takeout; bidding 2♥ over 1♠ can be done with four hearts and a side four-card minor.

COST: 5/5

Free but with video adverts after every hand or £5.99 for full access with no ads.

NAVIGATION: 5/5

There are two different game modes – rubber and Chicago. Navigating between them via the home screen is quick and easy. Conveniently, the game settings and design settings can be accessed easily while playing a hand.

DESIGN: 3/5

You can customise the suit order and card order of your hand, and whether you want the program to move trumps to one side of your hand once they've been chosen.

The page is a little crowded (the screenshot was taken on a 5.8" screen) and during the card play cards go onto multiple lines. You can change this in the settings so the cards stay on one line, at the cost of them being more bunched. That said, if you play on a PC or tablet, overcrowding is not a problem.

BIDDING AI: 2/5

While the program will reach reasonable contracts most of the time, there are some situations in which it struggles, namely raising partner's suits preemptively and trusting partner's judgement (for example when it had a weak opening hand and a seven-card minor, it would remove my 3NT to 4♣/♦). On occasion, in uncontested auctions, the program will land in the wrong strain at the game level and you can take big penalties.

Stylistically, you may be interested to know that the app doesn't count points for a singleton honour unless it is an ace. This decision was made based on their hand simulations.

CARD PLAY AI: 3/5

Like most bridge AI, the robots make frequent errors, particularly by under-leading honours into

your tenaces, and not cashing out correctly in defence. The latter may be because the robots don't play count signals. In terms of agreements, the bots play 4th highest leads, K from AK, otherwise top of sequence, top of doubleton. Standard attitude.

EXPLANATIONS

Explanations are given for the robots' bids and for your own bids after you make a call. If the call was not what you intended you can use the take back feature to replace your bid with a different call. The explanations include the point count of the hand and the number of cards promised in the suit bid.

Overall mark: 3.3/5

App store rating: 4.1/5

Google Play rating 3.9/5

FUNBRIDGE

Funbridge is a mobile and PC-based application. Unlike the other main bridge apps, Funbridge users always partner and play against the program's AI. Their scores are then compared with other users all of whom held the same hand.

It offers users a variety of play modes including a fortnightly ladder-style league (MP), direct challenges vs friends (IMPs), random practice boards, learning-the-basics boards with written commentary, and difficult board challenges with expert commentary.

SYSTEM: 4.5/5

The app has six distinct pre-set systems for you to choose from or you can opt to set up a free profile where you can choose between four basic system types: Acol, Better Minor, Short Club and Polish Club, and four different NT ranges: 12-14, 15-17, 16-18, 14-16. Regarding two bids, the app can play Strong Twos, Weak Twos, Multi and Muiderberg, Precision 2♣, or Benji. You should be able to play the same system as you do with your regular partner.

The app also lets you customise the responses to your opening bids (WJS, fit jumps, forcing NT), how you bid in competition (Truscott, Lebensohl, Rubensohl), and a few other uncontested auction



conventions such as splinters, checkback and Drury. There are some negative points such as no Jacoby 2NT (though you can play this as 3+ card support and game forcing), and the fact that the app treats responding hands with 5-10 as 'minimum', 11-12 as 'invitational' and only 13+ as game forcing which can't be changed and causes some problems for game exploration.

ACOL: 4.5/5

Overall the app plays and understands Acol bidding very well.

COST: 1/5

€12.99 per month

NAVIGATION: 3.5/5

Navigation is intuitive. The app has separated its features onto separate pages reachable by big navigation buttons from the home page. This set-up avoids cluttering the screen with lots of buttons or text, though it does mean that in order to switch between game modes, or to access your settings, you have to click the home button and start navigating down a different branch of the app from the top.

DESIGN: 4.5/5

There are many features you can customise such as the card back design, whether the deck has two colours or four colours, the card playing sound effects, and whether the program announces each bid, lead, contract, alert, and result as you play.

BIDDING AI: 4.5/5

The robots can understand your bidding quite well but when they bid themselves they are less good. The robots will sometimes jump to final contracts on the balance of probabilities in situations where a human player would often make an asking bid to consult partner. On the other hand, Funbridge has also been continuously updating to remove bugs which users report.

CARD PLAY AI: 4.5/5

Funbridge robots are very good at working out where the cards are, particularly as they are capable of signalling to each other. So, unless the player has misled them in some way, the robots will not make many mistakes near the end of a hand. Earlier on in the hand though, they do make a number of mistakes, particularly when they have little help from the bidding.

Regarding carding, the robots are able to understand effectively a wide variety of signals: Standard Attitude, Standard Count, Reverse Count, and even Suit Preference in a variety of common situations such as when there is a strong suit or singleton in dummy, or when giving

Cont/...

partner a ruff. All the signals can be turned on and off individually in the settings. Tip/flip in software: the AI defenders will give honest count all the time, even in the trump suit, which is very helpful when you need to know if a suit breaks 3-3.

EXPLANATIONS

There are detailed explanations of what every robot bid and player bid means including point count, min/max length in each suit, whether the bid is forcing and what the bid means if it is not natural.

Sometimes the meanings of different bids appear to overlap or one bid may appear to be a subset of another. This doesn't mean the computer will choose between the bids randomly but that the criteria for choosing one bid over another is not always explicit. An example from Acoll would be the 2NT and 3NT rebids after 1M-2m, where 3NT appears to be a subset of 2NT. 2NT is described as 15-19 balanced, but in fact shows any 18-19 balanced hand, or 15-17 balanced with a five-card major (such that there is still room to explore a major suit fit), whereas the more narrowly defined 3NT rebid is 15-17 balanced with no five-card major.

Overall mark: 3.9/5


App store rating: 4.5/5

Google Play rating 4.2/5

SENIOR'S TRIUMPH

Cont/ from page 38

sixteen boards. IMPs changed hands at a furious rate until:

Love All. Dealer South.			
♠ A J 10 9 8			
♥ A 10 7 3 2			
♦ 3			
♣ 7 6			
♠ 7			♠ Q 5 4 3 2
♥ K 8 5			♥ J 9
♦ 9 8 6 5 4			♦ Q 2
♣ K Q J 8			♣ 10 9 4 3
<div style="text-align: center;">  </div>			
♠ K 6			
♥ Q 6 4			
♦ A K J 10 7			
♣ A 5 2			

England played in 3NT by South, not the best spot but despite a club lead and continuation declarer somehow came to eleven tricks. The Dutch were in 6♥, also not the best spot and not without its problems on the lead of ♣K. But South won that, cashed a couple of diamonds to throw a club from the table, played ♥A and another, and later guessed spades to make his slam and take an unassailable lead in the race for the gold medal. The final margin was more than the swing on this board and the Danes were very worthy winners, but of course the English would never bid a slam like that. It wouldn't be respectable. □

World Championships – Open & Mixed teams

England fielded three equally strong pairs for the World Mixed Teams Championship: Sally Brock & Barry Myers, Frances Hinden & Graham Osborne and Fiona Brown & Michael Byrne. Paul Barden was the captain.

On the first two days, England beat Romania, Sweden, Barbados, Morocco and Italy, drawing with India. This put them into 1st place, a position they would retain throughout the entire round robin.

In the medal matches they beat Croatia to get into the semi-finals, but having lost they lost again in the bronze medal play-off. This new category in the World Championships will provide plenty of promise in future years.

The Open team comprised top players Tony Forrester & Andrew Robson, David Bakhshi & Artur Malinowski and Jeffrey Allerton & Chris Jagger. Neil Rosen was captain and Andrew Murphy the coach.

The team reached a qualifying position in the round robin and looked set to trounce the Americans in the quarter finals. After four out of six sets England were leading by an incredible 147 to 82. The Americans put on a terrific show in the last two sets to pull through and win by 195-162.

It was a gutting moment but overall a spectacular result. All the England teams had qualified for the quarter finals. Full match reports by David Bird on these two series can be found online, p67. □

GOLD CUP



The prestigious Gold Cup, organised by Bridge Great Britain, was won by Alexander Allfrey, Andrew Robson, Mike Bell, Tony Forrester, Graham Osborne & David Gold (*pictured*).

They defeated Simon Gillis, Odin Svendsen, Hugh McGann, Tom Hanlon, Glyn Liggins and Espen Erichsen in a tight final. The Gold Cup is the first competition counting towards the EBU's Player of the Year Championship.

GERARD FAULKNER TROPHY



The winners of the Seniors Knockout competition for the Gerard Faulkner Salver are Norman Selway, Brian Senior (Captain), Sandra Penfold, Tony Forrester and Paul Hackett (*pictured, left to right*). In the final, the first time champions defeated the team of Malcolm Pryor (Captain), Alan Mayo, David Muller and Ed Scerri.

ONLINE KNOCK-OUT

The EBU Online Knockout Teams competition has been won by Claire Robinson, Qian Li, Neeraj Tanna, Tony Ye, Siyu Ren & Alex Hydes. They beat the team of James Thrower, Ali Ahmed, Todor Tiholov, Marusa Gold, Szczepan Smoczynski & Tenyu Tenev by 66 IMPs in the final.

Congratulations to all involved and well done to *Team Robinson*. The 2020 competition will start in the new year with entries opening soon.

AUTUMN CONGRESS



The Two Star Pairs, the main competition at the Autumn Congress, was won by Ollie Burgess & Heather Dhondy (*pictured, trophy presented by David Burn, left*). Second placed were Philip Wood & Graham Osborne, and Mike Bell & Ben Norton were third. The Two Star Pairs was the second competition in the 2019-20 Player of the Year Championship.

GREAT NORTHERN SWISS PAIRS



Terry Read & Bob Marchbank won the Great Northern Swiss Pairs title held in Leeds in October. They were comfortably ahead of Tom Gisborne & Sandy Davies, with Fiona

Brown & Helen Erichsen in third place.

The Improvers' Pairs was won by John Ungar & Miranda Hughes. Linda Cartwright & Steve Cartwright were second, and Andrew Pearson & Kathy Pearson were third.

GUERNSEY CONGRESS



The winners of the Swiss Pairs at September's Guernsey Congress were Rune Hauge & Reidar Laland. The pair also won the Swiss Teams playing with Dan McIntosh & Tim

Gauld. The full results can be seen at www.ebu.co.uk/results/759

PREMIER LEAGUE



Janet De Botton's team comprising David Bakhshi, Tom Townsend, Espen Erichsen, Glyn Liggins & Artur Malinowski won the Premier League title for 2019 in early November. In second place were the *Black* team with the *Small* team third. The *De Botton* team will receive an invitation to represent England in one weekend of the Camrose Trophy.

In the Second Division, Tim Leslie, Mike Bell, Michael Byrne, Kieran Dyke & Ben Norton finished first. The *Penfold* team came second.

In the Third Division Paul Hackett, John Sansom, Croz Croswell & Dave Debbage finished in first place, ahead of the *Fegarty* team.

A full match report can be read online, p74

REALLY EASY AUTUMN BREAK



Players enjoyed a delightful stay in Midsomer Norton for the Really Easy Autumn Break. There were sightseeing trips to Bath, Wells, Cheddar, Frome and Stourhead while the sporty ones enjoyed a round of golf.

The next Really Easy break will be the house party at Wroxton, near Banbury in April 2020. For people who have never played in a congress before this is a very gentle introduction. Full results can be found on www.ebu.co.uk/results/764



MAX BAVIN
1954 – 2019

Max Bavin became the Chief Tournament Director of the EBU in 1986, at which point he was already directing at both European and World championships. He then became CTD of the World Bridge Federation in 2003, and deputy CTD of the European Bridge League. He left the EBU at the end of 2012, and retired from his roles with the EBL and the WBF a few years later.

His friend and colleague John Williams remembers 'an amenable and committed colleague who commanded the utmost respect, whose main problem was a stubborn refusal to look after himself, despite the best efforts of all who cared about him: he smoked heavily, his taste in food veered towards the junk variety and he had a life-long devotion to beer), coupled with an aversion to fruit and veg.

'Max was a fine bridge player who loved the problem-solving aspect of the game and welcomed over-complication. I spent a year as his partner for club and county and likened it later to going ten rounds with a monkey in a dustbin (which I think he found amusing). He was hard to please without ever being unpleasant and his main enemy at the table was himself. After his dalliance with me he formed a partnership with N. Ireland's Nick Perceval-Price and they developed a highly complex and artificial bidding system which seemed to lead to endless confusion. At the end of that particular episode he came to the conclusion that he was simply unsuitable as a bridge partner for reasons of temperament, and so stopped playing abruptly.'

Antonio Riccardi, Head TD of the WBF and the EBL, said, 'Among tournament directors Max was always considered the most technically prepared. Whenever I had doubts it was him whom I addressed. His ability to kick off a major pairs competition on time was legendary.'

More delightful recollections about Max can be read on www.ebu.co.uk/biographies/max-bavin



Beat Today's Experts

1. Love All. Dealer South

<p>♠ 10 8 7 3 2 ♥ J 3 ♦ A 3 ♣ A J 9 6</p> <p>♠ A 9 5 ♥ K 8 6 5 ♦ J 7 2 ♣ K 7 5</p> <p>♠ K Q J ♥ A 10 9 7 2 ♦ 5 ♣ 10 8 3 2</p> <p>♠ 6 4 ♥ Q 4 ♦ K Q 10 9 8 6 4 ♣ Q 4</p>			
West Natt	North Urman	East Norton	South Yekutieli
Pass 4♥	Pass All Pass	Dble	3♦ Pass

This time our deals will come from the World Youth Championship in Croatia's Opatija. On this one, England faced Israel in the U26 Swiss qualifying round. Ben Norton competed with a protective double and Shahzaad Natt bid the heart game. At double-dummy, this can be beaten by the lead of the ♦3(!), South winning and switching to clubs. You will not fall off your chair when I tell you that North preferred to lead the ♦A and ten tricks were made.

It was a somewhat lucky game, yes, but even minus 50 would be better than minus 110 for 3♦ making.

West	North	East	South
Zamir	Ye	Toledano	Kennedy
Pass	Pass	Dble	3♦ All Pass

Ami Zamir's pass of the take-out double, without a single trump trick, was poorly judged. 3♦ doubled could not be beaten and England picked up 13 IMPs.

Awards: 4♥ (10), 3♥ (8), 3♦ by South (4), 3♦ dbled by South (0).

2. Love All. Dealer North

<p>♠ A 10 8 6 5 4 ♥ 7 5 4 ♦ 10 6 ♣ J 9</p> <p>♠ 2 ♥ Q 6 3 ♦ K J 9 ♣ K Q 10 6 5 3</p> <p>♠ J 7 ♥ A K J 10 ♦ A Q 4 3 2 ♣ A 4</p> <p>♠ K Q 9 3 ♥ 9 8 2 ♦ 8 7 5 ♣ 8 7 2</p>			
West Norton	North Ferenca	East Natt	South Stefanec
2♣ 3♦ 4♥	Pass Pass Pass	1♦ 2♥ 4♦ 6♦	Pass Pass Pass All Pass

point out how totally hopeless it is to pass on the North cards. Some players have a notebook of excuses why they should not open a weak two. 'I don't like to hold three cards in the other major', 'I like to hold two of the three top honours' and so on. It is losing bridge to give your opponents a clear run on such deals.

Over Natt's reverse, Norton showed his diamond support. He then suggested playing in 4♥. Natt was confident of a spade shortage opposite (he could have cue-bid 5♣ if not) and the splendid slam was reached.

West	North	East	South
Bilusic	Kennedy	Evacic	Ye
Pass 5♣	2♦ ^A 3♣ All Pass	Pass Dble	3♥ 4♣

Stephen Kennedy and Tony Ye have a notebook of reasons why you *should* open with a weak two (or multi) whenever possible. Croatia did not survive the multi opening and ensuing pre-emptive barrage. England scored a well-deserved 11 IMPs.

Awards: 6♦ (10), 6♥/6♣ (8), games (4).

Cont/...

We continue at the quarter-final match between England and Croatia. Before we admire the England pair's bidding, I must

3. Love All. Dealer West

<div> <div> ♠ A 10 8 7 3 2 ♥ 9 7 3 ♦ 9 7 3 ♣ 7 </div> <div> ♠ J 5 ♥ K Q J 8 4 ♦ Q 10 ♣ A K Q 4 </div> <div> ♠ 4 ♥ 2 ♦ A K 8 6 5 4 2 ♣ J 10 5 2 </div> <div> ♠ K Q 9 6 ♥ A 10 6 5 ♦ J ♣ 9 8 6 3 </div> </div>			
West	North	East	South
<i>Duffie</i>	<i>P. Patreuha</i>	<i>Youngquist</i>	<i>J. Patreuha</i>
1♥	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♣	Dble
3♣	4♣	5♣	All Pass

Poland face the USA in another quarter-final match. A 2♦ response would be forcing to game (two-over-one system), so Sarah

Youngquist responds 1NT. Her 2♣ continuation cannot be natural after the failure to respond 1♠ and is normally played as a strong raise of partner's minor. (It may have shown diamonds here, though.) The opponents come alive in spades, where they can make nine tricks. East then closes the auction in 5♣. Eleven tricks are easily made, for +400.

West	North	East	South
<i>Marcinowski</i>	<i>Rosenberg</i>	<i>Sobczak</i>	<i>Kristensen</i>
1♣	Pass	3♦	Pass
3♥	Pass	3NT	All Pass

Marcinowski's opening bid was the Polish Club, usually a 12-14 no trump or a strong club. Over the natural 3♥ rebid, showing 16+ points, East was unwilling to go past 3NT. The bidding died in a spot that was a few miles away from being the par contract.

The American North/South pair reaped a reward for not entering the auction. South led the ♠K and they scored the first seven tricks, gaining 11 IMPs.

Awards: 5♦/5♣ (10), **part-scores** (4), 6♣ (1), 3NT (0).

4. Love All. Dealer West

<div> <div> ♠ Q 6 ♥ J 9 3 ♦ K 10 8 ♣ Q 8 6 5 2 </div> <div> ♠ A K 4 2 ♥ K Q 8 2 ♦ A J 9 7 ♣ 9 </div> <div> ♠ 10 9 7 5 ♥ A 7 ♦ Q 5 4 2 ♣ A 10 7 </div> <div> ♠ J 8 3 ♥ 10 6 5 4 ♦ 6 3 ♣ K J 4 3 </div> </div>			
West	North	East	South
<i>Duffie</i>	<i>Norton</i>	<i>Youngquist</i>	<i>Natt</i>
1♦	Pass	1♣	Pass
4♣	Pass	4♣	All Pass

England met USA in the semi-finals and ran into a hailstorm of adverse IMPs. On this deal Cornelius Duffie's 4♣ rebid was a splinter bid, agreeing spades. Youngquist had


a great fit for clubs, two aces and a useful queen in partner's first suit. Against that, she held a modest 10 points and very poor trumps – only four of them, and 10-high. She judged well to sign off in 4♣. A trump and a diamond had to be lost and USA scored +450.

West	North	East	South
<i>Kennedy</i>	<i>Rosenberg</i>	<i>Ye</i>	<i>Kristensen</i>
1♦	Pass	1♠	Pass
4♣	Dble	Redble	Pass
4♦	Pass	4♥	Pass
4NT	Pass	5♥	Pass
6♣	All Pass		

Kevin Rosenberg's double of the splinter bid was poor, allowing East to redouble to show first-round control. Both England players were then more or less compelled to cue-bid their red aces. Kennedy's RKCB revealed that the ♠Q was missing, but he hoped for the best in diamonds and bid the sub-par slam. As the cards lay, it was one down. 11 IMPs away.

Awards: 4♣ (10), 5♠ (7), 6♣ (4).

5. N/S Game. Dealer West

♠ Q 9 5 ♥ A K 7 6 3 2 ♦ A 7 2 ♣ 5		♠ A 7 6 2 ♥ Q J 9 ♦ Q ♣ A K 9 4 2
West <i>Coppens</i> 1♥ 2♥ 4NT 5NT 6♦ All Pass		East <i>Bijsterveldt</i> 2♣ 4♦ 5♠ 6♣ 7♥

In the other semi-final, Australia faced the Netherlands. Pim Coppens liked his ♦Axx opposite partner's 4♦ splinter bid. He bid RKCB, hearing of two aces and the trump queen. 5NT asked for any side-suit king to be named and 6♦ was a general grand slam try. Niels Bijsterveldt accepted after some


thought, and the grand slam was reached. Coppens won the club lead, ruffed two diamonds in dummy and two clubs low in his hand. When clubs split 4-3, he made the grand slam. If North holds five clubs, there is the additional chance of a black-suit squeeze.

West <i>Spooner</i> 1♥ 2♦ ^A 4♣ 4♥ 5♣ 6♥	East <i>Cooper</i> 1♠ 3♥ 4♦ 4NT 5♥ All Pass
--	---

Andrew Spooner's 2♦ was a transfer to 2♥, and Renee Cooper's 3♥ was forcing and showed genuine heart support. The response to 4NT showed 0 or 3 keycards. East bid a disciplined 5♥, secure in the knowledge that partner would advance with the more generous allocation. When West made no further control bid on the way to 6♥, East did not know enough to bid the grand slam. It was 11 IMPs to the Netherlands on their way to a big win.

Awards: 7♥ (10), 6♥ (8), games (4).

6. E/W Game. Dealer South

♠ A K Q J 8 4 ♥ J 3 ♦ 10 6 ♣ A 8 4		♠ 10 9 6 ♥ K 8 7 2 ♦ J ♣ Q 10 5 3 2	♠ 3 ♥ 4 ♦ A K Q 9 7 3 2 ♣ K J 9 7
West <i>Coppens</i> 3♠	North <i>Duffie</i> 4♥	East <i>Bijsterveldt</i> 6♦	South <i>Youngquist</i> 3♥ All Pass

You may think that South has a textbook

weak-two opening. At favourable vulnerability, with all the values concentrated in the long suit, both Souths opened 3♥. What should East say after partner overcalls 3♠ and North raises to 4♥?

Marc Smith, my co-commentator on *Bridge Base Online*, predicted 6♦. I rather thought that 5♦ would be enough, showing a splendid diamond suit and leaving any further move to partner. Mark Horton, the bulletin editor, agreed with me. Bijsterveldt made the '5♦ or 6♦?' score 2-2 with his leap to the diamond slam. A club was led and all thirteen tricks were made. At the other table Kevin Rosenberg chose 5♦. I expected West to raise to 6♦. Why not? The N/S bidding suggested a heart shortage opposite, and the combined tricks from spades and diamonds would then produce a slam. 5♦ was passed out. No doubt the kibitzers were unimpressed by my crystal-ball gazing.

Awards: 6♦ (10), 6♠ (8), games (4), 4♥ doubled (2).

Well, I can only apologise. The juniors have scored an unbeatable 60 out of 60. Every deal caused a swing at the table, but the good results for E/W arose in the Open Room and therefore counted towards the 60 total. If you add up the scores from the Closed Room pairs, their total was only 20!

TIPS TO REMEMBER

- ❖ A weak-two opening should be mainly destructive, rather than constructive. Make such bids as often as possible and you will see a considerable benefit. Nowadays, some players are willing to open at the three-level with a strong six-card suit.
- ❖ Splinter bids are invaluable in bidding successful, low point-count, slams.
- ❖ If you cue-bid your aces and kings, regardless of your trump quality, your slam bidding cannot be accurate. It is customary to cue-bid aces, below the game level, but you can use your discretion about cue-bidding a king.

Prize Leads Quiz Answers

by Alan Mould



click
link

Answers to October's Problems

This issue, problem one was sent to me by reader Mike Griffiths and comes from a local duplicate, problem two I held (and got wrong!) in a Crockfords match, and problem three was given to me by multiple World and European Champion Nevena Senior.

Hand 1

♠ K 8 7 5 3 2
♥ Q J 10 9 3
♦ 8
♣ 4

South	West	North	East
		1 ♣	2 ♥ ¹
3 ♦	5 ♥	Pass	Pass
6 ♦	6 ♥	Pass	Pass
7 ♦	Pass	Pass	Dble
All Pass			

¹ Weak

Choose from: (a) a spade; (b) ♥Q; (c) ♦8; (d) ♣4

Hand 1: After a wild auction you find yourself on lead against a doubled grand slam. Not many points resting on this then! But we have been here before. The double of a slam unless it is clearly a sacrifice should always be interpreted as Lightner. So the right lead is this:

(a) **a spade: 10 marks.** You expect partner to be void and ruffing this spade. Remember Lightner doubles call for an unusual lead, and usually it is because partner has a void. Somewhat amusingly,

partner actually has the ace and you cash two spades tricks for +500.

(b) **♥Q: 1 mark.** This is close as to whether it is a bigger insult to partner or the opponents. Partner did not make a Lightner double to see you lead a heart, and the opponents do not go around bidding grand slams with a loser in the suit you have bid to the six-level.

(c) **♦8: 1 mark.** This is not any better either. Exactly what is this going to achieve?

(d) **♣4: 5 marks.** If I was defending 6 ♦ without a double, there is an argument for leading a club, which plays partner for specifically the ace, as nothing else works for that lead. I would still lead a spade as that requires less (♠Q and ♣K for example). But here we are defending 7 ♦ *and* partner has doubled. If partner has the ♣A it is hard to believe it is going anywhere (let's face it – they are certainly not void in clubs!) and therefore one off will be fine. With the double, you must lead a spade from your hand.

Pairs Bonus: a spade – 5 marks. For all the reasons given above, a spade is equally clear at Pairs.

SEND IN YOUR LEAD CONUNDRUMS

Email the editor, lou@ebu.co.uk and if suitable, Alan would be delighted to use them.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE WINNERS:

Master: Frances Smith
Ashford



Open: Bomi Kavarana
Tadworth

Sponsored by **Piatnik**



Hand 2

♠ A K 5
♥ J 9 8 5 3
♦ Q 5 3
♣ J 5

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

¹ N/S are playing 5CM, and 2/1 game force.
3NT is alerted and explained as showing a dead minimum 11-13, 5·3·3·2 hand

Choose from: (a) ♠A; (b) ♥9; (c) ♦3; (d) ♣J.

Hand 2: You know a lot about the hand. Declarer is presumably 5·3·2·3 shape and dummy must be at least 5·5 in the minors. And they are close to the values for slam. What therefore should we do?

- (a) ♠A: 10 marks. I suspect many of the readers will get this one right, whereas to date only one expert I have given the problem to has led this. The key I think is your diamond holding, which looks terrible and suggests that left to their own devices declarer will come to enough tricks. At the table it was the only winning lead. Dummy hits with a stiff queen and partner plays the jack! Declarer's spades were 8xxxx. Sometimes the simplest answers are the best ...
- (b) ♥9: 8 marks. This will be safe. There is pretty much no position where it will give away a trick. If it is right to be passive then this would be fine.
- (c) ♦3: 1 mark. Why do you want to help declarer set up the diamonds?
- (d) ♣J: 7 marks. Several experts I have given this hand to have led this, arguing that it may disrupt declarer's communications. I am not so sure about this, and it seems it could be dangerous to me, but I respect their judgement. Hence the relatively high mark. I did not lead a top spade and so let 4NT through, and gained 10 IMPs for my trouble as team-mates bid and made 6♣. Better to have good and lucky team-mates 😊.

Pairs Bonus: ♠A – 5 marks. I would certainly lead the ♠A at Pairs. With this diamond holding declarer could easily have 12 tricks to cash.

Hand 3

♠ 5 3
♥ 8 6 3
♦ K 8 7 3 2
♣ 6 4 3

South	West	North	East
		1NT ¹	Pass
6♣	All Pass		
¹ 15-17			

Choose from: (a) ♠5; (b) a heart; (c) ♦3; (d) a club.

Hand 3: People do not usually bid like this these days, but when they do, they tend to give you horrible lead problems, which is the point. This is a classic punted slam.

- (a) ♠5: 5 marks. It is pretty much random whether you lead a heart or a spade, so I have given both the same mark, but neither is the right lead.
- (b) a heart: 5 marks. As above.
- (c) ♦3: 10 marks. We have been here before – lead aggressively against suit slams. Heck, there could be ♦AK off this contract. And do not tell me that declarer would not have bid 6♣ with an uncontrolled suit because he did! Nevena tells me that nothing beats the hand for sure, but a diamond or a spade puts declarer to a guess at trick one as to which finesse to take; a club or a heart lets the hand through trivially ...
- (d) a club: 1 mark. It is hardly ever right to lead trumps against freely bid slams, and I see no case for it here. It just gives declarer all the time to draw trumps and set up any tricks they need.

Pairs Bonus: ♦3 – 5 marks. I would lead the same thing at Pairs. You may say that this is too aggressive and may give away the overtrick. However, in all the years I have been playing, I have *never* scored above average for the opponents bidding and making a slam, no matter how solid it was or how obvious to bid. You have to go all out to beat slams even at Pairs. You are gambling probably 20% of the matchpoints (a 20% score to a 0% score) on letting through the overtrick against 100% for beating it. □

Heffalump Traps

by David Bakshi



Answers from page 10



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

7NT. West leads the ♠10.

The 7NT contract may not be duplicated at the other table, so careful planning could lead to a positive swing.

You have 11 top tricks, and have the potential to make two extra tricks in diamonds. However, it is worth noting the blockage in hearts. Your main

decisions involve how to play diamonds, and the timing of playing your other winners to avoid being stranded in the wrong hand. Diamonds should provide two extra tricks unless East started with ♦Jxxx or ♦Jxxxx. Does it matter how declarer tackles the suit?

If West has diamond length, then ♦10 and ♦8 will need to win tricks. You should therefore plan to cash the ♦A on the first round then lead towards dummy on the second round. With fewer entries in your hand than dummy, you should win the first trick with the ♠A, then lead the ♦3 to the ♦A. When East discards, you now lead the ♦2 to the ♦8. Before returning to hand for the last time, you should play dummy's ♥A and ♥K, then lead the ♠J to the ♠K. At this point, you should play the ♥Q and the ♥J (discarding the ♣4 and the ♣7 from the dummy). It is now safe to lead the ♦5 to the ♦10, allowing you to make your grand slam.

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

2NT. West leads the ♥4. East wins the ♥A, then returns the ♥J.

You have alighted in a 2NT contract after partner bid a slightly aggressive Stayman to your 1NT opening, so there is a risk you will lose a swing if NS at the other table manage to stop in 1NT.

You start with just three top tricks, but after East wins the ♥A at trick one, you now have a fourth

winner. What lies ahead when East returns the ♥J?

Needing four extra tricks, you should plan to force out the ♣A, but you should not consider risking the spade finesse, as it would not give you the extra tricks that you require.

It may look natural to duck trick two, planning to win the ♥K on the third round, hoping that West cannot gain the lead to cash his last two heart winners (if they split 5-3). However, if East switches to diamonds at trick three, you may lose at least three diamond tricks in addition to two hearts and the ♣A. Assuming West has led his fourth highest heart, it can only be from a four- or five-card holding, since you possess the ♥3. If West wins four hearts and either defender wins the ♣A, then you will only have five losers, so it is safer to win the second trick rather than hold up the ♥K.

Win the ♥K at trick two and play on clubs. West can win the ♣A and cash his remaining hearts, but you can now win any lead and play out your eight winners to make your contract.

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

3NT. West leads the ♠J and East plays the ♠Q.

You have six top tricks, and can win a seventh trick with the ♠K. Extra tricks may be available in hearts or clubs, but which is the best suit to try?

While it can be a good idea to keep your high cards at trick one, East's play of the ♠Q is consistent with a short holding headed by the ♠Q, in which case ducking would allow the defenders to win at least the first five tricks, so play the ♠K to ensure winning a trick with this card if West has the ♠A.

You could now guarantee two extra winners by playing on hearts, but if West has at least four spade winners to cash upon gaining the lead with the ♥A, then your contract will be doomed. However, clubs can provide two extra winners without losing the lead, as long as neither defender started with four clubs. Does it matter how you play the suit?

With no finesse position available, it might not seem to matter, but it is important to take a close look at the spot cards in both hands. If clubs split 3-1, then you might find yourself with an annoying problem on the fourth round. Can you see why?

If you win the ♠K, cash the ♠K (all following suit), then lead to the ♠Q, you can cash the ♠A and dummy's last two clubs will be winners. However, if you still have the ♠9 or the ♠7 as your final club, you will have to win the fourth round of clubs in your hand, leaving you stranded from dummy's fifth club. Once you are aware of this potential blockage, you can avoid this by playing the ♠9 and the ♠7 underneath the ♠A and the ♠Q. You can now play the ♠5 under dummy's ♠6, and dummy's ♠4 will provide your ninth winner.

However, as long as West has not led a singleton heart, then playing low from the dummy might allow you to make your slam even if you have to lose a diamond trick (if West has led away from the ♥K), so playing low at trick one gives you an extra chance to succeed.

If East wins the ♥K, you will have to play the diamonds as described above. However, if you win the first trick with the ♥Q, you can now consider how to play the diamonds to guarantee at most one loser. Your contract will only be in danger if either opponent started with ♦QJxx. How can you guard against this?

You should lead the ♦2 from your hand, and if West discards, you win the ♦K and lead the ♦8, intending to cover East's card. If West plays the ♦Q or the ♦J then you can lead back to the ♦A to guarantee your contract. However, if West follows with the ♦3 (or the ♦7), you have one final choice to make. To avoid losing two tricks if West started with the ♦QJ73, you can simply play dummy's ♦8. If this loses to the ♦J or the ♦Q then the remaining two trumps can be drawn when you regain the lead. If East has no diamonds, then dummy's ♦8 will win this trick. You can now cash the ♦K, and cross to hand to play the ♦A. West's ♦Q will be your only loser. □

6♦. West leads the ♥3.

It feels like you need one more swing to complete a comeback victory, so your partner has stretched to put you into a thin slam. Making your contract could just be enough to justify her optimism and win the match for your team.

If you win the ♥A at trick one, then you will need to avoid a diamond loser, in which case, you would have to cash the ♦K, then lead to the ♦A (hoping for a 2-2 split if both opponents play low on the first round), or decide whether to 'finesse or drop' on the second round if West follows with the ♦Q or the ♦J on the first round.



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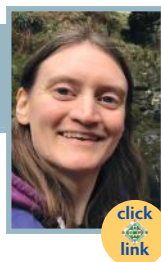
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Amazing Club Number 2

by Samantha Kelly

Tessa Templeton's School of Bridge



Tessa Templeton, owner of her eponymous EBU-affiliated School of Bridge, has one of the highest table numbers per session of any club in England. Based in Chalfont St Peter in Bucks, the club boasts over 20 tables twice a week at duplicate sessions. This is amazing by any standards, particularly for a club which started out of a teaching group meeting in a community centre.

What's her secret? 'A stonking good tea,' says Tessa in a light-hearted manner, but she's only half-joking. It's all part of her determination to honour her tag line: *Our aim is to be the friendliest club anywhere.*

Let's start with the tea . . . Tim Anderson, the EBU's Membership Development Officer, has previously pointed to the convivial and social ambience that a good tea can provide. And Tessa's tea is certainly good. With afternoon duplicate several times a week, the break is hotly anticipated. There's tea and coffee with different hot savouries (chicken pieces on the day I visited, provided by everyone's favourite tea lady, Rose), cheese, biscuits, cakes and other sweet temptations and fruit.

Then there's the atmosphere, help and advice. There is always a host – and often several players turn up on their own. But Tessa goes the extra mile. Every duplicate session has hand commentaries for all the boards played. This is a hugely popular feature for newcomers to the game.

Next, bad behaviour is out of the question. Tessa stresses that a happy social atmosphere is of critical importance. If the new students make friends with each other and with the existing members, they are more likely to join the club and become engaged active members. The members and the team running the show are the heart of the club.

There is a happy atmosphere. The members know that there is a zero tolerance policy on rudeness, and the director is in control of the room. All members are made aware of the *Best Behaviour @ Bridge* guide and the code of conduct expected upon first

joining. These are reiterated at teaching courses and subsequent sessions. The club's philosophy is that if people feel comfortable and relaxed then they are more likely to return.

Tessa feels that it is a good idea to get students playing duplicate bridge as early as possible. It is important to make students feel part of the wider club. This could include a gentle duplicate at the same time as a more advanced session, inviting students to seminars suitable for their level, and asking them on to committees or other roles within the running of the club.

The club is very active – always planning new events. These have included playing in different restaurants around the area for a Sunday lunch and bridge afternoon, and two club bridge holidays a year. There are also seminars and guest speakers. The club participates in the EBU Sims and mini bridge events which are great fun for regular members and new students alike.

Ten years after starting, the club is no longer just for beginners. It's a fully-fledged club with players in the County Leagues and other competitions. Hard graft pays. Well done Tessa. ☐



Tessa Templeton and her students at her eponymous School of Bridge



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Send your letters to the editor, Lou Hobhouse
Raggett House, Bowdens, TA10 0DD, or e-mail lou@ebu.co.uk
The editor reserves the right to condense letters. Publication does not mean the EBU agrees with the views expressed or that the comments are factually correct.

HANDICAPPED GAMES

At Cheltenham Bridge Club, in an effort to enhance the members' enjoyment playing against significantly stronger players, we have tried to level the playing field by operating a handicapped scoring system. This had a great effect with club members securing top positions. However, they are somewhat surprised and disappointed that the results of a handicapped session are not accepted towards the NGS or Master Points system. The former is understandable but I have no answer to why Master Points could not be allocated.

Other sports that run handicapped scoring systems award their prizes in line with the handicapped result. At a time when we are trying to encourage new players to broaden their aspirations and integrate with the wider club programme I find it difficult to understand why we do not have some flexibility in this area. Furthermore, does this inability to formally recognise a handicapped result mean that no competition in the game of bridge should be decided using a handicapped scoring system?

John Faircloth

We are currently looking into running handicapped EBU events, which was one of the suggestions from our EBU tournaments discussion at Eastbourne, and it has been followed up in discussion on the EBU tournaments forum.

Clearly NGS grading can't be based on results that have already been handicapped based on the NGS, but they can be graded on the underlying results. Similarly Master Points can be awarded on the underlying results and indeed they can be awarded for results stratified on NGS if desired. Prizes can be awarded based on any of: raw results; handicapped results; stratified results, as decided by the event organiser.

**Gordon Rainsford,
EBU Chief Executive Officer**

PRAISE FOR THE NGS

I write in praise of the NGS. I care not a great deal about how my grade compares to other players but, from time to time, I do pay attention to how my present rating compares with that of the younger Bob Dowdeswell of, say, eight years ago. I find it comforting that the evidence suggests I am playing at, or close to, the same level.

To paraphrase the words of writer Malcolm Gladwell, it appears that years of gathering experience can offset the

inevitable process of cognitive decline in those same years.

Bob Dowdeswell

ACOL UNVEILED

Many thanks for publishing the first of Chris Jagger's articles defending Acol and the Weak No Trump. The fightback starts here.

Ron Lowe

I see that Chris Jagger advocates the use of a Weak No Trump; as described this is 12-14 points with a not infrequent use of 11 or 15 points. How would you suggest this is announced?

Michael Whiting

'Good eleven to bad fifteen.'

Robin Barker, EBU TD

NO DIARY NEXT YEAR?

I was disappointed to hear that the free diary is to be discontinued for those that don't opt in. It seems rather a harsh decision to exclude so many people for their apathy. No doubt a large percentage of members do not use their diaries and are therefore wasted.

Would it not be a better option to give, as an alternative to the diary, an EBU pen suitably embossed, for those that don't opt in?

Philip H Jackson

Great idea. I suggest 'EBU Apathy Award'

Ed



CONGRATULATIONS to Bredon Bridge Club on their 21st anniversary. Di Davies, founder member and scorer made a cake with edible printed playing cards as icing. Too good to cut, maybe, but Jenny proved as adept with a cake knife as she is with a hand of cards. Other members produced a variety of goodies and wine to celebrate the milestone anniversary. The occasion was also used to honour Jenny Steel, regular director and all-round stalwart, who was made Lifetime President.

CROSSWORD NO 24

Compiled by MERMAN

Answers online, p78

1	2		3	4	5		6	7	8
9	10								
11						12			
13		14							
15			16						
17	18			19			20		
					21			22	
23				24					
	25								
26									

ACROSS

- 1 Stresses space is captured in stages (10)
- 10 My extreme self-importance is shown by each man I go off (8)
- 11 College having issue with public service workers' agreement (6)
- 12 One's left simple space for the congregation (4)
- 13 Unconstrained abrupt discomposure — player shows signs of dyspepsia? (5)
- 15 Stone cold in diamonds (3)
- 16 Most senseless place to lay eggs (7)
- 17 Goes on and on about toads having no honour? (7)
- 20 Businesses that give offence (3)
- 21 For example, get sight of returning birds (5)
- 23 Stone cold at heart, father's got into it (4)
- 24 Animals in miserable game of cards would get upset (6)
- 25 Familiar sign-off in text, one a lot of people embraced here on the Med? (8)
- 26 Made to go farther, English immediately get led about (10)

DOWN

- 2 List of options for university people first (4)
- 3 Sort of ship where those on board get treated (8)
- 4 Look up drug in book (4)
- 5 3 volunteers required to fulfil seasonal role (5)
- 6 Cats fighting fish (7)
- 7 Cockney thieves didn't duck the edge of the roof (5)
- 8 Charming cape and light needed to produce a reasonable state of affairs overall (9)
- 9 What to do with ointment like this House of Lords convention (9)
- 12 Three different players frequently expected to get over what's patently absurd (8)
- 14 Player's not being kept in check so prepare for a change of job (7)
- 18 Computer tree (5)
- 19 Living in exile without Father Time (5)
- 21 Extra slice (4)
- 22 What turned up in the last auction? (4)

CAPTION COMPETITION



Tra la la! Send your new entries for the cartoon above to lou@ebu.co.uk by 28th December, or post to Editor, Raggett House, Bowdens, Langport, TA10 0DD.

Last issue's captions were dominated by Double, Bubble and Trouble. Congratulations to Sherryl Fairweather for my favourite shown below the cartoon. Other close contenders were Alan Evans' *'To wing of bat and tail of newt, add those who fail to follow suit'*. I loved Peter Sturton's *'OK, she was three down, re-doubled and vulnerable, but I still say it's an over-reaction'*; and for something completely different, there was Colin Clark's *'The Disciplinary Committee have upped their game'*.

Prestat donates a box of its very superior chocolates as a prize. The brightly coloured boxes, and the scrumptious contents, are the epitome of good taste – in all the best ways!



Are you sure it was ALL your partner's fault?

PRESTAT



Overseas Congress – Sicily

by Chris Benneworth

The Bridge Overseas Congress was held in October at the Naxos Beach Hotel in Giardini Naxos, Sicily. It was very well attended, with up to 43 tables in play, and I was delighted to see so many players and their non-bridge playing partners making the most of the good weather and enjoying the bridge. In his introduction to the Congress, David Jones emphasised that this was a holiday with bridge, and he hoped everyone would enjoy it that way.

Giardini Naxos, which sits in the shadow of Mount Etna, was the first Greek settlement on Sicily and is imbued with a sense of history. The nearby town of Taormina, perched on a hillside overlooking the Mediterranean, is home to an ancient Greek theatre as well as a pedestrianised area full of shops and bars and thronged with tourists. While we were there, Etna was fairly active and we often saw plumes of black smoke billowing from the volcanic fissures. It was a pleasant walk from the hotel into Giardini Naxos, with its numerous local restaurants, bars and shops. There were two organised excursions: a morning visit to Catania; and a full day trip to Mount Etna and Taormina. Several guests also went to see the spectacular Alcantara Gorge using the hop-on-hop-

off tourist bus, and a number of players visited the opera in Taormina. For fans of the fictional Sicilian detective Montalbano, a small group headed South to visit sites made famous by the books.

The hotel provided a perfect, well-lit playing room next to the dining room, which delighted us with interesting local food and complimentary wine and water.

At the end of a lively Congress, the prize-giving and presentation on Monday evening, with farewell Prosecco, was, as always, a pleasant event. But what made the Congress extra special was that it was the last one that the team of three directors – Marilyn and David Jones and Neil Morley, who have between them over one hundred years of service as panel directors – and Win Morley would be involved in. For the last fifteen years, they have set the standards for the Overseas Congress, with their energy, magnificent organisation and attention to detail. It was fitting that tributes to the four were made on behalf of the board of the EBU and players before they were presented with mementoes of their time working at the Congresses and for the EBU. Marilyn, David and Neil received engraved glassware and Win a silver Celtic brooch. □

Sicily Overseas Congress results on

www.ebu.co.uk/results/763

Photos: Chris Benneworth



View of Taormina from Giardini Naxos



End of an era for directors Marilyn Jones, David Jones, Neil Morley & Win Morley

NEXT OVERSEAS CONGRESS - ROME

5 – 12 February 2020 www.ebu.co.uk/competitions/rome

Many people learn bridge by following the *Bridge for All* series, enlivened in recent times by *Fast Track Bridge*. The latest development sees changes to *Bridge for All Book 1* (the red book) to bring it up-to-date. The new book has been published and is ready to purchase. The accompanying material such as system cards, teachers' notes and hand banks have also been revised and are available to all EBTA members. For a short while the old notes will continue to be available so teachers can switch when it suits them.

Some teachers contributed to the EBTA forum www.ebedcio.org.uk/forum/ and reported some errors in previous editions so apart from anything else the opportunity to correct these errors has been taken but please, if you spot anything the proof readers missed don't hesitate to let us know. They did use the finest of toothcombs. We believe that all hands have 13 cards in them and when it says South leads the ♣A it is actually a card that South holds!

One principle behind the changes is to try and make bridge easier to learn. We have removed some of the evaluative language and simplified it, for instance *a five card suit with two top honours* is better, perhaps, than *a good five card suit*. A second principle has been to get things up-to-date and resemble more what people play in club bridge. Of course there is a lot of variety in England but a learner could play in quite a few clubs before coming across a strong two. Bidding changes over the years. Try finding a player who plays *Fishbein* as

a defence to a three level opener or *Fruit Machine Swiss* or *Cansino* defence to 1NT. All were common in the 70s or 80s.

The main changes to the book are:

- ❖ Guidance that all 12-14 balanced hands, including 5-3-3-2 hands, open 1NT. This means that any balanced hand opens 1NT whether or not it has a five card major or minor.
- ❖ Removal of all references to strong twos. Weak twos in three suits is the system of choice (Intermediate in 4th position).
- ❖ Weak Jump Overcalls replace Intermediate Jump Overcalls.
- ❖ The removal of evaluative language to simplify things for beginners. For example guidance will now be that you need a six card suit to overcall at the two level. The phrase *or good five card suit* has been removed. Hand evaluation is an intermediate skill that can be introduced at a later stage.
- ❖ Some re-ordering of content. The chapter on Stayman now comes before 2NT openings and responses.
- ❖ Guidance on opening 4-4-4-1 hands and making a cue bid opposite a take-out double are now only in *Book 2*.
- ❖ Clarification that you overcall a five card major rather than making a take out double unless you are a very strong (17+).

What will the book of 2025 be like? Comments to the forum welcome. Will it even be a book?



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Daniel Baines, Northamptonshire
Chris Smart, Surrey
Jenny Gray, Wiltshire

Avon

Master

Brian Burridge
Dorothy Hoyle
Tom Nolan
Liz Tracy

Bedfordshire

Master

Pippa Green

Berks & Bucks

Grand Master

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Master

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Master

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Julie Rotchell

Jean Smith

Mary Wheaton

Dorset

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Nick Forrest

Master

Carolyn Blake

Essex

Master

Dorothy Barber
Andrew Black
John Clarke
Diana Funnell
Tim Haubrick
Jose Levy

Gloucestershire

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Peter Waggett

Master

Mariam Gilbert
Marianne Hicken
Dennis Law
Maureen Law
Nicola Renshaw
Elaine Roberts

Hants and I.O.W.

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Brian Medhurst
Michael Yeo

Master

Ray Andrews
Gay Bessant
Antony Blunt
Patricia Emmett
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Master

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Richard Strickland

Isle of Man

Master

Tim Eyre
Jackie Molesworth
Charmian Perston

Kent

Grand Master

Michael Hampton

Regional Master

Ruth Appleton

Angela Treen

Master

David Bartlett
Lyn Bowler
Jennie Cain
Frances Gerth
Tony Owen
Prakash Parekhji
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Lancashire

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William Whalley

Regional Master

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Master

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Master

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James Marchant

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Master

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Paul MacLachlan

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Grand Master

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Life Master

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BELLE OF THE BALL



This wonderful dress was created using nearly 1,000 court playing cards by Children's Hospice South West shop manager Sue Redford who worked in the charity's Tavistock shop. Sue was inspired to get creative when a supporter dropped off 60 packs of playing cards. 'We put a note in the window asking people to donate more packs of cards and it took nearly a year to collect enough,' said Sue. 'Shop volunteers

helped fold the cards and I started attaching them to the fabric whenever I had a spare half hour. The dress took around two weeks to assemble and it formed the centrepiece of our Christmas window display, winning the best dressed window at Tavistock Town Council's Dickensian Evening,' added Sue. She decided to display the dress in the charity's Exeter shop when she became manager of the Sidwell Street branch earlier this year. 'It's had loads of interest in Exeter,' said Sue. 'Lots of people have come into the shop to comment and ask if they can buy it. Someone even asked if they could borrow it to use in a fashion show.'

70 YEARS TOGETHER



Congratulations to Patricia and Maurice Markson who recently celebrated 70 years of marital bliss and bridge harmony at Tenterden BC. Readers may also know the couple from stints around London, Tunbridge Wells and Salisbury.

100 YEARS CELEBRATION



Chichester Bridge Club recently celebrated the 100th birthday of long-standing member Mary Esson with a bridge tea. A regular Saturday player, Mary has enjoyed a rich life as a scientist. She has played with a number of partners, many of whom were there to wish her well.

LEEDS' NEW TEACHING ROOM



Leeds BC officially opened its new teaching room in early September with help from a grant from the Yorkshire Contract Bridge Association. The thriving club has many classes and tutors now have computers to enhance their teaching methods.

Club Bidding Quiz

by Julian Pottage



click
link

Answers to Questions on Page 10

Hand 1

♠ K 5
♥ A Q
♦ Q 9 6 4
♣ Q 8 7 5 4

W	N	E	S
?			

1NT. With plenty of your values in your short suits, including tenace holdings, this is a much better opening than 1♣. You do not want to open and repeat a weak suit if you can help it. The 1NT opening also makes it harder for the opponents to overcall.

Hand 2

♠ 9 2
♥ 10 7 4
♦ K Q 4
♣ K J 10 8 2

W	N	E	S
?		1♠	Pass

2♣. A hand with nine high card points and a good five-card suit is too strong for a 1NT response. Partner would always pass a 1NT response with a balanced 15 and usually with a balanced 16, when often game will have reasonable play.

Hand 3

♠ Q 3
♥ A Q 9
♦ 6 4 3
♣ A Q 9 3 2

W	N	E	S
2♣	Pass	1♠	Pass
?		2♥	Pass

3♦. You have a good hand and want to go to game but cannot yet tell which is the right game. You have no diamond stopper yourself and cannot be sure of better than a seven-card fit in either major. Bidding the fourth suit creates a force and asks opener for further description.

Hand 4

♠ 8 7 5
♥ K J 8 4
♦ J 10 7 2
♣ K 5

W	N	E	S
2♥	Pass	1♥	Pass
?		3♣	Pass

4♥. Partner's 3♣ is a trial bid for game, asking you to evaluate your hand rather than an attempt to play in clubs. You have eight HCP when you might have had five or six and you have four hearts when you might have raised with three. Moreover you have help in clubs. You should definitely accept the invitation to reach game.

Hand 5

♠ Q 9 5 2
♥ A K J 8 6 3
♦ 4
♣ K 4

W	N	E	S
?		4♠	5♦

5♠. While the usual rule is to let the opponents play at the five level, the exceptional distribution on the deal suggests otherwise. Your side has at least eleven spades and the opponents probably have a big diamond fit. If the ♣A is on your right, 5♠ may well be making. If not, it could be a very cheap sacrifice.

Hand 6

♠ A 9 7 4
♥ A Q 2
♦ K Q 3
♣ A K 10

W	N	E	S
2NT	Pass	4NT	Pass
?			

6NT. Partner's jump raise to 4NT is quantitative, inviting you to bid a slam if you are maximum. With 22 HCP you are maximum for a 20-22 2NT opener, the flat shape notwithstanding, and you duly accept the invitation. ☐

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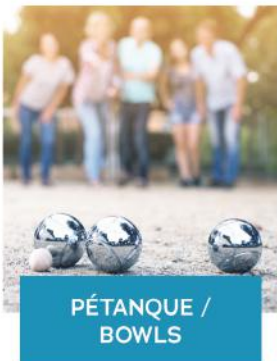
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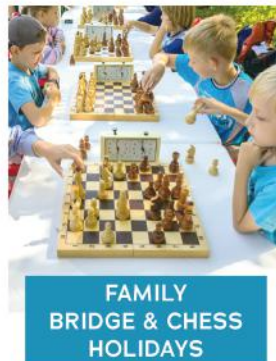
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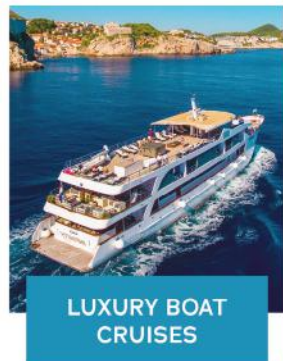
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Hari's Squeeze

It's a wonderful and diverse crew that look after Bridge Club Live, the only online bridge club based in the UK. Nick Justice, our MD and Co-founder, lives in Kent and has a team that includes Berkshire's Malcolm Burch running all our special events and competitions, and Bucks' Ed Scerri ensuring that play is fair. I am the club's TD and I also deal with any behavioural issues. We have a couple in The Netherlands, Phil, our IT guru, and Joke, who deals with member support, and yes, they are one of our several pairs who met and married through Bridge Club Live!

A lady in Switzerland monitors our registrations and acts as our 'bouncer'! Our other Co-founder, Peter, lives in New Zealand and co-ordinates our many player coaches. We also have many helpful members who do their bit for the club of some 3,000, about two thirds of whom live in the UK.

This board came up halfway through a daily 18 board IMPs Pairs set movement:

Love All. Dealer East.

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

♠ 7 6
♥ K Q 9
♦ A Q 10 3
♣ A 8 7 4

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

The auction shown was at my table where I was West against strong opponents. East led the ♠2 and declarer made 11 tricks. It looked like we had deterred our opponents from a slam that was

probably not making, but on inspecting the traveller, we found we had a flat board because two pairs had bid slam and one had made it.

Cue Surrey's Hari Patel in the South seat in 6NT after an unopposed auction and a passive small club lead from West. Taking East's ♣K, declarer finessed the ♠10 at trick two, losing to the ♠K. A club came back and declarer cashed two rounds, noting that they hadn't broken. Three top hearts and two top diamonds were cashed leading to the following position with declarer on lead:

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

♠ 6
♥ -
♦ Q 10
♣ 8

When declarer led the ♦Q, it didn't matter that the diamonds didn't break because West was squeezed and had to throw a spade to prevent declarer's ♣8 from being promoted. Now Hari led his spade and finessed the ♠J and took the ♠A and the last trick with ♠3. Excellent play combining chances. It would have taken a brilliant East to decline to win the ♠K at trick two to break up such a possible squeeze! □

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Funbridge Competitions

by Marc Smith

I, Robot...

Who would have thought that partnering a robot could be so much fun? It's also much faster than face-to-face bridge: you can play a whole 20-board session in less than an hour. The Funbridge robot, Argine, is not that different from a human partner, except that you do not have to sit quietly and watch him play the dummy. On Funbridge, you become declarer whenever North or South wins the auction.

Playing on Funbridge provides plenty of opportunity to hone your card play skills, as declarer and in defence. This deal, from the bi-monthly, matchpointed Series Tournaments, offered just such a chance. It also confirmed that those situations you read about in textbooks also occur at the table. You hold the West cards:

Game All. Dealer North. Pairs – MPs

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

Game All. Dealer North. Pairs – MPs

West	North	East	South
	1♣	Pass	1♥
Pass	2♥	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

You lead a trump. Argine draws three rounds ending in his hand, partner following twice and discarding a diamond. Declarer then runs the ♣J to partner's queen. A low diamond comes back and you capture declarer's queen with the ♦K. Over to you.

What should be clear is that declarer is about to set up dummy's clubs, on which he will discard any losers he may hold. It is imperative that you stop

him. Perhaps you switch hopefully to a low spade. There is just about room for partner to hold the ♠Q, after all. You are nearly right, but the spade you have to play is the king. Take a look at the full deal:

Game All. Dealer North. Pairs – MPs

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

Playing the ♠K gives declarer a trick with the ♠Q, but it also leaves him with nowhere to put his losing diamond. Declarer wins with the ♠A and leads a club to his jack which, of course, you duck. There is now no way for declarer to make ten tricks. Remarkably, +100 was worth just over 98%.

Just like a real opponent, Argine does not play perfectly: declarer here could have succeeded by playing the ♦A or ♦10 rather than the queen. Equally, partner could have beaten the contract by playing a spade when he won with the ♣Q. Just as at a face-to-face table, though, your job is to take advantage when declarer goes wrong and sometimes to rescue partner from his miscues (in the hope he'll do the same for you). □



World Championships

by David Bird



England's Open and Mixed Teams

England fielded three equally strong pairs for the World Mixed Teams Championship: Sally Brock & Barry Myers, Frances Hinden & Graham Osborne and Fiona Byrne & Michael Byrne. Paul Barden was the captain.

On the first two days, England beat Romania, Sweden, Barbados, Morocco and Italy, drawing with India. This put them into 1st place, a position they would retain throughout the entire round robin. On days three and four, they beat New Zealand, Egypt, Canada and Russia, losing narrowly to USA-2 and Poland. On the next two days, they defeated Thailand, Australia, Latvia and France, losing to USA-1 and Denmark. Their last five matches yielded wins against Chinese Taipei, Pakistan and China, with narrow losses to Indonesia and Brazil.

The final leader-board showed: 1st England 311.19, 2nd USA-2 290.83, 3rd China 282.10. They had won by more than a whole match. Magnificent!

The Butler scores provided further good reading: Hinden and Osborne were 3rd overall with +0.71 IMPs per board: Byrne and Brown were 4th with 0.62 IMPs; Brock and Myers were 11th with 0.51 IMPs. All these numbers represent top-class play in a world championship event.

In the quarter-finals, England started badly against Latvia but gradually closed the deficit. Michael Byrne played well here:

West <i>Bethers</i>	North <i>Brown</i>	East <i>Romanovska</i>	South <i>Byrne</i>
		Pass	3♠
Dble	4♠	Pass	Pass
Dble	All Pass		

Janis Bethers led the ♥K, winning the first trick. His ♥J continuation was overtaken by Maija Romanovska, who switched to the ♦10. This drew the jack, king and ace. Even after this helpful switch, Byrne was still faced with losers in trumps and clubs. What could he do?

Declarer ruffed a diamond in his hand, ruffed a heart and ruffed dummy's last diamond. With the red suits eliminated, he played a trump. West won with the bare ♠A and had to play a club from the king or concede a ruff-and-discard. The doubled game was made for +590. Even a heart return by East at Trick 3 would have beaten the game. It would have removed the heart-ruff entry to dummy prematurely, preventing declarer from eliminating diamonds.

The defence was the same at the other table, but the Latvian declarer played a trump, rather than a third heart, after the first diamond ruff in hand. It was 12 IMPs to England. Do you see how the defenders could have removed any risk of an endplay? After playing the ♥K, West might have cashed the ♠A before continuing hearts.

England eventually won the quarter-final by just 182-173, after a strong last segment from their opponents. They would now face USA-1 in the semi-finals.

The Americans played strongly against us and led by 139-81 after the first day. This was a rare ray of sunshine for England, in the fifth set:

Cont/. . .

E/W Game. Dealer East.

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

Diagram: A diamond shape with 'N' at the top, 'E' on the right, 'S' at the bottom, and 'W' on the left.

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



N/S Game. Dealer East.

♠ 9 4

♥ A Q 10 6 5 4

♦ 7

♣ A Q 10 2

♠ Q J 6 3

♥ 7 2

♦ K J 10 8

♣ 6 5 4

♠ K 10 2

♥ K J 9

♦ A Q 9 5 3 2

♣ 3

♠ A 8 7 5

♥ 8 3

♦ 6 4

♣ K J 9 8 7

West <i>Byrne</i>	North <i>Ivatury</i>	East <i>Brown</i>	South <i>Henner</i>
1♦	1♥	Pass	Pass
2♦	Dble	Dble	Pass
All Pass		3♦	Dble

Christal Henner passed at her first two turns. Uday Ivatury showed a strong hand with his second-round double, and South then doubled East's 3♦. What could this mean? Did she intend it for take-out into one of the black suits? East had already indicated spades with her negative double, so it looks better for South to bid 4♣, rather than double. Indeed, some would say that North's double had indicated hearts and clubs, since the other two suits had been shown by East-West. North decided to pass. He led the ♠9, which was run to declarer's ♠10.

Byrne drew trumps and played a second spade from dummy. South rose with the ace and switched to the ♥8. North took two heart tricks and the ♣A, conceding -470.

West <i>Myers</i>	North <i>Brock</i>	East <i>Graves</i>	South <i>Myers</i>
1♦	1♥	Pass	Pass
2♦	3♣	Dble	Redble
Dble	4♥	3♦	3♣
All Pass		5♦	Dble

Myers took the opportunity to indicate his limited values with a redouble, showing clubs and usually a doubleton heart. When Brock bid clubs, Myers cue-bid 3♣ (East's implied suit) to show a strong raise.

The England pair were on their way to 5♣, or maybe 4♥, both of which would have been made. Allan Graves decided to compete with 5♦, and Myers was happy to double. Brock led a trump, declarer winning and drawing a second round. When she led the ♠3 from dummy, South ducked and the ♠K won. Myers won the next spade, cashed the ♣K and switched to a heart. That was +500 and a welcome 13 IMPs to England.

Our team won the last two sets, but USA-1 advanced to the final by 194-166.

England's final match was the bronze-medal play-off against Romania. This team had tied their semi-final with Russia 174-174, only to lose the split-tie because of their earlier loss to Russia in the round robin. Could they recover from this devastating blow?

Sadly for England, the answer was 'Yes, they could'. Romania won the first three sets out of five, to lead by 133-76. England won the last two sets, bidding boldly on several boards in an effort to close the gap. Look at this deal:

N/S Game. Dealer North.

♠ K J 9 3

♥ 10 9 4

♦ 10 7

♣ A 8 7 3

♠ 8 6

♥ J

♦ Q 6 4 3

♣ Q J 10 9 6 5

♠ A 10

♥ 8 7 6 3

♦ K J 9 8 5

♣ 4 2

♠ Q 7 5 4 2

♥ A K Q 5 2

♦ A 2

♣ K

West <i>Osborne</i>	North <i>Ionita</i>	East <i>Hinden</i>	South <i>Stegaroiu</i>
Pass	Pass	3♣	4♣
Pass	4♦	Pass	4♥
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

Marina Stegaroiu's 4♣ showed the majors and Marius Ionita's 4♦ indicated interest in a slam. Hinden led the ♥J against 4♠, declarer winning in the dummy and leading the ♠2. Osborne rose with the ♠A and gave partner a heart ruff, holding the contract to eleven tricks.

West	North	East	South
<i>R Mihai</i>	<i>Brown</i>	<i>G Mihai</i>	<i>Byrne</i>
	Pass	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♦	Pass	4NT
Pass	5♥	Pass	6♣
All Pass			

Brown's 2♦ showed a sound four-card spade raise, Byrne promoting himself into a spade slam. A diamond lead would be deadly, but it is not attractive to lead from a king against a slam. The opponents will have a huge majority of the points and may well hold the ♦A and ♦Q. Radu Mihai chose to lead the ♥8, which was also potentially bad news for declarer.

Byrne won East's ♥J with the ace and led a low trump. West surprisingly played low, although there was no chance on the bidding that East would hold the ♠Q. Dummy's king won and a second round of trumps allowed Byrne to claim +1430.

England closed the gap, eventually losing 190-166. They were disappointed not to have won a medal, but they had participated fully in what had been a fine achievement by our four teams.

BERMUDA BOWL

England fielded a strong team for the Bermuda Bowl: Tony Forrester & Andrew Robson, David Bakhshi & Artur Malinowski and Jeffrey Allerton & Chris Jagger. Neil Rosen was the captain and Andrew Murphy the coach.

Play started with a 24-team round robin. England won their first six matches – against the Netherlands, Egypt, India, New Zealand, Argentina and Russia. They topped the leader board with 92.37 VPs.

On Days 3 and 4, they beat China, Singapore, Indonesia and Israel, losing to Canada and Norway. This left them in 4th place. Days 5 and 6 produced wins against Italy and Guadeloupe, but losses to Australia, Chile, Poland and USA-1. We had fallen to 8th, the last qualifying place. Day 7 added wins against Bangladesh and Morocco, but a loss to Sweden. We were still 8th, with two tough matches to play against China and USA-2. Could England hold on?

Our team played wonderfully well to beat China by 51 IMPs to 35. In the final match against USA-2, they lost two big swings early on, but then. . .

E/W Game. Dealer North.

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

Diagram: A diamond shape with 'N' at the top, 'S' at the bottom, 'W' on the left, and 'E' on the right.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Robson</i>	<i>Fleisher</i>	<i>Forrester</i>	<i>Martel</i>
	1♠	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♣	Pass	4♣
Pass	Pass	Dble	All Pass

Forrester passed on the first two rounds ('with the air of a man going to his own funeral', as Terence Reese used to say). He was rewarded when the Americans climbed to 4♣, which he doubled.

The ♥K lead drew the ♥6 and ♥10 from the closed hands. Martin Fleisher won the club switch with dummy's ♣A. At this point, a low heart would allow declarer to escape for one down. Fleisher preferred to lead a low diamond to the king and ace. He won the diamond continuation with dummy's queen and ruffed a heart in his hand. All roads now seemed to result in two down.

His next move of a trump to the queen was not optimal, West showing out. A diamond ruff was then needed, but declarer opted to ruff another heart. Forrester ruffed the ♣K with the ♠J and removed dummy's last remaining trump with the ace. He was left with ♠65 ♥K ♦J, while declarer held ♠K10 ♣QJ. Because declarer had not ruffed a diamond rather than a heart earlier, Forrester was able to force him twice. The penalty grew to +800.

West	North	East	South
<i>Moss</i>	<i>Malinowski</i>	<i>Lall</i>	<i>Bakhshi</i>
	1♠	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♣	Dble	2♣
Pass	Pass	Dble	All Pass

Malinowski and Bakhshi stopped at a safe level and were doubled there. Justin Lall led the ♥A, switching to ace and another trump. Declarer won

with dummy's queen, continuing with a diamond to the king and ace. A second diamond to the queen was followed by a diamond ruff. Declarer then played good clubs, conceding two trump tricks for +670. The resultant 16 IMP swing more or less assured England's qualification for the knock-out stage. They ended 7th, with USA-1, China and Sweden in the first three positions.

The Cross Imp Scores for the round robin showed Forrester & Robson in 9th place. They had played 256 boards with a splendid average of +0.61 IMPs per board. Allerton and Jagger had played 208 boards at +0.32 IMPs per board. Bakhshi and Malinowski had shouldered the heaviest load of 272 boards at +0.11 IMPs per board.

In the quarter-finals England faced the round robin winners, USA-1. On the first of two days, England played splendidly.

Love All. Dealer South.

♠ A 8 2

♥ A K

♦ 10 4

♣ A J 10 8 6 5

♠ 7 6 4 3

♥ 10 8 6

♦ 9 5 2

♣ Q 9 2

♠ 10 5

♥ Q 5 3

♦ K Q J 8 7 3

♣ 4 3

♠ K Q J 9

♥ J 9 7 4 2

♦ A 6

♣ K 7

West	North	East	South
Rodwell	Malinowski	Meckstroth	Bakhshi
Pass	2♣	2♦	2♠
Pass	3♦	Pass	3NT
Pass	4♣	Pass	4♦
Pass	4NT	Pass	5♥
Pass	6♣	All Pass	

Steve Weinstein and Bobby Levin had stopped in 4♥ but Malinowski and Bakhshi had an excellent sequence to 6♣. Malinowski won the ♦Q lead in dummy, continuing with the king and ace of trumps. He was combining the second-best play in trumps, viewed alone, with the additional chance that he could then dispose of his diamond loser.

Unwilling to rely solely on the ♣Q being accompanied by at least three spades, declarer next

cashed the ♥AK. The ♥Q did not fall, but (for what is was worth) both defenders followed upwards in hearts.

Malinowski crossed to the ♠K and led the ♥7, ruffing in his hand. This ran the risk that East held the ♣Q and no more hearts. If instead West had the ♣Q and no more hearts, he might have been able to ditch a spade from three cards.

It's hard to judge whether the heart ruff was a better idea than simply playing for a discard in time on the spade suit. As the cards lay, both lines would have succeeded. When the hearts broke evenly, Malinowski crossed to the ♠Q and ditched his diamond loser on the ♥J. It was +1370 and a 13-IMP swing for England, who led by 118-55 overnight.

Game All. Dealer North.

♠ A K 3 2

♥ 8 7 5 4

♦ 9 8 3

♣ 6 2

♠ J 10 5 4

♥ Q J 3 2

♦ Q

♣ J 9 8 7

♠ Q 9 8

♥ A 9 6

♦ A 7

♣ Q 10 5 4 3

♠ 7 6

♥ K 10

♦ K J 10 6 5 4 2

♣ A K

West	North	East	South
Allerton	Rodwell	Jagger	Meckstroth
Redble	Pass	1NT	Dble
All Pass	Pass	2♣	2♦

Allerton and Jagger play a weak 1NT throughout. 1NT doubled would have gone five down on the likely lead of the ♦K. When the England pair escaped into 2♣, Meckstroth and Rodwell did not locate a playable game their way. Three overtricks were made for +150.

West	North	East	South
Levin	Forrester	Weinstein	Robson
Dble	Pass	1♣	1♦
2♣	Redble	Pass	Pass
Pass	Pass	3♣	3NT
		Dble	All Pass

Robson won the club lead, crossed to a spade and led the ♦9, East playing the ♦7. What happened next? Nothing, for five minutes! Eventually Robson played the ♦K, dropping West's queen. When he then cleared the diamonds, Weinstein won and tried his luck with ace and another heart. That was two overtricks and +1150 for England. The winning diamond guess had brought in 14 IMPs instead of

losing 12 IMPs. After four sets England led by a huge 147-82.

Everything changed in the fifth set, USA-1 winning by 76-13. Only 2 IMPs of England's lead were intact. The momentum stayed in the same direction and USA-1 won a fine match by 195-162. England had given their mighty opponents a big scare, but it was the end of the road for them. □



Stephen's Defence Quiz from page 18

What would you lead as West after the following auction?

W	N	E	S
			1♠
Pass	2♠	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

And what would you lead here:?

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

W	N	E	S
			1♠
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♦
All Pass			

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

Hand 1. If you didn't lead the ♦2, I would recommend a trip to the opticians. What can I say? Singletons are great. (see David Gold's article on p24)

Hand 2. Leading a singleton is usually a good idea because you might score a ruff. I don't imagine you'll fall out of your chair if I tell you that a club ruff isn't going to help very much on this hand. The ♦J looks pretty routine.

Hand 3. Playing three rounds of spades is too good to resist. A safe lead that should prevent declarer from scoring any unwarranted ruffs. And if a different suit is needed, you can always switch at trick two.

Hand 4. There are many auctions that call for a trump lead, and the most famous is when dummy doesn't show preference at the two-level. Yes. Even away from a king, a trump is still right on this hand. The fact that dummy hasn't shown preference heavily suggests that he is short in spades and will want to ruff a few. Dummy might even have only three diamonds. A trump lead could save two tricks if a second or third trump can be played. If you think you might forget this bead of wisdom, consider the following rhyme: *When second suit agreed, a trump is what you lead.* (Results may vary!) □



Michael's Interference Quiz, from p14

With both sides vulnerable partner opens 1♦ and the next hand doubles - what are you going to say now?

W	N	E	S
1♦	Dble	?	

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

This time you open 1♠ and this is quickly followed by Double, Redouble and a bid of 2♣ on the right. What do you bid now?

W	N	E	S
1♠	Dble	Redble	2♣
?			

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

ANSWERS

Hand 1) Redouble – Start with redouble and take it from there. The deal looks to be a misfit and, with shortage in partner's suit and both majors wrapped up, there is a good chance that you can take a nice penalty when no one can make anything.

Hand 2) 1♠ – This time the main feature of your hand is spades and you want to stress this to partner as quickly as possible. You have a good suit and something in partner's diamonds as well, making the hand unsuitable for defence.

Hand 3) Redouble – This is not so much because you want to double the opponents as it is you have no good bid to make. No trumps is a likely final destination but with no tenace holdings you would like partner to declare.



Hand 4) Pass – Although you were intending to rebid your spades you should not do so now which would carry the impression of weakness. You have a perfectly respectable opening bid and you must see what partner wants to say. If partner doubles for penalty you will be delighted to pass, since they are likely to have a singleton spade.

Hand 5) 2♠ – This time you are weak and unsuitable for defence. Tempting though it is to show your other suit (only joking) you want spades as trumps even if partner is short.

Hand 6) 3♥ – Again you pre-pull to show a weak hand, and you jump to show a very shapely one. You intend to play this hand in game in whichever your best fit is and hope partner's values fit well.

Hand 7) Double – why not!? This is a penalty double and you can see the defence going smoothly, a singleton lead through dummy, a few ruffs and partner switching to a spade through declarer's king when he gets a chance. You would normally have a bit more in clubs for such a double, but doubles of two of a minor risk very little and stand to gain a lot. □



England's finest players

The 2019 Premier League was contested over three weekends – a sturdy test for England’s finest players. We will look at one board from each weekend. *Dhondy* faced *Hinden* here:

Love All. Dealer West.

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

♠ Q J

♥ A K Q 7

♦ A Q 3

♣ A K 10 5

♠ A 10 6 5

♥ 10 9 6 3

♦ J 8 5

♣ 8 2

West	North	East	South
<i>Khandelwal</i>	<i>H Dhondy</i>	<i>Green</i>	<i>Callaghan</i>
2♣	2♦	Pass	3♦
3NT	Pass	4♠	Pass
4NT	All Pass		

Ankush Khandelwal did not expect much from Ben Green's 4♠ bid, because he had failed to bid 2♠ on the first round. He signed off in 4NT. After winning the diamond lead with the queen, he cashed the ♣A and crossed to the ♥J to finesse the ♣10. This lost to North's queen, but declarer now had club communication to his own hand and to the dummy. Dhondy cashed the bare ♠K and declarer scored the ten tricks for +430.

Perhaps something more exciting would happen at the other table:

West	North	East	South
<i>Myers</i>	<i>Osborne</i>	<i>Brock</i>	<i>Hinden</i>
2♣ ^A	Pass	2♦	Pass
2NT	Pass	3♥ ^A	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♣	Pass
4♥	Pass	4♠	Pass
6♣	All Pass		

Barry Myers opened 2♣, which was either a very strong hand or a weak two in diamonds. His 2NT rebid showed 25+ points. Sally Brock showed her spades with a transfer bid and then bid her clubs.

In their system, 4♥ agreed clubs. After a previous misunderstanding in this area, Brock was unsure if they were on the same wavelength. She hedged her bets with 4♠, instead of signing off in 5♣. Myers read this as a control bid and judged that he had enough to bid 6♣.

As the cards lay, only an unthinkable lead of the ♠K would beat the contract! When Graham Osborne led a heart, Myers won with dummy's jack and played a trump to the ace. The ace of diamonds and a diamond ruff were followed by a trump to the king and the ♥AKQ. Declarer then ruffed the ♦Q in dummy and led a spade. If South rose with the ♠A, this would pick up North's ♠K and set up the queen for declarer. When he played low instead, North won and had to lead a diamond for a ruff-and-discard. Away went declarer's second spade loser, and it was a scarcely deserved 10 IMPs to *Dhondy*.

The first weekend ended with *Dhondy* leading the field with 97.01 VPs, 2nd *Small* 80.85, 3rd *Mossop* 77.03.

Our next deal, from the *Hinden-Dhondy* match on the second weekend, featured an inventive opening lead:

Cont/ overleaf



E/W Game. Dealer West.			
<div> <div>♠ 5</div> <div>♥ 2</div> <div>♦ K Q J 9 6 2</div> <div>♣ A K J 7 3</div> </div> <div> <div>♠ J 9 7 6 3</div> <div>♥ Q 8 3</div> <div>♦ 10 7 5 3</div> <div>♣ 10</div> </div> <div> <div>♠ A Q 8 4 2</div> <div>♥ A 10 7 6 5</div> <div>♦ —</div> <div>♣ 6 5 2</div> </div> <div> <div>♠ K 10</div> <div>♥ K J 9 4</div> <div>♦ A 8 4</div> <div>♣ Q 9 8 4</div> </div>			
<div> <div>♠ N</div> <div>♥ E</div> <div>♦ W</div> <div>♣ S</div> </div>			

West	North	East	South
<i>H Dhondy</i>	<i>Allerton</i>	<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>Jagger</i>
Pass	1♦	2♦ ^A	Dble
4♠	4NT ^A	Pass	5♦
All Pass			

Brian Callaghan's 2♦ was Michaels, showing a major two-suiter. Jeffrey Allerton's 4NT indicated a shapely minor two-suiter, with the diamonds longer than the clubs. Jagger gave little thought to a slam, since his major-suit kings might be worth nothing. Well bid! Callaghan led the ♥A and eleven tricks were made. Let's see what happened at the other table.

West	North	East	South
<i>Khandelwal</i>	<i>Brock</i>	<i>Green</i>	<i>Myers</i>
Pass	1♦	2♦ ^A	Dble
4♠	5♣	All Pass	

Brock did not regard a one-card length discrepancy as justification for rebidding 4NT instead of 5♣. Green found the inventive lead of the ♠8. He was hoping that partner could win with the ♠K and give him a diamond ruff.

'Ten, please,' said Brock. Khandelwal covered with the ♠J and may have been surprised when this won the trick. Green ruffed the ♦3 return and cashed the ♥A for the setting trick. The seemingly cold game had gone one down and it was 10 IMPs to Hinden.

In the cold light of day, there seems to be no reason to withhold dummy's ♠K. Still, which of us can say for certain that we would not have played a careless card, thinking the play from dummy irrelevant?

The second weekend drew to a close with *Small*

leading with 165.21 VPs, 2nd *De Botton* 159.39, 3rd *Dhondy* 156.46.

Our final deal, with *De Botton* facing *Black* on the third weekend, featured a difficult bidding decision for North.

N/S Game. Dealer North.			
<div> <div>♠ 10 2</div> <div>♥ J 9 8 7</div> <div>♦ A 8 3 2</div> <div>♣ J 4 2</div> </div> <div> <div>♠ J 8 6 5</div> <div>♥ K Q 6 3 2</div> <div>♦ J 10 5</div> <div>♣ 10</div> </div> <div> <div>♠ K 7</div> <div>♥ 4</div> <div>♦ 9 7</div> <div>♣ K Q 9 8 7 6 5 3</div> </div> <div> <div>♠ A Q 9 4 3</div> <div>♥ A 10 5</div> <div>♦ K Q 6 4</div> <div>♣ A</div> </div>			
<div> <div>♠ N</div> <div>♥ E</div> <div>♦ W</div> <div>♣ S</div> </div>			

West	North	East	South
<i>Townsend</i>	<i>King</i>	<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>McIntosh</i>
All Pass	Pass	4♣	Dble

The bidding question is: what action do you take on the North cards, vulnerable against not, when partner doubles a natural 4♣ for take-out?

Phil King opted to pass for penalties. 'Tosh' McIntosh led the ♦K and continued with a low diamond to North's ace. The ♠10 switch allowed South to claim two tricks in the suit. David Bakhshi ruffed the ♦Q continuation and led a heart, South rising with the ace.

Bakhshi ruffed the heart exit and now had to guess which trump to play. A low trump would save a trick against a singleton ♣A; a trump honour would work well against a singleton ♣J. It was natural to lead a top club, since this would restrict the trump losers to one against a 2-2 break. Two trump tricks were lost and that was four down for a penalty of 800. King had taken an excellent view in the bidding.

West	North	East	South
<i>Hallberg</i>	<i>Liggins</i>	<i>Patterson</i>	<i>Erichsen</i>
Pass	Pass	4♣	Dble
	4♥	All Pass	

Cont/ p78

BLAST FROM THE PAST — August 1969

& further comment by Richard Fleet in 2019

When these questions were set in 1969 they were introduced with the following words: *The problems on bidding have been selected from some set by the Dutch writer Herman Filarski to a top international panel some 20 years ago. The British member was the late M Harrison-Gray. Since the problems all relate to judgement rather than to system the opinions expressed at that time may still hold good today.*

Seventy years after the original questions, let's see how the answers compare today. The comments published in 1969 were not attributed to anyone in particular but it appears that they were written by Jack Marx and Harold Franklin, the Editor of the *EBU Quarterly*, very likely taking account of what Harrison-Gray had previously said.

1 With N/S vulnerable, playing rubber (similar to teams), South holds the hand below. What should South bid next on the following auction:

a) Pass; (b) 2NT; (c) 3♥; (d) 3NT; (e) 4♥?

♠ 3
♥ K Q J
♦ A Q 10 2
♣ A 10 5 4 3

N/S Game. Dealer South.				
W	N	E	S	
1♦	1♠	Pass	1NT	
Pass	2♥	Pass	?	

2NT. Though South had no more convenient rebid than 1NT, the bid still understated his strength. When North makes a second bid South should bid again and the question is whether his second bid should be in hearts or no trumps. If North should be 5-5 in the majors, whatever South's next bid the partnership should reach a heart game. North, however, may have five spades and four hearts and be looking for either a 4-4 heart fit or a 5-3 spade fit, in which case no trumps may well offer the best spot.

In 1949, a 1NT rebid was not (except in the Baron system) as precisely delineated as would be the case for most players nowadays. If the rebid is played as weak, for example in the context of a strong 1NT opening, the suggested rebid of 2NT is reasonable

since opener does have something extra. However, if the rebid shows a relatively strong hand (15-16 or 15-17 HCP), opener has nothing extra and should take the opportunity to pass 2♥.

So, in my view, the correct answer is either Pass or 2NT depending on the North-South understanding regarding the strength shown by the 1NT rebid.

2 With N/S vulnerable, playing rubber (similar to teams), South holds the hand below. What should South bid next on the following auction:

a) Pass; (b) 5♣; (c) 5♥?

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

N/S Game. Dealer West.				
W	N	E	S	
1♠	Pass	2♠	4♥	
4♠	Dble	Pass	?	

5♣. One thing is obvious – South must not pass. With a club fit North-South might even have a slam whereas in defence South cannot count more than one possible trick, and if his partner has top tricks in clubs they may fail to materialise. The disadvantage of bidding 5♣ is that it alerts the opposition to the freakish distribution but the jury was unanimous in choosing the bid.

I was surprised to see that the unanimous view was that the double should be removed to 5♣. If North has a marginal hand such as:

♠K1094 ♥4 ♦A8653 ♣942

North-South are heavy favourites to beat 4♠ whilst a five-level contract, while not hopeless, is relatively unlikely to make. But, if North has a strong hand such as:

♠KQ104 ♥4 ♦AK653 ♣942

4♠ is likely to cost 500 with no improvement to the chances of 5♣ or 5♥ making.

I polled this hand on the BridgeWinners website and there was a 45% vote for 5♣, 37% for Pass (my choice) and 18% for 5♥. There were comments to the effect that this situation might have been anticipated and that 3♥ would have been a better choice on the previous round: there is a lot to recommend this strategy.

3 With N/S vulnerable, playing teams, South holds the hand below. What should South bid next on the following auction:

(a) Pass; (b) Dble; (c) 4♦; (d) 4♥?

♠ Q J 2	N/S Game. Dealer South.			
♥ J 7 6 4	W	N	E	S
♦ A Q J 8 6 3				1♦
♣ —	1♥	Dble	3NT	?

4♥. North's double, especially at the vulnerability, must have been made on very good hearts. East's 3NT bid was clearly made on a solid club suit and a diamond guard. Consequently there should be a play for 4♥ – a spade picture in the North hand may make enough side winners for a cross-ruff game – and South should bid it.

The double of 1♥ was for penalty, of course, not that this necessarily implied a trump stack. In *Why You Lose at Bridge* (1946), 'Skid' Simon's advice was:

'Arrange with as many of your partners as you can to treat all business doubles at the one or two level as purely tentative.'

In this context, I have to say that I fail to see the appeal of the suggested 4♥ bid: do I really want to play in game with a poor trump suit known to be splitting badly?

In addition it is, I think, remotely conceivable that partner might fail to interpret 4♥ as a natural bid and think that we are trying to transmit some esoteric message about our hand.

It may be unenterprising but I would pass over 3NT.

4 With N/S vulnerable, playing teams, South holds the hand below. What should South bid next on the following auction:

(a) Pass; (b) Dble; (c) 4NT; (d) 5♣; (e) 5♥; (f) 6♥?

♠ Q 10 7 5	N/S Game. Dealer West.			
♥ A 6	W	N	E	S
♦ J 7 5	1♠	Dble	Pass	2NT
♣ A 10 9 6	3♠	4♥	4♠	?

Double. South cannot be certain that North holds a six-card heart suit, and even if he does, the risk of a 4-1 trump break (or worse) cannot be disregarded. With one spade loser the odds against

making 5♥ would be considerable. On the other hand the prospects of 500 are very high. 500 as against 650 for 5♥ bid and made would cost 4 IMPs. 5♥ one down would cost 12 IMPs against a 500 penalty. The odds therefore substantially favour taking the penalty.

The suggested double of 4♠ is, in my view, singularly obvious.

5 It is Game All, playing teams. What should South bid next holding the hand below on the following auction:

(a) Pass; (b) Dble; (c) 3♥; (d) 3♠; (e) 3NT; (f) 4♠?

♠ A K 8 3	Game All. Dealer South.			
♥ A J 5 4	W	N	E	S
♦ K Q 9				1♠
♣ K 7	Pass	Pass	2♣	Dble
	Pass	2♠	3♣	?

Pass. Having opened the bidding and doubled for take-out, South must be considered as having done his job (he might of course have opened 2NT, but then we would not have had our problem). The shape is so unattractive that no game is likely, certainly not unless partner bids again. A penalty double would be far too rash since East is likely to have a singleton spade and with all the strength in one hand the defence may be difficult. This too was a unanimous decision.

There is rather an old-fashioned tinge to the bidding of this hand. 2NT would have been fine playing Acol at the time since it showed 20-22 HCP, though slightly stronger in both the other popular natural systems at the time, Baron and CAB. But most players nowadays would, if playing four-card majors and not opening 2NT, opt for 1♥ rather than 1♠.

As the bidding has progressed, it is surely right to pass 3♣: had partner volunteered 2♥, there might have been a case for bidding on but it seems quite likely that there is only a 4-3 fit and game seems a long way away.

Cont/...



6 With N/S vulnerable, what should South bid next on the following auction, playing Pairs:

a) Pass; (b) 2NT; (c) 3♦; (d) 3♥; (e) 4♥?

♠ Q 3
♥ K 10 9 7
♦ A K 3
♣ K J 10 9

N/S Game. Dealer West.

W	N	E	S
Pass	Pass	Pass	1♣
1♠	2♥	2♠	?

4♥. If one discounts the ♠Q, as one may reasonably do, the hand has no more than 14 high card points. If partner has a fair hand it is immaterial whether one bids 3♥ or 4♥. The case to consider is when partner has stretched to bid 2♥, for example with:

♠xx ♥AQxxx ♦xxx ♣xxx

It is difficult to imagine partner being weaker than that and even with so little the game is likely to depend on no more than the position of the ♣Q. The solidity of South's club holding should play a predictable part in the hand.

I agree with the suggested 4♥ bid: there are no guarantees but opener has extra values and good heart support. It should be noted that those playing a strong no trump would have a totally different auction and that others would have opened 1♥, not 1♣. Although it is quite likely that 4♥ will be played by opener at several tables, it is possible that not much turns on this: however, in the event that partner holds the ace of spades, a spade lead round to the queen rather than through it might make a great deal of difference.



The 1969 article ended as follows:

This feature has been by way of an experiment. It would be helpful to know whether readers find the form an interesting one.

In the next issue, it was reported that it had been so well received that it had been decided to continue with the feature, which also included questions on play and defence. Readers who are interested can find the other questions in the August 1969 EBU Quarterly which is available under *Old Magazine Content* in the *Archive and Awards* section of the EBU website. □

Answers to crossword on page 57

1	E	2	M	3	P	4	H	5	A	6	S	7	I	8	S
9	R	10	E	G	O	M	A	N	I	A	W				
11	U	N	I	S	O	N		12	N	A	V	E			
13	B	U	14	R	P	S	T	O	M	E	E				
15	I	C	E	16	I	N	A	N	E	S	T				
17	N	A	T	T	E	R	S	20	S	I	N				
	S	P	R	A	X	21	G	E	E	22	S	E			
23	O	P	A	L	24	P	A	N	D	A	S				
	H	25	I	M	A	S	S	O	L	S					
26	L	E	N	G	T	H	E	N	E	D					

PREMIER LEAGUE continued from page 75

Glyn Liggins preferred to bid 4♥, which was passed out. He won the ♣K lead with dummy's ace, crossed to the ♦A and finessed the ♠Q successfully. After playing the ♠A, he ruffed a spade with the ♥7, East discarding his last diamond.

At this stage the contract can be made by playing a trump. Let's say that declarer runs the ♥8 to West's queen. He can ruff the ♠J return with the ♥9, play the ♦KQ and lead the good ♠9. West is down to ♥K632 and would have to ruff with the ♥K to prevent an overtrick! (If instead West exits with a trump after winning with the ♥Q, declarer cannot be deprived of three further trump tricks.)

Liggins preferred to ruff a club after ruffing the third round of spades. Gunnar Hallberg then defeated the game by overruffing and giving his partner a diamond ruff. Derek Patterson continued with the ♠Q, and declarer was two down when he opted to ruff with the ♥A instead of the ♥5. It was a swing of 14 IMPs to the Black team. The final leader board saw these teams at the top:

- 1st J De Botton, A Malinowski, D Bakhshi,
T Townsend, E Erichsen, G Liggins 246.53 VPs
- 2nd A Black, P King, A McIntosh, G Hallberg,
D Patterson, D Gold, 244.19 VPs
- 3rd C Small, J Cooke, J Cox, P Taylor, 223.42 VPs □