



THE **Bedfordshire Bridge Association** **BULLETIN**

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Declarer Play Quiz

After an aggressive auction and a few cue bids thrown in for good measure, your ambitious partner lands you in 7♠. The ♥K is led. All you have to do now is make it. It looks like there are only 12 tricks on top so what is your plan? (Spades split 3-1)

Answer on page 13

♠ 85
 ♥ A6432
 ♦ 532
 ♣ AKQ



♠ AKQ9732
 ♥ -
 ♦ AQ
 ♣ 7532

YOUR BULLETIN REPRESENTATIVES

| | | | |
|------------------|-----------------|---------------------|------------------|
| Bedford | Pamela Smith | Milton Keynes | Janet Marsh |
| Cranfield | Bruce Kitchener | Olney..... | Pamela Smith |
| Leighton B. | Peter Scott | Wardown..... | Lesley Beardsall |

Bulletin Proof Readers: Alan Cooke and Peter Taylor



Recent Results



28 June
Swiss Teams
Riviera Congress

1st: Alan Cooke & Gary Hyett,
Robert Miller & Bill Taylor 100 VPs

♣ ♦ ♥ ♠ ♣ ♦ ♥ ♠

22 July
EBU Summer Sim. Pairs
Playing at Leighton Buzzard

3rd: Bob Brown & Peter Malpass 69.6%
(1159 pairs competed)

♣ ♦ ♥ ♠ ♣ ♦ ♥ ♠

22 August
BBA Seniors' Teams
Wixams

1st: Paul Kilduff & John Naylor,
Colin O'Hara & Peter Scott +64 IMPs

♣ ♦ ♥ ♠ ♣ ♦ ♥ ♠

Guernsey Congress
10 Sept. Men's Pairs
10 Sept. Multiple Teams

1st: Alan Cooke & Gary Hyett 64.0%
2nd: Maureen & Brian Stairs,
Alan Cooke & Gary Hyett +51 IMPs

13 Sept. Swiss Teams

2nd: Maureen & Brian Stairs,
Alan Cooke & Gary Hyett 171 VPs

♣ ♦ ♥ ♠ ♣ ♦ ♥ ♠

10 October
BBA Mixed Pairs
Wixams

1st: Margaret Codd & Michael Sim 60.2%

♣ ♦ ♥ ♠ ♣ ♦ ♥ ♠

7 November
Seniors' Pairs
Wixams

1st: Peter Coles & Niall Perry 62.5%

Bedfordshire Green Pointed Swiss Pairs

Saturday 7 March 2020 at 12 noon
Wixams Lakeside Village Hall

£21 per person 7 x 7-board matches
See BBA website for more details and online entry

Improver's Corner

with John Hurst



Bridge is a game of detection and deduction

When sitting down to play bridge seriously, try to regard yourself as Sherlock of the Table and try to glean what information you can and use it. For instance, when you have no obvious interest in the bidding, don't (as we are inclined to do at times) sit thinking about what went wrong on the last hand or whether you'll have cocoa or whisky when you get home. It is surprising what information you can deduce, even from the most uninspiring auctions. Then put it to use.

Here is an example to set you on your way: Opponents have bid unopposed from your right:

1NT(12-14)-2NT(11-12) -3NT

an apparently less informative auction is hard to envisage - perhaps. You hold a motley collection of 13 pts. So what is your thought process? With such bidding, you know they almost certainly hold 24 to 26 points. Your first serious deduction is that partner has just 1 to 3 points. Of course, at the same time, partner should be sitting there, looking at his 2 points (say) and deducing that you must have 12 - 14 points. Next, note that the 2NT bidder hasn't used Stayman or a transfer, so he is *unlikely* to have a 4-card major suit (though not impossible).

If you are on lead you should now be using that information to decide which card to choose. Next, think what your objective is. In teams, you are trying to defeat the contract - never mind if you give away an overtrick. In pairs, you are trying to take more (or at least not fewer) tricks than all the other pairs - a forfeited overtrick as declarer can give you a bottom, an extra one - a top.

Let's take a look at your non-descript hand now.

♠AK ♥J843 ♦KJ ♣J10842

(no wonder you didn't compete over 1NT)

* You might be tempted to cash the ace of spades "to have a look at dummy" and possibly to set up a long suit to the queen in partner's hand if you get an encouraging signal and see two or three small ones in dummy. You may strike oil and find partner with QJxx(x).

However, you can deduce that even on that rare day, he has no possible hope of cashing them because you don't have a third one and he doesn't have a possible entry in another suit. Worse, if you do have a suit you can set up, you have almost certainly given away the chance of doing so before declarer knocks out your top cards.

- * Leading a diamond seems the height of folly.

- * The three of hearts is worth a thought. But knowing partner can only have the king or the queen, can it possibly be of benefit? He might just possibly have Qxxxx and declarer have a doubleton ace in one hand and doubleton king in the other - he *might*, but it's extreme odds-on that he won't.

- * **We are left with a club lead.** At least you know it is *your* long suit. Pairs or teams, it seems to have the most to commend it. So which one? Jack or 4th highest? See which I would choose at the end but just note how much we have deduced from apparently minimal information.

Of course, there is no answer that is *right*, One day with this hand, you will find declarer has three small diamonds, responder has: ace singleton of diamonds, six clubs, three hearts and three spades and the star lead is to lay down the king of diamonds. When he does, I would love to hear about it, please send me an email to johnh@heaven.org. I'm sure it will find me. (You may think otherwise.)

My suggested answer:

You decide to lead a club. Let's assume you strike gold and partner turns up with the queen (or the king) and at least one or hopefully two more. With J10842 you may think it is right to lead the jack and in many circumstances it would be a sensible lead from that holding. It is *unlikely* to give a trick away.

The trouble is that if partner does hold Qx, he may not regard it as sensible to play his queen on your jack, so blocking the suit and with Qxx he almost certainly won't play the queen, and you won't know if he has it. If you lead the standard 4th highest, it almost compels partner to play his queen (or king) unless dummy wins the trick. Now the suit can't be blocked and you will usually find out immediately whether he has an honour or not.

But, you may say, you might give away a trick if partner has no honour. True, but only if one opponent has four clubs and partner

lacks the 9; you will lose three top tricks anyway if either has three cards, whichever you lead.

So we have deduced quite a lot from just listening to the most innocuous bidding, adding up points and noting bids that have not been made. We arrived at a lead that many might have made without much thought, but you will derive more satisfaction from having made a logical deduction. Not only that, but if you keep concentrating on doing the counting and thinking, it will become second nature and a lot easier. Unfortunately, I am finding as we age, that the process becomes much harder, and our brains can easily become lazy. But just like your body, the brain will decline much less quickly if you exercise it frequently, and keep you competing with these young under 75 year old beginners.

How Good is Your Defence?

Find out by trying this one from Alan Cooke

You are South in the diagram shown and after you initially Pass you watch the bidding proceed as shown:

♠ 1032

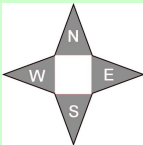
♥ Q943

♦ A94

♣ AQ9

↑

Dummy



♠ A987

♥ A84

♦ Q72

You → ♣ 872

You lead ♣7 and dummy goes down. Declarer ducks the club to partner’s king and a spade comes back. If you win the ♠A, what do you lead back and why?

| West | North | East | South |
|------------------|-------|-----------------|-------|
| | | | Pass |
| 1NT ¹ | Pass | 2♣ ² | Pass |
| 2♦ ³ | Pass | 2♥ ⁴ | Pass |
| 2NT ⁵ | Pass | 3♥ ⁶ | End |

- 1. 12-14 hcp
- 2. Puppet Stayman
- 3. One or both 4-card majors
- 4. Spades
- 5. Minimum with hearts but not spades
- 6. Hearts

Answer on page 13

Quote: “Good partnerships should practice the *Breakfast Review*. Post-mortem the hands (session) the next day when cooler and calmer heads are present.” Robert S. Todd



A Senior Topic

by Jocelyn Shaffer



You meet an acquaintance
Whilst you're out shopping
And though you're in a rush
You can't resist stopping

So what do you talk about?
You've not seen her for years
You're both in your late sixties
And retired from careers

Your life has changed
No more foreign travel
You'd rather watch TV
Though keep changing the
channel!

The current weather forecast
Holds no interest to you

Because it's not important
And doesn't affect what you do

You don't want to discuss
The state of the country
Nor talk about
The earthquake last Monday!

Because when you're at the age
When you've paid off your loans
Your topic of conversation
Isn't i-pads or phones!

Nor the light that had broken
Inside the fridge
No, all you want to talk about
Is last night's bridge!





Red Herrings for Christmas



This year's puzzle from Tim Sharrock

After a traditional Christmas Day feast, the two couples sat down to play a few hands of bridge. "Chicago? With nobody vulnerable on the first of each set of four hands, then dealer vulnerable and then everyone vulnerable on the last of the four?" They agreed to play just 12 hands, to score as if playing their usual duplicate, and to start off playing with their spouses, but then to cut for partners after each set of four hands.



After they had finished, Robert complained that "N/S seemed to have all the cards, but I was never N/S all evening." Alan commented that "The women won handsomely, but it was the luck of the cards." He quickly added "But don't tell them that I said so!"

Robert pointed out to Diana that "In just 12 hands, six slams were bid, although only four of them were made." Diana responded that "Wasn't it a remarkable coincidence that the four successful slams all made just the 12 tricks, were all in trumps rather than no-trumps and were in succession in increasing order from clubs to spades?" "5♦ doubled, succeeding both times. How unlucky is that?" asked Alan. "Lucky for some!" sympathised Chris.

"We are all aggressive bidders," said Robert, "so it's not surprising that we bid to game on every single hand." Privately, however, Alan commented quietly to Robert that "The ladies constantly underbid their cards. When you and I both had Yarboroughs, the ladies really should have been in 7NT. And how on Earth did my wife manage to make only 12 tricks?" Raising his voice to its normal level, he added that "It was not a surprise that 3NT was bid and made on four successive hands – that is everyone's preferred game contract – but it was a bit unusual that no overtricks were made on any of them."

Chris commented to Diana that “I was doing quite well, but it was not until I bid and made slams on four of the last five hands that I knew that I would end up as the winner.” Diana responded with “I’ll bet that your Alan will only grudgingly congratulate you on beating him – the men always like to think that they are superior.”

Alan grumbled quietly to Robert “I had to play twice in succession with my wife – you know how she hogs the bidding.” “Same for me, obviously,” complained Robert, “and I never played with your lucky Chris.”

QUESTION: What was the combined score for the fourth and eighth hands?

*Please send your answers, to arrive before 15 January 2020, to
tim.sharrock1@gmail.com
or by post to:
Red Herrings, Fountains, Park Lane, Blunham, Bedford MK44 3NJ
(or hand them to Tim personally). The winner, drawn at random on
the closing date if there is more than one correct answer submitted,
will receive a copy of Tim’s The Wildlife Quiz Book.*

Try this Christmas Cracker

♠ 9872

♥ AK10

♦ AKQ

♣ 1032

♠ AKQJ1043

♥ 6

♦ 8

♣ 9874

♠ 5

♥ J54

♦ J1053

♣ AKQJ6

♠ 6

♥ Q98732

♦ 97642

♣ 5

After West pre-empts in spades, your partner doubles and you bid directly to 5♣. West leads the ♠A and follows it up with the ♠K. It’s down to you...

Answer on page 27

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 3♠ | X | Pass | 5♣ |
| End | | | |



Making your Slams

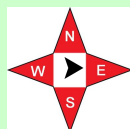
Test your skill with Alan Oddie



Bidding slams in the first place is hard enough, especially in the minor suits. But having produced a brilliant auction to a good contract there is nothing more galling than seeing your partner go off in a contract he should have made. See if you can do better on these deals. They are not easy and become increasingly difficult – the last two particularly so. I suggest you sit down with several glasses of Christmas alcohol close at hand and prepare yourself for a long haul well away from the grandchildren.

1. Game all, dealer East:

♠ 874
♥ KQ84
♦ 52
♣ Q653



♠ AKQ6
♥ -
♦ AKQJ9864
♣ 8

East opens 1♣ and you end the auction by bidding 6♦.

They lead the ♣K. East overtakes with the ♣A and returns the ♣J. What now?

2. N/S vulnerable, dealer South:

♠ KQ42
♥ 9753
♦ AQ
♣ A63



♠ A65
♥ AK6
♦ KJ76
♣ K72

| West | North | East | South |
|----------|-------|------|-------|
| | | | 1♦ |
| 2♠ | X | Pass | 3NT |
| Pass | 4NT | Pass | 6NT |
| All Pass | | | |

West leads the ♠J. When dummy goes down, you have to admire the sort of rubbish that people pre-empt on these days. You win the first trick in dummy and East discards a heart. Eleven tricks are not a problem, but where's your twelfth coming from?

3. Game all, dealer North, you hold as South:

You are playing 5-card majors. With the opponents silent, the bidding goes:

You (South)

♠ AKQJ1084

♥ J75

♦ AK

♣ 7

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

- 1. Agricultural, but you want to find out about the ace, king, queen of hearts and the ace of clubs. Setting spades as trumps first will make that difficult.
- 2. 0 or 3 ‘aces’.
- 3. If it’s 0, we’re already too high, and I’ll shortly be teaching you a lesson on what constitutes a vulnerable opening bid, but in the meantime have you got the queen?
- 4. No queen.
- 5. I was bidding 7NT if you had the queen. For once I’ll take the blame if this goes off. A half decent partner will have the queen of diamonds or the king of clubs.

They lead the ♣K and this is what you see:

♠ 5

♥ AK1042

♦ 963

♣ A864



♠ AKQJ1084

♥ J75

♦ AK

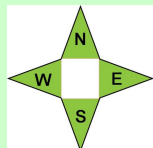
♣ 7

No half decent partner sitting opposite then, but at least he’s got the ♥10, so you can always take the finesse in that suit. We’ve all been in worse grand slams than this.

It can’t do any harm to ruff a club in hand because you might want to ruff another club later in an attempt to leave only one defender guarding the fourth round. West drops the ten on this trick and you cash a top spade. East shows out. The heart finesse might be right, but with West holding all five missing trumps, the odds are against it. Is there anything you can do if East has the guarded queen together with the long clubs?

4. You're in 7♠ with no opposition bidding:

♠ QJ53
♥ AK9
♦ K642
♣ 53



♠ AK107
♥ 63
♦ A8
♣ AKJ98

They lead the two of trumps. East plays the eight. You don't know much about their hands, but West is unlikely to have led a singleton trump for fear of carving up something like ♠Jxxx in his partner's hand. So either the trumps are breaking, or West started with four.

Do you play a second round of trumps, and if not, what do you do instead?

If you play a second top trump from hand, what do you do if they are 3-2?

If you play a second top trump from hand, what do you do if East discards a heart?

As a bit of a clue, I went off at the table and in an attempt to make myself feel better, sent the hand to Andrew Robson, asking him how he would have played it. He went off too. Can you do better?

Answers on page 22

No 'Rising Stars' at the Mixed Pairs

by Alan Cooke

The deal shown is Board 21 from the BBA Mixed Pairs played at Wixams on 10 October. You are East in 6♠. The lead is ♥Q. None of the eight declarers made 12 tricks. Can you do better?

Answer on page 32

| | | |
|-----------|--|----------|
| ♠ 1083 | | ♠ AKQ954 |
| ♥ 4 | | ♥ K9 |
| ♦ K10642 | | ♦ 753 |
| ♣ Q10 32 | | ♣ K5 |
| ♠ J72 | | |
| ♥ A872 | | |
| ♦ AQ9 | | |
| ♣ AJ8 | | |
| ♠ 6 | | |
| ♥ QJ10653 | | |
| ♦ J8 | | |
| ♣ 9764 | | |


Answer to Declarer Play Quiz on page 2

A quick count up of top tricks comes to one short at 12. Looking around at possible sources of a 13th trick, how many can you see? You could take the diamond finesse or hope clubs split 3-3. However, there is a third possibility: the hearts may split 4-4 giving you the 5th heart in dummy if you can reach it.

By playing carefully, you can combine all three chances. If you win the opening lead in dummy, you will not know whether to pitch the ♦Q or a

club from hand as neither suit has yet been tested. So, play low from dummy and ruff in hand. Take out all opposition trumps and then a club to the high honours in dummy. Ruff a 2nd heart in hand and play another club to dummy, ruffing a 3rd heart in hand (are you keeping count?). Now a 3rd club from hand on which West discards, meaning one of your options (clubs splitting 3-3) has evaporated. This is the time to cash the ♥A and hope both opponents follow suit. If they do, your 5th heart in dummy is good and gives you your 13th trick. If either opponent does not follow to the 4th round of hearts (and no hearts have already been discarded on a spade or club), your only remaining option is to take the diamond finesse. This line of play gives you your 13th trick if any of the three available options come good.

Ed.

| | | | |
|-------------|---------|---|---------------|
| | | ♠ 85 | |
| 7♠ by South | ♥K led | ♥ A6432 | The Full Deal |
| | | ♦ 532 | |
| | | ♣ AKQ | |
| ♠ J64 | ♥ KQJ10 |  | ♠ 10 |
| ♦ K1086 | ♣ 104 | | ♥ 9875 |
| | | | ♦ J974 |
| | | | ♣ J986 |
| | | ♠ AKQ9732 | |
| | | ♥ — | |
| | | ♦ AQ | |
| | | ♣ 7532 | |

Answer to Defence Quiz on page 6

Congratulations if you led back a spade. You are an excellent defender and counter of the spade suit. You know declarer has four spades, you have four, you can see three in dummy, leaving partner with exactly two. So you plan to take your ace of trumps on the first round and give partner a spade ruff. Well done.

Alan Cooke

Little Green Man

One of the most valuable assets a bridge player can possess is the knack of asking himself the right question at the right time. Ideally, I would like an invisible friendly leprechaun permanently perched on my shoulder charged with whispering something appropriate in my ear at the opportune moment such as "think about the distribution", or "remember the bidding", or "why didn't partner switch to spades?". I am sure it would be a big help.

On this pairs deal no-one is vulnerable and the auction starts with two passes to me:

♠K 10 6 3 ♥Q J 4 ♦A K Q 10 ♣A 6

I open 1♠ and my LHO jumps in with an unusual 2NT, showing the minors. Partner passes and RHO bids a predictable 3♣. With 19 points

| West | North | East | Me |
|----------|-------|------|------|
| | Pass | Pass | 1♠ |
| 2NT | Pass | 3♣ | Pass |
| Pass | 3♠ | Pass | 4♠ |
| All Pass | | | |

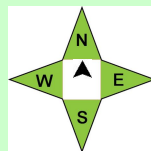
I'm reluctant to pass, but I can't see anything sensible to do, 3NT is unlikely to be a success on a club lead. So I pass, as does LHO, but partner is still there and he competes with 3♠ which I raise to four, happy to have a chance to bid again:

The ♣2 appeared on my left:

East played the king and I won the ace, noting that I now had three top losers. I played my ♥4 in an attempt to get to dummy for a spade lead towards my honours, and that was successful with West and East both contributing low cards.

Dummy's ♠2 went to East's ♠5, my ♠10 and West's ♠A. Later, my ♠K failed to drop the ♠Q and I was one down, losing two spades, a club and the ace of hearts on the layout shown at the top of next page:

♠ J8742
♥ K76
♦ 54
♣ 973



♠ K1063
♥ QJ4
♦ AKQ10
♣ A6

| | | | |
|---------|---------|--|---------|
| ♠ A | ♠ J8742 | | ♠ Q95 |
| ♥ A93 | ♥ K76 | | ♥ 10852 |
| ♦ J9863 | ♦ 54 | | ♦ 72 |
| ♣ Q1082 | ♣ 973 | | ♣ KJ54 |
| | | | |
| | ♠ K1063 | | |
| | ♥ QJ4 | | |
| | ♦ AKQ10 | | |
| | ♣ A6 | | |

It was an uninspired effort by me, I would only have succeeded on the line I chose with ♠A-x on my left and ♠Q-x on my right. The way I played, none of the spade splits with a singleton on my left and three cards on my right would have allowed me to make ten tricks – even dropping a singleton ♠9 was no help as I couldn't get back to dummy to lead a second spade through East's remaining ♠A-Q.

With the actual division of bare ♠A on my left and ♠Q-9-5 on my right, leading the jack fails if East plays low, and also fails if she covers with the queen and I put on the king – in both cases I can't pick up her remaining high spade.

Would a mental dialogue with my leprechaun have helped before I played at trick two? I think so, quite a lot in fact:

Leprechaun: Ah, I see West led a low club and East played the king – presumably West doesn't even have ♣Q-J at the top of his suit, or he would have led the queen

Me: Quite so, and clearly his diamonds lack honour strength too, perhaps he has more extreme distribution than the normal 5-5 in the minors

Leprechaun: Maybe, but you know this particular West might even be only 5-4 for his bid

Me: Indeed – and on balance, regardless of his actual lengths in the minors, I reckon he's likely to have both major suit aces since his long suits are so poor

Leprechaun: What do you think is the likely spade split round the table?

Me: One on my left and three on my right I suppose given the expected ten minor suit cards with three vacant spaces on my left, as opposed to five minor suit cards with eight vacant spaces on my right.

Leprechaun: Agreed and don't forget you will only get to dummy once before all the trumps are played.

A very helpful pattern of thought I would say. By a not-too-difficult piece of reasoning, I could have come up with the twin conjectures that the ace of spades was on my left, and there was also a singleton spade on my left. Not too hard after that to find the winning play of a low spade from hand at trick two. Subsequently, dummy's entry is used to finesse against East's remaining ♠Q-9.

Perhaps bridge really is an easy game after all.

Bridge in Mental Health

By Daisy Smith

They say that as you get older you can't learn new tricks - but Bedfordshire's No Fear Bridge group aims to prove the old saying wrong. It believes everybody, not least those at risk of developing dementia, can benefit from playing the classic card game. Research shows the interaction with others not only builds new friendships, it helps to combat loneliness and maintains good mental health.

Currently 850,000 people in the UK are living with dementia and, with numbers set to rise to over 1 million by 2025, it is as important as ever to help those with dementia stimulate their mental activity. The University of Stirling, working alongside the charity English Bridge Education and Development, discovered that playing bridge has a statistically significant positive effect on wellbeing.

Dementia UK recommends that people should 'stay physically active and mentally stimulated with different activities in order to use different parts of the brain' thus reducing the risks of getting dementia.

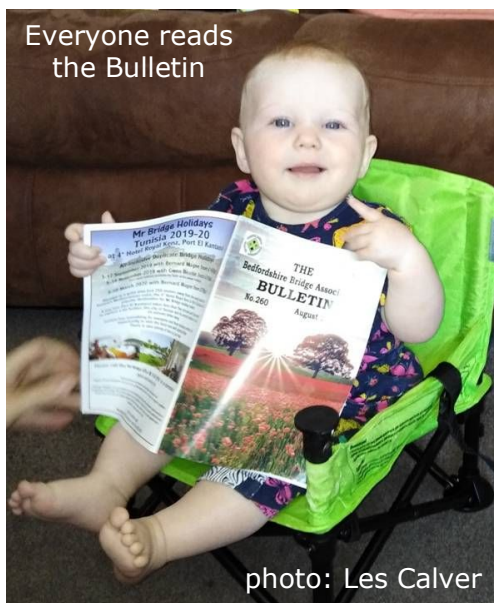
The No Fear bridge community which began in Bedford ten years ago consists of five bridge clubs of approximately 200 active members

with several in their 90s. Their main focus is to help people make the transition from learning the game to playing duplicate bridge. Together with the Bedford Bridge Club, they can offer duplicate bridge on most days of the week at various locations within Bedford. An initiative by these clubs to source a permanent centre for the clubs to share has seen a charity, The Bedford Bridge Centre (charity number 1178914), being formed and they have approached the Bedford Borough Council to help seek a dedicated centre for all bridge clubs to share.

President of No Fear Bridge, Sue Ford, believes that 'social isolation and loneliness is a real and growing problem amongst older people and playing bridge is a wonderful way to make new friendships and enrich your retirement years'. Sue Ford has started a class for beginners at Wixams Retirement Village, encouraging all people to play whilst enjoying the many benefits that bridge brings.

No Fear has also begun entering schools in the Bedford area to introduce mini-bridge to children in order to enhance their maths and communication skills and to safeguard the future of this multi-faceted game.

Anyone interested in joining in with No Fear Bridge can contact Dale Squire, Chair of No Fear Bridge via email dale_squire@hotmail.com.



80th Celebration at Ryden Grange



The editor and partner Margaret were invited to Mr Bridge's 80th birthday celebration garden party at the luxurious and prestigious Ryden Grange in Knaphill, Surrey on a glorious sunny July day. The event was extremely well organised with marshalled car parking, a bouncy castle, pony rides and a ball pond for toddlers. After a personal welcome from Mr Bridge, aperitifs were taken before a superb lunch that had been prepared in the massive marquee. Guests were divided into three sections designated by a suit symbol: clubs for friends, diamonds for staff and hearts for family. Several entertaining after-dinner speakers were introduced by Master of Ceremonies Bernard Magee. They recounted some of Mr Bridge's previous ventures into such fields as a sandwich supermarket, the Goss china business and the stock market before he entered the bridge world commercially. We were unfortunately unable to stay for the evening barn dance but a good time was had by all who attended.



Andrew Robson visits Bedfordshire

Bedford Bridge Club and Bedford No Fear Bridge Club were delighted to host a Masterclass teaching event by the International Master Andrew Robson on Friday 25 October 2019.



Andrew was, as expected, quite inspirational and although some players in the room have enjoyed this game for many years, everyone left feeling they had learned either something new, a new way to evaluate hands, bidding or how best to play the cards. The fun and relaxed atmosphere was complemented by the various t-shirts worn by Lesley Perkins and Pippa Green which captured different elements of bridge as slogans.

Pippa and Lesley with Andrew

Thanks to all your generosity including Bedfordshire Bridge Association for donating the hire of the hall and Andrew for reducing his fees for a charitable cause. Together we raised £2,482 on behalf of the charity Bedford MS Centre.

We learned all about *bidding bad hands*, *fourth-suit-forcing* and *listening to the opponents' bidding* in order to deduce the best lead.

We are keen to learn more and Andrew has given us his last Masterclass date for 2020 which is Wednesday 2 Dec. Half of the tickets have already been sold for this next event so please contact either Lesley Perkins or Pippa Green if you'd like to come. Details can be found on the Bedford Bridge Club website.



Raptor Defence to an Opening 1-of-a-Suit

From Bob Denby


A great deal has been written regarding conventional defences to a 1NT opener but in comparison, little about defences over one-of-a-suit.

Raptor 1NT

How can you overcall one of anything with a 4-5+ major - minor two-suiter? Well the alertable overcall Raptor 1NT (usually bid in the direct position) is one answer that deals with this common and often difficult to bid hand type that occurs at least once per session. It is a convention that indicates a two-suited hand with exactly four cards in an unbid major and a longer suit in an unbid minor. The idea of using a 1NT overcall to denote a 4-5 two suiter apparently originated independently in Poland and Sweden in the early 1980s. Though the name Raptor first appeared in an article in a 1993 Toronto magazine as "wRAP around TORonto" style. Raptor is also defined in the English language as a bird of prey.

High card strength is down to partnership agreement. Based on shape and vulnerability, the point range can be wide ranging, say 4-9 or 10-15. Compared with a natural 2-level overcall, the Raptor 1NT, which is mildly pre-emptive, may be safe with fewer points as it promises two places to play and is usually played forcing.

When playing Raptor, one of these suits will often be known. For example: 1♣ (natural) – 1NT shows 5+ diamonds and a 4 card major. (1♥ – 1NT shows 4 spades and a 5+ minor.)

| | | |
|------------|---|---------|
| | ♠ AK | |
| | ♥ 109754 | |
| | ♦ QJ64 | |
| Belladonna | ♣ J5 | |
| ♠ J9842 |  | ♠ Q105 |
| ♥ Q | | ♥ AK6 |
| ♦ A93 | | ♦ K8752 |
| ♣ Q864 | | ♣ 103 |
| | ♠ 763 | |
| | ♥ J832 | |
| | ♦ 10 | |
| | ♣ AK972 | |

Consider this hand from the 1967 European Championships. If North passes, deeming the hand as not strong enough to open and East bids 1♦, a part score in hearts is there for the taking if South bids Raptor.

The hand is a famous example of not over-ruffing - see the Gem article in the December 2014 Bulletin on the BBA website.

At the table North passed (note many Norths nowadays would open 1♥). South overcalled East's 1♦ with 2♣, Belladonna doubled for penalties and declarer went down one.

Consequently:

- Pass is to play.
- A bid of overcaller's known suit is to play.
- If the major suit is known, then partner's cue bid shows a limit+ raise of the major.
- If the major suit is unknown, then partner's cue bid asks that overcaller bid his major, noting partner may be weak, but bidding again would show interest in game.
- If the minor suit is unknown, 2♣ asks overcaller to pass (with clubs) or correct to 2♦.
- Other bids tend to show values in the suit and suggest it as trumps, even if the over-caller is short.

Commonly now, partnerships open a short minor and Raptor is a useful defence against such minor suit openings where the 1NT overcall does not necessarily specify that the other minor is held. So the convention tends to crop up against minor suit openings much more frequently and caters for a real problem in standard bidding.

Strong hands can overcall directly, even reverse if necessary or make a take-out double. Recognise that, as with many conventions, treatments can vary, as can be found via the following two links:

<https://bridgewinners.com/article/view/raptor-1nt-explained/>

http://web.mit.edu/mitdlbc/www/articles/Raptor_RR.pdf




Team Talk: How could you swoop so low as to suggest we have 'Raptor' on our convention card?

Answers to Alan Oddie's Slam Hands on page 10

1. The defence have surely not taken leave of their senses in the club suit. On this defence that king of clubs must have been a singleton, so you should ruff high. You can run all the trumps and hope that in the end-game the spades are coming in. But your opponents will know that their only hope of a second trick is in spades (you wouldn't have leapt to 6♦ with a loser in both clubs and hearts) and no-one is going to discard one. In that case you're relying on a 3-3 spade break, so you might as well play the top spades after drawing one round of trumps. If spades don't break and the hand with four (or more) spades also has the long trump(s) you can simply ruff the fourth round of spades in dummy.

The full deal:

| | | |
|-----------|---|------------|
| | ♠ 874 | |
| | ♥ KQ84 | |
| | ♦ 52 | |
| | ♣ Q653 | |
| ♠ 10953 |  | ♠ J2 |
| ♥ 1097652 | | ♥ AJ3 |
| ♦ 107 | | ♦ 3 |
| ♣ K | | ♣ AJ109742 |
| | ♠ AKQ6 | |
| | ♥ - | |
| | ♦ AKQJ9864 | |
| | ♣ 8 | |

2. Do you think the hearts might be breaking after that discard at trick one? Not a chance. East is not going to discard from four cards and if they were 3-3 he would have had at least ten cards in the minors and would have thrown one of those instead. For the same reason a major suit squeeze against West is a non-starter. East would not be discarding from a doubleton heart with eleven cards in the minors. He must have started with at least five hearts. In that case, West is guarding the spades and East the hearts, and neither defender will be able to guard the third round of clubs if you cash your winners in the right order.

To get the timing right for a squeeze you must duck a heart. Suppose West wins and plays the jack of clubs. Where are you going to win it?

It might not be immediately obvious, but you have to win the club in dummy. Then you cash dummy's diamonds, your top hearts, the ace of spades and your diamonds. The 4-card ending will be something like this when you cash your last diamond:

♠ K4

♥ 9

♦ -

♣ 6

♠ 109

♥ -

♦ -

♣ 105

♠ -

♥ Q

♦ -

♣ Q98

♠ 6

♥ -

♦ J

♣ K7

South on lead

N

W

E

S

On the last diamond, West will have to let go a club to keep his spade guard and you throw the four of spades from dummy. East will be down to a boss heart and three clubs. He can throw a club on the last diamond but a spade to the king will squeeze him out of his club guard.

Had you won that club switch in hand rather than in dummy, the squeeze position against East would have evaporated.

If you're the type that likes to show off (perish the thought) you could have kept the two of clubs for your twelfth trick rather than the seven.

The full deal:

♠ KQ42

♥ 9753

♦ AQ

♣ A63

♠ J109873

♥ 10

♦ 983

♣ J105

♠ -

♥ QJ842

♦ 10542

♣ Q984

♠ A65

♥ AK6

♦ KJ76

♣ K72

N

W


E

S

3. If East holds the queen of hearts and five clubs (quite likely after West has played the ten of clubs on the second round), he would be responsible for guarding both suits if you ruffed another club in hand. But would that help? He is sitting over dummy, rather than under, so both menaces are misplaced for a squeeze. For example, if you draw trumps, cross to a top heart and ruff a club, hypothetically extracting West's last club, cashing the ace, king of diamonds won't put East under any pressure even if he is left guarding both hearts and clubs. He will simply discard in whichever suit dummy gives up. That might establish your jack of hearts for you, but you'd have no entry back to hand after cashing dummy's other top heart.


Is there anything to be done?

If you've had to give up on it, can you solve it as a double dummy problem? The full deal is below.

| | | |
|---------|---|----------|
| | ♠ 5 | |
| | ♥ AK1042 | |
| | ♦ 963 | |
| | ♣ A864 | |
| ♠ 97632 |  | ♠ - |
| ♥ 93 | | ♥ Q86 |
| ♦ J75 | | ♦ Q10842 |
| ♣ KQ10 | | ♣ J9532 |
| | ♠ AKQJ1084 | |
| | ♥ J75 | |
| | ♦ AK | |
| | ♣ 7 | |

The winning line is indeed a squeeze against East (and it's also the correct line even if you couldn't see all four hands).

Having ruffed a club at trick 2 you run off five more trumps to reach the ending shown at the top of the following page as the ten of trumps is played.

| | | |
|---------------|---|-------|
| | ♠ - | |
| | ♥ AK10 | |
| | ♦ 96 | |
| | ♣ 86 | |
| ♠ 2 |  | ♠ - |
| ♥ 93 | | ♥ Q86 |
| ♦ J75 | | ♦ Q10 |
| ♣ Q | | ♣ J9 |
| South on lead | ♠ 108 | |
| | ♥ J75 | |
| | ♦ AK | |
| | ♣ - | |

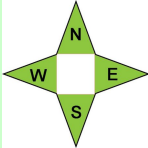
You throw a diamond from dummy and East will also have to let go a diamond. Now you cash the ace and king of diamonds, throwing the ten of hearts. What can East throw on the second diamond? If he lets go a heart you cash the ace, king of hearts and ruff a club back to hand for the jack of hearts. If he throws a club, you cross to a top heart and ruff a club to establish dummy's last card in the suit.

You will look very stupid on this line of play if West started with Qxx(x) in hearts, but that is against the odds once you know he has all five missing trumps.

In over 50 years of playing bridge, I have only ever seen this one example of the so-called 'ruffing criss-cross squeeze' in actual play.

4. When this deal came up at the table, I played off the ace, king of clubs intending to set up the suit by ruff(s) in dummy. When I showed the hand to Andrew Robson he started the same way, but pointed out (which I hadn't seen) that if West discards on the third club, you can ruff low in dummy and then, as long as you successfully guess which red suit you can ruff low in hand (a heart is favourite), you can cash your red suit winners and have 13 tricks on a high cross-ruff. If instead West follows to the third club, you ruff high and if the suit is not established (doubleton queen or a 3-3 break) you cross back to a top trump and ruff another club high. Then you come back to the ace of diamonds, draw trumps and claim.

How did we both manage to go off? Simple really. West ruffed the second club!

| | | |
|----------|---|----------|
| | ♠ QJ53 | |
| | ♥ AK9 | |
| | ♦ K642 | |
| | ♣ 53 | |
| ♠ 9642 |  | ♠ 8 |
| ♥ 752 | | ♥ QJ1084 |
| ♦ J10753 | | ♦ Q9 |
| ♣ 2 | | ♣ Q10764 |
| | ♠ AK107 | |
| | ♥ 63 | |
| | ♦ A8 | |
| | ♣ AKJ98 | |


The problem with playing on clubs immediately is that if you have to ruff high in dummy (i.e. West follows to the third round) AND you don't establish them with one ruff, you will need the trumps to break 3-2. In that case it's a slightly better line to play off a second top trump from hand at trick 2. If they break 3-2 you revert to ruffing clubs and the contract is virtually guaranteed unless the clubs are 5-1 or 6-0.

When the trumps turn out to be 4-1 you can no longer establish the clubs if you need to ruff twice. If you do that the opponents will have a trump trick. If the trumps are 4-1 therefore, playing on clubs will only work if they can be established with one ruff – about a 50% shot.

But there's a better chance than that...

... when East throws a heart on the second round of trumps, instead of ruffing a club in dummy, you ruff two diamonds in hand: the play goes ace, king of diamonds, ruff a diamond, top heart to dummy, ruff a diamond, heart to dummy and play off the trumps. You now have 12 tricks with the club finesse available for the 13th. When West has four trumps, that's about 57% and a better chance than playing on clubs (about 50%). It also has the merit of being the winning line on the actual deal. In practice, you don't even need the club finesse: when you draw the trumps after ruffing two diamonds in hand East is squeezed in this ending when you cash dummy's last trump:

If you got this right I suggest you write to The Times offering your services as a replacement columnist for Andrew Robson.

| | | |
|-----|---|--------|
| | ♠ Q | |
| | ♥ 9 | |
| | ♦ - | |
| | ♣ 53 | |
| ♠ 9 |  | ♠ - |
| ♥ 7 | | ♥ Q |
| ♦ J | | ♦ - |
| ♣ 2 | | ♣ Q107 |
| | ♠ - | |
| | ♥ - | |
| | ♦ - | |
| | ♣ AKJ9 | |

A View of Bridge

Bridge, like life, is a series of sine waves. For example, on a good day you take three tops in a row off a pair of internationals, you win the jackpot on the fruit machine, and afterwards she says "of course darling, but let me fix you two steaks first". On a bad day, a pair of beginners take three tops in a row off you, somebody else wins the jackpot just after you have lost a fiver and afterwards she has a headache.

Quote:

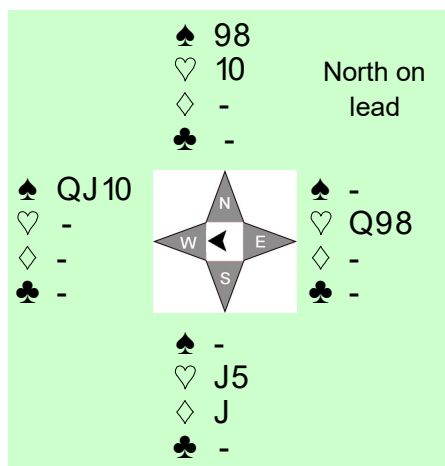
"It's not usually the first mistake that gives you a bad board, it's the second one. You often make the second mistake because you are still focusing on the first one. Don't let one mistake cause another!"

Robert S. Todd

Answer to 'Christmas Cracker' on page 9

If you count up your top tricks, it comes to 11 so what's the problem? You cannot access more than 10 since you will find yourself stuck in dummy after taking out the trumps and cashing the top three diamond honours. At the table, you could try the heart finesse but would you be reading about it in here if it were that simple? Did you try all sorts of squeezes and end-plays on East to sort it out? None of them work. You have to clear the blockage in hearts to give yourself an entry to your fourth diamond trick. How do you work such magic? The answer is as follows:

Ruff the second spade in hand and take out all opposition trumps, pitching your ♥A from dummy on the last club. Now cash your three top diamond honours and ♥K in dummy, followed by the ♥10. East has no answer: if he covers, he then has to put you back in hand with the ♥J so you can cash your ♦J. If he ducks, you overtake the ♥10 with the ♥J to gain access to your 11th trick with the ♦J. The end position is shown. Ed.






Bridge Gems from the Greats

No. 14: Geir Helgemo Part 2. Gleaned by Bob Denby

Genius

Geir has been responsible for some of the finest instances of declarer play ever seen. The following deal is highly unlikely to be surpassed and was quite rightly voted the best played hand of the year for 2011 by the IBPA, the International Bridge Press Association. It involves a type of play practically unknown to anyone except Geza Ottlik and Hugh Kelsey, whose *Adventures in Card Play* is the most complex bridge book ever written.


| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|--|
| Dealer South Both Vul | | ♠ A9743 ♥ K8763 ♦ A6 ♣ 7 | |
| ♠ - ♥ QJ952 ♦ 109 ♣ KQ10982 |  | ♠ Q82 ♥ 104 ♦ QJ85432 ♣ J | |
| | | ♠ KJ1065 ♥ A ♦ K7 ♣ A6543 | |

| West | North | East | South |
|-----------------|------------------|------|------------------|
| | | | 1♠ |
| 2♠ ¹ | 2NT ² | Pass | 3♣ |
| Pass | 4♣ ³ | Pass | 4NT ⁴ |
| Pass | 5♣ ⁵ | Pass | 7♠ |
| All Pass | | | |

Bidding Explanation

1. Michaels - Hearts + a minor
2. Game-force with 4+ spades
3. Shortage
4. RKCB
5. 2 Key Cards + trump queen

North, Boerre Lund, judged that with at least ten spades in the two hands, the queen was not likely to be required, so showed it when not actually holding it. As it turned out, he was wrong, as the grand slam would have been much easier to make if he held the trump queen.

| | | |
|--------|---|---------|
| ♠ - | ♠ A74 | ♠ Q |
| ♥ QJ9 | ♥ 876 | ♥ - |
| ♦ - | ♦ - | ♦ QJ854 |
| ♣ Q109 | ♣ - | ♣ - |
| |  | |
| | ♠ KJ6 | |
| | ♥ - | |
| | ♦ - | |
| | ♣ 654 | |

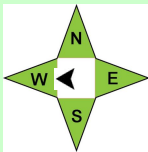
However, Geir revealed his brilliance when most would not even find the winning line even with all four hands on show. West led the club king, East the jack, and Geir won with the ace. He cashed the ace of hearts, the king and ace of diamonds, the heart king, and then ran the spade nine from dummy.

The astonishing first-round finesse was required in order to arrive at the end-position shown on the left.

A spade to the jack came next. Geir then led the spade king from his hand. West, with three master cards in hearts and three in clubs, had to find a discard with no winning play. If he discarded a heart, Geir would overtake the spade king with dummy's ace. Then he would ruff a heart, ruff a club, ruff a heart, ruff a club, and dummy's last heart would win the last trick. Alternatively, if West threw a club, Geir would allow the spade king to hold and would ruff a club, ruff a heart, ruff a club, ruff a heart, and his last club would be a winner at trick 13. An entry-shifting trump squeeze is a rare enough beast at the best of times, but the first-round trump finesse makes it truly special. What a gem!

When asked about his deducing Geir said "I played the percentages". Geir's first analysis was about the distribution, and after his conclusion he backed his judgment to play in a way that is difficult for most of us to spot even seeing the full diagram. Geir's reasoning: West is likely to have six clubs unless East has played the jack from a doubleton, but why would he? West has also shown five hearts, so the 3-0 break in trumps is becoming more and more likely. West's distribution is quite likely to be 1-5-1-6 or 0-5-2-6. What about the diamonds? If West has only one diamond, it gives East an eight-card suit, which most players would have announced over North's 2NT. And if West has the 1-5-1-6 distribution, he could have led his trump. After all, trump leads against grand slams are *de rigueur* according to the classic rule. So the 0-5-2-6 distribution with West is definitely the most likely one.

THE 1997 "LE BRIDGEUR" HAND OF THE YEAR AWARD

| | | |
|-------------|---|---------|
| | ♠ 973 | |
| | ♥ 9762 | |
| | ♦ K1086 | |
| | ♣ 92 | |
| ♠ 84 |  | ♠ QJ105 |
| ♥ KQJ84 | | ♥ A1053 |
| ♦ 5 | | ♦ 3 |
| ♣ K10753 | | ♣ QJ64 |
| 6♦ by South | ♠ AK62 | |
| | ♥ - | |
| | ♦ AQJ9742 | |
| | ♣ A8 | |

Another example of his brilliant talents. When the left hand opponent's weak two-bid is raised to game, the player in fourth position when holding a good hand really needs to guess well. Would North-South have reached the slam under their own steam? Certainly East-West's tactics placed tremendous pressure on Geir, and his bid of six diamonds was more than justifiable.

West led the heart king, ruffed in the closed hand. It seemed that the only way for declarer to get home was to set up a spade in hand to discard a club from dummy and then ruff his losing club on the table. That would seem to need a 3-3 spade break and, in light of the preemptive auction, that was unlikely. Even so, Geir made the slam in a way that is not easy to find even if all the cards are on show. Thankful not to receive a club lead Geir ruffed, drew trumps and led the spade two, finessing the seven when West followed low. In an attempt to fool declarer, East won with the jack and returned the spade five, but Geir was having none of it, allowing it to run to the nine which won.

A spade to the king, then a club discard on the ace, and Geir had only lost a spade trick. Note that Geir was going to make the slam regardless of what East did after winning the first spade. Declarer would get to dummy with a trump to run the nine of spades, pinning West's eight, and another spade finesse if necessary would provide a parking place for the club loser. (The play is a fine example of an intra-finesse. Some may recall The Gabriel Chagas Gem, who introduced the play in his Bols Tip.)

There were two psychological clues to this remarkable winning play. East's spade return was slightly suspicious, since he could obviously

have led a heart. And if West had been able to win the third trick he might have done so, or at least twitched fractionally. None of the experts who were shown South's problem found the solution, and all were in awe of Geir's play. If East had returned an obvious heart at the fourth trick, South could still have succeeded by ruffing, crossing to dummy and leading the spade nine.

2017 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS IN LYON.


Many top players consider Geir to be the best player there is. Certainly, his ability to picture the cards, then find ingenious plays whether as declarer or defender are second to none.

On this hand, Monaco was the only team in the Bermuda Bowl to defeat South's 3NT contract. The bidding: 1NT-2♣-2♦-3NT.

On lead, 95% of Wests led a small heart, but Geir was the only person to lead totally differently. Apparently his reasoning was something like: "All the suits are breaking 3-3 or 3-2 for declarer, so the contract will make on a passive defence. I'll have to attack to win five

tricks before declarer makes his game. I have 10 hcp, so partner has 4-5 hcp at best. Even if partner has something like ♥K-J-x-x, we still need a fifth trick (in clubs?). However, if East holds those hearts, then North will have four spades, given the auction, and that would give declarer nine tricks via three spades, one heart, four diamonds, one club. Noting North has at least one 4-card major, possibly partner will hold long clubs instead. Four or five clubs including the club queen is more likely than the perfect heart holding. That even gives partner a few other values."

Anyway, Geir backed his instincts by leading the club king. His intention was to unblock the club suit in the hope that partner held long clubs. Declarer ducked the club king lead, so Geir continued with the jack, won by dummy's queen. Declarer now tackled the spade

| | | |
|--------|---|---------|
| | ♠ KQJ10 | |
| | ♥ K109 | |
| | ♦ 10874 | |
| | ♣ Q10 | |
| ♠ A54 |  | ♠ 876 |
| ♥ Q653 | | ♥ J84 |
| ♦ 965 | | ♦ A3 |
| ♣ KJ2 | | ♣ 98765 |
| | ♠ 932 | |
| | ♥ A72 | |
| | ♦ KQJ2 | |
| | ♣ A43 | |

suit, unfortunately picking the 'wrong' suit to establish first, Geir winning with his ace to play his third club, so establishing Tor's two club winners whilst he still had the diamond ace as entry. Despite such stunning efforts from Geir, Monaco did not qualify for the final eight teams in the Bermuda Bowl.

The Man

Deals where Geir makes the right choice, even if it looks like a guess, are countless. It is certainly no coincidence and it is not easy to find the secrets of his success. Focus must be one, card play another plus the ability to collect intelligence from details and inferences, both negative and positive, or simply put, the tell-tale clues throughout a deal which assists Geir to come to the right answer. Though to be fair, Geir has often said: "I played the percentages."

To those who compete at the top level, Geir Helgemo's name evokes words such as genius, psychologist, champion, and yes, a nice guy, always with a smile and a good word for everyone around him. "I find the psychology of the game fascinating and I always believe in what I am doing and I am not afraid to look stupid if I am wrong" – clearly it does not happen too often. "If I could choose my partner I would play with Tor Helness, Jeff Meckstroth or Alfredo Versace. Several players have influenced my game, in fact so many I don't think I can mention them all - just to say 'thank you' to all my partners."

If you would like to delve into the hands from the IBPA awards up till 2014, wherein Geir often crops up, then look no further than:
<http://bridge-tips.co.il/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/IBPA-Handbook.pdf>

Solution to 'No Rising Stars' at the Mixed Pairs' on page 12

This is a textbook elimination and throw in. Win the opening lead, draw trumps and play a second heart. When North shows out, the contract is a certainty. Play the ♠K and then a diamond, covering whichever card South plays, North can win cheaply but then has to lead a club or diamond into one of dummy's tenaces, giving you your twelfth trick.

The sharp-eyed amongst you will notice that the contract can also be made by a minor-suit squeeze on North. Win the ♥A in dummy and then play off six rounds of trumps followed by ♥K. North has to either unguard the ♦K or ♣Q giving you 12 tricks.

Erika Marion Sharrock (née Otte)

22 February 1936 – 13 August 2019

Erika was born in Vienna, Austria, the only child of Heinrich Otte and Lola (née Wallerstein). Her father owned a knitwear factory, but that and almost all of their other possessions had to be left behind when they fled in 1939 to escape the forthcoming Holocaust. Her father had worked and studied in Britain, and spoke even better English than most Englishmen, so their immigrant status was accepted here. They lived in London for a while, then moved to Huddersfield and eventually to Edgware. None of them was religious, but Erika was always very proud of her Jewish heritage.



Erika excelled at science and chose to study chemistry at the University of Southampton. After her first BSc degree, she went on to obtain a Diploma in Education, and later a Diploma in Mathematics at Homerton College, Cambridge. It was when she was a student at Southampton that she met and then married Tim Sharrock, took up bridge and gained an interest in birds and other wildlife. They were married for 36 years, and remained the very best of friends throughout the 22 years after their divorce.

Taking overseas bridge holidays (usually with 'Mr Bridge') and wildlife holidays (usually with 'Sunbird' or 'WildWings'), Erika was very well-travelled, making long trips to Antarctica, Argentina, Barbados, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Croatia, Egypt, Greece, India, Indonesia, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Kenya, the Maldives, Mexico, Morocco, the Netherlands, Norway, the Seychelles, Singapore, Spain, Switzerland, Tanzania, Thailand and the USA (Alaska, the western national parks and Texas). She accompanied Tim on several two-month-long survey trips to the remotest and most inaccessible parts of both Ireland and Scotland.

In Bedfordshire, Erika taught science (usually chemistry and mathematics) at the Convent of the Holy Ghost School in Bromham Road, Goldington Road Secondary Modern School, Bedford High School for Girls and Sandy Upper School. Apart from bridge and

wildlife, Erika's main interests included opera and reading. She was also a crossword-puzzle and quiz enthusiast.

Erika joined Bedford Bridge Club in 1963. She played regularly at more than half a dozen bridge clubs, including Bedford, Cranfield, Felmersham, Olney, Potton and Renhold. She served on the committees of both Bedford and Cranfield, and in recent years was the dealer for Cranfield and Renhold. Her regular partners were Cathy Morant, Jed Pascoe, John Barton, Kaz Rogers and Richard Champion. For many years, Erika and Jenny Cox took it in turns to host New Year's Eve bridge parties at their homes. Erika won Cranfield's Champion's Cup on two occasions, in 2004 (with Tim) and in 2016 (with Irma Sucher). At Bedford Bridge Club, she won the Stephenson Cup in 2004 (with Peter & Barbara Freeman), the Ken White Handicap Trophy in 2015 (with Stephen Thornley), and the Ladies' Pairs on two occasions (with Rosalie Hayhoe in 2005 and with Diane Musselle in 2019). It is also pleasing to note that, the very last time that she played, her team-of-four came second, with +50 IMPs.

Erika leaves one son (Dr Kieran Sharrock), one daughter (Ms Lorna Delayahu) and four grandchildren (Lola, Ed, Maya and Lior), of whose professional, academic, athletic and artistic achievements, Erika was immensely proud.

TS & KR.

Roland Wale

6 November 1931 – 18 April 2019

Although known almost universally amongst Bedfordshire bridge players as 'Roly' Wale, his preference was to be called Roland. When the Bedfordshire Bridge Association was formed in 1964, Roland was one of the 43 founder members. By the time that *George Goddard's Bridge Memoirs* appeared in Bulletin 241 (April 2013), only three of those founders were still alive. That particular 'club' became even more exclusive in April of this year.

Roland was on the County Committee for many years where he gave a considerable amount of his time to 'backroom' duties as well as playing in and for Bedfordshire. He was part of one of Bedfordshire's best and most consistent pairs, 'Dick and Roly'. 'Dick' is David Bond, although Roland was the only bridge player I know who ever referred

to him by his given name of David. However, bridge was only a small part of Roland's life. Foremost was his family. He was devoted to his wife Ann, his three children and his grandchildren.

Roland was a talented electrical engineer, the seed of that specialization was planted during his period of national service. Once back in civilian life he built and managed a successful electrical engineering business. The Merteck group of companies employed over one hundred people with the head office based in Luton. This group addressed the problem of methane build-ups in landfill sites. Previously, methane emissions could only be managed by a 'burn-off' process. Merteck offered an alternative which used the methane to generate electricity which was then sold into the National Grid.

When I met Roland for the first time at the bridge table, two things stuck in the memory from that brief encounter. Apart from being a good player, Roland was also courteous, a hallmark that remained with him for the whole of his bridge playing career. The other memory is that, with the exception of two pairs from the Sixth Form College, Roland and his partner were the only pair in the room playing weak two bids. So, here was a man ahead of his time.

In 1972, I formed a bridge partnership with Geoff Stokes. We played at the old Dunstable (Thermoplastics) Club, where the first session in each month was teams-of-four. Roland and David had just embarked on the 'Dick and Roly' partnership and Geoff and I were their regular Thermoplastics team-mates. That led to playing as a team in the Luton & District League and then the County League and Cup. Roland entered us under the name 'Lea Valley'. He explained that when he marked the positions of our four homes on a map, the result came out in the form of an arrow that pointed down the Lea Valley.

Roland had survived and fully recovered from a major heart attack in 1990. We all thought that he would follow in the footsteps of his mother, who had lived to over 100 years of age but unfortunately not. Roland Wale, a true gentleman and a good and generous friend. I will miss the cheerful face coming across the car park in Hitchin on a Wednesday evening.

John Havard

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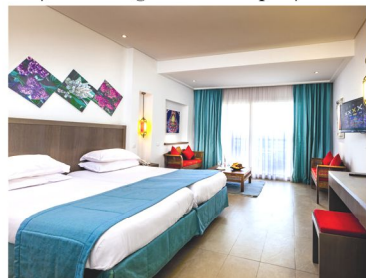
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