

# BRIDGE

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June 2018

## Bernard Magee's Acol Bidding Quiz

This month we are dealing with hand evaluation. You are West in the auctions below, playing 'Standard Acol' with a weak no-trump (12-14 points) and four-card majors.

### 1. Dealer East. Love All.

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



West	North	East	South
		1NT	Pass
?			

### 2. Dealer East. Love All.

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



West	North	East	South
		1NT	Pass
?			

### 3. Dealer East. Love All.

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



West	North	East	South
		2NT	Pass
?			

Answers on page 41

### 4. Dealer East. Love All.

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



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

### 5. Dealer East. Love All.

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



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

### 6. Dealer East. Love All.

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



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

Answers on page 43

### 7. Dealer East. Love All.

♠ K 8 2  
♥ Q 7 4  
♦ K Q 8 7 6  
♣ 8 2



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

### 8. Dealer East. Love All.

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



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

### 9. Dealer East. Love All.

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



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

Answers on page 45

### 10. Dealer East. Love All.

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



West	North	East	South
		1♥	Pass
2♣	2♣	3♥	4♠
?			

### 11. Dealer West. Love All.

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



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

### 12. Dealer West. Love All.

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



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

Answers on page 49

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## Features this month include:

- 1 Bidding Quiz by Bernard Magee
- 5 Mr Bridge
- 7 Bidding Quiz by Bernard Magee
- 8 The Diaries of Wendy Wensum
- 9 Defence Quiz by Julian Pottage
- 10 The Power of Spot Cards: Part 2 by Mike Lawrence
- 11 Declarer Play Quiz by David Huggett
- 12 New and Improved: 'Portrait Cards'  
by Paul Bostock
- 15 Declarer Play Answers by David Huggett
- 16 Sally's Slam Clinic
- 17 Defence Quiz Answers by Julian Pottage
- 18 More Tips from Bernard Magee
- 19 Defence at Duplicate Pairs by Andrew Kambites
- 23 Defence at Duplicate Pairs Quiz by Andrew Kambites
- 24 David Stevenson Answers Your Questions
- 26 Defence at Duplicate Pairs Quiz Answers  
by Andrew Kambites
- 29 Readers' Letters
- 30 Gisborne's Disappointing Session by David Bird
- 32 Detective Kelsey by Shireen Mohandes
- 34 Julian Pottage Answers Your Questions
- 38 Bring on the New Players by Jeremy Dhondy
- 40 Teams of Four by Bernard Magee
- 41 Bidding Quiz Answers (1-3) by Bernard Magee
- 42 Ruffing in Your Hand by Michael Byrne
- 43 Bidding Quiz Answers (4-6) by Bernard Magee
- 44 Catching Up with Sally Brock
- 45 Bidding Quiz Answers (7-9) by Bernard Magee
- 46 Seven Days by Sally Brock
- 48 How Strong is 1NT by Responder? by Julian Pottage
- 49 Bidding Quiz Answers (10-12) by Bernard Magee
- 50 A Dream, or a Nightmare? by John Barr

## ADVERTISERS' INDEX

- 2 2018 Cruises on  
with Cruise & Maritime
- 3 Clive Goff's Stamps
- 4 Madeira Winter Warmth  
with Fred. Olsen
- 5 Bernard Magee DVDs  
Set 8
- 5 Re-boot Acol Event
- 4 Capital Cities of the  
Baltic with Fred. Olsen
- 9 Cruise the Danube to  
Vienna & Budapest with  
The River Cruise Line
- 10 Defence  
with Bernard Magee
- 11 Tunisia 2018-19
- 13 Bernard Magee DVDs  
Sets 1-3
- 14 Mr Bridge UK Events
- 15 Duplicate Bridge  
Rules Simplified
- 16 Festive Events 2018
- 18 Designs for Bridge  
Table Covers
- 22 Christmas Markets  
with Fred. Olsen
- 23 Bernard Magee DVDs  
Sets 4-6
- 27 Bernard Magee DVDs  
Set 7
- 28 Cruising European  
Rivers and Canals  
with Fred. Olsen
- 29 Club Insurance
- 29 Travel Insurance
- 36 Designs for Bridge  
Tables
- 37 Cruising  
German Waterways  
with Fred. Olsen
- 39 Declarer Play  
with Bernard Magee
- 45 Acol Bidding  
with Bernard Magee
- 47 Bernard Magee's  
Tutorial Software
- 51 Canaries Christmas  
with Fred. Olsen
- 52 Swedish Waterways &  
Cities with Fred. Olsen

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First up is Lisbon, where adorable backstreets, architectural treasures and delicious egg custard tarts await you. A Tuk Tuk tour is a great way to take in the sights up close. On the beautiful island of Madeira, Funchal is your gateway to exploring sweet-smelling gardens and unique levada walking trails, or experiencing stunning views from the Cabo Girão sea cliff.

Calling into pretty La Palma, you'll have the chance to see the San Antonio Volcanic Park, though be sure to savour local wines in the town of Fuencaliente too. Tenerife's capital, Santa Cruz, features an array of tapas bars and enlightening museums. Elsewhere you'll find the mysterious Pyramids of Güimar, the botanical gardens, and magnificent Mount Teide – don't miss the views from the cable car on the way up. Next day you can absorb a mix of architecture in the Vagueta district of Las Palmas, or explore more of Gran Canaria, from picturesque Puerto de Mogán to the oasis-like sand dunes of Maspalomas.

Gran Tarajal offers its own spin on Canarian culture – highlights include the golden sands of Jandia Beach – then it's on to La Coruña for your finale. This laidback Spanish city is the start point for tours to the Santiago de Compostela Cathedral.



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directed by Bernard Magee.

## FAREWELLS



Our newest recruit has flown the nest. I say newest but Sophie was part of the “Mr Bridge family” for 6 ½ years. I will miss her but wish her all the best in her move to a career in nutrition.

Also, Ruth Edmondson, my typesetter extraordinaire, has brought forward her retirement and leaves me after 30 years. She has been a great sounding board and trusted friend who has helped this publication evolve. I wish her a long and well-earned retirement.

However, it is with great excitement that I am awaiting the arrival of two new starters. So next time you call do make them welcome. Their introduction will come in the July issue.

## HOLIDAY

Although I have not yet been given the green light to go cruising, it is not all doom and gloom. The medics are happy to let me travel on my annual family holiday to Brittany.

## BE SURE TO BOOK

Bernard really puts on a show at Denham Grove for New Year. I am shocked at how many people join in with the late night speedball after the midnight celebrations. I always find it very hard

turning people away and as we are well over half full, here is your warning, book now or you may miss out.

## SUNSHINE

It is easy not to realise how much you miss something until you experience it again. I find this especially true regarding the sun. This last bank holiday has reinforced my mood and makes me understand why so many choose to cruise to warmer climes in the dark winter months. For some winter warmth try the January Canary Islands and Madeira cruise on Balmoral (see left). There is always a good bridge party and 2019 looks set to be the same.

## TUNISIA AMENDED

The dates for Tunisia 2019 have altered, see page 11. Bernard will be at the Royal Kenz from Tuesday 5-12 March. He is looking forward to returning as he is another one for enjoying some winter sun.

## BLUNSDON IS BACK

The period between Christmas and New Year for many is a very quiet time and for the last few years both of my hotel events have sold out of space, so I am pleased to be able to tell you that I have arranged a Just Duplicate event in Wiltshire at the Blunsdon House Hotel, 27-29 December, £228 per person full board. Single supplements apply. Also, whilst going to print I am finalising some autumn events at Blunsdon, details of which will by now be on my website. Do take a look as it is a truly wonderful venue.

All good wishes,

**Mr Bridge**

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## SET 8

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Great fun to play at club level and even in the home. Bernard discusses the format and then looks at the tactics you might use in the bidding and play.

## 44 GAME TRIES

When your partner raises your suit to the two-level, you have a variety of options available to you.

## 45 DISRUPTING DECLARER

A defender needs to try and predict what declarer might want to do. Your job is then to disrupt declarer's plan.

## 46 DEFENDING VS HIGH CONTRACTS

Making the right plays against high level contracts can make a huge difference.

## 47 OVERCALLS

Duplicate bridge is so much more competitive now and it is important you are part of this.

## 48 PRESSING THE DEFENCE

There are ways you can make life more awkward for the defenders, particularly by disguising holdings in your hand. Bernard explores a number of tactics that will help you to exploit the defenders.

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The delights continue in vibrant Stockholm. You could opt to delve into authentic Swedish pop culture at ABBA The Museum; glide peacefully along the city's impressive waterways aboard a sightseeing boat; or bear witness to the changing of the guard at the Royal Palace within the Old Town, Gamla Stan.

In St Petersburg you'll have the chance to uncover a collection of grandiose architectural treasures: Catherine Palace, the Hermitage Museum and St Isaac's Cathedral, to name just a few. An overnight stay here affords the opportunity to spend the evening at the Russian ballet too.

The ever-fascinating city of Oslo provides one last chance for discovery before you return home with many unforgettable memories. In the capital of Fred. Olsen's homeland you won't want to miss the astonishing exhibits at the Vigeland Sculpture Park, or the panoramic fjord views on offer from Oslo Opera House.



9<sup>th</sup> May 2019 • 14 nights

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## Prices per person

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**This month we are dealing with hand evaluation. You are West in the auctions below, playing 'Standard Acol' with a weak no-trump (12-14 points) and four-card majors.**

## 1. Dealer East. Love All.

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



West	North	East	South
		1NT	Pass
?			

## 4. Dealer East. Love All.

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



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

## 7. Dealer East. Love All.

♠ K 8 2  
♥ Q 7 4  
♦ K Q 8 7 6  
♣ 8 2



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

## 10. Dealer East. Love All.

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



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

## 2. Dealer East. Love All.

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



West	North	East	South
		1NT	Pass
?			

## 5. Dealer East. Love All.

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



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

## 8. Dealer East. Love All.

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



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

## 11. Dealer West. Love All.

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



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

## 3. Dealer East. Love All.

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



West	North	East	South
		2NT	Pass
?			

## 6. Dealer East. Love All.

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



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

## 9. Dealer East. Love All.

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



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

## 12. Dealer West. Love All.

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



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

**My Answers:**

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

Answers on page 41

**My Answers:**

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

Answers on page 43

**My Answers:**

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

Answers on page 45

**My Answers:**

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

Answers on page 49

# The Diaries of Wendy Wensum



## Episode 74: A Canterbury Tale

Spouse and I had joined our friends, Sally and Dave, and their rambling group in Kent, a county with a strange knack of hiding its traffic signs in hedges and behind trees as a challenge for touring motorists. We spent a delightful day walking and exploring the lovely Sissinghurst estate and the surrounding countryside. The view from the top of the tower was particularly spectacular. In the gardens dogs were welcome and allowed to swim in the lake but only from an Authorised Dog Access Point, which we called an ADAP. An observation platform by the water edge acted as an unofficial UDDP or Unauthorised Dog Diving Point. Later back at the hotel we rejoined Millie and Justin who had been to Canterbury, a city they had never visited before. In all innocence I asked if the cathedral impressed them. 'We didn't get there, no time after shopping and lunch,' explained Millie succinctly.

After dinner, the main business of the evening was a bridge match over sixteen boards between the ramblers and the Riverside, the latter represented by Millie, Justin, Spouse and me. Our opponents were Sally, Dave, Brian and Harry. At the halfway mark Riverside had a narrow lead. Towards the end of the session I still hadn't declared a hand. Being dummy can be really boring. I once accompanied Spouse on a fishing trip. Never again, waiting for the float to bobble in the water was as nerve-racking as watching partner play all the hands. However eventually Spouse allowed me to declare this board, which, by chance, proved decisive.

I opened one no-trump (12-14). Sally thought for quite a while before passing. Spouse had quite a difficult bid but settled on three no-trumps,

which gave little information to the opposition. Clearly he hoped the long clubs would be useful.

**Dealer South. Game All.**

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Sally</i>	<i>Spouse</i>	<i>Dave</i>	<i>Wendy</i>
			1NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

Sally led the king of spades. I won with the ace and claimed the contract with seven club tricks and the ace of hearts. 'Phew, should I have bid that?' asked Spouse, 'The contract seemed a bit dodgy.' I reassured him that it made on any lead, adding unnecessarily, 'Why the observation? You don't normally doubt your judgement.' 'I don't know really. I suppose my mouth wasn't doing anything else at the time,' was his quick but inadequate justification probably induced by his more than adequate consumption of real ale.

At the other table the auction took a different route. Harry as South opened one no-trump. Justin bid two clubs nominally showing five-five in the majors. Brian bid three clubs. With good heart support, Millie bid three hearts. This was passed round to

North where Brian unwisely doubled for penalties.

West	North	East	South
<i>Justin</i>	<i>Brian</i>	<i>Millie</i>	<i>Harry</i>
		1NT	
2♣ <sup>1</sup>	3♣	3♥	Pass
Pass	Dbl	All Pass	

<sup>1</sup>Major two-suiter

Harry led the ace of clubs and must have been disappointed to see the void, when dummy was tabled. Millie ruffed and played the king of spades, won by Harry's ace. He returned the club king ruffed by Millie on the table. The ♥10 was led from dummy and Brian hopped up with the ace. He tried a diamond return. Millie won with the ace, cashed the ♠J then removed the opponents' remaining trumps. The winning spades disposed of the two losing diamonds and the losing club.

The doubled contract came home with overtricks for a big IMP score and was the main factor in an overall win for the Riverside. Even so Millie was disappointed with the match result and thought we should have done better. Spouse attempted to lighten her mood with, 'Don't let's ask for the moon, we have the stars.' He really does watch too many classic movies on television.

We joined the rest of the ramblers enjoying a karaoke evening in the bar. The men had refilled their glasses and entered the spirit of the occasion. Spouse, Justin, Brian, Dave and Brian gave a loud and tuneless travesty of 'We did it our way'. I doubt if Frank Sinatra would have approved. Meanwhile Sally and I enjoyed cups of camomile tea. Millie, brandy in hand, clearly disapproved as she headed for the ABAP or Authorised Bar Access Point for a top up. ■



# DEFENCE QUIZ

by Julian Pottage

(Answers on page 17)

You are East in the defensive positions below playing matchpoint pairs with neither side vulnerable. Both sides are using Acol with a 12-14 1NT and 2♣ Stayman.

1. ♠ 8 5 4 3  
♥ A 7 5 4  
♦ Q J  
♣ A K 2

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

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

Fourth-suit forcing

Partner leads the ♥J; your ♥K wins, collecting the ♥Q. What is your plan?

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

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

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

Partner leads the ♠6, won by the ♠K. After a club to the ♣Q and ♣A, partner plays the ♠7. Declarer wins in dummy with the ♠A, comes to hand with the ♠10 and leads the ♥4 to the ♥J. What is your plan after taking the ♥K?

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

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

West	North	East	South
			1♦
Pass	2♣	Dbl	3♦
Pass	5♦	All Pass	

Partner leads the ♠J. What is your plan?

4. ♠ A 6 2  
♥ A J 6  
♦ J 10 9 7 2  
♣ 5 2

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

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

<sup>1</sup>15-17, not five spades

Partner leads the ♠J. What is your plan?

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## Fireside Chats with Mike Lawrence



# The Power of Spot Cards Part Two

Spot cards play more of a role than most players give them credit for. The hand today offers a little test revolving around spot cards. One of the considerations in this hand is South's nine and eight of hearts.

### Dealer East. Game All.

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



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

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

East opened 1♥ and South bid 1♠. North's 3♥ bid showed at least a shapely limit raise and promised four trumps. South has a balanced hand but he has good values and is comfortable going to game. North discounted his queen of hearts so was not interested in going higher.

West leads the ♥J. South is safe for ten tricks but there are various lines that may

make an overtrick.


Do you see a way to get two heart tricks out of this hand?

If South is aware of his ♥9 and ♥8, he can cover with the queen and win East's king with the ace. Now, after drawing trumps, he can give up a heart trick to the ten and will subsequently discard a diamond from dummy. This line might end up losing just one heart and one diamond. South went for it and played the queen from dummy. East covered and South followed his plan. There was a snag, though. West had the ♥10, not that big a surprise, and when he won the next heart trick, the diamond switch got the defence two diamond winners.

Here is the complete hand.

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

♠ 2  
♥ J 10 2  
♦ 10 9 7 6  
♣ 9 8 6 5 2



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

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

South had a good idea but there was a better one. South

knows that East has the ♥K. No doubt about this. If South gives up the lure of the heart spots, he can make eleven tricks by using the information that East has the king of hearts.

Keep the queen in dummy and win the ♥A at trick one. Draw the trumps. East has two and West, one. Now play the club suit. On the third club, discard a heart. The point of this is that after South ruffs the last club in his hand he can give East his ♥K. East is endplayed and has to give a ruff and discard or lead to dummy's ♦K.

The South player who played to set up a second heart trick was victimised by knowing too much.

Note, for the record, that if West has the ♥K, South can make an extra trick by playing the queen at trick one. If there had been no bidding, playing the queen could be correct. Here, there is conclusive evidence. East opened the bidding. You can see 27 points in your hand and dummy. This leaves only 13 points for the opponents. East's opening bid must include the ♥K.

As an aside, if the opening lead had been a small heart, you should play the hand in the recommended fashion.

Knowing where the high cards are helps. ■



# DECLARER PLAY QUIZ



by **David Huggett**

(Answers on page 15)

**Y**ou are South as declarer playing teams or rubber bridge.  
In each case, what is your play strategy?

1.

♠ A Q 7 6 2  
♥ A 10 9 7  
♦ Q 3  
♣ 7 6

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

You are declarer in 6♥ and West leads the ♥3 with East following. How do you plan the play?

3.

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

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

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

2.

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

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

You are declarer in 3NT and West leads the ♥4. East plays the ♥10. How do you plan the play?

4.

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

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

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

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# New and Improved: 'Portrait Cards'

By the 1700s, portraits on standard court cards had evolved to become highly stylised and no longer particularly realistic. Over the years, various card-makers have seen this as an opportunity to market improvements on the design and to differentiate their cards from the others. A common idea has been to make the figures look more like real people, often with specific and well-known people in mind. There is no conventional name for this kind of card, but I have recently proposed 'portrait cards', which briefly conveys the idea.

The earliest English example we know is by Rowley, who registered an Ace of Spades at the Tax Office in 1765. These cards were engraved (while all the other makers were printing with wooden blocks) and the quality of their appearance is a great improvement over the best standard cards of the time. Rowley also changed the suit signs and colours, using: pikes in black, red cups, orange diamonds and green clover-leaves. For their age, these are not as rare now as one might expect. It is fair to guess that they were quite popular, which is unusual given their novelty, but they would also survive more than the standard sets if they were kept as an attractive item to own, rather than worn out in use.



Queen of Diamonds and King of Cups.  
Cards by Rowley, c 1765.



Creswick's Imperial Playing Cards 1820-23.  
Detail from advertisement.

The next example comes from 1820, when Thomas Creswick produced a set of 'Imperial' playing cards. Creswick was a paper maker as well as a card maker, and the cards were advertised as being superior in card quality as well as having a new appearance. The advertisement is shown below, commanding us to 'look but on this card!!! ... and on this!!!'. The court figures are said to portray real monarchs and the designs do look impressive, as claimed. The advertisement shows a direct comparison between the new Queen of Clubs and the traditional version.

In 1828, S & J Fuller made an 'Imperial Royal' set of cards in similar vein and more lavishly made, but change was to follow more rapidly after De La Rue set up in 1932. De La Rue was the first printer to use lithography, and this new technology permitted very much more detailed and accurate designs. De La Rue made a more elaborate design to show off this capability, but sensibly made a set with a conventional appearance as well.

The author is a Court Assistant in the Worshipful Company of Makers of Playing Cards – see [www.makersofplayingcards.co.uk](http://www.makersofplayingcards.co.uk). Many more sets of cards are illustrated on the author's website [www.plainbacks.com](http://www.plainbacks.com)





De La Rue's first two designs: a more elaborate design (left) and one more traditional (right).

One impressive set is the "International" playing card pack made by De La Rue in 1874 and marking the Wedding of Queen Victoria's second son Alfred, Duke of Edinburgh, and Grand Duchess Marie Alexandrovna, daughter of Alexander II. The court cards depict members of the (often related) European Royal Families. The illustrations are from a 2003 reproduction by John Berry.

With non-standard cards more accepted, packs have been made featuring Kings and Queens from Tudor times, the Court of Louis XV, Shakespearean characters, politicians of different countries, famous actors and so on. The portrait style is now familiar everywhere card games are played. We saw German examples by Dondorf in the previous article in this series, and below we show some by Grimaud from France.

This style is appreciated by many players and of course by collectors. ■



International Playing Cards by De La Rue, 1874. Queen Victoria and the Crown Prince of Prussia.



Jeu 'Louis XV' by B P Grimaud c. 1970s. Cards by J M Simon of Lorraine based on a C19 Grimaud design.

The creation of these various alternative sets in the space of ten years coincides with reductions in tax and a growing popularity of informal card games. The new popularity of games among family and friends almost certainly accounts for the uptake of these new designs.

From the 1850s, with more industrial production and with big increases in annual volumes sold, the card makers could start making different kinds of cards to appeal to different buyers.

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### DAY 3

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Breakfast

1000 **to 1230**  
SEMINAR & PLAY  
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# Answers to David Huggett's Play Quiz on page 11

1.

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

You are declarer in 6♥ and West leads the ♥3 with East following. How do you plan the play?

A successful club finesse will see you home but, as always, you should be on the outlook to improve your chances and here the spade suit looks as though it might provide just that extra chance. Play the spade ace at trick two and ruff a spade. Enter dummy by drawing the last trump and ruff another spade and on a good day the king will appear. If that is the case then you will have two spade winners in dummy on which to pitch your two losing clubs and a diamond ruff in dummy will give you your twelfth trick.

2.

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

You are declarer in 3NT and West leads the ♥4. East plays the ♥10. How do you plan the play?

The rule of eleven tells you that East started with at least three hearts so a hold-up play cannot possibly work here. Also a count of the tricks immediately available comes to five without clubs, meaning that you need only four tricks in that suit to achieve nine tricks. In normal circumstances you would play the ace and then finesse the jack but here you have to do everything possible not to let East on lead as he would surely fire a heart through your vulnerable holding. So play towards the king first (ducking if West plays the queen) and then the ace. If West has the ♣Q-x-x you have forsaken an overtrick but you will be safe against East holding doubleton queen.

3.

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

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

You know from the opening lead that West started with either four or five hearts and the duplication you hold in that suit is tiresome to say the least. It looks tempting to play on diamonds with the prospect of making three tricks in the suit once the ace and king are dislodged, but can that really be right? Once you lose the first diamond the defence will persist with hearts and then you will lose three hearts and two diamonds. If you count your top tricks you have six outside of spades, so you need three tricks in that suit to achieve your goal of nine tricks. Which means you need both king and

jack to be onside. Win the opening lead in dummy, cross your fingers and lead a spade to the ten. It's true this line of play is odds against to succeed but it's better than no chance at all.

4.

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

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

If spades break 3-3 there is no problem at all but the odds favour a 4-2 break so you have to address that problem. Sometimes the defender with two spades will hold only two trumps so win the opening lead and play just two top trumps. Now play the ace and king of spades and another to the queen. If everyone follows then draw the last trump and play the thirteenth spade. If either defender shows out on the third round of spades but cannot ruff then you can ruff the last spade in dummy. ■

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## Sally Brock Looks at Your Slam Bidding

# Sally's Slam Clinic

### Where did we go wrong?

Richard Rees asks where he went wrong on this slam deal that occurred at Loughborough Bridge Club:

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

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

His reason (excuse) for bidding a slam when it was known that there were two 'aces' missing was that he hoped partner had the ♥A and by some miracle he might be able to scramble twelve tricks.

West has shown a good heart suit on this auction. Some experts consider that, playing a weak no-trump, it is correct to open 1NT with a 5-3-3-2 distribution. If that is the case, when West rebids 2♥ he has shown a six-card suit. Over 3♣ he had plenty of room. Without a good heart suit he could have bid 3♦ as a fourth-suit bid, inviting partner to show delayed (ie a doubleton) heart support. He chose to show a good suit and I would not have been worried that the singleton ten was insufficient support.

Although the East hand is not really suitable for launching into Blackwood, it is hard to see what else East can do to move forward in any sort of meaningful way. So, to bid 4NT, intending to stop in 5♥ if there are two aces missing, is a reasonable idea.

Sean Haffey and his wife settled for 4♥ on this deal from a club team's night:

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

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

In common with many club players, East-West were playing Benjaminised Acoll, with 2♦ being their strongest opening bid. I know this method is popular at club level, but not many expert pairs play this system. I guess that a lot of the time it doesn't matter that much, but it works terribly when the strong hand has a heart suit. It doesn't work much better to swap the 2♣ and 2♦ openings either – there are just problems with different hands. It would have been easier on this layout after 2♣-2♦-2♥.

Still, East did not do nearly enough to express the value of his hand.

When partner bids a suit at the three level, the best agreement to have is that a new suit at the four level is a cue-bid (ie if you can't find a club fit below 3NT then accept that it is lost forever). So East should cue-bid 4♣. While this could be a singleton or void it is more likely to be the ace. Now West's hand is huge and he should bid 5♦ to show the void. (Some would play this as Exclusion Blackwood, and the 5NT response, showing two 'aces' outside diamonds, would end all West's problems.) East has only shown his club ace so far, and he has the ♥K as yet unshown, so he should jump to 6♥, and now West can tell that East has just what he needs for the grand slam.

**Send your slam hands to**  
**[sally@mrbridge.co.uk](mailto:sally@mrbridge.co.uk)**



# Answers to Julian Pottage's Defence Quiz on page 9

1.

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

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

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

<sup>1</sup>Fourth-suit forcing

Partner leads the ♥J; your ♥K wins, collecting the ♥Q. What is your plan?

Your partner has found a good lead. You want to continue the suit, leading the ♥8 to avoid a blockage. If, as is quite possible, declarer holds up a second time, what do you do then?

Since you have the ♦A entry and only one heart left, playing a third round will do little good. Instead you should switch to a spade, hoping to set up a couple of tricks to go with the two hearts and a diamond.

2.

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

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

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

Partner leads the ♠6, won by the ♠K. After a club to the ♣Q and ♣A, partner plays the ♠7. Declarer wins in dummy with the ♠A, comes to hand with the ♠10 and leads the ♥4 to the ♥J. What is your plan after taking the ♥K?

You could play a third spade so you have a long spade to cash when you get in with the ♦A. One trick in each suit, however, will not beat the contract. You might try a low diamond hoping partner has the ♦Q and declarer misguesses. Again this does not give you five tricks. When in doubt go for the plus. Since declarer may well have the ♥Q and so have nine tricks ready to run, you should aim to cash three diamond tricks and switch to the ♦A. You need to find partner with the king and ten, which seems a reasonable chance.

3.

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

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

West	North	East	South
			1♦
Pass	2♣	Dbl	3♦
Pass	5♦	All Pass	

Partner leads the ♠J. What is your plan?

Apart from the ♠J, partner surely has no high cards; a void in clubs is also unlikely. While prospects of a plus score

seem slim, can you stop the overtrick?

The main threat is dummy's long club suit. Fortunately, you have four clubs, which means dummy will need a lot of entries (four) for setting up and running the suit.

If you take the ♠K and return the ♠A, this will remove a ruffing entry. Unfortunately, unless partner started with six spades, this will set up the ♠Q; then dummy discards a heart on the ♠Q and later ruffs a heart. The safe way to remove an entry is by switching to a trump. That removes an entry prematurely and declarer will finish an entry short.

4.

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

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

West	North	East	South
			1♠
Pass	2♦	Pass	3NT <sup>1</sup>
All Pass			<sup>1</sup> 15-17, not five spades

Partner leads the ♣J. What is your plan?

Although the usual rule is 'third hand high', the bidding tells you that a singleton king is not on your left. Can you see the downside to playing the ace? If partner (whose main suit is no doubt spades) has led from three clubs, declarer can hold up the ♣K until the third round. Then, unless partner has the ♦A, you will probably not get in. You should instead encourage with the ♣7 and, if the ♣J holds, duck the second club as well. Partner can then continue clubs when in with the ♦Q. ■



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## More Tips from Bernard Magee

### Weak trumps are not an excuse for delaying drawing trumps

**A**s declarer, most know the basic rule, that you should draw trumps without a good reason not to.

There are many reasons to delay, but having bad trumps is not one of them.

Sometimes, with poor trumps you might choose to cross-ruff, but then you are not drawing trumps for a valid reason. Or you might feel your trumps are too short, again a reasonable choice, but look at this trump suit:

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

West	North	East	South
1♠	Pass	3♣	Pass
4♣	All Pass		

North leads the ♣2.

You have all the side suit tricks taken care of, so all you need to do is avoid four trump losers. If the trumps break 3-2, you can do this by simply playing trumps out – you expect to lose three tricks in the suit, but are trying to avoid losing four, by giving up ruffs. How about if trumps break 4-1? Again, you might be OK if you can guess who has four. The key to the hand is to focus on drawing trumps and not be put off by their weakness.

North's lead looks suspiciously like a singleton, which makes him the likely holder of the long trumps. Your aim should be to lead a trump from dummy: this means that for South to give his partner a club ruff he would have to play a high trump, but you would then play low from hand and still have the queen and jack to make sure you just lose three trump tricks in total. This requires you to jump up with ♣J at trick 1 and lead a small trump.

South wins his ♠A and can give North a club ruff, but you can use your queen to knock out the ♠K and the jack draws North's last trump. If you win trick one in hand and lead a trump up to dummy, then your jack loses to the ace and North

will make three more trump tricks.

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

You may feel you could win trick one in hand and then decide to cross to dummy in hearts and lead a trump from dummy, but then the layout might have been:

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

Now your delaying of trumps would cost dearly. After a club to your ace and a heart to dummy in order to lead trumps, South would take his ♠A, give his partner a club ruff and then receive a heart ruff in return. Two ruffs and the ♠A-K would defeat your contract.

Both layouts would be a little unlucky, but you can deal with either by attending to your trumps straight away. The warning signs were there: when your opponents lead your strongest side suit, very often they will have led from shortage.

There are many reasons for delaying the drawing of trumps, but having weak trumps is not a good one. ■

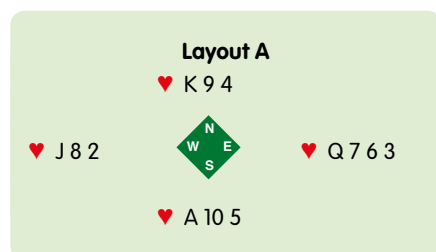


# Defence at Duplicate Pairs

Some of the themes I develop in this article closely follow ideas I introduced in my series on defensive play about two years ago. I make no apology for this. If I had to give advice to club players on just one aspect of the game, I think I would help them improve their skills in the difficult area of defence. Most of the points I discuss in this article are of huge importance in any form of scoring, but are even more significant in matchpoint scoring (duplicate pairs).

## Frozen suits

For most club players defence consists of switching from suit to suit, hoping to strike gold. To see the consequence of this look at the heart suit below in Layout A:



The contract is 4♠. West started the defence with a low club, but that didn't seem to achieve much. On the other hand the club lead doesn't seem to have cost much. West gets the lead at trick 2 with the ♠A and has to decide what to lead to trick 3. In West's mind the following misguided thought process is going on. My club lead didn't do anything very positive for the defence, I don't want to return a trump because declarer is playing that suit, so it is a choice between the red suits. West

decides to try a heart (the ♥2), only to find the above layout. The heart suit is frozen. Whichever side opens it up concedes a trick. Declarer plays low from dummy, captures East's ♥Q with his ♥A and is able to finesse against West's remaining ♥J-8, making three heart tricks when he only had the right to two. West's club lead turned out to neither gain or cost a trick but the heart switch has given away a cheap trick.

Why does this tend to matter far more at duplicate pairs than, for example, teams-of-four? At teams-of-four often the contract cannot be beaten, so all this concedes is a relatively unimportant overtrick. At pairs if every other North/South pair is in 4♠ overtricks will be critical. If West's heart switch has turned -620 into -650 he is likely to have turned a satisfactory matchpoint score into a near bottom.

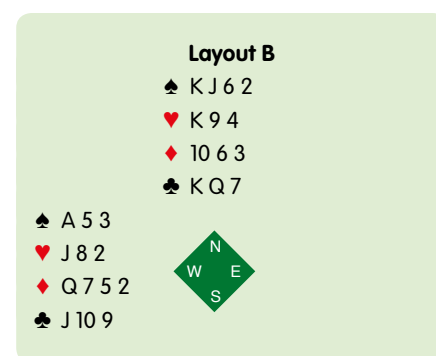
**If it is likely that declarer will have to play a suit himself, don't help him by opening up the suit for him.**

## Passive defence

In my series on defensive skills I argued that most club players were too active in defence. There is a sort of misplaced Victorian work ethic, 'I must do something positive for my side.' More than ever in duplicate pairs it can be right just to avoid doing anything costly. Let me put the heart suit seen in Layout A into the context of a complete hand.

In Layout B, West leads the ♣J against 4♠. Declarer takes the ♣A and

leads the ♠Q. West takes the ♠A and has to decide what to do next.



West	North	East	South
			1♠
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

There is no long suit in evidence that might suggest that the defenders need to take their side suit winners before they disappear. West has two choices. A club continuation, or returning a trump, is unlikely to do much good or much harm, ie it is a passive defence. Alternatively, a red suit switch might enable the defenders to take quick trick(s) but could easily cost a trick.

It isn't even close. This hand will be all about how many overtricks declarer makes. A switch to either red suit gifts him an eleventh trick. If the defenders hold declarer to ten tricks they will get, and deserve, an excellent score.

The club lead has gained nothing, but the positive side is that it has not cost a trick. The bidding seems normal and there is every reason to believe other North/South pairs are also in 4♠. West has the choice between trying to generate tricks for his side, ►



or going passive. He doesn't really have many clues as to which honour cards (if any) his partner has but there doesn't seem to be any reason to believe that declarer's losers will disappear. Declarer may well have:

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


Often reasons are given for a heart switch that simply don't bear scrutiny. When this hand occurred West switched to a heart and justified it by saying, 'I was afraid that declarer had ♣A-x and might get rid of a heart loser unless I took our heart winners quickly.' So why did declarer start on trumps rather than take trick 1 with his ♣A and cash the ♣K-Q, discarding a heart? This sort of reasoning suggests an intelligent but overactive mind. Successful pairs players do not torture themselves with such intricate arguments. They recognise that in this situation they cannot work out exactly who has what and just go passive.

However now consider Layout C. Again you led a club, taken by declarer's ♣A and regained the lead at trick 2 with the ♠A.

Layout C

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

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



West	North	East	South
Pass	4♣	All Pass	1♠

It is pretty obvious that left to his own devices declarer will discard his heart losers on dummy's long clubs. Pairs or not, you must seek to take anything you are due in hearts urgently so, risky or not, you must switch to a heart at trick 2. Declarer has:

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

Unless your side takes the ♥A now, declarer will make 12 tricks.

**If it is likely that, given time, declarer will be able to dispose of his losers in a suit, either by discarding the losers in his hand on a long suit in dummy, or discarding his losers in dummy on a long suit in his hand, you may need to play that suit yourself while you have the chance.**

## The opening lead

It is difficult for me to give authoritative advice on opening leads because it is an area which divides expert opinion. However be aware that it pays to resolve borderline opening lead decisions in favour of the passive option.

Suppose you are on lead with Hand D or E after South's 1NT opening bid is passed out.

Hand D

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

Hand E

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

With Hand D a heart lead might be the best shot at beating the contract, but it is always likely to concede a cheap trick. A spade lead is unlikely to do anything for declarer that he cannot do for himself and if you are lucky you might hit partner's suit. I would look no further than the ♠8 or ♠9 (depending on your methods) playing duplicate pairs.

However you should not take this to extremes. With Hand E a heart lead from a five-card suit stands out at any form of scoring.

**Be wary of leading broken four-card suits against no-trump contracts at duplicate pairs.**

## The rest of the room

**Just as when you are playing a hand as declarer, your target is to beat or at least equal the scores around the room rather than necessarily defeat the contract.**

Sometimes it is obvious to you that events at your table are far from normal. In Layout F your ♠K lead is taken by dummy's ♠A. At trick 2 dummy's ♠J is run to your ♣K. You can cash the ♠Q but what then?

Layout F

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

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



West	North	East	South
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♣
Pass	3♣	End	1NT <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>15-17 points

It is clear that North/South have had a bidding misunderstanding. North clearly thought 3♣ was forcing, South didn't. Even then, why on earth did North bid 3♣, forcing or not, when his obvious bid is 3NT?

They are playing a hand with at least 26 combined points in a part-score.

Usually that signals a good result for you but this time the signs are ominous. You have a natural ♠K lead against 3NT and when you gain the lead with the ♣K you have four more tricks to cash: three spades and the ♥A.

26 points or not, 3NT is going off, so letting South make 3♣ (with or without overtricks) is not going to give you many matchpoints. Is there any chance of beating 3♣? Partner has at most two points and you must hope they are the ♥Q. If it is doubleton you might just let him take the ♥Q, return his last heart to your ♥A and collect a heart ruff.

That would give declarer:

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

It is not much of a chance, but better than none. Note that even if it was not clear to you that 3NT was making, the fact that your opponents are likely to be the only pair not in game means that it won't matter how many overtricks you concede. If 3NT makes you will do well whatever you do. If 3NT fails the only way you have of influencing your score is by defeating their partscore. Overtricks will be irrelevant.

## Counting

In any form of bridge if you want to be a good defender you need to count points, shape and tricks. This is a topic I dealt with in my recent series of defence and it is too big a topic to explore exhaustively here, however I will briefly revisit it. Effectively there are two types of conclusion you can reach by counting.

1. I don't know if partner has the ♥A but I know that the only chance of beating the contract is to assume he has it. That tends to be conclusive if you are playing teams or rubber bridge. Your objective is to beat the contract and if you give away overtricks so be it. Playing pairs the decision can be more murky. How likely is partner to have the ♥A? Is declarer in the same contract as others are likely to be? How vital will overtricks prove if I concede them?
2. I know for certain partner has the ♥A. Whatever form of bridge you are playing you can safely proceed on that knowledge.

The following hand (see next column) illustrates both types of logic at different stages of a defence.

West leads the ♠Q taken by your ♠A. At this stage you might wonder if partner has the ♥A but you cannot be sure. You know declarer has the ♠K and he must surely have either the ♦Q or the ♥A for his 1NT response. He won't have the ♦Q and the ♥A because that would give him nine points, enough to raise 2NT to 3NT.

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

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

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

If partner has the ♥A you can take four heart tricks. If declarer has the ♥A there seems little chance of beating 2NT because there are no entries to partner's spades and declarer can make four diamond tricks (using the ♠K and ♥A to take two diamond finesses) to go with the ♥A, ♠K and ♣A-K-Q.

However you should not switch to the ♥2 at this stage, which might give declarer an easy overtrick if he runs it to dummy's ♥10. You decide to return your ♠2. Declarer takes the ♠K and immediately runs the ♦Q to your hand. Now you know declarer cannot have the ♥A. Take your ♦K and switch to the ♥2. Four heart tricks, the ♦K and ♠A plus whatever spade tricks partner has established defeat 2NT with lots to spare. Declarer has:

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

If you don't take your tricks, declarer will make four diamonds, four clubs and the ♠K.

## Defending against a sacrifice contract

On the hand in the next column it is game all and you lead the ♥5 to East's ♥A. East returns the ♥Q, declarer following suit. How should you defend? This hand features the same theme in defence as you saw in declarer play in my last article.

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

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

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

<sup>1</sup>Weak jump overcall

Presumably declarer has six spades headed by the ♠A-K. Your partner clearly has hearts headed by ♥A-Q-J. Partner must have the ♣A for his opening bid. He has no losers in the major suits and just one club loser. He cannot have more than two diamond losers so he was clearly going to fulfil his game contract, scoring 620 or 650. If declarer can get out for two down (-500) he will feel delighted. You must aim for three off, giving you +800. You have five obvious tricks, a trump, two hearts, ♦A and ♣A. Your only chance of a sixth trick is to find partner with the ♦Q and for declarer to misguess. Declarer won't need to play diamonds himself because he will hope to discard all of his diamond losers on dummy's clubs so you must attack diamonds. Overtake the ♥Q with the ♥K and switch to the ♦3, hoping declarer has:

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

Occasionally you will find declarer with just a singleton diamond, enabling him to rise with dummy's ♦K and escape a diamond loser. Your play will have turned +500 into +200 but this won't necessarily dramatically affect your matchpoint score. Because they are sacrificing against +620 or +650 there will be a large difference between +500 and +800 but considerably less difference between +200 and +500. Now try the quiz on page 23. ■





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# Defence at Duplicate Pairs Quiz

by Andrew Kambites

(Answers on page 26)

1. South opens 2NT which is passed out. What do you lead from Hands A, B and C?

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

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

**Hand C**  
 ♠ A Q 6 5 2  
 ♥ 9 8 7  
 ♦ 6 4 3  
 ♣ 7 2

2. What do you lead from Hands A, B and C after the bidding shown?

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

**Hand B**  
 ♠ Q 6  
 ♥ 9 6 5  
 ♦ J 6 4 3  
 ♣ A 6 5 4

**Hand C**  
 ♠ A 8 6  
 ♥ A 3 2  
 ♦ A 9 8  
 ♣ Q 5 3 2

West	North	East	South
			1♠
Pass	3♣	All Pass	

3. At game all your ♥J lead is taken by declarer's ♥K. Declarer leads the ♦K. How should you continue after taking your ♦A?

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

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

West	North	East	South
			2NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

4. With N/S vulnerable, you lead the ♦8. Declarer plays low from dummy, partner takes the ♦Q, cashes the ♦A and gives you a ruff. What next?

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

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

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

5. At game all, West leads the ♥Q to dummy's ♥K and your ♥A. How do you continue:  
 (i) Playing teams-of-four?  
 (ii) Playing duplicate pairs?

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

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

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

6. At game all, your ♣K lead is won by declarer's ♠A. He continues with the ♠K. What are your thoughts?

♠ Q J 8 5  
 ♥ K J  
 ♦ A K Q J 10 8  
 ♣ 8

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

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

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## North-South and East-West Hands Switched

**Q** We were N/S and our opponents reached 4♥ and made ten tricks. We then discovered that 4♥ (or 2♥ or 5♥ making ten tricks) had been bid in the opposite direction (ie by N/S, not E/W) in all the previous rounds. Clearly, the E/W and N/S hands had been switched at the previous table. The director was called and the cards positioned correctly for succeeding tables. What is the correct ruling concerning the scoring for that board for the two pairs at our table and the two pairs at the previous table?  
Tim Sharrock by email.

**A** The board is unplayable at your table and neither pair is at fault so they each receive average plus. The pairs at the previous table should both be penalised and 10% of a top is the normal penalty.

It sounds as though the board was removed from the table at the previous table which is illegal and both pairs should be warned not to do this.



**Q** I have two questions: 1. North opens 1♥. There are then three passes, at which point North bids 1NT. How should the director rule?

2. It is North's turn to bid, but before she can call, East bids 3♦. South does not accept the bid and immediately calls the director. It seems that North had intended to bid 1♠. This situation seems to require a comparable bid by East. Is this true, what is the comparable bid to 3♦?  
David Bowers by email.

**A** 1. Law 39 deals with calls after the final pass. The 1NT bid is cancelled and North plays in 1♥. Since he is declarer there is no penalty though there would have been lead penalties if he had been defending. Of course, the defence have a perfect right to make deductions from the cancelled 1NT bid.

2. I presume you mean North is the dealer? The director explains that South may accept the 3♦ bid in which case there is no penalty. If he does not the 3♦ bid is cancelled and the bidding reverts to North. If North passes, the 3♦ bid is repeated without penalty. If North makes any bid (ie does not pass) East can make a comparable call to 3♦ without penalty, or make any other call and silence partner for one round and there may be lead penalties. After the director has explained all that, and not before, he offers South

the chance to accept.

Assuming that South does not accept and North bids 1♠, the question is what does an overcall of 3♦ mean? If it is played as pre-emptive that is a comparable call to an opening pre-empt of 3♦, but if it is played as intermediate that is not. However an overcall of 4♦ if played as a pre-empt is probably similar enough to be considered comparable. No other calls are comparable.



**Q** Is it legitimate to prompt your partner, prior to seeing your hand, as to the vulnerability on the board about to be played?  
Ron, Alton BC.

**A** The auction period starts for a pair when either player takes his hand from the board, so if the prompt is given before any cards are taken from the board by this side it is permissible. Once either of them have taken the cards out it is no longer permissible.

I should find this very annoying and would stop my partner very quickly if she did it. Of course if one player had difficulty seeing the vulnerability then it would be acceptable and normal. On the other hand it is difficult to see why anyone objects.

**Q** I write in connection to your reply to Roy Betteridge's question (BRIDGE 181). It is stated that one board was not arrow-switched, but neither pair was penalised. Under law 7 B1 both pairs contravened the law so why was there not a procedural penalty imposed on both pairs for their infraction? If not, all other pairs playing this board correctly have been unfairly treated.

Mr Morgan,  
Attleborough, Norfolk.

**A** It is not normal to penalise pairs in a club except in two circumstances.

First, if a player makes a habit of doing something wrong after warnings, then it is normal to start giving him a procedural penalty and continue to do so until he stops. Second, if the actions at one table mean that a board cannot be played at another table, then it is normal to give procedural penalties. There is no suggestion that either of these applied in this case.

You suggest the other players are disadvantaged. Failure to arrow-switch a board (or arrow-switching when it should not be done) causes no particular problems to anyone but the scorer. No other players were disadvantaged in any way.



**Q** Yesterday, we encountered an issue on this hand:

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

West	North	East	South
Pass	2♦ <sup>1</sup>	Pass	2♥ <sup>2</sup>
Pass	3♦	Pass	Pass <sup>3</sup>
Pass			

<sup>1</sup>Announced as strong

<sup>2</sup>Intended as a relay

<sup>3</sup>South realised 2♦ was weak

The director was called before the lead was made and he suggested we play on and he would look at the board at the end of the session – East did mention that she would have bid had she known that 2♦ was weak. 3♦ made nine tricks. After discussion at the end of the round, E/W thought they would make nine tricks in 4♣. At the end of the session, the director had a quick look at the hands and gave an adjusted score of 4♣-1 by East. Today the director changed his ruling to 4♣ making by West.

1. Should the director have requested the bidding to revert and correct bidding to take place?

2. Having adjusted the score initially, can he now take it upon himself to change the score?

3. Should he have consulted all four players as to the likely bids and outcome?

4. Can the director assume from the travellers that makeable contracts are always possible?

5. Should the strength of the players be considered in deciding if they are able to make a contract?

6. What action should the director have taken when he was initially called and what is correct ruling?

Vandana Wadhar by email.

**A** 1. The director should allow the final pass to be withdrawn, but cannot go back any further. I do not think West will change his pass so the contract will be played in 3♦.

2. If he believes he has made a mistake it is correct for him to amend the ruling.

3. He must let everyone have their say, certainly, but eventually it is his decision after consulting other players as to how he rules.

4. The director should not be looking at the scores at other tables because he has no idea how they were reached or played.

5. When making an adjustment all relevant facts should be taken into account.

6. Letting the board be played is the correct thing to do. However when adjusting at the end he should consider all possibilities and, unless it is obvious what would have happened, should give a variety of adjusted scores and a weighting, as it is called, for each. For example, here it is not at all obvious that E/W would reach 4♣ though it is such an easy hand I think that 10 tricks are fairly obvious. Suppose East were to double 2♦ as she might, West will bid clubs and they will probably finish in 4♣ or possibly 5♣. But it is not an obvious double with only two spades and East might pass. If so, after the 2♥ bid on her

left which seems to be natural I do not think she would bid.

A more normal ruling, in my view, would be:

25% of 3♦ =, N/S +110

+10% of 5♣-1, N/S +50

+65% of 4♣ =, N/S -130

Of course 3♦ should go off, but since it did not when it was played, I do not include any weighting for it going off.

♣♦♥♠

**Q** Please could you tell me which of the following are alertable?

1NT-2♦-3♥ (showing a maximum with four hearts or three very good hearts and a doubleton).

1NT-2♦-3♣ (showing a maximum, three or more hearts, a good four card club suit and a doubleton).

1NT-2♦-3♠ (showing a maximum with three or more hearts and club shortage).

I suspect the first two are not alertable but the third is. Mike Johnson by email.

**A** I agree with you. Basically where bids are concerned you alert bids that are natural but very surprising, or that are artificial. When you show a shortage that is artificial so the third one is alertable. The first one is clearly not alertable. However the second one is somewhat arguable and if you are in a club where very few people even consider super-accepts, you might argue that 3♣ meaning clubs and hearts would be very surprising, but it would not hurt to alert it.

To summarise, the first is not alertable, the third is alertable, and the second

depends somewhat on what people in your club expect. If in doubt then alert.

♣♦♥♠

**Q** We had an incident at a club duplicate recently, where declarer made 3♠, which was the contract so far as she was concerned.

However, her opponents insisted that she had bid 4♠ and so was one down. The director was called, but the players could not agree. What should the ruling be?

On a subsidiary point, is there any objection to a player noting down each contract at the end of the bidding? Some members also like to leave the appropriate bidding card visible, proud of the bidding box.

Keith Rylands, Kent School of Bridge, Maidstone.

**A** One of the director's many jobs is to decide the facts.

In a case like this the director must get as much information as he can, for example what was the bidding, what did the players have, and so forth, and then decide. It is like an alleged hesitation: the director has to decide, he cannot give averages or an adjusted score instead of deciding.

It is normal for players to write the contract on their score-cards. Probably over 85% of club players do so and it is perfectly legal. Leaving a bidding card showing the contract is a matter for the club who may allow it, forbid it or mandate it. I recommend allowing it because it is hard to see anything wrong with it. ■

E-mail your questions on bridge laws to:  
davidstevenson@mrbridge.co.uk

# Answers to Defence at Duplicate Pairs Quiz on page 23

1. South opens 2NT which is passed out. What do you lead from Hands A, B and C?

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

Hand A Lead the ♦J. A spade lead is likely to be round to the ♠K. Partner has some points, otherwise why are the opponents not raising to game? If spade tricks are required to defeat the contract, partner will hopefully gain the lead and lead spades through declarer.

Hand B Lead the ♠Q, a nice compromise between being passive (not leading away from broken honours) and setting up tricks.

A diamond lead is too likely to concede an unnecessary trick.

Hand C Lead the ♠5. A five card suit is a much more attractive lead against no-trumps than a four-card suit. This may give away a cheap trick but hopefully partner will gain the lead and a spade return could let you cash four spade tricks. Leading passively at pairs is a good principle but don't take it to extremes.

2. What do you lead from Hands A, B and C after the bidding shown?

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

West	North	East	South
Pass	3♠	All Pass	1♠

Hand A Lead a trump, the ♠4. This is likely to be passive and may prevent declarer cross-ruffing. Note that honour sequences with just two touching honours and no intermediates are not passive. For example, leading the ♥K would be costly if South had ♥A-6-5 and dummy had ♥J-8-3.

Hand B Lead a heart, the ♥6 if your leading methods are MUD from three small. Leading from the ♦J is not passive, for example if dummy has ♦Q-2 and declarer has ♦A-10-8 declarer asks for dummy's ♦2 and East must play the ♦K to prevent declarer making the ♦10. The defensive diamond trick has gone up in smoke.

Hand C Lead the ♠6. This is highly unlikely to damage a trump trick in partner's hand and may enable you at a later stage to continue with ♠A and ♠8, drawing a total of three rounds of trumps. Leading away from the trump ace is much safer than leading away from a side suit ace.

3. At game all your ♥J lead is taken by declarer's ♥K. Declarer plays the ♦K. How should you continue after taking your ♦A?

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

West	North	East	South
Pass	3NT	All Pass	2NT

You have 11 points and dummy has 9. South's 2NT opening bid promises 20-22 points. Your partner has nothing. You can write down declarer's hand:

♠ A K Q J
♥ K 5 2
♦ K 5 3
♣ K J 9

He also has 12 tricks: four spades, three hearts and five diamonds. It is no use waiting for declarer to lead to his ♠K. He doesn't need any club tricks. Take your ♣A and give up.

Holding declarer to 11 tricks by cashing out when it is obvious that you must either take your trick or lose it should ensure a decent matchpoint score for you.

4. With N/S vulnerable, you lead the ♦8. Declarer plays low from dummy, partner takes the ♦Q, cashes the ♦A and gives you a ruff. What next?

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

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

The important thing here is that in two ways you have already done very well. First you have overcalled on just six points, enabling partner to sacrifice in 4♠ and pushing your opponents one level higher than they would want to be. Second you have

found the diamond lead, leading to a ruff. You are already ahead of other East/West pairs and it is time to consolidate by cashing your ♠A. If you look at declarer's hand you will see why.

Unless you cash your ♠A declarer will discard his spades on dummy's ♦K and ♣K. Many N/S pairs will be in 4♥ and will go one off, so your +200 will compare very well with a string of +100 scores.

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

5. At game all, West leads the ♥Q to dummy's ♥K and your ♥A. How do you continue:

- (i) Playing teams-of-four?  
(ii) Playing duplicate pairs?

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

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

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

- (i) Playing teams you must look for an opportunity to beat the contract. You are unlikely to have a trump trick and the clubs look menacingly solid. Therefore you need two diamond tricks to add to your two heart tricks. Switch to a diamond on the slim hope that declarer has the hand shown.

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

- (ii) At pairs you would like to cash two heart tricks and then lead a diamond through declarer, but if your side takes the second heart trick partner will be on lead. Suppose declarer

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

received a normal lead. Overtricks will be crucial here. You should return a heart at trick 2 to ensure that you hold declarer to 11 tricks.

6. At game all, your ♣K lead is won by declarer's ♠A. He continues with the ♠K. What are your thoughts?

♠ Q J 8 5  
♥ K J  
♦ A K Q J 10 8  
♣ 8

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

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

Of course you would be too polite to say anything but you would not be unreasonable to wonder if North is quite sane. South might have a balanced hand and want to suggest 3NT as an alternative to 4♠ but surely he did not expect North to pass on this shapely hand. Declarer should have a heart guard for his 3NT bid so he might have:

Declarers in 4♠ will easily take 11 tricks, losing just the ♠A and ♥A. This will give them +650. If you hold declarer to +630 you are likely to score very well, so take the ♠K with your ♠A and cash your ♥A and ♣Q.

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

Perhaps this example seems a little bizarre but all clubs have players with slightly eccentric views. In this case your opponents seem to have no-trump-itis. Playing duplicate pairs you have to learn to take advantage of them.

has:

On a diamond switch he will make 12 tricks. Declarer seems to be in a normal contract and has

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# READERS' LETTERS

## BOOKS WANTED

Many of your readers will be familiar with the fact that I sell bridge books – in fact the Spring 2018 catalogue is now available. However, recently I have found it difficult to acquire quality, new stock.

I would be particularly interested to hear from anyone who has bridge books to dispose of. I am keen to acquire books in good, clean condition, with dust wrappers where published in that format. They should ring me on ☎07530 553594.

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## ACOL SURVIVAL

If like me you are a keen player of Acol, you may have noticed that other systems are creeping into general bridge awareness. There are reasons for this. First, the internet is dominated by the need to play American-style five-card majors; and, secondly, many of the most experienced players play very little normal club duplicate, preferring team matches. Even when playing pairs, expert games tend to be scored by IMPs rather than matchpoints. Playing IMPs, or any other kind of aggregate scoring, there is a case to be made for playing a strong no-trump – and if playing a strong no-trump, it makes sense to play five-card majors.

Playing normal matchpoint club pairs, however, I think you give up so much by moving away from the weak

no-trump. With this type of scoring you are aiming to get a better score than others holding your cards. How much more is irrelevant – a win by 10 points is just as valuable as a win by 1,000 points. The weak no-trump helps you achieve this aim, winning many more boards at matchpoint pairs than it loses.

How do these wins arise? The weak no-trump is both accurate and pre-emptive. By opening a weak no-trump you have told your partner about your weak balanced hand in one bid and have not been blocked out from completing your hand description by the opponents horning in. Quite the converse, your 1NT may have prevented the opponents having an easy entrée into the auction. The 12-14 1NT also really simplifies the rest of the system. There is no need for the convoluted 'prepared' bids inherent in five-card majors. In fact, Acol with a weak no-trump is the only major system in the world completely based on bidding your longest suit first.

Even when 1NT is 'wrong' and the opponents double you, it is often hard for them to maximise their score. There are many good 'wriggle' systems and being caught for a 'telephone number' is now quite rare.

Bad systems and conventions tend to get Darwin-ed out of existence... only the fittest survive. The weak no-trump is still going strong after

nearly ninety years and my guess is that it will flourish for a long time yet.

**Ned Paul, Twickenham.**

## ACOL BIDDING

I wonder if you could ask Bernard Magee about his Acol Bidding Program?

I find it excellent. The bidding advice is universal but the explanations on how the hands should be played is not always provided. I assume, though I may well be wrong, that it isn't given for all hands and if so is there any way of knowing which?

**John Abbott, Cambridge.**

The program is Acol Bidding not Acol Bidding and Play of the Hand.

## VIVA BIRD

I enjoy the David Bird stories and I suspect that many other readers do too. David has been really prolific over the years in different magazines with his Abbott stories, Cholmeley School and not least, the Robin Hood adventures in BRIDGE.

The stories are light and easy reading, populated with characters with recognisable bridge-club traits and personalities. What I really like though is the challenge of the interesting deals and the 'over-my-shoulder' approach David takes, so that you get to think along with the declarer, be it Robin, or the Sheriff, about the problems the hands present.

The deals usually involve planning for the bad breaks, overcoming 5-0 trump splits or finding interesting endplays. You absorb them as you read but this is great training and practice for when you meet such hands in real life at the table. Thanks, David, for all your efforts.

**Ned Paul, Twickenham.** ■

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# Gisborne's Disappointing Session

The Sheriff had arranged a social game in his chambers and, so far, his partnership with the enchantingly attractive 19-year-old Giselda Beauchamp had gone well.

Somewhat less smooth had been the partnership of Sir Guy of Gisborne with Giselda's mother, the Countess Beauchamp of Longwilton.

'Forgive me but I can endure no more,' declared the Countess. 'Mistake after mistake, he makes! If the game is to continue, we will have to change partners.'

Gisborne perked up at this news. Perhaps this would be his chance to impress Giselda, one of the most alluring young ladies it had been his pleasure to encounter. Sitting opposite her, he would be able to exchange friendly glances and commend her play. He gathered his concentration. Yes, this was an opportunity not to be missed.

'I will partner Giselda,' continued the Countess. 'We will see if two ladies can outplay two men.'

The game continued, with neither the Sheriff nor Gisborne displaying any pleasure at the new arrangement. This was an early deal:

## Dealer South. Love All.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Guy of</i>	<i>Giselda</i>	<i>The</i>	<i>Countess</i>
<i>Gisborne</i>		<i>Sheriff</i>	<i>Beauchamp</i>
Pass	3NT	All Pass	2NT

Gisborne led the ♠K and down went the dummy.

'Just two queens for me?' queried the Countess. 'Your father would have passed 2NT on such a poor hand.'

'I was hoping that Sir Guy would assist us with his opening lead,' Giselda replied. 'And you play the cards so well, Mama.'

On the first trick the Sheriff had to overtake with the ♠A. It was clear from the bidding that declarer must hold all eight of the missing honour cards outside clubs. He therefore returned a passive ♦10.

The Countess won with the ace. Such a threadbare dummy, Giselda had given her. With only one entry card, the ♦Q, how could she possibly take both the major-suit finesses? It seemed that she would go down, even if the ♠K and ♥K were onside.

A few moments later, the Countess had spotted the best chance. She played the king and jack of diamonds, drawing the defenders' cards in the suit, and then led a small club towards dummy.

Gisborne went in with the ♣9, the Sheriff discarding a low spade, and pondered his return. If he continued clubs, surrendering a trick to declarer's ♣J, a successful heart finesse would land the contract. There would be no need to seek a second spade trick.

When Gisborne eventually placed the ♥8 on the table, the Countess reached for dummy's ♥Q. The Sheriff covered with the king and she won with the ace. A diamond to the queen

permitted a winning spade finesse and the game was made.

'It was just as I thought, Mama!' exclaimed a delighted Giselda. 'Sir Guy found the only lead to give it to you.'

The Sheriff stirred in his seat. 'Lead the club ten, not the king!' he cried, 'Is that too difficult for you? How can she make it then?'

Gisborne knew better than to make any riposte, however absurd the Sheriff's comments might be. The game proceeded and the Countess was soon in a slam contract.

## Dealer North. Game All.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Guy of</i>	<i>Giselda</i>	<i>The</i>	<i>Countess</i>
<i>Gisborne</i>		<i>Sheriff</i>	<i>Beauchamp</i>
Pass	1♦	Pass	2♠
Pass	3♦	Pass	4NT
Pass	5♥	Pass	6♠
All Pass			

Gisborne was pleased to have an obvious ♣Q opening lead at his disposal. Surely even the Sheriff could not find fault with such a choice.

Countess Beauchamp won with the ♣A and drew trumps in four rounds,



throwing a heart and a club from dummy. Her next move was to lead a diamond, ducking in the dummy.

The Sheriff won with the ♦9 and returned a heart, hoping to drive out dummy's ♥A. The Countess rose with the ♥K and crossed to the ♦A, continuing with the ♦K. The suit failed to split 3-3, but she was able to ruff a fourth round with her last trump. A heart to dummy's ace provided access to the established ♦8 and the slam was home.

'What a clever play, ducking that diamond, Mama!' declared Giselda, flashing a splendid smile. Gisborne's pulse was racing. Such a smile in his direction would have been treasured for many weeks.

'No lady member of court would miss it,' the Countess replied. 'With only one side entry to dummy, it's the only way to survive a 4-2 diamond break.'

'Maybe a heart lead would beat the slam,' suggested Giselda. 'You win with the king, but if you duck a diamond, then they would play another heart before the diamonds were set up.'

Gisborne winced. Who in the world would lead from the J-9-6 when they had a Q-J-10 sequence elsewhere?

The Sheriff glared across the table. 'Lead the unbid major and the slam has no chance,' he said. 'A heart is the killing lead. Even the girl noticed it.'

'The girl, you call my daughter?' protested the Countess. 'She does have a name, my Lord. Good manners cost nothing, even for you men.'

The incoming daylight was beginning to fade and there would be time for just one more rubber. Gisborne's momentary hope for a further change of partners failed to materialise. The final rubber had reached Game All when the Countess arrived in another slam.

**Dealer North. Love All.**

♠ 10 7 5			
♥ A 2			
♦ J 9 7			
♣ A Q 10 3 2			
♠ 4 2			♠ 8 6 3
♥ K Q J 10 9 6			♥ 8 7 4
♦ K 10 4 3			♦ 8 5 2
♣ 4			♣ J 9 7 6
	<div style="display: inline-block; transform: rotate(45deg); border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"> <div style="display: inline-block; transform: rotate(-45deg);">N</div> <div style="display: inline-block; transform: rotate(45deg);">E</div> <div style="display: inline-block; transform: rotate(-45deg);">W</div> <div style="display: inline-block; transform: rotate(45deg);">S</div> </div>		
♠ A K Q J 9			
♥ 5 3			
♦ A Q 6			
♣ K 8 5			

West	North	East	South
<i>Guy of Gisborne</i>	<i>Giselda</i>	<i>The Sheriff</i>	<i>Countess Beauchamp</i>
	1♣	Pass	1♠
2♥	2♠	Pass	4NT
Pass	5♥	Pass	6♣
All Pass			

Gisborne surveyed his hand wearily. Should he lead the ♥K or the singleton club? Giselda had shown two aces, responding to the Richmond 4NT. Surely the Countess would hold the other two aces to justify invoking the convention. Since the Sheriff could not hold an ace, he decided to lead the ♥K.

Giselda laid out her dummy and, once again, her mother was not impressed. 'Another minimum hand for me,' she declared. 'Your father always passes with 11 points. It's lucky for you that I have such a good hand.'

The Countess won the first trick with dummy's ♥A and drew two rounds of trumps with the ace and king. All would be well if the clubs broke 3-2 and her next move was to play the king and ace of the suit.

When Gisborne showed out but could not ruff, the Sheriff winced. The Countess was the luckiest player he had ever encountered. Did the woman realise there was still a trump out?

The Countess continued with dummy's ♣Q and ruffed a fourth round of clubs with the ♠J. She returned to dummy by overtaking the ♠9 with the ♠10 and discarded her heart loser on the thirteenth club. A finesse of the ♦Q lost to the king but she then claimed the remaining tricks with a trump and two diamonds.

'Brilliant play, Mama!' said Giselda. 'If you're not the best player in the shire, I don't know who is.'

The Countess shook her head. 'All my lady friends would have made it,' she declared. 'If clubs turned out to be 3-2, I could draw the last trump then.'

The visitors departed and Gisborne looked somewhat dejected as he trudged back to the castle barracks. The Sheriff had achieved no more success with the dazzlingly beautiful Giselda than he had. Ah well, three or four pints of Garfield's strong ale would rectify the situation. They usually did.





# Detective Kelsey

Scotsman Hugh Kelsey (1926-1995) is well known as one of the world's leading bridge writers. See BRIDGE 164, page 28. Amongst his works was a series of short books on specific card play themes, for publishers 'Master Bridge Series'.

The deal below is from *Test Your Card Reading*. It has 36 well-presented deals which he has used to train the reader to build a chain of logic to help declarer place cards and find the best line of play.

The best approach often requires

## Sudoku

- Predecessors to the modern Sudoku appeared in France, in the late 19th century.
- The word Sudoku is a portmanteau of two Japanese words Num(ber) Pla(ce).
- In 1997 New Zealander Wayne Gould, a Hong Kong judge developed a computer program to generate puzzles.
- In 2008 an Australian drugs-related jury trial was aborted when it became known that five of the twelve jurors had been playing Sudoku instead of listening to evidence. Surprisingly, there is no offence under the NSW Jury Act for playing games or being inattentive to a degree that causes a trial to be abandoned.

Source: Wikipedia, and Sydney Morning Herald

making provisional assumptions about the layout, working out what follows from those assumptions, and then playing accordingly. A similar approach is often used in Sudoku.

So, try your hand at this deal, based on a deal in the book – I have slightly altered it to fit in with the style of bidding and opening lead that is more commonly used in the 21st century.

### Dealer East. Game All.

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



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

West	North	East	South
		1♠	Pass
Pass	Db!'	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

'An imperfect shape for a take-out double, but North has to do something in the protective seat.

Opening lead: ♠8

Starting with what we know for certain:

Between the North/South hands we have 22 HCP. If West had as few as 5 HCP, there might have been a response, rather than just a pass.

West: 0 to 5 HCP. East: 13 to 18 HCP.

	12	
0-5		13-18
	10	

If all the points are on the right, with East, then we have potentially three losers, certainly no more than that: ♣A, ♥K, ♦A.

Even if the trumps lie badly, breaking 4-0, then there are enough entries to take these winners: two top spades, two in the minors (having knocked out the aces), four trumps in hand and two ruffs in the short hand ... or ... instead of trumping in the short hand, try to establish one or two extra tricks by setting up the diamond suit.

What if West has the ♥K? Then that means:

	12	
♥K		All the missing top cards
	10	

Our heart finesse will succeed, and the ♣A will be with East (remember, West passed, so he cannot have both the ♥K and the ♣A). So game will make.

Let's visualise an adverse lie of the cards. The worst things can be is: the ♣A lies over the ♣K.

	♣ 8 4	
♣ A ??		♣ Q J 10 ??
	♣ K 6 3	

In the same way that we are being pessimistic, East will be optimistic, and were he to have a hand like this:

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

He would think to himself, 'Let's hope that partner has the ♣A, and we can take the ♥K, ♦A and two club tricks.'

We can rely on him to play clubs before we can manage to establish the diamond suit. If he does have that hand, there is nothing that can be done. And this is the key theme behind the 'chain of logic'. That chain is the chain of doom and gloom.

So, let's look at a different chain ...

♣A with West		♥K with East, but I must not lose to it

When high cards are positioned so that our finesses will lose, there are

three possible ways that we can avoid losing to them:

- Endplays
- Squeezes
- Playing for the honours to drop (ie dropping a doubleton queen, or a singleton king).

On this deal, we cannot endplay West, for there are too many suits that he can use as exit cards. Also, there is no squeeze, because we are about to lose four tricks pretty quickly (the losers are not slow, as they say).

That leaves us with the dropping option. Looking at two possible branches:

if ♥K is here ...		... ♣A is sure to be here

If the ♥K is with West all along, then the ♣A is sure to be with East (we considered this earlier in the article).

		if ♥K is here singleton, ♣A is irrelevant

If the ♥K is with East, and is singleton, and we drop it, then we don't care who has the ♣A. Because we have one fewer loser than our original reckoning.

The line suggested by Kelsey is to win the opening lead in hand and play to the ♥A. If the ♥K does not fall, set up the diamond suit. The heart pips allow you to trump diamonds without fearing an over-ruff.

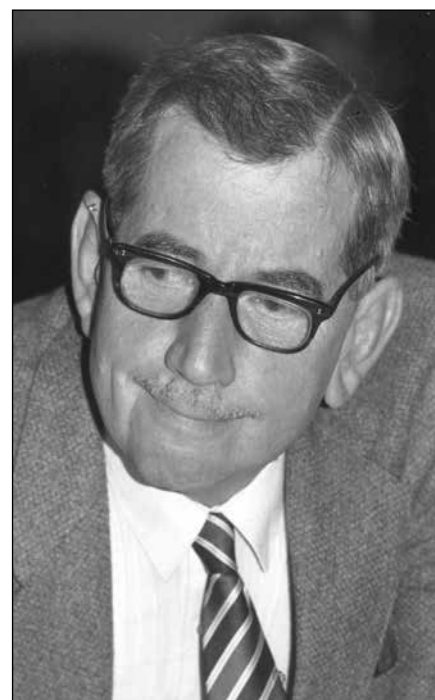
The full deal is:

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

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

West	North	East	South
		1♠	Pass
Pass	Dbl	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♥	All Pass	



Hugh Kelsey

Author's note: if you wanted to win the first trick in dummy with the ♠A, and start by playing a club towards your king, then that is a good line too (ie deferring the 'try to drop the ♥K'). However, what you cannot do is win the opening lead in dummy, play the ♥A, and then play a club up, because the opponents may play two more rounds of trumps, preventing you from ruffing black cards in dummy, and you'll need a friendly lie of diamonds to prevail.





# Should I Play for Overtricks at Pairs?

**Q** In the February edition of BRIDGE, Michael Byrne wrote an article on cross ruffing. My query is on an aspect he did not cover.

On the second page he shows hands which can make 11, 12 or 13 tricks, depending how clubs split. He advocates only playing one club in 5♦, two in 6♦ and three in 7♦ to ensure the contract. I agree entirely when playing teams.

Playing pairs is there not a strong case for trying to make overtricks, but how many? My instinct and what I would probably do at the table would be to play for 12 tricks in both 5♦ and 6♦. However detailed analysis may show differently.

In 5♦ with a 92.7% (30.5+62.2) probability of a 5-2 or 4-3 club distribution it appears obvious to play for 12. Is it worth trying for 13 tricks, a 62.2% probability, taking into account some people may have not bid 5♦ (28 high card points between the hands) or successfully play the cross trump?

Again in 6♦, is it worth trying for 13 with the 62.5% probability, especially as it is much more likely that other pairs have not bid 6♦ than it was that they did not bid 5♦ in the previous case?

Now I am leaning more towards playing for 13 tricks but am far from sure.

**My last doubt is that with declarer's and dummy's uneven distributions in hearts and spades, are the standard probabilities valid or is it more likely there will be a 6-1 or 5-2 distribution in clubs?**

David Lawrence,  
Hook, Hampshire.

**A** Michael's article was about card play generally rather than matchpoint pairs tactics specifically. Sometimes at matchpoints, you do aim for an overtrick even if it means putting the contract at risk. The correct play will depend in part upon your assessment of what contracts other pairs will reach.

On most deals there will be at least one pair in an inferior contract, in which case you want to make sure of beating them by making your contract. This means you usually need the chance of an overtrick to be above 50% for it to be sensible to risk your contract in trying for an overtrick. If you are in a slam contract, there will nearly always be some pairs who have stopped in game, so you would be more cautious about risking the contract for an overtrick.

On the deal in question, if you are playing matchpoints, it is probably a good idea to try for 13 tricks if you have stopped in 5♦ but to play safe for 12 tricks if you

have bid 6♦. With so many points and this shape, very few pairs, if any, will have stopped in a part score, making it reasonable to put a game contract at risk.

On your last point, the unbalanced North-South hands have no impact on the standard probabilities of a 5-2 or 6-1 club division.



**Q** In the following bidding sequence, my partner (West) said that his 2♣ rebid was fourth suit forcing. Is it correct?

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

Raj Subramaniam, Southport.

**A** No: after a response at the one level, a rebid in a new suit below two of opener's first suit is not forcing. The bid is quite wide ranging in strength. Opener could be minimum or could have some extras.

The change of suit rebid would be forcing either if the initial response was at the two level or if it took the bidding past two of opener's first suit.

If opener wished to force on your sequence, a jump to 3♣ would be forcing, as

would a cue bid of 2♥.

The term 'fourth suit forcing' only applies when your side has bid three suits. If the opponents bid a suit, this does not count as a suit bid by your side. If the opponents have bid a suit, you can bid their suit as a force.



**Q** On page 35 of the April BRIDGE magazine you recommend opening a hand with five spades and five clubs with a bid of 1♠ and not 1♣.

Although many would agree with your suggestion I am also sure that many Acol players would disagree.

After a 1♠ opener the dustbin response of 1NT is not very informative whereas a 1♣ opener leaves more space for development. John Martin by email.

**A** Over the years the proportion of people opening 1♣ with 5-5 in the black suits has steadily fallen. This is in part because bidding has become more competitive.

Getting the spade suit into the auction is so important because:

- (i) you can outbid the opponents at the same level;
- (ii) you have a better chance of making

game aiming for 10 tricks rather than 11;

(iii) you score more playing in spades (an important factor at matchpoints), sometimes even if you make a trick less (140 for nine tricks in spades, 130 for ten in clubs).



**Q** I was South on the following deal. I opened 1♠ and my partner responded 1NT. What should I bid next?

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

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

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

I didn't fancy 2NT with my weak diamond suit and felt 2♠ a bit feeble so I bid 3♠ which my partner raised to 4♠, which went one off. Was 2♠ the correct rebid?

Hugh Ball, Eastbourne.

**A** There are three rebids I might consider with your hand; I am afraid 3♠ is not one of them because the hand is too flat and lacks a sixth spade.

With a 5332 shape, the natural thing to do is to raise to 2NT or 3NT. Partner has already bid no-trumps and the lead will be coming up to whatever partner has in diamonds. With 18 HCP a raise to 2NT would normally suffice. Here it would be reasonable to upgrade the A-K-J-10-x holding and raise to 3NT.

If you really do not fancy raising no-trumps, you could rebid 3♣. If partner then bids 3♦ or 3NT, you can be confident 3NT is the right spot. If partner rebids 3♥, you will know to raise to 4♥. If partner gives preference to 3♠, you can bid 3NT at your third turn, knowing you have expressed doubt about whether 3NT is right. The awkward thing partner might do is raise clubs...

With a combined 26 HCP, I do not see how you can avoid bidding game. As the cards lie, 3NT will not make either, because holding up the ♦K until the third round does not help when East has the ♥A.



**Q** Dealer South; neither side vulnerable:

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

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

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

#### Our table

West	North	East	South
			2♠
3♠	4♠	5♣	Pass
5NT	Pass	6♣	Pass
6♥	6♠	Pass	Pass
7♥	7♠	Pass	Pass
Dbl	All Pass		

#### Teammates table

West	North	East	South
			2♠
6♥	6♠	Dbl	All Pass

**I am West and have the best hand I have seen in ages. I need to find my partner with something in diamonds but N/S open the bidding. My 3♠ is forcing. The opposition bidding doesn't help me but I push on. It's a hand I want to declare not defend. North has a sixth sense and keeps bidding. Could I have done any better?**

Roger Harris,  
Stratford-upon-Avon.

**A** No bidding system caters adequately for hands with two voids.

Since the weak two opener is unlikely to hold the ♦K, West only wants to be in a grand slam if it sounds as if East holds that card.

At equal vulnerability, it is unclear how strongly West should feel about buying the contract. If North-South can make nine tricks with spades as trumps, it is better to play in 6♥ making an overtrick than collect 800 from 7♠ doubled. If North-South can make only eight tricks, it is better to bid 7♥ even if they sacrifice because 1,100 would be better than 1,010.

If you play a convention known as Leaping Michaels (and North-South do not compete much), you might be able to find out whether East has the ♦K. You overcall 4♦ to show a big red two suiter. If East bids 4♥, you cue bid 4♠ and then 6♣, inviting partner to cue bid 6♦ with the ♦K; if instead East raises 4♦ to 5♦, you bid 5NT to ask how many of the top three diamonds East has, correcting whatever the reply is to an appropriate heart contract.

Few people will play Leaping Michaels and here North-South would bid on anyway. You start with a 3♠ cue bid and hope to

judge from the subsequent bidding whether to stop in 6♥ or risk going on to 7♥.



**Q** We were North-South and West opened 1♠. My partner doubled for take-out.

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

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

With 16 points I jumped to 3♥ to show strength. I didn't bid 4♥ as partner may have had only three hearts but perhaps I should have done. I considered 3NT but thought a suit contract would be safer. My partner passed and I made ten tricks. Other pairs were in 4♥ or 3NT.

Do you think I should have jumped to 4♥, 3NT or possibly have bid the opponent's suit? Or do you think North should have raised my 3♥ to 4♥? He said he didn't raise it as he had minimum points, just 11, for a take-out double although the shape was perfect.

Jane Karfoot by email.

**A** North, being minimum, was right to pass 3♥.

South's jump to 3♥ is invitational, showing around 9-11 points. With 16 points South does not want to make the same bid. Either you bid game or you make a bid that partner cannot pass: the opposing suit. The cue bid is forcing to suit agreement, ►

so if you bid 2♠ and follow with 3♥ then partner cannot pass that either. With four-card heart support, North would raise to 4♥. On a hand without four-card support, North could try 3♠ to ask for a spade stopper or take some other suitable action.



**Q** We play a 15-17 NT and Benjaminised Acol, with 2♦ as a game force and 2♣ as eight playing tricks in a suit or 2NT (22-23).

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

**N**  
**W**  
**E**  
**S**

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

<b>North</b>	<b>South</b>
2♣	2♦
2♥	4♥
End	

**I suggested my partner might have bid 3♦, hopefully getting to 6♥ where 13 tricks rolled in. What do you think a reasonable auction would have been?**  
David France, Glasgow.

**A** Here 4♥ is fast arrival and I suggest playing 2NT on the second round as a negative, leaving a 3♥ raise available as agreeing hearts plus some slam interest. I would not recommend a 3♦ rebid from partner when holding J-x-x as

support for your strong suit. After 3♥, your side continues with an exchange of cue bids 3♠-4♦. Partner has nothing really in reserve (bidding 3♥ rather than 4♥ already showed some slam interest) and would pass if you bid 4♥. Perhaps you are worth a 4NT enquiry once you get the 4♦ cue bid; then you reach 6♥.

With the strong hand as declarer, 6♥ is a very good spot. At worst the opponents lead a club and you guess wrong (or North has K-J-x and there is no winning guess); then you have the diamond finesse in reserve. On any other lead, you expect to make 6♥ no matter who has the ♦Q.



**Q** What do you think of the rule of 14 for deciding whether to respond 1NT or show a suit at the two level in response to partner's one-level opening?  
Name and address supplied.

**A** The rule of 14 is a slight over simplification. Playing matchpoints, it is fair enough to say that you can bid a lower suit at the two level with ten points and a four-card suit or nine points and a five-card suit. Vulnerable at teams, however, you do not want to be responding 1NT on many nine point hands unless they are 4333; you would rather ensure you play in game with 16 facing nine and be willing to play sometimes with 15 facing nine. Even at matchpoints, seven points and a seven-card suit could be a bit frisky for a two level response.

**Q** Does the general rule that a double of a conventional bid shows the suit apply here?

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
	1NT	Pass	2♣ <sup>1</sup>
Pass	2♦ <sup>2</sup>	Pass	Pass
Dbl			

<sup>1</sup>Stayman <sup>2</sup>No four-card major

**West had 15 points including a four-card diamond suit to the K-Q and a five-card club suit. As it happens, East took it as take-out, but if left in, the contract would have been four down vulnerable.**

**Also, West said that the double would be for penalty anyway, as N/S had bid no-trumps initially and whenever opposition bid no-trumps, all doubles are for penalty (except a direct double of a 1NT response to a suit opening). Is this correct?**  
Colin Jones by email.

**A** By passing 2♦, South has shown some diamonds, so a reopening double is protective, competing for the partscore ie take-out.

With a strong hand West should double 2♣. Indeed, since you say that West's 15 point hand included a five-card club suit, it does not matter whether you play the double of 2♣ as clubs, a hand that would have doubled 1NT or possibly either: West should have doubled 2♣.

If you play the double of 2♣ as definitely a hand that would have doubled 1NT then you might be able to catch the opponents in 2♦ doubled. If not, I do not think you can. ■



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# Bring on the New Players

*My name is Jeremy Dhondy and I am the Chairman of the English Bridge Union.*

*This column is to answer questions or comments about the EBU that you might have.*

*If you have a comment or a question, I would be happy to hear from you. [jeremy@mrbridge.co.uk](mailto:jeremy@mrbridge.co.uk)*

**Q** In my local area, I see the same people all the time at the club and also when I venture out to local tournaments. How can we get new people involved?

## Teaching is important

I was recently invited to Preston Bridge Club to open their newly refurbished premises and I thought they provided an object lesson in how to both maintain their current membership and also to get new players into the game.

First of all they have a pleasant refurbished environment and a lot of the work and planning was done by volunteers in the club. This creates a great atmosphere.

Secondly, you have read previous articles by me going on about the importance of teaching before and it won't surprise you I am about to mention it again. The club has not only beginners' lessons but also consolidation lessons for those who have got to the end of the beginners' course. Once you have taught new players, those taught there and perhaps elsewhere need somewhere to play.

Often relative beginners are slow and unsure so need a welcoming environment to start with where, perhaps, they play fewer boards. Even before this there can be some supervised play in order to make students feel more comfortable about playing.

The progression is lessons, consolidation, supervised practice, gentle duplicate, full duplicate. That's a lot of organisation not only to put on and teach lessons but for the club to have the necessary number of teachers.

Far-sighted clubs help volunteers get the training necessary for them to become teachers. EBED run courses precisely for this. Have a look at <http://www.ebedcio.org.uk/teach> if you or your club are interested. EBED doesn't mind whether your club is affiliated or not. I think it is important to have someone on the club committee who is responsible for the teaching programme and the students. It sends the right message about the importance of this.

When the new players make it to the normal club game it can be difficult if they encounter players who are terse and unhelpful, so it is important to create the right atmosphere. I asked a club manager about his success in getting relatively new recruits to the normal club game. He replied that the first thing he had to do was to chuck out about 6-8 long-standing club members who found it hard to be polite to anyone let alone relative beginners. That's probably a lot easier if the club is a proprietor owned one rather than a members' one and I'm not sure a major cull is necessarily the way to go but it does point to the importance of creating the right atmosphere whatever your club's aims are.

## Involving new players

One thing I am frequently told is that club players have no ambition to move on, that new players do not want to play in the better game at their club let alone go to a tournament. Whilst not everyone wants to visit a tournament 150 miles away, it is important to stage events that are suitable and enjoyable for less experienced players. Getting outside your immediate circle has much to commend it. Two new initiatives to mention are, first, a national one. The EBU has just put on a 'Jack High' tournament to go with the Easter Festival. It is what it says on the tin, ie available only to those who have an NGS rating of Jack or below with some prizes reserved for those with an NGS of nine or below. The tournament costs less than usual and the players should feel more comfortable as fewer boards are played.

In my local county they have decided to put on a tournament aimed at newer players who may not wish to travel a long way to play. Again it is restricted, this time, to those 10 or under on the NGS. The county have contacted clubs who have teaching programmes, whether they are affiliated or not to invite entries and at the time of writing it has already attracted a decent size field with some weeks to go.

## Is it safe?

Famously this is a line delivered by



Laurence Olivier, a dentist and also a war criminal, whilst holding some very unpleasant dental equipment next to Dustin Hoffman, who has no idea what he is talking about. It's something which applies to games for new players in my view. Is the event, whether in a club or further afield, likely to be something you want to go back to? If an event has too many boards or the experienced players complain about slow play, bidding, the laws etc, then the newcomers will be discouraged from attending in the future.

A fundamental is that your club has to have a way of welcoming new players into the game. If you are big enough to organise supervised play, a newcomers game, perhaps with fewer boards will likely help, but if not then your regular players will need to adapt if there is to be a game at your club in years to come. Similarly even if there is a newcomers' game, eventually the idea will be for players to graduate.

So to go with the welcoming bit, the new events and the club committee member charged with ensuring some teaching happens, you also need a firm code of conduct. We could call it 'Best Behaviour at Bridge' but any name will do. You must expect your members to be pleasant to newcomers and to be tolerant if they don't get every little nuance of the game right. In general, for example, if there is a hesitation then a) it probably doesn't mean all that much and b) it is unlikely that in most cases beginners will know how to take illicit advantage, so the only harm comes when the experienced player makes a couple of cheap jibes about ethicality and follows that with a stentorian call for the director. Then he describes the situation to the director in the most unflattering way. Really this is just bullying. It is a good idea for beginners to have something brief about ethics in their lessons, not so much as to be off-putting but enough to know that one doesn't give the thumbs up to approve of a bid or play! It is also a good idea to have the aforementioned code of conduct and to deal with any players who make the lives of others unpleasant. When you have your code you need to enforce it. To avoid losing members, a gentle

campaign may be more effective than a draconian one. Try asking for any call for the director to be below 75 decibels and accompanied by the word 'please'. In one club I play in you hear a call for 'technical director' which is the player's way of saying something has gone wrong with the scoring machine or someone has 16 cards and nothing ethically challenging has happened at the table. In short you don't need the Witchfinder General to deal with the recalcitrants but you do need to create the right atmosphere in the club.

### Bring on the robots

If beginners feel unsure and they know they are slow then one possibility might be to play some bridge online to build up confidence. These days you can play with robots. One example game is Funbridge (<https://www.funbridge.com/en/>). You can play at a time of your choosing, at a speed you want and as frequently or infrequently as you wish. You can start, stop for a couple of hours and then pick up again. Your robot is most obliging and will play any system you want. Funbridge is French in origin but its grasp of Acol has improved in the last few months so weak no-trump and four-card majors is fine as a system.

If you enjoy the game then there is also a more competitive game run via the EBU. You don't have to be a member unless you want to register the master points that go with it. Best of all no robot that you play with will be critical or sigh in a meaningful way if you go down in a solid contract. The robots themselves are not completely beyond criticism on occasion although they are getting more reliable. Just as you learn whilst going along, the engine which determines the robot's play is updated quite frequently to correct errors and improve bidding. You can play on your computer or laptop, tablet or phone. It even understands the Apple system so iPads are OK to use.

If you feel that robots are a touch impersonal then perhaps going away with others for a bridge weekend with like minded players might help. I'm told Mr Bridge organises a few of those! ■

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# Teams of Four

**T**his DVD is all about a particular form of bridge when you play as a team rather than just a pair. It is the most common form of bridge at international level and is generally more popular with experts. It can be great fun for players at any level and getting to know how the game works is worthwhile on a number of levels.

You can play teams tournaments at club, county or national level, but you can also play a teams match as a dinner party for eight people – a great mixture of social with a little bit of competition.

The DVD starts by showing how to play the form of the game and how to score it. From the scoring it develops some of the most important tactics.

Going for vulnerable games is shown to be important by looking at two situations:

If you bid two games (say 4♠) on two vulnerable boards and make one and go off in the other, then compare that with opponents who just bid 2♠ on both boards.

Board 3: 4♠ making = +620 whilst teammates score -170 for 2♠+2

Board 4: 4♠ down 1 = -100 whilst teammates score -140 for 2♠+1

The scores for the two boards are:

Board 3: +620-170 = +450

Board 4: -100-140 = -240

These two scores are translated in to IMPs by using the IMP table:


Board 3 = +10 IMPs

Board 4 = -6 IMPs

By making one game and going down in the other you have gained four IMPs. This means that vulnerable games are worth going for – a 50% game is a 'good game'.

After seeing the way to play the game and score it, the DVD then shows the main tactics of the game and the first

one is to see how going for games affects your bidding:

♠ A Q 8 4		♠ K J 3
♥ A 7		♥ 9 8 2
♦ Q 10 8 2		♦ 9 6
♣ 9 8 4		♣ A Q J 10 2
<b>West</b>		<b>East</b>
1NT		3NT

East has 11 points and a strong five-card club suit. Game might make or it might not, but looking at your club suit it might be reasonable to hope that the game would have a 50-50 chance even if your partner has just 12 points. Rather than inviting game, gamble on 3NT. Your game will depend on who has the ♣K. If North has the king you will make ten tricks, but if South has the king, you will go down.

Taking these gambles is worthwhile because you gain more IMPs when you win than you lose if you go down.

The contrast with pairs is important – you either get a bottom or a top – you would not want to be in a less than 50% game because you do not gain by doing so.

The second half of the DVD deals with declarer play and defensive tactics. Starting by talking about the decreased importance of overtricks: so important in pairs bridge but relatively worthless at teams. An overtrick is worth 1 IMP, whilst a game might be worth 10 IMPs. This means making your contract is 10 times more important than making an overtrick.

The topic quickly moves on to perhaps the most distinct set of tactics which resolve around safety play.

♠ 7 6 5
♥ A K 4 2
♦ A K 4
♣ 7 6 5

♠ A 4 3 2
♥ 7 6
♦ 9 8
♣ A K Q 4 2

**3NT by South.**  
**Lead ♠K.**

This is a simple contract, but it is one that should be played very differently at the different forms of the game. You have eight top tricks, so need one more to make your game.

Playing pairs, overtricks are important, so you should aim for ten tricks. You duck a couple of spades (hoping for a switch), but then you win your ace, cash a top club, cross to dummy and play a second club: when East follows suit, you take your top clubs. When clubs break 3-2, you make ten tricks. However when East holds four clubs you go off because you cannot reach your last club winner – you make just your eight top tricks.

Playing pairs this means you score +630 about two thirds of the time for a good score, but one third of the time you go off for a bad score – you should be happy with this outcome.

However, playing teams your aim is to make your contract, so you should plan for a bad break. You win the third spade and then duck a club trick to keep the communication – making sure of the one extra club trick you need for your contract (ex-

cept against a very unlikely 5-0 break). You end with just nine tricks, but a safe game bonus. This means that most of the time (about two thirds) you make fewer tricks than the norm: nine instead of ten. However, playing teams, you lose just 1 IMP each time you make one trick fewer, whereas about one third of the time you will make when others go off gaining 12 IMPs (if vulnerable). So for the two times out of three you gave away an overtrick you lost 2 x 1 IMP = -2 IMPs, whereas on the third hand you gained 12 which leaves you with a profit of 10 IMPs.

Finally, how might teams of four affect your defence? The DVD talks about the freedom you have in defence to be flamboyant because overtricks are not a worry – your sole aim is to try to defeat the opposition, which means that sometimes you get desperate – placing partner with the one card you need to defeat a contract.

Here is an example:

♠ 4 2  
♥ AK 4 2  
♦ K Q J 8  
♣ Q 8 2

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

West North East South

1♥

Pass 2NT<sup>1</sup> Pass 4♥<sup>2</sup>  
All Pass

<sup>1</sup>Support for hearts, 13+ points.

<sup>2</sup>Minimum opening.

West leads the ♠Q which you overtake with the ♠A and take stock. Add up some points: dummy has 15, you have eight and your partner has shown ♠Q-J

(three points): that adds up to 26 points. There are only 14 points left and South opened the bidding so must have most of them. Playing pairs you would probably be trying to prevent declarer making overtricks, but playing teams your one and only aim is to try to defeat the contract. You have the ♣A but to make two more tricks is surely not possible... unless you can get a ruff?

If partner had a singleton club he should have led it, so your only real chance is to put him with the doubleton king of clubs – a long shot, but your only vague chance of defeating the contract. You switch to a low club which your partner wins with the king, he then plays a club back to your ace and you give him a club ruff for an unlikely one off. Here is the full layout:

♠ 4 2  
♥ AK 4 2  
♦ K Q J 8  
♣ Q 8 2

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

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

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

This might only work one in eight times, but getting a vulnerable game down is worth 12 IMPs, so it is worth risking a potential overtrick to try for it.

Teams can be great fun if you understand what is going on – it takes getting used to, but it is a great form of bridge. When you play with friends as teammates it is particular fun because you can enjoy your successes and failures together. ■

## Answers to Bernard Magee's Bidding Quizzes 1-3 on the Cover and page 7

### 1. Dealer East. Love All.

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

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

West North East South

1NT Pass

?

### Pass.

Your partner has shown 12-14 points and you have 11 high card points, which gives you a chance of hitting the magical 25 points aspired to for a game contract. However, your hand is a very poor collection of eleven high card points. All of your honours are isolated and the shape is the worst of all: 4-3-3-3 – so flat I suggest you downgrade the hand by one whole point.

Your final evaluation for this hand should be a poor 10 points, with which you should just pass.

You have a 4-4 heart fit, but with no ruffing values, the two hands struggle in whatever denomination they finish in. 1NT is certainly high enough.

12-14 1NT opening, but your hand is a very different collection to the previous one. With 12 high card points you are between a raise to 2NT and a raise to 3NT, so you should use your hand evaluation to decide whether you are on the strong side of 12 or the weak side.

You have two good suits, high cards working together and three tens and a nine. The collection of tens should persuade you to add a full point and the two robust minors should make you label the hand a 'good' 13 points and therefore a comfortable raise to 3NT.

### 3. Dealer East. Love All.

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

♠ 9 8  
♥ AK 4 3  
♦ AK 6 5  
♣ AK 7

West North East South

2NT Pass

?

### Pass.

This time you face a 2NT opening bid, which shows 20-22 points; you have a bare four high card points. More than half the time your partner opens 2NT he will have just 20 points – bearing this in mind you should be looking to hold at least five high card points to respond positively. Your four points are pretty poor too – individual honours with no tens or nines to back them up. Pass and do not be surprised if your partner goes off in 2NT. ■

### 2. Dealer East. Love All.

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

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

West North East South

1NT Pass

?

### 3NT.

Once again you are facing a



# Ruffing in Your Hand

Last month we continued looking at setting up long suits, sometimes by ducking tricks, sometimes by ruffing them. As a general rule, ruffing in the long trump hand is to be avoided, but there are times where not only is it a good idea, it is also essential to making your contract.

Imagine you are declarer on this hand:

♠ K  
♥ AK82  
♦ A9432  
♣ 975



♠ AJ109843  
♥ 543  
♦ 7  
♣ 62

Your opponents open a strong no trump and you overcall 3♠, which most people play now as a pre-emptive bid. Partner looks at his quick tricks (essential when considering what to do facing a pre-empt) and raises you to game. The ♦Q is led.

Partner's raise is well judged since had your suit been just a little stronger then you would have had ten tricks on top, but, as it is, it seems as if you need the ♠Q to fall in two rounds. Is there anything better? Actually yes, if you take enough ruffs in your hand you can come to ten tricks no matter how many times the ♠Q is guarded.

Counting points strongly suggests that East has the queen of trumps (there are 21 points missing and West

who led the ♦Q is known to hold three of them, so there are only 18 left, and East has 15-17).

Let's go through the play if we take a few ruffs in our hand. Win with the ♦A, ruff a diamond (two tricks), then back to the dummy with a spade and ruff another diamond (four tricks). Now a heart to the dummy, ruff a third diamond (six tricks), then play a second heart to the dummy and ruff the last diamond (eight tricks). You are left with ♠A-J in your hand. Simply play any of your losers and give the lead to the opponents. If the queen of trumps is indeed on your right then you must make two more tricks.


There is one catch however... when you are 'ruffing in' as it were, it is similar to a cross ruff (only you go back to dummy with high cards not ruffs) and you must follow similar technique. The Golden Rule of cross ruffing is 'Always cash your side suit winners first' and we must try and translate that here.

The reason for cashing side suit winners first is that the opponents might end up ruffing them, and that could be possible here. If East began with two diamonds and three hearts, or even two hearts and three diamonds, then he will throw his hearts away when we are busy ruffing diamonds and then he will be in a position to trump our ♥A.

We must use the hearts as entries first, so let's have another go. Win the ♦A and ruff a diamond. Back to the ♥A and ruff a second diamond, then back to the ♥K and ruff a third diamond. Use the ♠K as an entry to ruff the fifth diamond (which might be a boss by now, we don't care) and then exit as before. The full deal is this:

♠ K  
♥ AK82  
♦ A9432  
♣ 975

♠ 5  
♥ J97  
♦ QJ865  
♣ 10843



♠ Q762  
♥ Q106  
♦ K10  
♣ AKQJ

♠ AJ109843  
♥ 543  
♦ 7  
♣ 62

Note that if East had two diamonds and two hearts then we couldn't make our contract on this line, as there would be no way to stop him getting a ruff, and we would have to resort to dropping the queen of trumps. (Mind you if East is 2-2 in the red suits then I suspect he won't have a doubleton spade as well as otherwise it would be a very unusual no-trump opening.)

This technique of ruffing in is often used when you have a long trump suit and not many in dummy (perhaps even a void). Sometimes it is used as a matter of desperation.

This is your hand:

♠ AQ10864  
♥ 763  
♦ 765  
♣ 7

You open an impeccable weak two in spades and the next hand doubles for take-out. Partner passes and the next hand falls over himself to pass with a smirk. You anxiously await the sight of dummy...



How do you play it on the lead of the ♠A and then the ♣K?

♠ Void  
♥ AK 2  
♦ J 9 4 3 2  
♣ 10 8 4 3 2



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

To pass the take-out double when sitting under the spades, East must surely have five spades to the K-J, he probably has the good pips as well.

Counting losers (as is normal technique in a suit contract) suggests we have three spades, three diamonds, one club and one heart, that's three down for -800.

Can we do any better?

Of course we can – science has the answer, and we should 'ruff ourselves in' and try to make plenty of tricks. The defence have already given us a helping hand by playing clubs and helping us take a cheap ruff. Carry on with this technique.

Cross to the dummy with a heart and play another club, ruffing with the ♠6 in your hand. Cross back to dummy with the other top heart and play yet another club (East no doubt showing out) and ruff with the ♠8.

At this point you are left with ♠A-Q-10 and (you presume) East has the K-J. All you have to do is exit with a non-trump card. Let's say you choose to play a diamond. No doubt West will start cashing his red tricks, but remember, East has got five trumps – he is going

to have to start ruffing his partner's winners. At this point he will be forced to lead a trump and you stick the ten in and score a trick. Now you are left with the A-Q in trumps, and when you exit with your remaining plain card, East must ruff and repeat the charade once more. At the end of the hand you will discover that you have made six trump tricks and two heart winners for a total of eight tricks.

This might be the full hand:

♠ Void  
♥ AK 2  
♦ J 9 4 3 2  
♣ 10 8 4 3 2

♠ 5 2  
♥ Q 10 8 4  
♦ A Q 10  
♣ AK Q 5

♠ K J 9 7 3  
♥ J 9 5  
♦ K 8  
♣ J 9 6

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

Instead of giving you a cheap ruff at trick two, West would have done better to switch to a heart (although from his point of view he didn't know where the jack was), but East had an easy chance to beat the contract by ruffing in on the fourth club. He would now have one trump fewer and when you give up the lead later on, he would be endplayed once but not twice and you would go down.

When you are caught in these awkward contracts where you have no long cards to take in the side suits, then ruffing in your own hand is a good way of making cheap trump tricks as your opponents sit there following suit impatiently. ■

## Answers to Bernard Magee's Bidding Quizzes 4-6 on the Cover and page 7

### 4. Dealer East. Love All.

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



♠ 3 2  
♥ AK 7 6 5  
♦ 7 6  
♣ K Q J 2

West North East South

1♠ Pass 1♥ Pass  
2♣ Pass  
?

**2♥.** Your partner's bidding suggests he holds five hearts, so you do have a fit. However, the rest of your hand does not fit well with your partner – no high cards in your partner's suits. Your own long suit is going to need some work to develop, so all in all, you are going to need partner to hold perhaps 16 points for game to have a chance. You do best to just bid 2♥ and settle at a comfortable level. Your partner has a reasonable hand for his bidding but 2♥ is high enough. If trumps break evenly you will make nine tricks, but with any kind of bad break you will only manage eight.

### 5. Dealer East. Love All.

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



♠ 3 2  
♥ AK 7 6 5  
♦ 7 6  
♣ K Q 4 2

West North East South

1♥ Pass  
1♠ Pass 2♣ Pass  
?

**4♥.** A stark contrast to the hand in Q4. After the same bidding which has suggested five hearts, you have good support for hearts and also a high card in your partner's

second suit.

With all your cards in partner's suits except for the ♠A, you should expect the hands to work well together and go for game. Even if your partner is minimum, game is likely to have a reasonable chance.

East is as weak as he can be – after all he has shown a 5-4 shape – so if you jump to 3♥ he should pass. With the two hands fitting so well together, there should be no trouble making ten tricks.

### 6. Dealer East. Love All.

♠ K Q 7 6 5  
♥ 8  
♦ AK 8 3 2  
♣ 8 7



♠ 3 2  
♥ AK 7 6 5  
♦ 7 6  
♣ K Q 4 2

West North East South

1♥ Pass  
1♠ Pass 2♣ Pass  
?

**2NT.** You have twelve high card points and two reasonable five-card suits, so when your partner opens the bidding you will be thinking of a game contract. However, as the auction develops, your view of the hand should change. Whenever you suspect a misfit, you should downgrade your expectations. Your partner has shown length in hearts and clubs and you have all your cards in the other two suits.

No-trumps is a reasonable option, but 2NT is enough. It will not be an easy contract to play as the two hands do not mesh well together – having shortages in each other's long suits. East would pass 2NT and you might scrape together eight tricks, or perhaps drift one off. ■



# Catching Up

## with Sally Brock

This has been a pretty hectic period. First, there was a huge brouhaha over the trials. Basically, the problem was the weather. We knew on the Monday before the trials that Yvonne (who lives in Stockholm) might have a problem getting to the Young Chelsea for the start. We had a substitute standing by, who was indeed needed. Yvonne arrived halfway through the second match but the selectors said they would prefer it if she didn't play until the first (of three) round robin was finished so that everyone would play against the same quartet. We knew that because of the substitution we would no longer be guaranteed to go to the European Championships if we won, but thought this was only if something very drastic happened (like Kay being hugely better than Yvonne). In the end we won by nearly 5 VPs but the selection committee overturned the result, arguing that the substitute had materially affected the result, as we had not won the second and third round robins (by 0.25 of a VP).

This was a pretty controversial decision. The postings on Bridge Winners hit the 1,000 mark and then went beyond. Whether or not the result should have been overturned is, to some extent, a matter of opinion, but it is clear that the procedure went badly wrong. The penalty for having a substitute should have been known before the end of the event. To start with we decided to stand together as a team and both Fiona and I, and then Nicola and Yvonne, rejected the offer to play in the European Championships. However, after a week or so when emotions had time to settle a little we were given the blessing of our team-mates, and decided to change our minds, so will now be part of the team for Ostend in June.

The weekend after the trials, Fiona and I flew to Philadelphia to play in the US Spring Nationals there. The format of the Vanderbilt teams (the main event) was the same as the Spingold we played in last year in Toronto. The first day was concerned with getting the numbers down to 64, so the knock-out proper could start. We were in a foursome. We played a 30-board match against a decent team (by chance it happened to be the same one we played and beat in the first round in Toronto) and got totally demolished.

After a weirdly early dinner (at 4.30) we then went to play the losers of the other match in our foursome. This team was delightful: they were a bunch of 27-year-olds who had all graduated in film and had decided to make a film of their efforts to learn bridge. They were not very good – having only been playing for eight months or so – but were eager to learn and the match was really good fun. We won by over 100 IMPs, but this is a deal they won't forget.

I think you will all have to admit that dummy was rather good for its (lack of) bidding. Twelve tricks rolled in; making with an overtrick was worth +1,090 for them.

In the next round we drew a good Polish squad. We were fairly mouldy in the first set we played, but I was pleased with how we played in the second half of the match.

However, they did very little wrong and we were thoroughly hammered. In the final set, when we were already a lot down, I thought I would take the opportunity to out-and-out psych, something I can't remember ever doing before.

This was the deal:

**Dealer East. N/S Game.**

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

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

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

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

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

**Dealer East. N/S Game.**

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

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

♠ 7  
♥ J 10 4 3  
♦ 7 5 4 3  
♣ K 7 5 4

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

First in hand, I opened the East hand 1♠. The bidding proceeded:

West	North	East	South
		1♠	Dbl
4♠	Dbl	Pass	5♦
All Pass			

Had South passed the double of 4♠ and the defence been accurate they could have held me to one trick – for a penalty of 2,300.

However, South thought his partner

must have a singleton spade and fewer values so decided he should bid his vulnerable game.

When we came out, teammates were discussing how they should have bid the grand slam, and were rather surprised to have gained 13 IMPs.

After a day's shopping and working on our system, we played in the National Women's Pairs. Most of the other good players were playing with clients, so it wasn't the strongest event in the world, but we won comfortably and seemed to collect a lot of kudos which was nice.

The Open Pairs was won by England's Simon Cope and Peter Crouch, so the front of the bulletin the following day was dominated by English successes.

The final event was a Swiss teams in which we performed rather indifferently before rushing for our flight home.

All my recent visits to the Far East and Australasia have made a little hop across the Atlantic seem no distance at all.

Other than that life marches on – online teaching sessions, the odd match here and there.

We played in the Portland Pairs and after a terrible start managed to win at the Young Chelsea, but when it was scored over the whole field we only managed 25th.

The flat seems quite small with both children living here for the moment but we're getting on pretty well. We might well look back fondly on this time with us all together I think.

Briony is enjoying her new job, and trying to find somewhere else to live.

## Answers to Bernard Magee's Bidding Quizzes 7-9 on the Cover and page 7

### 7. Dealer East. Love All.

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

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

**Pass.** As North has made a bid in this auction, East was not required to bid again. This is because if he passes you will get another chance to bid. This means that he should have a reasonable six-card suit for his 2♣ rebid. With 10 high card points you might be hopeful of greater things, but full evaluation of your hand will stop you in your tracks. Your ♥Q may well be worthless, you have no help in clubs and you are aceless. All this should persuade you to pass 2♣ and hopefully collect a positive score.

### 8. Dealer East. Love All.

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

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

**3NT.** Comparing your hand with that in Q7, once again you can rely on your partner for a good six-card club suit from his 'free' rebid of 2♣. This time you have a key card in the club suit to help develop a lot of extra tricks and you have two aces – one of which

is a definite stop in the heart suit. Hoping that you might have six running club tricks and two more tricks from your aces, it is reasonable to gamble on 3NT. It is true that you have nothing in spades, but remember that your partner has an opening hand so has to have some points somewhere. You might think that bidding 2NT to invite your partner is enough, but East is minimum for his 2♣ bid and he would pass. As it is, if clubs break evenly you will make nine tricks off the top.

### 9. Dealer East. Love All.

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

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

**1NT.** You have the same hand as on Q8 but there is an important difference – your partner has chosen not to make a free rebid. After North's bid, he can pass with an unsuitable hand and let you bid again if you want to. East's pass suggests a minimum hand with no extra shape. Your ♣Q is certainly a useful card, but with just two bare aces beyond that, your best rebid is 1NT: suggesting that that might be the limit of the two hands. On a non-spade lead you should manage seven tricks, otherwise six could be your limit if the clubs do not break 3-3. If you do go off, it will not work out too badly as 1♥ is likely to make.

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# Seven Days

## by Sally Brock

### Thursday

Today is Colin Simpson's funeral. Colin was a great friend, a top-class bridge player and a lovely man. He had been struggling with cancer for perhaps the last five years. For more than a year he has been living in a hospice near his home in Gerrard's Cross. Across the road is a gastropub, and he was in the habit of meeting his friends there for lunch – his wife Juliana would wheel him across the road in his wheelchair and we would all have a convivial lunch. Although his physical health was in a steady decline, until a few weeks from the end his mind was working normally and he was as good company as he had always been – with tales of bridge and of his work in Special Branch.

His funeral is a non-religious one, with a ceremony in a rather rustic hall, followed by burial in a woodland setting, then lunch afterwards at Beaconsfield Golf Club.

Later I drop Barry off, drive home to leave the car, spend a couple of hours there before walking back to Barry's for the evening.

### Friday

Today is the start of the Easter Bridge Festival. I am playing in the first event, the Championship Pairs, with Debbie. I spend the morning at Barry's, and get to the Royal National Hotel just before four. Our first session is about as close to average as you can get. Later we go for a quiet dinner at my favourite local Filipino restaurant, Romulo Café on Kensington High Street. We go through the card together while we are eating the truly delicious food (I can't recommend this restaurant highly enough).

### Saturday

It's a morning start today, and two sessions of bridge. Our second session is a little better and we move up the field. In the lunch break we go to Carluccio's with Simon and Richard. Then the third session, which is terrible. Everything that could go wrong does. I (South) hear the following auction:

West	North	East	South
1♦	1♠	2♥	4♠
6♥	All Pass		

I have to lead from:

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

So I try the ♠A. There is a void in the dummy along with two small spades. And, yes, we had two spades to cash which now go away on dummy's diamonds.

After the bridge we go for a drink and then go back to Carluccio's for a very convivial dinner with plenty of wine.

I am on a new drinking regime – no alcohol Monday to Thursday (though I can abstain during a weekend to build up an extra day during the next week), so suddenly weekends are much more fun than weekdays.

### Sunday

A family day – at the request of the kids. Barry comes over for a late roast chicken lunch. Afterwards we munch away at Easter eggs while playing

Mahjong (when my father died we acquired his set – which he himself had acquired from his elder sister). Then some card games before settling down to watch a movie. There are upsides in having my kids living with me.

### Monday

This is the most miserable bridge day that I can remember. It starts well enough when Gilly comes to pick me up in her new car – a Mazda MX5. We drive to the Royal National Hotel with the roof down – for me, there is little more exhilarating than driving with the top down. Somehow the bridge starts badly and gets worse. On the first board I (North) open a weak no-trump. Gilly bids 2♥ and I obediently bid 2♠. If East had passed now, Gilly would not have made another bid, with:

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

However, the hands fit well when I had four small diamonds, and we seemed to be one of the few pairs not in game. In addition, East actually doubled 2♠. They bid 3♦ and we pressed on to 3♠. I had to guess the play, having ♠A-K-x. Both sides were vulnerable and I knew East had only three hearts, so I played him for a singleton spade and finessed into his doubleton queen, so made only ten tricks. A virtual zero.

The day continues in the same vein. Everything we do seems reasonable but goes wrong. Our high spot is beating Barry and Charles 11-9. As

time marches on we get depressed and make more errors, finally descending to the bottom table for the last round.

And, as it's Monday I can't even have a drink. A couple of alcohol-free lagers will have to do.

## Tuesday

I have put away my handbag-making material, having just finished four for my elder son and his family.

I am returning to some general typesetting – the Yearbook for the British Guild of Travel Writers. This used to be an annual project until a couple of years ago when they decided just to have an online version. Happily, for me, they have decided to go back to the print version, so there is some work for me. I spend all day working on this and then meet Briony after work to go and see a room in a house near Edgware Road tube. It is rather depressing. The room itself is OK, but there are five rooms in the house, one of which is en-suite while the others all have to share one bathroom, which is two floors down from the room that would be Briony's. The location is great, but is it worth it? She had hoped to join a house where there was some community spirit and social interaction, but it seemed as if these rooms were very separate.

In the evening we sit down to watch several episodes of MasterChef.


## Wednesday

Next week I am off to Cyprus to play in their festival. There is a main pairs in which I am playing with Barry, but before that there is a two-session mixed pairs in which I am going to play with Zia. He likes his system and has sent me several emails about it. Today we practice on BBO for an hour or so. It seems to go OK, and while am a little apprehensive, I am really looking forward to the chance to play with a really great player.

The rest of the day is spent working on the BGTW project. Then I walk down to Barry's for our customary pre-bridge bowl of soup, and then it's off to the Young Chelsea for our Super League match. We win comfortably against a team who are not at their best.

On the last board they managed to play in 4♠ doubled at both tables. I'm sure in the land of Victor Mollo and the Hideous Hog, they would have been able to make both contracts, but in the real world that was –300 at one table and –1,400 at the other.

**Dealer West. Love All**

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

Against us (E/W) the bidding was:

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

South thought that the 2NT bid showed a spade raise, while North thought it was natural. West thought he had a fairly clear double of the final contract, and declarer lost a trick more than she needed to when I was allowed to make a diamond ruff for the second undertrick.

In the other room, East/West were using a system similar to the one the discredited Fantoni and Nunes used to play:

West	North	East	South
1♣	1♥	Pass	4♥
4♠	Pass	Pass	Dbl

All Pass

The 1♣ opening was natural and forcing. Quite why East decided to play in spades rather than clubs I do not know. In the event all declarer could make was his four trump tricks.

As I said earlier, next week I am off to Cyprus – at least the weather should be an improvement. I will tell you all about it next month. ■

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# How Strong is 1NT by Responder?

**T**he strength of a 1NT bid by responder depends on several factors:

- 1 whether the opening bid is in clubs or some other suit;
- 2 whether you are playing teams and are vulnerable;
- 3 whether you are playing a weak or a strong 1NT opening;
- 4 whether it is an immediate response or whether it is a rebid.

For simplicity, let's assume you are playing a weak no-trump and matchpoints. In this case an immediate response of 1NT to one of any suit other than clubs indicates 6-9 points.

Are there any exceptions?

Some nine point hands (with a good five-card suit) will make two-over-one response rather than respond 1NT.

Some five point hands, particularly if you are trying to improve the contract, will also respond 1NT rather than pass.

In general, however, you will have 6-9 points and opener will continue (or not) accordingly.

Remember also that you give priority to showing a major, so a 1NT response to 1♥ denies four spades while a 1NT response to one of a minor denies a four-card major.

A 1NT response to 1♣ is slightly different. Unless your only suit is clubs, in which case you have the option to raise to 2♣, you have a suit that you could show at the one level. It is not, therefore, necessary to use 1NT as a dustbin bid. Bearing in mind that opener will have a better hand and is thus more likely to have tenace holdings, it should carry a more

positive message.

The traditional range of 8-10 for a 1NT response still applies today. With a weaker hand, 6-7 points, respond 1♦ or raise 1♣ to 2♣ (you must have at least four cards in a minor if you do not have a four-card major).

If you are playing teams and are vulnerable, you will be a bit more inclined to find a two-over-one response on a decent nine-point hand. The IMP scale rewards pushing for thin games when vulnerable. You do not want to stop out of game with a combined 25 points and you do not mind being in 3NT sometimes with 24 points. If you have a good nine points even without a five-card suit, you should be reluctant to respond 1NT. If at the other table the bidding might be going 1NT (strong)-3NT, you do not want to be stopping in 1NT and playing the contract from the weaker hand to boot.

If a strong no-trump opening is available, this does affect the upper limit of a 1NT response. You can freely respond 1NT on as many as ten points. You will not be missing game if partner has a balanced 15-16 and partner passes, because with a hand like that the opening bid would have been 1NT in the first place. Even if you play a weak no-trump, this is an important point to remember because the knowledge that responder could hold as many as 10 points may affect how you defend if the opponents play in a no-trump contract after a 1NT response.

Finally, a 1NT rebid by responder is different to an immediate response. With 6-7 points, you have already done your bit in keeping the bidding

alive. When opener has not jumped or reversed or shown a fit, you can usually dismiss the chance of game. You will normally show preference between opener's suits (passing if you prefer the second suit). A 1NT rebid therefore shows 8-10 points, the same strength as an immediate 1NT response to a 1♣ opening.

Let us look at some hands and see how the above works in practice.

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

With Hand 1, you respond 1♠. Showing an unbid major at the one level takes precedence over limiting your hand.

With Hand 2, you respond 1NT whatever the scoring method and vulnerability. Being maximum, you will of course go on if partner raises to 2NT.

Although Hand 3 has only five points, passing 1♥ would mean the distinct possibility of playing with four hearts facing a singleton – unlikely to be a good idea. You should respond 1NT. You are hoping to see a rebid in one of the minors (or a pass).

If partner rebids 2♥, at least you will know it is a six-card suit and that you have removed the option for your left hand opponent to introduce spades at the one level.



Partner  
1♣

You  
?

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

Hand 4, with only six HCP, is too weak to respond 1NT to 1♣, which remember shows 8-10 points. You should respond 1♦.

While Hand 5 has the right strength for 1NT, your diamond suit is too good not to mention, so again you respond 1♦. Furthermore, with two suits wide open, it might be better to have the lead run up to partner's hand. Of course, if partner rebids 1♠, you will happily bid 1NT at your next turn, which still shows 8-10 and will then show some sort of heart stopper.

Hand 6 is perfect for the 1NT response. You have nine points, a flat shape, secondary values and something in every suit. Bidding 1NT also makes it harder for your left hand opponent to overcall.

## How does opener continue after a 1NT response?

With a balanced hand and facing the usual 6-9 range, opener passes with up to 16 points, raises to 2NT with 17-18 and jumps to 3NT with 19.

If responder has shown 8-10 (either by bidding 1NT directly over 1♣ or by rebidding 1NT), a raise to 2NT shows 15-16 and a jump raise to 3NT shows 17-19.

With an unbalanced hand, opener typically shows a second suit if it is lower ranking than the first suit. There is little need to worry about missing a fit in a higher-ranking suit because responder would have bypassed that suit to respond 1NT, making a fit in a higher suit unlikely. A rebid in a higher-ranking suit, while it does show reversing values, does not promise a 5-6 shape. ■

# Answers to Bernard Magee's Bidding Quizzes 10-12 on the Cover and page 7

## 10. Dealer East. Love All.

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



West	North	East	South
		1♥	Pass
2♣	2♠	3♥	4♠
?			

**4NT.** Your partner has made a free bid of 3♥ which should be based upon a good six-card suit or better. You have superb heart support, a great six-card suit of your own, a singleton and there is good news from the auction too. Surely your opponents have at least a nine-card fit in spades which leaves your partner with at most one?

Your hands seem to be fitting really well – if your partner has three aces then a slam is going to have a good chance: ask your partner by using Blackwood. His response will propel you to slam.

## 11. Dealer West. Love All..

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



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

**Pass.** Your partner has shown no great strength with his first round double although you would expect six or more points. He has then followed up with a minimum rebid of 2♥.

You have 16 points and six losers, so you might think there is a chance for game. First of all consider that you might not have a real heart fit and

secondly that you have the nasty double doubleton shape – two doubletons are often overvalued by the losing trick count. Finally your spade queen is not likely to carry its full weight sitting under a spade bidder. All these factors should persuade you to pass and leave your side at a comfortable level.

## 12. Dealer West. Love All.

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



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

**3♣.** Once again, this hand looks very similar to its predecessor: this time the difference is the shape and the positioning of the outside queen. You have 16 points and a singleton, so if you do have a fit in hearts your hand is quite powerful. Furthermore, your partner must have had a reason for doubling on the first round and usually that will be because he has some strength in the unbid suits (the minors). Since you have good support for both minors your hands might fit well.

Your best continuation in this auction is to try to finish the description of your hand and then let your partner decide on the denomination and the level.

3♣ is a great descriptive bid – it is unlikely to show four cards because you would have bid 2♣ rather than 2♦ on the previous round. What it does do is spell out your shape to your partner: probably 1-5-4-3 – he will know you are short in spades.

On this hand your partner is able to work out that clubs will make the best denomination and he might choose to pass your bid. 3♣ is a great contract. ■

# A Dream, or a Nightmare?

Yesterday evening's session was a particularly frustrating one. The bridge club computer decided to install a Windows update at the last minute (although I was sure I had deselected that option), which meant I was late in starting to enter the names and prepare the movement.

Then a pair arrived just as we were about to start requiring the movement, table numbers and boards to be changed. To be fair, they had phoned ahead and said that they'd be late, but no-one had thought to tell the tournament director.

And throughout the evening, every time I settled down to focus on a hand I'd hear the cry of 'Tournierleitung' (German for TD) breaking my concentration. Every finesse I took failed and every break I hoped for failed to materialise. I know that at duplicate it's the same for everyone, but it seemed to earn me bottom after bottom.

So it was with some relief when I settled into an armchair to watch the football highlights supported by a cold beer and a cheese board. I may have overdone the cheese, as I spent the night having fitful dreams about an imaginary hand on which I was playing 7NT (see deal in next column).

With 12 top tricks you just need one of the black suits to break 3-3, or one of the black jacks to be singleton or



Image from <http://freefoodphotos.com/imagelibrary/dairy/slides/cheese.html>

doubleton. Of course, none of these options worked, and when I woke the next morning – feeling less than refreshed – I wondered if the grand slam could be made.

	♠ AKQ		
	♥ 432		
	♦ 432		
	♣ 10987		
♠ 5	<div>♠ N W E S</div>	♠ J6432	
♥ J10987		♥ 65	
♦ J109876		♦ 5	
♣ 2		♣ J6543	
	♠ 10987		
	♥ AKQ		
	♦ AKQ		
	♣ AKQ		

If the hand was slightly different (ie if there was a club entry in dummy, or a spade entry in declarer's hand), it

would be easy to squeeze East as he held both black jacks. After a while I gave up, but the hand was still annoying my subconscious later in the day, so I tried another approach.

West led a heart and I started by cashing my top clubs to see if the suit broke nicely. When West showed out on the second round I switched to spades, and again West showed out on the second round. I now cashed my five red suit winners and East is in trouble – he still

has one more card to play here:

♠ —	♠ A	♠ J 6
♥ 10	♥ —	♥ —
♦ J 10	♦ —	♦ —
♣ —	♣ 10 9	♣ J 6
<div style="display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> <div style="display: inline-block; transform: rotate(45deg); border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> N W E S </div> </div>		
♠ 10 9	♠ 10 9	♠ —
♥ —	♥ —	♥ —
♦ —	♦ —	♦ —
♣ A	♣ A	♣ —

Whichever jack East unguards, I can cash the ace in that suit and use the other black ace to cross back to the winning 10 for my thirteenth trick. It is certainly an interesting hand, but I think I'll steer clear of a late night cheese snack next week. ■





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