

# BRIDGE

Number: 166

UK £3.95 Europe €5.00

October 2016

## Bernard Magee's Acol Bidding Quiz

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

### 1. Dealer West. Love All.

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



| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 1♠   | Pass  | 1NT  | Pass  |
| ?    |       |      |       |

### 2. Dealer West. Love All.

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



| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 1♥   | Pass  | 1♠   | Pass  |
| ?    |       |      |       |

### 3. Dealer West. Love All.

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



| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 1♠   | Pass  | 2♦   | Pass  |
| ?    |       |      |       |

Answers on page 5

### 4. Dealer West. Love All.

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



| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 1♥   | Pass  | 1♠   | Pass  |
| ?    |       |      |       |

### 5. Dealer West. Love All.

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



| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 1♥   | Pass  | 1♠   | Pass  |
| ?    |       |      |       |

### 6. Dealer West. Love All.

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



| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 1♦   | Pass  | 1♠   | Pass  |
| ?    |       |      |       |

Answers on page 9

### 7. Dealer West. Love All.

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



| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 1♠   | Pass  | 2♦   | Pass  |
| ?    |       |      |       |

### 8. Dealer West. Love All.

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



| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 1♠   | Pass  | 2♥   | Pass  |
| ?    |       |      |       |

### 9. Dealer West. Love All.

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



| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 1♥   | Pass  | 1♠   | Pass  |
| ?    |       |      |       |

Answers on page 11

### 10. Dealer West. Love All.

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



| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 1♣   | Pass  | 1NT  | Pass  |
| ?    |       |      |       |

### 11. Dealer East. Love All.

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



| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 1♥   | Pass  | Pass | Pass  |
| ?    |       | 2♣   | Pass  |

### 12. Dealer West. Love All.

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



| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 1♠   | Pass  | 2♦   | Pass  |
| ?    |       |      |       |

Answers on page 13

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|--------|--|
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| NOV 12 | SEVILLE Spain  |
| NOV 13 | CADIZ Spain (Jerez)  |
| NOV 14 | CASABLANCA/FEZ Morocco<br>Morning drive to Fez<br>for afternoon sightseeing hotel*             |
| NOV 15 | FEZ/RABAT/CASABLANCA Morocco<br>Morning drive to Rabat.<br>Rejoin ship in Casablanca overnight |
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| NOV 17 | MARRAKESH/AGADIR Morocco<br>Rejoin ship in Agadir.<br>Afternoon sightseeing to Taroudant       |
| NOV 18 | LANZAROTE Canary Islands   |
| NOV 19 | LA PALMA Canary Islands  |
| NOV 20 | TENERIFE Canary Islands<br>Disembark and transfer to<br>Tenerife Airport for flight home       |

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## WELCOME



A great big hello to all the new subscribers who have recently enrolled, as the result of the special Minerva 36 issues for £50 subscription promotion.

Regular subscribers receive their monthly ration in a clear plastic envelope. Not so the newly enrolled. They receive two issues and the 2017 diary in a large white envelope which I adorn with assorted postage stamps purchased from the Clive Goff Postage Service.

The discount he offers reduces my costs and promotes his business – see his advert on page 4. These amazingly varied labels also make my packages more interesting, especially as we still save all our incoming used stamps for Little Voice, the children's home for orphans in Adis Ababa, Ethiopia. We have helped to support it for some years now by this and other fund-raising initiatives.

## CROATIAN SPRING



This Bernard Magee land-based holiday, really is filling up fast for 2017. Book now to avoid disappointment. Please see adjacent advertisement.

## END OF SEASON

This year has been really good for weekend events. Hooray for that but a good promoter always over caters, so there are still a few spaces to fill, here and there. Have a look at the Just Duplicate advert on the right and give the office a ring.

## LOOKING FORWARD



Next year will see the 30th anniversary of my career as Mr Bridge. This I will be marking at sea on lovely Aegean Odyssey with Mrs Bridge. For details see the facing page advert and those on the inside and outside of the back cover.

## 2017 DIARIES



All new subscribers will receive a 2017 bridge players' diary, its cover colour chosen randomly but there is a choice when ordering extra copies.

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**Mr Bridge**

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

## 1. Dealer West. Love All.

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



| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 1♠   | Pass  | 1NT  | Pass  |
| ?    |       |      |       |

### Pass.

You have 15 HCP and a good five-card suit, so you might count it as 16 points, but even so you would need a good maximum from partner to give game a chance. Generally, with 15-16 points you should settle for a partscore. With a balanced hand which includes a five-card major, you should settle for no-trumps. In fact, a rebid of 2♠ should promise at least six spades. 1NT is as high as you would want to be.

## 2. Dealer West. Love All.

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



| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 1♥   | Pass  | 1♠   | Pass  |
| ?    |       |      |       |

### 2♠.

Some players choose to open 1NT with a hand with a five-card major, but when the major is strong it is generally best to open the major, hoping to find a fit, as well as advertising the best lead if the opponents win the contract. Here, your partner responds 1♠ and you have to choose your rebid.

With a weak hand your choices are limited: 2♥ looks obvious, but you could also choose to support to 2♠ with your

three-card support. Your job will often be to find the best partscore contract on hands like these: if you choose 2♥, your partner will generally pass.

Depending on your style, your partner should support to 2♥ on some weaker distributional hands with three-card support, which means you are likely to have a seven-card fit in hearts at best. In spades, much of the time your partner will have a five-card suit, but even if he has just four, the contract might turn out to be the best. This is the case here – 2♠ is likely to score best – aiming for ruffs in both hands, you will get close to making.

Quite often on misfitting hands, one off will be a good score – you are aiming to limit the damage.

## 3. Dealer West. Love All.

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



| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 1♠   | Pass  | 2♦   | Pass  |
| ?    |       |      |       |

### 2NT.

Some players will cry foul on this hand, claiming that they would have opened 1NT because of the weak spade suit. However, they would be short-sighted. This West had already fully evaluated his hand. With two tens and a five-card suit he had upgraded it from 14 HCP to a 15-count and was planning to rebid no-trumps. Your partner's 2♦ bid enhances your hand even more – the ♦K increases in value – it is now at least a 'good' 15. You rebid 2NT and end in 3NT.

As long as the hearts are 4-3 you will take nine tricks, in fact when the honours are awkward for the defenders, you may well make even if the hearts break 5-2.

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# Moments of Madness

by Shireen Mohandes

What makes a mature adult 'lose it' and carry out an impetuous act with calamitous consequences? When Zinedine Zidane head butted his opponent, Francesco Totti, in the World Cup Final in Berlin in 2006, he took the number one spot in the football madness charts. Even Uruguayan Luis Suarez's penchant for biting opponents, though noteworthy even to non-football fans, pales by comparison to Zidane's action at the France v Italy match.

## World Cup red card statistics

Rigobert Song became the first player to receive two red cards – one in 1994 and one in 1998. Zinedine Zidane replicated this in 1998 and 2006.

The single World Cup match with the greatest number of red cards was the Netherlands-Portugal game in the second round of the 2006 World Cup. This match is also known as 'The battle of Nuremberg'. Four players, two from each team, were sent off; overall, referee Valentin Ivanov dished out 16 yellow cards and four red cards, the greatest number of players booked and sent off in any one match.

Source: Wikipedia

What about politics? Michael Leapman, writing for *The Independent*,

in November 1995, described Neil Kinnock's, oh so memorable, downfall:

The former Labour leader Neil Kinnock is haunted by the conviction that a rush of blood to the head, lasting a few seconds, cost him victory in the 1992 election. In a television interview to be screened next month, Mr Kinnock describes the emotional spasm that overwhelmed him at the controversial Sheffield rally in the week before polling day, destroying the statesmanlike image that had been constructed for him over his nine years as leader.

He believes that three little words caused his defeat, 'We're all right.' He shouted them three times in a tone of frenzied triumphalism, punching the air, just after he entered the Sheffield arena to a mighty ovation. That was the part of his address shown on television news programmes, rather than his carefully scripted arguments.

In the interview he explains, 'This roar hit me and for a couple of seconds I responded to it; and all of the years in which I'd attempted to build a fairly reserved, starchy persona – in a few seconds they slipped away.'

There are also mass 'moments of madness'. There have been numerous incidents of mob psychology affecting looters, demonstrators, hooligans, and even police. Jonathan Freedland writing for *The Guardian* in August 2007, in an article entitled *A Moment*

*of Madness*, discussed one of the largest such occurrences after the death of Princess Diana:

It has become an embarrassing memory, like a mawkish, self-pitying teenage entry in a diary. We cringe to think of it. It is our collective moment of madness, a week when somehow we lost our grip. A decade on, we look back and wonder what came over us.

There were some who felt that way at the time, but they were the minority. Indeed, they complained they were a marginalised, even oppressed, group – gagged dissidents in a new totalitarian state of the emotions. Some looked at the mountain of Cellophane-wrapped bouquets that piled up outside Buckingham Palace – a million of them, it was said – and sniffed 'floral fascism' in the air. Later, Christopher Hitchens wrote that in the week after Princess Diana was killed in a Paris car crash, Britain became a 'one-party state', such was the coercive nature of the public reaction. He sought out the Britons who had been forced to close their shops or cancel sporting events on the day of the funeral, lest they feel the rage of the tear-stained hordes outside. The writer Carmen Callil was more specific, 'It was like the Nuremberg rallies.'

Bridge is not exempt, as was demonstrated in the US this summer. Two USA teams, comprising mixed ability players, but including national and international standard players,



were playing in a Swiss Teams event. One team comprised six players, and the other four. The two players who were not playing the match were not in the playing area and were not directly involved in the incident.

When the two teams completed their match and returned to their home tables to score up, they learned that they were both sitting in the same direction. In other words, Team A, for example, was North/South at both tables. In the UK, the penalty for doing this is an outcome of 8-8 out of 20 victory points. Not too severe a penalty. In the USA, however, the penalty is a score of 0-0. Quite harsh, you may think, for an inadvertent situation which can only lead to harm for both teams.

But what happened next is surely a moment of madness amongst eight brilliant brains. Allegedly, the players agreed to enter a score of a draw, and thus both receive 10 victory points. What was going through their minds? Might it have been the case that one player convinced the others? Did they all jointly say to themselves, 'I don't like the rule, I am not going to follow it.' The rule is pretty clear: you submit the true result of the match to the organisers. There are no circumstances where entering any other result is allowable. One might further wonder: did they really think they could all keep it a secret?

Another USA player caught wind of the incident and reported it to the ACBL (the equivalent of the EBU in England). The incident is being investigated at the highest level in America. The bridge world is astonished and aghast.

After last year's revelations about pre-planned and collusive cheating, the community expects squeaky-clean behaviour from players. Most of us will have either had our own personal moment of madness, or have seen one first hand. Such individual spontaneous poor decisions are regrettable but understandable, but it is the collective decision that is so hard to fathom.

In today's age of people using Twitter, Facebook and other social media, it is all too easy to get into trouble simply by posting a flippant

or unwise comment, without due consideration. What's more, if one does so, and is publicly taken to task, the very public nature of that shaming is often publicised so instantly and extensively that it becomes even more noteworthy than the original content.

Jon Ronson's book *So You've Been Publicly Shamed*, a *New York Times* bestseller, has this write-up on Amazon:

For the past three years, Jon Ronson has travelled the world meeting recipients of high-profile public shamings. The shamed are people like us – people who, say, made a joke on social media that came out badly, or made a mistake at work. Once their transgression is revealed, collective outrage circles with the force of a hurricane and the next thing they know they're being torn apart by an angry mob, jeered at, demonized, sometimes even fired from their job.

A great renaissance of public shaming is sweeping our land. Justice has been democratized. The silent majority are getting a voice. But what are we doing with our voice? We are mercilessly finding people's faults. We are defining the boundaries of normality by ruining the lives of those outside it. We are using shame as a form of social control.'

Returning to the gang-of-eight American bridge players. If they did what they are alleged to have done, their moments of madness were (a) their collusion to break the rules, and (b) thinking that in this day and age they'd be able to conceal it. Perhaps they subconsciously calculated the odds: they thought the likelihood of getting caught was low, and they would avoid punishment, public shaming and democratised justice, as Ronson puts it.

*[Author's note: at the time of writing, the date of the hearing is not known, but it is expected to be in November 2016. When the outcome has been determined, for the eight players, and the extra two, a notice will be published in BRIDGE].* ■

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

## 4. Dealer West. Love All.

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



| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 1♥   | Pass  | 1♠   | Pass  |
| ?    |       |      |       |

### 2♥.

Your partner has replied at the one level, promising only six points, so you have no reason to harbour hopes for game unless he can bid again. Therefore, you should make your natural rebid of 2♥. If he does respond again, you will know that game might be on – here he would pass.

The jump rebid of 3♥ is reserved for strong hands: encouraging partner to bid on. A 4♥ rebid would be for hands with a much more robust suit.

2♥ is certainly high enough with these two hands – if you manage to lose just two heart tricks you will make your partscore.

## 5. Dealer West. Love All.

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



| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 1♥   | Pass  | 1♠   | Pass  |
| ?    |       |      |       |

### 2♦.

You have 16 HCP so you might have been taught as a beginner to show your strength by rebidding 3♦: showing 16+ points and 5+4+ in your two suits. However, beginners are taught a very

simplified version of things.

Once you are immersed in the game you will understand that a 3♦ rebid is forcing to game – your partner has to respond so that the partnership will finish in a game contract. This means that you need to be able to guarantee a game contract when your partner has only promised six points with his one-level response. You need 19 total points to make a jump rebid.

You have 16 HCP and two good five-card suits, but without a fit you cannot evaluate for your shortage, in fact your singleton in partner's suit is not usually a good sign.

Just rebid 2♦ and see what your partner has to say. Here, he would pass 2♦ and you would have stayed at a relatively safe level.

## 6. Dealer West. Love All.

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



| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 1♦   | Pass  | 1♠   | Pass  |
| ?    |       |      |       |

### 2♦.

You have 14 HCP so your options are limited: you cannot afford to reverse (showing hearts with 2♥ would take you above your barrier and push the auction too high). Could you stretch to bid 1NT?

Your good diamond suit is worth a point, but at the same time, your singleton in your partner's suit is not a good sign. You do best to slow things down and bid 2♦ which will end the auction.

1NT might work well if the diamonds behave, but an adverse division in diamonds will leave you well short, whilst 2♦ has reasonable chances. ■

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

## 7. Dealer West. Love All.

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



| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 1♠   | Pass  | 2♦   | Pass  |
| ?    |       |      |       |

**3♣.** Your partner has shown you ten points, so you know game is on, but which game?

Rebidding 2NT is reasonable, showing your strength and shape, but that will tend to lead to a 3NT contract, whether or not your partner has a heart stopper. Your aim should be to set up the auction in such a way as to discover whether partner can stop the heart suit.

You need to make a forcing bid and 3♣ is probably your best bet: even if your partner takes your bid seriously and raises clubs, you can correct the contract to diamonds where you will have a reasonable fit. By bidding clubs you advertise the weakness in hearts, allowing your partner to continue his description, you also show your five spades by rebidding in a new suit.

You are of course showing 4+ clubs, but you are willing to overlook that for getting your message across. Here the complete auction might be: 1♠-2♦-3♣-3♦-3♥\*-3♠-4♠.

You use the fourth suit forcing (3♥) to ask for a stopper directly, but your partner cannot bid no-trumps so he gives delayed support for spades. Although 5♦ will make 11 tricks, 10 tricks in 4♠ scores better.

## 8. Dealer West. Love All.

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



| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 1♠   | Pass  | 2♥   | Pass  |
| ?    |       |      |       |

**3♥.** You have a lovely six-card spade suit and it is tempting to rebid it. However, when you find a major suit fit it is best to show it: your partner's 2♥ response promises five or more hearts, so you have at least an eight-card fit. Show your fit by raising to 3♥ and your partner will probably bid on to 4♥. If you can manage two ruffs in dummy, then 4♥ will scrape home. If instead you rebid 2♠, your partner might even leave you there.

## 9. Dealer West. Love All.

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



| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 1♥   | Pass  | 1♠   | Pass  |
| ?    |       |      |       |

**4♣.** You have fine support for your partner's suit, so you want to show your liking for spades. 15 HCP, a five-card suit and a singleton, or counting losers (5 losers) would suggest going for game. However, direct raises to game often end up with missed slams. Try to be more descriptive: you have the perfect opportunity to make a splinter bid.

A splinter is an unnecessary jump beyond three-of-the-major: it does not need to be used as natural and instead can be used to show **support** for spades, **points** and distribution for game and **shortage** in the suit bid. Jump to 4♣ and this will allow your partner to take control. His only weakness in his hand is in clubs and you have taken care of that, by saying, 'Partner, I will be able to ruff some of your clubs as I have a singleton or void.'

6♠ makes since the hands fit well: nothing wasted in clubs means the high cards are working together in the other suits. ■

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

## 10. Dealer West. Love All.

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



| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 1♣   | Pass  | 1NT  | Pass  |
| ?    |       |      |       |

### 3NT.

The important aspect of this question is to identify the meaning of your partner's 1NT response. A 1NT response to 1♣ is unusual: why has your partner not bid a suit?

Because he has not got a suit to show. Then why has he not supported clubs?

This is the crux: he has a choice and the standard method is to use a raise to 2♣ to show weaker hands and a 1NT response to show the upper range: 8 to a bad 10.

You have 15 points with a six-card suit that will have support: you can surely hope for six club tricks and the ♦A and, with your partner being in the 8-10 range, you can reasonably hope for two more tricks from your two hands. Go for game – a bit of a gamble, but it will often pay off.

## 11. Dealer East. Love All.

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



| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 1♥   | Pass  | 2♣   | Pass  |
| ?    |       |      |       |

### Pass.

Hopefully you noted the two passes at

the start of the auction because they are all-important. Because your partner has passed, he has limited his hand, which means you can place him with fewer than 12 points. This, in turn, means that his response is non-forcing: you can choose to pass if you think game will be beyond you and you have found the best denomination.

You have 12 HCP, so game is likely to be beyond the partnership and since your fit appears to be in clubs, it will be a long way away. You should pass and make things easier for your partner.

On a bad day, declarer might lose two trumps along with the other three top losers, so 2♣ will be high enough.

## 12. Dealer West. Love All.

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



| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 1♣   | Pass  | 2♦   | Pass  |
| ?    |       |      |       |

### 3♣.

Only 15 HCP so you appear to be too weak to do a high reverse. However, whenever contemplating making a strong bid, consider the circumstances. Clearly, if you rebid in your second suit, it will be a game-forcing bid – are you prepared for that?

Yes, you are: your partner has promised 10 points for his two-level change of suit response and with your 15 that should add up to a game contract. Bearing this in mind you should bid your hand out naturally. Over 3♣, your partner will try 3NT, which you should pass, hopeful of success.

Your partner is minimum for his bid, but 3NT has every chance of success. ■

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# Should I Overcall with my Higher Ranked or Longer Suit?

**Q** My right-hand opponent opened 1♠ and I wondered what to do with the following hand:

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

Would you bid 2♣, as it is the longer suit, or 2♦, so that you can next bid clubs twice, if necessary?  
Peter Calviou by email.

**A** For sure, I would not overcall 2♦. You might end up in a high-level doubled contract and be subject to spade forces. Playing in your best trump fit may be worth several tricks in the play if it means the difference between losing control or not.

Whether you should make an unusual 2NT (both minors) or start with 2♣ depends upon your partnership agreement about the strength of a 2NT overcall. Some play that the hand can be weak or strong but not, as is the case with the hand you cite, of intermediate strength. If you have no such agreement, 2NT has the advantage of

showing both suits at once. If a 2NT overcall does not fit in with your agreement, you should start with 2♣ and be willing to come back in with 4NT over 4♠.

♣♦♥♠

**Q** What is the general practice for the opening lead against a suit contract when your partner has bid a suit during the auction? Does one lead high, low or what?

Bryan Stephens,  
East Preston, West Sussex.

**A** The general practice for club and home players is to lead the same in partner's suit as you would in an unbid suit, top of a sequence, high from a doubleton, second from poor suits and fourth from suits with an honour. For sure, it is rarely a good idea to lead high from three to an honour.

At a higher level of play, it is customary to lead a bit differently, typically third and fifth in partner's suit. The reason for this is that a lead from a three-card holding is so much more likely in partner's suit than in an unbid suit. If you lead low from three or four, partner

cannot tell which you have.

If you have supported partner's suit, when a doubleton is impossible, you can agree to lead top of nothing even if you would lead second highest in a weak unbid suit.

♣♦♥♠

**Q** With a new partner using ordinary Blackwood and no agreements about fourth suit, cue bids or splinters, on the very first hand, I held:

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

**Partner opened 1♠. I replied 2♣ (I believe the modern way is to take things slowly to give more room, so did not jump). Partner bid 2♦, so I knew he had five spades. However, I had no idea about the quality of the spades, or if my clubs would run as a side suit. I wanted to be sure of making game, so bid 4♠, which was passed. Partner's hand was:**

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

**Thirteen tricks rolled in when the ♠Q dropped on the first round. Should I have jumped, then he might have bid beyond 4♠? Alternatively, should I have guessed at 6♠? What would 5♠ (rather than 4) have meant – does it ask about the quality of his spades?**  
Ron Tomsett by email.

**A** 2♣ initially was fine. If you use fourth-suit forcing (2♥) and then bid 3♠, this sets up a forcing situation and gives you more room to explore. Even in the traditional Acol method of playing fourth suit forcing not as game forcing, any bid past 2NT should create a game force.

Your hand is not good enough to be sure you have slam values facing a minimum opening bid and so you want to consult partner. Quite often, having bid spades and diamonds, partner will have a small singleton club, in which case there will be work to do to set up the club suit. ▶

If you go to 5♠ when your side has bid three suits, it sounds as if you are looking for a control in the unbid (heart) suit rather than for good trumps. A guess to bid 6♠ would be an optimistic guess.



## Q Please can you explain reverse bidding?

Name and address supplied.

**A** I think you are talking about a reverse (typically by opener but could be by responder) when a player bids his suits in reverse order. On most hands, one bids the higher-ranking suit before the lower ranking-suit so that if partner prefers your first suit it is possible to go back to it without raising the level. You can follow this normal order either if the suits are of equal length or if the higher-ranking suit is longer.

If the lower-ranking suit is longer, you do not want to start with the higher-ranking suit. So, if your hand is relatively weak, you either bid the lower-ranking suit twice (eg 1♦-1♠-2♦), or you rebid a higher suit at the one level (eg 1♦-1♥-1♠), but with a stronger hand, you can rebid the higher-ranking suit at the two level (eg 1♦-1♠-2♥); this is a reverse. For a reverse as opener, you need at least 16 or 17 points as well as the appropriate shape, at least five cards in the first suit and at least four in the second, with the second suit shorter than the first.



## Q My partner opened 2♣, with the strength of an Acol strong two (we

play 2♦, 2♥ and 2♠ weak). My RHO overcalled 5♦. I held a balanced seven-point hand:

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

I knew it was dangerous, but I wanted to take the opportunity to tell partner something about my hand. I ventured 5♥. LHO passed and partner puzzled... before raising to 6♥. He held:

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

The ♥A-Q were with my LHO, who sagely failed to double, or we might well have found 6♣.

Rupert Timpson by email.

**A** Partner, who has announced a strong hand, is hardly going to let the opponents play in 5♦ undoubled.

If you bid when you do not have to and at such a high level, you should only do so if you have something descriptive to say. I suggest you need at least a six-card heart suit for the 5♥ bid.

With your actual balanced hand, you have no idea of the best denomination because so much depends upon what your partner holds. It is debatable whether pass or double is the best way to show a few values – but for sure 5♥ shows a much shapelier hand than you held.

Incidentally, it would seem you have two heart tricks to lose in either

major-suit slam. A single discard on the ♣Q will not help partner much in 6♠.



**Q** In a teams event, at game all, my RHO opened with an Acol 2♠ (holding 25 points and a string of diamonds). I held:

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



With a degree of devilment I overcalled 2♠. My LHO held:

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



He bid 3♥, RHO bid 4♦, and their final contract was 5♦. They made 12 tricks with ease, my ♠A being the only possible defensive trick. Our teammates duly made the slam, so it was a good result for us. What do you recommend in such cases where a strong 2♠ or 2♦ is overcalled?

Jim Miller, Loughborough.

**A** The general principle when it comes to an overcall of a two level opening is 'strong over weak and weak over strong', so you are right to bid over their strong 2♠ with a weak shapely hand.

For the opening side, after a strong artificial 2♣ and an overcall, it is usual

to play that responder does not need positive values to bid – just a good suit. At the three level, a five-card major headed by a top honour is just about worth showing. Opener might have guessed that responder had something apart from the ♥Q and gone on to 6♦ – but I suppose that something did not have to be the ♦K.

You need to take some credit for your overcall in keeping the opponents out of a slam.



**Q** Sitting South, I had a strong hand and at some stage bid 4NT, asking for aces. The opponent on my left, West, then bid 5♦. My partner, who had one ace, was then unable to make her bid, as West had bid her response. My partner doubled.

I took this as meaning she was doubling for penalties. I passed, and we took opponents down by two. However, my partner said that her double was to tell me that she had wanted to bid 5♦. Who was correct please?

Sir John Olrog,  
Virginia Water, Surrey.

**A** An established partnership would have an agreement about what to do if the opponents intervene over 4NT. A common agreement is DOPI, whereby double shows no aces (or no key cards if you are playing a form of Keycard Blackwood) and pass shows one ace (or key card). In this case, the double of 5♦ would show no aces and a pass one ace. Higher bids show

aces in steps: the next bid (5♥ in your example) shows two aces and the next bid after that (5♠ in your example) shows three aces.

When the partner of the 4NT enquirer does have only one ace or no aces at all, it is quite possible that a slam is not on. In this case, particularly if the opposing bid is higher than five of the agreed suit, it is useful for you as the 4NT bidder to have the option to play for penalties. You can leave in the one ace double or, if partner passed to show no aces, you can double yourself.

Given that the 4NT bidder is asking about aces, the other player cannot really make a pure penalty double. If a slam is on, you may need to defeat the opponents by a lot of tricks to compensate.

♣♦♥♠

**Q** How could we have bid the hands below? 6NT was an easy contract.

♠ K 5 3 2  
♥ A K 5 3  
♦ 7 5  
♣ A 7 5



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

**My partner (North) opened 1♥ (although she said afterwards that she had wondered whether to open 1NT).**

**My response was 2♦ (just a simple change of suit – should I have jumped?)**

**My partner rebid 2♠, to which I replied 3♣. I know this bid was wrong but if I had said 3NT, my partner would have passed. Should I have just jumped to 6NT?**

Ann Yeldon,  
Seaford, East Sussex.

**A** Your 2♦ response and 3♣ rebid were both fine.

You have not said what happened after that. I guess from your comments that your partner bid 3NT and you passed. If that is the case, you were overly cautious in passing 3NT.

Your partner's bidding certainly was not correct. For a start, although the aces and kings are nice, the poor spot cards mean that the opening hand is not too good for a weak 1NT opening.

After your 2♦ response, partner does not have a sensible rebid available to show a minimum opening. The best option, having created the problem by failing to open 1NT, would be to rebid 2NT. This would be a slight overbid but at least describes the general nature of the hand. Partner's actual choice, a 2♠ reverse, not only showed extra strength but also a non-existent fifth heart.

Bidding slams without cue bidding is tricky. You are going to be guessing on some occasions. You really ought to try adding this weapon to your arsenal. Even at the rubber bridge table, where systems are necessarily simple, cue bids are part of the standard. If the bidding starts 1NT-3♦-3NT-4♣, 4♥ cannot be an attempt to play there. If wishing to play in hearts (facing a minor-two suiter to boot), opener would have bid hearts previously. Logically, 4♥ agrees clubs

because opener could bid 4♦ to agree diamonds.

♣♦♥♠

**Q** I have always played that your 'support suits' must have at least three cards but that a three-card suit can be just low cards. So if the opponents bid clubs – I play that you can make a take-out double with these hands:

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

**My partner believes that there must be an honour card in all support suits.**

**May I ask for your view on this?**

Bruce Paul by email.

**A** When it comes to choosing a trump suit, length counts for more than strength. You cannot make it a rigid rule to have an honour in all three-card unbid suits. Sometimes your shape will be 4432 rather than 5431, in which case making an overcall would not be sensible.

♣♦♥♠

**Q** A few years ago, you suggested that responder should use Stayman on all hands with both majors, including weak hands. Is this still the case?

Tim Lines, Ferndown, Dorset.

**A** So long as you play that 1NT-2♠-2♦-2♥ shows a weak hand with both majors and invites

opener to give preference, it is perfectly playable to use Stayman on any hand with both majors. I use Stayman myself on most hands with both majors. The exception would tend to be when my limited values are mainly in the minors. A weak 4-3 fit might not play anywhere near as well as 1NT.

Hands with at least the values to invite game present no problem because then responder can rebid 2NT or 3NT as appropriate.

♣♦♥♠

**Q** Can you advise what the SID convention is, please? It evidently arises after a 4-4 fit has been found, after a Stayman enquiry. John Shingler by email.

**A** Since you have asked, I shall explain – but this is one of those conventions that one is better off not playing.

SID stands for Stayman in Doubt. You would use it if you use Stayman on a 4333 shape to find out whether partner is 4333 too. If neither of you has a ruffing value, 3NT may produce as many tricks as the 4-4 fit in a major-suit game (and sometimes more tricks if the opponents could score a ruff).

The way it works is that after 1NT-2♠-2♥/2♠, a rebid of 3♦ asks opener to bid 3NT with a 4333 shape or rebid the major with any other shape, presumably jumping to game if non-minimum.

If you play this convention, you give up whatever you currently play the 3♦ rebid as meaning. You also give away information about opener's shape when you use the convention. I would







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recommend simply not using Stayman on 4333 shapes (unless perhaps all the strength is in two suits).

♣♦♥♠

**Q My partner and I (South) held the following hands:**

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

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

| West | North | East | South             |
|------|-------|------|-------------------|
|      | 1♣    | Dbl  | Rdbl <sup>1</sup> |
| 1♥   | 2♣    | Pass | 2♠ <sup>2</sup>   |

All Pass

<sup>1</sup>Showing 9+ points

<sup>2</sup>Intended as forcing

**Was I right to redouble initially and should I then have gone 3♠?**

Martin Epstein by email.

**A** After an opponent doubles partner's opening, you can play a jump shift as a fit-showing jump – you are very unlikely to have the strength for a strong jump shift if an opponent shows strength. Playing fit jumps, 2♠ shows five spades and at least four clubs, with at least the values to reach 3♠; this describes your hand quite well. If you do not play fit jumps, I recommend a 1♠ response. You want to show the spades and the clubs if you can; redouble conveys neither feature.

On your actual sequence, the redouble followed by 2♠ should indeed be

forcing. Having already shown a limited hand with 2♣, partner can bid 2NT to show the heart stopper. You could raise that to 3NT.

In fact, 3NT is not the best spot. Even with spades 4-2 (when one needs to ruff a round to set up the suit) and the ♥A offside, 6♣ played by North looks good. If East does not cash the ♥A at trick one, declarer can discard one heart on the ♠K and another on the fifth spade, just losing a diamond. If East does cash the ♥A at trick one, declarer discards two diamonds instead of two hearts and again makes twelve tricks.

♣♦♥♠

**Q How would you respond to partner's 2NT(20-22) opening with the following hand?**

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

**One partner suggested 4♣ (Gerber). Is there a way to explore a possible minor suit slam?**

Huw Jones, Swansea.

**A** The simplest thing is to give up playing Gerber – it is one of the worst conventions ever invented. The chance of having the perfect hand for it is extremely remote. A natural jump to 4♣ would describe the hand well.

If you cannot persuade your partner to give up Gerber, you can bid 3♣ and then 4♣. If you do not have a natural jump to 4♣ available, that sequence must show clubs without saying anything specific about the majors.

**Q Playing teams, I was East when we had this deal.**

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

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

♠ 9 7  
♥ K 10 7 2  
♦ 9 7 6 4  
♣ 9 7 2

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

| West | North    | East | South |
|------|----------|------|-------|
|      | 1♦       | Pass | 1NT   |
| Dbl  | All Pass |      |       |

**N/S made nine tricks for some score I prefer not to think about. My partner said that his double was for take-out of 1♦ so I should not have passed. I thought that doubles of 1NT were for penalty unless agreed otherwise. What is the general rule on this?**

John Collins, Hertfordshire.

**A** Most doubles of no-trump bids are for penalties, however a double of a 1NT response is an exception and is a take-out of opener's suit. You should have bid 2♥, though that would not have gone very well either. Your partner's flat hand is not ideal for the double, especially with both sides vulnerable and undertricks at their most expensive.

Incidentally, South's 1NT response with four cards in each major is bizarre. South should have responded 1♥, not 1NT.

**Q Who should have bid what on this deal (nobody vulnerable)?**

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

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

♠ J 9 6  
♥ 6  
♦ J 9 8 4  
♣ J 9 6 4 3

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

**As North, I saw West open 1♥ and I made a 1♠ overcall. I played there and went down after East led her singleton heart.**

**Results at our club: 2♠ minus two by West; 1♥ minus four by West; 2♠ made by North (I wonder how); 1♠ minus one by North (I might have made it); 3♥ doubled minus one by North.**

Keith Rylands by email.

**A** A possible auction is as follows:

| West             | North           | East     | South |
|------------------|-----------------|----------|-------|
| 1♥               | 1♠ <sup>1</sup> | Pass     | Pass  |
| 1NT <sup>2</sup> | 2♥ <sup>3</sup> | All Pass |       |

<sup>1</sup>North takes the chance to show the spades at the one level.

<sup>2</sup>The 1NT rebid with nothing from partner shows 18-19 or maybe 17-19. You risk missing game if you pass with this many points.

<sup>3</sup>The delayed bid in opener's suit is natural.

It is interesting that none of the tables at your club reached 2♥.

**E-mail your questions (including your postal address) for Julian to: [julianpottage@mrbridge.co.uk](mailto:julianpottage@mrbridge.co.uk)**



# The Diaries of Wendy Wensum

## Episode 54:

### Soft Landings

**A**s boys, my big brother and his best friend, Peter, used to play on the flat roof of the shed at the bottom of Peter's garden, even though this dangerous venture had been banned by both sets of parents. Access was by ladder, which I was too young to climb. I threatened to spill the beans on their activities unless I was allowed to join the boys on the roof, so they fitted large springs to the bottom of a wooden barrel and with ropes attached attempted to haul the barrel with me as passenger up to the roof. Having left the ground, the weight of me and the barrel was too great and control was lost. The barrel returned to earth under gravity, precisely as predicted by Isaac Newton, and bounced on its springs a few times before spilling me uninjured onto the grass below. I ran home to mother and blamed my brother for the incident. On mature reflection years later, I realised this conclusion was rather unfair as I had taken part in the escapade as a willing participant.

It was a teams event at the Riverside with teammates Jo and Kate. Jon and Jane were our opponents on this board.

With only 10 HCP, I (South) was concerned about opening this hand. On the plus side, we weren't vulnerable and the hand reached 20 opening points, so in the end I found one spade. Ignoring the vulnerability, Jon made a rather weak overcall of three diamonds. Sitting North, Millie simply confirmed her liking for spades as trumps by bidding three spades. Holding the best hand at the table, Jane bid four diamonds suppressing her strong club suit. The void in diamonds encouraged me to declare in four spades.

| West     | North  | East | South |
|----------|--------|------|-------|
| Jon      | Millie | Jane | Wendy |
|          |        |      | 1♠    |
| 3♦       | 3♠     | 4♦   | 4♠    |
| All Pass |        |      |       |

Spurning perhaps the more obvious option of a diamond, Jon went for the trump lead and led the nine of spades. I won the first trick, removed the remaining trump, finishing in dummy and then led a small heart towards my hand. Jane popped up with the ace and continued with the king. With the ace and king to lose in clubs, I nearly claimed my nine tricks at this point for one off.

Fortunately, I resisted this negative approach; in bridge one never knows what might happen next. Still on lead, after much thought, Jane failed to test clubs, but instead played the diamond ace. I ruffed in hand and the queen and jack of hearts took care of the two losing clubs in dummy. The apparently hopeless contract came home for 4♠+1 and a score of plus 450. Our opponents left the table still bickering about their defence. Jon blamed Jane for not taking her two club tricks, while

Jane argued that Jon could have made things easier by leading a diamond. I queried Millie's bid of three spades, noting that I would have bid four spades with her trump holding. Millie sensibly countered this suggestion by pointing out that three spades was the last making contract for North-South as with better defence, game should not make.

As we scored up later, Kate and Jo explained they were rather lucky to get a good result on the hand as the auction took a fairly undistinguished route to a partscore. After three passes, Kate opened one club as East. With no specific bid available in their system to show a major two-suiter, South chose to overcall one heart. Two passes followed and Kate's final bid of two clubs made her declarer.

| West | North | East | South    |
|------|-------|------|----------|
| Jo   |       | Kate |          |
|      |       |      | Pass     |
| Pass | Pass  | 1♣   | 1♥       |
| Pass | Pass  | 2♣   | All Pass |

South led the ace of spades, North encouraged, and the spade continuation was trumped by Kate. She now played the ace and king of hearts, followed by a small heart ruffed high with the jack in dummy. The club lead from the table lost to South's queen, but the contract made nine tricks in all for 2♣+1 and a score of plus 110 to our team. Rather unnecessarily, Millie pointed out that a diamond contract might have produced ten tricks for plus 130. Rather like the childhood incident of the bouncing barrel, bridge too produces conflicting choices, and like life itself does not always apportion blame as fairly as it might. ■

#### Dealer South. E/W Game.

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



# Catching Up

## with Sally Brock

Briony and I went away for a little holiday on our own. The (rather foolish) original plan was to have two nights in Lille, then drive to Annecy for three nights and return for two nights in Bruges. As the time drew nearer, I found myself wondering why we were going to drive quite so far for such a short stay, so at the last moment we cancelled Annecy, and instead had an extra night in Lille before spending a couple of nights in Brussels and then moving on to Bruges. Much more sensible. We had a great time. We enjoy each other's company and both like to do lots of shopping – especially when we are in the car and therefore not limited by what we can fit into a suitcase.

As well as that, we have had the odd bridge fixture. We won a NICKO match and so are now in the quarter-finals of that event. I organised a bridge evening for Tove who had paid handsomely for my services at Briony's charity bridge evening. As usual, we played a couple of times at the Young Chelsea.

As well as that, I continue to do my online coaching sessions, though it is a bit more patchy over the summer as people go on holiday. This was quite a fun deal from a session with one of my Irish pairs.

I held the North hand (see next column) and had to find a bid after partner passed and West opened 1♣ (E/W open 1♣ with all balanced

12–14 counts, including those with five diamonds). I chose a slightly conservative 1NT. East passed and Barry bid a 2♦ transfer. West chose to double for the lead, I passed (showing fewer than three hearts) and Barry redoubled, a re-transfer, asking me to please bid 2♥ this time. Well, the opportunity was too good to resist, so I passed and let him take his chances in 2♦.

**Dealer South. Love All.**

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

West led the ♣K, won with the ♣A. Barry cashed the ♥A and played a club to the ten and queen. West switched to the ♦K and dummy won the ace. He now played a low spade. East went in with the king and continued spades. Two more spade tricks, ending in hand, brought declarer's trick total to five, and he now played a diamond. There is no way the defence can take more than five tricks now (nor could they have done anything earlier), and, in practice, an overtrick slipped through so we made the unusual score of +760. ■

## DECLARER PLAY QUIZ



by David Huggett

(Answers on page 23)

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

1.

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

You are declarer in 3NT and West leads the ♠5. East plays the ♠Q. How do you plan the play?

3.

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

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

2.

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

You are declarer in 5♥ and West leads the ♦Q. How do you plan the play?

4.

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

You are declarer in 7♠ and West leads the ♠2. How do you plan the play?

# High, but Flat

## by John Barr

I love living in the mountains, and I love walking in the mountains, but I'm not partial to walking up (or down) mountains. For me, the perfect walk starts with a gondola or chair lift that whisks me from the floor of the valley up to somewhere between 1,500 and 2,000 metres. I can then walk along the mountain tops for a few

As is often the case when a very strong hand is held, South overbid and played in 6NT in both rooms.

In one room, East had opened a multi 2♦ (which was shown later in the auction to be a weak two in spades), while in the other room East had opened with 3♠.

In the first room, declarer had



hours before stopping at a mountain hut for some refreshment. High, but flat is the theme for my mountain walks, and it's also the theme for this hand from a recent teams competition:

|              |  |                  |
|--------------|--|------------------|
| ♠ 4 3 2      |  |                  |
| ♥ 8 7        |  |                  |
| ♦ 8 6 3      |  |                  |
| ♣ A J 8 7 2  |  |                  |
| ♠ Q          | <div>♠ N<br/>♥ E<br/>♦ W<br/>♣ S</div> | ♠ K J 10 9 7 6 5 |
| ♥ 10 9 6 4 3 |  | ♥ J 5            |
| ♦ Q 10 9 4   |  | ♦ 5 2            |
| ♣ Q 5 3      |  | ♣ 6 4            |
| ♠ A 8        |  |                  |
| ♥ A K Q 2    |  |                  |
| ♦ A K J 7    |  |                  |
| ♣ K 10 9     |  |                  |

ducked the opening lead of the queen of spades (overtaken by East's king) without giving it too much thought – probably thinking along the lines that it's often right to duck to cut communication with the six-card suit.

At trick three (yes, two tricks too late), declarer started to think in detail about his prospects.

He couldn't avoid the club finesse, but had no obvious discard on the final club. Reckoning that the diamond finesse would probably be wrong, he cashed the two top diamonds and continued with the king and ten of clubs, taking the finesse and running the club suit. This was the position when dummy leads the last club: South discarding a diamond. West could not avoid being squeezed in the red suits.

|   |          |                                |         |            |
|---|----------|--------------------------------|---------|------------|
| ♠ | —        | ♠                              | 2       |            |
| ♥ | 10 9 6 4 | ♥                              | 8 7     |            |
| ♦ | Q        | ♦                              | 8       |            |
| ♣ | —        | ♣                              | 7       |            |
|   |          | <div>♠ N<br/>W ♣ E<br/>S</div> |         | immaterial |
|   |          | ♠                              | —       |            |
|   |          | ♥                              | A K Q 2 |            |
|   |          | ♦                              | 7       |            |
|   |          | ♣                              | —       |            |

At the other table where East was expected to have a seven card spade suit, declarer decided to win the first spade and play on clubs. Again, West has a discard to find on the last club:

|   |            |                                      |         |            |
|---|------------|--------------------------------------|---------|------------|
| ♠ | —          | ♠                                    | 4 3     |            |
| ♥ | 10 9 6 4 3 | ♥                                    | 8 7     |            |
| ♦ | Q 10 9     | ♦                                    | 8 6 3   |            |
| ♣ | —          | ♣                                    | 7       |            |
|   |            | <div>♠<br/>N<br/>W<br/>E<br/>S</div> |         | immaterial |
|   |            | ♠                                    | —       |            |
|   |            | ♥                                    | A K Q 2 |            |
|   |            | ♦                                    | A K J 7 |            |
|   |            | ♣                                    | —       |            |

A further diamond discard allows declarer to drop the queen, while after a heart discard, declarer can play four rounds of hearts, throwing West in to lead away from the queen of diamonds.

Both declarers were disappointed that their clever card play in a slam only resulted in a flat board. ■



# Answers to David Huggett's Play Quiz on page 21

1.

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

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

You are declarer in 3NT and West leads the ♠5. East plays the ♠Q. How do you plan the play?

The Rule of Eleven tells you that East has at least three spades, so there is no use in trying any sort of hold-up. Nor is there any need, for all you have to do is try to ensure that East never gains the lead to push a spade through your remaining holding. Although the odds favour playing the clubs from the top there are other considerations here, so play a club to the ace and finesse on the way back. If it loses, West can do you no harm with another spade lead. Win or lose you have at least enough tricks for your contract.

2.

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

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

You are declarer in 5♥ and West leads the ♦Q. How do you plan the play?

Flirting for a slam has got you to the five-level. There are ten tricks 'on top' and at first glance it looks as though the eleventh might come from a fourth club if they break 3-3, or a spade if East has the knave and a higher honour. But it's much more simple than that. Simply go for a spade ruff in dummy by leading one from hand. Maybe the defenders will switch to a trump but you just win and lead another spade and eventually ruff the third in dummy.

Notice that it would be wrong to cross to dummy with a trump in order to lead a spade, because the defenders might be able to continue leading trumps and deny you your ruff.

3.

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

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

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

You have been dealt a spectacular hand and it would be a shame to waste it. Dummy has a fine potential source of tricks in the diamond suit, but if the defenders hold up the ace until the third round – and they certainly will if they can – you have to make sure you can reach dummy to cash the remaining

winners. You won't be able to do that if you win the first trick with any card other than the ace. By winning with the ace, it is true that you set up the king for the defenders, but you do guarantee an entry to dummy's precious diamond winners and with a double stop in every other suit you have no fears in that department.

4.

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

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

You are declarer in 7♣ and West leads the ♠2. How do you plan the play?

Try as you might the total number of tricks on offer only seems to be twelve, via five spades, one heart, four diamonds and two clubs – but there is a way to make thirteen tricks if you look hard enough.

Curiously enough, the contract is a sound one and virtually laydown if trumps are no worse than 3-2.

Win the spade lead in dummy and play ace and another heart, ruffing in hand. Now enter dummy with a trump (both defenders following suit) and ruff another heart. Go back to dummy with a club and ruff the last heart in hand. Your hand will be out of trumps now, but dummy will still have one, so you go across with a diamond and play the last trump, drawing the outstanding trump in the opponent's hand in the process. On that last trump you throw your club loser.





# Logic at Trick 2

**Y**ou have won trick 1 and must decide what to do next. As I have shown earlier in this series, there are a lot of clues from the bidding that are available to help the discerning mind find a good opening lead, but once dummy appears and you have seen the cards played to trick 1, the information available to you increases exponentially. Logic and counting become paramount. In the examples considered, you are playing teams of four so you can focus your attention on beating the contract rather than preventing overtricks.

In Example A, partner leads the ♠9 to dummy's ♠K and your ♠A. What next?

**Example A**

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

♠ A 7 4  
♥ 8 5  
♦ 7 6 4 2  
♣ A 8 6 4

| West | North | East     | South |
|------|-------|----------|-------|
|      |       |          | 1♥    |
| Pass | 1♠    | Pass     | 2♥    |
| Pass | 4♥    | All Pass |       |

Dummy is depressingly strong and there is no reason to believe that the cards are behaving badly for declarer. Where are four tricks coming from?

You can start by dismissing the idea that you can give partner a spade ruff. If partner started with a doubleton spade then declarer has four spades, but surely he would then have raised spades in his rebid. Partner has led passively from a holding of ♠10-9-x or

♠10-9-x-x. Many experts would state that South's 2♥ rebid guarantees six hearts because it takes up so much space. However, even if you believe that South may have only five hearts, that leaves South with only eight side suit cards, and it looks likely that declarer will have winners in dummy to discard at least some club losers in his hand. So returning partner's suit is unlikely to be successful.

So where are three extra tricks for the defence coming from? It is just about possible that you might have two trump tricks to go with your ♣A, but it is far more likely that you will need two club tricks to supplement just one trump trick, or even three club tricks. An immediate club switch is clearcut, but which one?

Suppose declarer has:

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

If you cash your ♣A declarer cannot go wrong, but suppose you switch to your ♣4. Declarer has a guess, and if he guesses wrong (playing the ♣J in the hope that you have the ♣Q) you have four tricks. At this point I can see you all reaching for your back copies of **BRIDGE**, searching for my advice on underleading side suit aces against suit contracts. What I said was, 'Don't underlead a side suit ace against a suit contract at trick 1.' This isn't trick 1. By this time logic has taken over from soundbites.

In Example B, your partner leads the ♠9 against 3NT. Declarer tries the finesse but your ♠K wins trick 1. How should you continue?

**Example B**

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

Lead ♠ 9

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

| West     | North | East | South |
|----------|-------|------|-------|
|          | 1♥    | Pass | 1NT   |
| Pass     | 2NT   | Pass | 3NT   |
| All Pass |       |      |       |

North is certainly a believer in opening the major. What clues do you have?

With four spades declarer should have preferred a 1♠ response to 1NT, hence, you know partner has led from a weak suit of at least five cards. You could return the ♠2, but partner is marked with at most 7 points and is unlikely to have enough entries to set up and cash his length spade tricks.

How about hearts? There is a subtle clue here. If declarer had three hearts he should have tried a forcing 3♥ over 2NT, rather than just raise to 3NT. By doing so, he would have given partner a chance to prefer a possible 5-3 heart fit. 3♥ is forcing because South cannot possibly have four hearts (otherwise he would have raised 1♥ to 2♥ rather than respond 1NT) and North might well have only four hearts. You don't sign off at the three level in a 4-3 fit. So, assuming you believe South to be a sound bidder, he cannot have more than two hearts. Dummy's hearts are very weak. If partner has the ♥K you can clearly take four heart tricks immediately. Suppose declarer has the ♥K. He has a stopper, but he might have a guess if he has the ♥J as well, ie:

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

Underleading your ♥A is called for here. Could declarer have the ♥K singleton? That would give West ♥Q-J-10-9-8 and with such a solid sequence, West would surely have led the ♥Q even though North bid hearts.

Before committing yourself it is worth looking at the superficially attractive diamond switch. Setting up diamonds requires partner to hold three good diamonds (eg ♦A-K-2), but that leaves declarer with only two diamonds. If declarer has at most three spades and only two cards in each red suit he must have six clubs. This is certainly possible but you are playing for very specific holdings in the minor suits.

While returning a spade (partner's suit) or diamonds (your long suit) could be successful, a heart return looks far more promising. So the ♥5 it shall be. There is a useful principle here. If dummy has bid a suit and it turns out to be very weak, carefully consider switching to that suit. Partner might have been put off leading the suit by dummy's bid.

Please note, there is one thing that I have **not** considered when deciding on my return at trick 2, and that is partner's reaction if it turns out to be unsuccessful. I know that for many of you the prospect of facing the accusing question, 'Why didn't you return my suit?' would lead you to return a spade just to escape partner's wrath. If you have a reasonable partner, he will give you the benefit of any doubt, assuming you had a good reason for your switch until proven otherwise. Then you can discuss it at the end of the session when you have got time to explain your logic. If you have an unreasonable partner who flares up at the table, divorce him and find a new partner!

In Example C, you start by cashing your ♠A-K, partner following with the ♠3 and ♠7, so there is no third spade trick for you. How should you continue?

#### Example C

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

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



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

Dummy's clubs look menacing. Declarer's bidding shows six strong hearts so it is easy to imagine declarer discarding all his diamonds on clubs, after conceding a trick to the ♥K and drawing trumps. So, do you need to switch immediately to a diamond while you still have the ♥K?

If you look at the bidding you will soon come to the conclusion that declarer must have the ♦A and is almost certain to have the ♦Q as well. So do you have any hope?

A club switch will work if partner has a singleton club because you can give him a ruff when you take the ♥K. Less obviously, a club switch will also work if declarer has a doubleton club, for example:

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

Switch to a club now and persevere with another club when you come in with the ♥K.

Declarer now has no club left in his hand, so he cannot draw the remaining trump and return to dummy to run clubs. By playing clubs here you are attacking declarer's entries to dummy before he is ready to use dummy's club suit.

Attacking declarer's entries is an aspect of defence that is largely neglected in bridge literature, but plays a large part in the thinking of experts. ■

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# Sir Guy's Downfall

Sir Guy of Gisborne did not greatly enjoy his bridge partnership with the Sheriff. After any bad board the blame came his way, regardless of the circumstances. The Sheriff was not averse to open criticism of a knight of the realm, even when the opponents were some hapless serfs.

The present scenario was entirely different. Sir Guy was enjoying a game in the castle armoury with three soldiers under his command. Easily the best player in such company, he ruled the roost. Anyone foolish enough to speak against him would risk extra drill and a night in some squalid cell.

This was the deal before them:

| Dealer West. Love All. |   |               |  |
|------------------------|---|---------------|--|
| ♠ 6 4                  |   |               |  |
| ♥ A Q 9 5              |   |               |  |
| ♦ 8 5 3                |   |               |  |
| ♣ 9 7 4 3              |   |               |  |
| ♠ None                 |  | ♠ 9 8 7 5     |  |
| ♥ 10 7 4               |   | ♥ K J 8 6 3 2 |  |
| ♦ Q J 9 6 2            |   | ♦ 4           |  |
| ♣ A K J 10 6           |   | ♣ Q 8         |  |
|                        |   |               |  |
| ♠ A K Q J 10 3 2       |   |               |  |
| ♥ Void                 |   |               |  |
| ♦ A K 10 7             |   |               |  |
| ♣ 5 2                  |   |               |  |

| West     | North  | East  | South    |
|----------|--------|-------|----------|
| Jacob    | Sgt.   | Gavin | Guy of   |
| Blayke   | Fyggis | Todde | Gisborne |
| 1♦       | Pass   | 1♥    | 4♠       |
| All Pass |        |       |          |

West launched the defence with the ace, king and jack of clubs. Gisborne ruffed the third club and played the ♠A, West discarding a diamond. What

plan should he make?

Gisborne soon saw that the contract was assured. East could hold no more than one diamond, on the bidding, and could be endplayed in the trump suit. He drew two more rounds of trumps and continued with the ace and king of diamonds.

The black-bearded Gavin Todde, known as a fine archer, surveyed the scene uncertainly. Gisborne had carelessly forgotten to draw the last trump! 'Bad luck, my Lord, I still have a trump and can ruff,' he said, displaying his ♠9. 'Mind you, I have to lead into dummy's hearts. It may be a lucky escape for you.'

'You great oaf!' cried Gisborne, as he won the heart return with dummy's queen and cashed the ace, throwing his diamond losers. 'You think I'm so bone-headed that I can't count trumps?'

'Er.. no, of course not, my Lord,' Todde replied. 'Had I thought for a moment, I wouldn't have ruffed. Then you'd have to give Jacob two diamond tricks.'

'The brilliance of my play obviously escaped you,' retorted Gisborne. 'If you don't ruff the diamond I throw you in with your last trump.'


'You played it very well, Sir Guy,' declared Sergeant Fyggis. He hadn't actually followed the deal but it could hardly be wrong to compliment his senior officer. Gisborne no doubt did the same when partnering the Sheriff.

Gisborne turned towards the doorway, where a bored-looking wench was surveying her fingernails. 'More ale!' he cried. 'Fill them to the brim this time or you'll regret it later tonight!'

'Right away, my Lord,' the girl

replied. 'I'll be as swift as I can.'

This was the next deal:

| Dealer North. N/S Game.                               |   |             |  |
|---|---|-------------|--|
| <p>♠ A 10 8 4 2<br/>♥ 9 6<br/>♦ 6 2<br/>♣ A 7 4 3</p> |   |             |  |
| ♠ J 6   |  | ♠ K Q 9     |  |
| ♥ J 10 7 4  |   | ♥ 3         |  |
| ♦ Q 10 7  |   | ♦ K J 8 4 3 |  |
| ♣ K Q J 6   |   | ♣ 10 9 8 5  |  |
| <p>♠ 7 5 3<br/>♥ A K Q 8 5 2<br/>♦ A 9 5<br/>♣ 2</p>  |   |             |  |

| West     | North  | East  | South    |
|----------|--------|-------|----------|
| Jacob    | Sgt.   | Gavin | Guy of   |
| Blayke   | Fyggis | Todde | Gisborne |
| Pass     | Pass   | Pass  | 1♥       |
| Pass     | 1♠     | Pass  | 4♥       |
| All Pass |        |       |          |

Emboldened by his masterful play on the previous deal, Gisborne opted to overbid by a trick. If partner could cover his spade losers, all would be well.

The ♣K was led and down went the dummy. Gisborne paused to plan the play. Six hearts, three aces and a diamond ruff in dummy would bring the total to ten. What could be done if the trumps were 4-1?

'Where's that accursed wench?' cried Gisborne, turning once more towards the doorway. 'By the Saints, if she's not back in thirty seconds, she'll pay dearly for it.'

Perhaps he could survive a bad trump break by ruffing clubs in his hand? Yes, if he could ruff three



clubs with low trumps and take one diamond ruff in the dummy...

'Your ale, my Lord,' said the serving wench, spilling some drops on the table in her hurry. 'Filled to the brim as you requested.'

'A knight of the realm doesn't request,' said Gisborne scornfully, pausing to take a draft of the ale. 'He demands! Mop up those drops, woman, or my sleeve will get wet.'

The wench dried the table with her own sleeve, deposited the other players' tankards of ale and departed as quickly as she could.

Gisborne attempted to regain his composure. He won with the ♣A and ruffed a club in his hand. He then ducked a round of diamonds, preparing for a ruff in that suit.


When East won the trick and switched to a trump, Gisborne rose with the trump ace, cashed the ♦A and ruffed a diamond in the dummy. A second club ruff in his hand was followed by the ♥K, a spade was thrown from dummy and East showed out.

'Hah!' exclaimed Gisborne. 'God willing, you will all soon appreciate the merits of my play so far.'

He returned to dummy with the ♠A and ruffed dummy's last club in his hand. When West followed suit, the contract was his.

Play continued and midway through

the next rubber, this deal arose:

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

| West     | North  | East  | South    |
|----------|--------|-------|----------|
| Jacob    | Sgt.   | Gavin | Guy of   |
| Blayke   | Fyggis | Todde | Gisborne |
|          |        |       | 2♣       |
| Pass     | 2♦     | Pass  | 2♠       |
| Pass     | 4♠     | Pass  | 6♠       |
| All Pass |        |       |          |

Blayke led the ♠10 and Sgt Fyggis scattered his cards on the rough wooden table.


'Line them up!' cried Gisborne.

With the dummy neatly arranged, Gisborne won with the ♠J and drew trumps with a second round. His next move was a diamond towards the dummy. Jacob Blayke knew from the 6♠ bid that this card must be a singleton. What should he do? If he

rose with the ace, this would set up two winners in the dummy.

'Ah, you have the ace,' Gisborne exclaimed. 'The slam is mine, then.'

Blayke played low and dummy's ♦K won the trick. Gisborne ruffed the ♦2 in his hand, played his three top clubs and returned to dummy with the trump queen. These cards remained in play:

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

Gisborne leaned forward to play the ♦Q. He threw the ♥2 from his hand and West won with the ♦A.

'No way out of the ambush,' declared Gisborne triumphantly, facing his cards. 'You must play a heart or give a ruff-discard.'

'Gisborne!' cried a commanding voice. Unperceived, the Sheriff had entered the chamber. 'I've come to see Robin Hood. Take me to his cell immediately.'

'Er... do you speak in jest, my Lord?' asked Gisborne. 'Hood is not yet captured.'

'And yet you see fit to while away your time, playing cards?' demanded the Sheriff. 'Should you not be making plans to take the wolf's-head and his gang of thieves, on the morrow if not sooner?'

'That was my intention, my Lord,' Gisborne replied. 'I joined the game for just one deal.'

'I see that you take ale before planning such a campaign,' retorted the Sheriff. 'When Hood is under lock and key, your men may drink ale. Not a drop passes your lips or theirs before then. You understand?'

Gisborne blinked furiously. 'Indeed I do, my Lord,' he replied. 'Not one drop - it shall be so.'



# READERS' LETTERS

## NEW UNDER THE SUN

Can I thank you for adding Ian Dalziel's column to your great magazine? As a long time bridge teacher myself I always find something new to try in each of his columns, the bidding tents and made-up play hands are now one of my teaching tools.

I have set up a bidding tents template on Pages (Mac & iPad) and a couple of readers have contacted me for these. Anyone

else should email me at [jimfrances@talktalk.net](mailto:jimfrances@talktalk.net)

I will send it back by return.

I am looking forward to more articles from Ian Dalziel.

**Jim Barker (EBU professional teacher) by email.**

## OVERSEAS SUB

A very big thank you for the lovely bridge diary. It is so smart, I shall be very proud to use it throughout the next year. I still belong to the old habits die hard brigade and cannot live without a diary in my hand bag.

Also, I would like to tell you that the articles that I enjoy a lot are the ones by Shireen Mohandes. In her last one of the April issue, it ended saying, 'Watch this space.' But the space has since been empty...What has happened?

However, I do still enjoy your magazine enormously and when I travel I always bring it with me. In spite of having bridge games on my iPad, I still always like

holding paper in my hands and follow all the games and articles in your lovely BRIDGE magazine. As a matter of fact, a friend from Argentina liked it so much that she took the June issue with her. Do you think you could send me another one?

**G Tomacelli by email.**

[A replacement copy is in the post.](#) [We also have a new subscriber in Argentina!](#)

## INTERIM REPORT

My column is primarily intended for bridge teachers, but I do try to make it interesting and varied so that it is a good read for bridge students and bridge players.

I sometimes offer free digital copies of the teaching material in my column and I have had 145 requests since the column started in August 2015. I also got 66 requests for my 'simplified rules card' which was offered in a letter in February 2015. I reply to each person individually by name. If I am at home I respond immediately, otherwise all emails are answered by the end of the day. I get quite a few follow-up thank you emails saying they like the material and those teachers who have tried it at the classes they give say the students love it. In all I have had 375 emails in the last 18 months from Mr Bridge readers. I have to say that without exception they are all really pleasant people and I have made some e-friends through the column.

It is difficult to tell what the total readership think of my column and other writers. The people who email me in such a positive way may not be representative of the majority. If I wasn't offering the freebies, I probably would not get any feedback at all. You said you don't get much feedback about my column or those of other writers, apart from some negative feedback about Sally. In the course of our phone call I suggested you use 'survey monkey' to get readers to rate the columnists.

Of course, if my column was rated badly, I'd have shot myself in the foot but that's a risk I'll take.

I do enjoy the magazine. You have some great columnists and I'm proud to be side by side with these stars of bridge.

**Ian Dalziel, Troon, Ayrshire, Scotland.**

## A SUGGESTION

Would it be possible to print the answers to the Bidding Quizzes at the bottom of the page (preferably upside down)? I am not always quick enough to cover them with my thumb which spoils the fun of coming up with an answer myself before reading it! And I **do** need the practice!!

**Anna Pinson by email.**

## ON ITS WAY

I received my latest copy of BRIDGE (number 164) and was delighted by its shiny new cover! I was also excited by its lovely shiny contents – so much so that I took my copy to work to read during my lunch break. I only have a small desk and my copy of BRIDGE sat quietly by my side whilst I worked.

My work colleague kindly offered me a mug of tea half way through the morning and

gently placed it on my desk.

Two minutes later this same colleague reached over my desk to retrieve some papers and shock, horror – suddenly the air was blue, my mug was empty and my copy of BRIDGE was learning to swim.

Just let all BRIDGE readers know – don't try this at home – Bridge cannot swim but it can go extremely soggy and the wet pages stick together really well!

Please could you send me another?

**Andrew Mountain, Wrexham.**

## GOOD EXPERIENCE

It was to be my first experience playing duplicate away from home. As a keen bridge player, I found combining duplicate with the opportunity to meet new people in a lovely location by the sea very appealing.

Although I did not bring a regular bridge partner to this event, the organisers ensured that I had a game every session. The event was well organised and the Mr Bridge team of helpers were friendly and accommodating.

**Jaya Gunatillaka, Waterlooville.**

## BLUE MOON

On the last day of the florin and once again since decimalisation, I was refused eight-level bids when holding 11 sure club winners. At duplicate scoring, in a weekly teams off-season practise session, always friendly, enjoyable occasions when TD was a signal for ritual half-time tea drinking, I had to watch partner record massive minus figures when -800 and -1100 would have hurt less. Footballers have recently been granted sensible kick-off rules. When will bridge players be allowed bids up to

8♠ rather than limit bidding to the seven level? It seems unfair, to me, for example, to condemn someone holding all thirteen of a suit to impotence and commitment to the defence of a grand slam. Extra deterrent might be appropriate for anyone wishing to sacrifice at such a high level.

Incidentally, I think that Ronald Keith's letter published in your August issue tries to bring a breath of fresh air to the bridge scenario and is well worth reading; especially by EBU supporters.

**Mr Charlie Richardson, Hesse, East Yorkshire.**

## HENCE DBRS

The discussion about the players' dilemma in the first letter to David Stevenson in your September 2016 issue highlights one of the ways in which bridge law has become far too abstruse for the vast majority of players. (To summarise the situation as I understand it: East did not notice North's double, so he intended a different meaning for his next bid. West did notice North's double, alerts East's bid, and when asked, explains the partnership agreement. But according to bridge law, this explanation is 'unauthorised' to East.) Among the questions raised are a) when, if ever, is East allowed to realise his mistake, and b) when, if ever, is West allowed to realise that he and his partner have been bidding to different conventions?

David Stevenson's analysis that, 'this is a very difficult case,' and that, 'even at the top level, different directors might rule differently,' should sound an alarm bell for

those who construct the laws of bridge. I imagine that this type of situation would get swiftly resolved at more than 95% of tables at the clubs I know, without the director being called. The majority of club bridge players would have no idea that their partner's explanation is unauthorised to them, nor would they be able to exclude that piece of information from their mental calculations. (It is very difficult to ignore a fact even when you know you shouldn't have it.) In my estimation, the vast majority of club bridge players would allow the auction to continue without remark, in the belief that East-West's messing up of their bids was punishment enough.

But this would not be in accordance with the laws of bridge and, as David replies to another letter in the same issue, 'If you do not play to the laws, it is not bridge.' That is the fundamental problem: the elite have evolved the nuances of the game's laws to such an arcane and detailed level that it has become separate from the game as played in most clubs and homes. The elite have clung to the nomenclature, insisting that what they play is called 'bridge' – even though they cannot agree on some of their rulings – so what is it that the rest of us are playing? Though I may dislike the name, I would agree with another anonymous correspondent who suggests that a much-simplified 'Duplicate Lite' set of fixed rules is needed for club bridge.

**Gavin Wilson, Claygate, Surrey.**

**Mr Bridge, Ryden Grange, Knaphill, Surrey GU21 2TH. [letters@mrbridge.co.uk](mailto:letters@mrbridge.co.uk)**

# DEFENCE QUIZ

*by Julian Pottage*

(Answers on page 31)

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

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

| West     | North | East | South |
|----------|-------|------|-------|
|          |       |      | 1♦    |
| Pass     | 1♠    | Pass | 3♦    |
| Pass     | 3♠    | Pass | 3NT   |
| All Pass |       |      |       |

Partner leads the ♠6. You win and return the ♣3. West wins with the ♠K and leads the ♠2 to South's ♣Q. Declarer runs the diamonds. Partner plays the ♦7-2, then the ♥7-2. What is your plan?

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

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

| West               | North           | East     | South                |
|--------------------|-----------------|----------|----------------------|
|                    |                 |          | 2NT <sup>1</sup>     |
| Pass               | 3♣ <sup>2</sup> | Pass     | 3♠                   |
| Pass               | 3NT             | All Pass |                      |
| <sup>1</sup> 20-22 |                 |          | <sup>2</sup> Stayman |

Partner leads the ♦6: ♦J, ♦Q and ♦K. Declarer leads the ♠A, ♠K and ♠J; partner plays the ♠8-3, then the ♥8. What is your plan?

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

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

| West     | North | East                            | South |
|----------|-------|---------------------------------|-------|
| 1NT      | Pass  | 2♦ <sup>1</sup>                 | 2♠    |
| Pass     | 3♠    | Pass                            | 4♠    |
| All Pass |       | <sup>1</sup> Transfer to hearts |       |

Partner leads the ♦A-K-7. You discard the ♥7 and then ruff. Declarer overruffs and runs all his trumps, partner playing the ♠8-J, then a heart. What is your strategy?

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

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

| West     | North | East | South              |
|----------|-------|------|--------------------|
|          |       | 1♠   | 1NT <sup>1</sup>   |
| Pass     | 2NT   | Pass | 3NT                |
| All Pass |       |      | <sup>1</sup> 15-18 |

Partner leads the ♠8: ♠3, ♠10, ♠A. Declarer leads the ♠A-K-Q, partner playing the ♠2-7-J. What is your discarding plan?





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# Answers to Julian Pottage's Defence Quiz on page 29

1.

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

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

| West     | North | East | South |
|----------|-------|------|-------|
|          |       |      | 1♦    |
| Pass     | 1♠    | Pass | 3♦    |
| Pass     | 3♠    | Pass | 3NT   |
| All Pass |       |      |       |

Partner leads the ♣6. You win and return the ♣3. West wins with the ♣K and leads the ♣2 to South's ♣Q. Declarer runs the diamonds. Partner plays the ♦7-2, then the ♥7-2. What is your plan?

Declarer must have started with six diamonds (West followed twice). As well as the discard on the third club, you must find three more. From the spades you can see in dummy and your hand, you know that partner cannot help much in the suit. You can discard one spade for sure and, if dummy discards two spades (or you are sure partner holds the ♠Q), a second. Your other discards should be hearts.

2.

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

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

| West                            | North | East            | South |
|---------------------------------|-------|-----------------|-------|
| 1NT                             | Pass  | 2♦ <sup>1</sup> | 2♠    |
| Pass                            | 3♠    | Pass            | 4♠    |
| All Pass                        |       |                 |       |
| <sup>1</sup> Transfer to hearts |       |                 |       |

Partner leads the ♦A, ♦K and ♦7. You discard the ♥7 and then ruff. Declarer overruffs and runs all his trumps, partner playing the ♠8-J, then a heart. What is your strategy?

Since partner followed to two rounds of trumps, declarer must have started with six. This means you need to find four discards – I know it sounds a lot.

Only partner can keep diamonds. How do you know what to keep? Declarer's line of play provides a massive clue. It would have been very easy to ruff a losing heart in dummy. This did not happen because declarer has a doubleton heart in each hand. You can thus discard hearts and keep at least three clubs.

3.

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

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

| West                 | North           | East     | South            |
|----------------------|-----------------|----------|------------------|
|                      |                 |          | 2NT <sup>1</sup> |
| Pass                 | 3♠ <sup>2</sup> | Pass     | 3♠               |
| Pass                 | 3NT             | All Pass |                  |
| <sup>1</sup> 20-22   |                 |          |                  |
| <sup>2</sup> Stayman |                 |          |                  |

Partner leads the ♦6: ♦J, ♦Q and ♦K. Declarer leads the ♠A, ♠K and ♠J; partner plays the ♠8-3, then the ♥8. What is your plan?

If the ♦6 was fourth highest, you can

tell that the ♦K was the only diamond declarer had higher – you could see the ♦Q-J-9-7. This means that the suit is ready to run.

Two other clues come from South's 3♠ bid and partner's ♥8 discard. The former warns you of four spades on your left while the latter suggests that partner holds the ♥A. This being the case, you must not part with any spades, because to hold 20 points without either red ace declarer must hold ♠A-K-Q-x. You discard diamonds and maybe one heart.

4.

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

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

| West               | North | East | South            |
|--------------------|-------|------|------------------|
|                    |       | 1♠   | 1NT <sup>1</sup> |
| Pass               | 2NT   | Pass | 3NT              |
| All Pass           |       |      |                  |
| <sup>1</sup> 15-18 |       |      |                  |

Partner leads the ♠8: ♠3, ♠10 and ♠A. Declarer leads the ♠A-K-Q, partner playing the ♠2-7-J. What is your discarding plan?

Counting points should help again. You have seen the ♠A-K-Q and the ♠A on your left. To hold 17 points, declarer must hold the ♥A but not the ♦Q. Declarer is going to cash whatever winners are available (including four hearts if he has ♥A-10-x-x, three on most layouts) and then exit with a diamond. You must make sure you do not leave yourself with ♦A-K alone and have to lead round to the ♠Q. Either discard only one diamond or save a high diamond and a low one.

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## Sally's Slam of the Month

# Grand Slams

One of the reasons people tell you that you need very good odds before bidding a grand slam at teams is that it is possible that your opponents in the other room won't bid the small slam. In the recent European Championships in Budapest, there were two such deals involving our team, one of which worked in our favour and one against us.

to the grand slam ... and misguessed diamonds to go one down.

♣♦♥♠

The second deal was against Scotland.

Dealer North. N/S Game.

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

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

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

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

Dealer South. Love All.

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

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

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

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

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

North would have done better to make a bid that showed club support on the first round – an 'inverted minor' 2♣ (forcing with clubs), if available, or 3NT (13–15 balanced with four clubs). As it was, the 1♠ bid was a transfer response and could have been on a number of different hand types without a four-card major. When South bid on over 3NT, North was afraid that any forward-going noise would have been taken as a cue-bid agreeing diamonds, and so settled for a preference to 5♣.

Never mind, in the other room, our Greek opponents bid all the way

Here, our Scottish opponents, extremely feebly, stopped in 4♠. However, our teammates, Heather Dhondy and Nevena Senior had an excellent auction to the good grand slam:

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
|      |       |      | 1♠    |
|      | 1♦    | Pass |       |
| Pass | 2♠    | Pass | 3♣    |
| Pass | 3♦    | Pass | 3♥    |
| Pass | 4♦    | Pass | 4NT   |
| Pass | 5♦    | Pass | 5♥    |
| Pass | 6♦    | Pass | 7♠    |

North's 2♠ raise showed four-card support and South's 3♣ was a natural slam try. North responded by bidding her diamonds twice more. After the RKC response of 5♦, 5♥ asked for the queen of trumps, and 6♦ promised that card, along with the ♦Q (as the ♦A and ♦K had already been shown).

The operation was successful but the patient died when the 4-1 diamond break left declarer a trick short. ■

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





# Can I Change My Bid?

**Q** On a recent bridge holiday, my partner opened 2NT. With eight points, I thought that even with 22 points opposite it was not enough for a slam, so I was ready to bid 3NT. My RHO asked the point count of 2NT, I said 20-22 and she then passed. For reasons known only to the Bridge Gods, I took out my pass card which was rapidly returned to the bidding box and followed by 3NT. I apologised to my opponents and said, 'Do you want to call the director?' They both said, 'No, we can see it is a genuine mistake.' Before my LHO could put his pass card down, the director, having heard 'director' mentioned, asked if she could help. I told her what had happened and both opponents said they were OK with it, but she got her book out and ruled that the 3NT bid should go back into the box and be replaced with a pass card. I realise now that I should have said, 'We are all fine, thanks.'

**Was this the correct ruling and should the director have butted in like that?**

Gail Davis,  
Haverfordwest, Pembro.

**A** It sounds as if the ruling was wrong. You intended to bid 3NT, pulled out the wrong card, and attempted to change it immediately. The law says the change is permitted. While a director can judge you did not intend to bid 3NT, or that you did not attempt to change your pass immediately, the evidence here is strong that the director is wrong. If the opponents thought it was a genuine mistake, why didn't the director?

Incidentally, I do not approve of directors listening to conversations and offering themselves. While it is legal to deal with anything they become aware of, good director practice is not to get involved unless specifically requested, except where bad behaviour is concerned.



**Q** In the June edition of BRIDGE, you

**reply to a query from Ray Andrews, by saying that his card inadvertently played must nevertheless be played. Law 45C4B says that it may be changed as long as there is no pause for thought. It looks as if this was just such a case. Can you advise me when it is appropriate to apply 45C4B?**

Nick Mayfield by email.

**A** Law 45C4B only applies to cards designated, ie spoken, which means cards played from dummy (except in amazingly rare cases). A card played by a defender is not designated so may not be changed even if inadvertent.



**Q** West is dealer. South passes out of turn, East immediately bids 1♥, South promptly passes again. How should I rule?

Pearl Evans by email.

**A** The law book is not very good on multiple irregularities, and we generally take them

one by one. If it makes any sense then we take them in the order they occur, but we do not have to.

In this case, consider South's first pass out of turn. The law book says that any call out of turn may be accepted by the player to the left of the call, so West is given the chance to accept it. Let us suppose he does. Then East's 1♥ is out of turn, condoned by South's second pass, and the bidding progresses from there. All the calls have been legalised so there is no penalty.

Now suppose West does not accept the first pass by South. The law says it is cancelled and South must pass at his first turn to call. That means now we go to East's 1♥, which is out of turn. South's pass condones this, and since he was required to pass at his first opportunity and has done so we have no problem there.

So either way, we have now reached the position of a legal auction with East opening 1♥, South passing, and it is West's turn to call, with no penalties. The only difference is that in the first case South's first pass is also part of the legal auction, ►

in the second case it is not, but there seems no effective difference whatever.

While the approach of dealing with them one at a time seems to have come to a very simple and consistent conclusion, that is coincidental. Usually, it would be much more complicated.



**Q The contract is 4♠ by North. Declarer wins the third trick in hand and after a short pause calls for a low heart from dummy. Dummy immediately tells declarer that he is in his hand. North apologises and promptly leads a trump from his hand. This all happens within a few seconds, before West has had a chance to accept or reject dummy's heart lead out of turn – West thinks he has this right. West, apparently still considering the best defence, asks East not to play to declarer's trump before he decides whether to accept dummy's heart lead. North calls the director, surprised by West's request.**

**My questions are: Is any player allowed to ask his partner not to play at any time in an attempt to protect his side?**

**Is West correct in thinking he can accept/reject the attempted (heart) lead from dummy at any time up to the point when East plays a card?**

**How do you prevent North using UI, if it later becomes apparent that West has a decision to make?**

**Could the players have**

**done anything after the attempted heart lead from dummy to avoid this situation? Perhaps West should immediately call the director, but this is a relatively common faux pas by declarer. What's the correct ruling in this situation?**

Chris Catchpole,  
Normandy Bridge Club.

**A** Whilst a lot of players do it, I should point out that dummy has no right to tell declarer he has led from the wrong hand and should not do so. Certainly, he has the right to warn him before he does it, but once he has called for a card, that card must be played and it is too late for dummy to do anything about it. The declarer then has no right to play from his hand after dummy has illegally pointed out the lead out of turn. As far as he is concerned, the lead from dummy stands until the director says otherwise. So at this point declarer has broken the laws twice and dummy once.

Certainly, a player can freeze play at any time to summon the director, which is what technically should happen. It is a very minor matter that he froze play and did not call the director: after all, attention has been drawn to the irregularity so all four players are required to call the director. Anyway, there is certainly no problem whatever with a player stopping play after an irregularity.

West can accept or reject the lead out of turn, and the director, if summoned, will offer that right. However, if either defender decides and says so then he has decided for the partnership.

I am not convinced that

there is any unauthorised information. If players followed the rules, these problems would not occur, and we have several infractions here. I do wonder what players think the director is for. If anyone had seen fit to call the director immediately dummy illegally pointed out the irregularity, then West would have had plenty of time to decide what to do while the director was coming and speaking.

As for what the players could do to avoid the problems, calling the director would seem to solve them all.



**Q On a recent hand, East opened 2NT, announced by partner as 20-22 points. South passed. West bid 2♦. Is this one of the occasions where West can correct to 3♦ (Law 27.1(b))?**

**Could you tell me of any other situations where this law might apply as it is a grey area to me.**

Robert Johnston, Halifax BC.

**A** Yes, it is suitable. Any time the insufficient bidder corrects his call, and there is no more information given by the insufficient bid, then it is a legal change.

Suppose the bidding goes 1♣-(1♠)-1♥. The player tells the director away from the table that he did not see the 1♠ bid so was just responding 1♥ to 1♣. Now, if they play a Sputnik double as 5+ points and 4+ hearts, then he can change it to a double without penalty because the original insufficient bid has not shown any extra information than the changed call has.

Now suppose double

shows 5+ hearts and 7 to 9 points. Can he double? Yes, because this bid is more specific, so there is no extra information given by the original 1♥ bid.

How about a general take-out double, promising nothing? No, because the original insufficient bid of 1♥ showed some extra information, namely that he had four or more hearts.



**Q When declarer says to dummy, 'Any card,'**  
**1. Can the declarer change their mind?**  
**2. Can the defenders choose?**

Ron Turner, Alton BC.

**A** No, the declarer may not change his mind. It is similar to him saying, 'Spade ace,' and then changing his mind: he is stuck with what he said. Either defender may nominate which card is to be played from dummy.

However, a part of this law, often forgotten, is that it includes 'except when declarer's different intention is incontrovertible' which applies, and it is the director's job to decide whether his intention is clear. For example, if dummy in no-trumps has five small cards left, none of which can win a trick and the ♦A, the director might accept he meant any one of the five small cards, but not the ace.



**Q Can a penalty be imposed for a revoke when discovered after the play is finished and the hand scored?**

Sue Hager by email.

**A** At rubber bridge, there is no penalty imposed once the hand is finished. At duplicate, there is a slightly longer time period: if the revoke is realised before the non-offending side call on the next hand, or before the round ends, then penalties are in time: after that, they are not.

In either case, a player should not gain from a revoke: if the revoke actually cost the non-offenders tricks, those should be transferred, either by the director at duplicate or by agreement between the players at rubber. This is called restoring equity, and can be done any time up until the end of the correction period in duplicate, or until the rubber score is agreed at rubber.



**Q Can an arrow-switch be used with an odd number of pairs? I recently directed a game when I needed one winner, we had six and half tables and the pair who came last complained that the arrow-switch made it unfair. Is this correct? Incidentally they scored 41% so would have been bottom however it was scored.**  
Pam McRobbie, Preston.

**A** An arrow-switch can be used with an odd number of pairs and is perfectly fair. The pair that complained will have compared their score not just with other pairs sitting their way, but also with one pair sitting in the other direction on every board they played. The arrow-switch works for every pair on every board.

**Q Regarding the first question on p16 of July BRIDGE, I was faced with this many years ago and the answer I have abided by ever since, is that if you recognise you have taken a long time, you must bid. Then there is no problem.**  
Philip Mucklow, Duffield, Derbys.

**A** This works in some situations no doubt. However, it has grave flaws. On some occasions, you will realise that to bid is definitely wrong and then it seems a bad idea to bid. On other occasions, the fact you have doubt is enough to cause partner problems. Suppose you are wondering whether to protect or not after (1NT)-Pass-(Pass)-?. If after consideration you bid, your partner will have a good idea you are minimum which may cause him problems. On the other hand, if you pass, the auction is over and partner will have no problem in the bidding. Of course, he will probably realise you have a borderline bid/pass during the defence, but one look at dummy's point count will probably tell him that anyway.

There are times when you need to think and then take whatever action you believe to be correct. You just have to trust partner to follow the laws and take no advantage from your thought.



**Q We are a small bridge club of 51 years and often play a Howell movement of 21 boards. Is it possible to buy a program that can score this? Our manual**

**scorer has recently died and no one can score the boards.**  
Penny Wurzel, Holly Walk BC, Enfield.

**A** One of the best scoring programs has been developed by Jeff Smith. They do take a little getting used to, but once you have got the hang of them they will do very well. Unfortunately, they are no longer free unless you are an EBU affiliated club. If you write to Ian Mitchell (ian@ebu.co.uk) he will help you.



**Q Here is a problem that I would like an answer to, please.**

| West             | North | East            | South |
|------------------|-------|-----------------|-------|
| 1NT <sup>1</sup> | Pass  | 2♥ <sup>2</sup> | 3♦    |
| Pass             | Pass  | 4♥              |       |

<sup>1</sup>12-14

<sup>2</sup>West said spades, playing transfers. At the same time, East intimates not transfers by tapping her bid and generally indicating that it showed hearts.

**At this point in the bidding, South called the director. He declared that a mistake was made and there was no penalty.**

**What would your ruling have been?**  
Tony Mortimer by email.

**A** The first thing is to give West a short lecture on his ethical obligations when partner has misunderstood a call. The actual ruling depends on West's hand: if he prefers hearts then the result stands, but if he has equal length or

prefers spades then I adjust on the basis that West would have bid 4♠. This might lead to various results such as 4♠ or 5♥ going off.



**Q I was TD last evening at my club and one of the tables had just put dummy down on the table when everyone else had finished. I asked them to take an average. Was I correct?**  
Beryl Pattinson, Castley, Leeds.

**A** It is not legal to stop a board part way through. It is not legal to give an average without finding fault: if one side is at fault then they get average minus and the other side average plus in situations where an average is legal, unlike here.

It is incredibly unfair on anyone who has got a good result during the bidding to have it taken away from them like this. It also seems unnecessary: why not just move the room and let them catch up? The normal way to run a duplicate is to move the room when just under one third of the tables are still playing. If a table has not started a board, then you can give averages but you have to check to find out who is at fault. This means that they have not played part of a board and know what sort of result they might get. If you do this, you will rarely get problems. If one particular pair is consistently behind, then give them a 10% of a top penalty to encourage them to play more quickly. ■

**E-mail your questions (including your postal address) on bridge laws to: davidstevenson@mrbridge.co.uk**



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# A New for Douk

**I** don't like playing no-trump contracts,' is a common cry from beginners – and even from some who have been playing for years. They even admit to avoiding bidding no-trumps for that reason which, of course, means that they don't get any better. In fact, playing a no-trump contract is actually easier than a suit contract because all the no-trump skills can be used in suit contracts – though not the other way round as the trump suit adds another dimension.

There are six basic techniques for playing in no-trumps. These are:

- suit establishment
- unblocking
- overtaking
- preserving entries
- ducking
- the hold up

I cover these topics over several lessons and anyone who grasps these skills will never fear playing in no-trumps again.

In my previous articles on declarer play, I demonstrated my flash cards and wallet pairs where the students worked in twos, getting much more practice than playing in fours. When teaching no-trumps, however, I use normal play with wallets after a short spoken lesson. There is no bidding, the contract is specified (usually 3NT), South is always declarer and they take turns to be South.

These wallets don't include finessing as that over-complicates the issue, so finessing is taught separately.

There is no need for a 'human' dummy so they practise in tables of three where possible. This means their

turn to be declarer comes round more often. Declarer plays dummy's cards and a defender turns them over after each trick. Both declarer's and dummy's cards are stacked from declarer's left to right so that the play can be more easily reviewed if required, see below.

Now comes the radical bit – declarer and dummy's hands are face up on the table during the play. Although there are two dummies, it's not 'double dummy play' as the word is normally used – for the defenders' hands are hidden. From declarer's point of view, it makes no difference, he sees only two hands as would be the case in a game. Defenders, however, see three hands so can 'work out' the fourth; for them it's true 'double dummy' defence.

There are three reasons for this seemingly bizarre method of play:

1. It's essential that declarer receives the best defence; otherwise an incorrectly played contract might make.
2. The exercise is not to teach defence; the defenders are merely making up the numbers at the table. By seeing both hands, the defenders can be thinking how they would have played the contract, but say nothing at the time. So they learn even when it's not their turn and are better able to discuss the hand afterwards.
3. The teacher can observe the play at any table without having to stand behind declarer.

The contract is played to the point of no return – play stops when the contract is made or defeated. The players then

# Meaning le Dummy

have their own post-mortem and play the hand again if they feel it would help.

Each wallet has a booklet with the contract and lead on the outside and the answer inside as shown. The suit to be established is called the 'work suit' and I use the mnemonic WISH (**W**in **I**n **S**hort **H**and) to prevent blocking it.

If the contract fails but no-one knows why, the cards are left in order of play and turned over giving a visual record of the card play – and the teacher can show them easily where they went wrong. Hence a written record of card play is not needed.

I put the tables in a circle; at each table the 'true dummy' is nearest the middle of the room and all declarers have their backs to the wall.

The wallets circulate anti-clockwise and each table has an 'IN' and 'OUT' card and they note the wallet number. They swap seats after every wallet to take turns as declarer.

When explaining a hand, the teacher sits in the vacant chair which

is less intimidating than standing over the players. These hands, though, are really self teaching, so one teacher can cope with quite a large number of tables.

Each lesson has at least nine hands with duplicates and they play three each. Some

have grasped the topic after the spoken lesson and whizz through the wallets, others are just starting to get the hang of it when time is up. Hence it's essential that the slower students go over the hands at home from the printouts, preferably playing them out with cards or on a computer.

'Play only' wallets are hard work for the students and 45 minutes is long

enough, so they are glad to have their tea break – after which it's computer dealt random hands with post-mortems.

I have designed 100 hands in booklet form on basic no-trump declarer play (like the one shown). If you would like a free PDF and/or Publisher copy with associated lesson notes, then email [ildalziel@talktalk.net](mailto:ildalziel@talktalk.net)

|   |   |                                   |                                   |
|---|---|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| J1.   |   | ♠ JTxxx<br>♥ xxx<br>♦ xx<br>♣ Axx | ♠ A987<br>♥ xx<br>♦ xxx<br>♣ QJT9 |
| ♠ x<br>♥ QJT9<br>♦ KQJT9<br>♣ xxx   | N<br>W S E<br>♠ KQx<br>♥ AKxx<br>♦ Axx<br>♣ Kxx |                                   |                                   |
| S to make 3NT, KD led   |   |                                   |                                   |
| <b>Play.</b> You should <b>hold up</b> ♦A till the third round of the suit. Then establish spades playing ♠K, ♠Q first. <b>Win In Short Hand.</b>                                 |   |                                   |                                   |
| <b>Short suits:-</b> 5 tricks (♥AK, ♦A, ♠AK).<br><b>Work suit:</b> Spades will provide 4 tricks.  |   |                                   |                                   |
| <b>Danger suit</b> is diamonds. When opponents get with ♠A (in the work suit) they might cash enough diamonds to defeat the contract.   |   |                                   |                                   |
| <b>Why.</b> Holding up ♦A till third round means East will have no diamond left (if diamonds are 5-3). You hope East has ♠A and when he gets in with it has no diamond to return. |   |                                   |                                   |

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# Patrick J

1 November 1942

*Ever the professional journalist, Patrick ensured that the media were suitably prepared that his phrase 'the bridge journalist's journalist' was particularly fitting. An editor*

Patrick Jourdain, who was born on 1st November 1942, was bridge correspondent of the Daily Telegraph from 1992 and Wales' most-capped bridge player with more than seventy appearances over six decades for the Principality in the Home Internationals.

Jourdain was the bridge-journalist's journalist. The International Bridge Press Association is a club of the world's leading bridge columnists and journalists. For twenty years, from 1982, Jourdain was editor of its monthly bulletin which acted as the source of many of the world's bridge columns, read by many millions of players. In 2003 he was elected IBPA's President.

Jourdain was born to a middle-class family in Woking, Surrey. His father, a vicar's son, was a patent officer who later rose to become Assistant Secretary in the Treasury. His mother was the daughter of a radiologist, one of the first with a practice outside London. Jourdain was educated at St. Edward's School, Oxford where he founded the school bridge club in his last year at school. He won a scholarship to Peterhouse, Cambridge where, in theory, he read Physics and Natural Sciences whilst actually spending much of his time playing bridge. He was Secretary of the University Bridge Club and played in the 1964 Varsity match.

His first job after graduation was in Operational Research for the GKN Steel Company in Cardiff, which was nationalised shortly after he joined

it. In 1965, on the morning the trials for the Welsh Bridge team were due to start, a player was taken ill. Jourdain was called in as a substitute, and after a few minutes preparation with his new partner, Roy Griffin of Swansea, the pair went on to win the trials. The Selectors had promised the winners a match and so Wales fielded its youngest ever-player at the age

bridge match between Scotland and Wales now bears his name.

In 1976 Jourdain had won the Gold Cup, the British knockout Championships, and was already earning money as a writer and teacher of bridge. He took the major decision to switch to bridge full time, something that came as a surprise to British Steel who had him on a high-flier list for senior management.

Jourdain returned to Cardiff in 1977 as manager of the main bridge club in Cardiff and bridge correspondent of the *Western Mail*. He also became the bridge journalist for Channel 4's teletext section on bridge. After re-qualifying for Wales by residence, he became the squad's most frequent member. From 1982 when he became Editor of the Press Association he also understudied GCH Fox, bridge correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*, reporting for the newspaper from each World and European Championship.

When 'Foxy' retired from the post of correspondent in 1992, retaining the post of columnist, Jourdain became the correspondent, reporting bridge news. On the rare occasion bridge made the front page it was mostly scandal. When a quirky story, about a computer coming fifth in a field of the world's top bridge players in solving bridge problems, made the front page, Jourdain was exhilarated. 'Today,' he told a friend, 'my words have been read by more people than saw Shakespeare when he was alive!' 'Ah,' his friend



of 23 in the match against Northern Ireland in Belfast in early 1966. For six consecutive decades Jourdain was a regular feature on Welsh teams.

In 1973 Jourdain was promoted by British Steel to run a team in Glasgow designing computer systems for the nationalised company. In bridge two years' residence of a country qualifies you to represent it, and Jourdain played two matches for Scotland in 1977 helping Scotland win the Home Internationals for the Camrose Trophy. The trophy for the annual



# Jourdain

2 — 28 July 2016

ed, and wrote his own obituary shortly before his death - further evidence (if needed)  
ted version of this obituary appeared in the Daily Telegraph on 30th July 2016.

replied, 'but how many of them will remember your words two hundred years after you are dead?'

In 1999, Jourdain was the key person in the exposure of a Welsh international bridge player as a cheat. In such cases, allegations are frequent, convictions rare, but once Jourdain realised what was happening he spent months gathering evidence. At the denouement at a Welsh National Championship independent witnesses observed the player exchanging shuffled packs for prepared decks where he knew every card. At the subsequent Laws & Ethics Hearing, faced with the irrefutable evidence, the player confessed and was suspended for ten years. The story made the front page of the *Daily Telegraph* and was picked up by the media throughout the world.

At the 2002 World Championships in Montreal, Jourdain competed against Bill Gates. At the Press Awards, Jourdain was declared Bridge Personality of the Year. As a journalist there, he achieved a world scoop. At the time bridge was trying to get into the Olympic Games and had taken up the same drug-testing procedures. On the grapevine he heard a player

had refused a drugs test but no name had been released. At the prize-giving banquet he noticed that when the American women's team went up to get their medals a player was missing. He located the missing player and she told her story of being stripped of her medal for refusing to take the drugs test, asking him to make her treatment

In 2010, Jourdain was organiser of the Buffett Cup bridge match between Europe and the USA that preceded the Ryder Cup golf match between the two. Two of the finest bridge teams ever to compete in Britain saw a win for the USA.

In 2014, Jourdain was on the team that won the first Welsh Premier League.

The team represented Wales in the Commonwealth Nations Bridge Championship and won the gold medal. The same team was selected for the 2015 Camrose Home Internationals, finishing a narrow second to the Republic of Ireland. This was Jourdain's first Camrose season for ten years.

Jourdain was co-author with Terence Reese of *Squeeze Play* (1980) and

on his own wrote *Play the Game Bridge* (1990), *The Daily Telegraph Easy Guide to Acol Bridge* (2005) and *Patrick Jourdain's Problem Corner* (2009).

At the Cardiff School of Bridge where he was Principal, he taught more than a thousand people to play bridge.

Jourdain was a social golfer and tennis player. He never married. He is survived by his two older sisters, Jennifer and Susan. ■



public. The story made the front page of the *Telegraph* and was picked up from there by the BBC World News, the main American press and television stations who interviewed the player on prime time television. The following year in Menton for the European Open, she spotted Jourdain and came rushing over. 'When I told you to make my treatment public,' she said, 'I did not expect the whole world to know!'



# Why play Low-Level Doubles for Take-Out?

In the modern world of duplicate bridge, more and more doubles ask partner to bid rather than to pass. Why is this?

1. At a low level, it is rare that you can collect a big penalty. Even if a penalty is available, you may have a better score your way in your own contract.
2. You are more likely to hold a hand short in the opposing suit than a hand long in it. Take-out doubles thus occur more frequently.
3. Some hands are impossible to bid without a take-out double as an option.
4. Some low-level bids by the opponents are forcing. It is pointless making a penalty double of a bid that will not end the auction anyway; it is much better, if you do have a good defensive hand, to let the opponents go higher.
5. When playing take-out doubles, you can still collect a penalty if the doubler's partner has the trumps and converts the double to penalties by passing.
6. Low-level contracts are often easier to play than to defend.

Let us study some example hands and appropriate actions.

**Example 1**

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

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

You cannot bid 2♠ with a weak five-card suit; you cannot bid 2NT with no heart stopper; you cannot bid 3♣ with a doubleton.

What else can you do but double?

**Example 2**

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

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| ?    | 1♦    | 1♥   | 2♣    |

With 11 HCP, your hand is too good to pass. You cannot raise with a doubleton; nor do you want to bid a mouldy five-card spade suit.

A competitive double fits the bill. It would be illogical for a double of the forcing 2♣ to be for penalties anyway.

**Example 3**

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

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| ?    |       | 1NT  | 2♦    |

Historically, because partner has opened 1NT, this would have been a penalty double situation. You are much more likely, however, to have a hand like this where you want to compete but have no suitable bid to make. If played for take-out, double is perfect.

**Example 4**

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

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| Dbl  | Pass  | Pass | 1NT   |
| ?    |       |      | 2♣    |

Your initial double of the 1NT opening was for penalties. The first subsequent double by your side can be for take-out. Assuming that the opponents run to a suit in which they hold length, one or other of your side will be relatively short in the suit. Whoever that is can make a take-out double. If, by contrast, you play the second double as for penalty, you might both be unable to act. Partner does of course have the option, with length in the opposing suit, to convert the double into a penalty double by passing – indeed you will quite often collect a penalty this way.

**Example 5**

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

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| ?    |       | 1♥   | 2♦    |

What call can you make apart from a take-out (negative) double? 2♠ shows five spades; 2NT shows better diamonds; raising hearts is unthinkable; 3♣, being a new suit at the three level, may propel the auction too high.



# The Gambling 3NT

One of the things noticeable in modern bidding is how often no-trump bids are given artificial meanings. The unusual no-trump is an example as is the Jacoby 2NT. In the world of opening bids, 3NT has long been abandoned as showing some enormous balanced hand. This is not only on the grounds of infrequency, but also because these hand types can be better investigated starting with a 2♣ opening bid. A common way, therefore, to use a 3NT opening is to show a hand with a solid minor but not much outside. A typical hand for it might be:

♠ 6  
♥ 7 5  
♦ AKQJ954  
♣ J62



You will never have fewer than seven cards in the minor and you won't have an outside ace or king. If partner is a passed hand then you might choose to muddy the waters a bit but in first or second position, you should be strict in the requirements to help partner to judge the hand.

## Responding to a 3NT Opening

If partner opens 3NT and the next hand passes you should respond as follows:

- Pass You hope to make 3NT  
4♣ Asks partner to pass with clubs or correct to 4♦  
4♦ An enquiry: See below  
4♥/♠ Natural and to play (at least a six card suit)  
5♣ Pass or correct to 5♦  
5♦ Pass or correct to 6♣

If you have a hand where the defence are unlikely to be able to cash too many tricks then you might choose to pass.

An example hand might be:

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



With seven tricks in a minor and a couple of aces you will make 3NT, almost for certain, and even if you removed an ace and made it a king, you would still have a reasonable chance of making it.

Quite a lot of the time you will want to remove the partnership from 3NT because there is a risk you will go a lot down. It is not a pleasure for the fourth hand to have to deal with the auction: 3NT-Pass-4♣. Later on in this article, I'll suggest how you might defend a 3NT opening.

If you were to bid 4♥ or 4♠ over 3NT then this would be because you think you are more likely to make this.

A typical hand for a 4♠ bid might be:



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

You might not make 4♠ but almost certainly you will go lots off in 3NT and 5♣ is not very likely to make.

## The 4♦ Response

That leaves 4♦ as a response. It is usual to play this as asking for a singleton (or void).

The responses to 4♦ are:

- 4♥/♠ Singleton or void in that suit  
4NT No singleton or void  
5♣ Singleton or void diamond  
5♦ Singleton or void club

At this point, you might be wondering why you bid 5♣ with a singleton diamond.

This can be seen by considering the following 3NT opener:

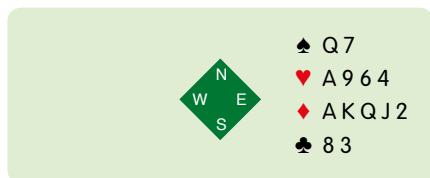
♠ 8 5 3  
♥ 10 3  
♦ 7  
♣ A K Q J 10 9 6



| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 3NT  | Pass  | 4♦   | Pass  |
| ?    |       |      |       |



You should bid 5♣ to show your singleton diamond. If you were to bid 5♦ and partner was intending to bid a slam if you had a singleton spade and otherwise settle for game in clubs, he would not now be in a great position. He might hold something like:



Of course, a gambling 3NT opposite a slam try is quite rare so don't make things too complicated because the hand won't happen that often. I once sat with teammates on a train journey from Newcastle to York and they discussed continuations after this start for all 73 miles of the journey. When they (very occasionally) drew breath, I offered thanks that it was an inter-city not a stopping journey.

## Responding after Intervention

First, if you have a convention then it is wise to be able to cope if the opponents interfere and secondly, you want to be able to penalise them if it is the right thing to do.

If they bid a suit, then double by partner is for Penalties with a capital P. A standard rule if you pre-empt is that double of one of their bids is for penalties and it is no different here. If you open 3NT, the next hand bids 4♥ and partner doubles and you then bid 5♣ because you have ♣A-K-Q-J-x-x and nothing else, then shooting is too good for you. You have shown your hand, don't show it again or you may need a new partner.

If they double 3NT, then bidding is as follows: a bid of a minor asks partner to pass or bid his minor at the lowest available level and a bid of a major is natural and to play.

That leaves redouble. This shows a good hand and means that: a) you have good chances of making it and b) if they remove the redouble then doubles by your side will be for penalties.

Here is my partner's hand from a

recent match where I opened 3NT. We won by fewer than 10 IMPs and this hand was worth 18 of them.



My partner bid a disciplined 4♣. At the other table they responded 4♥ to the same opening. Our reward came when the bidding continued:

| West              | North | East            | South    |
|-------------------|-------|-----------------|----------|
| 3NT               | Pass  | 4♣              | Pass     |
| Pass <sup>1</sup> | 4♠    | Db <sup>2</sup> | All Pass |

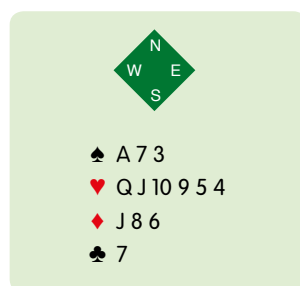
<sup>1</sup>Showing solid clubs.      <sup>2</sup>Oh, happy days.

The hand that bid 4♠ had five spades and five diamonds and hoped for a fit. The end result was an 800 penalty. They might have escaped slightly cheaper in 5♦ but it was very hard to get there.

At the other table, the hand that responded with 4♥ to the 3NT opening was doubled so he tried 4♠ which was also doubled. His partner put him back to 5♥ (with no spades and three hearts) and the end result was an 1,100 penalty and 18 IMPs to the good guys. Well done partner.

## Defending against 3NT

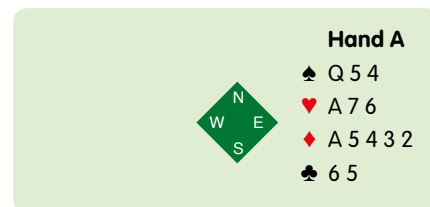
The first pillar of defence is leading. If the auction goes: 3NT-All Pass, then it is not the same as leading against a 3NT contract bid in a slower way. You know a lot more about the opening bidder's hand. Suppose you hold:



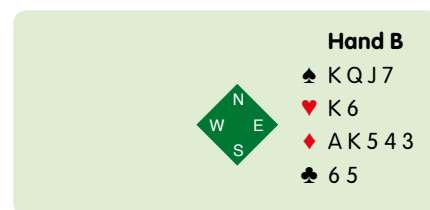
If your opponents had bid 3NT via a slow route you would likely lead the

♥Q, but here, you need to be aware that declarer will take at least seven tricks in a minor when he gets in, so it is quite usual to lead an ace to get an idea of what the successful defence might be.

If you lead the ♠A from the hand above, then dummy might be either of the following hands



If you lead the ♥Q, then declarer will take two aces and seven or eight clubs. If you lead the ♠A, then you may be able to take five spade tricks before declarer gets in. On another day, dummy might have:



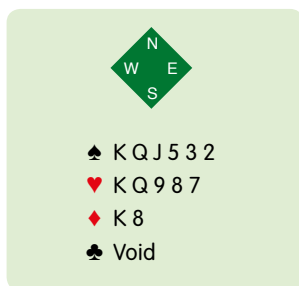
After the ♠A lead, you can switch at trick two to the ♥Q and hope to take six hearts as well as the ♠A. In short, the ace lead gives you more flexibility to find the right defence.

Sometimes, you will want to bid over 3NT. I suggest:

- Db<sup>1</sup> High cards and a hope of beating the contract or taking a penalty if they escape
- 4 ♣/♦ See below
- 4 ♥/♠ Natural and to play

You can, of course, play 4♣/♦ as natural and non-forcing but the most likely thing you want to do if you can't defend and beat their contract, is to bid four of a major. Quite often, if you have a single suited minor you can double and then bid it or perhaps jump to the five level.

So, a use for 4♣/♦ is to show both majors. 4♣ shows better hearts and 4♦ shows better spades. If you hold the following:



then the lack of aces should deter you from doubling. The wrong lead could be disastrous. Imagine leading a spade against 3NT doubled and seeing the opponents take eight clubs and the ♠A, when you can cash around ten tricks in the red suits and also make a game your way.

Instead, you can bid 4♦ to show the majors with better spades. You wouldn't want to have to bid 4♠ and find partner with one spade and four hearts. The other merit of this is that partner may know better what to do if the opponents seek to save by bidding five of their minor. ■

## Summary

- **A 3NT opening makes the opponents' life difficult. Don't make your partner's life difficult too, by having an unsuitable hand.**
- **Responses are mostly natural, but 4♦ can be used as a singleton enquiry to aid slam bidding.**
- **If you are on lead against a gambling 3NT consider leading an ace to gauge the best defence after trick one.**
- **Consider how you bid after an opponent opens 3NT. It is rare but you don't want to have a misunderstanding when it does happen.**

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## Topics

### MORE SIGNALLING

I will be looking at different times when you signal and the messages you might want to give. Using signals in new ways can greatly improve your enjoyment of defence as well as pushing up your scores.

### 4-4-4-1 HANDS

Everybody's least favourite type of opening hand. I will be going through the methods for choosing the right suit to open as well as coping with responses. As responder you need to be aware of the options and work out your partner's type of hand. Strong 4-4-4-1 hands can be just as difficult and will be dealt with too.

### DRAWING TRUMPS

This seminar sounds straightforward, but we will not be simply drawing trumps, we will be considering the reasons for delaying. Keeping control of trumps is an important part of declarer play. Knowing when to risk leaving trumps out and when not.

### FIVE-CARD MAJORS

Popular around the world, this method is becoming more popular here. It is not a method I would advocate for club players, however it is important to understand the method as you will need to defend against it.

### FUNDAMENTALS OF DEFENCE

Defence is by far the hardest aspect of bridge: this seminar seeks to show the building blocks that can start you off on a wonderful journey. If you can get the basics right then the more complicated aspects of defence can follow.

### SUPPORTING MINORS

Minors are not as important as majors, but we have to bid them and it is important to know your system. Bidding more 3NT contracts will get you better scores, but being able to spot a minor suit slam will put you a cut above.

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<sup>1</sup>Subject to availability <sup>2</sup>Filmed <sup>3</sup>Not with Bernard Magee



# Combining Your Chances

A good approach to declarer play involves making a plan at the start of play, then making the necessary changes as more information comes to light.

When you are declarer you can't make every contract and guess every suit, all you can do is go with the odds and be right most of the time. If the cards lie in unfortunate fashion then you will go down, but at least you'll have had the satisfaction of knowing you have played the hand correctly.

Take this simple hand, 3NT by South on a spade lead.

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

N  
 W E  
 S

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

With 30 points between you, a contract of 3NT would normally be child's play, but, alas, the spade holding is rather annoying. If either hand had the ♠2 you would have nine top tricks, without it you are stuck at eight.

Taking careful stock, you see that you have two spade tricks, four heart tricks and two minor suit aces to bring you up to eight. What suit will you play on to get you to nine?

The normal tactic in no-trumps is to play on your combined longest

suit, which here is clubs. You could duck a club, win the spade return and then carry on with clubs. Sadly, that will not work – the enemy will knock out your second spade stopper the moment you give them the first club trick. Effectively, they are a trick ahead of you in the race to dislodge stoppers. (The bridge expression is, 'you are a tempo behind the defence.')

Had you received a heart lead, then that would have been fine but we will need plan B given that we actually got a spade lead. Fortunately, we have a fair diamond suit to fall back on.

You have this combined holding:

♦ A 10 2

N  
 W E  
 S

♦ Q 6 4 3

You have two chances and can take them both. Win the spade lead in dummy and play a low diamond towards your ♦Q. If East has the ♦K (a decent 50/50 shot) then even if he rises with it your ♦Q becomes a winner.

What happens if East plays low, your queen loses to the king and they carry on with spades? Now you win in dummy, cross to your hand with a heart and lead a diamond to the ten. This second finesse will win if the jack is with West, again a 50/50 chance.

What are the odds that either finesse works? A full 75%, since you will only go down when both are wrong (50% x 50% = 25%), which is fairly unlikely.

Note that in real life a lot of players

would try cashing four heart tricks, 'to see what happens.' The only thing this achieves is to butcher your communications and make it hard for you to cross back and forth from dummy. It might well be a good time-wasting tactic, but it is better to take the bull by the horns and start going after your ninth trick immediately. Although many players play as if the contrary is true, I can assure you that there are no prizes in bridge for procrastination.

On the previous hand, we looked at the case where you took two separate chances and only needed one to work, the next hand is similar in nature.

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

N  
 W E  
 S

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

You reach a fairly good 4♥, only to find the opponents fish out the spade lead with alarming accuracy. West leads the ♠2 and East plays the king – what is your plan?

You might try ducking the first spade, (who knows maybe the opponents will lose their marbles and forget to play another), but today they play another one and knock out your ace.

You have four possible losers – two



spade tricks, one trump trick and the ace of diamonds. There are a few chances to get rid of losers; you could for example run the ♥J round at at your first opportunity and crush the king if it is under your ♥A-Q. That is a straight forward 50/50 chance (a 3-0 break is of no consequence), but if it loses we are down straight away as the opponents will cash their other spade trick and there is no way to avoid losing the diamond ace.

The club finesse also gives us a 50/50 chance, since if the ♣K is with East, we could play low to the ♣Q, cash the ♣A and discard a spade from dummy.

Alas, we can only try one of these finesses – if we take the heart finesse and it loses, they will cash their spade, there is no second chance with the clubs.

Or is there? Let us try and combine our chances...

Start by leading the jack of trumps boldly from your hand, intending to play the ace of trumps from dummy come what may. If West has ♥K-x, he should duck smoothly, (giving nothing away) but now and again, someone might put the king on (perhaps thinking you have ♥J-9-8-x and are going to run the ♥9 on the next round).

Assuming your jack collects nothing but fresh air, rise with the ace and take the club finesse. Can you see why?

This way you will make 4♥ if the club finesse is right or the ♥K falls singleton from either opponent. A 2-1 break in hearts is 78%, and one third of that is 26%. We have to halve that (since we don't make the contract twice when both things come to pass) and add it to our 50% from the

club finesse, giving us a full 63% chance of making our game, a big improvement on the all or nothing heart finesse.

What is the moral of the story? When you are in a contract and can only see one way of making it, try and look for a fall back plan, a second string to your bow so that if your first plan doesn't work you have an extra chance to increase the odds. This final hand shows the idea perfectly:

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

N  
W E  
S

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

With 34 points between you and a long diamond suit as well, you zoom into 6NT and find it has 11 tricks and lots of chances for 12.

The opponents sensibly lead a passive heart (against 6NT lead from long weak suits and give nothing away) and you take stock; with 11 cashable tricks you have these two suits to cope with:

♠ A Q 10  
♣ K 3 2

N  
W E  
S

♠ 8 3 2  
♣ A J 5 4

Each offer a choice of extra tricks but which one should you go for? Effectively, you

have three finesses but can only take two of them (if the first two finesses lose you are down already). You should aim to combine your chances.

At trick two, lead a spade to the ten, (the normal play with this combination) which will lose, no doubt to the jack. The defence will return a red card and you can cash a few diamonds and hearts and try another finesse – which one?

The general scheme when you have a choice of finesses to take, but can only take one is to play for the drop in the **combined longer shorter**. The idea behind this is that a missing honour will drop more often when the opponents have fewer cards between them, a simple enough premise that we should put into practice.

So you cash the king and ace of clubs, checking to see if the queen falls, before playing all your red suit winners and finally taking the second spade finesse. You will make it if:

- a) the jack of spades is **on**side **or**
- b) the king of spades is **on**side **or**
- c) the queen of clubs falls doubleton under your ace and king.

In addition, you will probably make it when the same hand has the ♣Q as well as the missing spade honour and throws his ♣Q to keep the ♠K guarded, (although a canny opponent should in practice come down to a singleton ♠K; far harder to do in real life as he doesn't know his ♣Q is crucial because he can't see the jack in your hand).

All you can do is give yourself the best chance every time; in the long run you'll be a big winner. ■

## Better Hand Evaluation

**Bernard Magee**

### Introduction

*Better Hand Evaluation* is aimed at helping readers to add greater accuracy to their bidding. It deals with auctions in which you and your partner, against silent opponents, can describe your hands fully to each other and, by evaluating them accurately, find the best final contract. The emphasis of all good, accurate bidding is on hand evaluation.

There are two general types of auction: a) a fit is found and b) no fit is found.

When you do not have a fit, you are aiming to describe the strength of your hand as soon as possible, most often using no-trump bids. This book begins by discussing balanced-hand bidding in Acol, as it is very important that both members of a partnership have an accurate knowledge of how to show hands of different strengths.

When a fit is found, there is much re-evaluation of the hand to be done; point count, though still important, needs to be evaluated together with distribution. The best way of reaching an accurate assessment is to use the Losing Trick Count; this is an important method of hand evaluation and takes up a number of chapters.

Finally, we move on to different forms of evaluation including game tries and splinter bids. You can never know enough methods of hand evaluation; the more you learn, the better you get at judging your hand.

Although the Losing Trick Count is used more easily in tandem with your partner, a large proportion of the ideas in this book can be used by an individual. For example, evaluating your hand to be worth an extra point is going to help anyone you partner – as long as you get it right.

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# Weak Twos

Becoming more and more common on the club scene, I do recommend playing weak twos. They come up more often than strong twos and they are good fun.

Should you play two weak twos or three weak twos?

To get a good balance between strong and weak you should just play weak twos in the majors. Although many players do play three weak twos now (including 2♦), I find that most of them do not really know how to bid their strong hands. Now, although it is true that the weak hands come up more often than the strong hands, it is also true that we do enjoy our strong hands and it is important to be able to bid them sensibly.

With all this in mind the DVD deals with Benjaminised Acro, where the 2♥ and 2♠ bids are weak and the 2♣ and 2♦ bids are strong.

After discussing suit quality and vulnerability, I move on to responding to the weak twos:

In response to weak twos, the 2NT bid is used artificially: there are a number of ways of playing the follow-up responses, but I prefer an up-the-line set of responses: the weaker you are, the lower you bid.

The strength of suit is also included on this slide so the four basic responses are:

- 3♣ Weak in all departments
- 3♦ A strong suit  
(2 of the top 3 honours)  
but little outside
- 3♥ Strong in points but  
not such a strong suit
- 3♠ Strong in all departments

Some players get the middle two responses confused, but the thing to remember is that the stronger the hand the higher it bids.

On the pair of hands above, South has four tricks outside spades as well as decent trump support. Game depends on partner's hand, so he uses 2NT. North shows a good suit but little outside. This is enough for South to go for game because he can count ten tricks: six spades and four top tricks.

This auction shows that weak twos can be constructive as well as destructive.

The second part of the DVD shows the strong opening bids and demonstrates the system's flexibility for showing most types of strong hand. This allows the partnership to enjoy both their weak and strong hands.

One thing that I do suggest, as an option, is playing 2♦ as always game forcing, so that the 2♦ opening followed by 2NT shows 25+. (2♣ followed by 2NT for 23-24). The advantage of this is that it leaves no room for doubt:

'When I open 2♦, partner, you are **not** allowed to pass until we reach game.'

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



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

North

2♦

2NT

3♠

South

2♥

3♣

4♠

North has 26 points so opens 2♦, South responds with the negative 2♥ and North rebids 2NT showing a strong balanced hand (25+) but South is still not allowed to pass. South bids Stayman and on finding the spade fit goes for 4♠. 4♠ should make comfortably whilst others would be stuck in 3NT which may well go off on a heart lead.

The DVD finishes with a simple message: bidding weak hands is fun and bidding strong hands is fun too; enjoy them and above all, smile if they go wrong. ■

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



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

North

2♠

3♦

South

2NT

4♠

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## When defending against 1NT think of two suits and not just one

When we learn how to defend against no-trump contracts, most of the teaching is based around defending against 3NT. Your plan is to lead your side's best suit, knock out declarer's stoppers and then make your length tricks.

The tactics are very similar against 1NT except that tricks from just one suit will not be enough to defeat the contract. In 3NT, if you make four length tricks and an ace, your job is done, but in 1NT you still need two more tricks. What this means is that you have to think beyond your best suit: you have to find the next best one too.

Most importantly, as with so much of defence, the right defender will often need to lead the right suit at the right time.

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

You are sitting East after the simplest of auctions: South opened 1NT and this was passed out. Your partner leads the ♠K; declarer wins and plays the ♥Q which, if you duck, is followed by a heart to the king. Which of these you choose to win is up to you, but sooner or later you need to choose which card to lead back.

It is so common to find yourself on autopilot and lead back your partner's suit, which will please your partner in some way because he takes three spade tricks, but he is then left with the lead and declarer can get home easily,

with an overtrick if West tries a club.

Instead as East, you think beyond just your partner's spades – you place him with winners in that suit, but where might your other tricks come from?

Surely the answer is clubs: and with weakness on your right, it is the perfect suit for you to switch to after winning the ♥A.

Furthermore, since it is your last chance to lead, you should choose a high club in an effort to retain the lead. The ♠10 is best, since the ♠Q would imply the jack, whilst the ten promises nothing (since the nine is in dummy).

Your ♠10 works perfectly; it might even hold the trick and then when you lead the ♠Q declarer can cover but your partner makes all his clubs and spades and poor declarer is two down.

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

1NT contracts are very difficult for both declarer and defenders alike, because there is so much more to think about – results can vary hugely – on this hand there will be some making 1NT+1 and some will be 1NT-2.

1NT is one of the most common contracts, so getting better at defending it will make a lot of difference. Try to look further than just one suit. ■

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# Seven Days

## by Sally Brock

### Friday

Up early and off to Heathrow for our 11.25am flight to Stockholm to play in the Chairman's Cup (the most prestigious teams event in the Swedish bridge calendar). It all passes off peacefully, more enjoyable than usual because teammates Frances and Graham have some sort of enhanced BA membership that allows us to join them in the posh lounge. When we arrive, they disappear to get the prearranged hire car while we wait for our luggage and then Graham drives us all to Örebro, 250km or so away. We check into our hotel, have a short rest and then go out for a Lebanese dinner.

### Saturday

The bridge doesn't start till 1pm today, in order to allow Swedish teams to travel on the day. Over the next two days, we have thirteen eight-board Swiss matches. We need to finish in the top 32 (out of 173). Our first match goes well, but the next two are dire – particularly at our table. After lunch, things go a bit better and we finish the day only just out of the qualifying range. We finish late, and go out for sushi – just about warm enough to sit outside.

### Sunday

Things are more serious today with a 10am start. We have a good win that puts us in a qualifying position. The day continues with ups and downs, but with one match to go we are lying 28th, so a small win should be enough. We start OK by making a thin game, and then beat 2♥ by two, vulnerable. This is the third board:

**Dealer South. Love All.**

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

|   |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|
| ♠ 5<br>♥ A J 9 2<br>♦ K Q J 10 7<br>♣ 9 3 2 |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|

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

Maybe I did too much in the bidding, but latterly I seem to have been mildly conservative in the slam zone and found that, although I haven't been missing particularly good slams, my opponents have been bidding them and I have often lost points. Here, I think slam will probably depend on a club finesse, but might be better, and I think my opponents will bid it (and I was right). So, how do you play on the seven of clubs lead? (Cover up the E/W cards before reading on.)

You have no choice but to play the queen, and East plays the jack. The first thing to do is to ask your opponents about their leading methods. Your opponent tells you that they play, 'first, third and fifth,' the most common method we have come across here. So your possible lines are to draw trumps and if they don't break to take a double

heart finesse, or to play ace and another heart immediately, hoping to ruff two hearts in the dummy. There is no fear of a club ruff as the seven can only be from a three- or four-card suit. So you play ace and another heart and then lose a club ruff! You ask your opponent why he led fourth highest, and you are told that is their systemic agreement when holding a six-card suit. If you had known that, you would definitely not have risked the line you chose so we call the tournament director. Eventually, he rules in our favour and we score up the slam (they go down in the other room). Our opponents are charming and apologetic, saying they understood our problem and that he had simply forgotten to tell us.

This helps us towards a heavy victory and we qualify in 18th place.

### Monday

We now face a 32-board match against a Swedish team. We are 16 IMPs up at the halfway stage, but the second half doesn't start too well. I get a bit too busy and protect when I shouldn't. I think perhaps Barry could have done better in the play but he goes for 1,400 on a partscore deal. Later on in the set, we collect an 1,100 penalty after an opponent doubles our weak no-trump, and there is also a board on which we make 3NT doubled with two overtricks for +1150. It is a bit of a roller coaster, but on balance we are plus and win the match by 48 IMPs.

After lunch, we move on to the Round of 16. Again, we are playing a local team (they have chosen to play us so we are mildly insulted) and are 12 IMPs up at half-time, but the second half is a bit of a whitewash. We enjoy this one: ▶

Dealer East. Love All.

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

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



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

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

| West | North | East | South    |
|------|-------|------|----------|
|      |       | 1♠   | 1NT      |
| Dbl  | 2♣    | Dbl  | 2♦       |
| Dbl  | Pass  | Pass | 2♥       |
| Pass | Pass  | Dbl  | All Pass |

Barry's double of the 1NT overcall is on the thin side and North's 2♣ shows both minors. I seem to have reasonable defence to 2♣ (and it is not game even if it makes) so I double that and South gives preference to diamonds. Barry doubles that and I decide to let it go. Imagine our surprise when South decides to try 2♥. This is passed to me and I double and we are even more surprised when North passes it out. When the smoke clears, that is 500 in the 'In' column, while 2♦ doubled would have made with an overtrick.

Winning this match allows us to choose our opponents in the next round – an awesome responsibility. We choose a Norwegian team called Abax, whom we beat in the very first round of the Swiss teams a couple of days ago.

## Tuesday

The first set doesn't go very well for us, but teammates have a good card and we are level. Then neither pair is any good and we lose 39 IMPs. After lunch, we are full of enthusiasm and fire but the third set is pretty dire and we find ourselves now 72 IMPs down. Should we concede and all go out to dinner? It is a close decision. We suggest comparing after eight boards but neither the tournament director nor our opposition are too keen on this idea, so instead we decide to play the last set. The first board is OK. We save

in 5♠ over a 5♦ that probably would have made. Then Barry picks up:



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

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
|      | 2♣    | Pass | 2♦    |
| Pass | 2♥    | Pass | 2♠    |
| Pass | 2NT   | Pass | ?     |

I have shown 23-24 balanced. How should he proceed? He chooses to bid 3♠ (forcing me to bid 3NT), followed by 4♠, showing a single-suited slam try with diamonds. I then bid 6♦. What now? Given the state of the match (this was the second board of the last set when we were 72 down) he plumps for 7♦. This is the full deal:

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

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



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

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

Although 7♠ is clearly superior, 7♦ is not such a bad slam. To start with, West has to avoid a club lead. And even then, either a 2-2 trump break, or the ruffing club finesse would have brought it home. But it is not to be.

After the match, we drown our sorrows in the local tapas bar, and look forward to our match in the subsidiary event against Denmark Open 1.

## Wednesday

Our first match goes very well. Barry and I play against the Danish stars, Dennis and his father Morten Bilde. Apart from one over-aggressive slam,

we play well and are 30 IMPs up at halftime. In the second half, we are steady enough and put on a few more.

That qualifies us for the semi-finals of the Bonus Cup, and we choose to play Harpever, a team we beat heavily in the main event. Things do not go so well this time though and at the halfway stage we are 50 IMPs down, after a pretty poor performance in both rooms. We are all tired and a bit disillusioned, so we decide to call it a day and go for a beer instead of playing the second half.

A pitcher of beer, followed by a pitcher of Margaritas, and a good steak, and we all feel a lot better.

## Thursday

We decide to play in a seven four-board match Swiss teams in the morning. There is a discussion about splitting up and playing in cross-partnerships, but in the end we decide that we'd be better sticking with what we know. That was a mistake because it doesn't go particularly well. We complain that the hands are a bit boring in the first two matches, but then Barry picks up:

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

He hears his RHO open 1♠, he bids a quiet 2♣ and his LHO bids 3♠, raised to 4♠ by RHO. Barry tries 5NT, forcing me to choose between his suits at the six level. I try 6♦ and he converts to 6♥. LHO doesn't believe he has quite such a good hand and doubles, but my ♥J-9-x and singleton club are quite sufficient for +1,660.

In the other room, they had a bidding misunderstanding. Barry's hand started with 2NT which his partner thought was 20-21 balanced and therefore raised to 3NT. Graham weighed in with 4♦, and Barry's hand settled for 5♣ which made exactly, so we gained 14 IMPs. We can't really complain that that was boring!

Tomorrow, we drive to Stockholm for a couple of days before flying home on Sunday. ■



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| SEP 16 | <b>SORRENTO</b> Italy<br>(Pompeii & Herculaneum)  | overnight |
| SEP 17 | <b>SORRENTO</b> Italy   | overnight |
| SEP 18 | <b>SORRENTO</b> Italy<br>Cruise past Capri and Amalfi Coast<br><b>SALERNO</b> Italy (Paestum) |           |
| SEP 19 | Cruise past Stromboli and through the Strait of Messina<br><b>TAORMINA</b> Sicily             |           |
| SEP 20 | At Sea  |           |
| SEP 21 | <b>CORFU</b> Greek Islands<br><b>SARANDE</b> Albania (Butrint)                                |           |
| SEP 22 | <b>LECCE</b> Italy  |           |
| SEP 23 | <b>DUBROVNIK</b> Croatia  |           |
| SEP 24 | <b>SPLIT</b> Croatia  |           |
| SEP 25 | <b>URBINO</b> Italy   |           |
| SEP 26 | <b>VENICE</b> Italy   | overnight |
| SEP 27 | <b>VENICE</b> Italy<br>Disembark and transfer to Venice Airport for flight home               |           |

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## MR BRIDGE VALUE FARES

|                       |          |
|-----------------------|----------|
| Premium Inside from   | £2,295pp |
| Standard Outside from | £2,650pp |
| Premium Outside from  | £2,795pp |

Odyssey Club Members enjoy an additional 5% discount on prices shown above.

**SINGLE SUPPLEMENT JUST 10%<sup>†</sup>**

## FARES INCLUDE:

- Scheduled economy class flights
- Expert guest speaker programme
- Mr Bridge drinks party
- Duplicate bridge every evening
- Morning seminars and afternoon bridge when at sea
- Sightseeing excursions in all ports of call
- All meals on board in choice of two restaurants
- Complimentary wine with dinner on board
- Gratuities for on-board cabin and restaurant staff
- Overseas transfers and baggage handling

Mr Bridge fares are per person and subject to availability at time of booking. They may be withdrawn at any time without notice. Please see website for full terms and conditions.  
<sup>†</sup>Single accommodation is available only in certain categories and is subject to availability.



ABTA No. Y2206