

Nine Ever Ten Never

by Micke Melander

One of our favourites in the Open Series, Monaco, picked Canada to be their opponents in the Round of 16. Here come four small problems from the first segment of that round.

Problem 1. N/S Vul.

♠ Q ♥ K 10 2 ♦ K Q 9 8 6 3 ♣ A 10 7

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

1♦: Natural diamond opening that promised at least four, anything to add in the bidding?

Problem 2. All Vul.

♠ K Q 7 4 ♥ 8 6 4 2 ♦ Q ♣ Q 9 4 2

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

You managed to get a fit. But do you know stay in 3NT or bid 4♥?

Problem 3. All Vul.

♠ K 9 ♥ A Q 10 4 ♦ A J 4 2 ♣ A K 10

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| | | | Pass |
| Pass | Pass | 2♣* | Pass |
| 2♦* | Pass | 2NT | Pass |
| 3♣* | Pass | 3♦* | Pass |
| 3♥* | Pass | 3NT | Pass |
| 4NT | Pass | ? | |

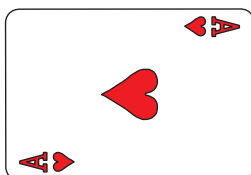
You have shown 22-24 HCPs and hearts. Partner has shown spades and is making a quantitative raise; do you have any extras or do you pass?

Problem 4. None Vul.

♠ 6 ♥ K J 10 ♦ A Q 10 2 ♣ 8 6 4 3 2

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

Would you dare to take any action?



Board 2. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ Q
♥ K 10 2
♦ K Q 9 8 6 3
♣ A 10 7

♠ J 9 4
♥ 8 5
♦ A 10 7 5 4
♣ Q 9 5



♠ A K 8 5
♥ J 9 7
♦ 2
♣ J 8 4 3 2

♠ 10 7 6 3 2
♥ A Q 6 4 3
♦ J
♣ K 6

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|-------|--------|----------|------------|
| Miles | Multon | Korbel | Zimmermann |
| | | Pass | Pass |
| Pass | 1♦ | Dbl | Rdbl |
| Pass | Pass | 1♠ | Dbl |
| Pass | 3NT | All Pass | |

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|---------|----------|---------|-------|
| Helgemo | L'Ecuyer | Helness | Demuy |
| | | Pass | Pass |
| 1♦ | Pass | 1♠ | Pass |
| Pass | Dbl | Rdbl | 2♥ |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | |

Helgemo was a little short in high card points, even for a third-hand opening but his semi-psycho bid worked out extremely well when L'Ecuyer in North had nowhere to go over 2♥.

Once Helness showed up with what promised to be just below an opening hand, L'Ecuyer got the impression that Demuy was fighting for the contract rather inviting for game and simply gave up.

Against 3NT Korbel led the three of clubs, declarer jumped up with the king and called for the jack of diamonds which held the trick. Multon then played a heart to the king and played the king of diamonds, setting up his ninth trick before the defense could set enough winners to set the game.

In the Closed Room Helgemo tried to be smart for a second time on the board and kicked off with the four of diamonds, under-leading his ace, which meant ten easy tricks for declarer who won the trick with the jack of diamonds and immediately played a spade to set up his dummy for a cross-ruff. Helness got in on the king of spades and did what he could by returning a trump, but that didn't help

much. Still, it was 10 IMPs to Monaco when the Canadians missed their game.

Board 4. Dealer West. All Vul.

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|--|---|--|---|--|---|--|--|--|
| ♠ J 9 5 3 ♥ J 10 ♦ 8 7 3 ♣ K 8 7 3 | <table style="border: 1px solid black; width: 60px; height: 60px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td></td></tr> </table> | | N | | W | | E | | S | | ♠ K Q 7 4 ♥ 8 6 4 2 ♦ Q ♣ Q 9 4 2 | ♠ 8 6 ♥ A Q 3 ♦ 10 9 6 5 4 2 ♣ A 10 |
| | N | | | | | | | | | | | |
| W | | E | | | | | | | | | | |
| | S | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | ♠ A 10 2 ♥ K 9 7 5 ♦ A K J ♣ J 6 5 | | | | | | | | | | | |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|-------|--------|----------|------------|
| Miles | Multon | Korbel | Zimmermann |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | INT |
| Pass | 2♣ | Pass | 2♥ |
| Pass | 4♥ | All Pass | |

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|----------|----------|---------|-------|
| Helgemo | L'Ecuyer | Helness | Demuy |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | INT |
| Pass | 2♣ | Pass | 2♥ |
| Pass | 3♥ | Pass | 3NT |
| All Pass | | | |

Zimmermann had no chance in the Open Room. 4♥ was completely hopeless, since declarer had to lose two clubs and two trumps. It went far better for the Canadian pair,

who tried their luck in 3NT on the other table, Helgemo led a small spade, which went to declarer's ten. With seven tricks in the bag declarer simply had to work on setting up two hearts to make his contract. Demuy had no problem doing that, 12 IMPs to Canada and their first game swing. Suddenly nine ever ten never was working fine...

On board six you had ♠AKJ1065 ♥J73 ♦J32 ♣3 and partner opened with INT (14-16). Again, 3NT would have been a better contract than trying to play in 4♠. But with every card placed wrong for declarer both contracts would have gone down unless there were some real favours from the defense.

Board 7. Dealer South. All Vul.

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|--|---|--|---|--|---|--|--|--|
| ♠ Q J 10 8 ♥ K 8 3 ♦ K 10 6 5 ♣ 5 4 | <table style="border: 1px solid black; width: 60px; height: 60px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td></td></tr> </table> | | N | | W | | E | | S | | ♠ A 3 2 ♥ J 9 7 6 ♦ Q 8 7 ♣ 9 7 2 | ♠ K 9 ♥ A Q 10 4 ♦ A J 4 2 ♣ A K 10 |
| | N | | | | | | | | | | | |
| W | | E | | | | | | | | | | |
| | S | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | ♠ 7 6 5 4 ♥ 5 2 ♦ 9 3 ♣ Q J 8 6 3 | | | | | | | | | | | |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|-------|----------|--------|------------|
| Miles | Multon | Korbel | Zimmermann |
| Pass | Pass | 2♣ | Pass |
| 2♦ | Pass | 2NT | Pass |
| 3♣ | Pass | 3♥ | Pass |
| 3NT | All Pass | | |

Closed Room

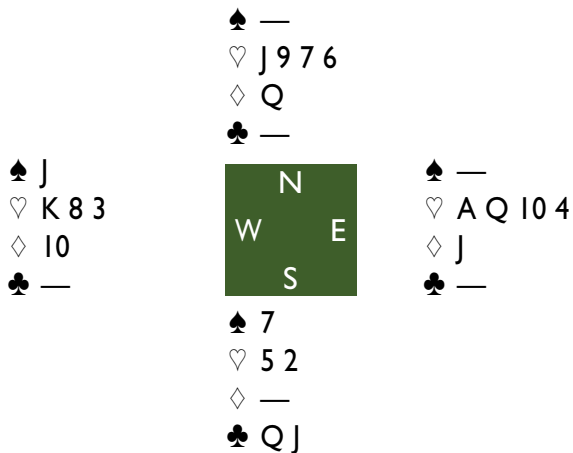
| West | North | East | South |
|---------|----------|---------|-------|
| Helgemo | L'Ecuyer | Helness | Demuy |
| Pass | Pass | 2♣* | Pass |
| 2♦* | Pass | 2NT | Pass |
| 3♣* | Pass | 3♦* | Pass |
| 3♥* | Pass | 3NT | Pass |
| 4NT | All Pass | | |

Miles and Korbel never even sniffed at bidding any higher than game. Helgemo in the Closed Room made the quantitative raise but Helness didn't take the bait, probably regretting it when he got a club lead to the ten which held the trick. Declarer played the king of spades, which held the second trick, then came a second round which North won with the ace to return a club. Helness won the return, cashed out the king of clubs, ace and king of diamonds ending in dummy. Then on the two good spades he had in



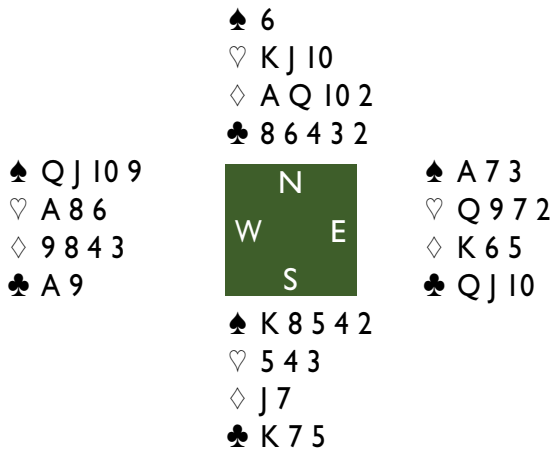
Daniel Miles, Canada

dummy he discarded his two diamonds in hand trapping L'Ecuyer in a show up squeeze on the red suits. The end position was:



Since neither of the tables were in slam, it was a push.

Board 8. Dealer West. None Vul.



Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|-------|--------|----------|------------|
| Miles | Multon | Korbel | Zimmermann |
| 1♦ | Pass | 1♥ | Pass |
| 2♥ | Pass | 3NT | Pass |
| Pass | Dbl | Pass | Pass |
| 4♥ | Dbl | All Pass | |

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|---------|----------|---------|----------|
| Helgemo | L'Ecuyer | Helness | Demuy |
| 1♦ | Pass | 1♥ | Pass |
| 1♠ | Pass | 2NT | All Pass |

Multon fearing that a spade led from partner might give the contract away, tried to direct Zimmermann to lead a diamond with a Lightner double. When Miles removed to 4♥ he immediately also doubled that.

Surprisingly for the defense the king of diamonds turned up in the wrong hand, but since E/W already were in a very hard game and Zimmermann showed up with both black kings there was no play for the contract. Korbel went two

off when he tried to make the contract. It was in fact much better to play in hearts in a 4-3 fit than to attempt no-trump, since the defence can put declarer down two in 3NT. Helness found this out at the other table when the defense didn't give anything away. Still, 6 IMPs to Monaco, who won the first segment against Canada with 28-12.

Eyes on the stars in Lille

by Didier Lévy

It looks like there is one particular spot in Lille where the percentage of bridge stars per square centimeter is beating all the statistics!

I'm talking of **la Brasserie André**, probably the best value your money can buy when you want traditional French food in a 1900-looking restaurant.

I was fulfilling a promise to David Bird*, that when we met in Lille I would take him to some very good restaurant and that he wouldn't forget his meal for a long, very long time.

So be it! And as we started with a bottle of Medoc 2005.

Almost immediately, I spotted the great Bob Hamman* sitting at a table next to ours.

David and I stood up to shake hands, and after David and Bob exchanged a few words, David introduced me, and I added:

'I'm Didier Lévy, a bridge Nobody'.

'Neither am I' said Hamman with a smile!

A moment later I asked David:

'Have you seen Phillip Alder* in the congress?'

And the answer came: 'He is sitting just behind you!'

Ah, good, I thought, and stood up to say *bonsoir* and introduce myself.

Phillip was sitting with another person and when I shook hands with Phillip, the other person stood up too and said:

'You are Didier!'

Me (surprised): Yes, you know me? And who are you?

Him: 'Of course I do, I'm Ron Klinger*!'

Phillip ordered a bottle of Pomerol Château La Salle 2007, a real gift from the gods. We joined him at the same table and enjoyed the super meal you only find at André's.

La Brasserie André – 71 rue de Béthune – Lille
03 20 54 75 51

* David Bird is the most prolific author of bridge books ever, with more than 110 bridge books published so far.

* The great champion Bob Hamman plays with Zia Mahmood for USA in the Open Teams in Lille

* Phillip Alder writes the bridge column for The New York Times and is currently captaining the US Senior team in Lille.

* Ron Klinger is from Australia and probably the most renowned bridge teacher worldwide.

* Didier Lévy is the creator of www.vubridge.com and publisher of bridge interactive "playbooks".