

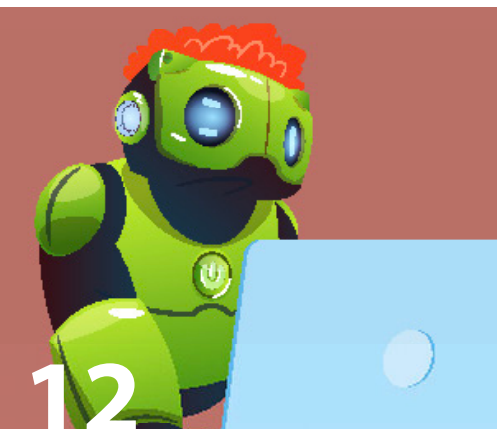
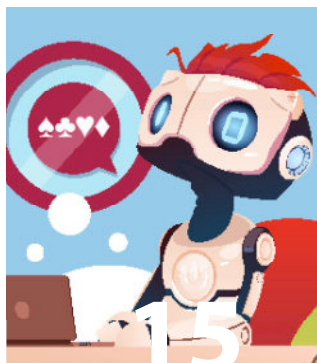
bridge *Canada*

Virtual fun at
Canada's Bridge Table



THE CANADIAN BRIDGE FEDERATION

The mission of the Canadian Bridge Federation is to promote bridge within Canada and protect and advance the national interests of Canadian bridge, including the selection and support of Canadian bridge teams and players for international bridge competition.



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MEMBERSHIP

Bridge Canada is available to members only.

If you know of anyone who wishes to become a member of the Canadian Bridge Federation please share with them these options:

1. Be sure to include CBF dues with your ACBL dues.
2. Visit cbf.ca and click **Join The CBF**.
3. Email info@cbf.ca for more information.

NOTE: Membership dues are waived for Canadian players under 25 years of age. Junior players can join the CBF by sending their information to info@cbf.ca.

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EDITOR & PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Neil Kimelman
Bridge Canada Managing Editor
President, CBF

I am now wearing two hats, CBF President and editor of Bridge Canada. As such I will use this forum for dual messages.

The Way Forward

We are in uncharted territory. Besides the changes to the 2020 CBC's listed below, the CBF Board will be looking at further necessary adjustments to ensure we can enjoy our pastime safely, in a Covid 19 world. The 2020 Annual General Meeting will be held online, likely in the early fall. Stay tuned for further updates!

2020 CBCs Update

We are in a brave new world as the 2020 Canadian Bridge Championship will be held completely online! The Round Robin stages of the four main events (Open, Seniors, Women's, and Mixed) are currently under way. Although online bridge does not replace, and is not the same as playing in person, the big plus is that we have had many more teams playing than usual! I look forward to very competitive events over the next three months. Good luck to all participants!

New Enhancements for the 2020 CBCs

Recognizing the highest level of achievement Starting this year the CBF will recognize outstanding play during the Championship events. Categories include best played hand, best defence and best bidding. Let us know if you become aware of an effort worthy of recognition!

The Great Canadian Bidding Contest

Congratulations to **Donald Jobin** and **Sandy McIlwain** for having the top reader's score for August – 44. **Sheldon Spier** is the \$100 winner for the best total scores for the June and August problems. Get involved and try out October's problems found elsewhere in this issue!

For the expert panel congrats goes out to **Dan Jacob**, who scored a perfect 50, with **David Lindop** close behind with 49. Way to go gentlemen!

Neil Kimelman
CBF president & Bridge Canada Managing Editor



(L to R) Ina Demme, Huges Boisvert, Neil Kimelman, Angela Fenton
Nader Hanna, Cathy Walsh, Wade Short, Jerry Mamer

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meet ...

MATTHIEU DALLAIRE

CBF COMMUNITY MANAGER



Editor's note: *Matthieu Dallaire is now the community manager for the CBF and works as a digital marketing specialist at Atypic. He's a new bridge player as he just learned to play last spring, but hopes that his involvement in the CBF will help him become a better player, and also be closer to the community. In his free time, he likes to travel, play sports and try unusual things – tasting insects or other weird food.*

What do you do for work and what drives you?

I work with non-profits and my expertise is in digital marketing. In my job, I support multiple clients on projects that involve social media, digital advertising campaign and any other web projects. I also work on different accounts as a project manager to assure coordination between stakeholders and make sure that each project is a success and answers clients' needs. I believe that working with causes and the feeling of making a difference that it brings, on a daily basis, is what drives me the most in what I do.

What drew you to start playing bridge and when did that happen?

I always loved playing card games, especially with my grandmother when I was young. We would sit for hours and play Crazy Eights and have so much fun. Then, later in my life, I also liked to play board games, the classics – Monopoly, Clue and Risk.

In 2016, I met my boyfriend who had learned bridge a few years before and had become a Bridge Master (very quickly!). He was really involved in the community, played regularly at a club and with his parents. Then, we discussed a bit about what bridge was – I knew little at the time, and I thought that with my interests for cards and board games, that it would

MEET MATTHIEU DALLAIRE *continued*

be a fun thing for me to learn. So, that is how I started to play bridge...

What do you like about bridge?

For recently being through the bridge lessons, I can tell you that bridge isn't as easy as playing Crazy Eights! I think that is why I enjoyed learning it, and now playing it. There is always room for improvement and learning, and I think that is what makes bridge such a great game.

With your involvement in the organization, where do you see the CBF in the future?

I have been involved with the CBF for not too long, but with the sense of community and the desire to help others that I see, I believe it has the potential to go far. In my opinion, I see the CBF becoming THE reference for bridge in Canada. I see it has the organization that brings together all bridge clubs and creates the sense of community that we have, from coast to coast.

What do you like to do besides bridge?

I love sports. It helps me clear my mind of any stress I have in my life and helps me live in the moment. If I don't have much time ahead of me, I just go for a run. If I do have time, I like to go climbing – a sport that

I've recently discovered and that drives me to push my limits.

Besides sports, I love cooking and learning new recipes. My all-time favorites to cook are Vietnamese noodle bowls and lasagna!

What is your pet peeve?

Eating dessert with a spoon. I'll only use one if I REALLY have to.

Favorite movie?

Requiem for a Dream. Beautiful and disturbing.

Cake or pie?

Both! I'd say lemon pie and carrot cake.

KAPLANISM 18 (Quotes attributed to Edgar Kaplan)

Editor's note: *This is the 18th in a series of quotes attributed to Edgar Kaplan, one of the game's greatest. He was a bridge writer, teacher, administrator, commentator, coach, journalist, player and lawmaker.*

It looks as though the normal diamond lead will defeat the contract (...) However, it is no longer fashionable to lead partner's bid suit; West tried the ten of hearts instead. (...) Plus 600.
"The 1977 Bermuda Bowl, III", TBW 3/78, p. 13

It has been said that the Manila Bowl did not produce very good bridge ("poor but honest," in the pithy phrase of an expert witness), but the records and my charge sheets do not support this opinion. Oh, there was a refreshing number of errors, as always –yet, a report like this, which necessarily concentrates on the swings rather than on sound, good bridge, gives a distorted view. Ibid, p. 17

Opening Leads vs. 3NT

Did Goren Have it Right?

by Andy Stark

Try your hand at making the best opening leads versus 3NT. Oh and since I dropped a clue already, (questioning Goren), think about what your second and perhaps third choices would be.

In both cases the auction has gone 1NT – 3NT.

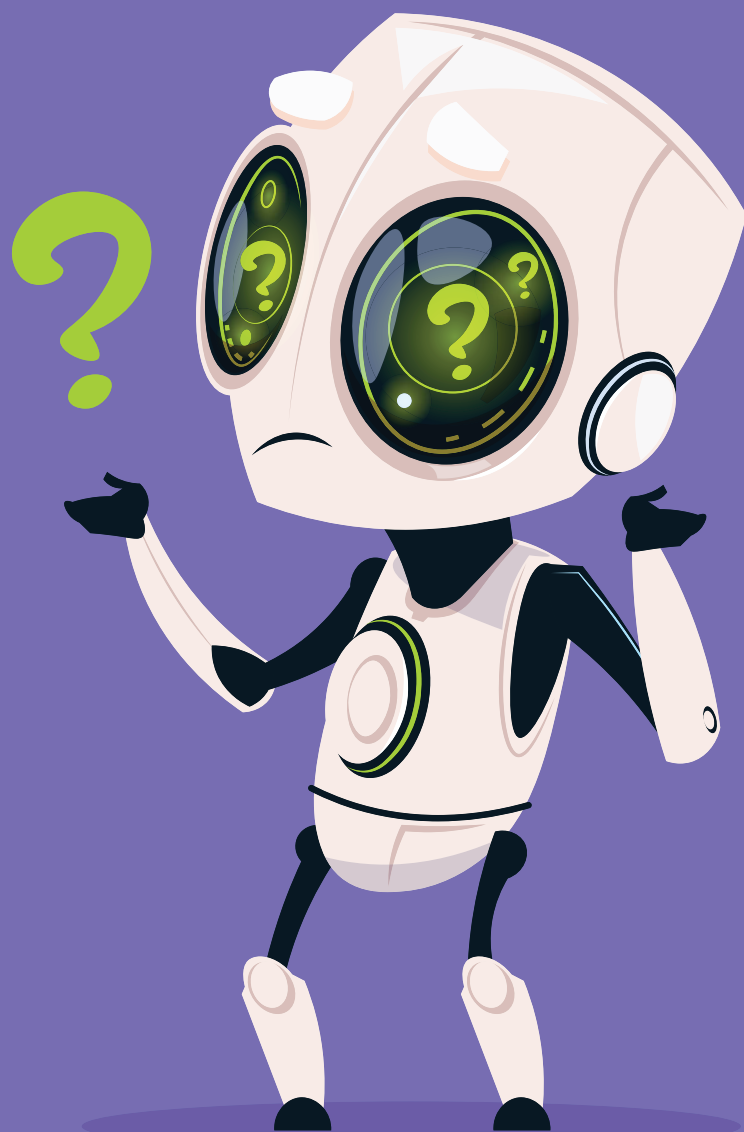
Hand 1, you, West, hold:

♠ 10 2
♥ K Q J 8
♦ A 10 6 4 3 2
♣ 8

Hand 2, you, West, hold:

♠ 10 8 5
♥ Q 10 9 4 3
♦ A K J 3
♣ 6

If you've been playing online lately against the robots on BBO, you will have observed that they don't make normal opening leads. They lead singletons against notrump, or they eschew their six-card suits for something passive. Years ago, the more I played against the bots the more I thought their opening lead



THE
NEW PLAYER
Spot

OPENING LEADS VS 3NT ... CONTINUED

strategy (or algorithm) was from Mars, but since then I've learned it's very much from Planet Earth and a little more effective than what Charles Goren taught. For example, take the time-worn maxim of Lead your fourth best from your longest and strongest. Often times it is winning strategy, but there might be another strategy available; the bots have figured out this more effective opening lead strategy by reviewing numerous simulations.

The two problem hands have been taken from the book *Winning Notrump Leads* by David Bird and Taf Anthias. To show the reader what makes for an effective lead they ran computer simulations. So, the West hands that you are asked to lead from remain intact, but 5000 other possible deals are created and analysed. This means the North, South, and East hands are shuffled up with each simulation, but the North-South hands will always fit the auction 1NT-3NT. The authors then reveal the success rate (by percentage) of each reasonable lead.

Take Hand 1. Your shortlist of effective opening salvos no doubt includes the ♥K and the ♦4. The heart king is the top of an honour sequence and the diamond four is good ol' fourth best from your longest and (but in this case, not necessarily) strongest suit. Before the big reveal let me also tell you that one of those two leads will beat the contract 41.6% of the time and the other lead will beat the contract only 24.5% of the time. Furthermore, there is a different lead that will set the contract 28.7% of the time. Can you guess what that card is?

Here we go: the most effective lead is the ♥K and it's not even close. Not only do you instantly promote two heart tricks if declarer chooses to win the ♥A at trick one, but you can infer that you are attacking one of declarer's shorter combined suit holdings. The authors show time and again that leading a major suit versus 1NT-3NT auctions is winning strategy. You should go out of your way to lead a major when the opponents bid 1NT-3NT. It takes precedence over leading from a five or six-card minor.

Given that dummy did not go looking for an 8-card major suit fit, you can reason that the opponents hold more cards in the minors. It is likely that North-South hold six cards in diamonds leaving your partner with only one. Here's the full deal:

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

Well, the percentages tell us that partner won't have many diamonds with us but today partner does. Still, the diamond lead blows the contract because partner does not hold the ♦K and the diamond lead is what gives declarer their 11th trick!

In order to beat 3NT against this layout we need to lead a heart, and then continue hearts, and for our fifth trick cash the ♦A. Bridge can be so simple. Even more effective than the ♦4 lead is the ♦A and this layout shows why. Let's say you decide to lead the ♦A, a good partner will drop the ♦Q. This play shows they have the ♦J or that the ♦Q was singleton. In both cases you now know declarer holds the ♦K, so a heart switch is prudent; again you'll reach your objective of setting declarer a trick.

Now for Hand 2. Surely there will be many votes for the ♥10 or the ♥4. I'll have to dust off my old Goren Bridge Complete book and see what he would lead, but I predict a heart. The Winning Notrump Leads authors, Bird and Anthias, show us that we should lean towards leading a major versus 1NT-3NT auctions and ♥Q109xx is a pretty decent holding to lead from. However, this hand is an exception. Do you see why? Right—the ♦A is too strong a lead; so strong that it

OPENING LEADS VS 3NT ... CONTINUED

gives us a double shot to beat the contract: either diamonds can be continued, or we can switch strategy and attack hearts if hearts is the right suit to attack after all. The ♥10 lead beats the contract 29.7% of the time and by 'time' I mean over 5000 times this hand is randomly dealt out. But the ♦A (or ♦K) lead beats the contract 36.4% of the time.

Remember I mentioned that the bots like to go for passive leads? That is because they, like you, prefer not to "give anything away." For that reason, the ♠5 is the second-best lead. It will beat the contract 30.2% of the time. How about that, Chuck G fans? Here is deal we cater to when we bang down a high diamond:

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

Notice that a heart lead will be fine, but the diamond lead also works. When you see the threatening club suit in dummy you can switch to a heart at trick two, removing dummy's side suit entry. The good news is partner can duck one club play and effectively lock declarer out of dummy. The bad news is declarer is now poised to take five spade tricks by finessing partner for the ♠Q. However, the prevailing good news is that declarer is only up to eight tricks. Declarer will fall one trick short.

I am sure we could construct a deal where the lead of the ♣6 is the only lead to beat the contract but bridge, like curling and baseball, is a game of percentages. If you are aware of some of these percentage plays, there is no doubt you will improve your game. For practice and insight, I highly recommend you play with and against the robots on BBO; and, while you're at it, order yourself a copy of Bird's and Anthias's book.

QUIZ

MOLLO ON PLAY X

SOLUTION IS ON PAGE 29

Editor's note: Victor Mollo treated us to some great characters such as the Hideous Hog and Rueful Rabbit. In addition, he shared with us some great declarer play problems.

Contract: 6 ♣ by South at IMPs.

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

Lead: ♣5. Plan the play.

CANCELLED MONTREAL NABC
Did You Know?

CBF, ACBL District 1 and Unit 151 Partner to reduce entry fees for Canadian Players

The 2020 Montreal NABC never happened but behind the scenes there was a concerted partnership effort to subsidize the cost to Canadians of playing in this Championship.

The CBF contributed monies to make it possible for Canadians to pay CDN\$20 for Regional events, not US\$20, the posted entry fee. This was a combined effort, and was not possible without the leadership of CBF officials and NABC tournament chair, Jean Latraverse.

Thanks to George Retek for suggesting we share with CBF members this unprecedented initiative of Canadian bridge players coming together to help fellow Canadians players.



CONVENTIONS 1

This is the thirteenth article in a New Player Bridge Canada series. Some of these concepts may be a review for you, but this series will also cover more advanced techniques and ideas.

CONVENTIONS I

An Introduction

A new topic – conventions. There are many conventions that are available to be played. You could learn a new convention every day of the year! Plus, they are usually effective, sometimes extremely effective in dealing with a certain hand, or auction. The potential advantages are impressive.

Conventions:

1. Describe a hand that is otherwise difficult to do. One example is that some play that a 2♦ opener is any 4-4-4-1 hand with an opening bid.
2. Differentiate between holdings. For example, many partnerships play that after a 1♣ by partner, 1♥ overcall, 1♠ shows five or more spades, whereas a negative double shows exactly four spades.
3. Provide a detailed, specific meaning in some instances.
4. Allow the partnership to make negative inferences from a bid not chosen.
5. Improve defensive bidding, taking away the bidding space of the opponents.
6. Can be transfers, so that the contract can be declared by the more effective side.

However, there are downsides to using some or too many conventions:

1. Used incorrectly.
2. Takes away the use of judgement, thus impeding learning and improvement.
3. Used unwisely.
4. Forget meaning, because used to infrequently, or too many conventions to remember, or too complex.
5. The use of the convention creates a different problem.
6. Takes away the ability to make to make a natural bid.

BRIDGE BASICS ... CONTINUED

Most of the advantages of conventions are well known and self-explanatory. However, I would like to further expand on the disadvantages of using conventions.

Used incorrectly.

I see this time and time again. A convention has a specific meaning, and a player wants to use it, even when their hand does not meet the criteria. Most players play Michaels, where a cue bid of an opponent's opening bid shows 5-5 in two suits. Using this convention when 5-4 is not wise. Partner will play you for 5-5, and bid accordingly, often with disastrous consequences. Even worse, partner will see what you held, and not trust you the next time you bid Michaels.

Used unwisely.

This danger relates to the above point but goes further. Quite often players will invoke a convention, often a defensive measure, where all it does is give the opponents vast information, and often help the other side successfully declare the contract reached. One convention I despise is the sandwich notrump. The bidding starts 1♣ on your left, pass by partner, 1♠ on your right. You hold xx Kxxxx QJxxx xx or worse, xx KQxxx Q10xx xx. I know many players, including so-called experts would bid 1NT to show a weak hand with two suits. Why not? First, you are using up NONE of the opponent's bidding room, and secondly, giving away oodles of distributional information when an opponent become declarer. There is no chance you will win the contract with 7 HCPs opposite a passed hand. Plus, you can no longer overcall with 1NT to show 15-17 HCPs, which is otherwise difficult to show.

Takes away the use of judgement, thus impeding learning and improving.

Conventions are great, but do not replace good judgement. Developing judgement is a learned trait, applying knowledge gleaned from all the hands played in the past. Using a convention indiscriminately, thinking that well, I am 5-5 so I have to use the convention is not always right. Plus, most auctions are competitive and most conventions quickly become moot.

Forgetting.

Playing complex conventions that require extensive memorizing is not recommended. I know, as I played a complex system and certain conventions rarely came up. When they did, we would often show the wrong hand. For example, if an asking bid asks for shortness and you show a spade void when you have a club void! Not good! Plus, you are spending so much energy on remembering conventional responses that you may not have anything 'left in the tank' to focus on declarer play or defense.

Creates a different problem.

What do bids mean by partner after the convention is used? For example, what do you do if the bidding starts 1NT on your left, 2♦ by partner showing one major, and you hold Qxx x AKJ9xx Axx? What is 3♦? 2NT?

Takes away the natural meaning for a bid.

This happens. Do you ever get a hand with an opening bid and KQJxxx of clubs, only to have an opponent open one club ahead of you? If you play Michaels, or another convention, you lose the ability to bid 2♣ naturally.

To be clear, I am not advocating avoiding conventions, just to be sure that you and your partner carefully weigh the plusses and minuses before adding one to your convention arsenal.

In this series of articles, I will focus on one convention at a time. I will explain how it works, give some hands where it makes sense to apply, plusses and minuses, and my opinion as to whether it is worth using. I will spend more time on conventions that are used more frequently.

Next issue: Negative doubles.



The Intermediate Series

BIDDING STRATEGIES

By Neil Kimelman

This is the first instalment in a series on bidding strategies. Bidding has always been my favourite part of the game, and I have written three, well-received books on how to learn and apply better bidding judgement.

Bidding – an introduction

When we first learned the rules of bridge we saw that bidding was the first step, where each side competes to determine who declares the contract, and what the contract will be. We learned the basic rules: an ace is four, a king is three and you need 13 points to open the bidding, 6 points to respond, etc... Our bidding was in a vacuum, as when we bid the opponents usually didn't, and vice versa.

As we played more, learning more, we discovered that a lot of those initial rules are more guidelines, and don't always work. Sometimes 26 points between two hands do not make game, whereas 20 points can yield a slam. Also, there are many other tools for hand evaluation, besides the initial 4-3-2-1 Goren system.

THE
INTERMEDIATE
Spot

What does this all mean?

Bidding is an art, not a science.

Determining the value of a suit holding, or a hand, is variable from deal to deal. It changes after every bid, when more information from partner and the opponents is received.

Bidding is about communicating.

Every bid you make, or don't make, gives partner information. Based on this updated data, partner can continue to give you information about their hand, until one person in the partnership has enough information to place the contract.

The more we play the more we learn that both sides often compete vigorously for the contract.

Simple bidding rules, and even conventions (see below) become less useful. Natural bidding is often the only recourse available.

There are also tools to assist you in making good bidding decisions:

1. Conventions. The current focus of the Bridge Basics series in this magazine is on conventions. Used properly, conventions can immensely help in communicating lots of information to partner about your hand, and vice versa.

2. The opponents' bidding. This is very useful. Used correctly, this information can allow you to change your original evaluation of your hand. For example you hold AQ10 of hearts. This suit will provide 1-3 tricks, and is valued at 6 HCPs. However, if your right-hand opponent opens 1♥ or 2♥, this holding has dramatically improved. It will usually be worth three tricks, no different than holding AKQ, 9 HCPs. Conversely, if left-handed opponent is the heart bidder, then the value of your heart holding weakens, and will often be worth only one trick, whether on offence or defense.

Where this series will go?

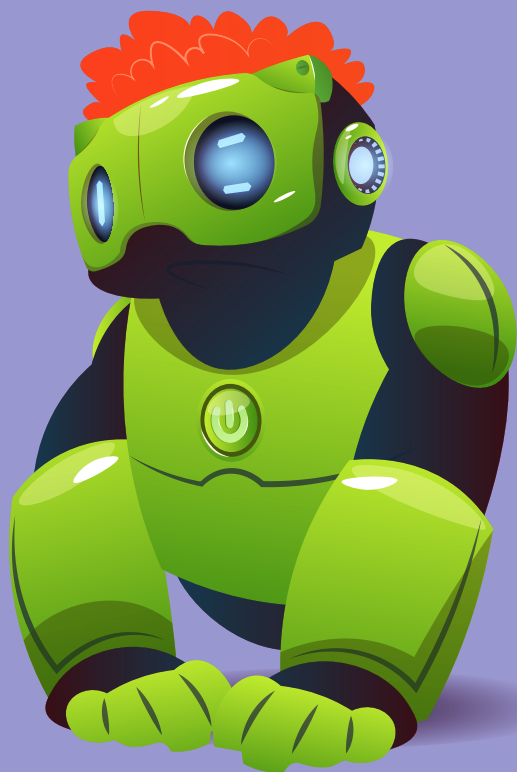
I will start simply, and look at bidding judgement in a vacuum, no opposition bidding, just you and partner. I will teach you some simple tools that can be applied to aid in describing your hand the best way possible, and learn ways to envision what is the optimum contract on each and every deal.

We will then focus on competitive bidding, and again learn some basic rules and guidelines to improve the effectiveness of your bidding.

Some of the topics I will cover:

- ☐ Hand evaluation.
- ☐ Bidding without competition.
- ☐ Assessing the value of your cards.
- ☐ Relative value of suits.
- ☐ Describing your hand.
- ☐ Rules of fit.
- ☐ Misfits.
- ☐ Preempting.
- ☐ Competitive bidding – what changes.
- ☐ Defensive bidding.
- ☐ Dealing with opponent preempts.
- ☐ When to bid with a fit, when to be silent.
- ☐ Advanced strategies.

Next article: Hand evaluation.



Intermediate Declarer Play Quiz 1

Editor's note: Here is a new limited series aimed at helping intermediate players sharpen up their declarer play.

♠ Q 9 4 3

♥ K 9 3 2

♦ A 4

♣ A Q 6

♠ A K J 10 6 5 2

♥ 4

♦ 10 6

♣ 8 4 3

Contract: 4♠ after East opened 1♥.

Lead: ♥6. The opponents switch to diamonds at trick 2. Find the 100% line of play.

Solution

The full deal:

♠ Q 9 4 3

♥ K 9 3 2

♦ A 4

♣ A Q 6

♠ -

♥ J 8 6

♦ K J 8 7 5 3

♣ 10 9 7 5

♠ 8 7

♥ A Q 10 7 5

♦ Q 9 2

♣ K J 2

♠ A K J 10 6 5 2

♥ 4

♦ 10 6

♣ 8 4 3

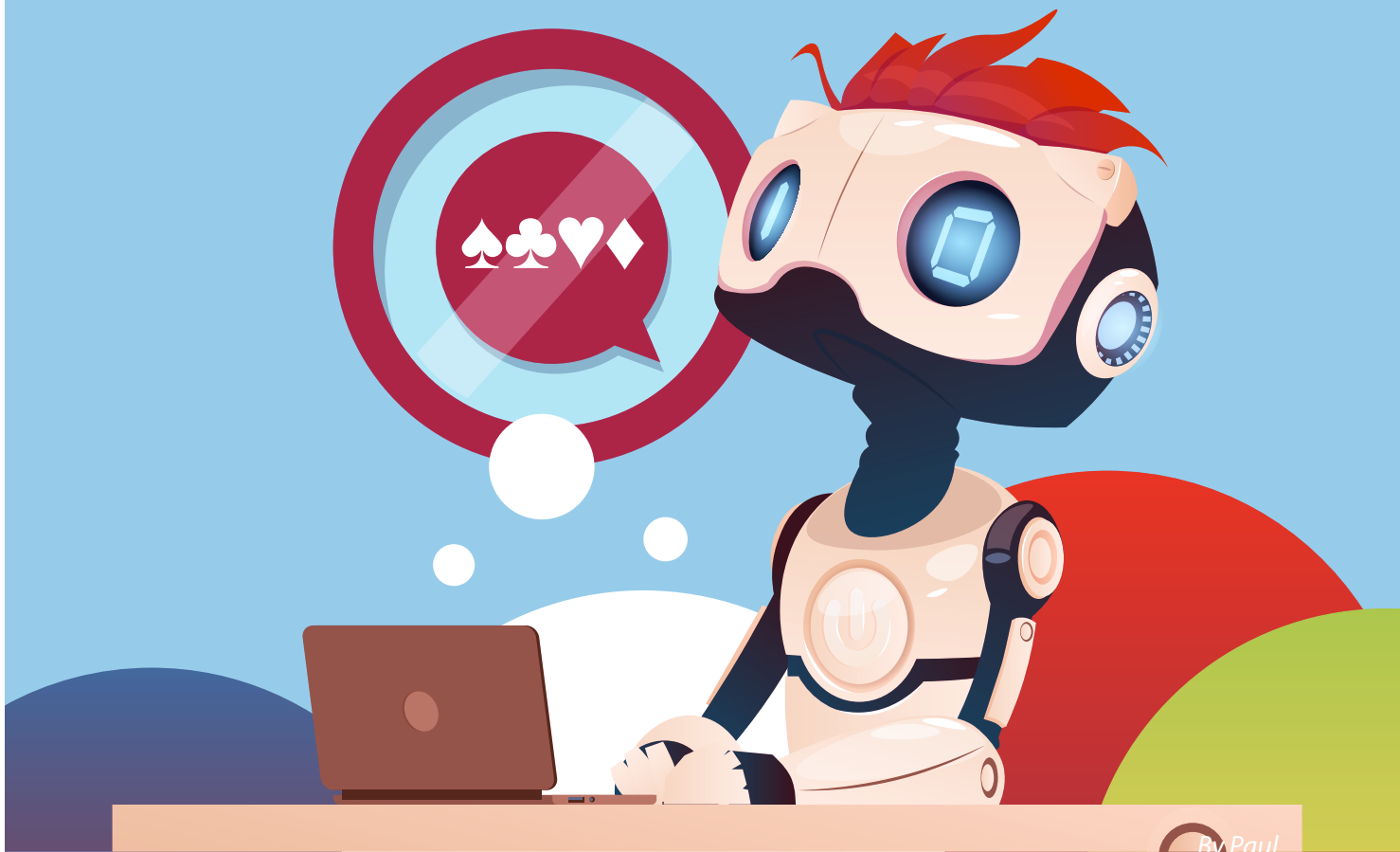
Contract: 4♠ after East opened 1♥. Lead: ♥6. The opponents switch to diamonds at trick 2. Find the 100% line of play.

You have nine top tricks, and the goal is to try to avoid taking the club finesse, which, based on the bidding, will likely lose.

The first step is to cover the six of hearts with dummy's nine, to prevent East from ducking and leaving West on lead to shift to a club. East wins the nine of hearts with the queen and shifts to a diamond. East likely has ♣K so an endplay is needed.

Win the ♦A and lead the ♥K, discarding the ♦10. The best East can do is shift to a trump. Play the five of trumps from hand and win the trick with in dummy with the nine. Ruff a heart in hand with the ace of trumps. Next, lead the ten of trumps to dummy's queen and ruff a diamond with the king of trumps. All that remained is to lead the carefully preserved two of trumps to dummy's three to reach dummy for the last time.

Now lead dummy's fourth heart and let East win the trick, discarding a club from your hand. East had two unappealing options: he could return a club into the ace-queen or give you a ruff and sluff. Either way, you score ten tricks.



THE EXPERT *Spot*

By Paul Thurston

WHAT WENT WRONG

A bit of a change in format for this feature: we'll start you off with two opening lead problems faced by experts in recent Online KO matches – IMP scoring. Once you've made your selections, we'll delve into the minds of the actual players (a scary proposition indeed!) to see the thought processes they used to make their choice. Finally, we'll see WHAT WENT WRONG? (or right) with those choices and try to decide if the lead that worked in practice was deserving of its success and whether the unsuccessful lead may have deserved a better fate.

Problem One

As West you hold: ♠ AQ654 ♥ K3 ♦ J1096 ♣ 94, and witness this auction:

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

1. Puppet Stayman , asking for 4 or 5 card major(s).
2. At least one 4-card major.

Your lead?

WHAT WENT WRONG ... CONTINUED

Problem Two

There were two different auctions because of system peculiarities so we'll see both sequences. As West, you hold: ♠ J763 ♥ K1042 ♦ 3 ♣ J865.

Table One auction:

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

1. Either a weak two in a major or very strong
2. Artificial relay asking hand type
3. Strong balanced with 24-25 HCP
4. Puppet Stayman
5. At least one 4-card major

What do you lead?

Table two auction:

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

1. Strong, artificial and forcing
2. Waiting relay
3. 24-26 balanced

What do you lead?

Problem One Discussion

There was, as always seems to happen, a divergence of opinion about what to lead – that's what makes bridge a horse race!

Expert #1: "Hey, its notrump – isn't that when we lead fourth-best from our longest and strongest? ♠ 5 for me!"

Expert #2: "So declarer has at least one four-card major, maybe two and responder must have at least three cards in one if not both majors so leading a spade has the possible downside of finding partner very short in spades to limit our potential for tricks while also risking giving away a possibly critical trick in the suit on the go. As an alternative, the solid diamond sequence won't give much if anything away immediately and may produce a trick or two for our side. Jack of diamonds for me".

The results? After normal play, Expert #1 yielded -430 and lost 10 IMPs when Expert #2 collected five tricks for +50. WHAT WENT WRONG will become evident when you look at the entire layout.

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

At the first table, declarer nervously called for the spade jack at trick one and was relieved when it held. Next, the heart ten was passed round to the king and West was stymied. He couldn't tell for sure if his partner started with one or two spades to go with the ten declarer's trick-one play marked in the East hand – maybe your signalling methods would have worked better? If East did have three spades to start with, West's continuation of a low spade might have worked very well but nothing was going to help on this layout. Declarer won the spade King and crossed to a winning heart to lead and pass the queen of clubs. East ducked but won the club continuation to shift to a low diamond. South was having nothing to do with that finesse so up ace and a fast claim of ten tricks.

WHAT WENT WRONG ... CONTINUED

As for the lead of the diamond Jack, the sight of dummy's spades made Expert #2 very happy and things got even better when South won East's diamond king to take the losing club finesse. Back came a diamond that South ducked before winning the third round to finish the clubs. Finally, a heart finesse that West won to cash another diamond and the spade ace for down one. Never having been a big fan of Puppet Stayman, if I sat on the jury I'd rule North guilty of Unnecessary Information Leakage that deflected West away from a spade lead when a simple and direct raise to three notrump might well have attracted a spade lead for a push.

And how would you rule if you were a jury member?

Problem Two Discussion

Puppet Stayman was involved once again after the French Internationalists holding the North-South cards unfurled some high-tech machinery with 2♦ having multiple possible meanings, the least common of which was the actual: 24-25 high-card points in a balanced hand. By the time three notrump was reached, **Expert # 1** in the West seat reasoned: "South has at least four cards in one major, maybe in both. Strictly based on my hand's distribution, South is more likely to be short in clubs than in diamonds. Dummy? Must have at least one three-card major to use Puppet Stayman and again it's likely his longer minor is diamonds. What I really hate to do is give something away by leading into a very strong hand's length, especially when our side doesn't have an abundance of high cards and/or useful length. Hope a club lead is best for our side. Put me down for the club five".

Expert # 2 had a different, more direct auction to consider and took a different, more direct path for the defense's start: "fourth-best from my longest and strongest and hope something good happens! Two of hearts for me". With a lot of information and inferences guiding his choice, Expert #1 went -430 and turned over 10 IMPs when Expert # Two's "shot in the dark" struck gold and produced +50 for his side.

Again, the deal's diagram will dramatically show What Went Wrong.

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

A lot of very bad things happened for Expert #1: the club ten won the first trick to give an otherwise unlikely dummy entry for an immediate diamond finesse and the club suit was also good for all five tricks. And one very good thing happened for Expert # Two's fourth-best lead: as all good partners will do, East produced the perfect heart-holding and those quickly-established heart winners and the 4-1 club split left declarer without resource.

And the jury rules? Was the club lead bad luck or a bad lead? Was the heart lead the best choice given the limited information Expert #2 had to go on? And for anyone who made the winning choice for both problems, please forward all partnership/team applications to tweedguy@gmail.com!



This one player never leads away from a king. He was told not to, so he never did. Finally he passes away and he finds himself in a bridge game. He is on lead against 4♠ holding: Kx, Kxx, Kxxx, Kxxx. Right then and there he knew where he was.



August 2020

Host: David Willis

For Panelists, see page 27

Editor's note: David hails from Ottawa and has played on and off in the Canadian championships since 1999, representing Canada at the World Championships as a player, coach or captain 4 times. Although he often is, he should not be confused with the longtime Ottawa column writer Dave Willis.

A couple of preliminaries to get us started. First an apology. All of the problems ended up being IMPs as I had been all set to play at least 4 days of Matchpoints in Columbus which of course did not work out as planned. At least **Danny Miles** still appreciated them saying: "Another impossible set of problems. Do they ever get easier? At least this month I only had a chance to get 5 wrong instead of 6." Finally, **Grainger and L'Ecuyer** look like the budding partnership of the month having duplicated each others calls on every hand of this set.

Problem 1: IMPs. N-S Vul., you, South, hold:

♠ K 5
♥ A 7
♦ A K Q 8 6 5
♣ 8 7 3

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

Action	Votes	Score
4♣	19	10
6♣	1	8
4♥	1	8
4NT	0	6
4♦	1	6
3NT	3	5

Some interesting questions on this one: How good is partner's hand for 2♠? How good is partner's shape for 3♠? What is the best trump suit for slam? How good is my hand? Not all of the 4♣ bids are coming from the same place. Let's start with those who are not sure that partner has not shown very much.

Gord Campbell (with support from Danny Miles, Marty Kirr, Ray Hornby): 4♣. Most of my stuff is wasted but I will give Pard a chance in case he holds ♠ Axxxx ♥ ? ♦ ? ♣ AKxxxx. My 3♥ surely created a game-force. Even with the above hand 6♣ is good but not a cinch.

Dan Jacob: 4♣. Slam prospects are good; partner should not have a minimum hand (it will be at least a shapely hand) since he/she wasn't forced to bid over the opponents 2♥.

For this group 2♠ is not game forcing even though freely bid but 3♥ established a game force. They remain leery of slam. What is partner's shape?

Ron Bishop: 4♣. Partner may have been 'stuck' over the cue so might not have the 6-5 that his bidding seems to indicate... but he certainly has quite a good hand or could have passed over the opponents' 2♥ raise.

Roy Dalton: 4♣. Not sure if partner is showing 5-6 distribution or if this is "last train" but either way 4♣ should work out.

Neil Kimelman: 4♣. I expect partner is 5-6 in the blacks.

Daniel Korbel with Zygmunt Marcinski: 3NT. I believe that partner could be only 5-4 in clubs and spades... We've been dragging them along at every opportunity. What was poor partner supposed to do

differently holding a hand such as AQxx xx xx AJ10xx? This sequence of cuebidding-then-3NT shows doubt about notrump.

In spite of holding ♦AKQxxx some are confident of the trump suit for slam and are driving there:

Keith Balcombe with Neil Kimelman, David Lindop: 4♣. 3♥ was game forcing and partner could be 5-6. Let's set trumps and take it from there. I see no reason for me to bid anything other than 4NT club RKC on the next round.

Kismet Fung with Jeff Blond: 4♣. Set the suit. Not great that I have a lot of red card values but at least they are trick taking and the ♠K rates to be a great card. If partner has AQxxx of spades and AKQxx of clubs, we could have a grand. Once partner cue bids, I can bid 4NT key card.

Nic L'Ecuyer with Robert Lebi, Andy Stark: 4♣. I would have bid 4♣ over 2♠ to ask about Keycards (Minorwood) – ... I don't think it is crazy to hope for Axxxx xx - AKxxxx and/or better – ... my next bid will be 4NT or 6♣.

David Turner: 6♣. I like the Levin-Weinstein agreement that all 4m bids are forcing, but I'm not sure partner will see it the same way (perhaps 4♣ could show the same hand with two small hearts). I'm assuming pard is at least 4xy6.

Driving to slam but getting diamonds in the picture along the way.

Bill Treble: 4♦. Very tough hand. I think the ambiguous 3♥ cuebid was premature. Better was to repeat the diamonds on my previous turn, then support clubs and cuebid the ace of hearts. It's going to be difficult now to show everything I have. But I'll cuebid the red suits and then 6♣.

Any others for diamonds as trump?

Danny Miles with Bob Kuz: 4♣. ... In a perfect world, we get a preference to diamonds with Jx and can comfortably play 6 (or even 7) diamonds...

Is everyone sure what's forcing?

David Grainger: 4♣. Setting trumps. Partner reversed. I made a 2/1 and cuebid. Any thoughts of this being not forcing are delusional.

Neil Kimelman: 4♣. ... Not sure I like the 3♥ call, as 3♦ seems more descriptive. I could have always bid clubs if partner had rebid 3NT over 3♦.

Could we not have had Qx xxx AKJ10xxx x and needed to stop in 3♦ if we had bid it? Some who believe that 3♦ would have been non-forcing would have picked a different path earlier.

Francine Cimon: 4♣. I don't like the 3♥ bid I would have bid 3♣ forcing. In that sequence I just play 3♦ not forcing. To make 3NT I need good clubs or diamonds to break. If he had good clubs I will probably make 6♣. I am not sure partner is showing a 6-5 and he can be weak.

One panelist even considers that 4♣ might not be forcing after 3♥ and wants to try for slam but give some room.

Stephen Cooper: 4♥. Opener may not know which suit I like, but if he signs off in 4♠, I will correct to 5♣. That at least gives us a chance for slam if he has two heart losers and a sound hand for his 6-5 sequence. I fear that he may pass if I bid 4♣, which may not be forcing, unless you have a specific agreement.

4♥ seems to have some merit on the face of things given the comments of others that partner may have shape but not necessarily a great hand. Some of our bidding gurus are putting on the brakes in 3NT which could be right if partner is 4-2-2-5 which they allow for:

Zygmunt Marcinski with Dan Korbel: 3NT. 3♠ is partner's "punt" and does not promise 556C... My "delayed" 3NT in conjunction with by-passing 3♣ in favour of 3♥ should show only a single stopper and asks Opener to "look at his hand"... if partner is shapely it's on him to pull. Yes, we could miss a slam.

At the table North held ♠ Axxxx ♥ x ♦ x ♣ AQJ642. Diamond and club slams both seem good. The ♣K is on-side third and diamonds are 4-2 so both slams come home. I downgraded 3NT as this bid will likely end the auction.

Problem 2: Imp pairs, N-S Vul., you, South, hold:

♠ Q J 8 7
♥ Q J 5 4
♦ 9 3
♣ K 7 3

West	North	East	South
-	1♣	1♦	Dbl
3♦ ¹	Dbl	Pass	?

1. Weak

Action	Votes	Score
4♦	13	8
4♣	10	10
3♥	1	4
3NT	1	2

Diving in, let's start with the TGCBC organizer to set the stage:

Neil Kimelman: 4♦. Originally, I thought this was the easiest problem. Not so much anymore. What does pard have? Extra values for sure. Shape? If balanced, 18+ Otherwise some hand with short diamonds, either with either majors or neither. With a hand with both minors I expect partner to have rebid clubs, bid notrump or pass

if hoping to defend. With one minor, I would expect partner to bid 3 or 4, depending on their strength. 4-4-1-4 or 3-3-1-6 are two possible unbalanced shapes. Either way we have enough to force to game, so I will cue bid, hoping partner can bid a major. If not, we can play in 5♣. The double is not penalty.

My partner and others are seeking the 4-3 fit:

Jeff Blond with Roy Dalton, Andy Stark: 4♦... What the heck is partner looking for? His double can't be penalty. All nine HCPs are working, and partner should be showing an above-average hand. I think 4♦ gives us the best chance to find the right game, demanding partner bid his better major.

Now what is 4♦? For some, it is a choice of games; for others a punt; and, for still others, an overbid to scramble to the best spot.

Daniel Korbel with Robert Lebi, David Turner: 4♦. I don't know where we belong but it surely can't be terrible to be taking a shot at game opposite partner's extras.

Gord Campbell: 4♦. An overbid ... to make Pard declare and to find the 4-4. Pard is at least a good 3424 or 4324, or 4414 or 3415 or 4315... With a more shapely hand Pard would have bid 4♦ instead of doubling 3♦.

Some are confident partner has no major others think they can have both:

Danny Miles: 4♦. Three-and-a-half Spearts feels about right. Does partner needs extras to double 3♦, or will any sound minimum with 4-4 in the majors suffice... vulnerable at IMPs will cause me to stretch.

Keith Balcombe with Ron Bishop, Stephen

Cooper: 4♦. Does opener's double promise both Majors? Maybe... Ron adds: we have good-to-great chances for game as long as we play in the right trump suit; so we had best get partner's input.

As for the 4♣ bidders they are in the camp, with me, that feels they showed exactly 4-4 (or possible 4-5) in the majors and thus partner must not have a 4-card major. They are going slowly given their soft values.

Kismet Fung: 4♣. Is partner 3-3-1-6 or 3-3-2-5. I have no defensive tricks. Either way, partner can bid, set the contract, or pass. Partner may opt to bid a good 3 card major and play the Moysian.

David Grainger with Bob K., David L., Francine: 4♣. My opinion of this double, given I have shown exactly 4-4 in the majors, is that it is a good hand, and mostly looking for a diamond stop. Given my slow, not special values and terrible diamond holding, 4♣ seems appropriate.

Dan Jacob: 4♣, not the right hand for 4♦ or Pass.

Nic L'Ecuyer, Bob Todd, Bill Treble: 4♣... let's NOT bid a 4 card major when partner could easily think this shows 5 – I am not passing with so-so defense.

And now for an interesting inference from holding the ♣K that I did not consider:

Martin Kirr: 3NT - I think (hope) double is lots of clubs (not solid since I have the king) with a diamond stopper. He can't be asking me to have both a stopper and club card.

Leaving the last words to our guru for this set:

Zygmunt Marcinski: 4♦. Opener's double is takeout and cannot have a 4. The more shape he has, the less values required, and he could be "dying for me to bid 3NT" with long solid clubs. I expect 18-19 balanced, ideally 3325 but possibly (32)35 with no/one D stopper or 15+ 3316 (possibly (32)26) or 14+ 7C's. My values, though modest, are all "working"... opener should assume that my 4♦ is a grope for the best game... will

pass anything except 4NT which would show slam interest.

I have demoted 4♦ in the scoring due to the variety of interpretations and mix of goals. The 4♣ bidders had relatively consistent views and would also have been right at the table, with 4♣ being the limit of the hand.

Making me feel a bit better about this one David Lindop, Bill Treble and Bob Todd all mentioned the possibility of passing at Matchpoints which I; do I have to admit this, did at the table. You can decide for yourself if you would have doubled 3♦. The real hand:

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

3) Imps. Both Vul., you, South hold:

♠ 10 7 6 4 2
♥ K
♦ K 10 6 5
♣ A 8 6

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	Pass
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠
Pass	3♣	Pass	3♦ ¹
Pass	3NT	Pass	?

1. Waiting bid, allowing partner to describe his hand.

Action	Votes	Score
Pass	12	10
4♠	1	8
4♣	9	7
4♥	1	6
4♦	1	5
4NT	1	5

This is one for the books with at least one panelist selecting each of the next 6 steps of bidding Pass thru 4NT. Key considerations are the slam that you can taste but knowing that 3NT might be the last makeable spot; how good are your partner's jump shifts; and can we get to the right strain for slam?

Summarizing for those who have become too acquainted with going down at the 5-level (Binsky) over their bridge careers:

Ron Bishop: PASS ... Let's see;... a couple of ways for this to win ... shapes from the 'norm' of 1-5-3-4 and 2-5-2-4 with around 20 HCPs must also be expanded to include some 1-5-2-5's, especially those with some diamond holding such as AQ tight. When we bid 3♦ our normal (non-heart support concerns) were those that had five spades; those interested in minor continuations; and those willing to play 3NT (or higher). I think we are just short of continuing. Short (but important hearts); no 4-card club support; and some 'wastage' in diamonds. Yes, we may be off a couple of spades in 3NT (if they lead them) but there is no assurance of an adequate trump suit at a higher level. So, let's shoot it out here.

David Lindop: Pass. Tough hand. We could easily have a slam. A lot depends on partner's spade holding: singleton ace, singleton king, low singleton. Tempting to bid 4♥ to show slam interest in hearts, but I'm not sure what 3♥ and 4♥ would have meant on the previous round.

Jeff Blond with Roy Dalton: Pass. While your ♥K and ♣A look like magnificent cards and your ♦K is surely useful ... lack of a fit for partner's suits suggest taking

the low road... since partner rates to be 1-5-3-4, 4♥ and 5♣ look like risky propositions as well.

Daniel Korbel: Pass. We almost have the values for a higher contract but we are unlikely to have any sort of fit. My fifth spade makes it less likely that they can beat us in the spade suit opposite partner's likely singleton.

Keith Balcombe: Pass. Partner might have x, AQJ10x, AQx, KQJx which makes 6♥. Or K, AJ10xx, AQx, KQxx which makes 3NT. I know what I choose.

Dan Jacob with Kismet Fung: Pass, it is likely partner doesn't have a 5-5 hand, rather 1-5-3-4. To make a move now I would need the 4th club.

Although the plurality votes for pass, a majority decides to move on toward slam:

Bill Treble: 4♣. ... Since I'm a passed hand partner should give me some leeway and I can follow up with 4♥ if he cuebids 4♦. The 'maxi-impossible' 4♠ occurs to me, but I don't want to encourage a double and there is the potential for a misunderstanding.

David Turner: 4♣. Very tough... We have to find a denomination where partner can't be tapped out. I'm going to try 4♣ and then 5NT next to offer a choice of denominations; I hope he'll bid 6♥ with x, AQJ10x, AQx, KQJx or 6♣ with the same high cards and 1-5-2-5 shape.

Danny Miles: 4♣. Worth a move with these prime cards ... Not impossible partner has a 5th club. The trouble is these auctions can get murky. A straightforward 4NT invite could commit us to that strain when partner is 1-5-3-4 or 1-5-2-5... If this is a magic hand for a 4-3 diamond fit, too tough for me.

Neil Kimelman: 4♣. Over 4♦ or 4♥ will bid 5NT, offering a choice of slams. I will pass 4NT and hope the defenders don't cash four top tricks.

Robert Lebi: 4♣. All my cards are working. Opposite one of my jump shifts, we will be cold for slam, even if partner is 1-5-3-4 in shape. x, AQJxx, AQx, KQJx. Give

pard a 5-5 and there is nothing to the play.

Stephen Cooper with Nic L'Ecuyer, Bob Todd: 4♣.

Partner should not expect 4-card support here, as I could have raised previously. But I have three working cards and partner may well be short in spades which would make slam a probable bet.

The question for this last group is what to do over 4♥ if partner bids it, having (possibly) faked the jump shift into clubs with long hearts. Now for our lonely bidders, with each person selecting a unique strain and level:

Ray Hornby: 4NT - not sure what 3NT shows but my prime extras should be worth 1 (quantitative) shot at slam.

Bob Kuz: 4♥. Seems strange but hearts is the only suit where I see slam is possible and a favorite percentagewise.

Andy Stark: 4♦. Can't bring myself to pass 3NT because we may have a slam. If partner has shortness in spades and strength everywhere else. For example: 5 AQJ98 AQJ KQ102 diamonds is the best strain... but clubs can't handle a 4-2 split with partner's hand getting tapped. If partner is 2-5-2-4 we might still have a slam. 4NT maybe that's our bailout.

Zygmunt comes up with a thoughtful master bid but let us hope 4NT or the 5 level are not too high.

Zygmunt Marcinski (with mention by Bill Treble):

4♠. This bid is not intended for small children. Its bid for success is predicated on complete mutual confidence. I have categorically denied a suit that wishes to suggest a 4♠ contract (no spade preempt or rebid); I would have responded 2♣ Drury with ♥; 4♣ with primary club support; and I cannot have slammish values with say 4♠6♦ as I would now first rebid 4♦. I'm making an aggressive slam move....ergo by process of elimination, 4♠ "should" depict exactly 3 "working" slam values since I didn't open the bidding including a stiff top honor in hearts and likely not the ♠A which is of uncertain value.

Partner should be able to place the contract - so I will "confidently" pass his next bid (other than 5♠!)

I indulged my almost (?) expunged bad habit of bidding on when one shouldn't. Angel Self: If partner is 1534 they are going to get tapped immediately in clubs and we may have no safe harbor. Devil Self: But wouldn't it be amazing if we made the slam on the 4-3 club fit, partner's jump shifts are serious... Although the x4xC bidders were rewarded at the table the sober thinkers who pass bring home the top score on this one. 4♦ and 4♥ were demoted as you could legitimately have longer trump and may get yourself to slam or the wrong game when partner plays you for that.

Partner North held ♠ A ♥ AJ10xx ♦ Axx ♣ KQJx. In 6♣ they lead a spade prematurely knocking out your hand entry before Hearts are unblocked but the Qxx of hearts is on-side (with East) and you skate home in 6♣. 4NT and 4♥ survive with spades 3-3.

4) Imps., N-S Vul., you, South, hold:

♠ A 9 8 6 5 3
♥ 6 4 3
♦ K Q 7
♣ K

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

1. GF

Action	Votes	Score
3H	18	10
2S	6	8
4H	1	6
4C	0	4

This problem was part style survey and part problem with a few interesting theory elements to consider. Disagreeing:

Stephen Cooper with Ray Hornby: 3♥ Am I allowed to ask what is the problem? 2♥ normally has a 5-card suit here.

Responses broke down into those who raise because they deny 3♥ otherwise; those who bid 3♥ because they believe it is right; a fast arriving 4♥ bidder and those who bid 2♠ for various reasons, almost all different. Some of the 3♥ bidders (many of them my teammates) considered but rejected splintering.

David Lindop with Neil Kimelman, Bob Todd, and Jeff Blond: 3♥. I'm not going to splinter with three low hearts and a singleton king. I'm happy to let partner know there is an eight-card heart fit. My spades aren't good enough to show the sixth spade ahead of supporting hearts.

Dan Jacob with Gord Campbell and Roy Dalton: 3♥, while the hearts are not great, 2♠ would deny 3♥.

Robert Lebi with Nic L'Ecuyer and Andy Stark: 3♥. I was taught to support with support. The non-robust six card spade suit can wait.

Francine Cimon: 3♥ forcing. 2♠ for many players means nothing, tends to be a weak hand and can have only 5 spades. Partner promises a 5+ card suit and FTG. I prefer to give a fit when I have one. And I don't show extras.

Ron Bishop: 3♥. We should be happy to play 3NT if partner were next to bid it, we had best give him room to do so.

Kismet Fung: 4♥. Fast arrival shows a worse hand. Don't want to encourage partner with xxx in hearts. Is the king of clubs pulling its weight? 3♥ is a very close second.

Now to the 2♠ bidders:

Danny Miles: 2♠. I'm usually one to support and establish trumps as early as possible, but we can save room and hear what else partner has to say before showing delayed support. If partner raises spades, they will have 3 card support.

Keith Balcombe: 2♠. When in doubt, choose the lowest bid to leave the most amount of room. If partner has: KQx, AQ8xx, Jxx, Qx or similar, then we want to play in spades.

Daniel Korbel: 2♠. No need to rush to raise hearts holding three tiny ones. A 6-3 spade fit could easily play better than a 5-3 heart fit. What if partner holds KQx AKJxx Jxx Qx, or even more importantly, KQx AKJxx Jxx Ax?

David Turner: 2♠. Mainly because I hate the bidding after a direct 3♥ raise: is responder's 3♠ bid real support, delayed support or a cuebid for hearts? Better to bid the nebulous 2♠ so that we can sort out the right denomination at a lower level. Partner will expect Hx for my later 3♥ bid, but what I've got is close enough.

Zygmunt Marcinski: 2♠ I wish to be non-committal, as there is no rush to show this potentially very dangerously tepid heart "support". Some pairs play that 2♠ shows six, others that 2NT does, if so I would choose that.

Finishing off with a 3♥ bidder who understands what the problem was and has a possible fix:

David Grainger: 3♥. This depends on agreement. Modern style these days is to bid 2♣ short with 3 spades and 5 hearts you don't want raised. That is my preferred style, and as such I would bid 3♥.

To my mind, in the absence of the Grainger gadget, the case for 2♠ is compelling: it is cheapest providing room, it simplifies future bidding, it does not overemphasize hearts it allows us to get to notrump, hearts and spades intelligently. There are many example hands similar to Daniel or Keith's where your heart losers in 4♥ go away on partner's minor suit cards in notrump or spades.

There is nothing stopping getting to hearts later with the main downside being partner allowing for you have xxx in hearts. Unfortunately, the ambiguity for many of 2♠ dissuades them when they might otherwise consider it.

On the actual hand partner North held ♠ - ♥ AKJ10x ♦ AT9x ♣ Jxxx. Most roads lead to 4♥ which makes with most reasonable lines.

5) IMPs, Both Vul., you, South, hold:

♠ 8
♥ K J 9 8 7 6 4 3
♦ -
♣ 8 7 5 4

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

Action	Votes	Score
Yes	14	3
No - 4♥	8	2
No - 3♥	2	1
No - 2♥	0	0
No reply	1	1

A) Would you have bid 1♥ or something else?

Another bit of a style survey. The majority bid 1♥; most because they felt it is correct, many because they don't know what partner will think of 4♥ or 3♥. If you are going to bid something other than 1♥ Keith, while recognizing the risk that there is a slam, sums things up nicely:

Keith Balcombe: No, 4♥. It's a bit heavy to bid 4♥, but you don't want to lay your cards down in dummy - right?

Nic L'Ecuyer with Francine Cimon: No, 4♥ – hoping for the best – only chance to strongly suggest playing in hearts – I have a bunch of other bids to suggest other strains or doubt.

Other people were less optimistic:

Kismet Fung with support from Peter Klimowicz: Can I bid 2♥ or 3♥ weak the first time around?

Stephen Cooper: I would respond 3♥ if it is a natural call. Absent that natural bid, I might respond 4♥

Summing up for those who might have wanted to bid 4♥ but would not have:

Ron Bishop: YES. In today's world all other levels of hearts may mean something different (other than a value response with hearts)... Inverted Flannery (weak; both majors); strong jumps; weak jumps; splinters; fit showing... all come to mind, so we had best bid what we know is true.

Bob Todd: Yes. 40 years ago 4♥ would have showed a one loser suit with 7+ hearts and nothing else. I have no idea if anybody would still bid 4♥ over 1 club. Even if I could, I would not.

B) What do you bid now (2NT is Ingberman)?

Action	Votes	Score
4♥	10	7
2NT/4♥	8	5
2NT/3♥	7	2
3♥	0	1

I was interested to see if anyone would question if 2NT should be Ingberman here. It seemed to be broadly accepted. From there, things diverged, particularly in the area of hand evaluation. Some panelists including many "Fish" were prepared to sign off in 3♥ taking a risk given that partner will play them to be 2-6-4-1 with a bad hand.

Blond with Turner, Fung, L'Ecuyer, Lebi, Kuz and Marsinski: 2NT. This looks like a good hand for Ingberman. After 2NT, assuming partner bids 3♣, I can bid 3♥ to show a very weak hand with long hearts. With partner showing at least nine pointed-suit cards, this hand has too many round-suit losers to just blast 4♥ and hope for the best.

Others bid Ingberman to avoid giving the wrong picture by bidding 4♥.

Cooper: 2NT tool. I will hear another call. The only one that would excite me is 3♥! Over anything else I will bid 4♥... With a better suit, I would bid 3♥ and then 4♥, or with a solid suit, jump to 4♥ over the jump shift.

Many thought 4♥ fit perfectly and was required to emphasize hearts.

Gord Campbell: I prefer an immediate 4♥ now rather than 2NT Ingberman to show I am not interested in what Pard has to say. I might make 4♥ even with an unlucky 3 trump losers.

Keith Balcombe: 4♥. It's now may not good enough to bid 4♥, but you still don't want to lay your cards down in dummy - right?

David Grainger with Ray Hornby: 4♥. Have to get across how one suited my hand is somehow.

Dan Jacob and David Lindop: 4♥. What else are we going to play? 3♥ followed by 4♥ should show a better hand.

Danny Miles: I bid 4♥ now. Surely this shows a minimum in high cards and a maximum in trump length. The trouble with 2NT is if partner breaks the relay with 3♠, now 4♥ may be taken as a cuebid.

Danny raises a key complicating factor of not bidding 4♥ immediately, you may find yourself too high before partner gets the message that you are all hearts if they do something other than relay. Those taking the middle road:

Daniel Korbel with Neil Kimelman, Bill Treble and Francine Cimon: 2NT. For now I'll try to slow the auction down then surprise partner by jumping to 4♥, if possible.

Bob Todd: 2NT and over anything to bid 4♥. If partner surprises me by bidding 3♥ over 2NT, I will have to re-think my plan. My hand is suddenly much better.

Not sure what we learnt on this one other than Ingberman auctions need some more discussion. There are no fewer than 4 ways to get 4♥ in this auction, might be useful to understand the differences.

At the table emphasizing hearts by bidding 1♥ to not preempt followed by 4♥ was a clear winner. Well done to those who thought there might still be a slam. Partner's hand is not everyone's cup of tea for 2♠ (2NT anyone?) but they should make a move over 4♥. The North hand: ♠ Jxxx ♥ AQ ♦ AKQxx ♣ Ax.



Count your winners and count your losers. If the total doesn't come to 13, count your cards.

Alfred Sheinwold

PANEL'S ANSWERS

	Hand 1		Hand 2		Hand 3		Hand 4		Hand 5				Total
Panelists	Bid	Score	Bid	Score	Bid	Score	Bid	Score	Agree	Bid	Bid	Score	Total
Balcombe, Keith	4♣	10	4♦	8	Pass	10	2♠	8	N/4♥	4♥		9	45
Bishop, Ron	4♣	10	4♦	8	Pass	10	3♥	10	Y	2NT/4♥	4♥	8	46
Blond, Jeff	4♣	10	4♦	8	Pass	10	3♥	10	Y	2NT	3♥	5	43
Campbell, Gordon	4♣	10	4♦	8	Pass	10	3♥	10	N/4♥	4♥		7	45
Cooper, Stephen	4♥	8	4♦	8	4♣	7	3♥	10	N/3♥	2NT/4♥	4♥	7	40
Dalton, Roy	4♣	10	4♦	8	Pass	10	3♥	10	N/4♥	4♥		9	47
Fung, Kismet	4♣	10	4♣	10	Pass	10	4♥	6	N/3♥	2NT	3♥	5	41
Grainger, David	4♣	10	4♣	10	4♣	7	3♥	10	N/4♥	4♥		9	46
Hornby, Ray	4♣	10	4♣	10	4NT	5	3♥	10	Y	4♥		10	45
Jacob, Dan	4♣	10	4♣	10	Pass	10	3♥	10	Y	4♥		10	50
Kimelman, Neil	4♣	10	4♦	8	4♣	7	3♥	10	Y	2NT/4♥	4♥	8	43
Kirr, Martin	4♣	10	3NT	2	Pass	10	3♥	10	Y	4♥		10	42
Korbel, Daniel	3NT	5	4♦	8	Pass	10	2♠	6	N/4♥	2NT/4♥	4♥	7	36
Kuz, Bob	4♣	10	4♣	10	4♥	6	3♥	10	Y	2NT	3♥	5	41
L'Ecuyer, Nic	4♣	10	4♣	10	4♣	7	3♥	10	N/4♥	4♥		9	46
Lebi, Robert	4♣	10	4♦	8	4♣	7	3♥	10	Y	2NT	3♥	5	40
Lindop, David	4♣	10	4♣	10	Pass	10	3♥	10	N/4♥	2NT/ 4♥		9	49
Marsinski, Zygmunt	3NT	5	4♦	8	4♠	9	2♠	6	Y	2NT	3♥	5	33
Miles, Danny	4♣	10	4♦	8	4♣	7	2♠	6	Y	4♥		10	41
Cimon, Francine	4♣	10	4♣	10	Pass	7	3♥	10	N/4♥	2NT/4♥	4♥	7	44
Stark, Andy	4♣	10	4♦	8	4♦	5	3♥	10	Y	2NT	3♥	5	38
Todd, Bob	4♣	10	4♣	10	4♣	7	3♥	10	Y	2NT/4♥	4♥	8	45
Treble, Bill	4♦	6	4♣	10	4♣	7	3♥	10	Y	2NT/4♥	4♥	8	41
Turner, David	6♣	8	4♦	8	4♣	7	2♠	6	Y	2NT	3♥	5	34

October 2020 Problems

Host: Paul Thurston

1. N-S Vul. IMPs. As South you hold:

♠ J8 ♥ J10854 ♦ Q942 ♣ 43

West	North	East	South
-	-	2♠	Pass
Pass	3♣	Pass	?

What do you bid?

2. Neither Vul. IMPs. As South you hold:

♠ 7 ♥ 108543 ♦ K76 ♣ AK73

West	North	East	South
-	1♠	2♥	Pass
Pass	4♠	Pass	?

What do you bid?

3. Both Vul. IMPs. As South you hold:

♠ Q64 ♥ Q ♦ K9862 ♣ J1093

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

South's pass showed values, somewhat undefined but at least 5 HCPs and no one-loser 6+ card suit.

What do you bid?

4. E-W Vul. Matchpoints. As South you hold:

♠ AJ4 ♥ - ♦ J73 ♣ KJ108653

West	North	East	South
-	-	Pass	?

What do you bid?

5. N-S Vul. IMPs. As South you hold:

♠ K8 ♥ Q52 ♦ 754 ♣ AQ982

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	Pass ¹
1♦	Dbl	Pass	?

Please don't abstain if you would have opened with South's "great" hand!

What do you bid?

Deadline for entries: August 27th.

MOLLO On Play

Solution to problem from page 9

Contract: 6♣ by South at IMPs.

Lead: ♣5. Plan the play.

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

As Mollo states, there is no problem if diamonds are 4-3, or the queen is doubleton. To make the hand he suggests the key is to try and set up the long heart, while keeping your diamond tenace intact. The recommended line is to win the club, cash ace of hearts, ruff a heart, xDxA, ruff a diamond, ruff a heart, ruff a diamond, ruff a heart and cash the ♣AK to reach this ending, and lead a spade.

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



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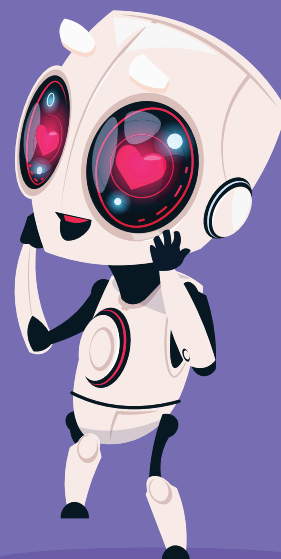
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Wife holds her bosom before her husband leads. He wants to lead a diamond, but when he sees her holding her bosom, so he leads a heart. A diamond lead would have set the hand.

He asks her why she was holding her bosom. She says: "I wasn't holding my bosom, I was trying to show a bust!"



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