

bridge *Canada*

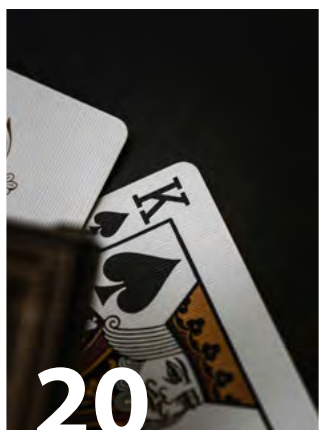
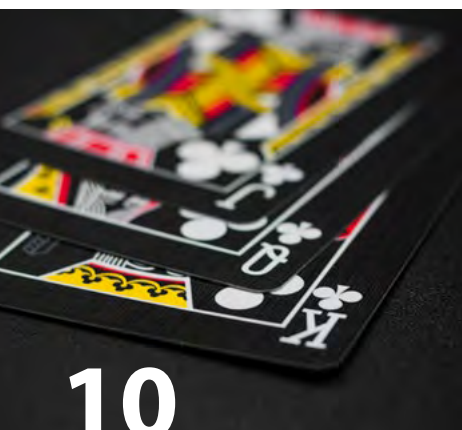
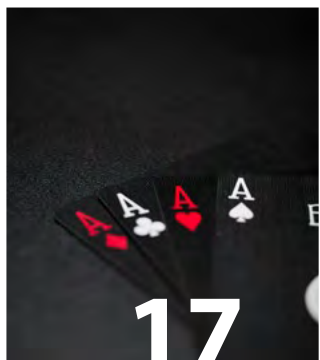


2024 CANADIAN TEAM CHAMPIONS - BUENOS AIRES BOUND!

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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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: Starting Jan 2021, membership dues for players 25 years of age and under are \$10 per year. When joining or renewing on the CBF website, use promo code JUNIOR to access the discount.

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EDITOR'S MESSAGE

The Goods

2024 Canadian Bridge Championships (CBCs)

Congrats to all the winners, and well done for all who made it to the Knockout Phase of the Championship events. See the next page for all the medalists from Penticton.

I wish all teams the best in the representing Canada at the World Bridge Championships, which are being held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, October 21-November 3, 2024. All Canadians will be rooting for you!

2024 Summer Olympics

When you read this the Paris Olympics will be over for more than two weeks. Did you watch? Cheer for all the athletes who represented Canada? Be proud when we won medals, especially gold?

I watched and did all those things. I marvelled at how well trained Canadian Athletes were, and all the money that must have gone into the coaching, training, pre-olympic competitions, travel, uniforms, etc... My tax dollars at work. I don't mind. I feel connected to what I see as a very worthwhile effort, and feel proud to be Canadian.

Well, bridge is having their own Olympics this fall. As mentioned above, this October in Argentina. It also takes money to support our finest bridge players in competing against the best in the world. For some reason, many Canadian bridge players do not wish to support our Olympians in the game we love.

The CBF can only afford to subsidize a small portion of these costs, which are similar in nature for our Olympic athletes. I encourage you to consider donating to support Canadian bridge athletes!!

Toronto: 2024 Summer North American Bridge Championships

Congrats to the CBF members and other Canadians who finished in the top three of NABC events in

Toronto:

1st: Spingold. Nick L'Ecuyer, Montreal, QC.

3rd Roth Open Swiss. Leslie Amoils, North York, ON.

3rd NABC+ Open Pairs. Yimei Cao, Aurora, ON.

1st: Wagar Women's Pairs. Kismet Fung, Edmonton, AB.

1st NABC 0-10000 NABC Mixed SwissTeams. Jianfeng Luo, North York, ON.

3rd: NABC 0-10000 Pairs. Gur and Margaret Baykal, Markham, ON.

2nd: Bruce 0-6000 LM Pairs – Craig Symington, Ottawa ON – Roman Jacques, Gatineau, QC.

2nd: 0-2500 Min-Spingold. Jill Plasteras, Victoria, BC – Madeleine Tremblay, North Saanich, BC.

3/4: 0-2500 Min-Spingold. Simon-Pierre Goulet, Montreal QC – Frederic Belanger, Verdun, QC.

1st: Young 0-2500 Josette Levesque, Montreal, QC - Johanne Sevigny, Westmount QC.

1st: Bean Red Ribbon Pairs. Ryan Clarke, Richard Piette, Calgary, AB.

3rd: Bean Red Ribbon Pairs. Iain Macdonald – Jerry Lenders, Toronto, ON.

CBF Online Teams

The online teams will be starting in October check the CBF website for registration info. This is a great, affordable way to compete, and improve your bridge playing against Canadians from across our country!

The CBF Junior Program

I would like to recognize and thank Andy Stark for all his efforts in managing and coaching our Junior superstars! Thanks Andy on behalf of the CBF and its members! See this issue for Andy's update on these young CBF members!

Neil Kimelman

Bridge Canada Managing Editor

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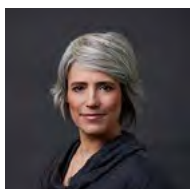
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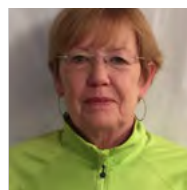
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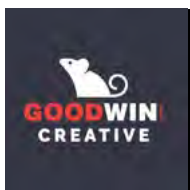
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2024 CANADIAN BRIDGE CHAMPIONSHIPS MEDALISTS

TEAM WINNERS

CANADIAN OPEN TEAMS CHAMPIONSHIP (CNTC-A)



CNTC A Gold

Daniel Lyder, Michael Roche, Jeff Blond, Brad Bart



CNTC A Silver

Peter Wong, Mike Xiaofang, Terry Du, Andrew Zheng

CNTC A Gold - Daniel Lyder, Michael Roche, Jeff Blond, Brad Bart

CNTC A Silver - Peter Wong, Mike Xiaofang, Terry Du, Andrew Zheng

CNTC A Bronze - Shigang Liang, Jianfeng Luo, Edward Xu Yan Wang, Michael Wang, Qian Re

CNTC A Bronze - Kai Zhou, Lu Gan, Xinguo Chen, Alex Hong

CANADIAN SENIOR TEAMS CHAMPIONSHIP (CSTC)



CSTC Gold

Dan Jacob, Gord McOrmond, John Carruthers,
Robert Lebi, Mike Hargreaves, Piotr Klimowicz



CSTC Silver

Doug Fisher, Bob Todd, Paul Thurston, Neil Kimelman,
Ray Hornby. Missing: Lino D'Sousa

CSTC Gold – Dan Jacob, Gord McOrmond, John Carruthers, Robert Lebi, Mike Hargreaves, Piotr Klimowicz

CSTC Silver – Doug Fisher, Bob Todd, Paul Thurston, Neil Kimelman, Ray Hornby

Missing: Lino D'Sousa

CSTC Bronze – Gerry McCully, Peter Jones, Sandra Fraser, Doug Fraser

CSTC Bronze – Sheldon Spier, Mike Ainsley, Steve Lawrence, Sandy McIlwain

CANADIAN MIXED TEAMS CHAMPIONSHIP (CMTC)



CMTC Gold

Ranald Davidson, Marc-Andre
Fourcaudot, Michael Gamble,
Kismet Fung, Sondra Blank,
Brenda Bryant



CMTC Silver

Edward Xu, Cindy He, Michael
Wang, Candice Huang, Yimei
Cao, Jianfeng Luo



CMTC Bronze

Bill Kertes, Roisin O'Hara, Ina
Demme, Hazel Wolpert, Andy
Stark
Missing: Paul O'Hara



CMTC Bronze

Richard Chan, Lisa Chen, Jessica
Lin, Peter Wong, Margaret
Baykal, Gur Baykal

CMTC Gold – Ranald Davidson, Marc-Andre Fourcaudot, Michael Gamble, Kismet Fung, Sondra Blank, Brenda Bryant

CMTC Silver – Edward Xu, Cindy He, Michael Wang, Candice Huang, Yimei Cao, Jianfeng Luo

CMTC Bronze – Bill Kertes, Roisin O'Hara, Ina Demme, Hazel Wolpert, Andy Stark

Missing: Paul O'Hara

CMTC Bronze – Richard Chan, Lisa Chen, Jessica Lin, Peter Wong, Margaret Baykal, Gur Baykal

CANADIAN WOMEN'S TEAMS CHAMPIONSHIP (CWTC)



CWTC Gold

Hazel Wolpert, Linda Wynston,
Lesley Thomson, Barbara Shnier,
Ina Demme, Roisin O'hara



CWTC Silver

Jennifer Hong, Jin Mei Luo, Lisa
Li, Amy Gao, Diana Jing, Juan Xu



CWTC Bronze

Anu Goodman, Pam Nesbitt,
Judy Harris, Julie Smith



CWTC Bronze

Johanne Sevigny, Josette
Levesque, Shelley Burns,
Chantal Dube

CWTC Gold – Hazel Wolpert, Linda Wynston, Lesley Thomson, Barbara Shnier, Ina Demme, Roisin O'hara

CWTC Silver – Jennifer Hong, Jin Mei Luo, Lisa Li, Amy Gao, Diana Jing, Juan Xu

CWTC Bronze – Anu Goodman, Pam Nesbitt, Judy Harris, Julie Smith

CWTC Bronze – Johanne Sevigny, Josette Levesque, Shelley Burns, Chantal Dube

CANADIAN TEAMS CHAMPIONSHIP FLIGHT B (CNTC-B)



CNTC B Gold

Runan Du, Yipeng Mai, Qi Ju, Xioadong Zhao



CNTC B Silver

Kathleen Harvey, Louise Klimowicz,
Charles Hitschfeld, Michael Harvey

CNTC B Gold – Runan Du, Yipeng Mai, Qi Ju, Xioadong Zhao

CNTC B Silver – Kathleen Harvey, Louise Klimowicz, Charles Hitschfeld, Michael Harvey

CNTC B Bronze – Freddie Mykytyshyn, Len Doerksen, Leigh Anne Shafer, Susanne McCarthy

CNTC B Bronze – Julien Levesque, Andrew Kwywaniuk, Kenny T K Chan, Kenny Ying

CANADIAN TEAMS CHAMPIONSHIP FLIGHT C (CNTC-C)



CNTC C Gold

Sharon McDonald, Phyllis Minielly,
Fred Smith, Linda Smith



CNTC C Silver

Jeff Frank, Liliane Tremblay,
Paulette Desaulniers, Patrick Noel

CNTC C Gold – Sharon McDonald, Phyllis Minielly, Fred Smith, Linda Smith

CNTC C Silver – Jeff Frank, Liliane Tremblay, Paulette Desaulniers, Patrick Noel

PAIR WINNERS

CANADIAN OPEN PAIRS CHAMPIONSHIP (COPC)



COPC Gold

Jeffery Smith and Xiaojing Deng



COPC Silver

Jason Feldman and Michael Gamble

COPC Gold – Jeffery Smith and Xiaojing Deng

COPC Silver – Jason Feldman and Michael Gamble

COPC Bronze – Julie Smith and Judy Harris



2024 CANADIAN SENIOR TEAMS CHAMPIONSHIP (CSTCS)

By Mike Hargreaves and Piotr Klimowicz

All 2024 Championship events started with an online Round Robin, on Real Bridge, with an in person final, held in Penticton, June 15-16. After having a once in a life time Round Robin of 82.75% of available VPs (almost 2 matches ahead of the second place) our team (Dan Jacob-Piotr Klimowicz, John Carruthers-Robert Lebi, Gord McOrmond-Mike Hargreaves) found themselves in the privileged position to pick the opponent for the semifinal. We all know that the picking could be a risky business and many times it backfires.

OVERALL SCORES

Pos	No	Team	Score
1	3	3. Jacob	148.95
2	5	5. Todd	109.42
3	8	8. McCully	103.24
4	2	2. Spier	94.19
5	1	1. Roche	91.82
6	6	6. Kersey	86.69
7	9	9. Baxter	84.87
8	7	7. Janicki	78.65
9	10	10. Burns	55.45
10	4	4. Li	46.72

Before the last round 4 teams (who finished 4-7) were on the bubble to catch the last qualifying spot. Spier (Sheldon Spier-Mike Ainsley, Steve Lawrence-Sandy McIlwain) prevailed. We selected Spier as our opponent for the semi-final.

SEMI FINALS

Although the final score (4 x 14 boards segments) was 157-95, the match felt much closer. We got an early wakeup call when on Board 4, Lawrence-McIlwain bid a cold 7♦ on a very rare auction:

Segment 1, Board 4. Dealer West, both vulnerable.

Klimowicz		Lawrence	
♠	J76543	♠	-
♥	643	♥	AQJ1095
♦	8	♦	K95
♣	AQ2	♣	K1098
McIlwain		Jacob	
♠	1092	♠	AKQ8
♥	K	♥	872
♦	AQJ1076432	♦	-
♣	-	♣	J76543

The auction:

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

N-S had a chance to save the board by bidding 7♠ (it only goes for -1400), but it's hard to blame them for not taking a sacrifice having an ace in the unbid suit on the opening lead. Wrong! That was 13 IMPs to the Spier team. Note: Likely a 2♠ preempt by North would make it a little tougher on the opposition to bid the grand. However, we will never know.

At other tables West opened 5♦ and all Easts raised to six.

Editor's note: In our CSTC semi final, Hornby considered bidding 5♥ over my 5♦ opener, a cue bid, trying for a grand in diamonds. However Ray reasonably did not want

to trot this out at such an important event, without having a firm agreement.

Segment 4, Board 20. Dealer West, both vulnerable.

Hargreaves		Spier	
♠	4	♠	J653
♥	KQ52	♥	973
♦	AK	♦	1072
♣	AKQ932	♣	J108
Ainsley		McOrmond	
♠	K872	♠	AQ109
♥	J864	♥	A10
♦	Q863	♦	J954
♣	6	♣	754

The auction:

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♣	Pass	1♥ ¹
Pass	2♥	Pass	3♣
Pass	4♦ ²	Pass	4NT ³
Pass	7♣	All Pass	

1♥ showed 4+ spades. 2♥ was a reverse, one round force, promising a rebid. 3♣ showed 3+ support, full values and denied a decent five card spade suit, while establishing a game force. With a weak hand and club support, South would have bid 2NT, Ingberman (which in this sequence is identical to Lebensohl). 4♦ was Kickback on clubs and 4NT showed 2 keycards. North's 7♣ was premature as if partner has any extras 7NT would be an almost laydown. North had an option of bidding 5♦ to ask for specific kings. Now the play. Although seeing all hands 7♣ can be made with almost any line of play (West gets triple squeezed if the contract is 7NT), in real life experts would calculate the best line of play by calculating the percentages.

You receive a low diamond lead. You try the 9 from the dummy, but the queen doesn't appear. If the trumps are

2-2 you claim, if they are 4-0, you can also claim for down 1. They are 3-1. The simple line is to play to ruff a heart in dummy...hearts will be 4-3 roughly 62.5% of the time, plus on a small number of hands, the long clubs will have 5 hearts (7.5%), so that makes it around 70% or so. Calculating the squeeze here is more difficult. Play 5 rounds of clubs, pitching two spades. Then cash the second diamond winner, reducing to a 6 card ending. Dummy has AQ Ax Jx void and declarer has x KQxx, void, x. A heart to the ace and ruff a diamond. The squeeze fails only when both the spade king and diamond queen are in the West hand with short hearts. (at the table Hargreaves opted for ruffing the heart).

There is a theory that one should not bid grands unless its at least 75%. Why? Because even good pairs sometimes have accidents and miss even the small slam. That happened on this board...our opponents played in game. Had the grand failed, we would have lost 12imps. Bidding the grand would have gained only 4imps.

The other semi-final (McCully vs Todd) was very close. McCully team (Gerry McCully, Peter Jones, Sandra Fraser, Doug Fraser) led all the way up to the last quarter only to lose by 9 IMPs (115-106).



The Finals

In the finals where we faced the very experienced Todd team (Bob Todd-Doug Fisher, Ray Hornby-Neil Kimelman, Lino D'Sousa-Paul Thurston), a team with members holding many national titles. The final was a close battle with many swing boards. It seems like the following board result turned the tide in favour for Jacob's team.

Segment 2, Board 18. Vul: N-S Dealer East.

Hargreaves

Hornby

♠ AK102

♥ A32

♦ Q1062

♣ K4

Carruthers

D'Sousa

♠ QJ63

♥ J5

♦ AJ853

♣ 62

Lebi

Thurston

♠ 54

♥ 984

♦ 94

♣ AQJ1097

McOrmond

Kimelman

♠ 987

♥ KQ1076

♦ K7

♣ 853

The auction (on both tables):

West	North	East	South
-	-	3♣	Pass
Pass	?		

North has two reasonable options, 3NT or double. 3NT has the merit of protecting the club king, at least on the opening lead, but it is not a clear action (poor source of tricks). You will need partner to have a fairly good hand to have a decent chance. Over 3NT, partner will not look for a major suit contract unless holding a 6-7 card major suit. On the other hand, a club lead at trick one may offer the 9th trick; and it's far from clear what you should bid if partner advances the double with 3♥ or 3♠.

In any case Hargreaves opted for the double, while Hornby, facing the same situation, chose 3NT. You be the judge which is the better call? After the double, McOrmond bid 3♥ and played there scoring 10 tricks, +170.

At the other table Hornby received a heart lead. (East would have to lead a diamond to legitimately beat the contract).

Assuming hearts behave, you have 7 top tricks. The ♦A may be with the long clubs, but they were at favourable and their Convention Card announces 'light' pre-empt(s).

Spades offers some possibilities, if RHO has both missing honours, you can take 4 spade tricks by double-finessing. Is there a risk to that? If you do lose to an honour on your left, sure as anything back comes a diamond, and the club through your Kx spells -400 on a good day (opener has only 6 clubs) or -500 if he has 7.

But rejecting the double hook almost always will lead to -200; if you cash out and either -300 or -400 if you play on diamonds, assuming RHO has that Ace. My counterpart struck a balance.....Hornby, not willing to give up but unwilling to risk -4/500, cashed one high spade, hoping to catch a stiff honour.

The double finesse is the right line, despite the risk involved. The auction suggests that RHO has some spade length, making the chances of both honours being onside greater than the a priori 25%.

If you play for both honors on side, you score +630 (you get four spade tricks!). As it is, refusing the double finesse means you are pretty much conceding -200.

The compromise line requires a very unlikely spade situation....5-1 with the stiff being an honour. Even if spades were 5-1, LHO could hold any of 4 spot cards to 2 honours, and there's was no compelling reason to expect 5-1 spades anyway. Had he double finessed, he would have won 10 imps. In conclusion our team picked up 9 imps instead of losing 10. 19 IMPs was the

massive swing and the momentum has turned.

Before the last quarter the lead for Jacob's team was 37 IMPs (85-48) but by no means was it a safe lead. Consider the following 2 boards.

Segment 4, Board 15. Dealer: North, Vul: N-S

Hargreaves

Todd

♠ J7

♥ KQ2

♦ A952

♣ AJ85

Jacob

Kimelman

♠ KQ1054

♥ 1087543

♦ -

♣ 104

Klimowicz

Hornby

♠ 8632

♥ AJ6

♦ K764

♣ KQ

McOrmond

Fisher

♠ A9

♥ 9

♦ QJ1083

♣ 97632

At both tables West originally passed but later showed both majors. Our side played 4♠, down one a heart lead, when their side got a heart ruff. Kimelman had a chance when he wound up in 4♥. On a club lead and continuation, he chose to play ♥A at trick three, hoping for a stiff honour. He shared that his line of play was influenced by Hargreaves not doubling 4♥, with his two aces, and two heart honours behind the heart length.



Segment 4, Board 23. Dealer: West Vul: Both

Hargreaves

Todd

♠ K108654

♥ -

♦ AK9

♣ KQ108

Jacob

Kimelman

♠ A

♥ J98643

♦ J832

♣ A6

Klimowicz

Hornby

♠ J73

♥ AKQ752

♦ 75

♣ J3

McOrmond

Fisher

♠ Q92

♥ 10

♦ Q1064

♣ 97542

Table 1 auction:

Kimelman	Hargreaves	Hornby	McOrmond
West	North	East	South
1♥	1♠	2NT ¹	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

1. Limit raise plus, with 4+ hearts.

Table 2 auction:

Jacob	Todd	Klimowicz	Fisher
West	North	East	South
2♥	2♠	2NT ¹	Pass
3♣	4♠!!	5♥	All Pass

1. Limit raise plus, with 4+ hearts.

2♥ was 10-12 with 6/7 hearts and 2NT asked further info (as you can see, an immediate 4♥ would generate 4♠ as well), 3C showed any 6-4 shape.

Team Todd won 12 IMPs. However, if they find a 5♠ bid and then guess the play (not hard) they would have gained an additional 3 IMPs and with hypothetical 12 IMPs from the previous board this would be enough to win the match by 1 IMP (the margin team Jacob lost

CSTC 2023 to team Hanna). I guess, the lighting doesn't strike twice.

The final score was 97-71 (26 IMPs) for team Jacob. Both of our opposing teams, semis (Spier) and finals (Todd), played very well...sure there were the inevitable: missed chances, "unlucky" decisions and some "oopses" by both teams.

Our team, with our NPC, Jim McAvoy will do our best to represent Canada Seniors in Buenos Aires (October 22 – November 3). With good play and plenty of good luck, we may be able to report on a successful trip.

QUIZ

IBPA DECLARER PLAY PROBLEM #26**ANSWER ON PAGE 33**

Contract: 6♠, IMPs. Lead: ♠6. Plan the play. Spades are 2-1. The full deal:

♠ J1083
♥ 74
♦ AJ82
♣ K52

♠ AKQ975
♥ AQ
♦ K94
♣ A8

**BRIDGE PLAYERS DO IT WITH FINESSE.**



Not all went wrong in Wroclaw

By Andy Stark



This year the CBF decided to send one junior team to the world championships in Wroclaw, Poland. Actually, 2024 was considered “an off year”, in that a country vs. country world championship was not contested, but rather a Transnational World Championship was held instead. This means that anyone can play. For example, a six person team could be comprised of players from six different countries. Team Canada had six Canadians on it, and I was their non-playing captain. The team consisted of the highly experienced pairs of Olivia Laufer-Cindy He, and Quan Chen-Garrett Liu, and the first-timers Simon Hungate-Jeff Martinovic.



Front row, L-R: Simon Hungate, Quan Chen, Garrett Liu, Cindy He, Olivia Laufer, Jeff Martinovic.

Back row Coach and NPC, Andy Stark.

Canadian junior star Jacob Freeman played on a transnational team in the Under 31 category, but alas, his team did not make the final four. Another star, and recently crowned ACBL King of Bridge, Darwin Li, winner of two gold medals in the previously held Transnationals

(2022). was on a multi-country team in the U21 category. His team just missed qualifying for the playoffs.

And then there was **Team Canada**, competing in the U26 category. I have some good news and some bad news. First the bad news (always start with bad news 😊). The bad news is we finished 19th overall. (The really bad news is that the event consisted of 19 teams. 😊) The good news, the piece we will hold forth as motivation for future events, is that after the first four boards we were leading the event. I watched as we built up a 38-0 lead versus a good team from Hungary-Israel. But after that amazing start Team Hungael clawed back to make it close, so after the first match Team Canada was in fifth place overall! But it was all downhill from there as far as the team play went.

Luckily there are other events at Junior worlds including a Board-a-Match and many Pairs events. Each Canadian pair represented us well. After the first session, Chen-Liu were numero uno of 88 pairs in the Pairs 'B' Final with an 80% game; they fell back to 7th overall after the final session. And Laufer-He finished sixth overall in the Women's U26 'A' Final. Super well done—those are grueling sessions.

Here was one of the women's top boards. See if you can match wits with Cindy He who was South on this hand, and eventually on lead versus 2♠. The full deal:

♠ A5	
♥ Q975	
♦ KJ10	
♣ AJ54	
♠ KJ10873	♠ Q2
♥ AJ6	♥ 10842
♦ 753	♦ A984
♣ Q	♣ K98
♠ 964	
♥ K3	
♦ Q62	
♣ 107632	

North, Olivia Laufer, opened 1NT which got passed around to West who competed with 2♦ to show an undisclosed single suiter in a major. East bid 2♠ to

mean "pass or correct." If West held hearts, East was ready with great support, and so could stand West bidding 3♥. But holding spades, West just passes and there they are.

If you look at the South hand only what is your opening lead? Cindy kicked off with a low diamond and the hand was over. Declarer could only take 8 tricks. At all the other tables, the opening lead was either a heart (from North) or a trump or a club. At all the other tables declarer had the timing to take 9, 10, or 11(!) tricks. It's hands like these, simple lead problems (or guesses) that when you get them right it leads immediately to a good result. Here, a non-diamond lead allows declarer the chance to set up the club king to pitch a losing diamond in dummy.

Simon and Jeff got some great experience representing Canada and we hope they will be back to try again at the Trials to determine Canada's teams in 2025. Playing with Evan Park, Simon went on to win a Collegiate Pairs event at the Toronto NABC. Overall, the Canadian team deserved a better fate, but sometimes the bridge gods do not smile down upon us. The bridge gods only smiled for the first four boards. We'll be back in 2025. Thanks to **David Colbert, Renette Bourgeois, Michel Lorber**, and **Shan Huang** for their excellent mentoring and coaching to help prepare the three pairs.



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2024 CANADIAN MIXED TEAM CHAMPIONS

Team Fourcaudot (Mike Gamble – Kismet Fung – Marc-André Fourcaudot – Brenda Bryant – Sondra Blank – Ranald Davidson) won the 6th edition of the Canadian Mixed Team Championship in Penticton in June.

Fung/Gamble & Blank/Fourcaudot are established partnerships for several years while Bryant/Davidson played for the first time together. Fung/Gamble uses 2/1 with strong NT. Bryant/Davidson played a variable NT structure along with their favorite convention 2♦ mini Roman. Blank/Fourcaudot play 2/1, strong NT, Multi 2♦ and transfer responses over 1♣ opening.

The three-day round-robin tournament was held online earlier this year. The team performed well during the first two days but faced difficulties on the final day. Despite this, they retained their first-place position, which gave them the advantage of selecting their opponents for the Quarterfinals and Semifinals. Some of the round robin softer results generated opportunities for several partnerships discussions and adjustments. Between February and June, the team engaged in a range of online practice sessions using BBO. In both the Quarterfinals and Semifinals, the team faced a similar challenge: they were behind after the third quarter and needed a strong performance in the fourth segment to advance to the next stage. Below are the playoff result scores:

QUARTER FINALS						
	S.1	S.2	S.3	S.4	Adj.	Total
Fourcaudot	30	24	32	41		127
Burns	29	20	58	1		108

SEMI FINAL						
	S.1	S.2	S.3	S.4	Adj.	Total
Fourcaudot	24	27	33	37		121
Demme	29	33	16	25		103

FINAL						
	S.1	S.2	S.3	S.4	Adj.	Total
Fourcaudot	24	27	33	37		121
Wang	29	33	16	25		103

The Final

In the Final, each segment was closely contested. Fourcaudot managed to win the last two segments with a slightly larger margin than the first two, allowing them to secure victory.

Dealer East. Neither Vul

♠ K9	
♥ Q862	
♦ J85	
♣ A1062	
♠ Q52	♠ AJ8
♥ J974	♥ A53
♦ AQ3	♦ 1076
♣ Q74	♣ KJ83
♠ 107643	
♥ K10	
♦ K942	
♣ 95	

In the above critical hand, Bryant/Davidson were E-W, and reached 3NT. South's lead of a spade was normal. Davidson correctly read the club position and decided to finesse the 8 after observing the 9 on the 2nd round of the suit. A successful diamond finesse, along with a winning heart play (small towards the Jack, with South winning the King and then running the Jack to smother the 10), resulted in making 10 tricks and a 6-imp gain.

Good teams often find themselves lucky, but they also create their own luck! In this hand from the semifinal's fourth-quarter comeback, Fung/Gamble bid up to 7NT.



♠ 4	
♥ KQ52	
♦ AK	
♣ AKQ932	
♠ K872	♠ J653
♥ J864	♥ 973
♦ Q863	♦ K95
♣ 6	♣ J108
♠ AQ109	
♥ A10	
♦ J954	
♣ 754	

Once clubs broke favorably, declarer tested the diamonds to check if the Queen was doubleton; at worst, a spade finesse might be needed. With three easy discards from the South hand, West was pressured across three suits and ultimately had to concede. Meanwhile, at the other table, the unfortunate North-South pair, not being a well-established partnership, experienced a kickback accident and remained in game. It's important to note that even seasoned partnerships can encounter such accidents!

Bridge is often described as a game of mistakes, but it also requires skill and, crucially, concentration. The following two hands demonstrate how lapses in concentration, insufficient attention, or playing too quickly can result in losing imps. Blank encountered a situation after their partner opened with a 3♣ preempt. Holding KJ7532 A6 A953 K, and eager to use one of her favorite gadgets, she bid 3♦ to show an invitational hand in a major. According to the system, partner should bid 3♥ if rejecting hearts, 3♠ if accepting hearts, and 3NT if accepting both. Her enthusiasm quickly waned when partner bid 4♣, and she realized that the 3♣ bid had actually come from her right-hand opponent. At that point, it was impossible to correct the situation, and partner ended up driving to a slam, resulting in an 11 IMP loss.

On another deal North (Fourcaudot) opened with 1♣ in the fourth seat, but when partner responded 2♦, he realized he had accidentally pulled the wrong bidding card and opened 2♣. South then pursued an impossible slam bid, resulting in a loss of 11 imps. Take your time partner!!!

The following hand was played by Sondra Blank. She is in 3NT as South, after North showed a 17-19 hand with exactly five spades and four hearts.

♠ AKJ73	
♥ AKJ7	
♦ 97	
♣ K4	
♠ Q1092	♠ 654
♥ 8	♥ Q6542
♦ Q32	♦ AK106
♣ Q9862	♣ 3
♠ 8	
♥ 1093	
♦ J854	
♣ AJ1075	

Blank won the ♥8 lead in dummy. ♣K and a club to the Ace revealed the bad news when East pitched a heart. Prospects are poor, Sondra needs to find a way for the defense to misjudge what they must do. After a successful spade finesse, she realized that establishing the suit can't be a success since defense can cash 1 spade, 1 club and 3 diamonds. She instead ran the ♦9 when East ducked smoothly. West was at the crossroad and reluctant to cash his ♣Q establishing two tricks in declarer's hand, a spade was returned. Sondra read the hand correctly at this point, and cashed the other top ♠ to strip East hand of this suit.

♠ 73	
♥ KJ7	
♦ 7	
♣ -	
♠ Q	♠ -
♥ -	♥ Q65
♦ 32	♦ AK10
♣ Q98	♣ -
♠ -	
♥ 109	
♦ J85	
♣ J	

When this 6-card ending was reached, Sondra played a diamond from dummy. East had no solution. At the table ♦K was won and exited a heart won in hand with the 10. A diamond was played to allow East to cash the Ace and the 10 but was endplayed for the second time and had to give the last two tricks to dummy. Note that when a second diamond was played from dummy cashing top diamond does not help the defense, declarer can always come to 9 tricks at this stage.

The Fourcaudot team will represent Canada in the World Bridge Games, being held in Buenos Aires next month.



*Bridge is Better Than Sex
because...*

...you don't have to hide your magazines.

It is ok to hire a pro.

You can play with strangers.

There are no bridge transmitted diseases.

You don't have the same partner for life.

You can play 2 over 1.

You can squeeze others without getting their permission.

Fast arrival is a welcome strategy.

Everyone goes down sometimes.



2024 COPC TOURNAMENT REPORT

By Jeffrey Smith

The 2024 Canadian Open Pairs Championships (COPC) were held in beautiful Penticton, British Columbia June 12th to June 13th of 2024. The COPC has long been an event that was on my bucket list to win so when Xiaojing (Eve) Deng suggested we play together in Penticton, I thought this was a great opportunity to shorten said list.

Eve is new to the Canadian bridge scene as she moved to Canada during COVID a few years after completing her undergraduate degree in bridge (Yes Bridge!) at Tianjin University. She is a full time bridge professional and based on her results to date in NABCs, Regionals and spoiler alert, the COPC, it is clear, things are going well.

The COPC is a long event, one full day of qualifying and the top 10 pairs advanced to the second day where they are joined by pairs that lost the semi-finals of the Canadian Women's Team Championships (CWTC) Semi-Final. The event consists of table after table of tough Canadian competition and practiced partnerships and it is draining on even the most seasoned player. As teammates of mine have often told me when speaking about the CNTC, you cannot win the event in qualifying, all you can do is lose it.

Well lose it we almost did. Our opponents played us very tough on the first day and we managed only a 51% in the first qualifying session and a 53% in the second,

good enough to qualify 9th of the only 10 pairs to make it through to the final day. One board that brought a smile to my face and a frown to my opponents was this one, where Eve demonstrated superior table feel and a willingness to buck the odds if her gut told her it was the right thing to do:

Board 17, neither vul, North dealer.

♠ 109876542	
♥ A	
♦ Q762	
♣ -	
♠ -	♠ KQJ3
♥ KQJ74	♥ 83
♦ AJ84	♦ K1095
♣ AK65	♣ Q32
♠ A	
♥ 109652	
♦ 3	
♣ J109874	

The auction was neither scientific nor effective, as were most of our auctions over the two days, but, sometimes, you end up in less than optimal contracts and you simply have to make them.

North, a multiple time Canadian Champion, opened the proceedings with a pass and Eve scraped together a 1♦

opening bid, one she would soon regret, South made the normal pass and I bid the normal 1♥. North now came to life with a 3♠ bid, it went pass by Eve and pass by South, which left me with a tough decision, double could well be right, but, I felt confident that my solid opponent was prepared for double and had some sort of compensating feature to allow his delayed entry into a live auction, so I simply bid what I thought Eve could make and blasted 6♦. Now the question was, was Eve up to making it?

The opening lead was the Ace of spades, Eve ruffed with the 4. She then surprisingly called for the Jack of diamonds, low from North, and she ran it...called for the diamond A and another diamond and scored up her slam. North was incredulous. As usual, we were done the round early so I had time to ask her, why did you run the diamond Jack? I knew, she knew, it was anti percentage, she simply said, "North was nervous." Works for me!



The Finals

The final day brought together 14 pairs, 10 from the previous day's qualifying and 4 pairs from the CWTC. Since we had less than one matchpoint of carryover, leaving us two boards behind the leaders, we knew we were going to have to play well. Fortunately, our round one opponents were familiar to me and it was a pair I was confident we would score well against... well, wrong again Jeff, we scored 1 matchpoint over the two boards as we sawed them off in a part score that was cold and failed to bid 5 over 5 after they found an excellent save, not found by the rest of the field.

Editor's note: It was nice to have a good round against you Jeff. nk

Not the start we hoped for, but, things had to improve right? My favorite hand of the tournament:

Board 26, Both vul, East dealer.

♠ AJ874	
♥ AQ	
♦ Q987	
♣ K3	
♠ K653	♠ 92
♥ 8543	♥ J
♦ J2	♦ 643
♣ J98	♣ AQ76432
	♠ Q10
	♥ K109762
	♦ AK105
	♣ 10

We had our usual messy auction, East opened a classic 3♣ bid, Eve, in the South, overcalled the normal 3♥, West passed and I made the normal 3♠ bid. Eve then bid 4♣, which in her more advanced style, shows a choice of games, showing 6 hearts and 2 spades... well, in my Neanderthal world, this shows a big spade raise, a hand too good to just bid 4♠. You should ask your favorite partner what it is for them, as I asked a few experts in Penticton and the views were split 50/50.

Thinking she had a big spade raise, I bid RKC and was disappointed to find out we were missing 2 key cards, so parked the contract in 5♠.

The lead was the ♥J and at this point, I think the hand is an open book, hearts are certainly 4-1, clubs are 7-3 (with 6-4 there would have been a club raise) so all that remains is to figure out the diamonds.

The play went, King of hearts, dropping the heart queen underneath, then, two rounds of spades, noting with satisfaction the 9 dropping...now, the whole hand is an open book. I crossed to my hand with the heart ace, crossed back to the diamond ace, cashed two hearts, pitching 2 clubs, ruffed a club to shorten myself to the

same length in trumps as west, crossed to the diamond king, cashed two more hearts, pitching my last two diamonds and then leading a diamond off dummy where east is forced to ruff low, letting me score all 13 tricks on the trump coup. The 710 score was better than all but the one pair that got to 3NT and made 7 for 720. The final hand worth noting was one that demonstrates the greed of the matchpoint player:

Board 21, N-S vul, North dealer.

♠ J653	
♥ 98764	
♦ 5	
♣ J83	
♠ 972	♠ AQ84
♥ A5	♥ KQ3
♦ A1082	♦ KQ93
♣ Q764	♣ AK
♠ K10	
♥ J102	
♦ J764	
♣ 10952	

Our auction was simple, Eve showed 22-24 HCP balanced, I made a quantitative raise to 4NT, she bid 5♦ showing a 4 card diamond suit and acceptance with her solid 23 HCP and I bid 6♦ to suggest playing there instead of the more lucrative 6NT. Both of us having doubletons made us lean towards diamonds instead of notrump, if either of us had been 4-3-3-3, I am sure we would have ended up in 6NT like the rest of the field. As you can see, 6♦ is cold as long as you guess the diamonds correctly (which we did), but 6NT which failed at every table but one, is doomed on most normal lines of play.

When the one round to go results were posted, Jason Feldman and Michael Gamble were less than two matchpoints behind us, so we knew it was going to be a VERY tight finish. Eve and I knew our last round was below average and Jason and Michael's last round was good, so it was going to be a photo finish and sure enough it was! The final result was as close an event can possibly be:

1. 182.53 - Xiaojing Deng - Jeffrey Smith
2. 182.18 - Michael Gamble - Jason Feldman
3. 176.42 - Julie Smith - Judy Harris
4. 173.25 - Chantal Dube - Shelly Burns
5. 171.25 - Neil Kimelman - Ray Hornby

With the win, Eve became the second woman to ever win the COPC after the iconic Katie Thorpe in 1990, which ironically took place two years before Eve was born.



Card sense is when it's technically right to do something, the little man that sits on my shoulder or anyone else's shoulder says, "Don't do that." And you say to yourself, "Well, wait a minute, that's the right way to play." And he says, "Yeah, but you don't wanna play that way."

That instinct is card sense. It's almost an ability to feel where the cards are. It's something that you can't buy, you can't find; you're born with. The ability to do the right thing at the wrong time or really to do the wrong thing at the right time.

Barry Crane

THE IBPA FILES

The International Bridge Press Association (IBPA) is a world-wide bridge organization of more than 300 members in all corners of the world. Its main objective is to assist bridge journalists in their bridge related professional activities. The IBPA publishes a monthly online Bulletin, which consists of interesting deals involving some of the best players of the world, competing in key international tournaments.



SERIOUSLY?

By Jan van Cleeff, Maastricht



As West you hold: ♠J76 ♥Q84 ♦KQJ52 ♣AK
Matchpoints. North dealer. North-South vulnerable.

West	North	East	South
	2NT ¹	Pass	3♥ ²

All Pass

1. Both minors, 5–10 HCP.
2. Not forcing.

In view of the misfit in diamonds you decide to keep quiet and lead the ace of clubs:

Dummy

- ♠ 5
- ♥ J10
- ♦ A9763
- ♣ 108765

You (west)

- ♠ J76
- ♥ Q84
- ♦ KQJ52
- ♣ AK

Partner follows with the three (low-high even) while declarer plays the two. You continue with the king of clubs, which also wins. How do you proceed?

Analysis

Try to imagine declarer's hand. East signalled an even number of clubs. So South is favourite to have two clubs. With four he would have signed off in 3♣. South is likely to have a singleton or void in diamonds. Apart from the long heart suit, that leaves declarer with three or more cards in spades. Therefore dummy's stiff spade is screaming for a trump switch. Seriously, from queen-third? Solution Actually a heart return is imperative, but it should be the queen! That card has several pros.

When partner has the nine, it doesn't cost a trick when declarer ruffs a spade in dummy. But more importantly, it prohibits playing spades from dummy. Let's have a look at the whole deal:

Dummy	
♠	5
♥	J10
♦	A9763
♣	108765
You (west)	East
♠ J76	♠ A1032
♥ Q84	♥ 93
♦ KQJ52	♦ 1084
♣ AK	♣ QJ43
South	
♠	KQ984
♥	AK7652
♦	-
♣	92

The deal stems from the Dutch First Division Pairs Competition. Having cashed his top clubs, Jan Jansma indeed tabled the trump queen. The stunning switch proved to be the only way to kill 3♥. At the table, South won the ace and continued with the king of spades, won by East (Rob Lindeman) who returned a second trump. So declarer lost three spade tricks and two club tricks: 3♥ down one (EW 83%). The majority of the field made nine or even ten tricks in a heart contract.

Post mortem

To proceed with a small heart instead would have given away the contract. Dummy wins the trick and cashes the ace of diamonds, followed by the five of spades. If East ducks, declarer wins in hand and ruffs a spade, eventually ending up with two spades, six hearts and a diamond. If East however steps up with the ace of spades and returns a trump, again there are nine tricks for the taking. Even a third club won't help the defense. Declarer ruffs high and ruffs a spade in dummy. This trade of tricks also leads to nine tricks.

what

...does this bid mean?

1. N-S vul, IMPs:

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

What does 4♣ show?

Answers on page 33.



At a recent duplicate game my partner and I finished the final board, and moved for the next round. Shortly after, the director asked us to look at our hands, and to see if they were correct. My partner and I both agreed our hands were the same as we played.

The director then asked, 'That is interesting, considering you have 14 cards and your partner only 12!

Author's name held back for reasons of embarrassment.

the GREAT CANADIAN BIDDING CONTEST



September 2024

TGCBC

Host: David Turner

*For panelists, and their bids,
see page 31*

Editor's Note: Keith Balcombe and Danny Miles tied for the top panelist score of 47, followed closely by Ray Hornby with 46. Ashot Harutyunyan topped the readers, followed closely by Sheldon Spiers.

As usual we're looking for the best expert consensus on these problems, opposite an "Unfamiliar Expert Partner (UEP)" (though we're always happy to hear about other methods you use with your favourite partner).

1. IMPs. Dealer: South, both Vul, as South you hold:

♠KQ4 ♥A6543 ♦A73♣J2

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

1. Game force

- a) Do you agree with 2NT?
- b) If not, what would you have bid?

a)	Score	Panelists
Yes	2	12
No	1	5

This is the most interesting problem I've seen lately. In the event, I held opener's hand and my partner bid 3♣ with the problem hand over 2♠ as he is wont to do, but though I wasn't surprised, I felt the panel would feel 2NT was the obvious choice over 2♠. And so it was:

Balcombe: Yes, good waiting bid.

Miles: Yes. A sophisticated 3♦ may be better, but will likely lead to murkiness. No need to repeat hearts.

Lebi: 2NT is OK in context, but in my methods, 2NT is Ingberman-like: it forces 3♣ to allow for very weak hands opposite. ***This is my preferred method as well.***

These Panelists agreed with my partner:

Kimelman: Prefer 3♣. Looks like 6♣ is assured. 2NT only delays the problem, but one level higher. Would prefer to have more clubs, *but Jx is as good as xxx.*

Remember that last part.

Stark: Prefer 3♣. What we lack in a third trump I make up for in aces – many aces. No need to bid 3♥ as partner will bid them next with three. *I would bid 3♠ before 2NT. (Emphasis mine -DT)*

Other Ideas:

Thurston: No! Prefer 3♦ – game forcing and may get notrump played from the right side. ***His personal 2NT would be like Lebi's.***

Smith: No ... I would have bid 3♥.

I guess this answer is more about style than I thought. To me, the jump-shift 'could' have 22 points or 9 running tricks in spades and clubs (but some of these hands could start with 2♣ with easy rebids available – not so easy with diamonds as the primary suit). The alternative (formerly mainstream) idea is that it shows too many points to risk 1♠, which partner might pass with the likes of: Kxxx, Kxxx, xxx, xx or some such ("if you had all that, why didn't you jump shift?").

While 2NT could get you to a notrump contract played from the wrong side, it has the benefit of: (a) saving space (b) showing a diamond stopper in a balanced-

ish hand (c) keeping out of partner's way if he intends on rebidding either black suit or supporting hearts (d) limiting club support and spade support (e) paving the way for a subsequent 5NT "choice of slams".

(b) What now?

b)	Score	Panelists
4♣	8	12
4♣	8	0
5N	7	4
6N	5	1
5♠	7	0

In part b) you're stuck with 2NT – what now? Well, needless to say, the folks who opted for 3♣ last time are bidding 4♣ now, (as my partner did), while the 2NT bidders are happy to support partner, having limited themselves to two cards in clubs earlier.

L'Ecuyer: I would have bid 3♣ (or 4♣ as Minorwood) last time. Now I'll bid 4♣ and hope to follow with RKC after that. *This is the exact problem partner and I had ... if 4♣ the last time would have been Minorwood, why wouldn't 4♣ now be Minorwood, after you already agreed clubs with 3♣ (and got the information that partner has diamonds covered)???*

Editor's note: In my opinion, the difference is that you are still investigating the best trump suit. Besides, if you had wanted to keycard, playing Minorwood, why not bid 4♣ directly over 2♠?

Lebi: 4♣, setting up my subsequent 4NT as RKC for clubs. I'm not stopping short of slam.

Kuz: 4♣. With aces and fitting spades I must make at least one move toward slam.

Jacob: 4♣. 6♣ should be better than 6NT.

Cooper: 4♣. Seven might be possible, but not sure I can see the path to the goal line. Set trump now and hopefully KCB in clubs later.

How about everyone else?

Treble: 5NT: pick a slam. This shows 3-2 in the black suits with two spade honours, IMO. With better club support I would have bid clubs either last time or this time. *Could the choice be between hearts and clubs, though?*

Thurston: 5NT. Old-fashioned: forcing to 6NT, invites 7, allows for further description of suitability at the 6-level.

Lindop: 6NT. *Opponents bid this way, not giving anything away.*

Almost everyone appreciated that, opposite what rates to be a stiff heart, a suit contract seems indicated, but there was surprisingly little consideration about the possibility of spades as a trump suit. If partner fails to show up with that ♣Q that everyone is hoping for, it's very likely that spades or clubs will be the best slam contract rather than notrump. Accordingly I think that 4♠ now is the best move: partner will doubtless bid 4NT, after which 5NT – choice of slams (between clubs and spades) will be perfect. How do you like your chances in 7♠ when partner has AJT9, K, KQx, AKxxx?

One panelist was more or less in sync with my thinking:

Hargreaves: 5NT, pick a slam. I hope he'll bid 6♣ with 4315 shape, at which point I will perpetrate the "master bid" of 6♠ – which should show this hand ... in my dreams.

In real life? I had a very cheesy AJxx, Q, KQx, AKxxx for my 2♠ bid (apologies to panelists who think this is a routine 1♠ bid). Note that 6♠ is the best slam, I believe (win the heart lead and ruff the 3rd club small looks like the best line to me). And because of the power of that Jx of clubs – see Kimelman's comment above – 6♣ looks like the 2nd best spot (you can make it with clubs 3-3 or QT9x in front of the Jack).

And, because of that pitiful HQ, there was no heart lead against 6NT, so playing on clubs brought in 12 tricks there too. You have to admit it would be pretty hard to get to the right slam(s) after a 1♠ rebid ... sometimes points do matter 😊.

2. IMPs, Dealer: South, Vul: EW. As South you hold
♠A♥53♦AQ1098743♣AK7

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

a) Do you agree with 2♠? If not, what would you have bid?

b) What now?

a)	Score	Panelists
Yes	2	8
No	1	9

b)	Score	Panelists
4NT	8	4
5NT	7	1
4♠	7	2
5♦	7	1
5♥	7	2
6♥	6	1
6♦	3	2
5♣	3	3

Well, I think this problem set a record for most different answers ever! On part a) a plurality felt that 2♠ was OK, since their 3♦ rebid wouldn't be forcing in competition, and nothing else appeals, so that received the top score. Others, many of whose systems say 2♥ is forcing to at least 3♥, have an easy (but not very descriptive!) 3♦ rebid of course, but I think they'd admit to at least a twinge of anxiety when UEP goes into the tank after 3♦, passes reluctantly, and tables: xxx, AKxxx, xx, Qxx. Other ideas over 2♥:

Jacob: No – I would've bid 5♦.

Smith: I'm not crazy about 2♠ ... think I'd choose 3♣ instead.

Cimon: No – 2♠ tends to show a great fit for partner. 4♦, game forcing, shows a good suit and a good hand. I'm not sure whether 3♦ would be forcing since 2♥ isn't a game force.

Treble: No - I'd chance 3♦ because I don't believe it's passable in real life.

In part b), a plurality of panelists thought that hearts was likely to be the best trump suit, and bid either 4NT, 5♥, or 6♥ based on how confident they were in partner's bidding. Campbell (a 4NT bidder) notes he might be able to set up the diamonds in hearts. One panelist thinks he can have his cake and eat it too:

Miles: 4NT. I'll try and suggest 6♦ as a contract if he has only 1 keycard.

Others thought that perhaps they ought to disclose their likely 9-winner hand in diamonds, or at least explore for a diamond fit:

Balcombe: 4♠. Spade control. See if partner bids RKC. If they bid 5♦ I'll bid 6♦.

Cimon: 6♦. Partner showed a minimum hand, but I don't have very many losers.

Hargreaves: 6♦. 4♥ should deliver solid hearts, but partner likely has weak length in spades, and will need to take the first 12 tricks on a spade lead. I'm going to be greedy and hope for: xxx, AKQJxx, Jx, xx opposite.

And 3 outliers:

Kuz: 5♣. Trying to focus on trump strength ... hoping for the miracle stiff king of diamonds.

Lindop: 5♣. I think I have to make a further try. Partner may be expecting better hearts from me for 2♠, but what can I do now? Partner presumably has good hearts and nothing else – I hope they're really good hearts.

Stark: Pass.

If it's right to bid 2♠ with any very powerful hand, I'd be hoping partner wouldn't pass 5♣ thinking opener might have a powerful 2065 hand!

One of our panelists, David Lindop (partnering Doug Baxter), held the responder's hand and didn't remember the deal and their auction went as shown up to the question point. Doug bid 5♦ (my choice too), and David jumped to 6♥ on QJ98x, AKQJ9x,x,x to win a slam swing vs. 6NT-2 at the other table. Well done! One other pair ended in 7♥, and were pleased to drop the ♦K in two rounds.

3. IMPs, Dealer: South. Vul: Both. As South you hold:
♠8763♥QJ♦Q3♣AJ1093.

West	North	East	South
			Pass
Pass	4♦ ¹	Pass	Pass
4♠	Pass	Pass	?

1. Unfamiliar expert partner

- a) Do you agree with the pass of 4♦, or prefer what?
b) What now?

a)	Score	Panelists
Yes	2	12
No	1	5

b)	Score	Panelists
5♣	8	3
5♦	7	6
Pass	6	8

Personal style plays a role here of course, so perhaps part a) is just a shrug, but a large majority thinks the

initial pass is fine. This sums up my view of what to expecting a vulnerable 4♦ bid to look like opposite a passed partner:

L'Ecuier: No - Prefer 5♦. A 3rd seat 4 of a minor bid is begging to be raised. I have no idea who can make what, but we have the diamonds and partner wouldn't open without big shape. I expect 1471 or 0382 or some such.

The most eloquent initial passers:

Balcombe: I'm OK with pass or 5♦, but pass appeals because LHO has already passed. *(He'll go on to 5♦ in part b).*

Campbell: I have no idea what's right and neither do the opponents. I'll pass next time for the same reason.

Lebi: Pass is fine ... both opponents have passed once *(and he'll pass next time for the same reason).*

Hornby: Pass and pass next time. Pre-empts work (even partner's).

Lindop: Pass ... we have 10 diamonds and the Law says 10 tricks only. And pass next time: they could be cold for 6♠ for all I know.

Miles: Pass and pass next time. We made 'em guess and maybe they guessed wrong. *Maybe, but you'd have to think we could take 9 tricks in 5♦ ... that's a good save against 620 which seems likely, despite the way they got there.*

And for the bidders:

Cooper: I would have bid 5♦ and kicked myself for not bidding 5♣ en route. *(He'll correct that omission in part b).*

Kimelman: I would have bid 5♦ – make them guess at the 5-level without the knowledge you passed 4♦ first.

I was the UEP on this hand, and don't blame partner for passing initially ... but it seemed to me that

when the balance of 4♠ comes, the value of his clubs improve – and a number panelists agreed:

Hargreaves: Agree with passing 4♦, but bid 5♦ now ... maybe both contracts will make.

Treble: Agree with passing 4♦, but bid 5♣ now ... I might want that lead if they bid 5 of a major. **Bingo!**

In real life, playing for the first time ever with a long-time teammate, I held -, AK, KJ987xxx, xxx for the 4♦ bid, and there was no defence to 4♠. At several tables the opponents went on to 5♠ and dummy hit with 3514 shape including KQxx of clubs. After the hearts were cashed, my hand switched to a diamond – making 5, as declarer won the DA, and his stiff club went away on the long heart in dummy. This happened 3 times ... hence the top score for bidding on with 5♣ rather than 5♦!

4. IMPs, Dealer: West, Vul: None. As South you hold:
♠AKJ9743 ♥Q ♦7 ♣AQ65

West	North	East	South
1♦	Pass	1♠	?

What's your plan?

Bid	Score	Panelists
3♠	10	1
2♠, then 3♠	9	8
2♠, then Pass	7	1
Pass then 3♠	7	3
Pass then 2♠	6	1
4♠ then Dbl	6	1
4♠ then Pass	5	2

These last two hands are from the English Bridge Union (EBU) senior championships.

"All" experts play a 2♠ bid here as natural, albeit not promising as much as this. It seemed to me that the standard approach would be to pass initially and then back in with an appropriate number of spades based on the opponents' bidding... The three musketeer trio of Thurston, Hargreaves and Kimelman were

there with me. The panel was having none of that, voting overwhelmingly to bid 2♠, showing shape over strength initially, hoping to get a chance to show extra strength later by bidding as high as 3♠. At the other extreme were:

Campbell: 4♠. It must be natural, what else could it be?

Jacob: 4♠. I'm not sure what else I could bid You only need a card or two to make game.

Treble: 4♠. There's no scientific way of bidding this hand. I'd like to have the spade ten, but I'll have to go with what I have. The upside is that it might put opener, who may have a very distributional hand under a lot of pressure. I'll double 5 of a red suit to show some outside stuff on defence.

Only one panelist chose a middle road:

Cimon: 3♠. I play this is as natural. This could make it difficult for the opponents to find their best contract. **Unless 3♠ doubled is their best contract. But now you mention it, I'm going to add that natural 3♠ bid to my system and give it top marks.**

Partner held a stiff spade and ♣K98x, the ♠Q was onside and clubs were 3-2. The 3 musketeers (and probably Cimon) are winning some IMPs here!

5. IMPs, Dealer: South, Vul: Both. As South you hold: ♠K ♥AKQ9 ♦A1087 ♣AQ63.

What is your choice and why?

West	North	East	South
			?

Bid	Score	Panelists
2♣	10	9
2NT	8	2
1♦	8	5
1♣	6	1
1♥	3	0

I fully expected most of the Panel to shrug and bid 2♣, and 9 of them did, all planning to rebid 2NT as "least of evils". Strong 4441s are a problem in almost all bidding systems, so no surprise there. Two panelists, Campbell and Cooper, acknowledged the liability of the stiff spade king, and demoted the hand to a 2NT opening. But there were some other ideas:

Hargreaves: 1♦. I'm a big believer in bidding shape, even with this strong a hand (and this wouldn't be the strongest hand I've ever done it with).

Kuz: 1♦. Hope I get past the first round. Pard may have long diamonds and a weak hand, so 5♦ won't get lost either.

Thurston: 1♦. I tell my students not to open 2NT with a singleton, and I'm trying to avoid having any 'splaining to do.

Cimon: 1♦. I don't have enough tricks to rebid 2NT after 2♣. If I open 1♣ instead, I won't be able to get my diamonds in play after a 1♠ response.

Treble: 1♣. Then 2♥ and 3♦ after that. I feel better about lying about the fifth club than distorting the diamond length with a 1♦ opening.

It seems that these panelists are aiming to reverse after partner's presumed 1♠ response. To me, that guarantees the minor is longer than hearts, so I'd start with 1♦ and then jump shift into clubs, with no such guarantee, but I get where they're coming from. No panelist chose to open 1♥, which might be my second choice.

When I first saw this hand I was with the 2♣-2NT shruggers, but I really hate to go minus on big hands. Since the average result in the EBU teams was 3NT-3 (6 spades and an ace) I began to wonder if my shrug wasn't an overbid. The fact that the spade here is the king doesn't change the fact that's it's a singleton

(whereas the similarly dreaded two small makes it a lot less likely 5 of a minor will be makable). And this hand, unlike a big 5332 or 6322 type, probably won't have 9 tricks in the bag even if the stiff K scores at Trick 1 in 3NT.

My recollection of the actual hand is that partner was going to respond 1NT to 1♦ or 1♣ and that the subsequent 5 Clubs lost only two aces. Given my jump-shift on Problem 1, partner won't have anything to complain about this time.



Most people think only once or twice a year.
I have made an international reputation by
thinking once or twice a week.

George Bernard Shaw

PANELIST ANSWERS

June 2024 Bidding Contest

	Name	1	Score 1	2	Score 2	3	Score 3	4	Score 4	5	Score 5	Total
	Keith Balcombe	Y/4♣	10	Y/4♠	9	Y/5♦	9	2♠/3♠	9	2♣	10	47
	Danny Miles	Y/4♣	10	Y/4N	10	Y/P	8	2♠/3♠	9	2♣	10	47
	Ray Hornby	Y/4♣	10	Y/5♥	9	Y/P	8	2♠/3♠	9	2♣	10	46
	Stephen Cooper	Y/4♣	10	Y/4N	10	Y/5♣	10	2♠/P	7	2N	8	45
	Robert Lebi	Y/4♣	10	N/5♥	8	Y/P	8	2♠/3♠	9	2♣	10	45
	Nic L'Ecuyer	N/4♣	9	N/5N	8	N/5♦	8	2♠/3♠	9	2♣	10	45
	Neil Kimelman	N/4♣	9	Y/4N	8	N/5♦	8	P/3♠	7	2♣	10	44
	Julie Smith	N/5N	8	N/5♦	8	Y/P	8	3♠/4♠	8	2♣	10	42
	Francine Cimon	Y/4♣	10	N/6♦	9	Y/5♦	9	3♠/3♠	10	1♦	8	41
	Gordon Campbell	Y/4♣	10	Y/4N	8	Y/P	8	4♠/4♠	5	2N	8	41
	Paul Thurston	N/5N	8	Y/6♥	9	N/5♣	9	P/3♠	7	1♦	8	40
	Bob Kuz	Y/4♣	10	N/5♣	8	Y/P	8	2♠/3♠	9	1♦	8	39
	Bill Treble	Y/5N	9	N/4♠	10	Y/5♣	10	4♠/D	6	1♣	6	39
	Michael Hargreaves	Y/5N	9	Y/6♦	9	Y/5♦	9	P/3♠	7	1♦	8	38
	David Lindop	Y/6N	7	N/5♣	8	Y/P	8	2♠/3♠	9	2♣	10	38
	Dan Jacob	Y/4♣	10	N/5♣	8	N/5♦	8	4♠/4♠	5	2♣	10	37
	Andy Stark	N/4♣	9	N/P	4	N/P	7	2♠/2♠	8	1♦	8	36



DECEMBER 2024 PROBLEMS

Host: Paul Thurston

Readers: Please submit their answers by November 12th.

1. Matchpoints. Dealer: South, N-S vul, as South you hold: ♠KJ932 ♥K9 ♦A74 ♣Q82.

West	North	East	South
			1♠
2♣	Dbl	Pass	?

What is your call?

2. Matchpoints. Dealer: West, neither vul. As South you hold ♠AKQ1096 ♥10742 ♦A9 ♣6.

West	North	East	South
1♣	1♥	2♣ ¹	?

1. Natural, 6-9 HCPs.

What is your call?

3. Matchpoints. Dealer: North, neither vul. As South you hold: ♠K102 ♥AKJ9764 ♦Q ♣KQ.

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

1. 15-17.

2. Hearts.

a) Do you agree with 2♦? If not, what would you have bid?

b) What do you bid over 2♥?

4. IMPs, Dealer: South, both vul. As South you hold: ♠A8 ♥65 ♦J9864 ♣AK95.

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

1. 4th suit forcing.

What do you bid?

5. IMPs, Dealer: South, N-S vul. As South you hold: ♠- ♥10972 ♦AKQ1075 ♣Q94.

West	North	East	South
			1♦
Pass	2♣ ¹	Pass	2♦
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♣
Pass	3NT	Pass	?

1. Game forcing.

What do you bid?



Samantha: Do you know why the game is called bridge?

Ethan: No, why?

Samantha: Because it makes you want to throw partner off one!!!

QUIZ

IBPA DECLARER PLAY PROBLEM #26

PUZZLE ON PAGE 14

Contract: 6♠, IMPs. Lead: 6♠. Plan the play. Spades are 2-1. The full deal:

♠ J1083

♥ 74

♦ AJ82

♣ K52

♠ 6

♥ KJ952

♦ 76

♣ QJ764

♠ 42

♥ 10863

♦ Q1053

♣ 1093

♠ AKQ975

♥ AQ

♦ K94

♣ A8

What a great contract! You make it if either the heart finesse or diamond finesse wins. Even if both of those are wrong, maybe diamonds are 3-3 or the queen or ten fall on the second round of the suit. These chances all add up to over 90%.

However one of the attributes that defines the expert is always looking for something better.

Win the spade in your hand, cash a 2nd spade, then win the ace of clubs, club to the king and ruff a club. Lead a spade to dummy, and play a small diamond, and put in the nine if it goes small. If West wins, they are end played into either giving you a 12th trick with a red suit return, or via a ruff and a sluff with a club.

On the actual deal your diamond 9 wins. If East had inserted the ten on the first round of diamonds, then you simply would have knocked out the ♦Q, discarding the ♥Q on dummy's 4th diamond.

what

...does this bid mean?

1. N-S vul, IMPs:

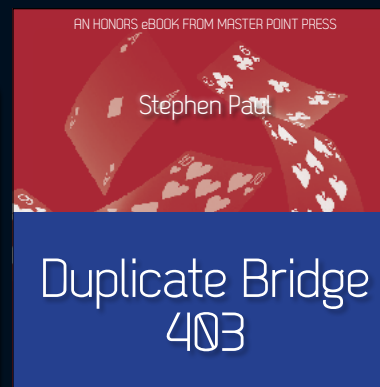
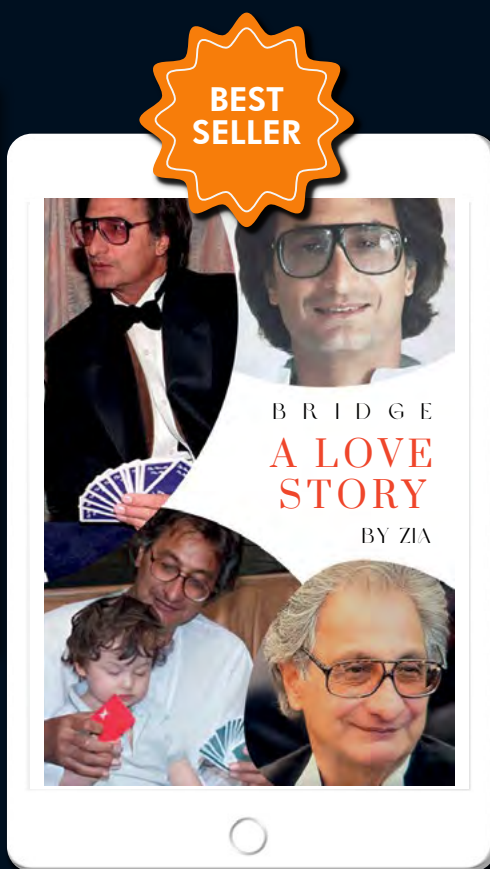
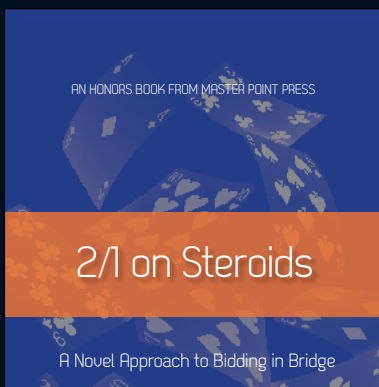
West	North	East	South
		3♣	3♥
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♣

What does 4♣ show?

I think it should show a game forcing hand, club control, and a likely spade support. However take a look at the COPC report to see a different way to play this bid.



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