

# bridge *Canada*

the  
**SUMMER**  
ISSUE!

*Stories*  
from the CBF Championships

*Defensive Strategy*

by Neil Kimelman

*Suit Up!*

by Katie Coopersmith

## 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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## Reflections of the Prez

PRESIDENT/EDITOR: NEIL KIMELMAN

### TEAM TRIALS VERSUS MEXICO

Congratulations to the CBF Senior Team (Fred Lerner, Michael Schoenborn, John Gowdy, David Turner, Andy Altay and Marty Kirr) and CBF Women's Team (Pamela Nisbet, Brenda Bryant, Hazel Wolpert, Linda Wynsto, Rhonda Foster, Lorna McDonald), who overcame their Mexican counterparts on the June 10th and 11th playdowns, respectively. They will now compete at the Worlds, being held starting August 12th in Lyon, France. I am very sad to say that my CNTC A Todd team were ousted by a steady Mexican squad (Gonzalo Herrera (captain), Beto Cohen, Miriam Rosemberg, Miguel Reygadas, Gerry Marshal), who will now compete for the Bermuda Bowl.

### NEXT UP - MONTREAL!!

Yes, we are going back to Montreal and McGill. The championships will be held May 26 - June 3, 2018. More info will be available on our website in due course. The 2019 CBCs will be held in Vancouver.

### NEW ACBL CEO - BAHAR GIDWANDI

I recently received a call from ACBL's new CEO. He was contacting all the Presidents of the key bridge organizations around the globe. He listened while I explained about our excellent relationship with the ACBL, and the several areas where improvements could be made. He left me with a favourable view of the future of the CBF - ACBL relationship.

## TEST YOUR CNTC DOUBLE DUMMY PLAY

Match 11, Board 22. Ealer East. E-W Vul

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

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

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

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

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
-	-	1♣	1♠
Pass	2♦	Dbl	2♥
Pass	3♥	Pass	4♥

Lead ♣10. East plays three rounds of clubs.  
Plan the play. Answer on page 21

## ONLINE TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS GET YOUR TEAMS TOGETHER!

Despite the challenges in its administration, the CBF will again be offering this event to CBF members. Look for info on registering later this month or in early September.

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**AUGUST 2017 • VOL. 47 NO.4**

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**MAGAZINE AD RATES**

Full page \$ 500 | Half page \$ 300

Quarter page \$ 175 | Business Card \$ 100

10% DISCOUNT if 3 issues paid in advance.

PUBLISHED 6 TIMES A YEAR



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# A ROAD NOT TRAVELED

2017 CNTC - by Neil Kimelman

The CNTCs were back in Winnipeg after a 10 year hiatus. We played at the downtown Radisson, a hop and a skip from the MTS Centre. All participants to whom I spoke with praised the Radisson as an excellent venue. As in 2007 Winnipeg hospitality was top notch, thanks to a pack of local volunteers.

Although only 12 teams, all were skilled and could win against any opponent. Of course there was the defending champion, and 2016 World's quarterfinalist L'Ecuyer (Zygmunt Marcinski, Nicholas and Judith Gartaganis, Kamel Fergani, Frederic Pollack). Other favourites include Todd (Fisher, Kimelman, Bart, Miles, Mackay); Litvack (Findlay, Lindop, Baxter, Dalton, Oddy); and Amoils (Sabourin, Mittleman, Cannell, Bercuson).

Not to be overlooked were five other very good teams: Duquette (Koski, Hunter, Bishop, Kersey, and McKellar); McMullin (Mazysmetz, Takemori, Martineau); Martineau (Gregoire, Hamelin, Morin, Chartrand, Cloutier); Yan (Wang, Xu, Wong, Angus) and local team Kuz (Mowat, Cheng, Sekhar, Yuen, Andrews).

Once again my Todd team took the road they have so often travelled for the last 15 plus years. Often close, never a winner. Many different combos, but always Todd, Fisher and Kimelman as a nucleus. The only criteria were we had to play with compatible, competent and courteous teammates.

## THE ROUND ROBIN

After day one L'Ecuyer was in form, at the top of the leaderboard, with Todd 2nd within striking range. The big story of day two was McMullin. Besides a disappointing last round loss, four big wins propelled them into 2nd place, but far from L'Ecuyer, who threatened to lap the field. Todd and Litvack were close in 3rd and 4th, respectively.

The only big move on Day 3 came from Amoils, to slip them into 4th. The top eight teams had separated themselves far enough from the rest of the field to all but ensure themselves a spot in the playoffs.

# A ROAD NOT TRAVELED

2017 CNTC - by Neil Kimelman

The final standings were:

1. L'Ecuyer
2. Litvack
3. Todd
4. Amoils
5. Yan
6. Kuz
7. McMullin
8. Duquette

## INTERESTING HANDS FROM THE ROUND ROBIN

Besides the double dummy play problem featured elsewhere in this magazine (see page 3), there were three hands of interest, two of which featured Bob and Doug:

### Match: 3, Board: 26. Dealer: E Vul: Both

Doug picked up: ♠10 ♥- ♦K Q J 8 7 5 ♣A K Q J 6 2 - a nice hand at any form of scoring, but especially when partner opens 1♠. RHO accelerated the auction with 3♥, and Doug tried 4♦, probably hoping to bid clubs at the 6-level on his next turn. But partner's next bid was five ... SPADES. Now what would you make of that?

"Sounds like solid spades and looking for heart control," said Doug as he tracked 7♠. Partner's hand: ♠AKQJ984 ♥95 ♦A42 ♣8. Win 13 IMPs when the other team stopped in 6♣ only.

### Match: 8, Board: 36. Dealer: W Vul: Both

Both vul, I picked up: ♠A K J 10 7 ♥J 6 ♦A 8 2 ♣A K Q. RHO opened 1♥ in 3rd seat, and I doubled. Partner bid 2♣ and RHO rebid 2♥. I had an easy 2♠ call. This shows 8 – 8 1/2 tricks in our system. However some players treated this hand as stronger. Besides the questionable evaluation in my view, a jump in spades, or notrump or a cue bid doesn't allow partner a chance to make his natural call at a lower level. I heard partner rebid his clubs. What now? Despite my strong spades, I know

partner would really try to play in the major with any support. His actual 3♣ choice told me a few things: he had little spade support, some values, as he could have passed 2♠, and at least five clubs, probably more as he did not bid a new suit. I bid 5♣. Brad actually held ♠- ♥74 ♦K964 ♣9876432. Plus 600 was good for a 10-IMP pickup as my counterpart passed 3♣ on the same auction.

### Match 10: Board: 13; Vul: Both; Dealer: N

Here is the 2nd great bidding display by Doug and Bob. I will let you treat this as the bidding problem Doug faced at the table. As West he held ♠9 7 6 3 ♥A K Q 8 ♦Q 10 9 7 6 ♣ void and heard this auction:

West	North	East	South
-	Pass	1♣	1♠
Dbl	Rdbl	3♣	Pass
3♦	Pass	4NT!	Pass
?			

What is 4NT and what would you bid? This cannot be key card, so it must show a hand with clubs and a moderate diamond fit, asking partner to bid five of a minor. Looking at weak spades, Doug was worried that partner would be tapped out in diamonds, but not in clubs. So Doug bid of 5♣!

Bob held ♠10 ♥J 7 ♦A K 5 ♣A Q J 10 6 5 4. This made easily, for another double-digit pickup, as their counterparts stopped in 4♣. 5♦ can only make double-dummy. Bob made two very nice bids on this auction: first he showed his playing strength with 3♣, then forced to game with his valuable minor suit cards, giving a good estimate of his relative minor suit length.

# A ROAD NOT TRAVELED

2017 CNTC - by Neil Kimelman

## THE QUARTER FINALS

L'Ecuyer, somewhat surprisingly in my view, chose Duquette, and ended up with a very comfortable victory. Amoils took McMullin, which was another comfortable victory but not for Amoils: McMullin, 148-90!! Yan got an early jump on Todd to go up by 23 after the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter. However, two solid sets put Todd up by 24 with one to go. Yan made a furious run, actually tying the match with five boards to go! However two solid pickups allowed Todd a 19 IMP victory, and to start breathing again.

The match of the day was Litvack vs. Kuz. In a duel that was close all day, Litvack won by 1 IMP! speaking from experience, I am sure the Kuz team are still not sleeping through the night. On the 2nd last board a Litvack player stepped out with 2♥, which would have been +1100 for Kuz. Instead the pedestrian 3NT was worth only 600 and a push.

## INTERESTING HANDS FROM THE QUARTER FINALS

The hands were very interesting and exciting all week. This continued when I picked up in the 2<sup>nd</sup> segment ♠A K Q 9 ♥A K 9 6 ♦K 3 ♣Q 8 7, a fair hand. I perked up as partner opened 1♦, and over my 1♥ response, rebid 1♠. One of the big advantages of a weak notrump system is that a rebid in a new suit by opener guarantees an unbalanced hand. I then found out that partner had two aces. I knew that any normal opener would be make the grand odds on, so I just bid it! Brad Held ♠10652 ♥- ♦AQ9854 ♣A109. There was nothing to the play. +1510 was worth 11 IMPs, as the strong notrumpers at the other table couldn't bid seven with any confidence.

**QF 2: Board: 27; Vul: None; dealer: S**

Another bidding decision two boards later, this time Brad was in the spotlight.

He held: ♠- ♥A K 9 8 7 4 3 ♦A Q 3 ♣A 8 6, a promising hand, until I opened 3♠ in first seat. What would you do? Brad's thinking:

'Both 4♥ and 4♠ have merit. certainly, the hand is great for play in hearts, but it contains a likely trump loser and the potential of four losers in the minors was very high opposite a useless dummy. 4♠ would make full use of partner's spade suit, with the opponents scoring most of their defensive tricks in trumps. The success of 4♠ would depend on how good was partner's suit.' But Brad bid 3NT! In the post mortem he explained:

'My reasoning was to try to set up my hearts for nine fast tricks, while using whatever bits and pieces partner held to keep the opponents at bay. Who knows? Partner may have had a partial club stop? Or I might have received a diamond lead?'

It turned out my hand was exactly what the doctor ordered: ♠K 8 7 6 5 3 2 ♥Q 10 ♦10 9 6 4 ♣void. The only contract that didn't work out was 4♠, which is what Brad's counterpart tried at the other table. Win 11 IMPs.



CNTC A GOLD: Doug Fisher, Neil Kimelman, Bob Todd, Brad Bart, Steve MacKay, Danny Miles.

# A ROAD NOT TRAVELED

2017 CNTC - by Neil Kimelman

## DANNY AND HIS GRANDMOTHER

This next deal features Danny Miles, who grew up in Winnipeg. He had a special kibitzer: his grandmother, 95 years young! she was eager to see her prodigal progeny in action.

**Segment: QF 3. Board: 3. Contract: 3NT**

Opening lead: ♠3 (4th best)

Dummy

♠ Q 5 2

♥ J 10

♦ A J 6 4

♣ A J 9 8

Danny

♠ K 6

♥ A 9 2

♦ K Q 10 8 5

♣ K 4 2

Danny let the lead run to the ten and his king. With nine tricks on top, he was playing for overtricks. He cashed four rounds of diamonds, ending in hand, receiving a heart and a spade pitch on his left, and two heart pitches on his right. Then, he played a low club to the jack, a finesse into the "safe" opponent, the one who could not lead through dummy's vulnerable queen of spades.

After the ♣J held, Danny called for the ♥J, covered by RHO with the king. It was also safe to duck this trick, so it was RHO's lead to trick 8 in this position (top of next page):

♠ Q 5

♥ 10

♦ -

♣ A 9 8

♠ A 9

♥ Q

♦ -

♣ Q 10 6

♠ J 7 4

♥ 7 6

♦ -

♣ 7

♠ 6

♥ A 9

♦ K

♣ K 2

RHO returned a heart, and Danny's ace dropped the queen. Cashing the ♥9 and the ♦K squeezed LHO in the black suits for plus 690 and 2 IMPs.

Danny's Grandmother: "That's just how I would have played it!"

## THE SEMI- FINALS

L'Ecuyer chose McMullin, which left Litvack and Todd. L'Ecuyer used two solid 2<sup>nd</sup> half segments to break open a close match and win 185-122. Todd continued the habit of losing the 1<sup>st</sup> segment, this time by 23. Good sets in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> quarters meant a comfortable 156-129 margin, in a well-played encounter.

## INTERESTING HANDS FROM THE SEMI-FINALS

**SF1: Board: 14; Vul: None; dealer: E**

Steve gave Brad a hand from the first set in which we sat out. Here is their conversation, with Brad retelling:

"None vul, you pick up: ♠A K 10 8 4 2 ♥K Q J 8 6 3 ♦- ♣4, a pretty fair hand," Steve began. "RHO deals and opens 1♣."

"2♣," I said.

"Okay, good. That's what Danny did," Steve encouraged.

# A ROAD NOT TRAVELED

2017 CNTC - by Neil Kimelman

"Partner jumps to 4♥, and your right hand opponent, the one who opened 1♣, now bids 4NT."

I considered for a moment: "5♦? I think??" There was a pause in the room, as if someone had eaten too much chili for lunch.

"I'm always bidding 6♥," I explained, "but if partner has the right two aces, I can encourage them to bid the grand."

"Danny bid 6♥."

"Well, I suppose that might work too," I conceded. "So what was the result?"

"Wait just a second, Brad," Steve cautioned. "The auction's not over. LHO now bids 7♣, pass-pass to you."

I couldn't think of anything to do but bid 7♥, after all partner's pass would normally show first round control of clubs. They likely also had the ace of hearts for their jump to game.

"That's what Danny did." Nice to be back in Steve's good books again. "Pass-Pass-Double." Umm. Okay? Good? Bad? "How do you like your chances now?"

By the tone of the question, not very much.

"Right hand opponent has two aces," continued Steve.

"I hope neither is the ace of trumps," I said.

"Diamond lead. Plus 1770."

The full deal:

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

But Bob also had a story to tell on this deal. "I picked up the East hand and opened 1♣. 1♠ overcall. Pass-Pass- to me! I bid 2♣. South bid 4♥, Doug 5♣ and RHO 5♥. All pass."

So, one table got pushed into the unmakeable grand, got doubled and made it, while the other table could have passed it out at the 1-level for -170, but ended up -480. All of this added up to 15 IMPs.

Of course, nothing was said about the fate of a club contract. The only way to hold East to 11 tricks is to lead a low spade at trick one for a diamond ruff at trick two.

**SF2: Board: 28; Vul: N-S; dealer: W**

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

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	Pass
1♠	DbI	4♠	Pass
Pass	4NT	Pass	5♥
All Pass			
Opening lead: ♠2			

# A ROAD NOT TRAVELED

2017 CNTC - by Neil Kimelman

After ruffing the spade in dummy, I led the HxQx from dummy. When that lost to LHO's ♥K, I ruffed the spade continuation low in dummy, then unblocked the ♥A, diamond to the ace and drew trumps. Being in five only, I eschewed the club finesse for making five. The full deal:

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

West can do better. He need to duck the ♥Q. Good defence from that point on will always beat me.

## THE FINALS

This was Brad's first final. Bob, Doug and myself have been here once before, facing the Korbel juggernaut in 2012, the year before Brad joined the team. Danny and Steve have been in the winner's circle before: Danny twice, in 2015, and also in that same fateful 2012; and Steve once, in 2004.

But our past record was nothing compared to our heavily favoured opponents. This was last year's champion team, and for most of them, it wasn't the first time atop the podium. Nick and Judy Gartaganis, one of Canada's premiere pairs --- not to mention recently inducted hall of famers --- have NINE gold medals between them (Judy: 4 wins; Nick: 5 wins), but that's just the beginning. Nick L'Ecuyer and Kamel Fergani each have SIX wins in this event. To top it off, Zygmunt Marcinski has won twice; Fred Pollack once. That's a total of 24 wins between them, compared to our paltry 3. Of the other top 8 teams, Amoils had 13 wins (Mittelman (8), Cannell (2), Sabourin (2), Amoils

(1)), McMullin had 6 (Maksymetz (5), McMullin (1)), Litvack 4 (Lindop (3), Baxter (1)), and Yan 1 (Yan (1)). So, you can sort of see why the Bridge Winners poll picked L'Ecuyer vs Amoils in the finals, and also why team Todd received only 4 votes to win the event.

## FINALS: DAY 1

Once again Todd spotted the opponents a first segment lead, this time 34. Team L'Ecuyer were playing well, and had some luck on their side. The only pick up in this quarter was a natural auction (sort of) that got us to a decent slam:

**F1: Board: 9; Vul: E-W; dealer: N**

Here is Brad recalling the hand:

"In 2nd seat holding ♠8 4 2 ♥A 9 7 4 ♦7 ♣A K Q 10 7. I opened 1♣. 1♠ overcall. 2♣ by Neil. Before you get too excited, 2♣ was actually conventional, showing 5+ diamonds and 8+ points: a transfer. I didn't relish to bid my singleton diamond, and fortunately I didn't have to. RHO raised to 3♠, which was passed back around to Neil who bid 4♥! I wasn't sure what I should make of that, but I took it for HEARTS. And to go this far, I played Neil for a strong hand with 6-5 in diamonds-hearts. My hand just grew up. 4NT was my next move, but hearing one keycard from partner cooled my heels to signoff in 5♥. But then Neil bid 6♥ anyway!"



# A ROAD NOT TRAVELED

2017 CNTC - by Neil Kimelman

The opening lead was the jack of spades. (Hands rotated.)

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

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

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

After Neil ruffed the opening lead, he went after trumps. After ace and another, the hand was over. Neil ruffed out diamonds, drew trumps and claimed. Plus 1430 and win 13 IMPs.

Solid segments 2 & 3 were good for us, winning back 18 and 6, respectively. This hand helped the comeback trail:

**F3: Board: 13; Vul: Both; dealer: N**

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

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

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

Bob and Doug got to a typically aggressive 4♠ contract. South on lead, made the very reasonable but unfortunate lead of the ♠7. Bob played low from dummy and the spotlight turned to North. He reasonably put in the ten, hoping partner had ♠9xx or Jxx, or that the ambiguity in the trump suit would restrict some of declarer's choices. Bob now led back a low spade and South, not wanting to be endplayed again, went up with the ace dropping partner's king, and played a third trump.

Bob now lost the diamond finesse and south expectantly returned a heart. Declarer went up with the ace, and ran the ♣Q to the king, won the diamond return and repeated the club finesse, making four.

## SEGMENT 4

For Brad and I, Segment 4 of the Finals was the most emotional and draining set of boards in the whole event. It started on the 1st board out when I pushed the opponents to the three level, only to defend sloppily and allow them to make. Lose 8. Then we stopped in a couple of part scores, where games make. Then:

**F4: Board: 22; Vul: E-W; dealer: E**

I held ♠A K J 6 2 ♥A 8 7 5 4 ♦- ♣A 8 5. I opened 1♠, and over 1NT I rebid 2♥...end of the auction. Brad held ♠9 ♥Q J 3 ♦10 8 5 4 ♣K Q 10 9 4. As you can see we can make slam. +230 was not only a loss of 10, but left Brad and I second guessing our bids and our partner's bids. Not a word was said, but we weren't done our emotional roller coaster.

# A ROAD NOT TRAVELED

2017 CNTC - by Neil Kimelman

F4: Board: 22; Vul: E-W; dealer: E

FINALS: DAY 2

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

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	1♠	Pass
1NT	Dbl	2♥	3♥!
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Because of the vulnerability I chose not to overcall 1NT, instead keeping alive penalizing the opponents. Sure enough things developed very favourably. All I had to do is place the double card on the table and collect our +1100 or so in 2♠. Seemingly forgetting partner's passed hand double, I decided to give up for penalty and play 3NT from partner's side. I couldn't bid 2♠ as that would be natural (I think), so I cue bid RHO's 2nd suit. It went all pass!!

Oh no!! After the set I criticized partner's pass of 3♥. Right or wrong, it left a bad taste in both of our mouths. Oh, what a lovely way to finish the day.

The set scored not as brutally as we had imagined. Both of the greasy games I mentioned were pushes, but we did lose 9 on a THIRD greasy game that we didn't bid. All that to lose the set 25-28, now down 13 half way through the final.

## SEGMENTS 5&6

We took the lead by 3 after the 5th segment but lost 6 in the 6th to be down by 3, anyone's match! Brad and I were out in Segment 7 and it was a disaster set for us, losing 28 to be down by 31 with only 15 boards to play. The whole team was deflated, but there were still 15 more boards and were there!

## SEGMENT 8

**Bd 15:** The set started with us making 3NT on a guess. I guessed right and they guessed wrong. Win 12.

**Bd 16:** A routine 3NT, win 1.

**Bd 17:** Brad and I bid a makeable game, not bid at the other table. I should make it, but missed a valuable inference, lose 5.

**Bd 18:** I tried something different, and it worked! Holding ♠6 2 ♥K 5 4 2 ♦A J 5 2 ♣K J 8, I passed in 1st seat, red vs white, instead of opening a weak notrump. It went 2♠ on my left, pass by Brad, and 3♠ on my right which ended the auction. We beat this two for +100. At the other table they bid 3NT. North also had a 12 count, but neither had a spade stopper, so Bob and Doug ran off six spade tricks. Win 7.

**Bd 19:** A flat 3NT - push.

**Bd 20:** A poor slam that makes, but neither pair bid. Push.

**Bd 21:** Brad and I had a rare bidding accident and bid 6♣, the inferior slam. Bob saved us with a great lead against 6♠, giving his partner a club ruff, lose 3.

**Bd 22:** Bob and Doug bid a no play game and we went down two in a partial, lose 6.

**Bd 23:** Our opponents bid the wrong game at our table, but our partner's couldn't quite fetch the makeable 4♠, a big missed opportunity, push.

**Bd 24:** Brad created a swing with an aggressive balance, win 3.

**Bd 25:** A well bid grand gained 13, and brought the lead down to 12 (see next page).

# A ROAD NOT TRAVELED

2017 CNTC - by Neil Kimelman

## Doug Fisher

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

## Bob Todd

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

Fisher		Todd	
West	North	East	South
-	-	1♥	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♠	Pass
2NT <sup>1</sup>	Pass	4♣ <sup>2</sup>	Pass
4NT	Pass	5♣ <sup>3</sup>	Pass
5♦ <sup>4</sup>	Pass	5♥ <sup>5</sup>	Pass
5NT <sup>6</sup>	Pass	6♥ <sup>7</sup>	Pass
7♠	All Pass		

1. Asking
2. Good minimum, short clubs
3. One key card
4. Do you have the ♠Q?
5. Yes, and the ♥K.
6. Any other kings?
7. No, but I have the ♥Q.

**Bd. 26:** Todd went ahead by 1 on the very next board. It was our turn:

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

West	North	East	South
-	-	Pass	1♣
Pass	1♦	Pass	1NT <sup>1</sup>
Pass	2♦ <sup>2</sup>	Pass	2♥
Pass	3♥ <sup>3</sup>	Pass	3♠ <sup>4</sup>
Pass	4♦ <sup>4</sup>	Pass	4NT
Pass	5♥ <sup>5</sup>	Pass	5NT <sup>6</sup>
Pass	6♦ <sup>7</sup>	Pass	6♥
All Pass			

1. 15-17
2. GF Checkback stayman
3. slam try
4. Cue bid
5. Two key cards, no ♥Q
6. Guaranteeing all key cards, as North is unlimited.
7. Bid 7♥ if you have the ♦K, denying the ♣K.

Now all I had to was make it. I got a trump lead and thought for 10 minutes (half of it in the washroom), and finally decided to cash another high heart, leaving one high heart in each hand and then played the ♦AK. It is funny, that a hand that was complex and uncertain, became a claimer after trick four! I simply ruffed a diamond with the ♥Q, led the ♥7 to the Jack, cashed the ♦J, and ran the ♣J. Even if it lost, West would have to lead a black suit into my tenaces for my 12<sup>th</sup> trick. The Gartaganis's stopped in game – we were up by 1IMP!!!

But we weren't out of the woods. Bob and Doug had a par plus result on 28, but got to a poor 2♣ part score on board 27:

## Board 27. Dealer East. Both Vul.

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

Bob played it well to keep the loss to down one, very important as it turns out. At the other table the bidding went (see next page):

# A ROAD NOT TRAVELED

2017 CNTC - by Neil Kimelman

Fergani West	Bart North	Pollock East	Kimelman South
-	-	Pass	Pass
1♣	1♥	Pass	Pass
1NT	All Pass		

Kamel made a very nice rebid of 1NT, despite the club singleton. Brad led ♥K and continued with the Queen. Fergani ducked two rounds of hearts, and on the 3<sup>rd</sup> dummy threw a low spade, and I had to discard. Not wanting to release a card in either minor I played the encouraging ♠3, in tempo. Kamel then led a small spade to the ten and my queen. I returned the ♣3, showing an honour. Kamel, who had six tricks, was at the crossroads. He cashed the ♦K, unblocking the nine. Now he could cash the DxQx, and third diamond and then rely on the spade finesse. Or he could simply play a small diamond to the ace on the second round of the suit, and finesse my ten on the way back for trick seven. He chose the former, and went down one for a push!

I'd like to introduce you to Team Todd, the 2017 CNTC Champions. Champions . . . the word sure does have a nice ring to it.

This was Brad's first CNTC win and to say that he was excited would be an understatement. For stars Steve Mackay and Danny Miles, this was their 2nd and 3rd wins, respectively. Doug, Bob and myself pulled off our first win on our native soil with many locals watching on Vugraph in the hospitality room. Hollywood could not have scripted it better! Hometown-hero underdogs stage a late game rally to come from behind and win a photo finish.

The celebrations began in the hospitality room, and believe me, the room could not have been more hospitable. It seemed like everyone wanted to talk to us, to shake our hands, to take our photo. Once we retreated back to Bob's house, there were more drinks, which included beer, scotch and champagne. And yes Keith [Balcombe], we actually DRANK your champagne, and didn't spray it all over captain Bob like a sporting cliché.

Our team of 'nice guys' finally made it all the way! Well, not quite. A combination of our opponents playing well with home court advantage, Danny not being able to play, and not having our 'A' game, we lost to the Mexico national winners. Good luck to them in the 2017 Bermuda Bowl.

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# Altitude Training

**UNOBVIOUS HANDS FROM THE  
2017 CANADIAN SENIOR TEAMS**

## By Michael Schoenborn (the Shoe)

The 2017 Canadian Senior Teams Championships was held in Winnipeg during the first week in May. The weather was sunny and warm while all of Eastern Canada was being flooded out in cold weather and torrential rains. None of this mattered to us, as we were indoors for five straight days of bridge.

It was a tough field in the CSTCs, judged by some pundits to be tougher than the Open. I was just happy to be there with Fred Lerner, John Gowdy and David Turner, three guys I have known and liked for over 45 years. On our last outing in this event, three out of four of us had failed to qualify a couple of years earlier in Montreal. Nobody had thought that the field in Montreal was anything special.

### *Round Robin*

We were to play a double round robin, fourteen rounds in three days, with four teams to qualify for the semifinals. We start right off with a solid loss to the Domansky team (Cliff Campbell, Dave McLellan, Rollie Laframboise). We are below average after the first day: I will not bore you with the details of the 40 IMPs I dropped personally. I found, as always, that if I avoided my own mistakes, we were fine. By the end of the first round-robin we were somewhere near the lead. It was about a six-way tie for the four qualifying spots. We started the second round with the Domansky repechage. Fred and I chose Don and Cliff again,



## UNOBVIOUS HANDS FROM THE 2017 CANADIAN SENIOR TEAMS

By Michael Schoenborn (the Shoe)

since our butts hardly even hurt from having been thoroughly kicked the first time, and also we liked these guys. The second time, they pretty much blitzed us. By Round 13 of the round robin, we are playing the Hanna team (Ron Zambonini, Jurek Czyzowicz, Dan Jacob, Michael Roche, John Rayner). We have lost World Championships with four of those guys, not simultaneously. By now, we are in a fight for first place with the Carruthers team (Paul Thurston, Katie Thorpe, Joey Silver, Keith Balcombe, Marty Kirr). We sit down with Dan and Jurek and get lucky a few times on this layout. Remember, we are old guys and in our case, playing late on the third day with a four-man team:

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

Our first major piece of good fortune is that, as dealer, our system requires Fred to open his mangy 11 count one club. That, in turn, means Jurek has a spade overcall where he would not have had a second chair opening bid, so we will never get to the hopeless four spades with the 5-0 trump split. At the other table, 4 spades is reached after a third chair one notrump opening and Stayman. That goes two down, +100.

At our table, it goes 1♣ - (1♠) - 2♠ - 3♥ - 3NT and I'm thinking I have a pretty good hand. Dan leads the jack of clubs and the Shoe, supersleuth, diagnoses the spade void. There may be some trouble enjoying the third club in dummy, so I win the king of clubs and go about setting up my three spade winners with a low spade to the queen, losing to the king. On a diamond return, I remained peacefully oblivious to the potential error of my ways.

I belatedly cash three diamonds, noting the 4-3 split. Now I realize the meaning of the fact that I only had one dummy entry for both spade finesses. So I cross on a high club, abandon my third club winner, and lead a spade down, finessing the eight. Now I play ace and ten of spades and Jurek considers ducking, which sets me with QJ of hearts with Dan. Finally he decides that I can't have been this stupid, and stops the overtricks by taking his two spades and the ace of hearts. So that is +400, win 11 IMPs.

Note that my line of play also goes down if the ace of hearts is onside, losing three spades, a diamond and the ace of hearts, or if the fourth diamond is with Jurek. The somewhat better line of play is to lead the eight of spades to dummy's queen, then discard a spade from dummy on the third high diamond. Now on the fourth spade, I lead the two, dummy is out of spades, and Jurek must win the three, the lowest he could keep. The endplay works all the time on the actual layout.

Of course, a real bridge player would not have done any of this. You should win the club king and cash three diamonds, pitching a spade from dummy. Then, travel to dummy on a club and lead a low spade from dummy. If the jack is played, duck and there is an endplay in both majors that either gives you three spades, or two spades and a heart, plus three tricks in each minor. If, on the spade down from dummy, RHO plays low, you seem to be back to the original heart endplay: win cheaply in hand and play ace and your high spade to the queen. He must win, it's your third spade trick if he ducks. Now he can cash two more spades (you have kept the deuce in hand, and dummy is out of spades because the pitch on the third diamond). After that, he is endplayed in hearts and has to give you the dummy. That comes to two spades, one heart, three diamonds and three clubs.

Finally, we should also observe that if you are not being a supersleuth trying to win a Canadian Championship, you would make this hand pretty easily. You would win the club lead with the king and lead a heart toward



## UNOBVIOUS HANDS FROM THE 2017 CANADIAN SENIOR TEAMS

By Michael Schoenborn (the Shoe)

dummy. LHO splits his honours and the king is topped by the ace. Back comes a diamond, and another heart is advanced. Some opponent wins and returns a club to lock out the dummy. The third round of hearts sets up a heart trick in dummy, which is left with a good club and a good heart. Someone exits with a diamond and it is time to cash the diamonds. When RHO shows in to three rounds, he is known to be 5-3-3-2. Now it is a simple matter to lead the two of spades to any spot card in dummy. RHO cannot duck, as the makes it a dummy entry and a second spade trick, which means two spades, one heart, three diamonds and three clubs. So RHO must win, but is down to all spades, so is endplayed. The queen of spades becomes the second spade trick and the entry to the club and the established heart.

### *The Semi-Finals*

We win the round robin by a fraction of a victory point over Domansky, and are left with the unenviable choice of semifinal opponents between Zambonini and Carruthers. Eventually, we sit down for the semifinal against Dan and Jurek, the Zambonini team, once again. This is a weird match, as we take a comfortable 24 IMP lead in the first quarter, then lose the second quarter 45-1. What do you do to recover from that? We used the lunch break together as a team, telling funny stories, and for John Gowdy and me, consuming a couple of beers. We prevail by 30 in the third quarter to lead by 10 IMPs, then it's on to the final segment. The issue arose whether, with Qxxx, sitting behind AKJ109 of diamonds in an entryless dummy, you duck when declarer takes the finesse? Doesn't everyone?

Take a look at this hand, from the fourth quarter of the semifinal (top of next column):

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

As West this hand was nothing but problems for me. It felt as though I had guessed wrong every time, but the outcome was good. First, I heard Dan opening 1NT (15 to 17) on my right. I bid 2♣ showing the majors, on the theory that I have lost 5 or 6 IMPs when it goes 1NT all pass at least a hundred times as often as I have gone for a number. Actually, I never go for numbers. Jurek raises to an optimistic 3 NT, but at least I have created the delusion of great major suit length.

I lead the king of spades and it goes: two five three. We play upside down count and attitude, so Fred's five is the lowest outstanding spade. Sadly, we also play this ridiculous carding agreement that crept over from our leads against suits at the five level and up, where it makes sense. Ace requests attitude or unblock, king requests count. So here I am in this life and death situation, blessed with the knowledge that Fred has four spades, but with no information about whether or not he likes the lead!

I go into a rare trance and deduce that Fred can hold at most 4 HCPs. The ♥K would be most useful, as he can win and return a spade to ensure five tricks. I can even unblock to keep an exit with my ♠4. The same useful result is obtained if he has the ♣A, or four clubs to the queen plus the guarded queen of diamonds, when I must shift to clubs, probably the jack. A neutral diamond exit is also possible and probably safest, but it will blueprint all my cards. With four suits to choose from and no clear idea of the truth, I opt for the



## UNOBVIOUS HANDS FROM THE 2017 CANADIAN SENIOR TEAMS

By Michael Schoenborn (the Shoe)

religious solution and continue a spade, praying for him to have the jack or ace of spades. That fails, and Dan wins the jack. I can hardly wait for the postmortem.

Dan takes the diamond finesse and Fred decides not to do as everyone does: he needs the entry before I can give away more tricks. He does not duck the queen of diamonds. He wins and clears the spades. Dan can hardly be blamed for diagnosing me with the ace or ace-queen of hearts and TWO more good spades. He runs the diamonds and stakes the outcome on the clubs, losing two spades and one trick in each of the other suits. One down is +50 for us.

At the other table, the spade lead is the same and discouragement takes place. John Gowdy is declarer, and receives a shift to the jack of clubs, which he wins with the queen. The diamond finesse is ducked and there is no really good way to return to hand except by breaking the hearts safely into LHO. When that works, he has nine tricks consisting of one spade, three hearts, three diamonds and two clubs, and eventually makes an overtrick. Plus 430 is win 10 IMPs. We win the final quarter by a grand total of 14 IMPs and are heading to the final, where we are facing Domansky, who had a solid win against Carruthers. The pundits seem to have been wrong about everything from rating the teams through to ducking the diamond.

### *The Final*

By now, we are pals with Cliff and Don, so we sit down against them for the first quarter. To change our luck, I take Don as my screenmate and Fred moves over to Cliff's side. Our luck changes all right: they do not beat us. However, we produce a 47-47 tie in the first quarter! Our pals come back for the second and third quarter, as we inch away with a win by 16 and a win by 12. It could have been more in the third quarter:

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

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

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

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

At both tables the contract was 3NT. The play was quick and easy at the other table. David Turner received a low club lead which could have won the eight in dummy, but he overtook to lead a diamond up, catering to a singleton ace on the left. Eventually, he dislodged the diamond and got a club return. That added up to nine tricks, so he rose with the ace and had one spade, six diamonds and two clubs. It is no better to return a spade, as declarer rattles off up to eight tricks, ending with J 10 9 x of hearts in dummy and Kx of hearts in hand with a winner in each black suit. By leading hearts, he can lose the ace and queen, but the gets either two high hearts in dummy or two high black cards in hand for an overtrick.

I apologize for picking on Cliff, when he played so well throughout. I can only assume that a whole day behind the screen with the unfailingly cheerful Fred Lerner had finally lulled him a little to sleep. I also led the four of clubs and the eight held in dummy. He pounded out the diamond ace (no harm there as they were 3-2) and Fred returned a club. With so many tricks, there was no harm in ducking, pitching a heart from dummy. I won and cleared the spade entry, doing my best impression of playing while awake. Now declarer must cash all but one of the diamonds, which gets to the same 4-card ending where he loses the ace queen of hearts, and then claims with two red tricks in dummy or two black tricks in hand.

When ALL the diamonds are cashed, declarer comes to spade K, singleton heart K and club A. I have to pitch



## UNOBVIOUS HANDS FROM THE 2017 CANADIAN SENIOR TEAMS

By Michael Schoenborn (the Shoe)

one more time from A Q of hearts and K 3 of clubs. I slept soundly through this opportunity, by keeping the king of clubs, my known card, instead of pitching it and keeping the three. Cliff woke up in time to remember I still had the king of clubs and to keep the ace of clubs on the pseudo squeeze when I cashed the two high hearts. Minus 600 was a push instead of a possible win 12.

The last quarter was uneventful, thank heavens. Fred and I were rock solid on the first eight hands. In fact, our lead reached 45 IMPs. Then we were on the wrong end of two vulnerable slam swings and an iffy game, but time had fortunately run out and we won by 17. Somewhere along the way, we found out we have a playoff with Mexico to qualify for the world championship. With this team, it can't be anything but fun.

### *On to Mexico*

By the time you read this Mexico playoff will be a distant memory – hopefully a good one!! Speaking of Mexico reminds me of a Mexico related story:

John Gowdy and Fred Lerner were walking their dogs on a sunny Saturday afternoon. John stopped at the open door of a pub and suggested they go in for a beer. Fred said the pub would not allow the dogs. John said "No problem. Watch this" and he enters the pub, beating the air with his free hand. The guy at the door says "You can't bring that animal in here." And John continues to thrash his arms and says: "Service dog." The doorman apologizes and tells him to go ahead and sit down. Fred thinks this is wonderful and tries the same stunt. "Service dog..." The doorman says "That's not a service dog, it's a Chihuahua." Fred, who has been studying repartee, raises his voice in anger for the first time in his life and shouts: "WHAT!!!!? They gave me a Chihuahua?"

That is not my number one Mexican-themed story, however. We have added Andy Altay and Marty Kirr as

our third pair. That means we now have one player from each pair that won the Canadian Team Championship in 1986 and went on to the 1987 Bermuda Bowl after a playoff in Mexico City. At that time, Marty Kirr was playing with Arno Hobart, David Turner was playing with Greg Carroll and the Shoe was playing with Harmon Edgar.

After our win in Ottawa, David Turner, a teetotaller, had a glass of champagne in one hand and the bottle in the other. Without hesitation, he leaped up onto a bridge table not spilling a drop, held aloft the glass and the bottle and proclaimed: "Altitude Training".



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## Into the wild

# 2017 CIPC Finals

By Dan Jacobs

When Jurek and I won this event in 2015 we had played all four sessions fairly well. This time, however, we joined the event in progress after a disappointing loss in the semifinals of the CSTCs. And we weren't quite ready for Matchpoints.

Not quite awake, we started the event poorly when each of us made a bad bid on two consecutive boards. However the following round brought us right back well over average when we scored in sequence 94%, 89% and 83%. Here is how we started the round:

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

We were playing E-W, Jurek (E) and Dan (W). North opened 1♣, East passed and South responded 1♦. West passed and North continued with 1NT (rather than the more descriptive 1♥), East and South passed and I decided to double. Although my double should've shown if not a much better hand, at least better diamonds. The double was passed all around. Jurek, with a balanced 10 HCPs had no trouble passing, and led the ♦4. Declarer played the queen and I contributed with six. After the 9♣ was captured by Jurek with ♣10 and shifted to a spade. Declarer could not take more than six tricks (four clubs, one diamond and one spade). +200 E-W was worth most of the matchpoints.

We obtained another excellent score by getting to game and scoring 11 tricks on the following board:

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

Jurek, opened 1♥ as dealer, (the opponents passed throughout), I responded 1NT forcing. Jurek bid 2♥, I raised to 3♥ and Jurek accepted. After the ♣10 went to the ace the opponents returned a club. Jurek won, unblocked the ♦K, crossed to dummy with the



## 2017 COPC Finals

By Dan Jacobs

♥A, discarded a spade on ♦A, then took the heart finesse and claimed 11 tricks for 94% of the matchpoints. Nothing special, but I guess getting to game was most of it.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> session included wilder hands and this time we weren't as often on the right side of the results. We didn't feel like we were having a great game and as it turned out we needed a good last round in order to retain the top position.

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

South was the dealer and passed, I opened 1♣ in the West, North overcalled 1♦ and Jurek doubled showing 4-5 hearts. My next bid was 1♠ and North continued with 2♦s which was passed around to me. I doubled showing a better than minimum hand and the desire to compete (I have already denied three hearts) and it ended the auction. North took his six tricks and +300 was worth 83%. It was a generous score since E-W can make 3NT vulnerable for +600.



## SOLUTION

### to CNTC Double Dummy Play

See page 3 for puzzle

If you solved this, congratulations! To my knowledge no one has done so. I had given to several experts. There are a couple of variations of the same theme, however the way to make is to give up a heart to East while retaining the ace, and eventually squeeze West in spades and diamonds. One line:

	W	N	E	S
Trick 1:	♣10	5	J	3
Trick 2:	4	8	♣A	6
Trick 3:	7	♥2	♣K	♠3
Trick 4:	4	♥Q	5	6
Trick 5:	♣9	♥J	K	7
Trick 6:	♦3	3	♥9	A

At trick 6 a ruff and a sluff is giving up so let's say that East returns a trump, leaving:

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

Declarer leads the ♥10, pulling the last trump and squeezing West between spades and diamonds. If West pitches a diamond, declarer pitches a spade, and leads the ♦K, then the 9 and playing the 10, and now dummy is high. If instead West throws the ♠8, declarer discards the ♦2, cash four diamonds, and then leads the ♠Q from dummy at trick 12, pinning the Jack.



## THE INTERMEDIATE SERIES

### DEFENSIVE PLAY 5

# DEFENSIVE STRATEGY

I started this series on defensive play by focusing on signaling, and the various signals available and common application. Another way to look at this is we have looked at the 'what' and 'how'. Now I want to take a step back and look at the 'why'.

We should have a plan on defence. This plan gets developed as soon as the bidding starts. It continues during the bidding, the lead, the displaying of dummy, the line the declarer takes, and the plays and discards of partner. All of these will help guide your partnership approach to defending each and every hand. The opener leader starts the defence on a path. The next few tricks will help determine if this defence is valid, or should a different tact be chosen. Obviously there are

by Neil Kimelman

# THE INTERMEDIATE *Spot*



some differences between notrump and suit contract approaches, as well as strategies utilized playing matchpoints versus teams. However there are common techniques applicable to all.

## DEFENSIVE TECHNIQUES COMMON TO ALL CONTRACTS

**COUNT YOUR HCPS.** This will help divvy up the remaining high cards once dummy is revealed and play starts.

**LISTEN TO THE BIDDING.** Is this an invitational sequence, game forcing, or non-forcing?

**Can I make an inference from partner's bidding, or lack thereof?** If LHO opens 1♣ and partner passes not vulnerable, you know that he easily could have bid and didn't. However if LHO opens 2♠, weak, and you are vulnerable, partner can have as much as an opening bid and not take a call. **Can I make any inferences (which are at your own risk!) from the tempo of the opponents' bidding? Will I be on lead?** Start formulating your main choices.

**LOOK AT YOUR HAND AGAIN. Are my high cards or partner's well-placed for the opponents?** If RHO has bid ♦2 over his partner's 1♠ opener, and you hold ♦5432, this suit is a very good source for tricks for declarer. **Are suits splitting? Do I have interior spots that will possibly be beneficial on defending?** If you have Qxxx in the trump suit, this holding may not take a trick. However Q1098 guarantees you one trick.

If the opponents stop at the one or two level, there is less of a need to lead aggressively, as you will often have more than one chance to find a right shift.

## DEFENDING STRATEGIES FOR IMP AND MATCHPOINT GAMES

At teams, the focus should be on taking all reasonable defensive strategies to beat game and slam contracts. Overtricks are not crucial. Therefore I will be more likely to lead from Kx in a side suit against a suit contract at IMPs.

### Notrump vs Suit Contracts

The opponents will pick a suit contract when they have at least an eight card fit, and expect to get ruffs in the short trump hand. Trump leads can be effective and negate this declarer strategy. Shortness leads can also be effective, hoping to secure a ruff before declarer pulls your trumps. However, as any general rule, caution is needed. For example if the opponents have bid game, and you have 14 HCPs don't lead your shortness! Partner cannot have an entry, or the ace of your singleton, to give you that ruff!

At matchpoints you do not want to lead from unsupported honours, and 'neutral' leads against suit contracts are often desirable.

When the opponents have bid to four of a major, it is usually on a 4-4 trump fit. One indicator on defensive strategy is when you have either length (4 or 5) in their trump suit or shortness (0-1). In these cases, the best strategy is to lead from length trying to set up and play good cards, thus weakening declarer's trump holding, and promoting your trumps into extra tricks.

Against notrump I am a proponent of fourth best from your longest and strongest. However there are considerations that may alter this choice. One is if the bidding goes 1NT-3NT. If I have Q10xx in spades and diamonds, I would lead a spade as responder did not bid Stayman.

Against notrump the opponents sometime have bid your suit along the line and you need to find an alternative choice. Having to lead from three card suit is common. I will chose my better three card suit, as a lead from this suit requires less from partner in order to be effective. Against 3NT at IMPs I would lead my KQx suit before I would lead my 10xx one. Opposite Axxxx we will take five tricks right away with the former, but need two more leads to set up and run the suit opposite the latter three card holding.

However most of the 'heavy lifting' of defence only happens after we see dummy. The next couple of columns we will examine all of the above aspects, and more.

**Next Column:** Defensive Play 6, Defensive Strategy 2: Applying the Theory



## SUIT UP!

### How We Got to Clubs, Diamonds, Hearts and Spades

*by Katie Coopersmith*

Clubs, diamonds, hearts, and spades are so ingrained in our culture, it seems as though they're always been around.

And it's true – they have been around for a pretty long time, but they haven't always looked the same. It's thought that packs of playing cards originated in China during the Tang dynasty (618-907), and they were used to represent money. The four suits used during this time certainly had a common theme among them; they were, respectively: coins, strings of coins, myriads of strings, and tens of myriads. Some have speculated that the numerical value inherent in these suits is the reason why we use 'ranked' suits today.

Eventually, the idea made its way to Egypt, and Italian merchants brought packs of cards from Egypt back to continental Europe (specifically Germany) in the 14th century. On those cards, money played less of a central role. The packs did feature coins, but the remaining three suits morphed into swords, batons, and cups.

It wasn't until about 100 years later that our four modern suits evolved, probably in France. But how on earth did we end up with these four rather disparate icons? And why red and black? Let's delve into the dirty details.

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## How Spades Became to be Called Spades

There's little mystery as to how the spade suit evolved from the earlier set of four Italian suits. How can we tell? Well, the Italian word for 'sword' is...you guessed it...spade!

Just as spades are the highest suit in many games, some scholars and amateur historians believe that our four modern suits were created to represent different French societal classes. Spades represented the highest strata of the social sphere: the bold knights!

It's also thought to represent a leaf on the tree of life, as it were, as well as fall and winter (clubs also have this significance because of the suits' dark hue). In Tarot cards, spades symbolize action, air, intellect, and death. How's that for variety!

## Breaking in Hearts

According to the 'social spheres' theory of the four French suits, hearts were meant to represent the Church and all holy men.

They are also, along with their like-coloured cousins the diamonds, thought to represent spring and summer – the 'lighter' seasons, if you will. In the Tarot, they represent love (of course), knowledge, fertility, and joy. Most people would be happy to have a heart appear in their card reading!

## Diamonds in the Ruff

Diamonds are believed to have represented archers and bowmen; their pointed shape may have been a symbol for an arrowhead.

In Tarot cards, diamonds signify money, bravery, earthly matter, and energy. However, fortune tellers interpret diamonds as signifying annoyances or perturbations.



## Joining the Club

Finally, in keeping with the other three suits, clubs also may have represented a fourth social class in 15th century France: shepherds and/or husbandmen. Their shape is thought to represent that of the clover, symbolizing agriculture and field work.

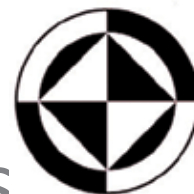
Clubs are also sometimes referred to as trefoils – which any former Girl Guides will recognize as the Guiding symbol (featured on their delicious cookies). They're thought to represent nighttime, fire, male energy, will and wealth, luck, and happiness.

## Why Red and Black?

Okay, so now that we can understand where the four suits come, we're still left wondering why our now-traditional decks of playing cards are red and black. Curiously, this doesn't actually seem to be a widely-known piece of history. One rather pragmatic theory is that red and black inks were simply the cheapest to mass-produce; both could be made by mixing linseed oil with either soot (for black) or with cinnabar (for red). Whatever the reason, the two hues certainly contrast well!

*Katie Coopersmith writes for Great Bridge Links. This and other excellent articles can be found on the Great Bridge Links blog <http://greatbridgelinks.com/articles/>*

# New Canadian Books from Master Point Press



## Two-over-One: A First Course

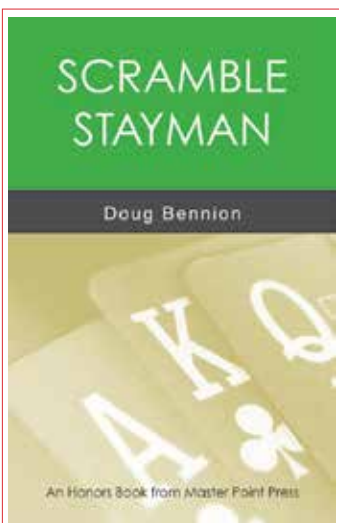
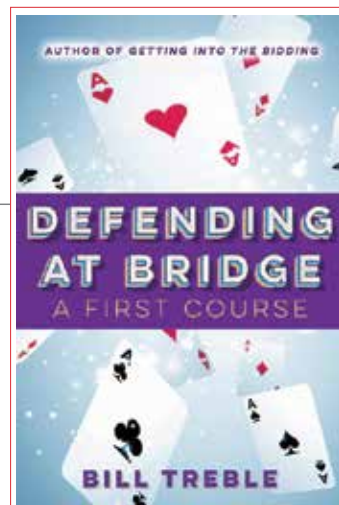
Bill Treble

Designed for players who are familiar with standard bidding, this book covers all aspects of switching over to a 2/1 Game-forcing approach. It's a comprehensive eight-lesson course, and includes dozens of full-deal examples that can be used to practice bidding and cardplay.

## Defending at Bridge: A First Course

Bill Treble

Just the facts, ma'am. The basics of defense at bridge in eight short, clearly explained lessons, with lots of practical examples. Topics include opening leads, signaling, second- and third-hand play, and discards.



## Scramble Stayman

An Honors Book

Doug Bennion

Scramble Stayman examines (1) which types of hands qualify to scramble, (2) the scramble technique to use and (3) how the various scramble contracts score compared to 1NT, measured over thousands of hands. The book features a 100-board 'match' between one player staying in 1NT, and another scrambling to a (usually) better contract, which the scrambler decisively wins.

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# EVENTS & DEADLINES

Canadian Bridge Federation Calendar of Events as of July 20 2017.

For more information see our website [www.cbf.ca](http://www.cbf.ca)

## AUGUST

World Team Championship  
12-26 August Lyon, France

World Youth Championship  
15-24 August Lyon, France

**Deadline** to submit team applications for  
Commonwealth Games  
31 August

## SEPTEMBER

All month – Club International Fund Games

COPC and CNTC club games begin – September  
through December

## OCTOBER

Canada-Wide Olympiad Fund Game  
6 October, Friday afternoon

Erin Berry Rookie Master Game  
18 October

## NOVEMBER

ACBL wide Charity Game  
21 November evening

## DECEMBER

ACBL wide International Fund Game #3  
20 December evening



## VERY IMPORTANT DATES !

2017 World Team Championships | 12-26 August | France

2017 World Youth Championships | 15-24 August | France

2018 17th World Youth Team Championships | 9-18 Aug |  
Wu Jiang, China

2018 11th World Bridge Series | Sep 22-Oct 6 | Orlando, FL