

bridge *Canada*

the GREAT CANADIAN BIDDING CONTEST



OUR INAUGURAL TGCBC p.5

MATCHPOINT STRATEGY p.15

MEET DANIEL LYDER p.18

ALL THE SPOTS! p.20

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.



IN THIS ISSUE

- 03. Editors Message
- 05. The Great Canadian Bidding Contest
- 14. TGCBC December Problems
- 15. Bridge Basics Matchpoint Strategy
- 18. Meet Daniel Lyder
- 20. The New Player Spot
by Andy Stark
- 23. The Intermediate Spot - Defense
by Neil Kimelman
- 26. Mollow on Play - Solution
- 27. The Expert Spot - Five Angry Bunnies
by Ron Bishop
- 30. IBPA - Motley Fools
- 32. IBPA - Norwegian Teams Championship
- 34. Upcoming Events

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EDITOR'S MESSAGE

Neil Kimelman - Managing Editor, Bridge Canada

Bidding Contest, Canadian Style! Cash Prizes!

The Great Canadian Bidding Contest (TGCBC) starts this issue. Check out what the experts bid, and why! Congratulations to Brent Gibbs, who with 55, was the reader with the top score. Over 45 readers entered the October contest. Other top scores:
2/3. Bo Zhu – 54
2/3. Sandy McIlwain – 54.

You can play too! The December Contest will appear on the CBF homepage the 1st week of November. The two players with the cumulative best scores for October and December will win cash prizes!

The New Player Spot

I would like to issue a warm welcome to Andy Stark who, starting this issue, will be writing articles in BC, focused on helping newer players.

World Championships

The World Championships were held in Wuhan, China last month. Look in the December issue (and the CBF Website) to see how Canadian teams fared.

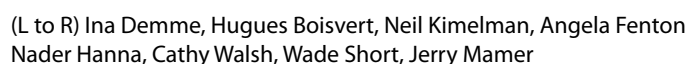
Meet Daniel Lyder

‘It’s amazing seeing the camaraderie among the junior players at the NABC events.’

In our ‘Meet’ series, read the insights of Daniel Lyder on youth and bridge.

If you have the slightest touch of masochism, you’ll love this game.

Author Unknown



Zone I

Wade Short zone1@cbf.ca
8 Hemlock Rd,
Pointe du chene, NB 506-530-5612

Zone II

Hugues Boisvert zone2@cbf.ca
1206-4239 Jean-Talon Quest
Montreal, QC H4P 0A5 514-889-9514

Zone III & CBF President

Nader Hanna zone3@cbf.ca
53 York Road
Toronto, ON M2L 1H7 416-756-9065

Zone IV & CBF Vice President

Neil Kimelman zone4@cbf.ca
110 260 Fairhaven Road
Winnipeg, MB R3P 1C9 204-487-2390

Zone V

Jerry Mamer zone5@cbf.ca
151 Nordstrom Road
Saskatoon, SK S7K 6P9 306-668-3951

Zone VI

Angela Fenton zone6@cbf.ca
601-1395 Beach Ave.
Vancouver, BC V6E 1V7 778-386-4343



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BRIDGE CANADA MANAGING EDITOR
Neil Kimelman editor@cbf.ca

BRIDGE CANADA FRENCH EDITOR
Francine Cimon wirek@videotron.ca

PRODUCTION EDITOR
Jude Goodwin jude@cbf.ca

CBF EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT
Ina Demme ina@cbf.ca
99 Ellis Avenue, Nobleton, Ontario L0G 1N0

ACCOUNTING & FINANCE MANAGER
Cathy Walsh accounting@cbf.ca

WEB ADMINISTRATION
Louise Mascolo webmaster@cbf.ca

CBF HOTLINE
416 706 8550
FAX: 905 832 7184

CBF CHARITABLE FOUNDATION
Gim Ong **charity@cbf.ca**
32 Sandusky Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5W4
204-775-5114

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October 2019

Host: Paul Thurston

1. IMPs, South dealer. Both Vul. As South, you hold
 ♠QJ1032 ♥8 ♦KJ9 ♣10732.

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

What do you bid?

Action	Votes	Score
3♦	17	10
4♣	9	9
5♣	1	8
3NT	10	7
4♥	2	5
3♠	1	2

The very first problem of our newest feature drew a wide variety of answers but they can be roughly divided into two camps: Supporters of Partner and Non-Supporters of Partner. There was no disagreement about the nature of North's second call: FORCING after South's positive jump response. Just what North might have was more open to debate:

Kokish: Nice Problem! (Thurston: a good way to get quoted!). 3♣ does not promise a huge hand but North may have one.

That seems to be cake-having and cake-eating all in a package. Competitive Bidding 101: When a takeout

doubler freely introduces his own suit, he shows a hand too good for an initial overcall. So just how much bigger than North's hand might be may be a tad debatable, but he does have clubs and he does have a really good hand. That being said, I find it almost incomprehensible that the majority of our panel have no real plans to show club support unless North bids the suit a second time!

A singleton, four-card support and a minimum hand for his previous bid – isn't that what South really has? And isn't the traditional way to show that hand type by jumping to game? That's why, if I could, I'd award top marks to:

Balcombe: 5♣. If partner bids 6♣ over my raise, I'd expect he'd make it. Maybe ♠Axx ♥Axx ♦x ♣AKQxxx.

When you see the follow-up article of what happened in real life, you may think Keith was prescient. Of course, the 4♣ bidders may end in slam as well.

Stark: 4♣. There may be a club slam, maybe even a grand and in the worst case, 5♣ should be an easy make.

Grainger: 4♣. Clearly forcing (yes!) and I'm willing to go past 3NT. 4♣ shows a bit more than would 5♣.

I think we'd all agree with that last bit but does South really have "a bit more"?

Korbel, always with a keen nose for a possible slam, summarizes the position of the club-raisers (and your Host): 4♣. 3NT is an illusion. With four trumps and a singleton, it is masterminding not to support partner.

Treble, the lone bidder out on the island of 3♠, says that 3♦, 3NT and 4♣ are also viable.

Withholding support when you have it and an easy way to show it wouldn't fit a universal definition of "viable". So let's move on to the camp of the cue-bidders. The usual motive for a cuebid in such auctions is indecision about strain and, perhaps, level.

L'Ecuyer: 3♦. I need to know more.

Maybe partner would like to know more too as in a great hand for play in clubs. What is really disturbing to those of us in the Support Partner camp is the plan for further bidding put forward by the cuebid Gropers:

Campbell: (who also opined he might have bid only 1♠ at his first turn) 3♦. I'll bid 3NT over 3♥ and 4♠ over 3♠.

And never a mention of clubs?

Dalton bids 3♦. A pessimist for sure as "doesn't expect there to be a slam" but he does have a plan to possibly show club support: 4♠ over 3♠, 3xNTx over 3♥ and 5♣ over 4♣, a plan shared by Turner and Maksymetz.

The last word to the scientists who want 4♥ to be a splinter raise of ♣ and well it SHOULD be but it's the type of call that, undiscussed, can lead to truly ugly contracts and put a lot of strain on a partnership. And that's enough discussion of Problem One.

What happened in real life?

SOURCE: The 2011 Bermuda Bowl match between the U.S.A. And the Netherlands.

For the Dutch team, Mueller advanced to 5♣ over three and, assured about club support and a fitting hand opposite, his partner had no trouble advancing to 6♣, laydown opposite: ♠AK ♥AQ102 ♦7 ♣AKQ986.

But for the Americans, Justin Lall went with the majority of our expert panelists when he "groped" with 3♦ and the auction continued just as many of our voters suggested they would continue:

North	South
3♥	3NT
4♣	5♣
Pass.	

Now you might debate North's final pass as being a tad conservative but he thought he had described a great hand by doubling and introducing clubs and wasn't sure he was facing a real fit since it had taken his partner so long to mention "clubs". Whatever the jury might rule, the scorekeeper wrote down +13 IMPs for the Netherlands. Moral: support with support!

2. IMPs, South dealer. N-S Vul. As South, you hold
♠J ♥QJ9843 ♦A98 ♣K62

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

What do you bid?

Action	Votes	Score
3♦	37	10
3NT	3	4
3♥	1	1

A landslide vote for 3♦ and only a mild defense offered for the distant runner-up of 3NT.

Judy Gartaganis: I'm not ashamed of 3NT as I do have cards outside my long suit.

But as Ron Bishop, Nader Hanna and Steve Mackay say directly (and many others imply):

Bishop: 3NT (if it is a good contract) rates to be better from partner's side.

Gordon Campbell offers his planned follow-ups if partner's reaction to 3♦ isn't the Holy Grail of 3NT: "Over 3♥ from partner's I'll raise to 4♥ and over 3♠, I'll offer 4♣."

So what exactly does 3♦ mean that makes it so attractive?

We'd need a New Bridge Dictionary to plumb the depths of what they think their call means/ shows:

Balcombe: "Fishing".

Korbel: "Just a noise".

Jacob: "Waiting".

My favourite:

Turner: "A grope".

Functionally what they are all doing is, as Koach Kokish says, "leaving room for partner" to show something in diamonds (3NT) or whatever else his hand has worth showing.

Except for John Rayner, there was very little comment on the preceding bidding, perhaps an indication of how low standards for opening one-bids have sunk. Or maybe JR suspects some of his many students might read this feature as he offers this: "At this vulnerability, an opening bid of 2♥ would have been acceptable". And maybe that choice would have suited Kismet Fung who opined that "this is a problem with no good option".

What happened in real life?

SOURCE: The 2019 USBF Trials to select a Bermuda Bowl team.

AS did the cast majority of our panelists, one South in this match bid 3♦ and got the hoped for 3NT from partner who held ♠KQ1096 ♥10 ♦Q5 ♣AQ1087. That left East on lead with ♠A532 ♥62 ♦K1074 ♣943 and his seemingly normal opening lead of a small diamond went round to declarer's Queen for the ninth trick.

Not so good for the other team when their South chose 3NT over 3♣ – he did, after all, have the fourth

suit stopped. But the diamond lead through the ♦ Q5 meant too many tricks for the defense and 13 IMPs for the team that had bid 3♦.

Double dummy: yes, East could lead a heart over to his partner for a diamond through the closed hand but he might have had some explaining to do for that line of attack!

3. Matchpoints, West dealer, neither Vul. As South you hold ♠A76 ♥94 ♦A10972 ♣Q74.

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

What do you bid?

Action	Votes	Score
DbI	29	10
2NT	7	5
Pass	4	4
3♦	1	1

Out there all on his own trying for the Trifecta (three 3♦ answers in a row – could they all be right? NO!) was Steve Mackay who did opine that there were grounds for discussion as to the relative merits of 3♦ versus 2NT. Not according to the Koach of all things modern with competitive bidding (Eric Kokish) who voted for Double as a "cooperative takeout double" while hoping partner would cooperate by passing.

Steve Cooper's double was defined as "penalty/ cooperative" - does that clash with EOK's meaning? Less well defined is Bryan Maxsymetz's double: "a strength-showing double", perhaps more in tune with Roy Dalton's 2NT: "The value bid".

And certainly at odds with Roy's regular partner Vince Oddy who votes for double as asking partner to "Do something intelligent". That fits with Dan Jacob's double that he describes as "Good hand, no heart support". But what do they want partner to do with his ordinary hand? (More on that later!).

More concerned with his own motivations and passing the ball over to partner was Dan Korbel: "Double – I don't like passing 2 ♠ without a fight". I agree but the fight may come later. The only panelist to focus on partner's possible problem over 2♠ was Judy Gartaganis who voted for double while saying that her choice "caters to partner's possible penalty double of spades".

Exactly. as what is partner supposed to do with some decent spades and a non-minimum opening as surely in this enlightened era, a direct double of 2♠ would be takeout so Responder's double may be needed to catch a speeding West – he did, after all, pass as dealer so he may well be overboard. But not if we don't throw him an anchor, an option declined by Rayner who said pass – "Call me a chicken". John, you authorized it so you are a chicken! But do have good company in your flock as Bart, Balcombe and Thorpe are with you in the coop.

As for the other also-ran suggestion of 2NT, Fred Pollack chose that option over the panel's favourite as "I don't know what double would accomplish". Maybe win some points?

What happened in real life?

SOURCE: "HOW TO WIN AT DUPLICATE BRIDGE" by Marshall Miles (1957!)

Yes, a problem from the distant past but just as compelling today given the frequency of interference bids. Miles strongly advised double as the only choice and our panelists agreed – mostly! The number, assuming North passes as he should, will be very large – maybe down at IEast two, maybe even three, a significant advance on anything North-South could score without West's contribution!

4. IMPs, North dealer, E-W Vul. As South you hold
♠Q8 ♥AK6 ♦AQ53 ♣10973.

West	North	East	South
-	-	1♣	?

What do you bid?

Action	Votes	Score
1NT	24	9
Pass	11	10
1♦	5	4
DbI	1	1

No misprint, the number one vote getter didn't get the highest score – Editor-in-Chief told me the Host can overrule the panel if he sees fit to do so and can advance good reasons for the decision. I could emulate Dan Korbel who votes for 1NT and says "Yeah, I don't necessarily have a club stopper but I'm still doing it and no one can stop me".

Full marks for courage of convictions but I'd have to take issue with "don't necessarily have a club stopper" – remove the adverb and I'd agree with the assessment if not the call.

And I hope to advance better reason(s) for the scoring decision than doing so just because I can!

When I teach intermediate-plus students (and I know many of you do), the section on competitive bidding describes an immediate one notrump overcall as a balanced hand with 15+–18 HCP and at IEast one stopper in the opponent's suit. Maybe ♣109xx and a scowl at the opponents will serve as a stopper but really?

Aside from the hand not really qualifying for the majority's choice, there are two other reasons for the upgraded selection of Pass. Campbell: 1NT could easily be crushed. And Andy Stark: "since partner is a passed hand, I take the low road and see what develops". (Miles and Bishop agree with the warning implicit in partner's passed-hand status).

Yes, partner being a passed hand surely decreases the possibility of our side owning the hand as attested to by EOK who says “technically we ought to pass facing a passed hand” but perversely succumbs to the lure of all those HCPs anyway because “there are lots of ways to win by bidding now”.

And lots of ways to lose too, a thought that passed through JOHN RAYNER’S mind when he voted for 1NT with a disclaimer: “If we are going for a number, I change my call to pass”. Sorry, JOHN, No undo’s allowed in this feature!

Klimowicz and Treble can smell the trouble lurking but opt for one notrump anyway. PK: “hopefully we have discussed run-outs if they double”. BT: “If and when they double, maybe partner can provide a safe haven”.

There is another slightly more obscure reason for passing. In this day and age of ultra-light openings but no lessening of the appetite for chasing vulnerable game bonuses, if we pass and at IEast temporarily leave the bidding field open for East and West, they each might just hope for a bit extra in the opposite hand and get too high, something that is very unlikely to happen if we make the popular overcall. There were two predictions about the deal that were amusing. Bob Kuz: “I have seen this hand and 1NT is the winning call but I wouldn’t make it”. Well as you see here and will see below in ‘What happened at the table’, Bob’s Pass scores maximum and wins at the table too. At IEast in this case, his bridge is better than his memory!

Also out of touch with his colleagues was Turner. “Double – unanimous, yes?” Ah, no! (David’s Partners are barred from bidding his short suit when he makes a flawed takeout double!).

The other also-ran was 1♦, best justified by L’Ecuyer: “I will peep but will not peep with a dangerous 1NT bid”. (My students wouldn’t get this choice any more than 1NT but they do like to peep.) The last word(s) to Balcombe who sums up pass very succinctly: “Two flaws for one notrump – a poor hand with no club stopper”.

What happened in real life?

Experts do yield to temptation maybe more often than they should and a lot of our panelists succumbed to point count and, as one of the South’s in the 2010 Vanderbilt did, overcalled 1NT with a less than ideal hand (no club stopper, minimum point count and no obvious source of tricks) in a non-promising situation since partner was a passed hand. Predictably, West doubled for blood and North had no rescue sequence available so that ended the auction.

And even though West led a diamond into the mashed potatoes, that was still -300 for the overcaller and 9 IMPs away when, undeterred by any interference, the other E-W overbid all the way to three notrump!!! Ending up down one. The full deal:

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

TOP SCORES FOR THE OCTOBER CONTEST

Experts		Readers	
Eric Kokish	58	Brent Gibbs	55
Peter Klimowicz	58	Bo Zhu	54
Keith Balcombe	57	Sandy McIlwain	54

5. IMPs, West dealer, N-S Vul. As South you hold ♠K5
♥Q973 ♦KJ1087 ♣J9.

West	North	East	South
3♥	4♠	5♥	?

What do you bid?

Action	Votes	Score
5♠	25	10
6♠	6	8
Pass	5	4
DbI	5	3

Top points for the majority's choice but I personally admire the choice of a Rayner: "I couldn't decide between an immediate 5♠ or pass (forcing) and a pull to 5♠ over partner's double as a slam try but my wife convinced me to bid 6♠." (Well done Jill, you may make a player out of him yet!).

Also choosing the high road were fellow Torontonians Bishop who expects "the presumptive heart void, long spades and a piece or two in the minors" and Mackay who predicts the same type of hand for partner while assessing that "we seem more likely to miss seven than to go down in six but I'll let the heroes bid 7♠."

They'd make good partners for a Western start, Fung who votes for 6♠ says "it's hard to construct a hand for partner when six (maybe even seven) doesn't have a play".

The 5♠ bidders refuse to be bullied into a slam but some want to hedge their calls as EOK and Balcombe who would change their vote to pass if they could be sure it was forcing. (Somewhat contradictorily, Balcombe offered ♠AQJxxxx ♥-♦Axx ♣Axx as a possible North hand – wouldn't we all want partner to be in six with that so why not bid it?)

And not all 5♠ bidders think slam might be in the offing: Jacob "with no thoughts of 6♠, I just don't want to defend". Dalton leaves the decision up to partner over 5♠ "perhaps partner can bid 6♠". Maybe, maybe not – I'd bet not barring a totally unusual hand for his four-level entry.

Most of the other delayed ♠ bidders intend their pass as forcing (reasonable expert treatment at the prevailing vulnerability) and subsequent pull of partner's double as a slam invitation. The most serious flaw in that approach would seem to be that partner will have little to no idea about what you might have for that invitation while you should have a fairly accurate picture of his holding (see BISHOP, above) all to make Jill Thomson's direct practical approach seem even better.

I would have to agree with Editor-in- Chief Neil Kimelman that there is some slight chance that after pass (forcing) and removal of partner's double to 5♠ as a slam invite that he might just accept by bidding 6♦ with the likes of ♠AQ10xxxx ♥-♦AQxx ♣Ax to make 7♦ "obvious". Maybe.

The five doublers will definitely get the plus score they are willing to settle for but how would this have fared at the table?

What happened in real life?

SOURCE: The 2012 Vanderbilt match between Swedish experts BERTHEAU and perennial American contenders DIAMOND.

For the Swedes, South doubled to take what he could get and that was +500. Seemingly inadequate as 5♠ was easy and 6♠ was makeable. But the double did produce + 12 IMPS for the Swedes when Moss for DIAMOND did reach 6♠ but didn't find a route to twelve tricks. Here's the complete layout to see how you might have played 6♠: (positions rotated to have South declare):

♠ A J 10 8 7 4 3 2
 ♥ -
 ♦ A 6
 ♣ A 4 2

♠ Q 6
 ♥ K J 10 8 6 4
 ♦ Q 9 5 4
 ♣ 6

♠ 9
 ♥ A 5 2
 ♦ 3 2
 ♣ K Q 10 8 7 5 3

♠ K 5
 ♥ Q 9 7 3
 ♦ K J 10 8 7
 ♣ J 9

To make 6♠ after the lead of the ♣, declarer needed to make something of the diamonds and when he won the club to play to the ♠K, his chance for success was gone.

A bit double dummyish: win the ♣A, cash the ♠A and the ♦A before crossing to the ♦K and taking a ruffing finesse against the ♦Q.

6. IMPs, West dealer, Both Vul. As South you hold ♠Q10852 ♥54 ♦AJ ♣J1082.

West	North	East	South
1♦	1NT	2♥	?

What do you bid?

Action	Votes	Score
3♠	13	7
2NT	11	10
3♦	6	9
3♥	3	9
Dbl	3	3
2♠	5	5

The scoring of the various calls chosen by our panelists was complicated by a variety of systemic considerations. No Great surprise as the deals was

used for two purposes: to see what, if any, systemic applications people would advance and to determine what effect, if any, opponents' bidding might have on considerations as to whether a hand is worth forcing to game, inviting game or simply competing. The system solutions were varied with various types of Lebensohl and Rubensohl proposed and even a negative double thrown in for variety.

To explain the scoring: the vast majority favoured inviting game and since the votes for those invitational actions (2NT, 3♦, 3♥ and 2NT) outnumbered those for forcing to game or merely competing, they were awarded higher marks.

Why not a tie for top for all the invitational actions? Because there was some hedging about what continuations might be taken and some inviters were actually game-bidders in sheep's clothing. The one clear invitational action was 2NT when used as Lebensohl: forcing partner to bid 3♣ after which 3♠ would be an invitation only.

3♥ and 3♦ were advanced as Transfer Lebensohl (aka Rubensohl for some) but there was some murkiness about the precise meaning attached and maybe, just maybe, an expert partner across the table might not survive that murkiness.

Dan Korbel: 3♥ is Transfer Lebensohl and would invite game with five spades. But Eric Kokish agrees with the "shows five spades" part but says he will drive to game. And partner, lacking three-card spades, will be forced to bid 3NT and you don't even have to drive to game, the limo arrives there all by itself!

And using a different language to probably get to the same place: Mackay, Jacob, L'Ecuyer and Grainger who all describe 3♦ as five spades and invitational values. Also bidding 3♦ but with a slightly different meaning: Balcombe who says his 3♦ shows a stopper (nice!) and is Stayman. While Cooper is thinking along similar lines when he says that "when they have bid two suits, it's best to cuebid the one in which you have something". As for the forcers-to-game:

West declined the opportunity to double but -200 was still a gain against the 1NT making with an overtrick at the other table:

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

Several points of interest:

- The initial overcall was not a thing of beauty (as Garozzo told his partner in a flourish of very colourful Italian).
- You don't get many opportunities to punish opponents of Garozzo's calibre and West might well have doubled.
- Our panelists who voted for double as a competitive effort would have done very well – North should pass if West does and East-West are definitely going down.
- ♠Q10852 when breaks are likely to be bad (both opponents bidding) doesn't seem like an adequate suit to base a game force on, particularly when the high-card content of the South hand is also a tad skimpy.
- Note that, doing well on the contest scoring doesn't necessarily translate into doing well at the table.

C'est la Vie, bridge-variety anyway. Bye for now!

A wise prediction from FRED POLLACK: "A small overbid but we are vulnerable at IMPs".

Dalton is driving to game as well: "3♠ – offering a choice of games". Miles offers a compelling case for double: "if partner bids, I'll follow with 3♠."

Ah, yes, if partner bids – and if he gets a chance to pass for penalty, how upset would you be? One thing is crystal clear: all the Lebensohl's and Rubensohl's in the world can't extract a penalty from the opponents if they are in over their heads. And those game-forcing 3♠ actions might be trading places in the deep water with the opponents.

At least the 2♠ bidders recognize the North-South hands might not be a perfect fit for game. Maksymetz says "I'm close to enough for inviting a game in spades but the bidding suggests bad breaks.

And as a parting shot: notwithstanding the vulnerability might have made partner a bit more cautious than the 1NT bidders were in Problem 4, how many of you forcers and/or inviters would like to get to the three level or higher opposite a 1NT overcall similar to the one twenty-four of you perpetrated previously? Makes Miles, Willis and Blond look pretty good for picking double.

What happened in real life?

SOURCE: BBO match with CAYNE's ALL STARS winning (as usual!)

In the hot seat, Italian Legend Benito Garozzo introduced a systemic variation unmentioned by our panelists: he bid 3♥, alerted as a transfer and raised the forced 3♠ response to 4♠.

PANEL'S ANSWERS



Panelists	Hand 1		Hand 2		Hand 3		Hand 4		Hand 5		Hand 6		Total
	Bid	Score	Bid	Score	Bid	Score	Bid	Score	Bid	Score	Bid	Score	
Balcombe, Keith	5♣	8	3♦	10	Dbl	10	Pass	10	5♠	10	3♦	9	57
Bart, Brad	4♣	9	3♦	10	Pass	4	Pass	10	5♠	10	2NT	10	53
Bercuson, Ken	4♥	5	3♦	10	Dbl	10	1NT	9	Dbl	3	2♠	5	42
Bishop, Ron	3NT	7	3♦	10	Dbl	10	Pass	10	6♠	8	3♥	9	54
Blond, Jeff	3NT	7	3♦	10	Dbl	10	1NT	9	5♠	10	Dbl	3	49
Campbell, Gordon	3♦	10	3♦	10	2NT	5	1♦	4	5♠	10	2NT	10	49
Cooper, Stephen	3♦	10	3♦	10	Dbl	10	1NT	9	6♠	8	3♦	9	56
Culham, Susan	3NT	7	3♦	10	Dbl	10	1NT	9	5♠	10	3♠	7	53
Dalton, Roy	3♦	10	3♦	10	2NT	5	1NT	9	5♠	10	3♠	7	51
Duquette, John	3♦	10	3♦	10	Pass	4	Pass	10	5♠	10	3♥	9	53
Fung, Kismet	3NT	7	3♦	10	Dbl	10	1NT	9	6♠	8	2♠	5	49
Gartaganis, Judy	3♦	10	3NT	4	Dbl	10	1NT	9	6♠	8	2NT	10	51
Grainger, David	4♣	9	3♦	10	Dbl	10	1NT	9	5♠	10	Dbl	3	51
Hanna, Nader	3♦	10	3♦	10	Dbl	10	1NT	9	Pass	4	2NT	10	53
Hornby, Ray	3♦	10	3♦	10	Dbl	10	1♦	4	Dbl	3	2NT	10	47
Jacob, Dan	4♣	9	3♦	10	Dbl	10	1♦	4	5♠	10	3♠	7	50
Kimelman, Neil	3NT	7	3♦	10	Dbl	10	1NT	9	Pass	4	3♠	7	47
Klimowicz, Peter	4♣	9	3♦	10	Dbl	10	1NT	9	5♠	10	2NT	10	58
Kokish, Eric	3♦	10	3♦	10	Dbl	10	1NT	9	5♠	10	3♥	9	58
Korbel, Daniel	4♣	9	3♦	10	Dbl	10	1NT	9	5♠	10	2NT	10	58
Kuz, Bob	4♥	5	3♥	1	Dbl	10	Pass	10	5♠	10	2♠	5	41
L'Ecuier, Nic	3♦	10	3♦	10	Dbl	10	1♦	4	5♠	10	2NT	10	54
Lebi, Robert	4♣	9	3♦	10	Dbl	10	Pass	10	5♠	10	3♠	7	56
Lindop, David	3NT	7	3NT	4	Dbl	10	1NT	9	5♠	10	3♠	7	47
Mackay, Steve	3NT	7	3♦	10	3♦	1	Pass	10	6♠	8	2NT	10	46
Maxsymetz, Bryan	3♦	10	3♦	10	Dbl	10	1NT	9	5♠	10	2♠	5	54
Miles, Danny	3♦	10	3♦	10	Dbl	10	Pass	10	5♠	10	Dbl	3	53
Oddy, Vince	4♣	9	3♦	10	Dbl	10	Pass	10	5♠	10	3♠	7	56
Pollack, Frederic	3♦	10	3♦	10	2NT	5	1NT	9	Pass	4	3♠	7	45
Rayner, John	3♦	10	3♦	10	Pass	4	1NT	9	6♠	10	2NT	10	53
Sekhar	4♣	9	3♦	10	Dbl	10	1♦	4	Dbl	3	3♠	7	43
Smith, Jeff	3♦	10	3NT	4	2NT	5	Pass	10	Dbl	3	2NT	10	42
Smith, Julie	3NT	7	3♦	10	Dbl	10	1NT	9	6♠	8	2♠	5	49
Stark, Andy	4♣	9	3♦	10	2NT	5	Pass	10	5♠	10	3♠	7	51
Thorpe, Katie	3NT	7	3♦	10	Pass	4	Pass	10	5♠	10	3♠	7	48
Todd, Bob	3♦	10	3♦	10	Dbl	10	1NT	9	5♠	10	3♠	7	56
Treble, Bill	3♠	2	3♦	10	Dbl	10	1NT	9	5♠	10	2NT	10	51
Turner, David	3♦	10	3♦	10	2NT	5	Dbl	1	5♠	10	2NT	10	46
Willis, David	3NT	7	3♦	10	Dbl	10	1NT	9	5♠	10	Dbl	3	49

December 2019 Problems

#1. IMPs. Both Vulnerable, as south you hold
♠KJ8 ♥8 ♦K98653 ♣AJ5.

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

1. Splinter

What is your call?

#2. IMPs. N-S Vulnerable, as south you hold
♠10842 ♥4 ♦J1098 ♣J862.

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

- 20-21
- Majors
- You choose

What is your call?

#3. Matchpoints. N-S Vulnerable, as south you hold
♠AQ76 ♥- ♦A108632 ♣QJ3.

West	North	East	South
			1♦
2♥	Dbl	4♥	4♠
Pass	4NT	5♥	5NT ¹
Pass	6♠	7♥	Pass ²
Pass	Dbl	Pass	?

- Two keycards, plus the spade queen.
- First round control of hearts.

What is your call?

#4. Matchpoints. E-W Vulnerable, as south you hold
♠KJ4 ♥AK6543 ♦53 ♣A9.

West	North	East	South
-	2♥	3♦	4♥
4♠	Pass	5♦	?

What is your call?

#5. Matchpoints. N-S Vulnerable, as south you hold
♠AJ7 ♥QJ873 ♦K4 ♣AK5.

West	North	East	South
-	1♠	Pass	2♥
Pass	2♠	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♦	?	

What is your call? And what is your plan? You play 2/1 and 2♠ does not promise six spades.

#6. IMPs. NS Vulnerable, as south you hold
♠K6532 ♥K ♦KJ102 ♣AQ9.

West	North	East	South
-	-	1♥	?

What is your call?

**Deadline for readers to submit their answers:
November 7th.**



MATCHPOINT STRATEGY

This is the eighth article in a new Bridge Canada series. Some of these concepts may be a review for you, but this series will also cover more advanced techniques and ideas. We are going to take a break from our declarer play checklist and talk about strategies to employ that should improve your results.

There are a number of effective ways to get ready for your bridge game, whether it be your regular duplicate game or your first NABC.

Some of them aren't about playing:

- ➡ Get plenty of rest
- ➡ Eat well before the game
- ➡ Stay focused
- ➡ Ignore good results, bad results, noisy playing site, rude opponents or uncomfortably chairs: Focus completely on the next deal.
- ➡ And above all, be kind and take care of your partner.

However there are strategies to employ which will maximize your chance of getting good scores. Let's look at specific ones that apply to playing matchpoints.

Matchpoint Strategy

There are a lot of techniques and information that can be used to improve your results in pair games. Let's go over them now:

IT IS A BIDDING GAME. It is vital that you compete in the bidding. This means overcalling, preempting, balancing, opening light*.

***Editor's note:** See Andy Stark's *New Players Spot in this issue on opening in third and fourth seat*.

GET IN EARLY. It is wise to get in the bidding early, before the opponents have a chance to sort out their offensive and defensive prospects.

Ex 1: You hold ♠ AJ43 ♥ 743 ♦ KQ43 ♣ 52

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

Double. You have both unbid suits. It is safer to double now than to balance at the three level.

PLUSSES. Many players think this is the most important objective: Take your sure plus. This means do not stretch to pushy games or slams. In a competitive auction, defend when you are reasonably certain of beating their contract, rather than declaring one level higher. Scoring and strategies – notrump scores higher than a major, which scores higher than a minor. So that is why there is such an emphasis in playing in notrump. 3NT making four score 430, while five of a minor making six scores 420, as does four of a major making. However playing in the major when you have at least an eight card fit will usually be the long-term winning strategy.

One advantage of bad bidding is that you get practice at playing atrocious contracts.

Alfred Sheinwold

But beware: if you stop in a partscore it is often right to play in a minor suit fit at the three level rather than 2NT.

Ex 2: You hold ♠ AJ43 ♥ Q3 ♦ KQ10943 ♣ 2

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

You are a minimum so will not accept the game invite, but don't pass! Bid 3♦. This is to play. Even if partner has modest support, such as, ♠ Qx ♥ AJxx ♦ xx ♣ Axx, a club lead will beat 2NT a couple while 3♦ will make even if you have to lose two diamond tricks.

DON'T LET THE OPPONENTS PLAY A 1NT

CONTRACT. When each side has roughly the same values and no fit, it is often a race to who bids 1NT first. Rarely will you get a good result in these cases. If you have a decent five card suit, or reasonable support for most unbid suits, compete!

DECLARING VS DEFENDING. Declaring has advantages over defending. It is easier as you can see the combined assets of dummy and your hand as declarer, while a defender can only see their hand, and has to guess what cards declarer has, and what cards partner holds. So defending is hard and contracts that could be beaten are often made.

CONSIDER THE VULNERABILITY. Favourable vulnerability (not vul vs vul) enables you take some liberties. Open lighter, compete higher, and consider sacrificing over their sure game, to name a few. On the other hand, the opponents will look at penalizing you at the three level if vulnerable, search for that magic +200 number. Have your full values when competing at these colours. Similarly, don't preempt with a bad suit as the opponents may double you when your suit breaks even slightly poorly.

So -50 is good against -90. However if vulnerable, -100 will be bad... unless they make 2NT for +120. Tricky! But down two vul., -200 is always bad!

BALANCING. If the opponents have found a fit, but stopped at the two level, consider balancing. The hand is probably 20-20 in high card points, so you can often do better in one of three ways:

- ➡ Make your contract.
- ➡ Go minus less than you would had you defended.
- ➡ The opponents may misjudge and bid one more, going down.

Warning: Make sure they have a fit. The auction 1♠-2♠ shows a fit, but the auction 1♠-1NT-2♣-2♠ does not. Overtricks – Overtricks (and extra undertricks) are vital at this form of scoring. Getting an extra trick when declaring is often the difference between an average and a top. However, going for that extra trick may result in one less than the field. Judgement is needed when considering being greedy.

The same consideration is needed on defence. Be aware of the times it is good just to cash all of your aces.

Ex 3: Playing pairs, you hold ♠ A 10 ♥ 7 6 5 3 ♦ A 6 5 2 ♣ 8 7 6

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

You lead a small diamond, partner plays the jack.

Dummy is:

♠ K J 7 2
♥ A 10 9 8 4
♦ Q
♣ K 4 2

Now declarer plays a spade to the queen. Now what? As usual, it is best to think before playing. Dummy has 13 HCPs, so partner will have less than five. Declarer has ♦ Kx(x...) left, so if partner can get in, they will lead the ♦ 10 through declarer. But is that going to happen? Not likely. And how many tricks does declarer have? 2 spades, 5 hearts (if declarer has the ♥ K), 1 diamond, and possibly 4 clubs. Win the spade and cash your

diamond ace! Partner might have the ♥ K, but likely doesn't. The actual full deal:

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

The key on the hand was to count tricks and points, and look at how favourable the suits lie for declarer. Here your four small hearts are ominous.

Next issue: We will go back and continue to look at declarer play, and keeping the dangerous hand off lead.



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Meet ...

DANIEL LYDER

CANADIAN JUNIOR PLAYER



'It's amazing seeing the camaraderie among the junior players at the NABC events.'

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

A couple things happened right at the beginning part of this decade. Firstly, I stayed with my aunt and uncle for a couple summers during university and discovered my Uncle's huge collection of bridge books which turned into me occasionally playing in a little kitchen style bridge game with him at the local senior centre. Sort of at the same time I stumbled upon a little bridge community containing some talented young American bridge players on an online poker forum that I was a member of. I joined BBO to watch them play and sometimes sit in, more often to watch Justin Lall (the most "bridge famous" of the group) to play on Vugraph. I went to the 2011 NABC in Toronto but just to kibitz. I started playing regularly at the bridge club and at tournaments when I moved to Victoria in 2015.

Were there challenges integrating into the bridge world being younger than most players?

For me, not so much. I'm sort of an old soul and I'm socially extroverted. The community in Victoria also embraced me and other younger players in a really special way. All the best local players went out of their way to make me feel welcome and to play in club games or sectional games with me when I was first learning and tanked their opportunity to win to help me improve. My friend and sometimes current partner Michael Roche is still doing this, just on a different

level now. I'm sure that these kind of challenges exist for younger players all over the continent though. It's amazing seeing the camaraderie among the junior players at the NABC events. It's such an incredible advertisement for youth to join the game and really needs to be marketed somehow – not just to kids but their parents also. Imagine the sort of scenario I'm sure happens in every town around North America – you have a kid who is intellectually ahead of their peers without means to really express it and they probably feel some alienation in their peer group as a result – imagine as the parent of that kid if you knew there were a group of like minded kids of both sexes that meet three times a year and participate in an insatiable problem solving challenge together. If people knew that that's what bridge was and that's what it can provide – in my opinion it's the first step towards regeneration of the game's player base.

What is your most memorable bridge moment?

I have at least half a lifetime less than most players available to help answer this question, but I can do it anyway and just because the accomplishments seem minute now doesn't detract from how great they were at the time which is part of the beauty of the game and the scope that it possesses. In the spring of 2016 I remember how jubilant I was when our team won the district flight C GNT qualifier and if down the road I manage to win CNTCs or NABCs (no promises, but I'd like to) I'm sure that the feeling will only compare rather than surpass, which is great. It really felt like we had been through something together. I won my first sectional game later that year playing a good Victoria player named Roger Allen and it really felt like things were coming together a little bit, which I suppose they were.

Meet ... DANIEL LYDER

What about life away from the bridge table.

I grew up in Dublin, Ireland and moved to Ontario in my early teens. I've lived all over Canada and have mostly had a cliched millennial existence with a mix of completed and abandoned degrees, bartending gigs to pay the rent, lots of traveling. I have a long-term girlfriend from Victoria who has her whole family still on Vancouver Island and as a result the next few years will probably be ones where we "settle down" out here on the west coast.

What do you like to do besides bridge?

I'm a huge sports fan, voracious watcher and follower of football (the real kind, where you use your feet), rugby, cricket, basketball, baseball, ice hockey, and much more. I'm a trivia geek, you'll often find me at a local pub quiz or watching Jeopardy religiously. I've been in the bar/restaurant industry for some time and have developed interest in wines and beer also, which makes BC a great place to live with thriving industries in both.

What is your favourite bridge book?

I don't read a ton of bridge books. I remember liking Alan Sontag's "The Bridge Bum" with its various stories when I read it the first time. I liked Mike Dorn Wiss's "Shadow in the Bridge World" quite a lot even though I was pretty sure I wouldn't. I've read it twice now. I like the bridge magazines: the bridge world, the bulletin, this one and Andy Stark's Kibitzer. Otherwise I'm a voracious reader. I love Irish fiction, postmodern American fiction, postcolonial African/Caribbean novels, etc. My favourite Canadian works are Michael Ondaatje's early stuff: Running in the Family, Billy The Kid, etc. Anil's Ghost is my favourite Canadian novel and one of my favourites ever.

Cats or dogs?

Cats, definitely, even if neither collaborated with the police.

Red or white?

Doesn't really matter, but usually red. I like natural

wines with their funkiness and yeasty sort of qualities and structures. Love Italian reds – Amarone, Tuscan Sangiovese Blends, etc. But I mostly try to drink BC wines these days and there is a lot of great stuff out there if you stay away from the main stores who stock the big mass-produced wines.

What advice would you give to a new player who wants to improve?

I have exceptionally lazy study habits so it's hard for me to really answer this. I improved in Victoria mostly by going to the pub after club games and listening the to best players discuss the hands. Victoria seems somewhat unique in the sense that lots of the best players still play regularly at the club and not unique in the fact that most of them like to drink. So, I learned by listening to Duncan Smith, Doug Fraser, Michael Roche and others argue about hands and it was a very effective course. Of course, once you improve you have to start deciding who to listen to and it gets tougher. I moved to Vancouver a year ago and hardly play at all at the club where the games are weaker. Now I mostly play BBO on my phone when bored and play about 2 hands a minute which develops all sorts of terrible habits with respect to counting and I really must stop. So, don't do what I do, I guess.

Can you share any amusing stories with us?

I played in my first CNTC this year and we had a good time, although we thought we could have done better in our quarter final match which we lost quite comfortably in the end. In that match we had a hand Vul vs Not where my partner opened 2♦ multi in first seat. I had a balanced 6 count 2-4-3-4 and bid 2♠, pass or correct, and to my surprise it went all float +110 when partner had QJ seventh of spades and a couple outside cards – he had found both opponents with 13 counts and marginal actions. Our teammates Nick Stock and Andy Stark faced no interference and reached an excellent small slam in diamonds. After we compared they were waiting for the congratulations on their result when my partner told them that it didn't really matter, even if it went down we would have won 2 IMPs on the board! Talk about taking the wind out of their sails.



OPENING LIGHT

in Third and Fourth Seat

by Andy Stark

At the top of your convention card under 'General Approach' and beside 'Very Light' you have some boxes to check if you wish. These boxes are titled Openings, Third Hand, Overcalls, and Preempts. Of those four boxes I recommend you check off Third Hand because it is a sound strategy to open the bidding light in third seat, even when holding as few as 8 HCPs.

The thinking goes like this: partner has passed in first seat so has at most 12 HCPs. If you have 11 HCPs or fewer, then you and your partner do not have a game to bid (unless you have a huge fit and lots of distribution). Therefore, there is either going to be a battle for a partscore, or the opponents have a game. Your LHO could easily have the best hand at the table so you should do what you can to disrupt the opponents' bidding. Bidding lightly in third seat creates havoc—hopefully only for your opponents.

by Andy Stark
THE NEW PLAYER
Spot

Vulnerability comes into play. If you are non-vul., then you should stretch to open anything within reason.

Let’s say you pick up:

♠ K 4 2
♥ A J 10 9 6
♦ 10 9 7 3
♣ 8

It goes pass-pass to you. While passing is perfectly fine, it is also okay to open with 1♥. (Some players might even open 2♥ which is right on values, but wrong on the number of hearts partner is expecting.)

What can go wrong? For one, partner can drag you kicking and screaming to game! But if you and your partner are on the same wavelength then they should know to only invite game. If you refuse the invitation, then they should respect that and let you play a partscore. Another thing that can go wrong is when the opponents bid a game, say 3NT. Partner might double that contract, playing you for a full opening bid. Again, they should be alive to you opening light and trust the opponents’ bidding.

What can go right? Well, here we would love a heart lead against a contract by LHO. If the contract is 3NT then our 1♥ bid will probably get partner off to a good lead. Good leads are those that do not give anything away. Awesome leads are those that don’t give anything away and develop tricks for our side. Here a heart lead appears to be awesome for us.

In addition to getting partner off to a good lead we hope to mess with the opponents’ exchange of information and that they’ll get to the wrong contract. They might underbid and miss a game all because you opened the bidding and your partner responded.

The Drury Convention

After learning duplicate bridge the Drury Convention was one of the first conventions I added to my convention card. It’s similar to Stayman in that it, too, is a 2♣ bid. But it comes in a specific sequence.

If partner opens a major (1♥ or 1♠) in third or fourth seat, then your bid of 2♣ says, “I have at least three card support for you and a hand with invitational values, (9-12 points). This gives up the natural meaning of 2♣ (no big deal, just bid 1NT instead), and allows you to stay at the two level if partner has opened light. Not playing Drury, you would have to go to the three level to invite game in partner’s major. If partner opened up a weak hand like the hand above, then the three-level might be too high.

Playing Drury, your 2♣ bid shows a fit for partner’s major and invitational values, and asks, “Do you have a full opening bid?” Partner denies a full opening bid by retreating to the two-level of the agreed major. Partner can show a 13-point hand by bidding 2♦. This is the in-between step that says, “Well, I do have a full opening bid, but not a great opening bid.” With anything else, partner can bid anything else. Oftentimes, partner just jumps to game in the major. Try the quiz and see if you know the message partner is sending after your Drury bid.

You	Partner	You	Partner
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠
2♣	2♥	2♣	2♥

You	Partner	You	Partner
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠
2♣	4♥	2♣	2♦

In each auction you have trotted out 2♣ to show partner a fit for her major and inquire into their strength. In essence you are inviting to game in partner’s major. In the first auction, partner has denied a full opening bid by rebidding her major, hearts. Perfect—why play the three level when the two level will do?

New Player Spot : by Andy Stark

In the second auction, partner has shown 4+ hearts and a full opening bid. If partner did not have a full opening bid they would have retreated to 2♠.

In the third auction, partner is showing a full opening bid by leaping to the heart game. The opponents have little information because all you have bid, really, is hearts. So, you might even get a favourable lead.

Lastly, partner is showing about 13 HCPs. Yes, it's a full opening bid but this bid puts the ball back in your court. If you have only three-card support and 10 points, you can retreat to 2♠. But if you have four-card support and a good 11-12 point hand, then you can bid anything but 2♠ and partner will get the message that you are going to game.

By the way, while fibbing in third seat when opening a major is okay (for its preemptive value), when opening with one of a minor you should be full strength. We don't have a Drury bid for the minors.

To wrap up, if you are not playing light opening bids in third/fourth seat already I suggest you and your partner give it a go, especially if you're comfortable playing Drury. Tactically it's a sound strategy. Also, a 2♣ Drury bid comes up, on average, at least once every session.



MOLLO ON PLAY VI

EDITOR'S NOTE: Victor Mollo treated us to some great characters such as the Hideous Hog, Rueful Rabbit and Colin the Corgi. In addition, he shared with us some great declarer play problems. In this limited feature, we present some of these gems. Solution on page 26.

CONTRACT: 6♣ AT IMPS

LEAD: ♦ K PLAN THE PLAY

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

KAPLANISM 13 *(Quotes attributed to Edgar Kaplan)*

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

[Freeman goes to 7♥ against a failing 6♠]

So, Freeman took out insurance, an action that would be automatic at Rubber Bridge. At IMPs, though, insurance premiums come high ... for -11 imps.

"Virginia Vanderbilt", TBW 5/79, p. 21

Sanders, finding the Michaels bidder with a singleton diamond, played for the queen of clubs in that hand – down 100. ... However, one of the reasons Sanders did not play his opponent for a normal cue-bid, with a zillion cards in the majors, was that the Wei team's bidding in this session had had little relationship to their cards.

Ibid, p. 23



THE INTERMEDIATE SERIES DEFENSIVE PLAY 17

DEFENSIVE STRATEGIES

By Neil Kimelman

I continue looking at some general defensive strategies. In the last segment I emphasized that bidding gives declarer a lot of information, and gave the advice to only bid if it will help your side, (by either declaring, helping partner find the best lead, or impeding the opponents' constructive bidding efforts).

In this instalment I look at different ways to make it harder for declarer to maximize his trick taking.

Hiding Where the Defensive High Cards are Located

Ex 1: As West, playing matchpoints vul vs not, you hold ♠ 105 ♥ 103 ♦ AKQ432 ♣ 876 and hear this auction:

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠
2♦	2♠	3♦	4♠
All Pass			

You didn't have a descriptive opening bid, so passed as dealer, but properly bid 2♦ on your 2nd turn.

by Neil Kimelman
THE INTERMEDIATE
Spot

Bidding could help you in one of three ways:

- Secure the best lead if north is declarer,
- Ensure a diamond lead in case the opponents were heading to notrump, or
- Pave the way for a beneficial sacrifice.

However, you have also given declarer a lot of information. You lead the A♦ and dummy is:

♠ K Q 7 2
♥ A 10 9 8 4
♦ 5
♣ Q 4 2

♠ 10 5
♥ 7 6
♦ A K Q 8 7 6
♣ 8 7 6

Partner plays the ♦3, declarer the nine. Now what? A club shift could easily be right, but it might also take away a guess. One of the primary strategies is to mask where your high card strength is located. I would return the ♦6 at trick two! Even if declarer has the jack he will not be expecting you to underlead your honours, and will reasonably assume that east has one or both of the outstanding diamond honours. If so he will likely play you for any outstanding high cards, to justify your overcall. The full deal:

♠ K Q 7 2
♥ A 10 9 8 4
♦ 5
♣ Q 4 2

♠ 10 5
♥ 7 6
♦ A K Q 8 7 6
♣ 8 7 6

♠ A J 9 8 6 5 3
♥ K J 2
♦ J 9
♣ A

♠ 4
♥ Q 5 3
♦ 10 4 3 2
♣ K J 9 5 3

go wrong, playing you for worse diamonds, thus cards on the outside. In fact an expert declarer will invariably get this wrong. Do you see how?

An expert declarer will ruff the 2nd diamond, pull trump ending in dummy, and play the ♣Q. This is a discovery play. Sure enough east has to cover, not knowing that declarer has a stiff ace of clubs. Now declarer has this mental image of the two hands:

West: ♠ x ♥ Qxx ♦ AQxxxx ♣ xxx
East: ♠ xx ♥ xx ♦ Kxxx ♣ KJxxx

From their perspective, west needs the ♥Q to come close to a passed hand 2/1 overcall.

A similar situation occurs when partner on opening lead against a suit contract, leads a suit and you have AKQxx, and dummy has a singleton. Declarer can reasonably assume you have the ace, so that is the card you should win the trick with. If you win with the king, you are showing AK, and if you win with the queen you are showing AKQ! Best to win the ace and return the queen (declarer should infer you have this card as well as partner would have led the king from KQx(x)).

Forcing a guess early

Good declarers will delay a critical guess to as late in the hand as possible, garnering as much information to help them find the winning play. Often you have no control over this, but sometimes you can make them guess earlier in the play:

Ex 2: As west, playing matchpoints, you hold ♠ Q10982 ♥ K6 ♦ 10976 ♣ K5 and hear this auction:

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

Declarer has a heart guess for overtricks and may well

♠ K J 3
 ♥ J 10 4 2
 ♦ K 2
 ♣ A Q 4 2

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

♠ A 5 4
 ♥ 9 3
 ♦ J 5 2
 ♣ J 8 7 6 3

♠ 7 6
 ♥ A Q 8 7 5
 ♦ A Q 4 3
 ♣ 10 9

Declarer wins your diamond lead with the king and takes the heart finesse. Now what? If you woodenly continue a diamond declarer can win, pull trump and take the club finesse. When that wins they will know that east must have the ♠A to justify their raise, and correctly guess the spade for the ever-important overtrick. However if you return a spade right now, declarer will be forced to guess, as he does not yet know which opponent has the club king. Declarer actually misplayed the hand. A better line is to win the diamond in hand and take the club finesse at trick two. Now, when that wins, but the heart finesse loses, a reasonably competent declarer will guess the spade correctly.

Masking your distribution

There are some useful techniques that help keep declarer in the fog as far as your distribution. Here are a couple of guidelines that can help maximize your defensive trick-taking:

1. Try to avoid discarding cards in a suit that takes away a crucial guess.

Ex 3: Here is a suit distribution in a notrump contract:

♠ K J 3
 ♠ 9 7 6 5 2
 ♠ A 10 8
 ♠ Q 4

Declarer has a 50-50 guess to score three spade tricks. But if West discards four spades on the run of long suit, they have taken away that guess.

Try to avoid discarding cards in a suit that force declarer to change from an unsuccessful line to one that works.

Ex 4: Contract: 7♥ Lead: ♠Q

♠ A K
 ♥ 6 4
 ♦ A 7 6
 ♣ A Q J 10 4 2

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

Declarer wins your spade lead with the ace, following with the three from his hand. They now lead six rounds of hearts, partner being dealt a singleton. What discards do you make?

You know that declarer has 12 tricks off the top, eight hearts and three aces and the king of spades. You also know that he has at most a doubleton spade. Why? If he had three he would arrange to ruff the 3rd spade in dummy for their 13th trick. So you know it is safe to discard four spades. And? Did you plan on discarding one of your 'worthless' clubs?

Intermediate Spot : by Neil Kimelman ... Continued

The full deal:

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

Here is the ending after trick seven:

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

2. If you discarded a club declarer will take the best odds on play in the suit by leading a club to the ace and ruffing a club, hoping the king falls. But just as good, you show out. Now It is an easy matter for declarer to play a spade to the king, and taking a ruffing finesse in clubs, with the ♦A still an entry to cash the set up club winner.

3. If you are known to have a long suit (i.e. you preempted or bid in that suit) make your discards from the known suit whenever possible, so as to mask the rest of your distribution.

When declarer is running a long suit, count how many discards you need to make, decide which cards you will throw, and don't follow a pattern.

4. If not sure what suit to unguard you can often get a clue from the bidding, or from cards that partner or declarer discard.

Next issue: *Defending against a squeeze.*

MOLLO ON PLAY *Solution from page 22*

CONTRACT: 6 ♣ AT IMPs
LEAD: ♦ K PLAN THE PLAY

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

A key to Mollo's IMP problems is to look for the best line, not worrying about overtricks. Here there is not a 100% line.

Declarer can improve his chances against some bad breaks by ruffing the lead with the ♣3, ruffing a spade with the ♣8, and leading the ♣9 to the ace. If West has all four trumps, then declarer must hope spades are now running, and pull trump. However if East has four trumps, declarer can guard against a 5-1 spade break by ruffing the 2nd spade with the club king, and lead the carefully preserved ♣2 to the ♣7, pull trump and eventually give up a heart.



by Ron Bishop
THE EXPERT
Spot

"There were Five Angry Bunnies standing 'round the bed..."

By Ron Bishop

You may remember the children's chanting countdown song referred to in the title of this story from your days at Camp when you were a youngster; or you may never even have heard of it... but that actually matters little to the hand under review.

But I was certainly reminded of what had made 'the Bunnies' upset as I kibitzed our highlight deal from a recent Spingold Knockout teams match. You will get my drift as we follow the hand through the bidding and play. It came from a match in one of the later rounds; one where this match was shown in its entirety on BBO. The contest was a close one throughout as the teams were quite evenly matched; and whilst this particular deal occurred in the second quarter, it could have had a special influence on the final result. This is how it played out...

We'll present it first as a bidding problem. With just the opponents vulnerable, the auction starts with a third seat opening of 1♠ on your right. You hold:
♠KQ32 ♥J82 ♦KQ87 ♣J8.

It seems clear to pass this 1♠ start by your RHO, but it might be a good time (after smoothly passing) to consider whether you would have opened the bidding in fourth seat if there had been three passes to you. After you pass, LHO raises to 2♠... you can assume that there was some sort of Drury raise available for that player. Your (passed hand) partner doubles 2♠; after which the opener passes and it is decision time for you.

Expert Spot : by Ron Bishop ... Continued

First; there is the choice of passing (converting to penalties). Secondly we could try 2NT... our agreements on whether this is natural; or some sort of two-suited run out, will have a lot of bearing on that decision. Or there is the simple pull to 3♦ as it rates to be a reasonable-to-good fit. Finally, we could be really greedy and try 3NT; hoping that partner has 'the right stuff'.

The player that held this hand was the youngest member of a quite young six person squad (in a high-level bridge sense); but that was not to say that he was inexperienced. Quite to the contrary, many accolades and championship achievements had already come his way. That his partner was also one of the aggressive young guns may have been part of the reason why he abandoned choice one, sitting out the double, as that would be in effect punishing his passed-hand partner for balancing. Their style... that shortness must act... meant that the balancer had no more than one spade and might be void, in a 0-4-5-4 type pattern. With 8 or 9 spades the opponents were still at their 'law' level, and they were getting a forewarned of the bad trump break.

Many partnerships use a response of 2NT in balancing auctions of this type as a two-suited run out that gives the balancer a choice of places to play. With a much clearer feeling for diamonds (and worried that a 2NT initiation of proceedings might lead to play in a poor 4-3 heart fit), our intrepid adventurer discarded approach number two.

With the requirements for an 'opening bid' being progressively eroded these days (and partner hadn't opened the bidding), our hero discarded option four as just too speculative. So that just left number three; the quiet pull to 3♦. After doing so, the auction ended and 3♦ became the final contract.

The spade raiser leads the ♠10 and this is what greets you in the dummy.

♠ 5
♥ K 9 7
♦ J 5 4 2
♣ K Q 10 5 4

♠ K Q 3 2
♥ J 8 2
♦ K Q 8 7
♣ J 8

The first few tricks went as follows:

(An italicized card denotes the card led; an underlined card shows the one that won the trick)

West	North	East	South	(trick count NS / EW)
♠10	♠5	♠ <u>A</u>	♠2	0-1
♦10	♦J	♦3	♦8	1-1
♣A	♣K	♣9	♣8	1-2
♥Q	♥K	♥ <u>A</u>	♥2	1-3
♥3	♥7	♥4	♥J	2-3
♠8	♥9	♠4	♠ <u>K</u>	3-3
♣2	♣4	♣6	♣J	4-3
♥5	♦2	♦6	♦ <u>K</u>	5-3
♠9	♦4	♠7	♠2	6-3
	??			

At this point, with the lead in the dummy and declarer leading the ♦Q off the table, the layout is the following:

♠ -
♥ -
♦ 5
♣ Q 10 5

♠ Q
♥ 8
♦ Q 8
♣ -

What does declarer know by now?

There are two outstanding trumps remaining (the Ace and the nine) and they are both with East; earlier the 1♠ opener had led a low trump around to dummy's jack as west contributed the ten; and then West showed out

Expert Spot : by Ron Bishop ... Continued

as East ducked the ♥K when we led it. Dummy's clubs are good (the Ace, King and Jack have been played and each defender has followed twice); the ♠Q is high but the heart eight is not (we don't know for sure who has the boss heart).

What can declarer do?

Just run winning clubs through East to neutralize his trumps; if at any time East ruffs with the Ace, we will just throw our heart away. If East follows to this club (trick ten), we will discard the heart eight. If East ruffs with the trump nine, we will overruff; cash the spade Q; and then trump the heart eight with dummy's little trump which East can only overruff (at trick 12) with the ace of trumps. If East never ruffs, we will continue to pitch side suit cards. Then at trick twelve (with the lead still in the dummy), we will be able to lead the last club and trump coup east. It will be an unusual deal... we can limit the defenders to just four tricks... those being the Aces of all four suits. There... 3♦ bid and made; +110.

What did declarer really do? At the point that he led the ♠Q from the dummy, declarer conceded down 1... giving the opponents two tricks for a score of -50.

This was the whole deal:

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

Why did declarer lose his way??

Who knows? Perhaps he just lost his concentration; maybe he was tired; perhaps he lost track of the clubs;

or felt under time pressure. We'll never know for sure. But he lapsed. He 'rolled over' (conceded) a contract that was due to come his way.

His teammates had collected +110 on this board already for 2♠ making E/W. See how poor a decision it would have been to sit out 2♠ doubled. Look at the layout to see how well it plays. So coupled with -50, our hero's team won 2 imps on the board. But making 3♦ would have led to a win of 6 imps for his side. A difference of 4 imps. Did that really matter??

Well, many boards (and many hours) later, going into the last board of the match, the team of the 3♦ declarer was down by 1 imp... needing a plus result on the last board of the match. If his team had been ahead by 3 instead of trailing by 1, then any 'push' result, or even a loss of 1 or 2 imps would have been okay. But now they needed a good result...

What happened??

One of his teammates showed his fortitude and endurance on the last board... opened aggressively and then competed wisely to the three level. Good technique coupled with a small slip from the opponents enabled him to bring home a contract of 3♠ and win a partscore battle. His teammates had gone down one, not vulnerable, in a three-of-a-minor contract. The resulting +90 swing won the match. All was forgiven; all was forgotten.

For those that know the camp-song... at the end all the bunnies that had once-upon-a-time been comfortably asleep, but had been rudely tossed on the floor by the littlest one's shouts of Roll Over!, were all looking in on the littlest one that had caused all the havoc.

'There were Five Angry Bunnies standing 'round the bed...'

But here; all the Bunnies are happy ... as they got to play the next day.

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.



MOTLEY FOOLS

Tom Townsend, London

The Idiot Coup is one of the lower arts of bridge. It is the unsubtle generation of a losing option for one's opponent (literally inviting declarer to play the deal as if the defenders were idiots – Ed.). Here is a suitably crude example:

♠ K Q J 10 9 8
♥ K 4 3 2
♦ A Q
♣ 5

♠ A 3 2
♥ 8
♦ K J 10 9 5 3
♣ K 3 2

West plays six spades after a Blackwood accident. North leads the ace of clubs. Play dummy's king under it and perhaps, not holding the ace of hearts himself, he may be smug enough to try and cash the queen of clubs. Sounds utterly pathetic, but keep trotting this one out against unsophisticated opposition, and thank me when it wins you a contract.

It would not be ethical, in case you wondered, to say "oops" after calling for the king of clubs, as if you meant to play low.

Dealer North. EW Vul.

♠ A K Q 9 7
♥ A 8 3 2
♦ K 4
♣ K 6

♠ J 10 6
♥ 10 6 5
♦ A J 9 7
♣ J 5 3

♠ 5 2
♥ K
♦ Q 6 5 2
♣ A Q 9 7 4 2

♠ 8 4 3
♥ Q J 9 7 4
♦ 10 8 3
♣ 10 8



MOTLEY FOOLS

Tom Townsend, London

West	North	East	South
—	1♠	2♣	Pass
3♣	Double ¹	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♥ ²	Pass	Pass
Pass			

1. Take-out double
2. Borderline at best

Opening Lead ♣3

Our full deal is from this year's Schapiro Spring Fours in Stratford-upon-Avon. The auction at my table was typical. Four spades by North, protecting his king of clubs, would have been a better contract than four hearts by South. Perhaps North should try three hearts instead of doubling three clubs, but that bid would strongly suggest five hearts.

West led a low club, on which South played low to keep west off lead. East took his club tricks and shifted to a diamond. West took the ace of diamonds and returned a diamond to dummy's king. With no prospect of returning to hand to take a heart finesse, South was forced to play successfully. He cashed the ace of hearts and was greeted by the king. There the play ended. South claimed his contract, drawing trumps.

At other tables, the defenders were more guileful, and more ready to insult declarer. West shifted back to a club after winning the ace of diamonds, allowing South entry to hand. At least two tables reported to me, declarer (in one case North) took the bait. He discarded from the North hand, ruffed in the South hand and ran the queen of hearts, the ordinary percentage play in the trump suit. East collected the king of hearts for one down.

If you're ever struggling to dump that portfolio of investment bridges, perhaps featuring Brooklyn, right there are two potential buyers.

Table One: Four hearts made, North/South plus 420

Table Two: Four hearts off one, North/South minus 50

South: Alert! East: Yes?

South: I'm requested to further misdescribe my hand.

Author unknown

New from
Master Point Press



Optimal Hand Evaluation

An Honors Book

Patrick Darricades



Accurately Assess the Value of Your Combined Hands

Accurate hand evaluation is critically important to reaching the right contract in bridge. Yet, for over 75 years now, hand evaluation has essentially relied on Milton Work's 4-3-2-1 honor point count — a count known to be seriously flawed and inaccurate. The method gives a very unsatisfactory, inaccurate point count which leads, too often, to the wrong contract.

In this book, the author addresses these flaws by applying corrections to the 4-3-2-1 honor point count and to Goren's distribution point count to obtain optimal accuracy — and introduces revolutionary new findings that lead to accurate hand evaluation. Most importantly, this new Optimal hand evaluation accurately assesses the value of both hands combined, the true test of hand evaluation.

Over 100 example hands clearly establish that the Work/Goren point count is simply erroneous and that various other current methods do not yet offer a better alternative.

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CALENDAR *of* EVENTS

COPC Club Qualifying games

September through December

CNTC Club Qualifying games

September through Jan. 15, 2020

OCTOBER

Oct 10	Canada Wide Olympiad Fund Game Afternoon
Oct 29	Erin Berry Rookie Master Game
Oct 31	ACBL-wide Instant Matchpoint Game Afternoon

DECEMBER

16 Dec	ACBL-wide International Fund Game Morning
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JANUARY

24 Jan	ACBL wide Junior Fund game (AM)
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New in 2019/2020

Definition of Rookie for the upcoming 2019 Erin Berry Rookie Master game and future rookie master games, is raised to 100 masterpoints from the previous 50.

The new schedule for the Canadian Bridge Championships will allow for less overlap between events. See the new schedule on cbf.ca

The masterpoint level for 2020 Canadian Bridge Championships Flight B have been raised to 3,500 mastpoints from 2,500



LOOKING AHEAD

2020 Canadian Bridge Championships
27 May - 7 June Niagara Falls, ON www.cbf.ca

2020 International Fund Regional
15-20 Sept St. Catharines, ON www.cbf.ca

2020 ACBL Summer NABC
16-26 Jul Montréal, PQ www.acbl.org