

bridge *Canada*

Happy Fall

IN THIS ISSUE:

Autumn treats to help you glide through dark times, trust in wise friends and be “whoo” you are.



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.



06



11



14



20



18

- 03. Editors Message
- 05. President's Message
- 06. The New Player Spot:
Filling out the Convention Card
by Andy Stark
- 09. Bridge Basics:
Major Suit Raises Part II
- 11. The Intermediate Spot:
Bidding Over Preempts Part II
by Neil Kimelman
- 14. The Expert Spot:
What Went Wrong? CNTC A 2021
by Paul Thurston
- 18. Tell Your Fortune
by Jude Goodwin
- 20. IBPA: Turkish Winter Teams
- 22. The Great Canadian Bidding Contest
- 31. TGCBC December 2021 Problems

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EDITOR'S MESSAGE

What's new in the CBF?

NEW ZONE III DIRECTOR

Stephen Laufer has undertaken the role of Zone III representative on the CBF Board. Welcome Stephen! I hope to include an interview with Stephen in the December BC.



ONLINE BRIDGE

Information on the ever popular **CBF Online Bridge League** is on the CBF website. Deadline is October 3rd for a late October start.

The CBF held its first **Canada-wide online club game** on July 31st. It was a big success, giving all participants a chance to get to know fellow Canadians from other Provinces. Keep checking the CBF website for the schedule of future Canada-wide games!

2022 CANADIAN BRIDGE CHAMPIONSHIPS

Next year's CBC's have now been finalized. Our annual championship will take place in Saskatoon, May 21-29, 2022. Further details will be made available over the oncoming months, including protocols that will be put in place to ensure the continuing health and safety of all participants.

Neil Kimelman
Bridge Canada Managing Editor

Mollo ON PLAY XVII

Contract: 4♠ by South at IMPs. Plan the play. Is the contract assured?

♠ K J 9 8 3
♥ A 2
♦ A J 5
♣ 6 4 2

♠ A Q 10 7 4
♥ 9
♦ 10 4 2
♣ A Q 5 3

Answer on page 13

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

September to December
COPC and CNTC qualifying games at clubs

October to February
CBF Online Team league

CBF STaC
February 14-20, 2022

Canadian Bridge Championships
May 21-29, 2022
Saskatoon, SK



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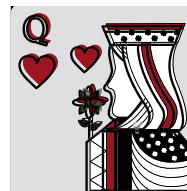
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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Ronald Carrière

I became a CBF Board of Director member at the start of 2021, and President by the summer, amidst some turmoil during the year!

The pandemic has accelerated the advent, and increasing interest, in online platforms and tournaments. Technologies, Systems, and Regulations have been questioned to preserve the integrity of the game.

Thus far, we have achieved a number of things:

- Update of sanctions, rules and regulations;
- Specification of processes and procedures, namely complaints; and
- Establishment of bodies:
 - Advisory council;
 - Appeals (of Discipline) committee;
 - Discipline (Ethics formerly) committee; and
 - Recorder.

The task of sustaining both the integrity of the game and the Federation is proving challenging. And so the Board of Directors is addressing a number of important issues:

- Vision and mission of our Federation,
- Continued responsibilities and organization of Federation,
- Programs and events in harmony with above, and
- Implication of financial impacts.

Stay tuned ...



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THE NEW PLAYER *Spot*



by Andy Stark

Filling out the convention card

Years ago, I had an opportunity to play a couple Swiss matches with the American world class player Bart Bramley. I learned a lot that day but the first thing I learned is something that has stayed with me all this time: When it comes time to filling out the convention card with a new partner, especially (say), a half hour before game time, do not start at the beginning! Start at the end and fill it out backwards. As Bart said, "Carding is guaranteed to come up during the day, while intricate understandings over 1NT probably will not."

So many players get bogged down discussing what their understandings are over 1NT. You might overhear, "Now what if it goes 1NT by you, 2♥ by them, 2NT by you? What's 2NT in that sequence?" And then you have to take the time to figure things out. By the way, that

was a Lebensohl auction and players have different interpretations, so there goes some time wasted that could be better spent on carding, for example, or slam conventions or what you do when they open 1NT.

Carding is at the end of the convention card and is guaranteed to come up! The math says you will declare one quarter of the time, be the dummy one quarter of the time, and defend half of the time. So, your conversation should start with, "Which do you prefer—standard carding or upside down?" And then you can discuss your first discard, whether it's special such as Odd-Even, or straight up such as high encourages, low discourages.

Also, what are your honour leads? If you spend time here and really get your understandings down, you will be unlikely to have silly carding errors later. We all make judgment errors, and we all make bad decisions, such as whether to continue a suit or find a switch, but if you can eliminate the signaling errors, you can do really well. Bridge is a game of mistakes—cut down on the unforced errors and the masterpoints will come rolling in.

After you discuss carding, go next to your slam conventions. Roman Keycard or regular Blackwood? Most players these days play RKC. You might ask your new partner, "What is 5NT?" It should be the king ask and then do you show number of kings or specific kings? Both have merit and there is even a more complex agreement, but for the partnership on this particular day, it's always advised to K.I.S.S. which stands for Keep it simple, Silly. (There are a few versions of KISS, but they all implore you to keep it simple.)

Here's a nugget for you: say hearts are trumps. If partner bids 4NT and you respond 5♦ to show zero or three keycards, what is partner's queen ask? If partner bids 5♥ that sure sounds like a signoff. And if partner bids 5♠ to ask for the queen, then you are beyond your trump suit and need to play at the 6-level, at least.

The answer is to have this agreement: 5♥ is the queen ask, but only answer if you have three keycards. If you

have zero keycards, pass. If you have three keycards, show or deny the queen. How do you do that? Well, if you do not have the queen, you must bid 6♥. (Remember, partner asked you a question and if you have three keycards you have to bid something.) If you do have the queen of hearts, and no outside king, bid 5NT. If you have an outside king, bid that suit. Thus, 5♠ shows the ♥Q and the ♠K. A bid of 6♦ shows the ♥Q and ♦K. If you happen to have two outside kings, (hubba hubba!) make the cheapest bid available and await developments. So, if you happen to have the ♠K and ♣K, say, bid 5♠.

Keeping with the upwards flow on the back of the convention card you come to some boxes that are easy to fill out quickly such as Michaels, yes or no, and whether or not 4♥ double by you is penalty or takeout. Yes, you should play Michaels and yes 4♥ doubled should be takeout. When the opponents open 4♠ your double should be 'cards' or 'do something intelligent, partner.' That is to say, partner is invited to bid with an offensive hand (some length in a suit) and pass with some defense and/or a balanced hand. Believe me, if we all knew what to do over the opponents' 4♠ opening bid we would not be reading or writing the New Player's Spot.

Continuing further up the back of the convention card comes the decision of what to play over the opponents' 1NT opening bid. This is especially a good box to focus on. You can trot out names of conventions such as Landy or Cappelletti or DONT. I prefer a modified version of Landy called Mohan. Another version is called Woolsey. These two conventions are named after John Mohan and Kit Woolsey. They both feature the Landy bid of 2♣ to show both majors which is superior to bidding 2♦ or 2♥. Bidding 2♣ allows Advancer the room to bid 2♦ to show tolerance or support for both majors, thus Overcaller can now bid their longer or better major.

For example, say you hold:

♠ A J 10 9 8
♥ K J 10 6
♦ A 3 2
♣ 4

You would like to bid over their 1NT opening. While you could insist on spades, making a bid that shows both majors is more flexible—what if partner has four- or five-card heart support and a singleton spade? If partner is 2-2 or 3-3 in both majors, they can bid 2♦ to check where your best fit is. You would then insist on spades, thus getting to your better fit. And if partner has the hand with four or five hearts? They bid hearts at an appropriate level (2-level is to play, 3-level is invitational).

Of course, experience tells us that when it comes time to fill out a convention card, there are many players who have their favourite pet treatments. We sometimes have to compromise on which treatments we adopt and which ones we ask our partner to adopt. Although I would not be willing to die on this hill, I do ask my partners to play some version of Landy such as Mohan or Woolsey.

Lastly, and still on the back of the convention card, we come to doubles. I like Negative Doubles to be high and so the more the opponents bid the more HCPs we have in order to make the double. Responsive doubles can max out at 4♥, and you should definitely play Support Doubles. These doubles are always made by opener and come when your RHO bids after your partner's

response. If opener doubles it shows exactly 3-card support for partner's suit.

For example:

You	LHO	Partner	RHO
1♦	Pass	1♠	2♥
Double			

If you have four-card support just raise spades to the appropriate level. The double above shows 3-card spade support and any strength. If you bid again, you have more. You should play Support Doubles through 2♥.

Next time you fill out a convention card...when you can fill out a convention card...do try the backwards method and leave more time to get to the good stuff.

QUIZ

INTERMEDIATE DECLARER PLAY

SOLUTION ON PAGE 17

Contract: 3NT

♠ Q 10 9 8 2
♥ 10 2
♦ K J 2
♣ 6 4 3

♠ J 7
♥ A 9 7 5
♦ A Q 6
♣ A K 10 5

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

Lead: ♥4, East plays the Jack. Plan the play.

A married couple are not speaking to each other after a horrible game and are driving home from a distant bridge tournament. They pass by a field where there are many donkeys. The husband breaks the silence by asking the wife: "Relations of yours"? "Yes" she says, "In-laws".



A hand is placing a red block on top of a pyramid of colorful blocks. The pyramid is built on a white surface against a dark grey background. The blocks are arranged in four rows: the bottom row has four blocks (green, red, blue, yellow), the second row has three blocks (blue, purple, green), the third row has two blocks (yellow, red), and the top row has one red block being placed by a hand.

A further modification is showing shortness when showing the four card limit raise. This is done by bidding a suit with shortness in that suit, bidding two of the major with a weak four card raise, and bidding 2NT with a limit raise and no shortness.

EXAMPLE 1

North: ♠ Jxxx ♥ x ♦ Axxx ♣ Axxx
South: ♠ AKOxxxx ♥ Axxx ♦ x ♣ x

South	North
-	Pass
1♠	2♣ ¹
2♦ ²	2♥ ³
4NT ⁴	5♥
7♠	

- 1) Four card spade raise.
- 2) How strong are you?
- 3) I have a limit raise and heart shortness.
- 4) Key Card Blackwood.

MAJOR SUIT RAISES IN COMPETITIVE AUCTIONS

Since many auctions are competitive, it makes sense to have good partnership agreements on the meaning of different bids when both sides are bidding.

If we overcall or open and the opponents overcall

Here is a suggested framework. These are the auctions in question:

West	North	East	South
-	1♠	2♣	?

Or

West	North	East	South
1♣	1♠	2♣	?

- 2♠ – Raise just like when we open and the opponents are silent.
- 3♠ – Preemptive.
- 2NT – Limit raise or better, with four (or more) card trump support.
- 3♣ – Limit raise or better, with three card trump support.
- 4♣, 4♦, 4♥ – splinter as normal

WHEN THE OPPONENTS MAKE A TAKEOUT DOUBLE

We can adopt the same rules as above after overcalls. Another advanced option is to use another convention, **Cappelletti** over 1NT doubled. Some players already play that:

West	North	East	South
1♠	Dbl	2♥ – Constructive raise (8-10)	
		2♠ – Weak raise (5-7)	

Here is the full convention if you are so inclined:

West	North	East	South
1♠	Dbl	1NT Relay to 2♣, showing at least five clubs, 6+ HCPs.	
		2♣ Relay to 2♦, showing at least five diamonds, 6+ HCPs.	
		2♦ Showing at least five hearts, 6+ HCPs.	
		2♥ Constructive raise (8-10).	
		2♠ Weak raise (5-7).	
		2NT Limit Raise of major.	

Normally opener accepts the transfer (They will not accept the transfer if they are very distributional or have extra values). Responder can then pass, bid a 2nd suit, or bid two of the major, showing five cards in their suit and exactly two cards in the major. A jump to three of the major is invitational, showing 5-3 or 6-3 in the two suits in question.

JUMP FITS

This is when you have a good fit for opener and a long suit of your own. If playing this agreement, a jump in a new suit in a competitive auction shows 5-4 in your suit and partner's major, with about 7-11 HCPs.

West	North	East	South
-	1♠	2♣	?

So, if as South, you held ♠ Kxxx ♥ xxx ♦ AQ10xx ♣ x, you would jump to 3♦. This convention is ok, but doesn't come up frequently. My other word of advice: closely define what your suit length and HCP requirement are for this bid.

Next issue: *We look at minor suit raise conventions.*





THE INTERMEDIATE Spot



BIDDING STRATEGIES 6

Bidding over preempts Part II.

By Neil Kimelman

In the last instalment we looked at direct seat actions, and what different bids mean. Let us continue this review, and expand it to include bids and responses by the 4th hand.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

When making decisions after an opponent preempts you want to have a good sense of what they have for their bid. The convention card is a good source of information. Asking your opponents about their preempting style is also advised.

Seat and Vulnerability – many partnerships will have a much better preempt when vulnerable, and also in 1st or 2nd seat. This may impact your decision making. A possible 1st seat preempt, vul. versus not vul., may be ♠ xx ♥ x ♦ AKQxxxx ♣ Jxx, while in 3rd seat, not vul. versus vul., ♠ xxx ♥ xxx ♦ KJxxxx ♣ x. A big difference!!

Form of scoring – There is an incentive to bid vulnerable games at IMPs, even if they are only 50-50 to make. So more aggressive action is sometimes warranted playing teams. But remember, partner may also be aggressive entering the auction, and bad breaks may be looming.

Another strategy is to leave in a takeout double or pass their preempt if you think the plus score will be better than any score you could achieve declaring, assuming you even find your best fit.

Consider playing in notrump instead of a suit –

A preempt is like putting a big sign out – suits are likely going to break badly. So often, the defense can negotiate ruffs, or a bad trump break will do you in. Experience has taught me that playing in notrump can often be the best choice. Here is a hand I held in a recent duplicate game:

EXAMPLE 1:

♠ Q52 ♥ KJ93 ♦ AQ53 ♣ AJ. LHO opened 3♣, pass, pass to me. What would you bid? Before answering you need to ask – what is the vulnerability? Here we were, they weren't. So I was able to determine that LHO likely had a decent preempt being in first seat, but not necessarily great, considering the vulnerability. Had the colours been reversed I would have doubled. Why? Because I expect LHO to have a good seven card suit AND an outside entry. But here I chose 3NT because of the jack of clubs. I wish I would have had a 3rd club, but you can't have everything. The full deal:

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

West led the ♣K, then the ♣Q. I won the 2nd club and led a small spade towards the dummy and the king popped. Now I knew that the rest of the high cards were with East and I had an excellent count on the

hand. Making five for +660 was a tie for top, as most of the field played in spades.

Go for penalties – Another question is whether you should try to penalize the opponents. If they are vulnerable, or the vulnerability is equal, it should be considered. However the danger is that partner will be too weak to act in fourth seat. I will come back to this question as we now look at how being in 4th seat changes things.

ACTION IN PASSOUT SEAT

LHO opens a weak two, partner bids, and RHO passes – what are the guidelines for bidding in this situation? Here is a suggested list:

Partner makes a notrump overcall

If partner overcalls 2NT system is on, recognizing partner may have a little more or a little less (14-18) than a normal 1NT opener.

A jump overcall of 3NT it is to play, and may be based on a long suit. A raise to 4NT would normally be made on around 10-13 HCPs. A bid in a new suit is natural with a good long suit, game forcing, but not necessarily slammish. A cue bid shows at least two places to play and would normally show at least modest slam interest.

A helpful convention I would recommend over partner's 3NT overcall of a three level preempt is that 4♣ asks overcaller to describe their hand. The suggested responses:

- 4♦ – 18-20
- 4♥ – 21-22
- 4♠ – Any long solid suit, with a stopper in the weak two suit.

Partner makes a suit overcall

- If partner overcalls a raise is invitational, usually less than 10 HCPs. It is a courtesy raise, in case partner overcalled with 17-18, or so. With 10-12, you simply bid game. So if partner overcalls 2♥

with 2♠, raise to 3♠ with ♠ Q52 ♥ 93 ♦ A1053 ♣ Qxxx and to 4♠ with Q52 ♥ 93 ♦ A1053 ♣ Axxx.

- A cuebid is game forcing, showing a full opening bid with support, but does not promise a control in the opponent's suit.
- A new suit is natural, game forcing, and notrump is natural.

Partner makes a takeout double

A very valuable convention over weak twos is the Lebensohl convention. It allows you to differentiate your strength, when responding to a takeout double. The way it works is that with constructive values, around 7-11 HCPs, you would bid your best suit. If you have a weaker hand, you bid 2NT. This is a relay, forcing the doubler to rebid 3♣ with a normal takeout double, and you then bid your best suit as a sign off.

If partner had doubled with significant extra values, they would not accept the transfer to 3♣, but instead make a natural bid. If you have a hand you would normally make an invitational 2NT bid, you must either bid 3NT, bid a suit, or pass for penalties.

EXAMPLE 2:

You hold ♠ Kx ♥ Qx ♦ J10xxx ♣ xxxx. LHO opens 2♥, partner doubles and RHO passes. Bid 2NT, forcing partner to bid 3♣, and then bid 3♦. This tells partner you have less than 7 HCPs*.

*The point count ranges given are recommended, but still only meant as a guide. There are good points and bad points. Here the ♥Q is likely not worth much.

EXAMPLE 3:

You hold ♠ Kxx ♥ Ax ♦ J10xxx ♣ Qxx. LHO opens 2♥, partner doubles and RHO passes. Now a direct bid of 3♦ is warranted. Partner can bid game with extra values, or pass with a minimum.

Next issue: I will look at balancing in 4th seat and bidding over higher level preempts.

MOLLO On Play xvii

Contract: 4♠ by South at IMPs.

♠ K J 9 8 3
♥ A 2
♦ A J 5
♣ 6 4 2

♠ 2
♥ K J 8 7 6
♦ 8 7 6
♣ K J 8 7

♠ 6 5
♥ Q 10 5 4 3
♦ K Q 9 3
♣ 10 9

♠ A Q 10 7 4
♥ 9
♦ 10 4 2
♣ A Q 5 3

Lead: ♠2. Plan the play.

The contract is assured. Declarer should draw the last trump, play to the ace of hearts and ruff a heart, then lead the ace and a low club.

If East wins this trick, any return enables declarer to get rid of a diamond loser. A heart is a ruff and sluff, a diamond picks up that suit, and a club will establish the queen or five for a diamond discard.

If, instead, West wins trick six, their only safe lead is a diamond. Declarer ducks in dummy, and if East wins they are end-played as in the previous paragraph.





What Went Wrong? **THE 2021 CNTC A CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL**

by Paul Thurston

The longest championship event in CBF history is finally over with the completion of the suspended CNTC Open late this summer!

Starting back in late winter (actual dates lost in the fog of history), four divisions (Open, Mixed, Women and Seniors) played round robins to determine playoff entrants for Knockout matches with National Championships and the right to possibly compete in the 2021 World Championships to be held in Italy, early March of 2022. Possibly because our entrants might have to playoff against Mexico and, as of this writing, that possibility hasn't been confirmed.

One very interesting sidebar to the qualification and subsequent World events: Kamel Fergani was a one-man wrecking crew in the CNTC events as together with assorted teammates and partners, Kamel won THREE of the National Championships with only the Women's title escaping his grasp! Congratulations to all the winners and a special tip of the hat to Kamel for a Triple Crown that will stand as an all-time record.

For this edition of What Went Wrong, we'll have a look at three dramatic deals from the Open final that all played a role in determining the order of finish.

THE
EXPERT
Spot

WHAT WENT WRONG ... CONTINUED

Hand 1: Dealer North. Both Vulnerable

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

West	North	East	South
	1♥	Pass	2♦
Pass	2♥	Pass	2♠
Pass	3♦	Pass	3NT
Pass	4♦	Pass	4♠
Pass	4NT	Pass	6♦
All Pass			

Lead: ♠ Ace

This was the auction with Kamel Fergani and Marc André Fourcaudot holding the North-South cards. When no heart support was forthcoming from his partner, Kamel took charge and headed directly to the diamond slam. A good (mostly) natural auction but with an ace missing, four trumps to the Queen with the defenders and no great source of outside tricks, not the greatest slam but the payoff is on results not aesthetics so to end the mystery, Marc André did indeed bring home twelve tricks. Did something go wrong with the defense?

What Went Wrong?

Sort of, as West started by cashing the ace of spades before shifting to a club. Sniffing the air, declarer decided there was something just a bit "off" about the lead of an ace of a suit bid naturally on the leader's right as well as a follow-up control bid that confirmed the location of the spade King.

Drawing the inference that such an unlikely lead bespoke a defender who must have had prospects of a second trick from somewhere and wanted to make sure of cashing the ace before the mice got at it, Marc André proceeded by winning the club King, playing to the diamond ace and continued with a second round to the Jack (no Eight Ever, Nine Never this time!). That solved the trump suit for no loser but there was still the not trivial matter of having to win the rest of the tricks! No problem as after taking out the last trump, declarer cashed the heart ace for a club discard, crossed to a high club and ruffed a spade. With the spade Queen coming down on the next round, that meant twelve tricks and 10 IMPs.

Did something really go wrong for the defense by virtue of the opening lead or could declarer have succeeded after a different start? Full marks to declarer for his card-reading and skillful follow-up but the IMPs might have gone to ZHOU after a neutral lead like a small card in the unbid club suit. If declarer tries to make something out of the spade holding (a seemingly natural line of play), he will eventually fall victim to the 3-1 trump split and the lack of the sure spade trick that had been a crucial component of the successful play.

As for a possible cross ruff after winning a hypothetical club lead, discarding dummy's spade on the third round of clubs and using heart ruffs to access the closed hand for subsequent black-suit ruffs, it seems West would be able to overruff the fourth round of hearts and play back a trump to end declarer's hopes – or – did something Go Wrong with my analysis?

Notwithstanding North-South having a convenient piece of bidding machinery to help them out in a tight spot, there was still a 5 IMP gain that accrued to L'ECUYER from the following innocent-seeming deal:

WHAT WENT WRONG ... CONTINUED

Hand 2: Dealer West. Neither Vulnerable

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

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	1♦ ¹	1NT
Dbl	2♣ ²	Pass	2♦
Pass	Pass	Dbl	All Pass

- 1♦ was part of East-West's forcing club system and promised 2+ diamonds.
- 2♣ was a handy tool to have against the semi-natural 1♦ opening as it actually was natural to at least find the only available eight-card fit for North-South.

Lead: ♦7

Yes, North-South did find their best fit to get out of one notrump (possibly down three after a lead of the club Jack) but they still turned over 300 points for a 5 IMP loss.

What Went Wrong?

For sure, East-West for L'ECUYER were very opportunistic but that one notrump overcall looks a bit off from this seat. Why "off"? Doesn't the hand fit in the range of 15-17 High-card points in a balanced hand, the usual parameters for a one notrump overcall? Well, yes BUT there are several contra-indicators that might have staved off the loss:

- While 1♦ only promised 2+ cards in the suit, it most certainly didn't deny actual diamond length and

strength to make the diamond stopper in the South hand more than just a little bit sketchy and a stopper of some sort in the opened suit usually heads the list of what partner can expect for a one notrump overcall.

- North was a passed hand so the chance of North-•
- South having a biddable and makeable game was slight.
- Even if there was a possible North-South game that might be missed with an initial South pass, it would have been a non-vulnerable game.
- Most critically, the auction would not have ended had South passed – his partner (and West!) would still have had the opportunity to continue the bidding. And while it wouldn't have happened this time, had East-West bid hearts after a South pass, that player would have been perfectly placed to keep his side alive with a takeout double showing the Black suits.

Once again, PASS would not have been the dirty four-letter call many of the hyper-aggressive camp make it out to be!

While we've all heard the cliché that "the only good slam is a slam that is made", that may not always be true. Near the end of the CNTC Open final with the score desperately close, this deal came along to give the North-South pairs a bidding challenge.

Hand 3: Dealer North. Both Vulnerable

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

WHAT WENT WRONG ... CONTINUED

West	North	East	South
–	1♦	Pass	2♣
Pass	3♣	Pass	4♣
Pass	4♦	Pass	4NT
Pass	5♥	Dbl	6♣
All Pass			

With L'ECUYER's North-South pair resting comfortably in 3NT (+660 for eleven tricks after a heart opening lead and continuation), the IMP flow would be determined by the result in this slam bid by Lu Gan and Alex Hong for ZHOU. And while the slam didn't make, I would call it a very good slam indeed because, as the bidders might have suspected, had six diamonds come home, the IMPs gained would have been enough for a ZHOU victory. So well bid but down one.

What Went Wrong?

Once clubs were agreed in the game-forcing auction, South invited a control bid (four clubs), got one and used Blackwood to find two total Keycards and bid the slam. Heart lead (as requested by East's double) for the return of the heart Queen to the King. Declarer cashed one high club to discover the inconvenient but not fatal 4-0 split. Over to the spade ace to mop up three more rounds of trumps with the aid of the proven finesse for East's Jack and then it was time for diamonds.

When South's play of the Jack was covered by the Queen, declarer was within sight of a twelfth trick but, unlike us, he couldn't see that the ten was about to fall if a second high diamond was cashed in dummy after the Queen had been captured on the first round of the suit. Instead declarer went with what looked like the best odds when he crossed back to a high spade and played a second round of diamonds to the nine. A valiant effort by Alex Hong but 13 IMPs to L'ECUYER – as what really went wrong was North or South's failure to hold the diamond ten!

QUIZ

INTERMEDIATE DECLARER PLAY

PROBLEM ON PAGE 8

Contract: 3NT

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

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

LEAD: ♥4. East plays the Jack. IMPS. Plan the Play

As it is often, the key play occurs at trick one. If you win the first heart and play a spade, East will win and lead back the ♥6. West will cash their king and queen and play their fourth heart. Now when they win the ♠A, they will cash the ♥8, the 5th defensive trick.

Look what happens if, instead, you duck the ♥J at trick one. East returns their last heart, and you duck that too. West cannot continue hearts without giving up a 2nd heart trick.

If West wins and does play a third heart, declarer wins and plays the jack of spades. Now, East wins the king of spades, but has no heart to return. Declarer can win the club shift in hand and play a second spade. West wins the ace of spades but declarer is in control; he loses only two spades and two hearts. West cannot have all four major-suit honours and have passed initially.



How to use a bridge deck to TELL YOUR FORTUNE

Fall is upon us in Canada and October is considered by many to be that time of year when the veils between the supernatural and known worlds are at their thinnest. What a perfect time to pull out that favourite bridge deck and try your hand at telling the future. Will you win at the club tonight? Should you ask that Life Master in #408 to play in the tournament on Sunday? Will your partner forgive you for that terrible slam?

Using cards for divination is nothing new, but most would use the Tarot these days. However, both types of cards have the same Chinese roots. Early in the 16th century, they diverged, with cartomancy (divination with cards) using the extended 78-card standard Tarot deck exclusively, and the deck of cards as we know it today being used only for game play. This doesn't mean, though, that we can't use them for casual fortune telling. Here's some tips to get you started.

First, our bridge decks have only 52 cards, while a full Tarot deck has 78. The Tarot has 4 extra honour cards (the Page in each suit) and 22 Major Arcana cards. To me this means the playing cards will be great for quick,

superficial questions while a full Tarot deck should be used for more involved divination.

1. Shuffle and Deal

Shuffle your cards thoroughly. If it's someone other than yourself asking the question, have them shuffle the cards. While the shuffling is happening, the question needs to be clearly formed in one's mind. Take the cards in hand and deal either a one-card or a three-card spread.

2. Quick and Easy

If you need a simple Yes/No or Good/Bad answer, simply deal one card. We've all been in that space where we really can't make up our minds about something, or where we are feeling anxious about a situation and really just want to know how it's going to turn out, one way or another. Truth is, most situations will turn out just fine, but often our brains will worry and worry. Now you can deal yourself a card, and if it's

friendly, suddenly all that worry fades away. If it's not friendly, there's more you can do but let's just start here.

3. The Divination

At right you will see what cards are associated with a Yes, No or Maybe. And sometimes you'll just need that simple answer. Sometimes however, you'll want to know more. In these cases, you can look at the suit your answer came in.

4. A little bit more please

If you'd like a little more information from that one card, you can look to the suit for what kind of answer you've received. Below is a brief outline of some of the meaning given to each of the four suits.

Spades (Swords): Intellectual reasoning and logic, mental energy and communications. This is the suit of intelligence, logic, truth, ambition, conflict and communication. It also represents fears, worries and doubts.

Hearts (Cups): The heart suit represents emotions, the unconscious, creativity, and intuition. An answer in this suit often refers to relationships, whether romantic or otherwise, family matters, and one's imagination and inner world.

Diamonds (Pentacles): This suit represents material concepts such as the body, home, money and physical things you can feel, taste, touch. On the negative side it can reflect greed, jealousy, miserliness, and unbridled ambition at the cost of all else.

Clubs (Wands): Clubs represent our creative sparks, spiritual passion and social vitality. An answer in this suit indicates a lot of energy and passion coming in for a project, relationship, interest or topic.

How then does an understanding of a suit help your question? Let's say you asked about a bridge partner, wondering if they'll call for a game tonight. If the answer is 'No' and it's a Spade, this could be something to do with your communications. Or it could be that partner is feeling some self-doubt. If you want to play a game with them, best to call them yourself. If it's a Heart, it could be they're having family issues which

THE ANSWER

THE ANSWER IS YES

Any Ace

Spades: Ace, Jack

Diamonds: Ace, 3, 6, 8, 9, 10, Queen, King

Clubs: Ace, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, Jack, Queen, King

Hearts: Ace, 2, 3, 6, 9, 10, Jack, Queen, King

THE ANSWER IS NO

Spades: 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10

Diamonds: 4, 5

Clubs: 5, 7, 10

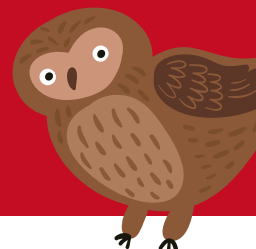
Hearts: 5, 8

THE ANSWER IS MAYBE

Spades: 2, 4, 6, Q, K

Diamonds: 2, 7

Hearts: 4, 7



prevent them from playing. If it's a Diamond, they might be worried about the costs, but more likely they're being greedy and want to win and don't think they will win with you. Best to let that partner loose! And finally if it's a Club, it's possible this person hasn't made up their mind and will probably miss the opportunity to call in time. You could possibly call them instead.

Of course there are many variations of divination with cards and zillions of articles written on this topic. A quick search of Google should provide many hours of interesting discovery. In this article, we've looked at a one-card spread. Sometimes a three-card spread will better answer a question, even using playing cards. If you're interested in learning more here's an article I've written on the three-card spread. It's written with a Tarot Deck in mind, but you can certainly apply its principles to a regular deck as well.

LINK: giftsformystics.com/blog-archive/three-card-spread

by Jude Goodwin

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.



TURKISH WINTER TEAMS

Erdal Sidar, Istanbul

Here are two deals from the Turkish Winter Open Teams. Perhaps you'd like to try them as a quiz. If not, just go to the answers.

1. You are East, with West the dealer and neither side vulnerable.

East

♠ 8 6

♥ K Q J 6

♦ K 8 7 5 4

♣ A 3

South

♠ 9 5 4 3

♥ -

♦ A Q

♣ K Q 10 9 8 7 4

You see the following bidding:

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

You led the king of hearts, then continued with the queen and jack. Declarer discarded three spades from the dummy, West followed with the eight (reverse count), two and seven and declarer with the three, four and nine.

What card do you play at trick four? Where is the ace of hearts?



2. This time, you are West and, after an uncontested auction, you are playing in four spades ...

Dealer East. E-W Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
—	—	1♣	Pass
1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♦ ¹	Pass	2♠ ²	Pass
4♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

1. Game-forcing relay

2. 3-card spade support, could have 4 hearts

How do you play after the lead of the spade jack?

ANSWERS

Both these two deals were played in final match of the Turkish Winter Open Teams with 60 Teams participating.

Final 1. Board 8. Dealer West. Neither Vul.

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

If you are confident about the meaning of your partner's carding, you must play a spade. Firstly, North could not have bid three notrump without the ace of hearts; secondly, declarer is clearly planning to shut you out of hearts, since, on the bidding you are likely to have the ace of clubs. That strategy, as you can see, will be successful.

At the table, Doğan Uzun played a spade at trick four; 10 IMPs to his side.

Final 2. Board 6. Dealer East. EW Vul.

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

When the jack of spades is led, (as it was at both tables in the final), winning in hand and taking an immediate diamond finesse seems best. Even if the diamond finesse loses, the ace of clubs might be onside to prevent two losers in clubs. If the diamond finesse wins, as it did in practice, you ought to run the nine of spades to guard against losing two trump tricks, where possible.

Repeating the diamond finesse allows a club to be discarded, after which you can lead up to the king of clubs if the defence has not done so and, if you lose two clubs and a spade, eventually taking a heart finesse will secure the contract.

Declarer Omer Kizilok played this way and, when the nine of spades was led from dummy, South didn't give declarer a chance to make a mistake and covered with his ten. At the other table, the same contract was down one for 12 IMPs.

The Final was won by SAYILKAN (107-30 IMPs) against ELDEBEYATİ. Team SAYILKAN comprised Tefik Sayilkan, Suleyman Kolata, Levent Ozgul, Omer Kizilok, Dogan Uzun and Merter Boybek.

the GREAT CANADIAN BIDDING CONTEST



AUGUST 2021 TGCBC
Host: Paul Thurston

For Panelists, see page ##

Editor's note: Congratulations to **Francine Cimon and Dan Jacob**, who topped our expert panel with a perfect score of 50! Tops on the reader side, was **John Bryden** with a score of 43, followed by **Ed Zaluski** with 40. The **December TGCBC** problems can be found at the end of this article.

1) As South, and Dealer at IMPs with both vulnerable, do you open with ♠ J87653 ♥ 105 ♦ - ♣ AQ983?

Action	Votes	Score
No	18	10
1♠	2	2
2♠	1	1

I expected (and almost got!) near unanimity with the panel as 18 out of 21 obliged by saying no. Is there anything to be learned from the three who deemed this hand worth initial action?

STEVE MACKAY: Yes, 2♠, pour a cup of coffee and await!

So we've learned Steve fortifies himself with caffeine, perhaps to ward off partner's reprisal. A cult of two:

BOB TODD: I open 1♠. (And without further comment, so there!).

DAVID WILLIS: 1♠. With equivocation as "I can see pass and 2♠ as alternatives".

But David, at the table, only one call is permitted unless you have free rein with the "UNDO" button. But not all disciplined passers were convinced they were doing the right thing:

GORDON CAMPBELL: Not bidding today, maybe tomorrow.

ANDY STARK: No bid, but maybe if not vulnerable.

At least one solid citizen attributes his passing to a learned Koach:

DAVID TURNER: I've often seen Eric Kokish opine that passing these sorts of hands may give you the opportunity to show them accurately later.

Wait till you see how "later" worked out in a match! All the passers had various technical reasons related to suit quality and later flexibility but no one summed it up better than:

RON BISHOP: I don't see any rush and those who believe this is a vulnerable first seat weak two-bid certainly enjoy playing cards but poker, not bridge!

I wonder what Ron would have to say about the two first-seat one spade bidders! What happened at the table? One free spirit in the match chose 2♠ for his initial action. Perhaps not quite ready for a weak two-bid like this, his partner holding ♠ AKx ♥ QJ2 ♦ K106 ♣ J1076, contributed a preemptive raise to 3♠ and, done with wildness for this deal, opener made the disciplined pass. Pairing up the two hands, you'll probably realize that 4♠ is quite a good contract that will make anytime the ♠Q appears in the first or second round with the added chance of the club finesse working. The ♠Q was doubleton so 4♠ was indeed cold but could it be bid? No problem after the initial pass for this N-S pair:

South	North
Pass	1♣
1♠	1NT
2♣	2♦
2♠	4♠
Pass	

After a routine start, 2♣ was a relay to 2♦ to make the follow-up to 2♠ a game invitation with five spades or, occasionally as here, with six spades. With a maximum in both high-cards and spade support, Opener happily accepted the invitation and chalked up a 10 IMP gain.

2) IMPs, Both Vul. Dealer: West. As South, you hold ♠ AQ86 ♥ - ♦ 9732 ♣ 98632

West	North	East	South
1♠	2♠ ¹	4♠	?

1. 2♠ is Michaels showing hearts and an unspecified minor with values deemed appropriate for the vulnerability conditions.

Action	Votes	Score
Pass	11	10
4NT	7	8
DbI	3	3

Three opted for double without a lot of conviction:

ANDY STARK: Eleven tricks seems doubtful if partner has lots of HCPs in hearts.

Seems accurate as far as our offensive potential is concerned but can you really expect to set four spades?

DAVID TURNER: "I hope partner will take out this double with extra shape and pass with a normal hand. I'm not confident of the outcome".

Sounds like an on-the-spot application of a DSI DOUBLE (Do Something Intelligent) that can cause a lot of post-match debate.

DAVID GRAINGER: "Partner forced to the three-level vulnerable and we don't need much to set them. Bidding could turn out very poorly on a non-spade lead".

Prophetic! 4NT received the second-most votes (seven) as a request for partner to name his minor – but not all thought that method was universal or ideal.

ROBERT LEBI: Four notrump or five clubs, whichever is pass or correct – I expect to make five of our minor.

RON BISHOP: "Tough one! I ask for his minor and if I catch clubs, we're reasonably safe but if his minor is diamonds, we will be beyond our "Law Level".

Always a bidder when the option is reasonable:

GORDON CAMPBELL: "Four notrump. Maybe we'd beat four spades but I hope to have a good shot at five of a minor".

DANNY MILES: Almost claiming in the auction:

"Pessimistically settling for game as partner may have lots of stuff in hearts and two losers in the other minor. Defending could be silly if he has ♠ x ♥ Qxxxx ♦ AKJxxx ♣ x or similar".

Seems the majority are willing to risk being "silly" as they pass with varying degrees of confidence they'll be right.

KEITH BALCOMBE: "Pass. An example of why I don't like Michaels as I would bid 5♣ if I knew he had clubs. With his likely void in spades, he might bid again with a great hand like ♠ - ♥ AKxxx ♦ KQJxxx ♣ xx."

Maybe a good problem for a future panel: would you bid again with a hand like Keith's example? Another who thinks partner might be heard from given a clear path:

BILL TREBLE: "Pass. I can't be sure of a plus at the five-level and I'm not going to step in partner's way with a penalty double".

Fresh off his one-level derring-do on problem one BOB TODD chooses passivity here:

BOB TODD: "Pass. How would you like a diamond lead in five diamonds doubled?"

Believing that the form of scoring makes a difference:

FRANCINE CIMON: "Pass. Partner has hearts so I'm better suited to defense so pass at IMPs, double at Matchpoints".

Also considering double but choosing Pass:

NEIL KIMELMAN: "Pass. Double isn't terrible but they might make five spades. Not four notrump with a void in one of partner's suits.

What happened at the table? Lining up with three of our esteemed panelists, one South in the match doubled four spades only to find card placement and well-timed play meant four spades was made in the shade. At the other table, south passed and once again four spades was made.

So what would happen to five clubs by North if that had been North-South's landing place after four notrump by South? A lot of possibilities in the play subject to the opening lead and early defense but I'd expect down two would be most likely, a small gain versus four spades and somewhat more when compared to four spades doubled.

Note that KEITH BALCOMBE'S reservations about Michaels hiding North's minor are worth considering because if South was able to bid and play five clubs from his side (Also echoing ROBERT LEBI's suggestion about how to inject "pass or correct") the defense to extract the maximum would likely be more difficult than it would with the South hand exposed.

Editor's note: Unlike Michaels, **Klinger** is a convention that **does show** your two suits right from the get go, and I highly endorse it.

3) IMPs (from one of the Online ALT events). Dealer: West. E-W vulnerable. You as North hold: ♠63 ♥A ♦A7652 ♣AK732. The bidding:

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

- do you agree with 2NT?
- What do you bid now?

Action	Votes	Score
Yes	16	5
No	5	2
Dbl	13	5
Pass	6	3
4♣	1	1
5♦	1	1

So for the minority who disliked 2NT with this hand, the plan forward was best stated by:

GORDON CAMPBELL: "Not 2NT. I will overcall two diamonds and save clubs for later."

Triple Crown Winner (2021 Open, Senior and Mixed Teams Gold medalist) KAMEL FERGANI vetoed SENIOR TEAMMATE CAMPBELL: "I'm not very happy with two notrump but two diamonds on that puny suit is worse".

DAVID LINDOP seems to have a narrower version of what can be included in the Unusual Notrump application:

"This is too strong to show as weak distributional". We'd all agree with this hand not being "weak distributional" but how about "strong distributional": can't we start with 2NT and spring our "surprise" later?

STEVE COOPER says "no" to 2NT but his stated preference for a Hi-Low approach in which 2NT

is either weak and two-suited or stronger than a minimum opening bid would seem to allow this hand in the “Hi” category – or am I missing something? The always practical DANNY MILES (echoed by ANDY STARK) suggests the best reason for 2NT: “It sure beats overcalling two diamonds”.

And so we’ve intervened with two notrump, extracted a three diamond preference from partner and, lo and behold, WEST isn’t ceasing and desisting as we might have expected, choosing instead a solo rebid of three spades. What now? The outliers first:

GORDON CAMPBELL: 5♦ – optimistic! (We’d all agree with that assessment but let’s remember Gordon didn’t want to bid 2NT in the first place so maybe 5♦ is by way of a protest bid – and will soon be followed by another protest – by South for being dragged kicking and screaming all the way to the five-level.

RON BISHOP: *had a creative call that I’m not sure would be understood by any random expert partner: “4♣ as a game try rather than just a shaded 5-6”. Maybe a few decided to retire from the field of action, maybe hoping partner will do something.*

DAVID TURNER: “hope to beat 3♠.

KAMEL FERGANI: “Pass – I might double with longer hearts than spades.”

DAVID GRAINGER: “Pass. A penalty double might work well here but double isn’t penalty”.

As for what double might actually mean for most, stay tuned – they will tell us!

KEITH BALCOMBE: “Pass. The vulnerable opponent has a good hand.”

Agree with that assessment but Keith, your hand isn’t exactly chopped liver either!

ROBERT LEBI: *(who also vetoed two notrump as the hand being either too good for the Low version or not*

good enough for the High): “Pass. I’m in a box and will have to live with it”.

Will anyone volunteer to rescue Robert from that box?

STEVE COOPER shows the way out: Dbl – partner can pass, scramble out of the double or maybe even bid game.

Because as **KIZMET FUNG** states: “Double – not penalty but brings partner into the sequence”.

In agreement: **STEVE MACKAY:** “Double – do something intelligent partner with passing the double being one of your options”

And what should partner base his “intelligent” decision on?

BILL TREBLE: “Double is not for penalty but shows maximum defense for 2NT.”

And isn’t that what North’s hand looks like? What happened at the table? Partner will be happy if you pass but positively ecstatic if you double to show the “high” version of 2NT with good defense as this was the full layout:

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

Three spades doubled can be set 800 and you might quibble that West didn’t have his bid (at least not the great hand KEITH BALCOMBE was allowing for) but he was a many-time European champion trying

to create some action. Rest assured he's keeping the IMPs he scored after the actual North competed with four diamonds over three spades and was roundly doubled for his troubles by East! I appreciate the reservations expressed by those who didn't like 2NT and/or the follow-up double but that duo of calls sure looks like the best way to describe that North hand. As summarized by BOB TODD: "after 2NT, aren't I systemically compelled to double? "Yes and you are systemically compelled to keep the IMPs gained by those actions!"

4) IMPs, East is Dealer, both Vul. As South you hold
♠J864 ♥8 ♦K6543 ♣763. The Bidding:

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

1. Natural and game-invitational

What is your call?

Action	Votes	Score
3♠	12	10
4♠	6	7
Pass	3	2

Three choices and, for a change of pace, there's no system considerations involved as it's more about South's attitude to how much to bid in a slightly uncommon situation. Playing a lot of online team matches against a variety of Europeans, I've seen this kind of 3♣ bid a lot and I don't think it's the kind of bid that you can read a lot into or get overly intimidated by: lots of clubs, no great fit for opener's suit and not exactly the 'Wealth of The Indies' in high cards. That's why I was very surprised by:

BOB KUZ: "Pass but would bid 3♠ if favourable vulnerability. Bidding could get expensive if the deal's a total misfit".

But it's not a total misfit when we have decent spade support to make BOB's final comment quite accurate: "I predict this won't be a popular action".

STEVE MACKAY: (In on the unpopular choice) "3♠ overstates my values and 4♠, while tempting, could be disastrous".

Joined by:

RON BISHOP: "Pass. 3♠ is too wide a range and shouldn't be a hand with zero defense. 4♠ might push the opponents to 5♣ which I can't imagine how to beat"

But partner might have ideas about that! The next time I encounter anyone of these three fine players at the table, I will remind them I fully expect them to stick to this passive style instead of the aggressive stance they usually take. Part way up the scale of aggression:

DAVID LINDOP: "3♠. Willing to compete and I don't like my clubs for 4♠.

STEVE COOPER: "3♠. A little bit ambiguous, but I'd bid 3♥ with more high-card points".

ROBERT LEBI: "3♠ – no reason for anything rash".

BOB TODD: "3♠ – I don't like 4♠ – I should allow partner to make a useful decision" (**Mark that one down Doug!**).

NICK L'ECUYER: "3♠ with 4 trumps and heart shortness. 4♠ is too much".

DAVID TURNER: "3♠. Wish I could pass" (**Call up Steve, Ron or Bob for a game**).

ANDY STARK: "3♠. Partner knows I'm under pressure and there's no good reason not to bid with four card spade support".

Now these and the other “brave” souls who steeled their nerves and bid 3♠ haven’t done as great a job of analysis as I might have expected: for no raise on my right, my guy, must have some hearts and they can be ruffed and my three small clubs with 6-7 cards in the suit on my right aren’t quite as big a possible liability as they seem to fear. Further, not a one of the 3♠ bidders expressed what I would consider the biggest fear I’d have in this position: missing a vulnerable game.

DAVID WILLIS concurs: 4♠ – sort of what I’m supposed to have. There are lots of hearts missing and if partner has them, we should be okay”. (**RIGHT!**)

And I can always count on a regular partner:

KEITH BALCOMBE: “4♠. Just the right hand with singleton in opener’s suit, an honour and length in the unbid suit and no wastage in RHO’s suit.” **And then he added** “A tolerant partner, right Paul?” **RIGHT!**

Another strategic reason for the more aggressive choice:

KIZMET FUNG: “4♠ – guess now or when 4♥ comes back”.

More succinct but not surprising:

GORDON CAMPBELL: “4♠. Automatic”.

And totally in character:

NEIL KIMELMAN: “4♠ – maximum pressure”

The full reveal: B.C.’s **BEN TAKEMORI** held the south cards opposite his brother **MIKE** during a CNTC playoff round, and surprised none of his fans, teammates and frequent opponents by taking the high road and bidding 4♠. This was the complete layout:

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

Mike stroked the dummy with his usual aplomb and brought home the game for the loss of two diamonds and the trump ace for a 10 IMP swing when, after a similar start, North-South rested in 3♠. Maybe some hyper-aggressive types might carry on to 4♠ after a mere 3♠ raise but I don’t think it’s anywhere close to as “automatic” as Mr. CAMPBELL thought south’s raise to four was!

5) IMPs, Dealer West. E-W Vul. AS West you hold:
♠A1053 ♥AQ9876 ♦Q96 ♣-. The bidding:

West	North	East	South
1♥	Pass	1NT	2♣
Dbl ¹	2NT	Dbl	3♣
Pass	Pass	Dbl	All Pass

a) West’s double was takeout - do you agree with the double?

b) Having passed your partner’s penalty double, what is your opening lead?

Action	Votes	Score
No	17	5
Yes	4	3
♦6	14	5
♥A	6	2
♠x	1	1

DISCLAIMER: *this problem arose in a CNTC match in which East-West’s system might have concealed four spades for East’s forcing 1NT response. Notwithstanding this blip, I thought West’s possible*

actions at his second turn might have some variance and virtually no panelists complained about the conditions but did think double by West would lose some of its “juice” by East not having a possible holding with four spades. The spade non-issue wasn’t why DAN JACOB said “no” to West’s double: “the hand isn’t strong enough. I would have bid 2 ♥.”

DAVID GRAINGER: “I dislike double when I have six good hearts – prefer 2 ♥”.

A different lack was pointed out by KAMEL FERGANI: “I prefer 2 ♥ and would need a better hand or four diamonds for double”.

STEVE COOPER: sides with JACOB. “I like to double here with excellent HCPs, like ♠AKx ♥AKxxx ♦Axx ♣xx”

But there are those who wouldn’t need anywhere close to that many HCP:

NEIL KIMELMAN: “Yes I like double with a shapely good non-minimum”

Joined by:

GORDON CAMPBELL: “I agree double”.

Again, a man of few words! BUT a lack few pointed out deterred KIZMET FUNG from doubling: “doubling is to be discouraged with a void”.

KEITH BALCOMBE agreed: “I would never double with a club void and a rebiddable suit.”

That indirectly points out one of the hidden hazards of doubling as partner, not expecting six-card heart length with you, might be expecting the suit to have more defensive potential than it will. Wrapped up in a well-edited summary by Kibitzer Editor ANDY STARK:

“I don’t like West’s double and would need more HCPs, and maybe a fourth diamond”.

So a fine mess the doublers have us in now as we have to find the killing lead (there is one) against three clubs doubled. A low score (and horrible at-the-table result) accrues to the best predictor for this problem:

DAVID WILLIS: “The moderator’s least favourite leads are an unsupported ace and an underlead of any ace against a suit contract so that would seem to rule out my first choice of the heart ace and my second choice of a low spade but I lead the ace of hearts anyway”.

Bang on for this moderator’s bias but you should have paid more attention to your suspicions!

BOB KUZ: “Ace of hearts and hope that hearts are 3-3 for +500 or maybe +800”.

And if hearts aren’t so sweet for you, are you prepared for -470? A similar question for GORDON CAMPBELL; “Ace of hearts intending to give a ruff next”

But do you have any guarantee that partner had only one heart? And he obviously has good clubs – will he need or even expect a ruff? That worries STEVE MACKAY who has fresh coffee and leads the ace of hearts “to look at dummy and hope I’m still on lead”. Turner was the outlier who got truly creative but with a hedge:

DAVID TURNER : I’d lead a low spade and if this gives the contract, I may find the partnership desk closed after word gets out”.

A funny denouement to TURNER’s Lead as it won’t directly give away the contract but will concede a tempo to declarer that, properly exploited, will result in three clubs doubled making instead of going down one. I’m not sure if he’ll still need the partnership desk! A brief study of the whole deal will reveal the diamond six leaders triumph where unsupported-ace leaders (or, gasp!, underleaders) chalk up another part score doubled into game.



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♠ K 4
♥ K J 4 3
♦ A 10 3 2
♣ 7 5 4

♠ A 10 5 3
♥ A Q 9 8 7 6
♦ Q 9 6
♣ -

♠ 8 7 6
♥ 10 2
♦ K J 8 4
♣ A J 10 6

♠ Q J 9 2
♥ 5
♦ 7 5
♣ K Q 9 8 3 2

At least the heart ace lead ends the mystery quickly as it will set up dummy's King for a fast pitch of the diamond loser that the diamond leaders will just as quickly set up. Note that North warned one and all that he had a good heart holding and you, the opening leader, had the most to fear that it would be the king and that a possible ruff for your partner should be weighed against the possibility of helping south set up trick(s).

Likely foreseeing some or all of this were the many panelists who chose the diamond six without much in the way of comment – maybe for the same reason I would: leading either suit headed by an unsupported ace just looks wrong and we may need a diamond trick or two. The last word goes to Keith Balcombe:

KEITH BALCOMBE: "I wouldn't have made the first double with a club void and a rebiddable suit but now I'd lead a club. What? I don't have any clubs? Diamond six will have to do!"

Hearty congratulations to Francine Cimon and Dan Jacob who scored a perfect 50. I may have to make tougher problems next time! Stay Well and Happy Halloween!

Teacher gives lesson on Keycard Blackwood using 1430 responses and says a 5♣ response shows 1 or 4 keycards. Student thinks he hears "one through four keycards" and responds 5♣ every time partner bids 4NT!



PANEL'S ANSWERS

	HAND 1		HAND 2		HAND 3		HAND 4		HAND 5		TOTAL
	<i>Bid</i>	<i>Score</i>	<i>Bid</i>	<i>Score</i>	<i>Bid</i>	<i>Score</i>	<i>Bid</i>	<i>Score</i>	<i>Bid</i>	<i>Score</i>	
Balcombe, Keith	No	10	Pass	10	Yes/Pass 8		4♠	7	No/♦6	10	45
Bishop, Ron	No	10	4NT	8	Yes/4♣ 6		Pass	2	No/♦6	10	36
Campbell, Gordon	No	10	4NT	8	no/5♦ 3		4♠	7	Yes/♥A	5	33
Cooper, Stephen	No	10	Pass	10	No/Dbl 7		3♠	10	No/♦6	10	47
Cimon, Francine	No	10	Pass	10	Yes/Dbl 10		3♠	10	No/♦6	10	50
Fergani, Kamel	No	10	Yes	10	Yes/Pass 8		3♠	10	No/♦6	10	48
Fung, Kismet	No	10	4NT	8	Yes/Dbl 1		4♠	7	No/♦6	10	45
Grainger, David	No	10	Dbl	3	Yes/Pass 8		3♠	10	No/♦6	10	41
Hornby, Ray	No	10	4NT	8	Yes/Dbl 10		Pass	2	No/♠3	6	36
Jacob, Dan	No	10	Pass	10	Yes/Dbl 10		3♠	10	No/♦6	10	50
Kimelman, Neil	No	10	Pass	10	Yes/Dbl 10		4♠	7	Yes/♦6	8	45
Kuz, Bob	No	10	4NT	8	Yes/Dbl 10		Pass	2	Yes/♥A	5	35
L'Ecuyer, Nic	No	10	Pass	10	Yes/Pass 8		3♠	10	No/♥A	7	45
Lebi, Robert	No	10	4NT	8	No/Pass 5		3♠	10	No/♥A	7	40
Lindop, David	No	10	Pass	10	No/Dbl 7		3♠	10	No/♦6	10	47
Mackay, Steve	No	10	4NT	8	Yes/Dbl 10		Pass	2	Yes/♥A	5	35
Miles, Danny	No	10	4NT	8	Yes/Dbl 10		4♠	7	No/♠3	6	41
Stark, Andy	No	10	Dbl	3	Yes/Dbl 10		3♠	10	No/♥A	7	40
Todd, Bob	Yes	2	Pass	10	Yes/Dbl 10		3♠	10	No/♦6	10	42
Treble, Bill	No	10	Pass	10	No/Dbl 7		3♠	10	No/♦6	10	47
Turner, David	No	10	Dbl	3	Yes/Pass 8		3♠	10	No/♠3	6	37
Willis, David	Yes	2	4NT	8	No/Dbl 7		4♠	7	No/♥A	7	31

DECEMBER PROBLEMS

Host: Neil Kimelman

1. IMPs. Both Vul., as South you hold:

♠ QJ6 ♥ AQJ864 ♦ K32 ♣ A

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	1♥
Dbl	3♥ ¹	3NT	?

1. Preemptive

What do you bid?

2. IMPs. Neither Vul., you hold as South:

♠ 75432 ♥ Q ♦ 63 ♣ 98763

West	North	East	South
-	-	1♥	Pass
4♥	4NT ¹	Pass	5♣
5♥	Dbl	Pass	?

1. Minors.

What do you bid?

3. As South, you hold ♠ A108 ♥ J9 ♦ AK1098532 ♣ -. N-S Vul. IMPs.

West	North	East	South
-	-	3♠	3NT
4♣	6NT	Pass	?

What do you bid?

4. As South you hold ♠ A63 ♥ AKQ984 ♦ 9 ♣ A65. Neither vul., matchpoints.

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

1. Forcing

What do you bid?

5. As South you hold ♠ Q ♥ AQ9 ♦ QJ3 ♣ AKQJ53. Neither vul., matchpoints.

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

1. Game Forcing (Over 2♦, 2NT would have been Lebensohl; all other bids would have been forcing.)

What is 3♠?

What do you bid?



BRIDGE HUMOUR

Man meets woman at bridge club and they decide to play in the evening duplicate. They play all the same conventions- Keycard, Transfers, Short Club, etc. so they really have nothing to go over. They have a big game and win. They go to have a cup of coffee at a restaurant and go over the hands which of course puts them in a good mood. She invites him to her apartment for a drink. They are sitting on the couch and one thing leads to another. Before you know it, clothes are flying around all over the place. In the midst of all this passion, he screams "Alert!" She says: "Yes, what" He says: "it could be short."

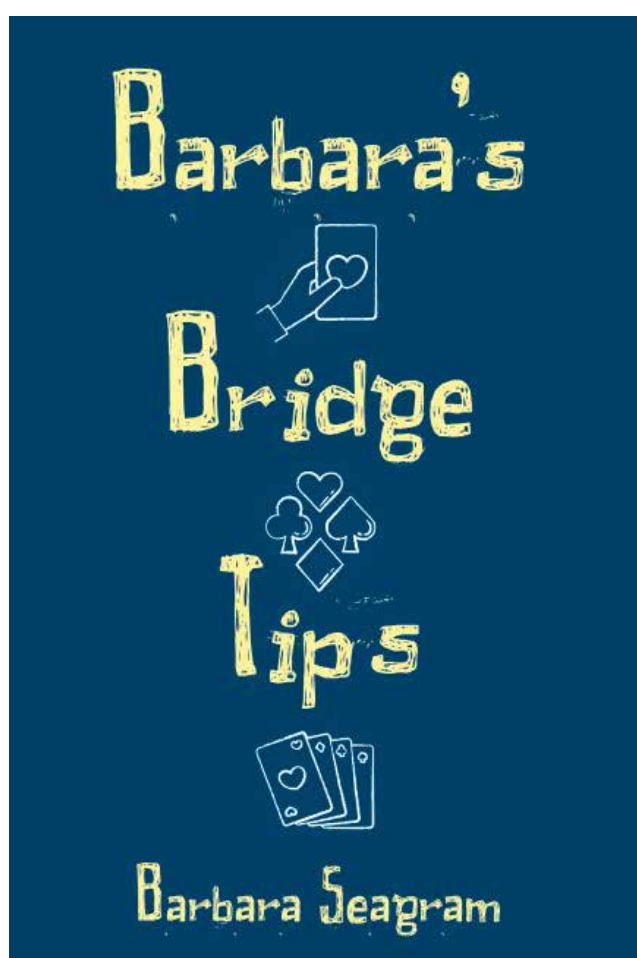
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