

# bridge *Canada*

## **Tricks & Treats for your autumn tables**

**Canadians at the Worlds  
What Went Wrong  
Live at the Club  
and more ...**

### **THE CANADIAN BRIDGE FEDERATION**

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



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2. Visit [cbf.ca](http://cbf.ca) and click **Join The CBF**.
3. Email [info@cbf.ca](mailto:info@cbf.ca) for more information.

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

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# EDITOR'S MESSAGE

## Karl Gohl, 1939-2022

It is with great sadness that I share the passing of my former bridge partner after a lengthy illness. Karl was by far my favourite partner, and a great friend. His mixture of decency, passion, kindness, humour, humility, competitiveness and loyalty is unmatched in my experience. He was a renaissance man with a knowledge of great many subjects and easily engaged others in conversation.

Karl loved the analysis of hands and using unique conventions that he thought would be of benefit. I remember sitting with Karl one night after bridge, and debating the merit of playing the seven of spades versus the nine of spades for 15 minutes. By being a regular reader of international bridge publications, he introduced me and other players to some great conventions including Miser, Catsfeet, Transfer Lebensohl and Klinger.

Karl had great success as a player. He is ranked 2817 (about 10,000 players listed) in the World Bridge Federation All Time Open Rankings. This puts him as the 73th highest ranking Canadian on this list, and the 2nd highest Manitoban. Besides many wins and CNTC medals, his highlight was in 2010, when Karl and myself made it to the final of the World Pairs in Philadelphia, and we were doing extremely well until he became very ill after the third of five sessions.

## You can't take it with you...

This common expression means that your wealth stays here on Earth when you 'shuffle off this mortal coil', or head for your eternal reward, leaving mortal existence behind.

Why not leave some of your estate to Canadian Bridge, and help future generations grow this great game in Canada? This would serve as your legacy for a game we all love. It is easy to do, and in some situations your estate would be able to deduct this charitable gift (not that it will directly benefit you).

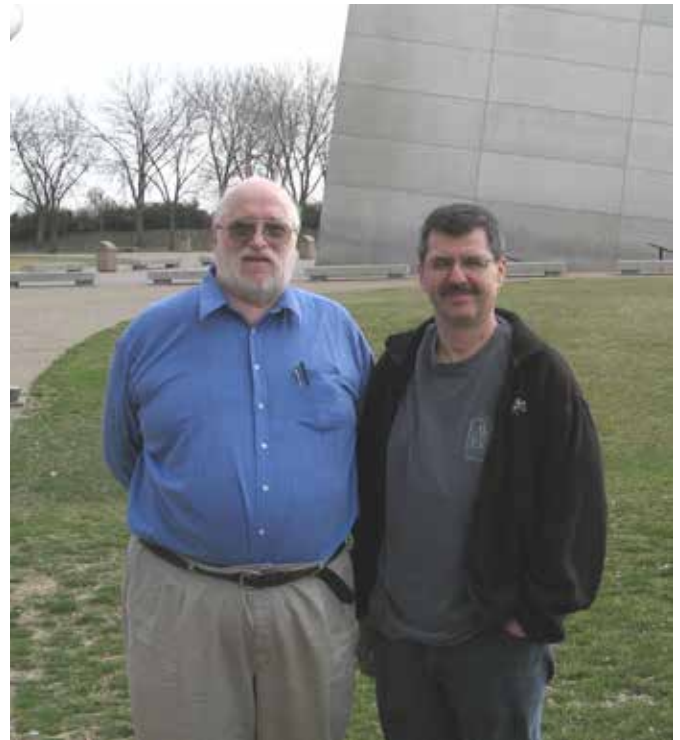
## The CBF Charitable Foundation (CBFCF)

Thanks to the generosity of bridge players the Canadian Bridge Federation Charitable Foundation had been able to support Canadian charities in their worthwhile efforts. In the past two years the CBFCF had helped many charities impacted by the covid fallout. We had also raised funds through The Longest Day for the Alzheimer's Society. This year funds were raised for the War in Ukraine.

The CBF has been given back to society for over 30 years. Why don't you join us?

Neil Kimelman

Bridge Canada Managing Editor



*Neil and Karl at the 2007 St. Louis NABC*

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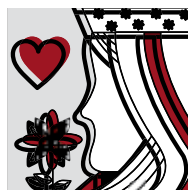
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## Bridge – Live at the clubs!

By Neil Kimelman

by Neil Kimelman

In the last few months I have returned to playing live bridge in Winnipeg. We have a beautiful new venue with boatloads of free parking, the Soul Sanctuary, where all daily games are held. And it is nice to see some of my friend and fellow players after such a long hiatus. The site being near my home doesn't hurt either.

Like everyone else, I had gotten accustomed to playing online. Mostly I have played in competitive events, against some of Canada's and World's best. Playing against the likes of L'Ecuyer, Brogeland and the great Gabriel Chagas. Playing on teams with world stars, and former ones, including Benito Garozzo. These events have been fun and challenging. I enjoying pitting my skills against the best. Not a lot of mistakes are made. You can reliably estimate whether you will win or lose IMPs on most of the deals.

But in person club play is different. Even from club play online. Of course there is the social interaction, but there is often more. Here are three hands from the July 21st duplicate game, providing evidence of the variety and novelty of in person play. Last Thursday our game started off against a lovely couple. Before we started playing we shared a few laughs, and solved many of the world's problems. On the very first deal out the bidding goes:

Board 1, Matchpoints, neither vul.

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

My partner, South, is on play holding: ♠K104 ♥Q10974 ♦A74 ♣A4. Dummy has ♠3 ♥KJ32 ♦Q108632 ♣86. West leads the ♣K. My partner wins and plays on trump. East wins the 2nd heart (west shows out), leads a club to West's jack, who returns a spade to East's ace. Now East unexpectedly leads the ♦K! You win the ace and West follows with the nine. What now? You have been gifted with a chance, albeit slim to make an overtrick. East opened 1♦, so has to have three diamonds, right? But why return the king from KJx? West would likely not lead their supposed stiff diamond with a club suit headed by the KQJ, right? My partner gave this some thought and reasonably decided to play East for three diamonds and thought they may well duck a small diamond lead from dummy.

They were sort of right. East ducked and West won the Jack! So the normal result was achieved. When asked why they opened 1♦ on Kx, East replied, 'Did I?' Club bridge. We have already gotten our value from the entry fee by witnessing a new mutation of the Grosvenor Gambit, although unintentionally. Everyone was all smiles, because having fun is what playing in club games is all about!

Another aspect of the joy of in-person bridge is the uncertainty as to whether your 'good' result will score well. I was pretty pleased with our result on this hand:

Board 15, N-S vul.

North (me)	
♠	Q107542
♥	J10987
♦	10
♣	Q
West	East
♠	AK3
♥	A532
♦	A63
♣	1073
♠	J986
♥	4
♦	KQJ98542
♣	-
South (Partner)	
♠	-
♥	KQ6
♦	7
♣	AKJ986542

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	5♦	All Pass

West was pretty timid on this hand, and East easily wrapped up 12 tricks. Tie for a top? No. A tie for a bottom! There was one other -420. The rest of the N-S pairs got doubled in four or five clubs, making when East felt they should sit for partner's double. Sigh.

My last instalment of the entertainment value of playing in person against people with various level of bridge skills, happened a bit later in the round. It was my turn to misplay a hand, for all the good it would have done me in getting it right! The same bottom! I digress. Here are the N-S cards with our bidding:

♠	83
♥	AKJ10843
♦	K94
♣	5
♠	Q7642
♥	65
♦	A2
♣	KQJ3

My partner opened 1♠ and it went pass, 2♥ by me. As we all know, club games are not played in perfect tempo, and East made a very small hitch, and passed. I noticed it but gave it no further thought. We eventually stopped in 4♥, when it became clear to me that we likely did not have the goods for slam. Right! East led the ♣A. I didn't have a lot to think out about on this trick, but West considered for a moment, before they discarded the ♠5! Huh, as I awoke from my daydream. East was dealt ♣A1098xxxx! Good thing they didn't bid I thought, then realized that was bad for us, with partner's club stack. Well maybe, the rest of the hand is such that no other East came in with this hand. East now switched to the ♦Q. I was still daydreaming and played a heart to my ace and East discarded a club. I got to ruff my diamond, but now when I led a high club West ruffed in low. I pitched a spade anyways, claiming down one. As I was doing that West led the ♠A, and East pitched a club! Huh. Even though I was back in the land of revokes and leads out of turn, none happened here. Yes, the full deals was:

North	
♠	83
♥	AKJ10843
♦	K94
♣	5
West	East
♠	AKJ1095
♥	Q972
♦	1075
♣	-
♠	-
♥	-
♦	QJ863
♣	A10987642
South	
♠	Q7642
♥	65
♦	A2
♣	KQJ3

All other N-S pairs doubled club contracts scoring +500, +800 and one +1100. Can't wait until next Thursday!

# what ...does this bid mean?

1.	North	South
	1♠	1NT
	2♣	2NT
	3♦	

What is the meaning of 3♦?

2.	North	South
	1♠	2♣
	2♥	3♣
	3♦	

What is the meaning of 3♦?

Solutions on page 8.

## MOLLO ON PLAY XXIV

Contract: 4♠ by South at IMPs. Lead: ♠4

♠ QJ975  
♥ A6  
♦ 543  
♣ 652

♠ AK1086  
♥ 5  
♦ AQ8  
♣ AQ43

Plan the play. Is the contract assured?  
Solution on page 8.

## CALENDAR OF BRIDGE EVENTS

**October** CBF Online Team league – play begins mid October through January

**Oct 15** CBF Online Game on BBO\* – 999er – 1:00 eastern  
CBF Online Game on BBO\* – Open – 1:15 eastern

**November** In person Clubs – September to December – CNTC and COPC qualifying games for 2023

**Nov 19** CBF Online Game on BBO\* – 999er – 1:00 eastern  
Open – 1:15 eastern

**December** In person Clubs – September to December – CNTC and COPC qualifying games for 2023

**Dec 17** CBF Online Game on BBO\* – 999er – 1:00 eastern  
Open – 1:15 eastern

**NOTE:** CBF online games in Oct., Nov. and Dec. will provide a qualification for CNTC A,B and COPC in the open game for pairs with a score of 50% or more, or finishing in the top half. Similarly pairs in the 999er game will receive a Q for the CNTC C.

# Mollo ON PLAY XXIV

Contract: 6♠ by South at IMPs.  
Lead: ♠4. Plan the Play

♠ 4	♠ QJ975	♠ 32
♥ Q943	♥ A6	♥ KJ10872
♦ K1072	♦ 543	♦ J96
♣ KJ87	♣ 652	♣ 109
	♠ AK1086	
	♥ 5	
	♦ AQ8	
	♣ AQ43	

Yes, the contract is assured. Draw the last trump, cash the ♥A and ruff a heart, cash the ♣A, and enter dummy with a trump to play a 2nd round of clubs. If East shows out, play small. West can win but is endplayed into giving you your 10th trick in the minor, or a sluff and a ruff.

If East wins the king you are playing for overtricks. If East follows low, play the queen. If it holds you are playing for overtricks. If it loses, and west has no more clubs they are endplayed. If West instead plays a 3rd round of clubs, and clubs are 3-3 you make five. If instead West has the 4th club, simply discard a diamond on it, and west must surrender a sluff and ruff, or give you the ♦Q.

Editor's note: Another line that is 100%, but gives up some overtrick chances is after ruffing the heart, simply cash the club ace and lead a small club. This might be necessary on some hands where the entries to dummy are limited.

## what ...does this bid mean?

1.	North	South
	1♠	1NT
	2♣	2NT
	3♦	

What is the meaning of 3♦?

Answer: 3♦ is natural and shows a diamond fragment, and accepts the game try. The point range for North is usually 15-18 HCPs. It allows South to very accurately place the contract, depending on their hand:

- With ♠xx ♥KQ10x ♦KJxx ♣Qxx  
South bids 3NT.
- With ♠Kx ♥Qxx ♦Axxx ♣J10xx  
South bids 3♠ forcing, suggesting 4♠ as a contract.
- With ♠x ♥Axxx ♦KJ10xx ♣Qxx  
South bids either 4♦, or 3♥, an advance cue bid, and then bids diamonds.

2.	North	South
	1♠	2♣
	2♥	3♣
	3♦	

What is the meaning of 3♦?

This auction looks similar to one, but is not. South has shown a game forcing hand with 2♣, and a good single suiter with 3♣, very possibly interested in slam. With a diamond fragment or stopper North would have simply bid 3NT. 3♦ is a cue bid showing first round diamond control and a good hand/extra values, and is cooperating in investigating a club slam. A typical North hand for this auction: ♠Axxxx ♥Kxxx ♦AKx ♣Qx.

# Canadians at the World Championships



Congrats to all Canadians who participated in the 16th World Bridge Series, recently held in Wroclaw, Poland.

Here are the Canadians who finished in the overall standings:

#### OPEN TEAMS:

- 5th-8th, Richard Chan, Zenin Xu (Lucky Four).

#### MIXED TEAMS:

- 3rd-4th, Leslie Amoils (Donner). *Photo at left.*
- 17th -32nd, Canada: Louise, Berthiaume, Kamel Fergani, Nicholas and Judith Gartaganis, Marc-André Fourcaudot, Sondra Blank.
- 17th-32nd, Jacob Freeman.

#### OPEN PAIRS:

- 22nd, Nicholas Gartaganis and Michel Lorber.
- 40th, Zenin Xu.

#### MIXED PAIRS:

- 45th, Louise Berthiaume and Kamel Fergani.

## Ethan & Sam BRIDGE HUMOUR



**Editor's note:** Here is the first instalment in Ethan and Sam humour, a young Canadian couple who love playing bridge!

**Ethan:** I hate the way my partner bids.

**Sam:** Why don't you go down to the club and find someone new to play with?

**Ethan:** It won't help. Playing with someone else from our club has the same chance of success as did changing cabins on the Titanic.

# BRIDGE BASICS



## MICHAELS AND OTHER TWO-SUITED DEFENSIVE CONVENTIONS

This is the 24th article in a New Player Bridge Canada series. Some of these concepts may be a review for you, but this series will also cover more advanced techniques and ideas.

We take a break from non-competitive bids, and wander over to the other side, defensive bids, which are calls that you make after the opponents have opened the bidding.

It can be argued that defensive bidding is more important than other bidding, as competitive auctions are more difficult to gauge, and do the right thing. We will start by looking at two suit bidding.

### CUEBIDDING OF THE OPPONENT'S OPENING BID.

Most partnerships play a cuebid of the opponent's one level opening as a two suited hand. Michael's is the common default treatment. It is simple to understand the basics of Michael's. A cuebid of RHO's minor shows both majors. A cue bid of a major opener shows the other major and an undisclosed minor. Easy, right? Let's do a FAQ format to further delve into the Michaels convention:

#### **Q: How long do the suits need to need to be?**

A: Most play at least 5-5. However at favourable vulnerability some partnerships risk 5-4.

#### **Q: Is there a minimum of HCPs to bid Michaels?**

A: Probably around 5 HCPs would be a minimum.  
♠QJ109x ♥Q109xx ♦x ♣xx.

#### **Q: Is there a maximum of HCPs to bid Michaels?**

A: Not really. Since it is forcing, the Michaels bidder can show a strong hand by cue bidding the opener's suit, or jumping in the suit partner chose.

#### **Q: How do you find out which minor suit partner holds?**

A: 2NT asks for the minor. Except for 3NT which is natural, all notrump bids by advancer (partner of the overcaller) ask for partner's minor. So if the bidding goes:

Example 1:

West	North	East	South
1♠	2♠ <sup>1</sup>	3♠	?

1. Michael's

3NT by south is to play (maybe holding ♠AJx ♥xx ♦AKQ109xx ♣xx), 4NT asks partner to bid their minor (maybe ♠- ♥xx ♦Q109xxx ♣Qxxxxx). Even 5NT has the same meaning!

#### **Q: What else do I need to know about Michael's?**

A: Interior suit quality is very important. In the 5 point example above, Michaels would be inadvisable without the tens and nines in the suits.

**Q: How do you bid when the opponents bid Michael's against you?**

A: There are several popular defenses to Michael's. Here is one of them:

Example 2:

West	North	East	South
1♠	2♠ <sup>1</sup>	?	

1. Michael's

- Double = invitational values or better and denies a spade fit. You can double the opponents in the suit they chose with length in that suit.
- 3♥ = limit raise or better in spades.
- 2NT = East has a weak hand with a long minor. Opener is forced to bid 3♣ where East will either pass or convert to 3♦.
- 3♣/♦ = natural and forcing.
- 3NT = to play.

## KLINGER

The Klinger convention is one not commonly played, but is superior to Michaels, in that it specifies which two suits are held in one bid. The disadvantage to this convention is that it is more taxing on the memory. Here is how it works.

A. A cuebid shows the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> higher ranking suits above the suit opened.

B. A jump shift in the next higher suit shows the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> higher ranking suits, and

C. A jump in notrump shows the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> higher ranking suits.

Example 3:

West	North	East	South
1♣	?		

The meaning of North's bids:

2♣ = diamonds and hearts.

2♦ = hearts and spades.

2NT = diamonds and spades.

Example 4:

**West North East South**

1♥ ?

2♥ = spades and clubs.

2♠ = clubs and diamonds.

2NT = diamonds and spades.

Just think of the suits as being in the same order on an indefinite loop. Clubs, diamonds, hearts, spades, clubs, diamonds, etc... The same guidelines found in the Michaels FAQ are the same for Klinger.

**Q: What do you do if partner Michael's (or Klinger's) and you either have a good hand or a good fit, or both?**

A: The default assumption is that the Michael's bidder has a weaker hand (this strength should be adjusted when your side is vulnerable). A cuebid shows strength, probably at least a very good opening bid. A jump in one of partner's suit shows a good fit (at least four card support), but not necessarily a great hand. A new suit by opener is natural. If advancer is silent, but the Michael's bidder doubles, this shows 16+ HCPs, forcing advancer to look at their hand and make a decision. With good defensive values, they will convert the double to penalties by passing. With a good fit/offensive values they will bid, with a minimum notrump again asking partner to bid their undisclosed minor.

Example 5:

West	North	East	South
1♥	2♥	4♥	Pass
Pass	Dbl	Pass	?

1. With ♠Qxxx ♥10xx ♦Qxxxx ♣x bid 4♠.

2. With ♠xx ♥QJ109 ♦xxx ♣xxxx pass.

3. With ♠J ♥xxxx ♦Qxxx ♣Qxxxx bid 4NT, asking for partner's minor.

Next issue: More defensive conventions.



# THE INTERMEDIATE *Spot*



## BIDDING STRATEGIES 11

### ***When to Preempt:*** **QUIZ 2**

*By Neil Kimelman*

Here are more quiz problems to help improve your bidding in this area. For the purpose of this exercise, assume your partnership agreements is to bid differently depending on seat and vulnerability. White versus red in 3rd seat could be quite weak, whereas a 1st or 2nd seat vul vs not, will tend to be very constructive. Also, all four level bids are natural and preemptive (no Namyats).

#### ***Preempting Quiz 2 Problems***

11. ♠AKJ10764 ♥4 ♦843 ♣K5

a. Neither vul, you are in 3rd seat. It goes pass, pass to you. What do you open? Would it matter if your hearts and spade holdings were reversed?

b. You are vul, the opponents are not. It goes pass and 1♣ on your right. What do you bid?

12. ♠4 ♥K109742 ♦3 ♣KJ1075

a. Neither vul, you are in 1st seat. What do you bid?

b. What if you are in 2nd seat, both vul, and RHO passes?

c. 3rd seat, not vul. vs vul, it goes pass, pass to you. What is your call?

13. ♠AK4 ♥4 ♦J109763 ♣Q65

a. 3rd seat, vul. vs not, it goes pass, 1♣ to you. What is your call?

b. 1st seat, what is your bid?

c. 3rd seat, not vul. vs vul, it goes pass, pass to you. What is your call?

14. ♠Q4 ♥Q87532 ♦K43 ♣QJ

3rd seat, not vul. vs vul, it goes pass, 1♦ to you. What is your call?

15. ♠Q764 ♥9 ♦AQJ109543 ♣-

Neither vul, you are in 1st seat. What do you bid?

3rd seat, vul. vs not, it goes pass, pass to you. What do you bid?

16. ♠5 ♥876 ♦AKJ1076 ♣965

You are in 2nd seat, both vul, and RHO bids 1♥? What do you bid?

17. ♠AKQ4 ♥7653 ♦43 ♣985

Not vul, vs vul, you are in 3rd seat. Pass, pass to you. What do you bid?

18. ♠54 ♥KQ1098 ♦8763 ♣85

Not vul, vs vul, you are in 3rd seat. Pass, pass to you. What do you bid?

19. ♠J9842 ♥KQ109762 ♦- ♣5

The Opponents are vul, you are not. What do you bid in 1st seat?

20. ♠A4 ♥AK109542 ♦3 ♣KQ5

Neither vul, you are in 3rd seat. RHO opens 1♦. What is your plan?

## Preempting Quiz Solutions

11. ♠AKJ10764 ♥4 ♦843 ♣K5

a. Neither vul, you are in 3rd seat. It goes pass, pass to you. What do you open? Open 1♠. There is still a chance to reach a good game, where opening 3♠ would not show as powerful a hand. Would it matter if your hearts and spade holdings were reversed? Yes. Now the opponents can outbid you if they have a spade fit. Make it hard for them to risk coming in, and open 3♥.

b. You are vul, the opponents are not. It goes pass and 1♣ on your right. What do you bid? This one is a bit of a coin flip, but 1♠ is better as your ♣K looks more like a trick.

12. ♠4 ♥K109742 ♦3 ♣KJ1075

a. Neither vul, you are in 1st seat. What do you bid? Bid 2♥. This could misfire, but preempting the opponents puts a lot of pressure on them. Depending on how the bidding goes, I would consider introducing clubs (i.e. if LHO overcalled 2♠ and it went pass, pass to me).

b. What if you are in 2nd seat, both vul, and RHO passes? 2♥ is still the best choice.

c. 3rd seat, not vul. vs vul, it goes pass, pass to you. What is your call? 2♥ is ok, but 3♥ is better. I know many experts who would bid 4♥ in a blink of an eye.

13. ♠AK4 ♥4 ♦J109763 ♣Q65

a. 3rd seat, vul. vs not, it goes pass, 1♣ to you. What is your call? Bid 2♦. 1♦ may result in partner reaching for a skinny vulnerable game, not what you want.

b. 1st seat, what is your bid? 1♦ is ok, but 2♦ is better. It makes it easier for partner to compete with some values, but moderate diamond support.

c. 3rd seat, not vul. vs vul, it goes pass, pass to you. What is your call? 1♦ and 2♦ are both acceptable, but 2♦ is better as the opponents have to start one level higher.

14. ♠Q4 ♥Q87532 ♦K43 ♣QJ

a. 3rd seat, not vul. vs vul, it goes pass, 1♦ to you. What is your call? Pass! You have a bad hand for offense!

15. ♠Q764 ♥9 ♦AQJ109543 ♣-

a. Neither vul, you are in 1st seat. What do you bid? What a fun hand! 1♦ is ok, but my first choice by a whisker is 4♦. Maximum pressure! Yes you will miss a spade fit once in a while, but even so, a 4-4 spade fit may not play well. 5♦ is also ok, but will occasionally be -300 or -500 against air.

b. 3rd seat, vul. vs not, it goes pass, pass to you. What do you bid? Same answer and reasoning as in (a).

16. ♠5 ♥876 ♦AKJ1076 ♣965

a. You are in 2nd seat, both vul, and RHO bids 1♥? What do you bid? Pass. You are not good enough for 2♦, and 3♦ vul vs not is too risky. I actually held this hand in a recent Canadian Championship. RHO ended up being declarer in 3NT and I led the ♦J. Dummy had ♦Q532, and declared ducked my Jack and my ten that I led a trick two! Had I bid diamonds this would not have worked.

17. ♠AKQ4 ♥7653 ♦43 ♣985

a. Not vul, vs vul, you are in 3rd seat. Pass, pass to you. What do you bid? 1♠ is a good bid, but 2♠ is also! The opponents will usually get to the wrong place, and avoid notrump without a spade stopper.

18. ♠54 ♥KQ1098 ♦8763 ♣85

a, Not vul, vs vul, you are in 3rd seat. Pass, pass to you. What do you bid? Bid 2♥. A little risky, but worth it. When you make bids like that, it is incumbent on the partnership to disclose your agreements on preempts, including opening a weak two on a five card suit.

19. ♠J9842 ♥KQ109762 ♦- ♣5

a. The opponents are vul, you are not. What do you bid in 1st seat? It is almost impossible to find a spade fit. Open 3♥, or if you had your Wheatties in the morning, bid 4♥.

20. ♠A4 ♥AK109542 ♦3 ♣KQ5

a. Neither vul, you are in 3rd seat. RHO opens 1♦. What is your plan? There are options with this type of hand, preemptive length in suit with good values. Often it is right to preempt, and then double to show an abnormal strength hand. My choice would be 4♥. Often the opponents will double with some values, and 4♥ will make (all partner needs is three small hearts and the ♣J). If the opponents bid on, now you double, and partner can either leave it in for penalty or bid 5♥, depending on their values and hand type.

**Next issue:** *Bidding after the opponents overcall 1NT.*

## QUIZ

### INTERMEDIATE DECLARER PLAY

#### SOLUTION ON PAGE 18

**Contract:** 6NT.

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

♠ A K 5  
♥ Q 6 4  
♦ A 10 7 3  
♣ A K 10

West leads the ♠10. Plan the play.



When your partner is playing even worse than usual you might say: "You know, you may not be the worst player in the world, .... but if that person should die...."

*Edwin Kantar*



## What Went Wrong?

by Paul Thurston

### Hand 1

Dealer: North. N-S Vulnerable

♠	KQ109	♠	76543
♥	A7	♥	1098
♦	1076	♦	AQ85
♣	AJ82	♣	9
♠	A82	♠	J
♥	543	♥	KQJ62
♦	9432	♦	KJ
♣	1032	♣	KQ654

Opening lead: TBA.

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

An exemplary auction up to a certain point but once again a pair of experts had reached the six-level missing two very cashable aces so WHAT WENT WRONG?

Transfer to hearts followed by opener accepting and responder continuing with a game-forcing and natural introduction of clubs and an agreement on clubs as a

THE  
EXPERT  
Spot

playable trump suit. Four diamonds showed a control and then the rot set in! For opener, four hearts was another control-showing bid but responder had a different interpretation! For him, four hearts was the exotic creature known as Double Suit Keycard Kickback asking for keycards but including the two suits that would likely be crucial in any successful slam, hearts and clubs. South answered five diamonds to show two keycards in the two suits he had bid plus the queen of the agreed-as-trump club suit. But with the fourth suit proof against two fast losers and expecting his partner’s two diamond “control” bids to have that suit locked up, North (who had run out of space in any case) advanced to the small slam.

Now players who are in on the secret of how to defend Canadian slams - cash your ace(s) and wait for partner to take his trick(s) - would have had no trouble defeating six clubs but, fortunately for North-South, this particular West was not only a deep thinker but also a player who liked the prospects of having his brilliancies published for all to see. In at least that regard, his lead will be getting the fame it so richly deserves although we will forego naming the perpetrator of the opening lead of the (insert drum roll here) ♠2!

Why that lead? West presumed North would have the spade King for his advance to the six-level (right!) and hoped it wouldn’t be accompanied by the Queen so that declarer, also lacking the spade Queen but maybe having the Jack in one of North or South, would play low from dummy for East’s Queen to win the first trick with the spade ace to follow for the setting trick. Just not this time!

## Hand 2

Dealer North. Both vulnerable.

	♠ Q1075	
	♥ KJ65	
	♦ A74	
	♣ A6	
♠ KJ9		♠ 843
♥ 7		♥ A84
♦ KQ102		♦ 986
♣ 108732		♣ Q954
	♠ A62	
	♥ Q10932	
	♦ J53	
	♣ KJ	

Opening lead: ♥7. The bidding:

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

On this layout you can see South could lose one spade, one heart and two diamonds for down one so was his second-round jump to game What Went Wrong?

As the deal was contested in a team match, where bidding and making games, especially the vulnerable ones is what usually separates the winners from the also-rans, it’s hard to fault South for his slightly forward jump to game, particularly when his partnership required four-card support for North’s second-round raise: those nine-card fits are often pure gold. And the money goes to the results and since South did bring home ten tricks, the real question of What Went Wrong needs to focus on the defense. The opening lead of the singleton trump wouldn’t be to everyone’s taste but as it did no real harm, we’ll have to look elsewhere. East played low at trick one for South to win in hand and play back a second round to dummy’s Jack and East’s ace. On that trick, West did the best he could by discarding the eight of clubs, an upside down attitude signal that said “no future for us in this suit” (and the card you and I might have picked for an opening lead).

Now with the defense limited to one heart winner and no possible club trick, East might well have reasoned like this: “dummy’s spades are going to be enough for us not to have a lot of tricks there so the only possible source of enough defensive nourishment to set this game must be diamonds”. To make a shift to the nine of diamonds East’s indicated play and his actual continuation of a third round of hearts a relatively clear sin of omission. South happily won the trump continuation in hand to play ace and a second spade towards dummy and soon had a parking spot for one of his potential diamond losers: further evidence of why bidding close games is often a sound policy at IMP scoring.

Note of irony: at the other table of this match, North-South were confirmed “Short Clubbers” so North opened the bidding one club (one diamond would have promised four cards in the suit) and the same three heart bids followed. Except this time West didn’t particularly fear what dummy might have in diamonds as the other team’s opening leader had and started proceedings by leading the ♦K, dummy played low and East followed with the diamond nine, an upside down signal to deny the diamond Jack. West knew enough to try a club shift (the eight to deny a high honour) but when East won the heart ace and went back to playing diamonds through the closed hand, South’s game was doomed.

## Hand 3

Dealer: South. E-W vulnerable.

♠ 98	♠ 765
♥ AJ9863	♥ K5
♦ 83	♦ AQJ9654
♣ 1082	♣ 7
♠ AQJ32	♠ K104
♥ Q102	♥ 74
♦ 107	♦ K2
♣ J93	♣ AKQ654

Lead: 10♦.

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

At the other table of this playoff match during the World Mixed Teams Championship played in Wroclaw, Poland, South started with a different opening bid, the more prosaic one club, and that spawned an entirely different auction. With the one-level available to him, West overcalled one spade and the highly competitive bidding went ever upwards until East-West seemed poised to declare in four spades. Not a great spot to be sure and we’ll never know if West could have negotiated ten tricks (likely not) as the non-vulnerable North-South sacrificed in five clubs. Down two doubled in five clubs with the players expecting not much of a swing – Ha! Examining What Went Wrong for North-South needs to start with the auction in which the players weren’t exactly on the same page of their system notes.

1NT: 14-16 with the sixth club acceptable for most modernists.

2♦: routine transfer to hearts with the bidder intending to drop her partner in two hearts.

Double: diamonds over here partner!

Pass: I don’t have three-plus hearts.

2♠: spades over here.

3♦: the point of divergence as North thought this was a further transfer as a prelude to her side playing three hearts while South thought this asked for a diamond stopper for play in notrump.

3NT: rest easy partner, I have the stopper we need.

4♦: please bid hearts!

Four hearts: ok, I get it (finally).

So rather than stopping in a part score and garnering a small plus, North-South reached game fated to lose two spades, one heart and one diamond. Except they only lost half of that number of tricks so now the question must be for the defenders: What Went Wrong for four hearts to have made with an overtrick? East won the opening lead to consider her options and eventually

decided a club shift might be her best choice: maybe a club trick with partner, maybe a defensive cross ruff?

South won the club as West signalled “no high club over here” by playing the upside down nine of clubs. Declarer continued with a heart to the nine and East’s King and it was crunch-time for the defense: spade switch and a happy ending but the actual diamond return was fatal. East’s reasoning: even though her partner had bid spades, that didn’t necessarily mean she’d have the ace and a singleton ten of diamonds seemed to offer more hope. Even if it was wrong to play a second round of diamonds, East couldn’t quite visualize all of dummy’s spades disappearing! South won her diamond King as West followed suit. Declarer next mopped up two more rounds of trumps with the aid of a second finesse and then cashed clubs, lots and lots of clubs, to dispose of dummy’s two spade losers and end with 11 tricks, +450 and a whopping 13 IMPs for her team!

For two months a man has been dating and playing bridge regularly with the same person. Things have been going great on both fronts, but he has been too timid to initiate any sexual advances.

Finally, she puts him in this God-awful slam and says: “If you make this contract, I’ll sleep with you.” He tries his hardest, but trumps don’t break and a couple of finesses don’t work and he winds up going down three!

She says: “That’s close enough”.



# QUIZ

## INTERMEDIATE DECLARER PLAY

### SOLUTION FROM PAGE 14

**Contract: 6NT. Lead: ♠10. Plan the play**

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

If diamonds split you have 12 tricks, 3 spades, two hearts, 4 diamonds and 2 hearts. Start by winning the spade and leading the king and queen of diamonds. You are saddened when the suit splits 4-1, and length is with West. However if they also hold the ♥K you have a sure thing!

After cashing the two diamonds, cross to the ♣K and lead a heart to the Jack. When that lives cash the remaining black suit winners and the ♥A. If the ♥K falls you have 12 tricks. However when it doesn’t you know what three cards West has – the ♥K and the ♦J9. Simply play your last heart, and West must lead away from his ♦J9 at trick 12.

# the GREAT CANADIAN BIDDING CONTEST



OCTOBER 2022 TGCBC  
Host: Zygmunt Marciński

For Panelists, see page 30

**Congrats to Sheldon Spiers, top reader for Oct., with a score of 40. Followed closely by Kai Zhou and Ken Sutley. David Willis and Nick L'Ecuyer were the top panelists with scores of 47. The December problems can be found on page 31. Play along!**

1. IMPs. Both Vul. as West you hold  
♠Q75 ♥A109432 ♦KQ2 ♣2.

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	4♦
?			

What do you bid?

Bid	Panelists	Score
Pass	13	10
4♥	3	3

**The panel's vote was a 2-horse race, confirming that this problem amounted to a simple question: do you pass or do you bid 4♥? Before attempting to distill the reasons for the landslide support for the discretion of pass over the valour of 4♥, might the minority persuade us to their side? Aiming for a very narrow target is:**

**Bishop:** Will partner balance with a double if decidedly short in spades?

**Arguing unpersuasively is:**

**Miles:** I have the 6-card major.

**Tellingly, both expressed serious misgivings about their choice:**

**Bishop:** Most hands where 4♥ has a play (...) partner should surely be able to balance back in with double.

**Miles:** (...) my diamond length perhaps argues for allowing partner to balance with a double if they have the required strength and diamond shortness. If they don't, defending is very likely best.

**Moving to the majority view, can we discern the salient symptoms that led to their choice? The favourite clue was diamond length, with:**

**Turner (with Cimon, Cooper, Hargreaves, Kimelman, and L'Ecuyer all in agreement):** If partner has values he'll be short in diamonds and can act I hope.

**Second favourite was the defensive nature of the diamond holding:**

**Kuz (with Cimon, Lindop, and Stark):** (...) defensive values which could be ruffed.

**Third favourite was heart suit was too weak:**

**Lindop (echoed by Cimon and Kuz):** hearts aren't good enough for a four-level overcall.

**Fourth favourite was that partner may (very reasonably) get us overboard if we overcall x4Hx:**

**Cooper (with Treble in agreement):** [Partner] needs quite a good hand for me to make 4♥. Even something as good as ♠KJxx ♥Kxxx ♦x ♣Kxxx might well go down on a spade ruff or with a 3-0 heart break. And would he pass a 4♥ overcall with that?

*It is an underappreciated quality of good bidding to look past one's own hand and try take into account partner's range of possible and likely actions - particularly when in second position following RHO's weakness-showing pre-empt and facing an unpassed hand since partner's range of hands is so wide. Cooper was the only voice to astutely mention three further reasons:*

**Cooper:** I'm not worried about further pre-emption, and I have a "sure" plus on defense (...) I don't want to discourage partner from bidding 4♠ with short hearts and six spades.

### **Summing up succinctly:**

**L'Ecuyer:** Partner will bid if we need to bid. I have length in diamonds. No rush to come in.

**Some panelists acknowledged that the immediate pass will not necessarily solve all problems:**

**Lindop:** A tougher decision will be if partner balances with a double. I guess I'd take it out with a six card heart suit, although I'd be tempted to pass with this diamond holding.

**Kimelman will pass the balancing double. The panel did a good job identifying the reasons why pass is more judicious than 4♥.**

### **The full deal:**

♠ 9642	♠ KJ1083
♥ 87	♥ KJ5
♦ 4	♦ 7
♣ AQ10765	♣ K983
♠ Q75	
♥ A109432	
♦ KQ2	
♣ 2	
♠ A	
♥ Q6	
♦ AJ1098653	
♣ J4	

*In a 2022 CSTC semifinal, after the offbeat 4♦ opening bid one West overcalled 4♥ (he must have learned his lesson as he voted for pass on this panel!) and when his partner, facing a difficult problem that would have merited entry to a future TGCBC reasonably chose not to pass (as anticipated by Cooper and Treble), raising to 5♥. Probably on the theory that to pass would be tantamount to being marooned in "no man's land" West concluded proceedings with 6♥. When the defense slipped a little securing only 3 tricks the loss proved modest: at the other table, after a much slower auction that commenced with a more mainstream 1♦ opening bid ending in 4♥ the defense accurately took its four tricks.*

2. IMPs. N-S Vul. As West you hold  
♠A82 ♥10975 ♦KJ73 ♣J4.

South	West	North	East
1♣ <sup>1</sup>	Pass	1♦ <sup>2</sup>	2♣ <sup>3</sup>
Dbl <sup>4</sup>	Pass	2♠	2NT
Pass	?		

1. Polish club: forcing for 1-round showing (a) weak NT with fewer than four diamonds, unbalanced with fewer than six clubs and clubs longer than diamonds, or (c) any 18<sup>+</sup>
2. Artificial, any 0-5 HCP's
3. Natural, by agreement
4. 18<sup>+</sup>, take-out

What do you bid?

Bid	Panelists	Score
3♠	8	10
4♦	1	8
3♣	3	6
3♦	4	5

**This problem is multi-layered, presenting the panel with four issues to grapple with: (a) what is partner showing? (b) how strong is partner likely to be? (c) given answers to (a) and (b) can our side make game? And (d) having answered the first three questions, what should you do now? As to Issue (a), whereas the panel was unanimous in its view that partner's 2NT**

*was take-out showing a shorter red suit (only Stark and Turner suggested that it could/would be a 5-card suit) opinion was divided as to whether it (i) could be either hearts or diamonds (ii) had to be diamonds. Speaking for the minority “either/or camp” is: Hornby (echoed by Bishop, Kimelman, L’Ecuyer, and Miles): (...) partner has some kind of asymmetric shape with long clubs and a shorter red suit.*

*The remainder of the panel was so in thrall to the “must be diamonds” view that it adduced no reasons in support of this conclusion (I am in agreement with Turner who was the only one to pertinently note that he assumes that partner’s 2NT on the first round of bidding (i.e. in lieu of 2♣) would not have shown the minors). I agree with the “either/or” minority: (a) such view allows our side to cover more ground including the all-important possibility that we may have a making 4♥.*

*As to Issue (b), all the panelists who bid more than 3♣/3♦ were implicitly of the view that partner has a good hand. Only one panelist attempts to make this case.*

**Turner:** Even given the vulnerability, partner couldn’t be sure of opener’s hand type when he bid 2♣, so it must have been constructive (...) he’s doing a lot of bidding without my ♣J.

*I agree – in particular with the observation that the ♣J staring us in the face should act as a beacon pointing towards strength and hence the distinct possibility of game. With the exception of Bishop the panel failed to weigh the implications to be drawn from partner’s 2NT rebid: (i) our second-round passive pass hardly incited him to any action, yet (ii) he volunteered a rebid in front of both an as yet unlimited opener and us. Despite their “minimum” bids (more on this below however), certain 3♣/3♦ bidders acknowledged that partner may have a good hand:*

**Bishop:** Sounds like partner has quite a good hand since he doesn’t seem at all perturbed that opener has 18+ HCP.

**Cimon:** (...) I don’t want to hang partner.

**Kimelman:** Partner has shown a lot of playing strength.

*As to Issue (c), the lion’s share of the panel let their choice of third round bid imply what they thought – though a few did venture an explicit opinion:*

**Cooper:** We may have a good 5-level save (or make!).

**Hargreaves:** Game seems a long, long way away.

**Kimelman:** I have a very good hand for [partner], especially if they have diamonds.

**Lindop:** The only question is whether I’ll insist on game.

**Miles:** I don’t think we have a game but could be wrong – hearts are likely wedged against us and our ♦K may prove useless if partner has two spades and one diamond (likely, otherwise the opponents may have been noisier with nine spades).

*Turning to Issue (d), opinion was fractured primarily along a line differentiating one’s assessment of game prospects but also which side suit partner may have. The 3♣ bidders all saw game as remote. I disagree as I’m persuaded that partner’s voluntary 2NT bid facing a hand that failed to show a sign of life over Opener’s double shows a very good hand. Agreeing with me are all the 3♠ and 4♦ bidders – notably:*

**Kuz:** I have to show my partner that my raise contains the majority of missing high cards.

**Treble:** On this auction I could easily have diddly-squat, and I think I need to show some signs of life.

*The 3♦ bidders were divided into three camps: (i) those who simply chose the best landing spot (I agree*

*with the 3♣ bidders who thought that would be a safer denomination than diamonds); (ii) those who thought that it kept alive the chance of getting to a 4-4 heart fit; and (iii) those who thought this was constructive and value-showing (why would that be? What else is advancer supposed to do here holding 3=4=5=1 in a hand unworthy of an immediate 1♦ overcall?):*

**Hornby:** I have some protection at these colors, so I'll bid 3♦ and then reconsider if I get doubled.

**Miles (echoed by Kimelman):** This allows us to get to either red suit.

**Bishop:** While we may be delaying our real decision until next round, we had best show some values with a 3♦ call now.

*3♠ drew almost half the panel. Only those who are convinced that partner's 2NT guarantees diamonds believe that their choice is a cuebid in support of diamonds. I agree with the inference that may be drawn from my hand's failure to act over Opener's dbl:*

**Cooper:** Diamonds are implied, since clubs could have been raised on the previous round.

**Lindop:** my hand is definitely worth a cuebid.

*The remainder of those who chose 3♠ are catering to the possibility that partner's 2NT may be based on either red 4-card suit, hence they concede that the direction of 3♠ is necessarily shrouded in ambiguity:*

**L'Ecuyer:** I have a decent hand for the second suit especially diamonds so let's try to show that. I don't think 3♦ does enough on these cards.

**Neither "ambiguous" 3♠ bidder offered any thoughts on how partner's forthcoming rebid is supposed to help unscramble issues of strain and level. Still on terra firma but perhaps suffering from over-exuberant hormones levels is:**

**Stark:** 4♦. The sexy bid, reading pard for 6/4 (or 7/5) in the minors opposite of which I have gold.

**Better hope that your partner does not subscribe to the "either red suit" interpretation of 2NT! More than passing mention was given to yet another possibility, an intergalactic unorthodoxy that the panelist concedes he would never venture unless certain that his partner was drinking the same Kool Aid:**

**Cooper:** The artist in me loves 3NT. If East can bid 2NT as a takeout, I can bid 3NT to show a raise to 4 with a 2-card disparity! Otherwise I'd choose a suit? But winning the post mortem is not the battle.

#### The full deal:

♠ 97543	
♥ 832	
♦ 105	
♣ 972	
♠ A82	♠ 6
♥ 10975	♥ A6
♦ KJ73	♦ A964
♣ J4	♣ KQ10653
♠ KQJ10	
♥ KQJ4	
♦ Q82	
♣ A8	

*In the 8-pair final of the 2022 Polish national team trials, a former Spingold winner sitting West chose to bid 3♣, languishing there. None of the other three tables in the event managed to reach the worthwhile 5♣/♦ contracts.*

3. IMPs. N-S Vul. As North you hold  
♠AKQ82 ♥10653 ♦AK ♣Q9.

East	South	West	North
Pass	1♦ <sup>1</sup>	4♥	?

1. 3<sup>+</sup>♦'s, denies balanced 15-17, balanced 20-21, or any 22<sup>+</sup>

a. What do you bid?

b. If you dbl, what do you bid if Opener rebids 4NT?

a. Bid	Panelists	Score
Dbl	9	5
5♠	4	3
4♠	3	1

b. Bid	Panelists	Score
5♥	5	5
5♠	1	5
5NT	3	3
6♦	4	3
5♦	1	1
5♣	1	1
Pass	1	0

**The panel identified no alternatives apart from bidding spades or Dbl. I concur – nothing else is remotely viable. Before turning to the slender majority's choice of Dbl, let's see if the spade bidders' arguments are persuasive:**

**Hornby:** 4♠, accepting the transfer.

**Stark:** 4♠. Wimpy. Feels like I need to bid 5♠.

**Treble:** 4♠ only. Pre-empts work.

**Have the 4♠ bidders done sufficient justice to a hand that has 18 prime HCPs with nothing wasted in the adversary's suit (contrast this to the hand held in Problem 1)? I think not. Agreeing with me are the 5♠ bidders:**

**Bishop:** 5♠. Double, which isn't for penalties, wouldn't be one of our choices since even down three for +500 will not in any way compensate for +1370 or maybe even +2210. We know our partner has the ♣AJ (or AK) to even get him even close to his opening bid conditions.

**The doublers are convinced that dbl at this level is**

**primarily "card-showing" and not penalties. I agree: it simply declares our side's "ownership" of the hand and denies the ability to take any other action that is clearer in terms of both direction and level.**

**Kimelman:** 5♠. I think this is natural and forcing. **What makes you so sure that it is forcing? What would you do with say 7+ solidish spades, two little hearts, and the minors you hold? Agreeing with me:**

**Lindop:** 5♠. Partner did open the bidding and I have 18 working high-card points plus 1 length point for the five-card spade suit ... enough to put us in the slam zone. I expect partner has heart shortness, but it won't hurt to check. 5♠ should ask partner to bid a slam with a heart control. It also gives us a chance of reaching a grand slam. Of course, my spade suit isn't that long. I'm banking on partner having at least some spade support given the likely heart shortness.

**Todd:** Dbl, 4♠, 5♠, 5♥ all have some merit. My first thought is that if I dbl, I am not really showing my strength. However 4♠ is also not enough. While it's not perfect, I think 5♠ gets across the nature of my hand and my strength.

**That's better, but what is he supposed to do with the hoped-for heart shortness? Or with inadequate spade support? Consider a prosaic ♠xx ♥Qx ♦QJxxx ♣AKJx or the like. Well, that was not very convincing. Let's see if the doublers can make a better case. Some consider only strength:**

**Cimon:** Too strong to just bid 4♠ and jumping to 6♠ is too unilateral.

**Hargreaves:** Since partner will rarely pass (his hearts are too short most of the time) I have to haul out the "hope you can do something good" dbl.

**Jacob:** The hand is too strong for 4♠.

**I agree with the need to weigh both strength and over-commitment to spades:**

**L'Ecuyer:** no choice really with such a big hand (4♠

is not enough and could be ridiculous facing short spades).

**Miles:** 4♠ doesn't do the hand justice; if we have a fit we very likely have a slam. If we don't have a spade fit, we may be in a silly spot, even going down with a making minor slam.

*Though it is admittedly unlikely, Opener may have a weak notrump. For the same reasons, he might just as well also have both minors with 1♠ and 2♥'s. In either case he will pass the double with alacrity, and then hope to beat it. So, if you double and opener does not pass, you need no longer hope he doesn't have those hand types (as do the 5♠ bidders) but focus on the happier prospect of more useful hand types. If opener bids 4♠ you will not know about heart shortness or control – but surely a raise to 5♠ will focus opener's attention on that question. If instead opener bids 4NT or higher you will be assured of hand type and near-certainty of heart shortness.*

*Turning to the second part of the problem, the panel's views were scattered – a problem-setter's delight but a host's nightmare to sift through! To begin with, one needs to accurately interpret Opener's 4NT rebid. Some thought it was natural, though on diametrically opposite poles of strength:*

**Cooper:** 4NT is natural when there's no suit agreement, it's a possible contract, no convention has been agreed to, and it's the first chance to suggest the notrump game. Opener on the dealing and on the bidding is unlikely to have 18 HCP, so some balanced minimum hand with A or K of ♥'s (...)

**Turner:** I think my partner would say 4NT is natural but denies a weak NT and I'd expect something like ♠Jxx ♥AQ ♦QJ10x ♣AKJx

*Might you have overlooked the opponents' vulnerability? With any balanced hand wouldn't Opener "take the money" and simply pass? Others suggest that it is Lebensohl-like, differentiating strength:*

**Kuz:** If our agreement is 4NT stronger than 5♣.

**Turner:** But if 4NT is meant to show a "good 5♣ bid" like ♠xx ♥- ♦QJ10xxx ♣AKJT<sub>x</sub>.

**Still others suggest what are improbable targets:**

**Kuz:** If 4NT is simply more clubs than diamonds.

*Are you really trying to cater to opener having five diamonds and six clubs? Surely there is a more useful interpretation to assign to 4NT? Most popular was the conclusion that it showed unequal minors. I endorse the entirety of the following view:*

**Hargreaves:** Over 4NT, I think we have a second 6-4 hand opposite, this time reversed so longer diamonds. I'd expect 5 clubs with 5-5 or 6-5. I am going to guess that he is 2=1 majors since with 1=2 he would often pass.

**Bishop:** With anything resembling a semi-balanced hand, Opener would likely be passing, so a conversion of the un-natural 4NT [usually even-length minors] is what we should do (...)

**Lindop:** If I did dbl and partner bid 4NT, presumably takeout for the minors (...)

**Miles:** What is 4NT? Can't be to play; partner is short in hearts and doesn't have running diamonds. Must be takeout for the minors.

**Are the arguments for the most popular second round action of 5♥ persuasive?**

**Bishop:** 5♥. Conversion of the un-natural 4NT is what we should do, but how to do it with our great hand is the question. Perhaps, with this being such an ugly development, we should have introduced spades somehow on the previous round.

*It is Opener's non-Pass of the Dbl, in conjunction with a rebid that bypassed 4♠, that serves as a de facto heart cuebid, almost certainly delivering heart shortness.*

**Jacob:** 5♥. I will correct a 6♣ bid to 6♦.

**What does Jacob's "correction" sequence connote?**

*Although unstated by him, my guess is that it's a choice between 6♦ and 6♠ rather than some hand with murky grand slam ambitions. Far from sure of what such sequence may signify is:*

**Todd:** 5♥. Partner has denied spades I think. So if he has three, he should maybe try 5♠. Maybe this is a dream on my part. But if he doesn't, I will convert 6♣ to 6♦.

**More certain than Todd as to what Opener's 5♠ would signify is:**

**L'Ecuyer:** 5♥. I like my hand even though we have no clear fit yet. I am trying to bid the right strain or 7♦ if ever this the right spot. I will correct 6♣ to 6♦ and will bid 6♥ over 5♠ (I would then expect 3055).

*Wouldn't Opener rebid 5♣ with that pattern? I would expect 3064 instead. But L'Ecuyer's reasoning does identify a possible subtle inferential route to perhaps finding out if Opener might have this particular and most likely heart void (though not 1075 and perhaps not 2065) and hence suitability for a grand slam. Since opener will have at least three more diamonds than spades he's more likely to hold ♦J than ♠J - so I concur with L'Ecuyer that 7♦ is a better target than 7♠. But I say perhaps since Opener will rightly fear that, having by-passed 4♠ on his first rebid, a 5♠ bid here would be interpreted as a cuebid rather than natural - indeed, I am persuaded that this should be the case.*

*Apart from L'Ecuyer, none of the 5♥ bidders makes any attempt to come to grips with whether to settle for a small slam or try to see if we should be reaching for the laurels of a grand slam. What about choices other than 5♥? Outliers were Pass (!), 5♣, and 5♦ -*

*for example:*

**Hornby:** Ask for an undo? If I was silly enough to have chosen that path [i.e. Double] I would bid 5♦ over 4NT.

**Some just gave up on further science and the grand slam, choosing 6♦:**

**Lindop (with Hargreaves):** We might miss a grand slam, but I don't know how to find out if partner has first-round heart control and enough fillers in the minor suits

**For suggestions on how to find out, see L'Ecuyer above or read on about 5♠.**

*One 6♦ bidder explicitly recognizes the distinct possibility that a grand slam beckons, but then makes no attempt to explore for it:*

**Miles:** My hand is getting very good. Even ♠xx ♥A ♦QJxxxx ♣AKxx is a very good grand slam.

*5NT drew the same number of votes as 6♦ - but I'm might not persuaded by the arguments its proponents advance,*

**Cimon:** With 5NT I am asking opener to bid his longer minor and I deny first round control in hearts.

**Didn't 4NT already indicate a 2-card discrepancy between the minors?**

**Kimelman:** Will bid 5NT in case partner is 5-6 in the minors.

**Wouldn't he have rebid 5♣ instead of 4NT?**

**Treble:** 5NT I guess. If partner bids 6 of a minor, I'd have to try 6♠ as there could easily be a grand slam somewhere.

*Looks to me that you're virtually committing to a grand slam (unless poor partner guesses to pass when that's right). A final possibility drew only a single vote,*

**Turner:** 5♠. Safety bid.

*But isn't there much more to be said for this choice? Firstly, since responder chose Dbl over 4♠, Opener indubitably should interpret it as forcing (though not necessarily natural). It reveals grand slam ambitions (in a denomination to be revealed) without first round heart control (Why? With first-round heart control responder should cuebid 5♥ instead). Thirdly, after alerting opener to both his ambitions and the absence of first round heart control, it leaves just enough cooperative wriggle room to rebid 5NT (presumably showing the hoped-for ♥ void). Despite its paucity of support from the panel, I am persuaded that this is the soundest path to follow.*

The full deal:

♠ J94	♠ 53
♥ -	♥ AKQJ9842
♦ QJ9643	♦ 7
♣ AKJ7	♣ 32
♠ 1076	♠ AKQ82
♥ 7	♥ 10653
♦ 10862	♦ AK
♣ 108654	♣ Q9

*In a 2020 CSTC round robin match, at one table responder chose to immediately bid 5♠ which Opener raised to 6♠ concluding the auction. At the other table Responder chose to begin with Dbl, then over Opener's 4NT continued with 5♠, and finally over Opener's 5NT concluded a successful campaign with a jump to 7♦.*

4. IMPs. Both Vul. As West you hold

♠A4 ♥AJ108 ♦Q874 ♣K52.

**South West North East**

Pass 1NT<sup>1</sup> 3♠ 4♠<sup>2</sup>

Pass ?

1. 14-16 balanced (offshapes permitted)

2. No particular agreement although alternative bids

would have been: (a) Dbl = takeoutish; (b) 3NT = to play; (c) 4 minor = 5♥ and 5 or more in the minor; (d) 4xH or 5 minor = natural, to play; and (e) 4N = both minors, presumably at least 5-5

What do you bid?

Bid	Panelists	Score
5♠	4	10
5NT	3	8
5♦	2	6
5♣	1	6
5♥	4	4
4NT	2	2

*First things first: what would Opener's 4NT mean? Two lone voices in the wilderness think (conveniently hope?) it is artificial, forcing, and asking for clarification:*

**Hornby:** 4NT - Since partner didn't make any of the other available calls, I expect some kind of oddly shaped 2-suiter like 4-6 in the minors or round suits, or some really big hand missing a spade control. 4NT will allow partner to express that hand.

**Jacob:** 4NT; I hope that partner takes it as 2 places to play, and not as a possible contract. Partner could be 1-4-(5-3); 1-3-(5-4); 0-4-(5-4)...

*Shouldn't 4NT be reserved for a hand that is regressive with considerable ♠ values (e.g. AQ or KQ or KJ) facing a not unlikely void? Explicitly agreeing with me, notwithstanding a dubious parallel he draws:*

**Cooper:** Following up on Problem 3, 4NT should be natural here, too.

*Also explicitly agreeing:*

**Miles:** regressing with 4NT holding a minimum in high cards (but with potential useful controls)?

**Todd:** If 4NT was two places I would bid that, but I'm betting 4NT is sort of natural.

**Turner:** What I want to bid is “4NT ... tell me what you have”, but I think it is probably should be natural here.

*With a natural/regressive 4NT precluded from the slate of candidates, the panel had to make a choice that largely depended on degree of optimism. Speaking for the slight majority that “went low”:*

**Cooper (both Kimelman and Turner also expect a void):** I have a minimum. There’s a fair chance my ♠A is wasted facing a void, because responder could have doubled with, say, 1444.

*Fine, if you’re pessimistic and decide that you don’t have in your quiver a “4NT pick a suit” arrow, what should you bid? Venting exasperation are:*

**Bishop:** we should also be mentally listing possible replacements as a partner for the next event ... one who won’t spring undiscussed 4-level cuebids upon us:

**Miles:** Complete guess.

**Todd:** Any bid is just a random guess.

*That may be, but you are obliged to take a stab. A 2:1 majority takes a stab with the higher-ranking 4-card suit. Can they persuade us?*

**Stark:** Feels like Stayman to me. We might get blown out of a heart slam but I can’t bid 6♥ here, can I?

*With the exception of 0-4-(54)’s that cannot stomach defending 3♠ doubled, surely “Stayman” hands would start with Dbl?*

**Todd:** I guess I bid 5♥ and fold my tent. Certainly not a bidding contest bid.

*Not much there. Offering much more meat on the bone is this 5♥ bidder:*

**Turner:** My hand is subminimum in context, and I don’t want to introduce diamonds on Qxxx when I could have AKxxx next time. We likely belong in six of a minor, and the best way to get there is to bid 5♥, since his re-cue of 5♠ will say “try something else”, at which point I can bid a cheerful 6♦. And if he has four hearts but was unwilling to risk a pass of 3♠ doubled, 5♥ will be just what he wants to hear (then 5♠-6♦-6♥-Pass).

*Well articulated, but I’m not sold: firstly 1NT has equal chances of encompassing five hearts as it does five diamonds; secondly, responder won’t have four hearts unless he’s specifically 04(54) or perhaps 04(63) whereas he’ll have many more shapes when he holds only three hearts; and thirdly, if you suspect that you belong in six of a minor how does a non-forcing 5♥ help to get us there? The optimists may be equally divided between 5♠ and 5NT, with uncertainty as to the difference between these choices, but I agree with the comfort they draw that both alternatives offer a choice of suit contracts:*

**Cimon:** 5♠. I think he has either strong suit with a very good hand or some strong (54). I have support for his suit(s) and all my cards should work.

**Hargreaves:** I bid 5NT, “pick a slam”. Side question: what is the difference between 5♠ and 5NT? If I know, and if the difference is the ♠A, I might choose 5♠ but I don’t (not, at any event, with my hypothetical partner).

*Excellent question – two panelists are moderately confident they know the answer,*

**L’Ecuyer:** 5NT. 4♠ sounds like 3-suited with short spades. I like some things in my hand but I don’t think this is enough for 5♠ which to me would be better.

**Lindop:** 5NT. Pick a slam. (...) I suppose I could bid 5♠ rather than 5NT, but I think that would be even more encouraging and I do have a minimum after all.

*The burden of this partnership’s stated agreements is such that 4♠ must carry a wider range of hands than only 3-suited short – see Cimon’s assessment above. As to the nuance to be drawn between 5♠ and 5NT, it*

*is excellent fodder for any ambitious partnership to chew on. In this instance (i.e. narrow strength range, known-to-be-balanced, already neither regressed with 4NT nor made a minimum suit), I would be inclined to agree with Hargreaves' interpretation of ♠A instead of L'Ecuyer's and Lindop's "better hand". Why? The former is more useful (in case responder harbours grand slam ambitions) whereas the latter amounts to splitting hairs in describing what is already conveyed as an excellent "all cards working" 1NT opening bid.*

#### The full hand:

♠ K10987532	
♥ 65	
♦ 9	
♣ 109	
♠ A4	♠ Q
♥ AJT8	♥ Q72
♦ Q874	♦ AK1062
♣ K52	♣ AJ83
♠ J6	
♥ K943	
♦ J53	
♣ Q764	

*In the quarterfinals of the 2022 CNTC Flight A West "went low" with 5♦, failing to capitalize on responder's enterprising 4♠ call when the ♥K turned out to be onside. At the other table, after a similar start responder chose to make a negative Dbl and then passed opener's 4♥ rebid.*

5. IMPs. E-W vul. As West you hold

♠982 ♥KQ92 ♦A976 ♣83

North	East	South	West
1♣ <sup>1</sup>	1♦ <sup>2</sup>	1♥	2♣ <sup>3</sup>
3♣	Pass	Pass	?

1. 3<sup>+</sup>clubs, denies balanced 15-17, balanced 20-21, or any 22<sup>+</sup>.
2. By stylistic agreement, might be only a 4-card suit if the following conditions are all met: (a) inadequate support for either Major to justify a take-out double; (b) due to absence of ♣ stopper or inadequate strength, inability to overcall 1NT; (c) 13<sup>+</sup> HCP's; and (d) at least

KJxx in diamonds.

3. Any limit raise – since 1♥ could be only four hearts hence 2♥ would have been natural rather than stronger cuebid. 3♣ instead of 2♣ would have been a so-called "mixed raise" (i.e. 4+ diamonds and app. 7-9 HCP's). 2NT instead of 2♣ would have been natural.

- Do you agree with 2♣?
- What do you bid?

Bid	Panelists	Score
No	7	5
Yes	9	4
Pass	10	5
3♦	5	3
Dbl	1	3

*The panel's opinion was evenly divided on the merits of 2♣. Reasons for not liking it centred on a preference for a "mixed" raise, judging to be not too strong for that:*

**Bishop (echoed by Jacob):** No; would have bid a solid 3♣ (...) have found from experience that when you have a 'mixed' raise available and don't take advantage of it being in your repertoire, then you oft-times paint yourself into a corner later.

**Cooper (with Lindop in agreement):** Looks like a mixed raise from the get-go.

*A perceptive observation about the mixed raise preference is offered by:*

**Kimelman (echoed by Jacob and Lindop):** No. I prefer a mixed raise with this hand. An added feature of this bid is that it takes away a 3♣ bid by LHO.

*The slender majority approving the 2♣ cuebid was either silent about its reasons or explicitly thought that the "mixed raise" option would be a mis-description:*

**Cimon:** (...) the hand is too flat to bid 3♣.

**Miles:** I'd like to be a touch weaker in high cards and shapelier to make a mixed raise, the purpose of which is to get your side competing to the 3-level right away.

**Turner:** (...) surely a limit raise delivers four trumps or extra values.

*Reflecting the nearly even split in votes, both sides of the debate make sense. At the table I was a 2♣ bidder but Kimelman's reasoning now tilts me the other way. Turning to the second question, the decided majority of the panel plumped for pass on the grounds that they had already accurately described their hand and hence should respect overcaller's decision not to compete. The minority acted since they thought they were forced to do so (and hence overcaller's pass was encouraging):*

**Cimon:** I am forced to the 3-level unless I have only 3 diamonds and I think my partner overcalled on a 4-card suit.

*Is this workable? If overcaller has no certainty as to whether his pass is forcing he is robbed of the additional flexibility that is a forcing interpretation's principal selling point, as pointed out by:*

**Kuz:** I promised partner we will compete to 3-level. And I have no extras. Partner bidding 3♦ in front of me is the weakest action.

**Pithily summing up for the majority are:**

**Hargreaves:** I have no idea why I'd bid again. How many times do I need to show a flat 9 count with a fit?

**Jacob:** Pass. Balanced hand with good defense. Partner did not show any interest in going further.

*The only panelist to touch on another important argument in support of pass (possibly since he*

*recognized the hand where he learned to regret his 3♦ rebid?) is:*

**L'Ecuyer:** My hearts are likely to be working but if they are working then I will start worrying about spades which they might balance with on the way to 4♣.

*I side with the "non-forcing" camp, and then I'm a passer as L'Ecuyer's concern about spades is a bitter fruit of experience that trumps my possession of an "extra" diamond. The full hand:*

♠ Q1076	♠ J53
♥ -	♥ A743
♦ 5	♦ KQ1083
♣ AKQ109765	♣ J
♠ 982	♠ AK4
♥ KQ92	♥ J10865
♦ A976	♦ J42
♣ 83	♣ 42

*In the quarterfinals of the 2022 CNTC Flight A West chose to bid 3♦, allowing opener to volunteer 3♠ to show both his extra playing strength and where he needed help, which in turn incited responder to conclude proceedings with 5♣. Indeed, 6♣ is a reasonable undertaking and, as the cards lie, makeable.*



## The Humour of George S. Kaufman

After an exasperating session for George, his partner stood and announced he was going to the men's room.

"Fine," Kaufman spat, "this is the first time this afternoon I'll know what you have in your hand."

# PANELIST ANSWERS

Name	Hand 1		Hand 2		Hand 3		Hand 4		Hand 5		Total
	Bid	Score	Bid	Score	Bid	Score	Bid	Score	Bid	Score	
Ron Bishop	4♥	3	3♦	5	5♠/5♥	8	5♠	10	no/pass	10	36
Francine Cimon	Pass	10	3♣	6	Dbl/5NT	8	5♠	10	yes/3♦	7	41
Stephen Cooper	Pass	10	3♠	10	Dbl/pass	5	5♥	4	yes/3♦	7	36
Mike Hargreaves	Pass	10	3♣	6	Dbl/6♦*	8	5NT	8	no/pass	10	42
Roy Hornby	Pass	10	3♦	5	4♠/5♦	2	4NT	2	yes/dbl	8	27
Dan Jacob	Pass	10	3♠	10	Dbl/5♥	10	4NT	2	no/pass	10	42
Bob Kuz	Pass	10	3♠	10	Dbl/6♦	6	5♠	10	no/3♦	8	44
<b>Nick L'Ecuyer</b>	<b>Pass</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3♠</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>Dbl/5♥</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5NT</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>yes/pass</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>47</b>
Neil Kimelman	Pass	10	3♦	5	5♠/5NT	6	5♦	6	no/3♦	8	35
David Lindop	Pass	10	3♠	10	5♠/6♦	6	5NT	8	no/3♦	8	42
Danny Miles	4♥	3	3♦	5	Dbl/6♦	8	5♣	6	yes/pass	9	31
Andy Stark	Pass	10	4♦	8	Dbl/5♥	6	5♥	4	yes/pass	9	37
Bob Todd	4♥	3	3♣	6	5♠/5♥	8	5♥	4	yes/pass	9	30
Bill Treble	Pass	10	3♠	10	4♠/5NT	4	5♦	6	yes/pass	9	39
David Turner	Pass	10	3♠	10	Dbl/5♠	10	5♥	4	no/pass	10	44
<b>David Willis</b>	<b>Pass</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3♠</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>Dbl/5NT</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5♠</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>yes/pass</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>47</b>



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# DECEMBER PROBLEMS

Host: Paul Thurston

Reader's solutions to be returned by Nov 12<sup>th</sup> to editor@cbf.ca

1. IMPs. Dealer: South, neither vul. As South, you hold:

♠942 ♥82 ♦A98 ♣AQ973.

West	North	East	South
			Pass
1♠	2♥	Pass	?

What is your call?

2. IMPs. Dealer: South, N-S vul. As North, you hold

♠J742 ♥QJ543 ♦3 ♣J72.

West	North	East	South
			1♦
Pass	1♥	Dbl	1♠
Pass	?		

What is your call?

3. Matchpoints. Dealer: South, both vul. As North, you hold: ♠AQJ107 ♥J83 ♦A9 ♣652.

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

What is your call?

4. IMPs. Dealer: South, neither vul. As North, you hold:

♠AJ6 ♥86532 ♦J ♣AKJ4.

West	North	East	South
			1♥
Pass	2NT <sup>1</sup>	3♦	Pass
Pass	?		

1. Jacoby Game forcing heart raise.

a) Does your favourite partnership assign any meaning to South's second round pass?

b) What is your call?

5. IMPs. Dealer: South, neither vul. As South you hold:

♠AQ84 ♥10 ♦AQ5 ♣KJ862.

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

What is your call?



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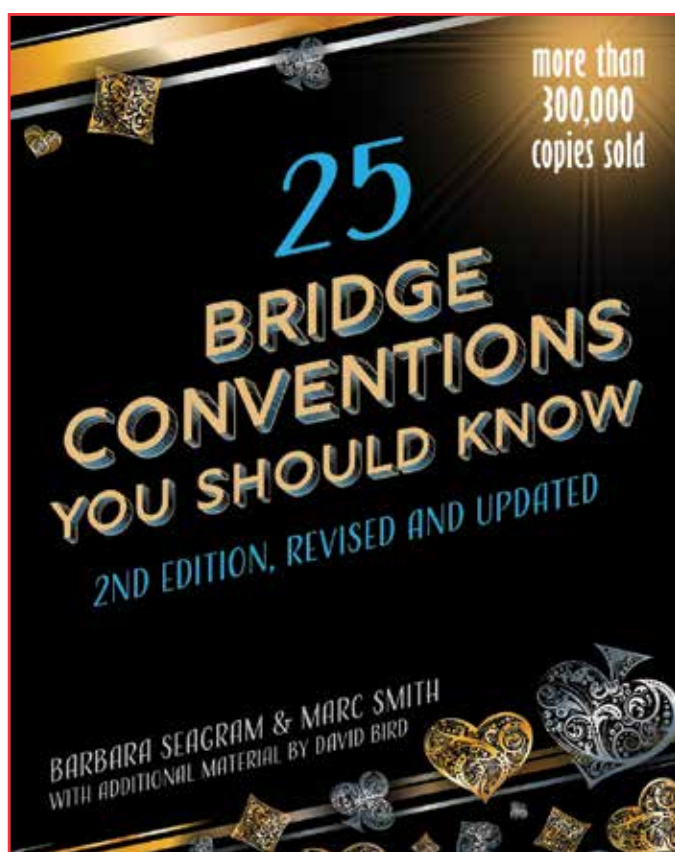


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