

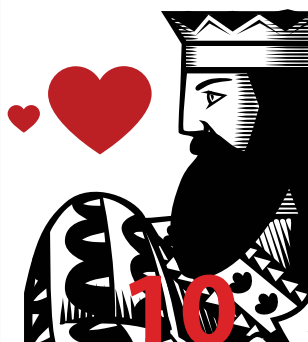
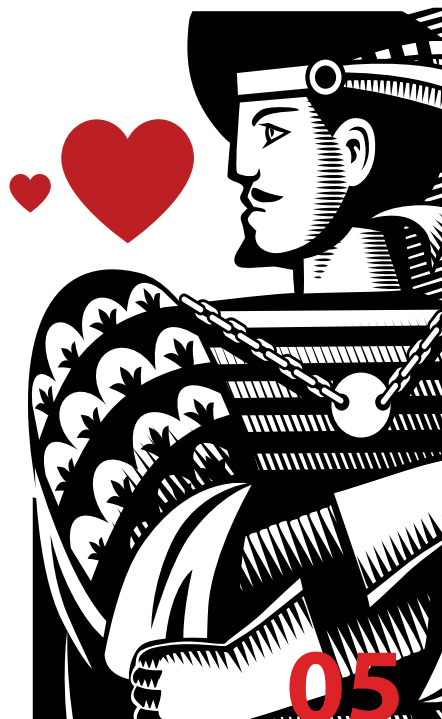
OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE CBF | FEBRUARY 2023

bridge *Canada*



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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EDITOR'S MESSAGE



Congrats go out to Canadians Pamela Nisbet and Brenda Bryant on winning the 2022 Whitehead Women's pair at the recent fall NABC in Phoenix!

REGIONAL & CANADIAN BRIDGE CHAMPIONSHIPS

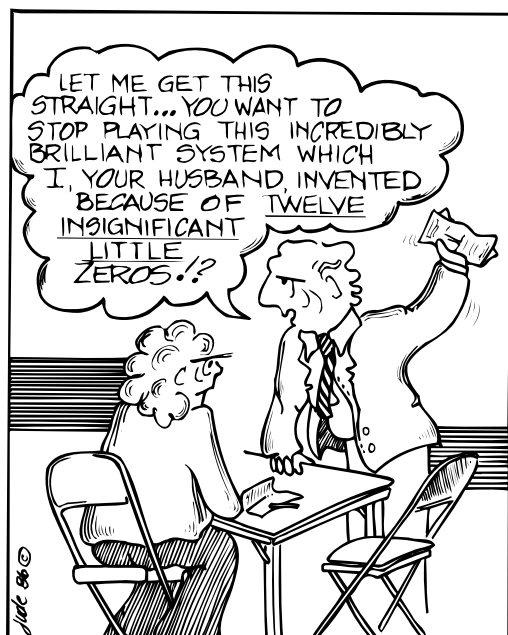
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Come and enjoy the competition against fellow Canadians. There are events for all levels of players, and tons of hospitality to boot in this fantastic location! Join us!

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Neil Kimelman

Bridge Canada Managing Editor



Mollo ON PLAY XXVI

Contract: 3NT by South at IMPs. Lead: ♥5, East plays the King. Plan the play.

♠ Q J 8 6 5 3
♥ 4
♦ A K 6 4
♣ A K

♠ 4
♥ A Q J 6
♦ Q 8 3
♣ J 10 9 8 2

Answer on page 7

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| Feb 4 | ACBL wide International fund game |
| Feb 13-19 | CBF Canada wide STaC |
| Feb 18 | CBF Online Game on BBO – 499er – 1:00 eastern
Open – 1:15 eastern |
| Mar 18 | CBF Online Game on BBO – 499er – 1:00 eastern
Open – 1:15 eastern |
| March 28 | (aft) ACBL wide charity game |
| April | Charity month at clubs |
| April 13 | Helen Shields Rookie Master Game at in person clubs |
| April 15 | CBF Online Game on BBO – 499er – 1:00 eastern
Open – 1:15 eastern |
| May 9-19 | Canadian Bridge Championships Niagara Falls |
| Aug 20-Sep 2 | World Team Championships Marrakech, Morocco |



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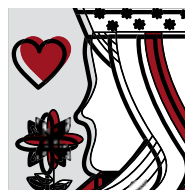
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HE WHO *Hesitates ...* and Karma



by Neil Kimelman

As experienced duplicate players we know a lot about hesitations. How we cannot take advantage of our partner's lengthy pause, but can do so if an opponent hesitates, but at our own risk. Having said that, an opponent cannot pause for the sole purpose of trying to throw you off. They must have a legitimate problem.

The most common situations occur during the bidding. However, a flexible mindset is needed. Let's say you are West and hear this bidding:

E-W Vul., IMPs.

West	North	East	South
1♥	2♠	Dbl	Pass ¹

1. Long hesitation during before passing.

What can South be thinking about? Many things. Maybe sacrificing. Maybe bidding game to make. Redouble to show values. Bidding a suit. We don't know, and the best we can do is ignore it during our decision making, but not forget about it completely, as their subsequent actions might make the reason evident.

Playing online, it is that much harder to deal with breaks in tempo. Maybe the player was talking to their spouse, answering the door, finishing their sandwich or just daydreaming. But sometimes there is a clue, if you are open to 'seeing' it.

Both Vul., South deals, IMPs.

♠ A103
♥ 109542
♦ 1097
♣ AJ

♠ K9752
♥ KQ
♦ K5
♣ K753

HE WHO HESITATES ... CONTINUED

You reach 4♠ on this auction:

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	1♠
Pass	2♠ ¹	Pass	4♠

1. 8-11 HCPs

West leads the ♥8. You play small from dummy and East inserts the six, with a low card being encouraging. E-W are professional players, with an aggressive bidding style. Plan the play.

Not exactly cold. I don't know the best line. I do think West started with heart shortness, probably a doubleton. So there is potential for 10 tricks if things are sitting right. Because of the danger of an uppercut, right or wrong, I led the ♠K to trick two. It went 4, 3, noticeable hesitation, Jack! What does that mean and what should you do at trick three?

Maybe East holds, QJx and wants me to finesse at trick three. Not sure. Maybe he is eating a sandwich. At trick four I finesse the spade 10, and RHO shows out pitching a nebulous diamond. Now what?

Just considering the cards, it looks like you have a good play for the contract if you can decide who has the ♦A. If it is East it then a diamond now will give you a good chance to land your contract. However if Wests holds this card then a heart is best, as East can't play a diamond through and lead a heart for a potential ruff. With two aces and short spades East may have entered the auction, so my first thought was to play West for this card. But what else do I know? East hesitated.

This is a common technique when a player knows they have a decision to make shortly. Rather than hesitate at the moment of truth, a player will often try and decide at an earlier trick, so that they do not give away their holdings.

This is legitimate before playing at trick one or at a different time, just as long as you say something like

'I want to consider the whole hand', or 'I don't have a problem to this trick'. But is taboo at other times. Yes, East's hesitation was unethical but as the opponent you can still profit from considering this information, albeit at your own risk. I decided East was thinking about whether to go up with the ace when a diamond was eventually led from dummy.

The full deal:

♠ A103	
♥ 109542	
♦ 1097	
♣ AJ	
♠ Q864	♠ J
♥ 83	♥ AJ76
♦ J32	♦ AQ864
♣ Q942	♣ 1086
♠ K9752	
♥ KQ	
♦ K5	
♣ K753	

Playing a diamond towards the King at trick four was the winning play, leaving the defence helpless on the actual lie of the cards. Maybe fate or Karma intervened, giving E-W this poor result.



Most bridge partners prefer consistency in their partners rather than brilliance.

Matthew Granovetter

What ...does this bid mean?

1.

North South

1♣ 1♠

2♦ 2♥¹

3♥ 3♠

Game forcing. Also playing Lebensohl.
What does 3♠ mean?

2.

North South

1♠ 3NT

4NT

What does 4NT mean?

Answers on page 23

QUIZ

INTERMEDIATE DECLARER PLAY

ANSWER ON PAGE 24

Contract: 4♠ West Leads: ♥2. Plan the play.

♠ K 8
♥ K 10 4
♦ Q J 7 6 5 4 2
♣ 4

♠ A 9 7 5 4 3 2
♥ -
♦ K 8
♣ A Q 9 3

MOLLO On Play XXVI

Contract: 3NT by South at IMPs. Lead: ♥5, East plays the King. Plan the play.

♠ Q J 8 6 5 3
♥ 4
♦ A K 6 4
♣ A K

♠ 10 2
♥ 10 8 7 5 2
♦ 10 5
♣ Q 7 6 3

♠ A K 9 7
♥ K 9 3
♦ J 9 7 2
♣ 5 4

♠ 4
♥ A Q J 6
♦ Q 8 3
♣ J 10 9 8 2

South's best strategy is to duck the first trick! If East continues hearts, as most Easts would, declarer can assure his contract: two winning hearts, discarding clubs from dummy, then the ♣J - and South must get at least three hearts, three diamonds and three clubs.

Even if East manages to find a shift at trick two, declarer has not lost any of their significant chances to make the contract.

The danger of winning the first tricks with hearts is that if the missing hearts are not 4-4, this will set up enough heart winners for the defense to defeat the contract, when they come on lead with the ♣Q.



BRIDGE BASICS



CONVENTIONAL RESPONSES after your side overcalls.

This is the 26th 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.

It is important to be able to effectively compete in various situations when the opponents start the bidding. We will address the most common situation - when partner overcalls at the one level.

Definitions first: The **bidder** is the overcaller, the partner of the overcaller is called the **advancer**. Since a one level overcall has a wide range, it is important to closely define advancers' bids. The following is a common structure that covers the majority of hand types that the advancer may hold:

New suit

A new suit is constructive and natural. If by a passed hand, it promises a fit or tolerance for the overcaller's suit, otherwise it is wiser to stay out of the auction with moderate values and no fit. If made by a non-passed hand then most partnerships play this bid as either a one round force or a game force.

Jump fits

The most common use of this bid is that a jump in a new suit shows a good fit for overcaller's suit and at least five cards in the bid suit. As far as values, many partnerships play constructive values, or about 7-11. Some partnerships require 5-4 shape, for others 5-3 or 6-3 is acceptable.

Splinters

Splinters are still playable, but the strength of the hand

needs to be adjusted. Since an overcall can be as light as 9-10 HCPs, a full opening bid is needed to force to game via a splinter bid.

Jacoby 2NT.

A common method is to play 2NT by the advancer, after partner has overcalled in a major, as a four card limit raise or better.

Preemptive jump raises

A double raise of opener's major.

Cue bid of opener's suit

With exactly three card support and at least a limit raise, the common approach is to cuebid the opponent's suit.

Redouble

If the responder (partner of the opening bidder) competes with a negative double, a redouble by advancer usually shows a hand with a high honour in partner's suit, but not the right type of hand to raise. Usually it means either fewer values, or only one or two spades.

Another possible bid is a jump in opener's suit. This often is used to show a mixed raise, maybe 7-9 points with defensive values.

Here are a few south hands, and suggested actions.

Auction 1, neither vul:

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

Example 1 – ♠xxx ♥Kxx ♦AQ10xx ♣xx

Bid 2♦. You have solid passed hand values, spade support, and excellent high card structure.

Example 2 – ♠x ♥Q1098xx ♦Kxx ♣Kxx

Pass. With no spade fit, it is too risky to bid 2♥. However if the opponents try to penalize 1♠, rescuing to 2♥ is very reasonable. (However see transfer responses below).

Example 3 – ♠Qxxx ♥xxx ♦KJxxx ♣x

Jump pre-emptively to 3♠.

Example 4 – ♠KQx ♥Q1098 ♦KQxx ♣Ax

This is a game forcing raise. Bid 2♣, and then jump to game to show a game forcing hand with exactly three card support.

Example 5 – ♠KQxx ♥K1098 ♦KQxx ♣x

Just good enough to splinter, bid 4♣. This bid is preferable to 2NT, as it is more descriptive.

More Advanced Conventions

The next couple of methods should only be considered by regular partnerships. Here is an overview of these methods.

Cappelletti over 1M - Dbl

This is a convention that can be used in the following two auctions:

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♠	Dbl	?

Or

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	1♣	1♠
Dbl	?		

Partner has either opened the bidding in a major, or overcalled with one, and East has made either a takeout double or negative double, respectively. Here is the response structure that can be used to describe a variety of hand types:

1NT – Usually 7-9 points. Transfer, showing a long club suit. Overcaller usually accepts the transfer. Advancer then either passes with something like ♠x ♥J10x ♦xx ♣KQ109xxx. However if the auction continues:

Example 6:

West	North	East	West
Pass	Pass	1♣	1♠
Dbl	1NT ¹	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♠		

1. Transfer to clubs.

North has shown 5-2 in clubs and spades, respectively, with 7-10. Maybe something like ♠Kx ♥Q10x ♦xxx ♣K109xx

2♣/♦ – Same structure as 1NT by advancer, except these bids are transfers, showing diamonds and hearts, respectively. In all auctions in which advancer bids 1NT, 2♣ or 2♦, a jump in the major by them, after the transfer has been accepted, shows the same shape but is now invitational.

2♥ – Good three card spade raise.

2♠ – poor three card raise.

Transfer responses by advancer

In this structure, all bids by advancer are transfers showing the next ranking suit, regardless of the auction. These methods are more complex but give advancer the ability to describe different hand types without the auction getting out of control.

Example 7: As north you hold ♠x ♥Q109xxx ♦xx ♣KQx.

West	North	East	West
Pass	Pass	1♣	1♠
Pass	2♦		

Playing a transfer system, North can bid 2♦, a transfer to 2♥, and then pass!

Next issue: More defensive conventions.



THE INTERMEDIATE Spot



BIDDING STRATEGIES 13

When your side overcalls

By Neil Kimelman

Editor's note: Once again the *Intermediate* and the *Bridge Basics* articles will examine the same area from different perspectives.

Bidding after your side makes a simple overcall is a complex area, with many variables/considerations that should affect your decision making. Over the next couple of articles I will try to explore all related issues.

There are two different type of simple (non-jump) overcalls:

One level overcalls

Two level (or higher) simple overcalls.

In addition, the form of scoring and when you overcall in an auction can affect hand/type.

Should you overcall?

As I wrote in my first book, *Improve Your Bidding Judgement*, there are three sound reasons to overcall:

- To suggest a lead.
- To compete to win the contract (or push the opponents higher), and
- To take away bidding spade from the opposition.

If you are not doing any of those things, do not overcall! All you are doing is giving the opponents valuable point and distributional information that will help them in the play. You may rethink entering the auction if the opponents seem to have found a fit at the two or three, but have not invited game.

Being penalized is a consideration, especially when playing against better opposition. One of the worse things for me is to be penalized when the other side cannot make a game contract. If you are vul vs not, the other side will first look at trying to penalize, especially if the trump suit isn't splitting well. Even neither side vulnerable situations can be dangerous to overcall:

Example 1: The bidding starts off, with neither vul:

West	North	East	South
	1♦	?	

You hold: ♠K97xx ♥Kxx ♦Axx ♣Jx

If you make the undisciplined decision to overcall with this bad hand

♠ AQJ10	♠ 63	♠ 84
♥ J74	♥ Q983	♥ A106
♦ 3	♦ Q9852	♦ KJ104
♣ Q9872	♣ K54	♣ A106
	♠ K9752	
	♥ K52	
	♦ A76	
	♣ J3	

E-W have a part score, and 1♠ doubled will likely go for -300 to -800.

ONE LEVEL OVERCALL

One level overcalls are awkward, as the range of hand types and HCPs is great. If you are suggesting a lead you may have as little as ♠AQJxx and out. But you could also have a 17 HCP hand.

Related to the question of when you have enough to act, what is the best choice: overcall, takeout double, jump in a suit or even pass may be right. The considerations in making these decisions was addressed in the **June 2021 Issue of Bridge Canada**. Having said that, I would like to address some of the common situations here:

Shortness in the opponent's suit, and 15- 18 HCPs

I recommend overcalling first, and then doubling. There are several reasons to do so:

- You get across that you have a long suit,
- Double gives your side a chance to penalize the opponents.
- You get the best chance of finding your best fit.
- You get across your values accurately.

Example 2: The bidding starts off, with neither vul:

West	North	East	South
	1♦	?	

As South you hold ♠AKxxx ♥Kxx ♦x ♣AKxx. Overcall 1♠.

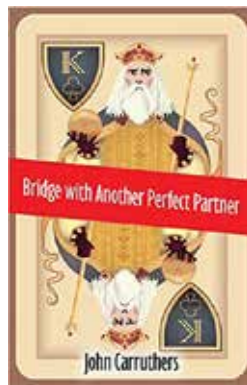
Let's say that West makes a preemptive raise to 3♦, and it goes pass, pass to you. Double. North now can accurately place the contract:

1. ♠x ♥QJxx ♦QJ98 ♣Jxxx. Here North will pass and expect a worthwhile penalty.
2. ♠x ♥J10xxx ♦xxx ♣xxxx. Bid 3♥. South should only raise with an exceptional hand, as they have already shown extra values. South, however, can bid game with something like ♠AKx ♥AKxx ♦x ♣KQ10xx.
3. ♠Qx ♥x ♦xxx ♣QJxxxxx. Bid a confident 5♣, and hope you cannot make six! Note that if South held the same hand with the ♥A instead of the ♥K, slam would be cold.
4. ♠xxx ♥Axx ♦xxxx ♣Qxx. A little light to raise to 3♠ last time, 4♠ is certainly justified now.

Next issue: Bidding after your side overcalls...continued.

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.



IBPA MASTER POINT PRESS BOOK OF THE YEAR

Bridge with Another Perfect Partner

From the publisher:

Bridge with a Perfect Partner, by P. F. Saunders, was published in 1976. Many read and delighted in Saunders' articles in Bridge Magazine (UK), and Saunders' character Wilson, according to the flyleaf of the book, is "... an austere character, whose scholarly discourses are enlivened by frequent flashes of mordant wit." The anonymous narrator comments, "He is very kind in explaining, when I go down in a contract, just how I could have made it and, when he goes down, just how my bidding misled him." We've all played with partners like that, though few of them have had Wilson's devastating, articulate wit. In this sequel, one of the world's top bridge journalists takes the reader through a brilliant series of deals, collected from tournaments all over the world. The style is highly reminiscent of Sanders' original and will give its readers just as much pleasure. From the book:

9. A Tiny Precaution

"We had an amazing deal at the tournament last week," Selby informed me after having returned from a distant event with hardware and cash. Unlike him, I had a life outside bridge and work. "May I give it to you as a single-dummy problem?" he asked.

"If you must," I replied. My experience of Selby's problems is that they are designed to showcase my deficiencies as a declarer or defender.



Dealer N. EW vul.

♠ A62
♥ AK103
♦ Q543
♣ 76

♠ 5
♥ 7
♦ AK8762
♣ AK985

West	North	East	South
-	1♥	2♠	3♦
3♠	4♦	Pass	4NT
Pass	5♠	Pass	7♦
All Pass			

Selby set the stage. "I was South. Playing four-card majors and strong notrumps, I took a slight chance that North would not have three low clubs on the auction; or if he did, that his hearts might provide discards, or that I could organize some sort of squeeze. The opponents' spades appeared to be six-three, thus North rated to have three of them as well. With his eight, nine or ten red cards, that did not leave room for more than two clubs, perhaps fewer. I thought that keeping my club suit hidden in the auction might also play to my advantage."

"West leads the seven of spades. Over to you, maestro." Irony was not Selby's strong suit.

I could see at a glance that if the trumps were two-one, I could ruff two clubs in the dummy and discard one on a high heart. I'd still be okay if West had all three trumps, since dummy's queen of diamonds would be in an overruff position. I could, in that case, take the ace and king of diamonds before playing on clubs. It could not hurt to play a high diamond from hand to test the trump layout.

I said as much. "I win with the ace of spades and lead a diamond to the ace."

"I regret to say you are down one," Selby replied instantly, exaggerating his sadness slightly. "Usually, you go down a little more slowly than that. Look at the full deal..."

♠ A62		
♥ AK103		
♦ Q543		
♣ 76		
♠ 987	♠ KQJ1043	
♥ Q8652	♥ J94	
♦ -	♦ J109	
♣ QJ1043	♣ 2	
	♠ 5	
	♥ 7	
	♦ AK8762	
	♣ AK985	

"You can now see all 52 cards. Does that help?" Selby asked. I had to confess that it did not. "Not really," I answered. "I need to draw all the trumps to prevent East from trumping a club. Then I can play the top clubs and ruff one in the dummy, come back to hand with a spade ruff and run my diamonds. West will be forced to unguard hearts to keep a club winner, but East can then take over as guardian of the heart suit. It looks like the contract cannot be made."

"Perhaps it cannot be made by you," Selby retorted, "but I assure you it is cold."

I sighed. "Please explain," I said wearily.

"You had a glimpse of the truth when you mentioned the impossibility of a squeeze on West. You just got it backwards. It is indeed possible, even necessary to squeeze West. Watch: win the first trick with the ace of spades and ruff a spade. This is the key play of the deal. Then play the ace of diamonds, as you suggested, to test that layout. West shows out, discarding a spade, so you play a diamond to the queen, and ruff another spade. Cash the king of diamonds. Look what is about to happen..."

♠	-	♠	QJ10
♥	AK103	♥	J94
♦	54	♦	J
♣	76	♣	2
♠		♠	
♥	Q865	♥	
♦	-	♦	
♣	QJ104	♣	
♠	-	♠	
♥	7	♥	
♦	K8	♦	
♣	AK985	♣	

"West is to play to the sixth trick on the king of diamonds. If he discards a heart, three rounds of that suit sets up a long card in the dummy, with a club ruff as the entry. If he discards a club, one ruff sets up the suit with a heart ruff as the entry."

"You are correct – that is a fantastic deal."

"Declarer needs to take the precaution of trumping a spade at trick two. It is a move that cannot possibly cost and, as here, it reduces West's flexibility in discarding. It's very difficult for an ordinary player to see the necessity of the spade ruff at trick two but, without taking that precaution, the grand slam cannot be made," Selby expounded. "Then when trumps turn out to be three-zero, a second spade ruff is necessary as well. By ruffing two spades, you reduce West's ability to discard from that suit."

"There are other slightly different sequences of plays that are successful, but they all have in common ruffing dummy's two low spades and trump-squeezing West. Had you noticed that leading a low heart kills the grand slam?"

I had not. But at least I knew I'd been elevated to 'ordinary' in Selby's estimation.

Other Shortlisted Candidates

David Bird, **The Abbot's Senior Moment**

Master Point Press, Toronto, Feb. 8, 2022;

198pp, paperback and e-book, US\$19.95; ISBN 978-1-77140-249-1.

Hugh Darwen, **A Compendium of Double Dummy Problems: Double Dummy Bridge Problems from**

1896 to 2005, Master Point Press, Toronto, Oct. 22, 2021; 336pp, paperback and e-book, US\$39.95; ISBN 978-1-77140-244-6.

Allan DeSerpa, John Mohan and Richard Catero, **Pancakes and Waffles: Better Bidding by Simulation**,

Self-published, Dec. 2021; paperback and e-book, 197pp, US\$17.95; ISBN 978-1-68524265-7.

Mark Horton, **Misbid These Hands with Me**,

Master Point Press, Toronto, Nov. 15, 2021;

200pp, paperback and e-book, US\$19.95; ISBN 978-1-77140-068-8.



Ethan and Samantha are not speaking to each other after a terrible game, and are driving home from a distant bridge tournament. They pass by a field where there are many donkeys.

"Relatives of yours?" Ethan asks.

"Yes," Sam says. "In-laws."

the GREAT CANADIAN BIDDING CONTEST



FEBRUARY 2023 TGCBC

Host: Andy Stark

For Panelists, see page 36

Editor's note: Congrats to **Earle Fergusson**, top reader for February with a score of 49. Way to go Earle! Two panelists had perfect scores of 50, **David Grainger** and **Mike Hargreaves**. The April problems can be found later in this issue. Play along!

This month's contest was designed for the up-and-coming duplicate player. While the panel of experts generally found the problems relatively straight forward, I think the newer players might find some of the concepts eye-opening. So, let's jump in with a competitive decision:

1. IMPs. Dealer: West, both vul. As South, you hold
♠9653 ♥8 ♦AK76 ♣10742.

West	North	East	South
1♥	1♠	2♠	?

What is your call?

Call	Score	Panelists
4♦	10	8
3♦	9	7
3♥	8	3
4♠	7	2
3♠	6	
4♥	5	
Pass	1	

There are quite a few directions you could go here, and you would not be wrong, really, with any of those choices, because it all depends on the layout. You could blast to game in spades or raise spades gently to the 3-level or you could cuebid hearts—perhaps the strongest spade raise. Or you could direct

partner to the best opening lead AND raise spades, thus preparing partner to make the most informed decision. Garnering top marks:

Grainger (with Lebi): 4♦ as a fit jump. If that isn't allowed, 3♦ then 4♠. Need to get the lead director in and to let partner know we have some defence for when they bid 5♥, as we don't want him bidding 5♠ most of the time.

Notice they're bidding diamonds at some level!

Mackay (with L'Ecuyer and Bishop): 4♦. In competitive auctions such as this, jumps below game should be "fit-showing" and although lacking a fifth diamond, I can't think of anything better...we had best prepare the auction to give us a chance at higher levels to know what is right. The singleton heart; fourth trump; and primary diamonds argue for this approach.

Lindop (with Willis): 4♦. To get partner off to the best lead if the opponents do bid higher. I don't think a 4♥ splinter will help our side more than theirs. I also don't think a 3♥ cuebid – which is what my hand is probably worth – will put enough pressure on the opponents. The limit of the deal could be the three level for both sides, but I'm not going to wait around to find out.

Also exercising great foresight are the 3-level diamond bidders:

Hornby (with Zhou): 3♦. Competitive methods matter here, but this gets the lead director in and should promise support sufficient for the three level at all vul.

Marcinski: 3♦. The orthodoxy of never suppressing 4-card support is, in my mind, trumped here by the

imperative of ensuring that partner leads a diamond should we end up defending. Once I belatedly support spades (which I intend to do at the minimum level to which the opponents propel themselves), I will succeed in showing my approximate combined pointed suit length and strength.

Kuz: 3♦. Partner, please lead a diamond. I am probably bidding 4♠ over 4♥ unless partner doubles.

Jacob: 3♦. Intending to raise spades over the expected heart raise.

Cimon: 3♦. I want to direct the lead against a 5♥ contract. I will bid 4♠ over 4♥. But I know that bid might give time for East-West to find the proper level.

Miles: 3♦. Planning on following with 4♠ in just about every scenario. Let's make sure we do our best to beat 5♥.

Kimelman: 3♦. For me there is no choice; need to direct the lead in case we are on defence. I have a lot of success with this approach. Yes, 3♦ is ambiguous, but one thing is for sure: it is forcing and should be forcing even if by a passed hand! An expert partner will know I have either a good hand with diamonds, or a hand suggesting a diamond lead, and spade support.

While not getting in the explicit diamond lead request, if we end up on defence, the next two panelists do show some defensive strength with the 3♥ cuebid:

Todd: 3♥. This is a good problem. Obviously, I will bid 4♠ but what message do I want to send? An immediate 4♠ bid will keep everyone in the dark including partner. I hope to slow them down and play 4♠ suggesting values for my bidding. Another thought is to bid 3♦ but that can backfire if opponents bid 4♥ and partner competes to 5♦. In my partnerships, we play 2NT as a limit raise plus, which gives us more room than 3♥.

Thurston: 3♥. Stiff heart and an ace-king plus four trumps are worth a slight upgrade.

Wanting to bid diamonds but unable to pull the trigger:

Cooper: 4♠. What are our system agreements? I might bid 4♦ if it's fit showing, then subside over 4♥.

When we go out of our way to bid a new suit in a competitive auction, we are directing a lead, or we have our own suit and will potentially rebid it. So, with a bid of 3♦ or 4♦, we're not bidding diamonds for the sake of it—we have a reason. That reason is because we may have (perhaps should have) something of quality in the diamond suit, a suit headed by the AK or AQJ or KQ10. Since those cards are defensive oriented, we are implying that we can also defend 4♥ or 5♥, besides showing spade support. Hopefully partner will know what to do based on their hand.

In real life, Terrence Rego, a top Canadian player, and winner of the CBF online league, held these cards and blasted with 4♠. His LHO competed to 5♥, and partner, not completely informed, went on to 5♠ which was doubled and easily defeated. But if partner knows there is some defence in our hand, then partner may wish to pass out (or double) 4♥, which has no play on a diamond lead.

The jump to a new suit in competition is best played as fit-showing, so if you do not already have Fit-Showing Jumps on your convention card, I implore you to add them today. The bid should show nine of your cards: five in the suit you jump in and four in partner's suit. Granted, the problem hand has only four diamonds, but by bidding 4♦ you get in the lead, you get in the support, and you get in the message, "Hey partner, I have some defence!" It's the 3-4-1 special. If you are not comfortable with 4♦, you should at least bid 3♦. Help your pard. Saying it succinctly:

Turner: 4♦. Understrength, but will allow pard to figure out what to do over 4♥ if we should defend. Unfortunately, I think this will make partner's pass of 4♥ forcing. I'll double and hope for the best.

2. MPs. Dealer: North, neither vul. As South, you hold
 ♠AJ8 ♥K983 ♦AJ ♣J973.

West	North	East	South
-	Pass	1♣	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♣	Pass
Pass	Pass		

a) Do you agree with South's passes? If not, please explain.

b) What is your opening lead?

a)

Yes/No	Score	Panelists
Yes	2	16
No	0	4

b)

Lead	Score	Panelists
Any heart	8	17
♠8	8	
♠A	7	3
♦A	6	
Any club	3	

This hand came up on BBO in a matchpoint game. I held this hand and got a tie for top by passing throughout and leading a low heart. The robot declarer won with dummy's ace (while dropping the queen from hand) and proceeded to take 8 tricks in the club partial. Ho-hum. Tie for top just for sitting there and not giving anything away as the spade ace lead might or a trump lead would. First the passers:

Bishop: Yes to passing due to my sufficient defense against the current contract; fear of a 2♦ response to a delayed Takeout Double; plus, at the time of my second pass still having a 'live' partner (in case the opponents were bidding "just on their good looks")...and, also, at that time I still had an unlimited opponent sitting over

me as his initial 1♠ response had done little to limit his holding.

Marcinski: Yes to passing – particularly clear to avoid any stretching (such as 1NT or a shapeless Double) here because partner is a passed hand while LHO is not.

Lindop: Yes. South didn't really have any good alternatives.

L'Ecuyer (with Kimelman): Yes, I agree with the passes – if I were looking for a swing, I might have tried 1NT over 1♣.

Willis: Yes – not good enough to overcall NT initially. Partner has an opportunity to balance after 2♣ – Pass – Pass.

Getting active:

Cimon: No, I will double 1♣, because over 1NT or 2♣ I won't be able to enter the bidding and -90 over -50 or +110 at 2♥ is not very good.

Lebi (with Jacob and Balcombe similarly): No, I must enter the auction with a decent opening bid and not vulnerable; will likely be my last chance. The least of all evils bid is Double.

That's an awesome Canadian foursome and doubling 1♣ could work very well...but not on this day. Those that did double (or bid 1NT) in the BBO game got too high in a heart partial and as you shall soon see, the cards did not lie well for the declarers in hearts. Now on to the opening lead. First, the leaders of an ace:

Jacob: ♠A. Tough hand to lead from.

Zhou: ♠A. It seems I get endplayed at trick one and I do not really want to give away an important trick at trick one. The ♠A allows me to see dummy and make a defence plan accordingly such as maybe tap declarer. (**Miles** mentions the tap, too, but leads a low heart.)

The trump leaders:

Turner: ♣3. Never did this before, but the best hope seems to be finding RHO with four hearts and five clubs (or some such) and defending as passively as possible. Any club honour with partner will make this a passive lead, if not a big mistake.

Marcinski: Club. Very tough problem. The auction does not suggest that aggression is needed, and a search for a “safe” lead reveals no candidate without flaws. A ♥ lead has its attractions (and I expect will garner a majority of the Panel’s vote) in case we need to score tricks there before one or more losers gets discarded on dummy’s spades.

Zyggy nailed it on all accounts—it is a tough problem, and we hate plunking down unsupported aces as much as we despise underleading aces (except when it’s right!) Once again, Goren to the rescue. If you lead a heart—any heart—you will come to five tricks on this day, versus this opponent. Double dummy the best opening lead is the heart king because declarer has the stiff heart queen. As predicted by Zyggy, the rest of the panel leads a mundane heart:

Thurston (with Lebi): ♥3. Not thrilled with this lead but everything else looks worse.

Willis (with Grainger and Cimon): ♥3. Hate all leads but by process of elimination the trump lead does not look right and I don’t want to lead or underlead an ace particularly holding the jack. Whichever ♥ low card is our partnership agreement (3/5th or 4th best—4th best for me).



I think we’re all a little masochistic. Otherwise, why would we continue to play bridge?

Edwin Kanter

The full deal:

♠ K3	♠ Q96
♥ J654	♥ Q
♦ 97643	♦ 52
♣ 42	♣ AKQ10865
♠ 107542	♠ AJ8
♥ A1072	♥ K983
♦ KQ108	♦ AJ
♣ -	♣ J973

Granted, anyone who leads the top spade can survive if they do the right thing next. Now they need to play a spade to partner, get a diamond back, and give partner a ruff. So, the ♠A lead scores a bit higher than the trump lead which leads to an instant overtrick for declarer.

3. MPs. Dealer: South, both vul. As South, you hold:
♠10983 ♥KQ98 ♦AQ ♣KQ10.

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

What is your call?

Call	Score	Panelists
4♠	10	12
Pass	8	8

This is the type of problem that would never see the light of day in the Bridge World. In their master solvers club bidding contest, they like to have three or more potential calls. Here we have a ‘do we or don’t we’ proposition: do we drop ourselves in 3NT or bid the spade game? That’s a total of two calls. As you will see, we have a matchpoint decision.

Hornby: Pass. Clearly a trick question. (Willis also mentions the trap and bids 4♠.) If I bid 4♠ I may catch something like two spade losers and be off two round

suit aces, and if I pass 3NT partner puts down ♦Kx and I need to knock out both round suit aces. Nonetheless I'll try for the 9-trick game which may produce a tenth trick for a top as a side bonus.

Bishop: 4♠. Sticking with a lifelong belief that this auction truly was just asking the question, "Partner, do you have four spades?" The clearcut answer is YES. And...yes, we can see the conditions: *MatchPoints!* But hands with wasted diamonds [Kx or KJx] may give us timing problems without a trump suit. Also, playing with spades as trump may spare us the need for late guesses (or wild plays) in either or both round suits.

Lebi: Pass, hungry for MPs, despite the 4-4 spade fit.

Todd: 4♠s. Either Pass or 4♠ could work. I have prime values for both contracts. The problem is hands where partner has two or three diamonds, and they lead that suit. If we need to knock out spades that puts 3NT at risk. Notrump may score better but 4♠ gains when the field is there, and notrump plays worse.

Marcinski: Pass. Although I usually try this gambit only when I'm 4=3=3=3, this hand's location of values is such that I am persuaded to stray from this tendency, seduced by the strong ♦ doubleton, ♣10 and ♥ spots.

Thurston (with Balcombe similarly): 4♠. Not a hand to be a genius by masterminding a Pass. Partner showed interest in a spade contract, and I fit spades. Sometimes discipline overrules creativity.

Jacob: Pass. A balanced hand with all the cards outside the spade suit. If ten tricks are available in both contracts, then NT will score better.

Grainger: 4♠. Partner won't bid Stayman at MPs with 4333 shape, so we both have a doubleton (or perhaps partner a singleton heart). Most of the time 4♠ will take the extra trick we need for it to be right.

Cooper: Pass. Queens like notrump. Rabbi Hillel used to say, "And if not now, then when?"

Miles (with Cimon): 4♠. I'm a simple soul. May be too many aces to knock out in 3NT. There is no guarantee partner has extra strength, which would make 3NT more attractive at MPs, especially if their spades are Axxx or AKxx where we may make 3NT on power when spades break badly.

Zhou (with Kimelman): Pass. Not confident. Strong spots and bad spades do indicate notrump, but you could say the 1098 are strong touching honors or dummy hits with 4324 shape even with the ♦ Kx, then wait for next hand.

L'Ecuyer: 4♠. Slow hands with major suit fits do not tend to play better in notrump in my experience and I do have good spade pips. Here it probably hinges on partner's diamond holding (Kxx being the one that matters). Whether 4♠ or 3NT is right – why gamble? If I can make 9 in NT, I like my chances to take 10 in spades.

Lindop: Pass. I rarely do this, but there always has to be an exception. It's hard to construct a hand for partner where 4♠ is a lot better than 3NT, and there are many hands where 3NT will be a lot better contract.

Turner: 4♠. A little slow to gamble on 3NT at MPs where most of the field will be in spades I reckon. Some will be weak Notrumpers and mightn't have the 3NT option. I'd still be thinking at IMPs.

Tired of the back and forth of what to do on this hand? Me too! I'm exhausted. The rest of the panel votes for 4♠ so that call gets the top marks. However, put me down for passing 3NT. Like a shot! As others have mentioned, it's a matchpoint decision and if we declarers are all making ten tricks then those of us in notrump will matchpoint better. One fun thing that might happen in the play in 3NT is that the defenders might assume their partner has the 13th spade. We might get a side-eye glance when we show up with it.

4. IMPs. Dealer: South, neither vul. As South, you hold:
 ♠AQ84 ♥Q104 ♦AQ983 ♣7.

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

Call	Score	Panelists
2♥	10	19
Pass	5	1
3♦	4	

L'Ecuyer: 2♥. What is the problem may I ask?

Turner: 2♥: Unanimous? With 4=3=4=2 I'd let it go, since my chances of making 3♦ would be reduced if partner has only 4 hearts.

Lebi: 2♥. Sure to be a unanimous panel bid.

Bishop: Pass. *Do we have a reasonable chance for game and a good mechanism to get there?* With partner usually having 4 or 5 hearts and 3 to 5 or 6 diamonds and 10 points or less (limited to 9 likely if he has concentrated heart and diamond strength), then the answer must be NO... and we have already found a semblance of a fit (and being IMPs we don't have to worry about the difference between heart and diamond partscores (if both are making). AND, we are not even guaranteed a fit (ask yourself what partner might do with 1-4-2-6 with a bare minimum response with his values in hearts).

Ron is not wrong, but the 2♥ bidders offer valid reasons to go looking for the heart game:

Todd (with Grainger): 2♥. Why I bid spades instead of raising hearts the first time. This is a decent hand for hearts, and we often find a good heart game when partner has a medium strength hand with 5 or 6 hearts and limited values. They often get stuck taking a 2♦ preference when hearts is much better.

They make a good point—perhaps the hand is not a spade rebid after all, but an immediate rebid of 2♥.

Neil, for one, would have done just that:

Kimelman: 2♥. Hearts score better than diamonds. This bid is constructive, showing the equivalent of 14-16. With a better hand I would jump to 3♥. However, I would have bid 2♥ on my last turn. To me, this is better, and does not discourage a spade balance, with which I will know what to do!

Marcinski: 2♥. Non-forcing but constructive. Although chances for game may be slender, if there is a game it is 4♥, so the lure of a game bonus (albeit only non-vulnerable) is sufficiently seductive for me to risk getting us too high if a part-score proves to be our limit. After rebidding 2♥ Responder will be well-placed knowing that I am 4=3=5=1 or 4=3=6=0 with values that are above-minimum yet less than game-forcing. I am perhaps near a minimum for this action, but in deciding whether to press forward Responder can and should cater to this range of strength.

Thurston: 2♥. Assuming 2♦ is natural and weak, I'd take one last try for the brass ring – aka a game bonus, even if slightly devalued by being non-vulnerable.

Kuz: 2♥. A gentle try.

Hornby: 2♥. Shows this hand (sort of). A couple of HCPs short, but enough offence from a loser count perspective.

Cooper (with Balcombe similarly): 2♥. Slight overbid, but perfect shape description and game is possible at IMPs.

Cimon (with Willis similarly): 2♥. Very close to pass. I am showing shortness in clubs and a good hand. I will prefer to have a little more like the ♦J or the ♠J.

Lindop (with Miles, Mackay and Zhou similarly): 2♥. It's IMPs, so I think it's worth bidding out my pattern. Partner could easily have five hearts and enough to make game reasonable. If not, we should be okay in 3♦.

Danny Miles illustrated it best when he postulated

partner holding ♥KJxxx and ♦Kx(x). That's only 7 HCPs. Granted they are perfect cards, but what fillers! If partner makes a move over your 2♥ bid, and they should, boom—we're in game.

5) IMPs. Dealer: North, E-W vul. As South, you hold:
♠K8752 ♥87 ♦4 ♣Q9542

West	North	East	South
-	2♠	Pass	?

What is your call?

Call	Score	Panelists
4♠	10	10
3♥	9	1
3♠	9	1
4NT	9	3
5♠	8	4
6♠	8	1

This hand was used to illustrate Tip #22 in Ron Klinger's 100 Winning Bridge Tips which was published in 1989. Klinger wrote: "When the bidding has revealed that the opponents clearly have enough for game or a slam and that you have an excellent trump fit, be quick to make a psychic bid in order to mislead the opponents..."

I thought our illustrious and esteemed panel would put on their creative shoes and have at 'er. But no. To my surprise the majority voted for KISS, so 4♠ gets the top score. Just know I have deep respect for the creative class. Here's a smattering of reasons for the boring 4♠:

Grainger: 4♠. Completely automatic.

Turner: 4♠: They may be able to make 6 of a red suit even with spades 1-1, and any lower call may help them sort out which one. I think Paul Heitner said, "Nothing is

more effective in competition than a natural pre-empt." If they bid smoothly to 7♥ thereafter I might regret my choice.

Todd: 4♠. I could try a 2NT psych but that may get them to slam more easily. LHO may have a good but limited hand and may not know what to do. Even if they double, they have less room to make a tough decision. If they bid slam confidently after my 4♠ bid, I can decide what to do. I have been surprised how many times I get to play in 4♠ on these auctions.

L'Ecuyer: 4♠. I'm hoping to create a decision and a final contract resting at the 5 level. I will then take the push in spades until the cows come home (-500 is likely in 6♠). I never liked to bid 5M and push them into making slams and then dive. I will 3-step (4♠ 5♠ 6♠) hoping to get doubled along the way. There is a case to try 3♠ hoping to prevent a 4NT bid by LHO showing 2 places to play. Some "exotic" actions could work better than the "down the middle" 4♠. I guess I am getting older after all.

Re: the getting older comment, can you tell Nic and Zygy are partners?

Marcinski: 4♠. O to be young again! In my youth I would have been unable to resist whatever tactical psyche caught my fancy at that moment as all the necessary ingredients to try some larceny are present: (i) extreme fit, (ii) favourable vulnerability, and (iii) certainty that opponents can make at least game. Candidates that immediately spring to mind are 2NT, 3♣, 3♥, 3NT, and 4NT, each beckoning with a siren song of possibly pulling the wool over the opponents' eyes.

Alright. I've heard enough. Time to hear from the larcenous, the treacherous, and the downright insidious:

Cooper: 3♠. They seem to have a probable slam. I'd probably knee-jerk a raise to 4♠ at the table, but bidding 3♠ casts a cloud of ambiguity over their four-level actions. West might bid 4♥ with a wide range and then East would be reluctant to venture higher

with a bird in hand. Similarly, if West doubles and East has a strong 4♥ call, he's unlikely to venture the five level when West might be stretching. If I bid four, somebody will broach the five level and THAT might inspire a slam. I can reconsider saving later over slam if necessary, but would let them play game.

Lebi: 4NT. If that is a Blackwood bid, 6♠, if it not. The opponents have a near sure slam or even grand available. Gotta disrupt.

Balcombe: 4NT. Anything might work; a direct preempt is often best. A 3♣ bid might get us to a slam sacrifice with a double fit. Here, Blackwood gets them into doubling mode. That might be good or not. But it's fun!

Hornby: 4NT. Pre-emptive Blackwood intending to sign off in 5♠. It might work, you never know. I might as well find out whether a 6♠ sac is the percentage play. So many psyche options here, but the opps know that also. 4♠ is the obvious bid as the opps have to guess at the 5-level.

Simon: 5♠. West has a very, very good hand so what can I do to make life difficult to bid a small slam or maybe a grand slam? I think it depends on the character of my opponents. Some opponents will just bid the slam if I bid 5♠, because they don't like to be stolen from; some others will just double because they don't like to be pushed around.

Lindop: 5♠. 4♠ could be right – leaving the opponents room to stop below slam. 6♠ could be right – making the opponents guess at the seven level. However, I'll just follow "The Law" and compete to the level corresponding to the combined number of trumps. Of course, I reserve my right to change my mind, depending on how quickly and how confidently West bids a slam.

Willis: 5♠. All of 4♠, 4NT, 5♠, and 6♠ are in the running.

Other psyches such as 3♥ or 3♦ could be candidates as well. West likely has enough to bid over 4♠ and may have room to invite slam. We may have enough defense and shape to beat slam so 5♠ seems to leave

them the last guess while still giving them some choice.

A man after Ron Klinger's heart:

Kimelman: 3♥. I like being creative but remember that even in a spade contract we are likely going for -300 or less. Therefore, I would not bid something silly like 4♥. Even 3NT, all pass is likely -400. 4♠ might be the most effective bid.

Even Klinger suggests 3♥, "If you are prepared to be downright brazen, try a bid of 3♥, played as natural, strong, and forcing over a weak two. If fourth player doubles this, is it for takeout or penalties? Most partnerships will not have defined the situation. If doubled, you can retreat to 3NT first and ultimately 4♠."

To infinity and beyond:

Zhou: 6♠. Cannot really find a way to shut out the dynamite from the left, no matter what I do. They can use 3NT, 4NT, even 5NT and 5♠ to start to show a potential two suiter. Also, with non-defensive values in my and, the ♣Q is kind of only ¼ a trick with length, so the potential for defence is zero.

To wrap up, life is short: Eat the pie, sleep till noon, psyche those opps!



Most bridge partners prefer consistency in their partners rather than brilliance.

Matthew Granovetter

what

...does this bid mean?

1.

North South

1♣	1♠
2♦	2♥ ¹
3♥	3♠

Game forcing. Also playing Lebensohl.

What does 3♠ mean?

North has shown 16-21, with 5+ clubs, 4+ diamonds and a heart fragment. South has a good hand for 4th suit forcing, but has denied primary support in both minors, and a longer spade suit, as they could have bid 2♠ or 3♠.

The 3♠ bid is clearly slammish, as South did not simply bid 3NT to play, or 4NT as a natural, strong slam invite. Therefore the only hand that partner could have that makes any sense is one where they are at least 5-5 in the majors, and are cuebidding agreeing hearts. North should cue bid a minor. Now a good South should confirm this hand type by a simple 4♥ bid. Although not explicit, this bid is forcing, asking North either to bid key card, or continue cue bidding.

2.

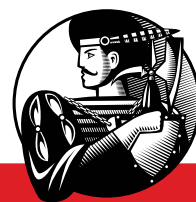
North South

1♠	3NT
4NT	

What does 4NT mean?

Assuming 3NT is natural then 4NT is a cumulative raise, asking South to bid slam with a maximum. A sophisticated partnership can also have the agreement that if South does accept the slam try, instead of simply bidding 6NT, they can respond as if this was Blackwood, too ensure they do not get to slam off two aces.

What if North wanted to ask for aces over 3NT? Again some partnership agreement would be helpful, (for example 4♣ could be keycard by partnership agreement). However without any type of agreement, North should bid a 2nd suit, and over any response by South, now bid 4NT. This should be keycard/ace ask.



Harold Ogust is chairing a bidding panel taking place after the evening session at a National Championship. It is now running into the wee hours and Harold says he will only take one more question. A lady raises her hand and is recognized. She says she doesn't have a bridge question but was wondering how many people would stay for a membership meeting. They need a quorum. Harold says that is not the kind of question he had in mind, but how many would stay? Three people raise their hands. Harold says, "O.K, one more question." A fellow raises his hand and says he heard if the bidding is opened 2NT and this is passed around to fourth seat, fourth seat should double no matter what he has. Is that true? **Jim Jacoby**, one of the panelists, says he would like to field this question. He says, "Anyone who would double 2NT in 4th seat no matter what he had, would also vote to attend the membership meeting."

PANEL'S ANSWERS

	HAND 1		HAND 2		HAND 3		HAND 4		HAND 5		TOTAL
	Bid	Score	Bid	Score	Bid	Score	Bid	Score	Bid	Score	
Keith Balcombe	4♠	7	no/♥3	8	4♠	10	2♥	10	4NT	9	44
Ron Bishop	4♦	10	yes/♥9	10	4♠	10	Pass	5	4♠	10	45
Francine Cimon	3♦	9	no/♥3	8	4♠	10	2♥	10	5♠	8	45
Stephen Cooper	4♦	10	yes/♥3	10	Pass	8	2♥	10	3♠	9	47
David Grainger	4♦	10	yes/♥3	10	4♠	10	2♥	10	4♠	10	50
Mike Hargreaves	4♦	10	yes/♥3	10	4♠	10	2♥	10	4♠	10	50
Ray Hornby	3♦	9	yes/♠A	9	Pass	8	2♥	10	4NT	9	45
Dan Jacob	3♦	9	no/♠A	7	Pass	8	2♥	10	4♠	10	44
Robert Lebi	3♦	9	no/♥3	8	Pass	8	2♥	10	4NT	9	44
Nick L'Ecyer	3♥	8	yes/♥3	10	4♠	10	2♥	10	4♠	10	48
Bob Kuz	3♦	9	yes/♥3	10	4♠	10	2♥	10	4♠	10	49
Neil Kimelman	3♦	9	yes/♥3	10	Pass	8	2♥	10	3♥	9	46
David Lindop	4♦	10	yes/♥3	10	Pass	8	2♥	10	5♠	8	46
Zyg Marcinski	3♦	9	yes/♣3	5	Pass	8	2♥	10	4♠	10	42
Steve Mackay	4♦	10	yes/♥3	10	4♠	10	2♥	10	5♠	8	48
Paul Thurston	3♥	8	yes/♥3	10	4♠	10	2♥	10	4♠	10	48
Bob Todd	3♥	8	yes/♥3	10	4♠	10	2♥	10	4♠	10	48
David Turner	4♦	10	yes/♣3	5	4♠	10	2♥	10	4♠	10	45
David Willis	4♦	10	yes/♥3	10	4♠	10	2♥	10	5♠	8	48
Kai Zhou	4♠	7	yes/♠A	9	Pass	8	2♥	10	6♠	8	42

QUIZ

INTERMEDIATE DECLARER PLAY // PROBLEM ON PAGE 7

Contract: 4♠. **Lead:** West leads the ♥2.
Plan the play.

♠ K8
♥ K104
♦ QJ76542
♣ 4

♠ Q
♥ J852
♦ A93
♣ KJ752

♠ J106
♥ AQ9763
♦ 10
♣ 1086

♠ A975432
♥ -
♦ K8
♣ AQ93

If spades are 2-2 you have 10 tricks by playing ace of clubs and ruffing a club: 7 spades, 1 diamond, 1 club and a club ruff. Plus you make if spades are 3-1 but the ♣K is doubleton or tripleton.

That is a decent line, but there is a better one. When it is not clear how many losers you have it is often wise to consider building tricks in a side suit. Lead the ♦K at trick two. What can the defense do? If they get their diamond ruff that is with a natural trump trick and you will actually make five. If they switch to trumps win with the ace and play on diamonds yourself. The ♠K, pulling the last trump, is a guaranteed entry to the good diamonds. If they lead another heart, ruff, cash the ♠A, and play on diamonds as before.

APRIL PROBLEMS

Host: Stephen Cooper

CBF members are invited to submit their answers to win cash prizes. If interested, please send your answers to editor@cbf.ca by March 15th.

1. IMPs. Dealer: West, N-S vul. As South, you hold
♠- ♥A9873 ♦742 ♣109843.

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♣	1♦	?

Note: These are your agreements:

- Double = Transfer to hearts, like a standard 1♥ call.
- 2♥ = Fit showing, 5+ hearts, forcing only to 3♣.
- 3♣ = Preemptive.

What is your call?

2. IMPs. Dealer: North, Both vul. As South, you hold
♠AK42 ♥65 ♦AKQJ963 ♣---

West	North	East	South
Pass	3♠	4♥	?

What is your call?

3. IMPs. Dealer: North, EW vul. As South, you hold:
♠J7 ♥A10653 ♦7532 ♣63.

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♣	?	

What is your call?

4. IMPs. Dealer: South, neither vul. As South, you hold:
♠J75 ♥KJ6 ♦AJ86 ♣A75.

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	1♦
3♠	Dbl ¹	Pass	?

1. Promises invitational or better values.

What is your call?

5. IMPs Dealer North. Neither vul. As South you hold
♠8653 ♥AK10432 ♦52 ♣J.

West	North	East	South
-	1♠	Pass	?

a) What is your call?

b) Might you stop short of game?



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Dianne Aves



Bridge teachers emphasize to their students the importance of counting — points, distribution, tricks, and so on. But it's hard to teach and even harder to learn, let alone assimilate to the point where counting becomes automatic as one is playing. This book introduces the concept of counting for newer players, and helps them to begin acquiring a skill that is critical to their becoming better players.

Dianne Aves (Waterloo, Ontario) is a retired math teacher who is now a professional bridge teacher.

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