

bridge *Canada*

See You There!
Niagara Falls 2023



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

AN INVITATION

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

Neil Kimelman
Bridge Canada Managing Editor

REGIONAL & CANADIAN BRIDGE CHAMPIONSHIPS

May 9 – 19, Niagara Falls.

The CBF Championship events will be running during the whole nine days. The Canadian Open Pairs Championship & CIPC do not require pre-registration (COPC does require pre-qualification or \$25 payment) and are open to CBF members. Both these events have cash prize awards.

The Regional events May 12th -19th are open to all players. We are featuring Gold Rush or Super Gold Rush events every day. You can find more information on our website at cbf.ca.

I would like to say a personal goodbye to an old friend and bridge partner, Dick Anderson, who passed away last Sunday. Dick (and Jan) welcomed me when I moved to Regina in 1990, and quickly introduced me to the rest of the local bridge community. For a number of years Dick and I were regular partners.

A longer obituary can be found on the CBF website, acknowledging Dick's amazing contributions to bridge, serving both on the CBF and ACBL Boards, with terms as president of both organizations. Jan, you and your family are in my heart.

Mollo

ON PLAY XXVI

Contract: 4 ♠ by South at IMPs.

♠ J 6 5
♥ K Q 3
♦ 9 6 5
♣ J 9 3 2

♠ A K 10 3 2
♥ A J 6 4
♦ J 4
♣ A K

The Bidding

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

Lead: ♦K. East encourages, wins the diamond continuation with the Ace and then leads the ♦10. Plan the Play.

Answers on page 12



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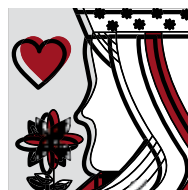
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The Listening Post 1

By Neil Kimelman

Listening Post (noun) Definition:

1. *Military.* A post or position, as in advance of a defensive line, established for the purpose of listening to detect the enemy's movements.
2. Any foreign country or city viewed as a source of intelligence about an enemy or rival nation or one that is a potential enemy.
3. Any concealed position maintained to obtain information.

Recently a hand was forwarded to me that got me thinking...before we go there let's see what your approach would be. Playing IMPs, you hold ♠753♥-♦K109543♣AJ74. While you are admiring your nice distributional hand, partner, with neither vulnerable, opens 1♦ and it goes double on your right. What do you bid?

I think 5♦ would be most popular choice. You expect to have a chance to make and make it difficult for the opponents to judge what to do. Other choices would be 2♠, a limit raise for diamonds, or even 3♣ jump fit, although to me, this last one seems a bit warped. If you do bid 5♦ the bidding would continue:

West	North	East	South
	1♦	Dbl	5♦
5♠	Pass	Pass	?

Now what? It seems that your strategy has misfired, and now you are the one doing the guessing. I don't know, anything could be right.

As sharp readers might glean from the title of this article, one of the contestants in this team match passed. Their logic was, 'I don't know how high to bid, as I do not know much about the other three hands. Instead I will listen, and have a better sense of the best option on the next round of bidding.' The bidding continued:

West	North	East	South
	1♦	Dbl	Pass
2♦	4♣	4♠	?

Wow did they learn a lot by passing!! E-W have a big major suit fit. Because the opponents have chosen spades, instead of a big heart fit, you know that partner is very short in spades, 0-1 for sure. At the table the bidding continued:

West	North	East	South
	1♦	Dbl	Pass
2♦	4♣	4♠	5♦
5♠	Pass	Pass	6♦
Pass	Pass	Dbl	All Pass

The full deal

♠	-	♠	AK1094
♥	102	♥	AQ64
♦	AQJ876	♦	2
♣	KQ1062	♣	985
♠	QJ862	♠	753
♥	KJ98753	♥	-
♦	-	♦	K109543
♣	3	♣	AJ74

Thirteen tricks for the taking. I suspect that South would have bid 7♦ (as would I) if the opponents competed to the six level. At the other table the bidding was uninspired:

West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♠	2♠
5♠	All Pass		

Not sure why West didn't bid 3♥ instead of 5♠. Again, West needs specific information, 'Partner do you have a heart fit?' I am equally as perplexed as to why North didn't take another call. 6♦, or even better, 6♣ would be sensible. On a diamond lead, E-W also took 13 tricks, and won 20 IMPs.

South's approach at table one is often called walking the dog...trying to disguise the playing strength of one's hand. This can work, but not often again expert opponents. They would normally 'smell a rat'. But the value of passing and gaining information is a neglected practice – everyone likes to bid. It is a great tool to have in your bidding toolbox, to be taken out when the situation and hand calls for it. Try it! A thanks to Ed Zaluski for sharing this deal.

Next issue: Listening Post II – a different application in using this effective tool.

what

...does this bid mean?

1. N-S Vul:

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

What does 3NT mean?

2. Both Vul:

North	South
1NT	2♥ ¹
2♠	4NT
5♥	

1. Spades

What does 5♥ mean?

Answers on page 30



Playing in Toronto I wind up playing against a good friend of mine's (Steve Aaron) mother. We wind up defending 3♦ which I might have doubled and we beat it a trick. I tell her I would have doubled her if she wasn't Stevie's mother.

Next hand I am in 4♠ and as my partner puts down the dummy he says: "Forget about Stevie's mother and make this hand."

Edwin Kanter



by Andy Stark

The Many Faces of 2NT

The bid of 2NT comes up a lot in any given session of bridge. Chances are you will bid 2NT yourself at least two or three times. It's fascinating how many different meanings the 2NT bid has, especially with a modern bidding approach, so let's break it down.

The 2NT Opening

To open the bidding with 2NT you should have a balanced hand with 20-21 HCPs. Sometimes you can shade it by a point or so, especially if you have a five-card suit. You should open 2NT with ♠A108 ♥K9 ♦KJ4 ♣AKJ97.

Also, think about making future bidding easier on your partner by opening 2NT with a six-card minor: ♠QJ3 ♥A4 ♦AKQ1043 ♣KJ.

THE
NEW PLAYER
Spot

The 2NT rebid by Opener

If a 1NT opening bid shows 15-17 HCPs and a 2NT opening bid shows 20-21 HCPs, you must use a 2NT rebid to show a balanced hand of 18-19 HCPs, which is the step in between. By opening your better minor and hearing a one-level major suit bid by partner, your jump to 2NT will deny four-card support. You may bypass a four-card spade suit if you wish. For example, ♠AJ87 ♥K103 ♦AJ106 ♣KQ.

Your bidding plan is to open 1♦ and rebid 2NT if partner responds with 1♥. If partner bids 1♠ then you can raise their spades to the 3- or 4-level, depending on how you like to bid.

The non-jump 2NT Overcall

Say the opponents open with a Weak 2 bid. Your 2NT overcall is the same as a 1NT overcall, showing 15-18 HCPs and a stopper or two in their suit. From there you can play all your favourite bells and whistles such as Stayman and Transfers. After 2♥ on your right, bid 2NT with ♠J93 ♥AJ9 ♦AK1076 ♣K2.

The jump 2NT overcall

This bid is commonly used as showing both minors, at least 5-5. It asks partner to bid their better or longer minor. Some duplicate players like it to show either a weak hand or a strong hand. So, with the in-between strength of (say) 11-14 HCPs, they might overcall 2♦ first, planning to bid clubs next. But world champion Jeff Meckstroth says you should show your shape as quickly as possible, irrespective of high card strength. If the opening bid is 1♥, bid 2NT with ♠Q5 ♥8 ♦AJ983 ♣KQ874.

The thinking is that if you bid diamonds first, you may not get a chance to show your clubs when the bidding next comes around to you. Get your hand type off your chest as soon as possible. If there is a club game or sacrifice to be made, you may need to get your club length in now.

Responder's 2NT

If the opening bid is 1♥ or 1♠ then Responder's 2NT is the Jacoby 2NT convention showing a game-forcing raise of opener's major. It promises 4+ card trump support. Most modern duplicate players know this convention and it should be added to your repertoire after Stayman and Transfers.

If the opening bid is 1♣ or 1♦, then Responder's 2NT is usually a natural invitational bid showing 11-12 HCPs. It denies a 4-card major and usually denies massive support for partner's minor. For example, if partner opens one of a minor, bid 2NT with ♠Q109 ♥K87 ♦J94 ♣AJ102.

Opener's non-jump 2NT rebid

If you open one of a major with a good 17-19 HCPs, and if responder bids 1NT, then you can rebid 2NT to show your strength. (If opener rebids 3NT it usually implies a 6-card major and offers responder a choice of game contracts.)

But sometimes opener's 2NT bid comes at their 3rd turn to bid. The sequence might go:

Opener	Responder
1♦	1♥
2♣	2♦
2NT	

This slightly delayed bid of 2NT usually shows a good 16 to a bad 18-point hand. With a good 18 or 19, Opener might have bid 3♣ (or 2NT) at their second turn. Since Responder's 2♦ bid shows 6-9 HCPs, the 2NT bid says, "Please bid game if you are at the top of your range."

Opener's delayed 2NT bid can come up in other sequences, and all show about 16-17 (18) points. For example:

Opener	Responder
1♥	1NT
2♣	2♦
2NT	

Balancing with 2NT

If the bidding starts with one of a suit on your left, pass, pass to you, then 2NT usually shows 19-21 balanced—almost the same as if you opened 2NT. You should have a stopper in LHO's suit of course.

If the bidding starts with a Weak 2 and goes pass, pass to you, then your 2NT balancing bid is balanced, about 14-16 HCPs. Partner is free to use Stayman and Transfers. Be careful here as a lot depends on your holding in opener's suit. If it is something you want to protect such as K10x or AQx then lean towards the 2NT bid. But if you hold Ax(x), then think about doubling.

Say your LHO opens with 2♥. If it comes around to you, double with the first hand and bid 2NT with the second.

♠ Q105	♠ Q1052
♥ A4	♥ KJ9
♦ KQ108	♦ KQ108
♣ A973	♣ A93

A holding of Ax in the opponent's suit is not a great stopper because once they knock out your ace in a notrump contract, you will be at their mercy.

Advancer's 2NT

The term 'Advancer' is applied to the partner of the Intervenor. To intervene is to double or overcall. Usually, the 2NT bid in this sequence is not a natural bid; it is usually a bid showing both minors, at least 4-4. Advancer will have some competitive values and is not interested in the unbid major. The sequence might go:

Opener	Intervenor	Responder	Advancer
1♥	Dbf	2♥	2NT

Advancer will have a hand resembling
♠J4 ♥983 ♦A1043 ♣KJ82.

Since the doubler is known to have support for spades, diamonds, and clubs, the bid of 2NT ensures the partnership finds their best minor fit. If Advancer were to double, instead of bidding 2NT, then it keeps spades in the picture—usually showing a 3-card spade suit. With a 4-card (or longer) spade suit, Advancer would just bid some number of spades.

Editor's note: Many partnerships still play 2NT in this sequence as natural, invitational values with a stopper in the opponent's suit.

That's a 2NT primer for now. Bridge being bridge, we're just getting started on uncovering the many faces of the 2NT bid.

QUIZ

INTERMEDIATE DECLARER PLAY

ANSWER ON PAGE 18

Contract: 6♥ West leads: ♥5 East follows.
Plan the play.

♠ -
♥ 10 8 6 2
♦ A 8 6 5
♣ K 9 7 5 2

♠ A Q 8 7
♥ A K Q J 9
♦ K 10 2
♣ Q

West	North	East	South
			1♥
2♠	4♥	Pass	4NT ¹
Pass	5♦ ²	Pass	6♥
All Pass			

1. Roman Key Card Blackwood
2. One key card

BRIDGE BASICS



This is the 27th 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.

BIDDING OVER PREEMPTS

It is important to be able to effectively compete in various situations when the opponents start the bidding with a preempt. Previously Bridge Canada articles have looked at this issue. Now we will change the perspective, by looking at specific conventions.

Fishbein – This is a convention created in the early 1960s by Harry Fishbein, where a double of a three level preempt is for penalties, and the next highest bid is an artificial takeout for the other suits.

The **Smith** convention is a variation of Fishbein, where 4♣ is the automatic takeout of all three level preempts.

Another variation is the **optional double** after a preempt on the three level, which promises a balanced hand with support for the other three unbid suits and some strength in the suit of the player preempting. The partner can bid with sufficient strength and length in any of the other three suits or bid 3NT, knowing that their combined holding contains stoppers in the preempted suit. On the other hand, the partner is given the opportunity to pass the double for penalty as in the *Fishbein convention*.

A last option employed rarely, is playing **3NT as a takeout bid**, instead of natural.

LEAPING MICHAELS

The most common method deployed by modern players to combat preempts is **Leaping Michaels**. The way this convention works over a weak two in a major is as follows:

- A jump to game is to play.
- A jump to four of a minor shows that minor, and the unbid major.
- A cuebid of the preemptive suit is asking partner to bid 3NT with a stopper in the weak two suit.
- 2NT and 3NT are natural bids.
- 4NT is for the minors.

This treatment can be extended to bidding over a weak two diamonds, and all three level preempts as well. However, in the latter case, the 'Leaping Michaels' bid is not really leaping. On the next page you'll find a chart to cover all opening preempts and the meaning of all direct overcall bids.

Preempt	Bids	Meaning	2♠	Double	Takeout
2♦	Double	Takeout		2NT	Natural, 15-18 HCPs.
	2 Major	Natural		3♣/♦	Natural
	2NT	Natural, about 15-18 HCPs.		3♥	Natural
	3♣	Natural		3♠	Asking partner to bid 3NT for a heart stopper.
	3♦	Both majors, at least 5-5, good hand.		3NT	To play, usually 19-22 HCPs.
	3 Major	Natural, with at least a six card suit, and about 17-20.		4♣	Clubs and hearts, at least 5-5.
	3NT	To play, usually 19-22 HCPs.		4♦	Diamonds and hearts, at least 5-5.
	4♣	Clubs and a major. 4♥ by partner is pass or correct.*		4♥	To play, strong hand expecting to make game.
	4♦	Both majors, at least 5-5, very strong hand.	3♣	4NT	Both minors, good hand.
	4♥/♠	To play, strong hand expecting to make game.		Double	Takeout, or a balanced hand with 20+ HCPs.
*4♦ can also be used to ask partner to bid their major.				3♦	Natural, with at least a six card suit, and an opening bid.
				3M	Natural, with at least a six card suit, and an opening bid.
2♥	Double	Takeout		3NT	To play, usually 16-19.
	2♠	Natural		4♣	Both majors.
	2NT	Natural, 15-18 HCPs.		4♦	Diamonds and a major. 4♥ by partner is pass or correct.
	3♣/♦	Natural		4♥/♠	To play, strong hand expecting to make game.
	3♥	Asking partner to bid 3NT for a heart stopper.			
	3♠	Natural, with at least a six card suit, and about 17-20.	3♦	Double	Takeout, or a balanced hand with 20+ HCPs.
	3NT	To play, usually 19-22 HCPs.		3M	Natural, with at least a six card suit, and an opening bid.
	4♣	Clubs and spades, at least 5-5.		3NT	To play, usually 16-19.
	4♦	Diamonds and spades, at least 5-5.		4♣	Clubs and a major. 4♥ by partner is pass or correct.
	4♠	To play, strong hand expecting to make game.		4♦	Both majors.
	4NT	Both minors, good hand.		4♥/♠	To play, strong hand expecting to make game.

MOLLO

On Play

Contract: 4♥ South at IMPs. The bidding:

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

Lead: ♦K. East encourages, wins the diamond continuation with the Ace and then leads the ♦10. Plan the Play.

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

South should ruff the 3rd trick low. There is a better chance of a 4-1 trump break than West leading from ♦Kx. Lead the ♠K at trick four. Assuming that holds, lead another high spade from your hand at trick five, the key play.

If spades are 3-2 there are no further problems. If the defender with four spades wins the 2nd spade, and leads another round of diamonds, declarer should discard from dummy and ruff with the ♠3, their last low trump in their hand.

Now attempt to cash two clubs and three hearts, and making the last two tricks on a cross-ruff. If instead the defender ducks the 2nd round of spades then declarer must guess what to do (you have no chance if the defender has 4-2-4-3 shape, as they can defeat the contract by holding up on the 2nd round of spades).

If declarer thinks that diamonds were originally 4-4 (as indicated by the carding) then South's best play against good opponents is again to cash two clubs and, hopefully, three hearts, continuing with a fourth heart to make the contract if all went well.

3♥	Double	Takeout, or a balanced hand with 20+ HCPs.
3♠		Natural, with at least a six card suit, and an opening bid.
3NT		To play, usually 16-19.
4♣		Clubs and spades, at least 5-5.
4♦		Diamonds and spades, at least 5-5.
4♠		To play, strong hand expecting to make game.
4NT		Both minors, good hand.
3♠	Double	Takeout, or a balanced hand with 20+ HCPs.
3NT		To play, usually 16-19.
4♣		Clubs and hearts, at least 5-5.
4♦		Diamonds and hearts, at least 5-5.
4♥		To play, strong hand expecting to make game.
4NT		Both minors, good hand.

Other Applications of Leaping Michaels

Q. Does Leaping Michael's apply to passout seat, when the preempt is followed by two passes?

A. Yes.

Q. Are there other situations where you can play Leaping Michael's?

A. Yes. The most common one is when the auctions starts with LHO opening a suit, partner passes, and RHO raises the suit to the two level (or three level!).

Ex 1: 1♥ Pass 2♥

Next issue: More defensive conventions.



BIDDING STRATEGIES 14

When their side preempts

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 the opponents is fraught with danger. There is less room to determine how high you should bid, or if you should bid at all! Bad breaks are lurking. If the preempt is on your right, then leftie may hold the 'goods' behind you.

Having said that there is a reward for using excellent judgement to determine which times you should enter the auction, and the best way to do so. Remember, all the other players in your seat likely have the same challenges, but many of them will not have read this article!

If you do end up declaring, the bidding often makes the hand an open book. Your odds have measurably increased on finding the best line of play, and avoiding ones where the bidding tells you will not work.

Here are some general tips to help guide your decision-making:

1. You don't preempt when the opponents have preempted first. Bidding over a preempt shows a good hand. Partner will expect it. Do not overcall 3♣ with 3♥ holding something like ♠xx ♥AQJxxx ♦Qxxx ♣x. Partner will play you for more.

2. Spots are important. A suit with K10987 is much, much more important to have as opposed to K8542.

3. There are good points and bad points. Q's and J's often do not live up to the 2 or 1 points you assign to them. Especially in the unbid suits or they are not part of a sequence. Compare

THE
INTERMEDIATE
Spot

these two hands: ♠xxx ♥Jxxx ♦Qxx ♣Kxx and ♠xxx ♥KQJx ♦xxx ♣xxx. The second hand is much better than the first one.

4. Plan the auction. This is especially true when considering overcalling in a suit or doubling for takeout. If you want to emphasize your suit, or you have extra values, it is often right to bid your suit first. If you only have one bid, it might be wiser to show support for all unbid suits.

5. Sometimes it is too dangerous to enter the auction. For example you hold ♠Qxx ♥AJxxx ♦xxx ♣AK. If the opponents open 2♠, 3♣ or 3♦ pass. Your suit isn't strong enough to bid. You can't double without better support for unbid suits, and 2NT is misguided. Pass and hope partner can balance.

6. Vulnerable vs not it is usually right to choose to bid 3NT instead of penalizing your opponents. Conversely, at other vulnerabilities the opposite is usually true. Especially when you are bidding game on minimum values.

7. When considering whether to declare notrump, your type of stopper in their suit is critical. Kx or Ax is bad. Axx, Kxx or even Qxxx is much better. The reason is that the preemptor may not have an outside entry to cash out the suit they have set up. Whereas if you are short, then the preemptor's partner is more than likely to have two, three or even four small. This is especially evident when they show support in the bidding. Conversely if they haven't raised, especially if they are known to be aggressive bidders, then they more than likely have shortness in their partner's suit.

Should you bid?

It is risk versus reward. Having said that your chances of scoring well improves dramatically when you have two suits, and you can show them.

In Bridge Basics 27, found elsewhere in this issue, talks about the convention known as Leaping Michaels which focuses on the overcaller having the ability to show two suits. This is key. Partner rates to have support for one of your suits. The odds of this go up dramatically after one opponent preempts showing 6+ cards in their suit.

What values do you need?

At one time the common wisdom was Leaping Michaels showed a strong hand, at least ♠AKxxx ♥x ♦KQ109x ♣Ax. Now more players are willing to shoot the dices with the same hand as above, without the ♣A.

Is this better?

Yes and no. Yes, as the less points are more common than stronger hands, thus higher frequency. However you may end up too high with less values. I tend to favour entering with both hand strengths. As in all bidding, the most important thing is to be on the same wavelength as your partner.

How should the advancer (partner of the overcaller) bid?

The three most likely type of auctions they will face can be generalized by:

2♥	Pass	Pass	?
2♥	2♠	Pass	?
2♥	4♣ ¹	Pass	?

1. Leaping Michaels, showing clubs and spades.

In auction a) the number of points needed to enter the auction are reduced. The more important feature is their holding in the bid suit. With three small extreme caution should be used. If partner does have values, then they have some length in preemptor's suit as they didn't bid a suit, or make a takeout double.

In auction b) the following guidelines are recommended. Raise to the three level is more of a courtesy raise showing 7-9 points.

- With 10-12 and support, advancer should bid game.
- With an opening bid or better, they should cue bid first, then raise, to get across their strength.

In auction c) you will take preference for the suit you can support, considering that 4♠ is game, whereas 4♣ is not. If you have a good hand, and think you may have a slam, you can cuebid the opponent's suit. Another option is to assign the meaning of 4♦ to mean I have a slam try in clubs (lower ranking of partner's two suits), and 4♥ to have the same meaning around the spade suit.

Next issue: Bidding over preempts quiz.



What Went Wrong?

by Paul Thurston

When a solid majority of the assembled online kibitzers castigate an expert player for making a losing play on defense, it's worth a look to see What Went Wrong – at least what was wrong in the view of those armchair critics!

Hand 1

Dealer North, N-S vul:

♠ QJ872
♥ QJ53
♦ J5
♣ 103

♠ K865
♥ 642
♦ Q2
♣ J742

♠ A1093
♥ AK987
♦ 103
♣ K9

♠ -
♥ 10
♦ AK98764
♣ AQ865

West	North	East	South
	Pass	1♥	5♦

All Pass

Opening lead: ♥2. East won the ♥K to shift to a low diamond – a perfect start for the defense! Declarer won the diamond in hand to cash the ♣A: 2, 3 and 9. Followed by a low club towards dummy: ♣J, 10 and King! That mopped up the intermediate clubs that South needed to get rid of to promote the rest of his cards in the suit and it was a mere formality to regain the lead and draw the last trump and claim eleven

THE
EXPERT
Spot

tricks. And to unloose the onslaught of critical arrows launched in West's direction: "What a rookie mistake".

"Hasn't West ever heard of Second Hand Low?" "One trick for West, one unattainable game bonus for South". And so on – but let's look a bit closer as I would judge West might have made the only winning play by rising with the ♣J to return his last trump to protect his partner's King of clubs from being ruffed away. King of clubs? Yes, as East-West were playing upside down count signals, East's play of the nine of clubs on the first round of the suit might well have been from ♣K9x to leave South with ♣AQxx and an eight-card diamond suit, holdings totally congruent with the massive leap to the five-level (a two-diamond overcall was ventured at the other table of this match) and the early play including East's possible count signal showing three clubs on the first round of clubs by playing his middle card in the suit. So from this seat, South more or less earned his swing by his bold bid and What Really Went wrong was the kibitzers' overly-hasty criticism of poor West!

Hand 2

Most bidding understandings result in the demise of the misbidders' final contract and an adverse swing suffered by their team – just not always! For this deal, a combination of slightly careless play at one table and serendipitous bidding at the other "earned" 10 IMPs. Let's see What started out Wrong at one table but ended being very Right with exactly the opposite occurring at the other table.

Dealer: East. East-West vulnerable. Table One Bidding:

♠ AJ107	
♥ K86	
♦ 732	
♣ J64	
♠ Q86	♠ 53
♥ J73	♥ A52
♦ 4	♦ KJ9865
♣ A109753	♣ 82
♠ K942	
♥ Q1094	
♦ AQ10	
♣ KQ	

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

Opening lead: 8♣.

Due to not having a weak two-diamond opening in his arsenal, East passed and North-South, using a weak notrump with four-card major openings system, brushed aside the mild interference to reach a perfectly good spade game with natural bidding. The play looked a bit like declarer had a train/bus/plane to catch as West won the opening club lead to return the suit to dummy's remaining high honour. Low spade to the ace for the club Jack that East ruffed with his remaining small trump and dummy overruffed. The ♠K followed by a heart to the King and ace and the low heart return from East left N-S with but nine winners and -50 on the score sheet.

Table Two Bidding:

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

Ah, yes the bidding! At least temporarily, it seemed this North-South was also headed for the challenging contract of four spades after East's weak two-bid and South's natural and strong overcall triggered a Stayman response from North. Enter the above-mentioned bidding misunderstanding as North-South were not on the same wavelength for what bids meant after the routine start. For North: his partner's three diamond answer denied a four-card major while South thought he was showing one or both four-card majors in line with Puppet Stayman protocols! It could happen to anyone – maybe! (Not to me as I decline the dubious pleasure of playing Puppet Stayman in any sequence!) No problem as South made short work of the play in three notrump by winning the club lead in hand to immediately play the non-preempter for the spade Queen: King and a second spade for a finesse and two diamond finesses later, South had a comfortable haul of four spade winners, one heart, three diamonds and two clubs – easy game, yes?

Hand 3

Not so easy for at least one declarer in this promising small slam in clubs that seemed to have all the ingredients for success: a near-solid nine-card trump fit, control cards galore and a very good spade suit as a source of playing tricks. In a high-level match, one declarer did negotiate twelve tricks but his counterpart had to make do with only ten – WHAT WENT WRONG? As is common in the modern era of complex artificial bidding systems, there was a difference in which player declared and when it was North, East's diamond lead certainly helped. Dealer West, with East-West vulnerable.

♠ J83	♠ 5	♠ 7642
♥ KQ5	♥ J764	♥ 10932
♦ 1095	♦ AJ2	♦ Q8764
♣ Q865	♣ KJ1074	♣ -
	♠ AKQ109	
	♥ A8	
	♦ K3	
	♣ A932	

Table One Bidding, with both vul:

West	North	East	South
	1♦ ¹	Pass	1♠
Pass	1NT ²	Pass	2♦ ³
Pass	3♥ ⁴	Pass	4♥ ⁵
Pass	5♣ ⁶	Pass	6♣ ⁷
All Pass			

For sure, you can't decode this bidding without a program so here's what it all mean:

1. An opening bid with less than 16 HCP and no 5M (1♣ was reserved for stronger hands).
2. 1NT = ugh!
3. Artificial game forcing relay asking for more information.
4. 4♥ and 5♣!!!! (Now that's information!).

5. Keycard ask for clubs.
6. 5♣ = Two Keycards for clubs.
7. 6♣ = a happy landing!

Opening lead: ♦6

Apparently dazzled by all that bidding, East decided to attack by leading a low diamond from his one and only honour card and that donated a third diamond winner for North to put to good use as a discard for South's heart loser. And notwithstanding that North's next play was the ♣K to make sure of a trump loser, the rest of the play was more or less a coast to home with the twelve tricks needed. The swing came about courtesy of South declaring at Table Two after an entirely different auction that attracted a more threatening opening lead.

Table two bidding:

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

1. Artificial and forcing.
2. Natural and positive with 8+ HCP creating a game force.
3. Keycard ask for clubs.
4. Two Keycards.
5. Logical conclusion.

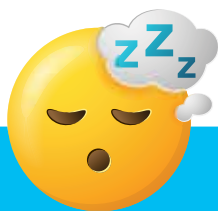
Opening lead: K♥. Played from the other side of the table attracted an opening lead of the King of hearts from West (the suit I semi-expected East to lead at the other table). Declarer won the ace of hearts to also misguess clubs by playing an immediate small trump to dummy's King. There were three possible ways to escape from the threat posed by a sure trump loser:

1. Take a diamond finesse to discard South's remaining heart.
2. Play top spades to discard two hearts from dummy and if the Jack didn't fall in three rounds, revert to the diamond finesse.
3. Based on East being void of trumps and

therefore having more vacant spaces for any particular missing card to occupy, take a finesse for the missing spade Jack.

As you can see, East did in fact have more spades than his partner but when one of them wasn't the Jack, Declarer's trick-three finesse in spades through East created an immediate third winner for the defense and down two for North-South. It's worth noting that if the spade lie that South played for (♠Jxxx with East) was the actual layout, he really didn't need to risk the finesse and would have then profited immensely by the spade Jack coming down in three rounds from the West hand. After the trump misguess, play three top spades from the South hand for heart discards from North. When the Jack arrived, continue spades and leave West with no winning reply.

BUT here's the vigorish if East still had the spade Jack after three rounds: ruff a fourth round to set up South's fifth card in the suit and cross back to the ♦K to produce the last high spade for West's inspection. If you look at the position reached and what options West would have, you'd see that WHAT WENT WRONG for East-West was that South had played a tough contract very well indeed!



Bobby Wolff is playing with a client who has just driven a long distance to play in this tournament with Bobby. On the first hand Bobby cashes the AK of a suit, his partner playing high-low and when he leads the third round of the suit she doesn't trump. When Bobby asks her why she didn't trump, she says: "Bobby, I was just too tired."

QUIZ

INTERMEDIATE DECLARER PLAY

PUZZLE ON PAGE 9

Contract: 6♥ West leads: ♥5 East follows.

Plan the play.

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

West	North	East	South
			1♥
2♠	4♥	Pass	4NT ¹
Pass	5♦ ²	Pass	6♥
All Pass			

1. Roman Key Card Blackwood
2. One key card

West found a good lead. It looks like you have only 11 tricks: 1 spade, 7 hearts (5 high trumps and two spade ruffs in dummy), 2 diamonds and 1 club. So another trick is needed. There are two possibilities for a 12th trick: clubs are 4-3 or diamonds are 3-3. Let's see the best line.

Win the 1st heart and lead the ♣Q. West wins and returns another trump, East following. The bad news a different return would have allowed you to ruff all 3 of your spade losers, but the good news is trumps are 2-2. Win the trump in dummy and cash the ♣K, discarding a diamond.

Now ruff a club. If both opponents follow you can cross to dummy with a spade ruff, ruff another club, setting up your 5th, and return to dummy with a 2nd spade ruff, and now cash the ♠9, throwing away the ♠Q.

However when you ruff the ♣5 West shows out, pitching a spade. Now you try your last chance. Ruff a spade, and now lead three rounds of diamonds and ruff in your hand. Both opponents follow!! Now ruff the ♠8 with your last trump in dummy, and cash the ♦8, your 12th trick!

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.



2022 IBPA Awards

The Justin Lall Memorial: Declarer Play of the Year

Winner: Terry Brown (Australia)

Journalists: Ron Klinger, Liam Milne & Julian Foster (Australia)

Article: Oz Bridge Event: 2021 NSW Open Teams Trial



TERRY BROWN

Terry Brown

♠ J3
♥ 85
♦ 965
♣ K98532

♠ 10954
♥ QJ103
♦ KQJ104
♣ -

♠ KQ8
♥ 972
♦ 8732
♣ AJ7

♠ A762
♥ AK64
♦ A
♣ Q1064

	Buchen		Brown
West	North	East	South
—	—	Pass	1♣
DbI	3♣ ¹	3NT	DbI
4♦	Pass	Pass	5♣
Pass	Pass	DbI	All Pass

1. Preemptive

West led the king of diamonds: five – two – ace. South (Terry Brown) played the two of spades: four – jack – queen. East switched to the seven of hearts. South won, cashed the spade ace, ruffed a spade in dummy and continued with the nine of clubs. East rose with the ace and led the two of hearts. South won with the king, ruffed a heart in dummy and ruffed the six of diamonds in hand.

This was the ending:

♠ -
♥ -
♦ 9
♣ K85

♠ 10
♥ Q
♦ QJ
♣ -

♠ -
♥ -
♦ 87
♣ J7

♠ 7
♥ 6
♦ -
♣ Q10

On the ten of clubs to the king, West discarded the jack of diamonds, but on the club five to the queen, West was squeezed in three suits. To throw the queen of diamonds would leave dummy high. When West discarded the ten of spades, South played the established seven of spades to discard dummy's diamond! "In over 50 years of playing bridge, I have never had this squeeze before," said Brown. Hardly a surprise there.



The Gidwani Family Trust Defence of the Year Winner: Boye Brogeland (Norway)

Journalist: John Carruthers (Canada)

Article: Rescuing Partner

Event: 2022 ACBL Spring NABC (Reno)

On this board from the third-quarter Vanderbilt semi-final match between ROSENTHAL and SPECTOR, Boye Brogeland found a fantastic counter to protect his partner, Christian Bakke, from allowing John Kranyak's four spades to succeed.

♠ 83
♥ J8653
♦ J842
♣ K9

♠ Q962
♥ A74
♦ Q
♣ Q10863

♠ AKJ54
♥ Q9
♦ K93
♣ J42

♠ 107
♥ K102
♦ A10765
♣ A75

West	North	East	South
Demuy	Bakke	Kranyak	Brogeland
Pass	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♠	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

Brogeland led the ten of spades. Kranyak won with dummy's queen and led a low club. Had Bakke risen with his king, an almost-impossible play with that dummy on view, either a club continuation or a heart shift would have defeated four spades. As it was, the play went three of clubs, nine, jack, seven! Declarer led the nine of diamonds to the ace next. Brogeland continued with the five of clubs! Bakke won with his king and shifted to a heart for one off. At the other table:

West	North	East	South
Willenken	Hurd	Jansma	Bathurst
Pass	Pass	1♠	Pass
2NT ¹	Pass	4♠	All Pass

1. Strong four-card spade raise in context

Kevin Bathurst led a heart, which Jansma ducked to his queen. Declarer led the ace of spades and, when all followed, claimed plus 420; 10 IMPs to ROSENTHAL.



West	North	East	South
Starkowski	Paul Gipson	Kwiecien	Alex Gipson
—	—	—	1♥
Pass	2♣ ¹	Pass	3♦ ²
Pass	3♥ ³	Pass	4♦ ⁴
Pass	4NT ⁵	Pass	5♥ ⁶
Pass	5♠ ⁷	Pass	5NT ⁸
Pass	7♦	All Pass	

The Yeh Bros. Best Bid Deal of the Year

Winners: Alex Gipson/Paul Gipson (Scotland)

Journalist: Barnet Shenkin (Scotland)

Article: Scotland's Winter Fours

Event: 2022 Scottish Bridge Union Winter Fours

This online event was a double knockout – you had to lose twice before you were out of the tournament.

The final was between (SHORT) Brian Short, Alan Goodman, Alex Gipson and Paul Gipson, who were undefeated, and (SELIGMAN) Marty Seligman, Jacek Pszczola, Michal Kwiecien and Włodzimierz Starkowski. SHORT led throughout the match until the second-last board.

♠ 1082	♠ AK	♠ 76543
♥ QJ103	♥ 652	♥ 4
♦ 10	♦ KQ54	♦ 873
♣ AJ754	♣ KQ106	♣ 9832
	♠ QJ9	
	♥ AK987	
	♦ AJ962	
	♣ -	

1. FG or clubs
2. 15+ HCP, 5/5 in hearts/diamonds
3. Relay
4. 3=5=5=0
5. RKCB for diamonds
6. 2 key cards, no queen of diamonds
7. King ask
8. Heart king

North knew, counting the high-card points that South had to hold the heart queen or spade queen to take care of his third heart. The grand slam had odds of success of more than 80 percent with diamonds to split 2-2 or hearts to split 3-2 or the smaller chance of long diamonds to be with long hearts. West believed the auction. Perhaps he had played this pair before, and refrained from leading the ace of clubs, choosing instead a trump. Thus, the contract was doomed to fail.

At the other table, the contract was five hearts, just making, for an undeserved gain of 13 IMPs. That was enough for SELIGMAN to win by 5 IMPs. North/South can consider themselves unlucky to lose the tournament here, but perhaps they might win an award for best-bid deal!



Ethan was playing bridge with his father, Jeremy, who had not played bridge in years. On the first hand Jeremy was the dealer and said: Pass.

Ethan: Dad, you have to use the bidding box.

Jeremy's dad picked up the box and whispered into the box: Pass.



The Richard Freeman Junior Deal of the Year

Winner: Ben Norton (England)

Journalist: Paul Barden (England)

Article: Bermuda Bowl, Round Robin 16,
England vs. Switzerland

Event: 2022 Bermuda Bowl, Salsomaggiore

In Round 16, England, in fifth place, played Switzerland, the leaders of the Round Robin.

♠ 865	♠ AK7	♠ Q4
♥ J1065	♥ A73	♥ 4
♦ 6	♦ AK32	♦ J109874
♣ K10642	♣ AQ5	♣ J987
	♠ J10932	
	♥ KQ982	
	♦ Q5	
	♣ 3	

West	North	East	South
Klukowski	Norton	Gawrys	Bell
Pass	2♣ ¹	Pass	2♦ ²
Pass	2♥ ³	Pass	2♠ ⁴
Pass	2NT ⁵	Pass	3♣ ⁶
Double	Redouble ⁷	Pass	3♥ ⁸
Pass	4♣ ⁹	Pass	4NT ¹⁰
Pass	5♦ ¹¹	Pass	5NT ¹²
Pass	6♣ ¹³	Pass	6♥
All Pass			

1. Strong
2. Waiting
3. Hearts or balanced
4. Forced

5. 24+ HCP, balanced
6. Stayman
7. Suggestion to play
8. 5+ hearts, 4+ spades
9. Control; agrees hearts
10. RKCB
11. 1 or 4 key cards
12. King ask
13. Either the club king or both the spade and diamond kings

At the other table Brink and Drijver bid up to 7NT, off one. Here, North-South played the third-best slam. Norton won the club lead with the queen, got the bad news in hearts, and ducked the third round. He won the spade exit, ruffed a club to hand, and drew the last trump...

♠ K7	♠ Q
♥ -	♥ -
♦ AK32	♦ J10987
♣ A	♣ J
♠ 85	♠ J1093
♥ J	♥ Q
♦ 6	♦ Q5
♣ K64	♣ -

Now he had to commit himself. West had had four hearts and, if the carding were to be believed, five clubs, consistent with his double of three clubs. It seemed likely that East would have length in spades and diamonds. So, declarer discarded his low spade on the queen of hearts, and crossed to the king of spades, planning to cash the ace of clubs to squeeze East whenever he was four-four or three-five in spades and diamonds. Unluckily for him, in a sense, East was two-six, but luckily his spade doubleton included the queen, so Norton made his contract to win 14 IMPs. Seven declarers in the Bermuda Bowl played six hearts and Norton was the only one to make it.

the GREAT CANADIAN BIDDING CONTEST



APRIL 2023 TGCBC

Host: Stephen Cooper

For panelists, and their bids, see page 31

Editor's note: First, I would like to thank **Stephen** for agreeing to host this segment of TGCBC. I have always enjoyed reading Stephen's bridge articles in **The Bridge World** and other publications.

Brian DeLong was the top reader score with 44. The reader with the best Feb-Apr combined score, and winner of \$100 in mad money, is Ashot Harutyunyan. 2nd place goes to Sheldon Spiers. Try your luck on June problems found later in this issue. Reader responses due by May 15th. Three panelists had perfect scores of 50, **Francine Cimon** (encore, felicitation!), **Zyg Marcinski** and my current partner **Ray Hornby**. The June problems can be found later in this issue. Play along!

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

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♣	1♦	?

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

What is your call?

Call	Score	Panelists
2♥	10	13
Dbl	9	4
3♣	8	2

How strong should a fit jump be? Here, perhaps a better phrasing would be, "How weak..." can it be!

This is from the 2022 CSTC. I chose 2♥, and was concerned when partner bounced into slam without further encouragement from me. He had 19 balanced:

♠Q1086, ♥QJ2 ♦AJ ♣AKQ7. Although a diamond lead would've beaten it, the ♠A from AK gave declarer time to set up the hearts and make it for a 12 IMP swing. At the other table, they reached the more temperate contract of 4♥.

Given the opponents have favourable vulnerability, you have no spades and few points, your next chance to bid may be over a 3♠ or 4♠ bid. Some simply made the obvious 1♥ bid, albeit through the conventional transfer-double.*

***(I wrote up this approach in a Bridge World article published in the December 2007 issue called REVERSING LOW-LEVEL LEAD-DIRECTION. It seems popular today, although I don't know to what extent, if any, the article was influential).**

Carruthers: Double. The only alternative is 2♥, but a fit jump when partner has only shown a two card suit is a bit presumptive, although it could shut out the spades.

Pegging partner's hand type:

Grainger: Double. Too good a chance partner has a 2NT rebid.

L'Ecuier: It is tempting to use a fit-showing bid but partner will expect more high cards at this vulnerability and it sounds like partner has four spades (no spade bid yet), therefore might be tempted to try 3NT without a heart fit. I will go low and just try to show my hearts. I don't like 3♣ with lousy clubs and five hearts.

Zhou also doubled without comment. A couple of panelist focused on the preemptive nature of the hand. Quite reasonable with only 4 HCPs!

Turner 3♣: Partner doesn't always have only three clubs when I have this shape, but I'm not sure enough to bid my first choice, 4♣. Maybe I'll bid 3♥ if it goes P-P-double.

Mike wanted a stronger hand for a fit-jump:

Hargreaves: 3♣. I want to get in the way of spades. I'll pay to a big heart fit, because if we have it then the opponents probably have spades. Plus, I play fit jumps as stronger than this.

The others all chose 2♥, with varying levels of enthusiasm. A gracious comment from Ziggy, the opponent holding these cards at the other table, as I was not sure afterwards that I'd made the best call:

Marcinski: Might this hand be too weak? I don't think so: (a) 10 cards in "our" 2 suits rather than only 9, (ii) an ace, and more speculatively (iii) a void in an as yet unbid suit though one in which the opponents likely hold 9 or more cards. This was a bid that the Panel Host found and which I regret to confess did not occur to me at the "virtual" table.

Andy made a good bid but a bad prediction:

Stark: 2♥. The majority will probably double and transfer partner to 1♥, but I'll bid 2♥ and try my best to prevent E-W from finding their 9+ card spade fit.

The next panelist is a true "feel" player if there ever was one, just grooving on making fit-showing calls:

Kuz 2♥. Love my fit showing jumps.

Speaking for the majority view:

Kimelman 2♥. Yes, a bit light on high card, but I do have a void and a 5th club. **No choice for me.**

Conclusion: It's usually a good idea to overbid if, in so doing, you can accurately show your distribution.

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

West	North	East	South
Pass	3♠	4♥	?

What is your call?

Call	Score	Panelists
5♠	10	10
5♥	9	2
7♠	8	3
4♠	7	2
6♠	6	2
4NT	5	0

This is a battle between technique and tactics. There were votes for every number of spades from four through seven. An old Montreal era team-mate (1970's!) summarized the issues well while choosing the most popular call:

Cimon: 5♠. A very good problem to discuss. Does 5♥ ask for a stopper in hearts or does it show a control in hearts with a very good hand for spades, asking for good spades. Does 5♠ ask to bid the slam with a control in hearts or is it just another pre-empt? I think vulnerable it is asking to bid slam with a control in hearts.

This panelist was a little more certain:

Grainger: 5♥. I think 5♠ should be preemptive here and 5♥ should ask for a control, but I suspect that would require an agreement. The other choice, of course, is blasting a grand slam and daring them to lead a heart.

Note this use of 5♥ cleverly allows you to keep 5♠ as a preempt. I've promoted it in the scoring as it's clearly best provided you adopt the agreement.

Miles: 5♥. Not sure what it means, but if partner takes it as a cue or great hand, they won't be jumping to slam with a Queen-high suit. If partner takes it as a request

for a heart control, great!

Try playing with Grainger, Danny - he'll know.

L'Ecuyer and Kimelman make the tactical underbid of 4♠. Kimelman hoped the opponents might reveal partner's heart length by raising. Both planned to buy the contract eventually, with L'Ecuyer prepared to keep on bidding spades "until the cows come home". I Googled it, and... "Cows come home when the farmer wants to milk them, generally early in the morning and roughly about 10 hours later in the afternoon". So that could be a lot of spade bids.

The most popular answer was 5♠, but not everyone meant it the same way. Some were just hopeful:

Hornsby: 5♠ hoping partner will take this as looking for a heart control.

A few panelists cited the classic meaning of the jump to 5♠:

Bob Todd: (with Marcinski, Bishop and Stark) 5♠. This seems so automatic. Asks partner to pass without 1st or 2nd round control, bid 6 with 2nd round control, and Q with 1st.

They aren't concerned with vulnerability, pre-emption or other distractions – just sticking to the book. Some were simply pre-empting.

Lebi: "5♠ - hoping to get doubled. I can't figure out a way to ask for a Heart control".

Grainger has an idea you might like....

Liking the sound of it, no matter what it might mean:

Balcombe: Does this ask for a heart control for slam? Normally, yes. Even after a preempt? Maybe not. It **certainly would not ask for a heart control not vul vs vul**. This bid looks reasonable anyway since nothing

else fits.

Two voted for 6♠:

Lindop: "6♠. I suppose some might play 5♠ here as asking for a heart control, but I think it is simply a further preemptive action. I think this gives us the best chance of making a slam. With no additional information, East might lead the ♣A. Bingo! And, of course, partner could hold a singleton heart. The good news is I'm on lead if the opponents bid 7♥, so I don't need to tell partner what to lead."

Nobody else said they were prepared to defend a heart contract at any level, although that could be right, of course.

Treble: 6♠. Partner could have anywhere from two quick heart losers to a void. If LHO bids 7♥ and pre-emptor passes to show a void, that would be, in the words of a friend of mine, "just ducky".

A nice point about possibly bidding seven after getting the heart void signal. My question with bidding 6♠ is whether it sounds like you DO have a heart loser – inviting them to bang down the ace and see.

Playing in spades, the main issue is NOT how many hearts partner has, but, rather, what will the opening lead be? You have all the tricks if you can win the first trick. Should you try to reach the correct technical contract, or bluff your way to the winning score?

This deal was taken from Bridge My Way by the immortal Zia. There, the immediate 7♠ bid stole the pot. Who leads a heart against that sequence? Full Zia points to three panelists:

Carruthers: "7♠. This is a 5 or 7 hand. I'm trying to convince East to lead the ace of clubs rather than the ace of hearts."

Kuz threw in a touch of coffee-housing:

Kuz: "7♠. Hope East is my screen mate. The 7♠ card will hit the table very quickly."

Impressionable readers should be aware he's only kidding about the tempo. Right, Bob? The third vote for the grand invoked one of my old partners, a known master tactician:

Turner: 7♠: Wayne Timms special. Not sure if I'll send it back if doubled - I think not. I'd bid 5♠ had partner opened 1♠ to ask for a heart control, but here 5♠ is simply a further pre-empt.

Timms would redouble, or not, depending on the opponent.

Conclusion: *The best technical bid is almost certainly 5♥, with prior agreement. As far as 7♠ is concerned, you enter the realm of poker. It gets top score in next month's issue of "Texas Hold' Em Bridge".*

Grainger: I think this is a spy versus spy situation that depends on your opponents.

I would add that it also depends on your own reputation. If you're known as a person who would NEVER try something like this, you are simplifying things for your opponents. You need an off-speed pitch now and then so they don't just sit on your fastball.

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

West	North	East	South
	Pass	1♣	?

What is your call?

Call	Score	Panelists
Pass	10	17
1♥	8	2
2♥	5	0

This problem turned out to be the free square on a Bingo board. It misfired, but there is a still a lesson in it. Pass seems obvious if you have a relatively disciplined style. Although the main decision is

between pass and a simple overcall, some mentioned a possible (very) aggressive jump to 2♥.

This is from an old World Championship, Meckwell against the Pakistani team (including Zia). Meckstroth overcalled 1♥. This led to a big loss, but not for the reason you'd expect. When Rodwell raised, the heart-stopper-less opposition climbed to the cold five of a minor with two balanced hands in a 4-4 fit! At the other table, a normal, uncontested auction led to an unlucky 3NT, down on a heart lead.

The panel is well represented by aggressive players, yet only two chose to bid 1♥:

L'Ecuyer: "I think it pays to bid. It may induce a heart lead when necessary, it may cause them to go low when they hold suspect heart holdings, ... On occasions, partner takes this the wrong way but partner is aware of the vulnerabilities and passed hand bidding. I would not bid facing an unpassed partner or at any other vulnerabilities."

Bishop: 1♥. I can see the pluses for overcalling 1♥ in this particular position and at the stated match conditions, those being:

(a) Partner is a passed hand (the likelihood of being punished by Opposite Hand Opponent are very limited... and if he does get carried away – vaulting us to game – perhaps he will have a perfecta; short diamonds plus his 5-card [or longer] promised trump support).

(b) The opponents are vulnerable *and* we are not.

(c) The form of the game is IMPs. So, going for -500 when the opponents are able to make +600 is not a losing proposition, but a winning one. Even a slight miscalculation (ie. going for -800 vs -600 or greater) will not be the end of the world. Surely in this 'modern' age, when partner was unable to open, the opponents must have very good odds of making some game their way.

(d) Getting partner off to a non-destructive lead; so, letting declarer do his own guesswork... that alone may be tremendously to our advantage. And

finally...

(e) Painting a surrealistic picture of the defensive layout which may lead declarer astray...whereas on the same hand at the other table, our teammates may get things correct.

A sampling of comments from the majority:

Grainger: Pass is automatic at IMPs. Anything else is clowning around.

(Take that, Meckstroth!)

Lebi: Pass, what alternatives are there? 1♥, 2♥ are very hungry bids.

This from a man who doesn't eat lunch. What a about a jump?

Balcombe: Pass. Maybe I should be bidding 2♥, but I wouldn't probably give this hand a second look. I would make a weak jump overcall white vs red, with KQ10xx though. I don't like funky preempts with an ace.

The World Championship report suggests that Meckstroth would have bid 2♥ "in his youth". Hornby also considered it:

Hornby: I might consider a 2♥ call over a 1♦ opener by RHO, but over 1♣ I'll pass and try to win the match on the other boards.

The club/diamond distinction is not clear to me. Hargreaves couldn't find a phone booth to change into uniform:

Hargreaves: Am I supposed to put on the cape and bid something?

What can we conclude? Most of a panel of top players don't give any serious consideration to the overcall.

But this is the Meckwell brand. They push! You must be true to thine own self. Take the poor results in stride. It's a game of percentages. Meckwell have gone on to be perhaps the GOAT. Their approach doesn't work every hand.

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

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

- What is your call?
- What would your answer be if that was a Thrump double?
- What the heck is a Thrump double anyway? Be as specific as possible. (**Editor's note:** *I had to google it.*)
- Do you play it?

Call	Score	Panelists
Pass	10	14
3NT	8	4
4♣	6	1
4♥	5	0

This is a timeless problem which I ripped off from another recent contest who took it from New Zealand Bridge August 2007. Pass got 100, 4♥ 60, 3NT 60. Nobody here suggested 4♥. Some bidding problems are like elections: Less about which option you like, and more about which you dislike less.

The problem with a standard double is that it might be based on a balanced hand with opening bid strength, or it might be more like my Pilates instructor – shapely and flexible with fewer HCP. In my view, that's too much baggage for one bid. It should probably be restricted to the balanced hand; with shape, bid (or adopt other methods (transfers?) at this level. Everyone chose to leave it in or try 3NT. The lone exception proved that one should leave forecasting to the meteorologists:

Bishop 4♣. Admittedly this is a difficult call (made more so if partner's double was even mildly out-of-

tempo) but, it's not my style to bid 3NT and watch the opponents take the first six tricks, while also having deterred partner from continuing onwards in the search for a minor-suit game/slam. Can see the possible plus position in a 4♥ call instead (*and expect some panelists will vote for that*). We know in a standard framework that partner's 'negative double' needs to cover a wide range of hands. Perhaps partner will have the 'red-suit' hand and continue onwards with 4♦ [over my 4♣] or test the waters in 4♥.

Although bidding a 4-3 minor shape like a two-suiter looks odd, it will work much better than pass if partner is shapely with short spades. Some others thought there may be a tempo issue:

Zhou: I would pass no matter how heavy/light or fast/slow pard's double is.

Some implicitly or explicitly cited Bob Hamman's Rule of bidding 3NT whenever it is a conceivable option.

Balcombe (with Stark, Hargreaves and Carruthers): 3NT. I follow Hamman's rule.

Maybe the suit blocks, maybe partner has a useful spade piece, maybe they don't lead one from AQJ.... For the passers:

L'Ecuyer: Partner is basically forcing us to the four level or 3NT therefore partner should have values. I have aces and good defense. Game is surely not clear to make if there is a game. I will take my chance to go plus on defense with no suit to bid and lots of defense.

Summing it up well for the majority:

Treble: Pass. I hate it, but I hate bidding more.

If you double at a high level, you should be prepared for partner to leave it in.

Bonus question: What if it was a Thrump double? (Three No Trump by Partner). The panel were much more comfortable about passing facing a Thrump double. A few admitted to wielding it in battle, but it remains a fringe concept not popularly adopted.

Everyone agrees that a Thrump double asks opener to bid 3NT with a stopper in the enemy suit; but what does it show? The consensus seemed to be that the Thrump double shows at least a balanced (near) opening hand. Thrumpers definitely do NOT have unbalanced hands.

You might also like to do it with a hand like: xxx, Qx, Qx, AKQxxx, but, as you can see here, partner might leave it in disastrously.

5. Imps, dealer North. Neither vul. As South you hold
 ♠8653 ♥AK10432 ♦♣J.

West	North	East	South
	1♠	Pass	?

- What is your call?
- Might you stop short of game?
- Describe your favourite system bid for this.
- Switching horses, if you were the opener, is this a weak two bid for you? i) Never ii) it's a 1♥ opener! iii) Yes, and state seat(s) and vulnerability.

Call	Score	Panelists
2♥	10	11
2NT	9	1
4♣	8	2
4♠	7	3
1NT	6	1
3♥	5	1

Another hand from the CSTC. One table judged to treat this hand as invitational (reaching game), based on a hyper-aggressive opening bid style, while the other hand made a game-forcing 2/1 and reached an excellent slam.

The lesson for readers is that a 2/1 game force need not have a fistful of HCPs. This hand has controls, an excellent long suit and a critical ninth trump. Hearts might set up for a bunch of tricks regardless of what partner has in the suit, and there are four spades for a possible late entry. Here's how you count it:

Balcombe: 2♥ Counting "support points" there are 8 HCP + 1 for 9th S + 3 for singleton + 1 for doubleton =

13. So plenty for game - even though it may not make.

As to the immediate 4♠ option, I agree with:

Hargreaves: 2♥ No way I'm not bidding game, but this is wrong for an immediate 4S...far too much potential. No limit raise seems adequate either, since I'm going to game anyway.

Cimon: 2♥, not many HCPs but not many losers.

This type of game forcing hand is more palatable than a misfitting 12 HCP with, say, a 1444 short in partner's suit. Many bid where they live, showing the strong hearts.

There was one for a Jacoby 2NT which at least confirms trump and sets up the GF. It might well work out, but it's not the typical hand type for the call.

Perhaps you might splinter? This is more typical with no long suit and more spread out values. At least it's very limited which allows partner to take over from there.

Fit-showing jumps are popular in competition, but some also tried it as a response; I don't think that's on our convention card.

There was a side question about whether this hand would be opened with a weak two bid. For this, we had three camps: Disciplined traditional, where the side major was a serious drawback;

Kuz: (with Carruthers, Turner, Stark, others) (NEVER open it a weak two. Players who open these types of hands will never imagine how little it takes to make a slam or game... modern preemptive styles are a joke.

Tactical, where the seat and vulnerability factor in:

Zhou: Tough call, I will only open 3rd seat 3♥ non-vul

and x2Hx vul, never a 1♥ opener for me.

Todd: I would open in 2-3-4 at any vulnerability.

Lebi: Yes, a weak two bid. Any seat but 4th. Any vulnerability but unfavourable.

Miles: 3rd seat any vul I'd open 2♥. I like to open weak 2♠ as much as anyone but this just runs too much risk of missing a spade game or slam.

And push push push where pressure is applied freely and frequently.

Hargreaves: (with L'Ecuyer, Grainger, Balcombe, others) I'd open 2♥ in all four seats and at all vulnerabilities

Grainger, thinking of partnership harmony, allowed that he would refrain if partner had strong feelings about the side 4-card major!

Balcombe voiced his life-long preference for a system that treats this as a one-bid (pre-alerted, of course). Some also use toys, where some use two flavours of weak two bids with 2♦ acting to differentiate from the natural two level opening. Perhaps this gives you the best of both worlds, if you don't have important work for a 2♦ opening.



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what

...does this bid mean?

1. N-S Vul:

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

What does 3NT mean?

3NT is to play. It is usually a hand with a reasonable expectation of nine tricks with a longer runnable suit. A typical hand: ♠Kx ♥Jxx ♦AKQJxxx ♣A.

2. Both Vul:

North	South
1NT	2♥ ¹
2♠	4NT
5♥	

1. Spades

What does 5♥ mean?

4NT is a quantitative invitation with exactly five spades. North is accepting the invitation, and is making a key card response, with spades as trump. In this way, slam can still be avoided if missing two aces/key cards. An example set up:

North
 ♠KQx
 ♥Axxx
 ♦QJ10x
 ♣KJ

South
 ♠AJ10xx
 ♥KQJ
 ♦Kx
 ♣Q109

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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
July 31-Aug 7	World Youth Bridge Championships Veldhoven, Netherlands
Aug 20-Sep 2	World Team Championships Marrakech, Morocco

The CBF is searching for a new Executive Assistant

The Canadian Bridge Federation (CBF) is a non-profit organization that promotes and protects the interests of Canadian bridge players. The CBF is seeking an Executive Assistant to perform a variety of administrative duties to support the CBF's Board of Directors.

The Executive Assistant manages the day-to-day office operations of the CBF and is the primary liaison person for the organization. Accordingly, the Executive Assistant handles communication with members and other organizations involved with bridge in Canada.

Visit the website at cbf.ca to see a list of key responsibilities, requirements and skills. If you are interested in this job opportunity, contact **Freddie Mykytyshyn** at zone4@cbf.ca.

PANELIST ANSWERS

April 2023 Bidding Contest

Name	Hand 1		Hand 2		Hand 3		Hand 4		Hand 5		Total
	Bid	Score	Bid	Score	Bid	Score	Bid	Score	Bid	Score	
Keith Balcombe	2♥	10	5♠	10	Pass	10	3NT	8	4♣/no	8	46
Ron Bishop	2♥	10	5♠	10	1♥	8	4♣	5	4♣/no	8	41
John Carruthers	Dbl	9	7♠	8	Pass	10	3NT	8	4♠/no	7	42
Francine Cimon	2♥	10	5♠	10	Pass	10	Pass	10	2♥/no	10	50
Mike Hargreaves	3♣	8	5♠	10	Pass	10	3NT	8	2♥/no	10	46
David Grainger	Dbl	9	5♠	10	Pass	10	Pass	10	4♣/no	8	47
Roy Hornby	2♥	10	5♠	10	Pass	10	Pass	10	2♥/no	10	50
Bob Kuz	2♥	10	7♠	8	Pass	10	Pass	10	2♥/no	10	48
Nick L'Ecuyer	Dbl	9	4♠	7	1♥	8	Pass	10	2♥/no	10	44
Neil Kimelman	2♥	10	4♠	7	Pass	10	Pass	10	2♥/no	10	47
Robert Lebi	2♥	10	5♠	10	Pass	10	Pass	10	4♠/no	7	47
David Lindop	2♥	10	6♠	6	Pass	10	Pass	10	4♣/no	8	44
Zyg Marcinski	2♥	10	5♠	10	Pass	10	Pass	10	2♥/no	10	50
Danny Miles	2♥	10	5♥	9	Pass	10	Pass	10	2♥/no	10	49
Andy Stark	2♥	10	5♠	10	Pass	10	3NT	8	2NT/no	9	47
Bob Todd	2♥	10	5♠	10	Pass	10	Pass	10	1NT/no	6	46
Bill Treble	2♥	10	6♠	6	Pass	10	Pass	10	2♥/no	10	46
David Turner	3♣	8	7♠	8	Pass	10	3NT	8	4♣/no	8	42
Kai Zhou	Dbl	9	5♠	10	Pass	10	Pass	10	2♥/no	10	49

JUNE PROBLEMS

Host: David Turner

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

1. IMPs. Dealer: South, all Vul, as South you hold:

♠8642 ♥AK7 ♦8 ♣J9853

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

(a) Do you agree with the double? If no, what would you have bid?

(b) What now?

2. IMPs, Dealer: East, Vul: E-W. As South you hold:

♠A876 ♥- ♦AQ82 ♣AQ542

West	North	East	South
-	-	Pass	1♣
Pass	2♣ ¹	Pass	2♠ ²
Pass	3NT ³	Pass	4♦ ⁴
Pass	5♣ ⁵	Pass	?

1. Forcing to 3♣, no major.
2. Natural length, some extras, not Game forcing.
3. Could have bid 2NT with 15+ HCPs.
4. Length slam try (4♣ would have been Minorwood).
5. Presumably no ♠K or ♥A.

(a) Do you agree with 2♠? If no, what would you have bid?

(b) What now?

3. IMPs, Dealer: East, Vul: Both Vul. As South you hold:

♠J863 ♥Q4 ♦A982 ♣1084

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

1. Weak

What now?

4. IMPs, Dealer: North, Vul: Neither. As South you hold:

♠AK ♥KQ92 ♦A65 ♣A876

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

1. 4th suit game forcing.

5. IMPs, Dealer: South, Vul: Both. As South you hold:

♠AQ83 ♥4 ♦A9 ♣KJ10963

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	1♣
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♦ ¹	Pass	3♣
Pass	3♥	Pass	3NT
Pass	4♣	Pass	4♦
Pass	6NT	Pass	?

1. 4th suit game forcing.

Had enough? Or too much already?

Improve Your Game with Bill Treble

Master Point Press



WINNING AT MATCHPOINTS



BILL TREBLE

WINNING AT MATCHPOINTS

Most players would agree that matchpoints is harder than IMPs – it's certainly different. Yet many players approach the two forms of scoring in the same way. In this book, the author explains the differences in approach, the whys and wherefores of the right way to bid, play and defend at matchpoint scoring for optimum results.

GETTING INTO THE BIDDING

This text covers the basic building blocks of competitive bidding (takeout and negative doubles, preempts, overcalls, forcing pass auctions, and others). It describes a number of useful conventions and gadgets with which the reader needs to be familiar, and suggests other optional treatments for partnership discussion. Each chapter ends with reviews and quizzes, and the final chapter is a summary quiz covering all the material.



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