

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE CBF | JUNE 2023

bridge *Canada*



A WHIMSICAL SUMMER OF BRIDGE IN 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

Regional and Canadian Bridge Championships May 9 – 18, Niagara Falls.

What a great venue. Nice to get out Face to Face, and compete and socialize with fellow Canadian players. Congratulations to the Board, Ina Demme and the director staff in making this CBC the success it was. Also, congrats to all of the winners. A special acknowledgement to Dan Jacob and Jurek Czyzowicz for their induction into the Canadian Bridge Hall of Fame. On page 7 you'll find a winners list and watch for more stories and photos in the August issue of Bridge Canada.

Neil Kimelman
Bridge Canada Managing Editor



Mollo

ON PLAY XXVIII

Contract: 6 ♠ by South at IMPs.

♠ J 3 2

♥ 10 5 4 3

♦ A K 6

♣ 10 7 2

♠ A K Q 10 9

♥ A K 6 2

♦ 7 4

♣ A K

Lead: ♣Q. Trumps split 4-1. Plan the play.
Plan the Play.

Answers on page 8.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

June 13 Canada Wide Olympiad Fund Games –
Match #1

June 17 1-day (18-25) Day of bridge / Alzheimer
Societies

July 31 – August 7
World Youth Bridge Championships –
Veldhoven, Netherlands

20 Aug – 2 Sep
World Team Championships
Marrakech, Morocco

Sept Qualifying games in clubs 2024 CBC
CNTC: Sept. to Jan. 15
COPC: Sept. to Dec.

Sept 1-30 Registration for CBF Online Team league

Sept CBF Online Games on BBO - new format
to be announced

Oct. 6 Canada Wide Olympiad Fund Games –
Match #2

Oct. 17 Erin Berry Rookie Master Game at
in person clubs

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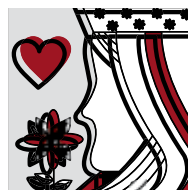
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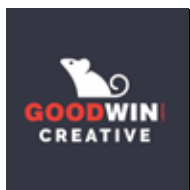
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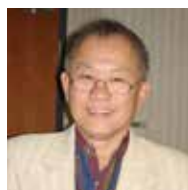
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Listening Post (noun)

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.

The Listening Post 2

The dog that didn't bark

By Neil Kimelman

In the last BC issue *The Listening Post* article looked at hands where it was right to pass, and listen to the opponents, in order to determine whether to bid more, and if so, how high. However the same principle applies to low level auctions, and listening to partner, as well as the opponents.

In one of his cases, Sherlock Holmes put it another way, "...the dog that didn't bark..." In that situation Holmes took inferences from something that did not happen. Specifically when a suit is not mentioned, and how it should affect your bidding decisions. Here are three recent hands from the same game that demonstrate this occurrence:

Hand 1

Playing matchpoints in 4th seat with neither vul you pick up an 'action' hand: ♠- ♥A43 ♦Q8653 ♣QJ963. On the plus side, this hand has a lot of potential. However it is hard to evaluate accurately, and your diamond suit spots are poor. You are thinking of bidding an unusual 2NT for the minors, and do get an opportunity when the bidding starts 1♠ Pass 1NT to you. Should you bid 2NT?

I didn't. My thinking was, 'Where are the spades?' Yes, LHO has at least five, but East likely has less than three. Partner is highly favoured to have at least four spades. If partner has spades, this hand might not play well for them. Maybe you are thinking that the opponents could have a heart fit. Yes, they could, but then you still have the option of bidding notrump later in the auction. The full deal:

♠	-	♠	AQ1086	♠	K9743
♥	A43	♥	Q75	♥	KJ92
♦	Q8653	♦	AK10	♦	74
♣	QJ963	♣	K10	♣	75
		♠	J52		
		♥	1086		
		♦	J92		
		♣	A842		

The opponents bid to a slightly aggressive 4♠ which went two down. Had I bid 2NT we likely would have been down two in three of a minor.

Hand 2

Playing matchpoints in 4th seat with neither vul you pick up ♠6 ♥AJ952 ♦A8 ♣J9432. Neither vul. At my table my RHO opened 1♣ and I bid a normal 1♥. The bidding continued:

West	North	East	South
			1♣
1♥	1♠	2♥	Dbl
?			

The double showed extra values. What is your call? I made the 'automatic' bid of 3♥ with my extra shape and hoping to ruff clubs in dummy. Had I paused for a second I may have reconsidered my call. Partner likely has long spades. Where is there a fit? A better choice might have been to listen and then decide whether to compete. The full deal:

♠ 6	♠ J7542	♠ KQ1083
♥ AJ952	♥ Q87	♥ 1043
♦ A8	♦ QJ64	♦ 932
♣ J9432	♣ 10	♣ A6
	♠ A9	
	♥ K6	
	♦ K1075	
	♣ KQ875	

Had I passed, LHO would have bid 2♠, and partner likely would have doubled, likely ending the auction. I did scrape out +140, but it could have easily been -50. +300 would have been a clear top.

Hand 3

East holds ♠AQ754 ♥2 ♦Q63 ♣A1062.

West	North	East	South
		1♠	2♥
2♠	3♥	?	

At the table I bid 3♠ with little thought. The full deal:

♠ 10963	♠ KJ8	♠ AQ754
♥ KJ103	♥ 984	♥ 2
♦ 105	♦ K98742	♦ Q63
♣ 954	♣ K	♣ A1062
	♠ 2	
	♥ AQ765	
	♦ AJ	
	♣ QJ873	

Had I passed, we would have been plus against 3♥ or 3♥ doubled. Had I paid attention and listened to the auction, and looked at my hand, I think the pass of 3♥ is a standout.

Don't forget you have a partner, who may be better situated to determine whether to compete further.



Regardless of what sadistic impulses we may harbor, winning bridge means helping partner avoid mistakes.

Frank Stewart

Congratulations

2023 CANADIAN BRIDGE CHAMPIONS



*L to R: Darren Wolpert, Mark Caplan, Fred Gitelman,
Jacob Freeman, Jason Feldman, Daniel Lavee*

CNTC Open

CANADIAN NATIONAL TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS

Gold: Feldman - Jason Feldman, Darren Wolpert, Fred Gitelman, Mark Caplan, Daniel Lavee, Jacob Freeman

Silver: L'Écuyer - Nicolas L'Écuyer, Zygmunt Marcinski, Marc-André Fourcaudot, Kamel Fergani, Michel Lorber, Nicholas Gartaganis

Bronze: Jacob - Dan Jacob, Piotr Klimowicz, Michael Schoenborn, Fred Lerner, John Carruthers, Joey Silver

Bronze: Hanna - Nader Hanna, John Rayner, Doug Baxter, David Lindop, Vince Oddy, Roy Dalton

CNTC - B

CANADIAN NATIONAL TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS

Gold: Chu - Roger Chu, Jim Wu, Yimei Cao, Fan Yang

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Bronze: Mykytyshyn - Freddie Mykytyshyn, Jenna Tichon, Ken Goodridge, Terry Visentin, Mike Shaw

Bronze: Jordan - Douglas Jordan, Larry Murray, Robert Lao, Chris Robinson, Alan He

CNTC - C

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Gold: Fung - Kismet Fung, Susan Culham, Louise Berthiaume, Sondra Blank

Silver: Thomson - Lesley Thomson, Barbara Shnier, Hazel Wolpert, Ina Demme, Debbie Bennett, Joy Phillips

Bronze: Chen - Yuan Chen, Lisa Chen, Rose Hou, Sheila Xieyi Xu, Cindy He

Bronze: Cao - Yimei Cao, Lisa Li, Candice Huang, Lucy He, Yanping Zhang, Wenmin Chen

CMTC

CANADIAN MIXED TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS

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Silver: Michael Wang, Candice Huang, Zhenghui Hu, Yuan Chen, Cindy He, Jianfeng Luo

Bronze: Susan Culham, Ranald Davidson, Kismet Fung, Robert Lebi

Bronze: Tim Edwards-Davies, Sandra Macpherson, Deborah Harper, Keith Heckley

CSTC

CANADIAN SENIOR TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS

Gold: Hanna - Nader Hanna, John Rayner, Vince Oddy, Roy Dalton, Doug Baxter, David Lindop

Silver: Jacob - Dan Jacob, Piotr Klimowicz, Robert Lebi, Les Amoils

Bronze: Findlay - Ian Findlay, Gordon Campbell, Paul Janicki, Waldemar Frukacz, Lew Richardson, Eiji Kujirai

Bronze: Gartaganis - Nicholas Gartaganis, Michel Lorber, Zygmunt Marcinski, Kamel Fergani

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CANADIAN IMP PAIRS CHAMPIONSHIPS

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Silver : Barry Senensky, Barbara Schnier

Bronze : Kelvin Raywood, Shelley Burns



CIPC Gold Medalists: Raymond Hornby & Marielle Brentnall

MOLLO On Play

Lead: ♣Q . Trumps split 4-1. Plan the play.
Plan the Play.

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

Under the assumption that West has the ♣J, declarer can insure their contract by drawing trumps, discarding a heart from dummy when spades split 4-1, and lead a low heart. Assuming E-W win and lead a diamond (as good as anything) declarer can win and test hearts.

If East has a heart guard, declarer finishes the heart, club and spade winners, producing a double squeeze (clubs threat vs West, heart threat against East, diamond threat against both; the club threat is positional – it is discarded on the last winner if West keeps the ♣J).

If West has a heart guard, declarer leaves themselves with one high heart, cashes any remaining club and trump winners (discarding the low diamond from dummy), then lead a diamond to dummy, squeezing West between hearts and clubs.

A trap to avoid is cashing one high heart first when hearts trumps are 4-1 (see diagram). In this case, when declarer ducks a heart West may be able to win and return a heart, breaking up the heart-club squeeze.

This is the last Mollo problem for Bridge Canada. A beauty to be sure.



THE NEW PLAYER *Spot*



by Andy Stark

Stayman 2.0

When we first learn the Stayman Convention we are told we need 8+ HCPs to bid $2\clubsuit$ over partner's 1NT opening bid. And we usually gloss over the strong hands of 15+ HCPs as that gets us into the slam zone. Today we'll delve deeper into Stayman and see how we can use the convention to refine our bidding.

Weak hands

Partner has opened with 1NT, and we want to show our five-card major. When we transfer partner to our long suit, we initially do not promise any high card strength. For example, if partner opens 1NT, you can bid $2\heartsuit$ and get partner to play in $2\spadesuit$ with this near-Yarborough:

♠ 108765
♥ 92
♦ 8752
♣ J9

Now, let's tweak the hand a little bit.

♠ 10876
♥ J92
♦ 107632
♣ 3

If partner opens 1NT you would probably pass like a shot and hope they don't go down too many. But this is a classic hand shape where you can trot out Stayman. Since partner is only allowed to make one of three bids (2♦ or 2♥ or 2♠), you simply pass at your next turn and the auction is over (unless the opponents balance).

If partner bids 2♠, you're happy to find a 4-4 fit and your hand will score a club ruff or two. That's two more tricks than in a 1NT contract. If partner bids 2♥ you are not quite as happy but the 4-3 fit will play better because your hand should score at least one club ruff. And if partner bids 2♦ (no 4-card major) then you can reasonably pass knowing partner most likely has 3+ diamonds. While their 2♦ is artificial, you convert it to the trump suit by passing. For this you need diamond length.

There are a few weak hand patterns in which you can bid Stayman and plan to pass partner's bid—they all involve shortness in clubs. For example, you could, if you choose, bid Stayman with any of these hands:

♠ J975	♠ J975	♠ J97
♥ 9872	♥ 987	♥ 987
♦ 109764	♦ 109764	♦ 1097643
♣ --	♣ 2	♣ 2

It's not pretty but it tends to be better than the alternative of watching partner struggle to find an entry to dummy in 1NT.

So, the rule of using Stayman with 8+ points is true, but only if you plan to make a rebid. For example, after Stayman, if you bid 2NT you have 8-9 HCPs. But if you are planning on passing whatever partner bids, then go ahead and bid with nothing!

Strong hands

There is a bid you and your partner should add to your repertoire. But first, to see how valuable it is, how do you bid this hand after partner opens with 1NT, and responds 2♠ to your 2♣ bid?

♠ AJ108
♥ A2
♦ KJ1093
♣ Q7

Opener	Responder (you)
1NT	2♣
2♠	?

Do you jump to 4♠, or do you bid 4NT? Or do you fudge and bid a new suit?

New suits are forcing, so that's a good start. So, you could bid 3♦ but if you do, partner will think you have 4 hearts and 5+ diamonds. It's a problem situation, so you need a bid that says, "I'm interested in slam, and I have support for your major."

The solution is to bid the other major, in this case 3♥. It comes after the specific start of 1NT (or 2NT), Stayman, a major bid by Opener, then the other major at the cheapest level by Responder. The meaning of the bid is that it agrees on the major suit bid by Opener and is at least a mild slam try. Now both partners know that they won't stop short of game and there may be a slam—something that control bidding and/or Roman Keycard Blackwood can sort out.

Here are four auctions where Responder shows a hand too strong to sign off in game:

1NT – 2♣	1NT – 2♣	2NT – 3♣	2NT – 3♣
2♥ – 3♠	2♠ – 3♥	3♥ – 3♠	3♠ – 4♥

Of note, in the first example, Responder jumps to 3♠ to show heart agreement and a good hand. (Bidding 2♠ would be an invitational to game type hand.) In the last example, we need to bid 4♥ to make the slam try in spades.

After Responder makes this Other Major slam agreement bid, 4NT by either player is RKC. But this 4NT is not to be confused with a quantitative bid of 4NT. An immediate bid of 4NT after Opener bids a major is quantitative, implying four cards in the other major. Here are the two auctions to show the difference:

1. Opener Responder
1NT 2♣
2♥ 4NT
2. Opener Responder
1NT 2♣
2♥ 3♠
4♥ 4NT

In the first auction Responder has four spades and is bidding 4NT as a quantitative invitation.

In the second auction Responder is bidding RKC because hearts were agreed on with the 3♠ bid.

And there you have it—two tricks of the trade involving Stayman auctions.



I give a lesson on preemptive bidding and then call off a hand. The class divides the cards. The South hand is supposed to have seven hearts, but North winds up with the 7 hearts and 20 cards and South winds up with no hearts and 6 cards.

South calls me over and says: "Mr. Kantar, I have never seen a hand like this before." But she is happy because she likes to count points for short suits. North, on the other hand, is having trouble holding on to all 20 cards and they are falling over the place. But North is even happier than South because North likes to count extra points for long suits. I finally had to tell them what happened.

Edwin Kantar

what

...does this bid mean?

1. N-S Vul:

North	South
1♥	1NT
2♣	2♠

What does 2♠ mean?

2. N-S Vul:

North	South
1♥	1NT
2♣	3♠

What does 3♠ mean?

Answers on page 23

QUIZ

INTERMEDIATE DECLARER PLAY

ANSWER ON PAGE 16

Contract: 4♥ West leads ♠A and then the ♠K
Plan the play.

♠ J 10 5
♥ K Q J 8
♦ 9
♣ A K 7 5 4

♠ 4
♥ A 10 4 3
♦ A 8 4 2
♣ 10 6 3 2

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

1. Heart support with diamond shortness, extra values

BRIDGE BASICS



SLAM CONVENTIONS 1

This is the 28th 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.

Let us now delve into the world of slam bidding, and some of the treatments available to you and your partner. Let's start with the numero uno slam convention asking for aces, and then dig deeper into the plethora of slam tools available.

GERBER

This is a method where a jump to four clubs asks for aces. Most partnerships restrict its use to over notrump openers.

Ex 1 1NT – 4♣ asks for aces.

Ex 2 2NT – 4♣ asks for aces.

Responses are:

- 4♦ = 0 or 4
- 4♥ = 1
- 4♠ = 2
- 4NT = 3

BLACKWOOD

For all other auctions 4NT asks for aces. The structure is similar to Gerber:

- 5♣ = 0 or 4
- 5♦ = 1
- 5♥ = 2
- 5♠ = 3

Ex 3

1♠ – 3♠
4NT

1430

This is an alternate form of Blackwood that is the commonly used as technically superior, as the first step shows 1 (or 4), which is the most likely response:

- 5♣ = 1 or 4
- 5♦ = 0 or 3
- 5♥ = 2

Roman Keycard Blackwood

Finally the version that most players adopt, allowing the responder to show the king and queen of agreed trump suit. In 1430 the responses include the King of trumps as one of 5 key cards (4 aces and the king of trumps).

The responses are:

5♣ = 1 or 4 key cards

5♦ = 0 or 3 key cards

5♥ = 2 without the queen of trump.

5♠ = 2 key cards with the queen of trump.

Q: How do you show the queen of trump after a 5♣ or 5♦ Key Card response?

A: The cheapest bid, not including the agreed trump suit, then asks responder if they have the queen of trump. If they do they jump to six in the trump suit, if not they return to five of the trump suit. A worthwhile modification is that with the queen of trump, and no kings, jump in the trump suit. With at least one king, bid the one that you can show most economically. If partner wants to hear about more kings, they can make the lowest, non-signoff bid. Here is what this looks like:

Ex 4

North	South
♠AKJxx	♠Qxx
♥Ax	♥Kxx
♦AQJxx	♦Kx
♣x	♣A109xx
1♠	2♣
2♦	2♠
4NT ¹	5♣ ²
5♦ ³	5♥ ⁴
5NT ⁵	6♦ ⁶
7NT ⁷	

1. Roman Key Card 1430.
2. 1 or 4 Key Cards
3. Asking for queen of trumps
4. I have the ♠Q and the ♥K
5. Do you have any more kings?
6. I do not have the ♣K, otherwise I would have bid 6♣, but have the ♦K.
7. I can count 13 tricks.

Here is an example with diamonds as trump.

Ex 5:

1♦ – 2♦¹

4NT – 5♣

1. Game Forcing

5♥ asks for the ♦Q. 5♦ would have been a sign off. Responder:

With no ♦Q they return to 6♦.

With the ♦Q they bid 7♦.

Astute readers might notice that this is cumbersome method when the agreed suit is a minor, as you have bypassed the five level when it might not be safe to do so (i.e. off two aces). There are two primary options:

Minorwood: That is when you have agreed a minor in a game forcing auction, four of that minor acts as a Key Card ask. The normal steps apply, just at a lower level.

Ex 6:

1♦ – 2♦¹

4♦² – 5♣³

1. Game Forcing

2. Minorwood

3. 4th step – two Key Cards with ♦Q.

Redwood: 4♦ is Key Card for clubs and 4♥ Key Card for diamonds.

Ex 7:

1♣

2♣¹

4♦²

4♥³

1. Limit Raise

2. Redwood

3. 1 or 4.

Playing Redwood or Minorwood a 4NT bid is now available for other purposes, such as signoff (especially important at pairs), or a relay asking how the trump queen and/or side kings.

Next issue: More slam conventions.



BIDDING STRATEGIES 14

When their side preempts

QUIZ

By Neil Kimelman

Here is a series of situations to test your judgement when the opponents preempt. This issue will focus solely on IMP scoring. Next issue we will look at matchpoint decisions.

1. Neither vul. IMPs. ♠K987 ♥A975 ♦1092 ♣A4

West	North	East	South
3♦	Pass	Pass	?

2. Both vul. IMPs. ♠65 ♥987 ♦AQ985 ♣AK5

West	North	East	South
2♥	?		

3. Both vul. IMPs. ♠1065 ♥87 ♦AQ987 ♣AK5

West	North	East	South
2♥	?		

4. Both vul. IMPs. ♠Q108 ♥A92 ♦AK75 ♣A109

West	North	East	South
4♥	?		

5. Both vul. IMPs. ♠QJ103 ♥- ♦AK75 ♣AJ1092

West	North	East	South
4♥	?		

6. N-S vul. IMPs. ♠Q1093 ♥AJ3 ♦5 ♣AK943

West	North	East	South
5♦	?		

THE
INTERMEDIATE
Spot

7. N-S vul. IMPs. ♠Q1093 ♥AJ3 ♦5 ♣AK943

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

8. N-S vul. IMPs. ♠54 ♥AJ109 ♦KQ103 ♣AK9

West	North	East	South
2♠	Pass	3♠	?

9. N-S vul. IMPs. ♠A54 ♥AJ109 ♦Q109 ♣AK9

West	North	East	South
2♠	Pass	3♠	?

10. N-S vul. IMPs. ♠- ♥95 ♦AK10943 ♣QJ742

West	North	East	South
		2♠	Pass
3♠	4♥	Pass	?

Solutions

1. Neither vul. IMPs. ♠K987 ♥A975 ♦1092 ♣A4

West	North	East	South
3♦	Pass	Pass	?

Pass. Your first thought might be that partner has an opening bid and you can make game. But if North does, they also have some diamond length, as they did not make a takeout double. They also cannot have a 15+ with a diamond stopper or partner would have overcalled 1NT.

2. Both vul. IMPs. ♠65 ♥987 ♦AQ985 ♣AK5

West	North	East	South
2♥	?		

Pass. Yes you have a good minimum opening bid with a good five card suit. But it is not enough. If you had a 6th diamond, ok. If you do bid 3♦ and partner bids 3♠, what do you bid? No, it is better to be conservative and hope partner can reopen if West passes.

3. Both vul. IMPs. ♠1065 ♥87 ♦AQ987 ♣AK5

West	North	East	South
2♥	?		

You have roughly the same hand, with one big difference: you have a 3rd spade and one less heart. This hand is still not a 3♦ overcall – too risky! Make a takeout **Double** as you have support for all suits.

4. Both vul. IMPs. ♠Q108 ♥A92 ♦AK75 ♣A109

West	North	East	South
4♥	?		

Double. This bid shows a strong notrump in a balanced hand. That is about what you have.

5. Both vul. IMPs. ♠QJ103 ♥- ♦AK75 ♣AJ1092

West	North	East	South
4♥	?		

Many experts would advocate a takeout double on this hand as well. I disagree with that majority as how will partner know you have this shape versus the shape in problem #4, when you make the same bid? I like **4NT** as a two or three suit takeout.

6. Both vul. IMPs. ♠Q1093 ♥AJ3 ♦5 ♣AK943

West	North	East	South
5♦	?		

Double. You might occasionally go -750, but you need to tell partner you have a good opening bid.

7. N-S vul. IMPs. ♠Q1093 ♥AJ3 ♦5 ♣AK943

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

One of the principles of bidding over preempts is that if you pull a double at the game level it is because you think you can make it, not because you are afraid of the opponents making their contract. Partner thinks

they can make 5♠. What can they have? At least something like ♠AKxxxx ♥xx ♦xx ♣Qxx. I would raise to 6♠. Even better is 6♣. After the original double this bid can never be natural, but a cue bid in support of spades, trying for a grand slam.

8. N-S vul. IMPs. ♠54 ♥AJ109 ♦KQ103 ♣AK9

West	North	East	South
2♠	Pass	3♠	?

Double. Automatic.

9. N-S vul. IMPs. ♠A54 ♥AJ109 ♦Q109 ♣AK9

West	North	East	South
2♠	Pass	3♠	?

Bid 3NT. This shows one of two hand types: Either around a good 1NT opener or a long running suit. Both with a spade stopper. Any bid by partner is natural and too play.

10. N-S vul. IMPs. ♠- ♥95 ♦AK10943 ♣QJ742

West	North	East	South
3♠	4♥	2♠	Pass
		Pass	?

You have a great hand opposite an average 4♥ bid. Tell partner you are interested in slam by cue bidding 4♠. Incidentally, this hand was not quite good enough for a 3♦ bid. 4NT would have been reasonable, although partner will likely play you for a better hand.



Bridge players will go to bid with anyone.

QUIZ

INTERMEDIATE DECLARER PLAY

PUZZLE ON PAGE 11

Contract: 4♥ West leads ♠A and then the ♠K
The full deal:

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

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

1. Heart support with diamond shortness, extra values

This looks like an easy hand, but it is not. In fact it is an advanced hand, so if you found the winning line, congrats!

You only have 1 certain loser, a spade. If clubs split 2-2 you can actually make twelve tricks. The key is to ensure making 10 tricks. Ruff the spade and lead a club, winning the ace if West follows. Now, ruff your last spade, and lead a 2nd club towards the king. If West shows out and ruffs, play a small club from, dummy and you have the rest, losing only two tricks. If West discards, win the ♣K and give up a club. If East returns a diamond or a heart you have 11 tricks. If instead, they return a spade, ruff with ♥A, and play the xHx 10 overtaking with the Jack. Pull two more rounds of trump. If trumps split claim. If not, play your two good remaining clubs, making 10 tricks.

Finally on the actual hand West follows to the 2nd club. Play the King. East can ruff. If they return a trump win with the ace and give up a club. If they return a 4th round of spades, ruff with the ace and give up a club.



What Went Wrong?

by Paul Thurston

The various routes the bidding might take to a final contract can have wildly unpredictable effects on the result and this deal provided enough variables to keep the after-the-fact analysts working overtime. Take a quick look at the diagram and try to guess what you think could (should?) happen when South declares four hearts.

Hand 1

♠	Q104	♠	AJ762
♥	J9743	♥	2
♦	K3	♦	AJ1042
♣	A62	♣	Q5
♠	3	♠	K985
♥	106	♥	AKQ85
♦	Q976	♦	85
♣	KJ10984	♣	73

Opening lead: ♠3

So, ever the wide-eyed optimist, you'd expect East to win the ace of spades, play back a spade for a ruff, win a diamond on the way back for a second spade ruff with the second diamond winner completing a two-trick set. Final score inscribed on the score sheet for North-South was +420 for making 4♥. To generate a genuinely surprised WHAT WENT WRONG?

Before proceeding any further let's examine the bidding

THE
EXPERT
Spot

that set the stage for WWW:

Dealer: South Vulnerable: none

West	North	East	South
			1♥
Pass	3♣	3♠	4♥
Dbl	All Pass		

Recognizing that his partner's spade lead could be from any one of 3 possible holdings: ♠3, ♠??3 or ♠K?3, East erred by making a play (the Jack) that really catered only to one of those (the K?3) and, given a reprieve from the carnage he was expecting, declarer won, drew trumps and forced out the spade ace to generate an extra spade winner to discard a diamond from dummy. Hard luck for the defense?

Really hard luck in more ways than one if you go back to the diagram and do a quick analysis of East-West's offensive potential: five diamonds is relatively easy to make with five clubs also in the running (there is a lead to set five clubs but not five diamonds). All to make the defensive lapse of minor (insert mild chuckle) significance compared to the bidding misfire by East-West. Yes, West might well have overcalled a preemptive three clubs but as luck would have it, his partnership had another artificial use for that bid!

But East? I'd judge he really missed the boat. One of the weaknesses of artificial raises like North's Bergen's raise (a limit raise showing 4+ support and 10-11 hcp) is that they will on occasion provide a convenient way for the opponents to stick an oar into the bidding waters. In this case, East did enter but with an all-eggs-in-one-basket bid of three spades. Much better to have used the available space and overcall three hearts with East's cards: that call showing spades and a minor would have removed all possibility of the spade lead and subsequent defensive disaster ever happening as West would surely have found a way to get his side to five diamonds (likely four notrump asking partner to reveal his minor) whether or not South essayed four hearts.

Hand 2

One of the crosses one must bear when competing in International events like the Rosenblum Cup (Philadelphia, 2010) is that on occasion you are featured on Vugraph where a live audience gets to see all 52 cards while having commentators provide a computer-generated analysis of what will work for both declarer and the defenders.

♠	J7654	♠	10932
♥	542	♥	103
♦	K1073	♦	9862
♣	2	♣	J105
♠	KQ	♠	A8
♥	AKJ7	♥	Q986
♦	AQ5	♦	J4
♣	AQ74	♣	K9863

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

Opening lead: ♠5

After partner (David Willis from Ottawa – but not the columnist!) found the spade lead that the Double Dummy computer/analyst/commentator(s) said was the beginning needed to defeat the contract but the final score for declarer (Sweden's Peter Fredin, truly one of the great card players of his generation) and his team was +600 for bringing home nine tricks.

And thus we can ask your current writer: hey Paul, WHAT WENT WRONG? In order to set three notrump, South must win the ace of spades (clever me, I did!) and shift to the Jack of diamonds (and I most definitely did not!). West would play the Queen for North to win the King and play back a second spade and there's no way for declarer to succeed even though the defensive communications are tenuous at best. Meanwhile, South, looking at an unimposing dummy (except for

all of those stout spot cards, some of which had to be good upholstery for West's advertised holding of about 25-26 high-card points) decided that the best approach might be to stick West in his hand without breathing possible trick-taking or entry life into dummy by switching to a new suit. But after winning trick two with a high spade, Fredin lashed back with the Jack of hearts! Still unwilling to provide a dummy entry, South ducked but then came more torture in the form of the Queen of clubs. To effectively end any glimmering defensive hopes as South won the King to return the Queen of hearts for declarer to win, cross to a club in dummy and play back the spade ten to force out the Jack and end with two spade tricks, three hearts, one diamond and three clubs. At least the head commentator was generous to end by saying that finding the winning defense against three notrump was "a very tough double-dummy problem".

Hand 3

One last double-dummy problem from the World Bridge Series Championship (Philadelphia, 2010), this one from the semi-final of the Rand Cup for Senior players.

Dealer: North Both Vulnerable

		♠ 2		
		♥ K106		
		♦ KQ75		
		♣ Q9654		
♠ 104	♠ AKQJ83			
♥ J4	♥ 873			
♦ 643	♦ 1092			
♣ KJ10873	♣ 2			
		♠ 9765		
		♥ AQ952		
		♦ AJ8		
		♣ A		

Table One Bidding, with both vul:

West	North	East	South
	Pass	1♠	2♥
Pass	3♥	Pass	4♣
Dbl	Pass	Pass	Rdbl
Pass	4♦	Pass	6♥
All Pass			

Opening lead: ♠10

As is common in competitions at the World level, North-South left nothing of their values unbid as they prodded and poked until arriving at the fair-to-middling small slam in hearts. East won the spade lead to play back his lone club but that wasn't quite good enough as South won, ruffed a spade in dummy, crossed to the diamond ace and ruffed one more spade. Finally, the heart King was cashed and a club ruffed in the closed hand to extract the outstanding trumps and take three more diamond winners: two spade ruffs in dummy, five hearts, four diamonds and the club ace to round out twelve tricks. Enter the Vugraph commentators with their computer-aided analysis to inform all and sundry that six hearts could (should?) be defeated! Really? So WHAT WENT WRONG?

Try seeing through the backs of the cards as West and make the devastating opening lead of a trump! Don't you just hate those computers?



Bad declarers mainly fall into two categories: Those who always pull trump and those who never pull trump.

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.



3rd Transatlantic Seniors Cup

Julian Klukowski Memorial Trophy, Part Two

by Mark Horton, Shrewsbury

Both declarers missed the winning line on this deal from Round 11, with Belgium facing Lithuania:

Board 1. Dealer North. Neither side vulnerable.



♠ 432	♠ QJ1097	♠ AK5
♥ AK1097	♥ Q5	♥ 862
♦ J10	♦ 8543	♦ K2
♣ AQ2	♣ 73	♣ J10985
	♠ 86	
	♥ J43	
	♦ AQ976	
	♣ K64	

Kowalski	Coenrates	Romanski	Bigdeli
West	North	East	South
	2♠ ¹	Pass	Pass
3♥	Pass	4♥	All Pass

1. Five spades and a minor, less than an opening.

North led the queen of spades and declarer won in dummy, played a heart to the king and ran the ten of diamonds. South won and returned the six of spades, and there was no way to avoid four losers for one off. At the other table:

Engel	Russyan	Backes	Gierulski
West	North	East	South
	Pass	1♣	1♦
1♥ ¹	1♠	Pass	Pass
Dbf	2♦	2♥	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

1. Shows five.

North led the five of diamonds and South won with the queen and switched to the six of spades, declarer winning in dummy and playing a heart to the ten and queen. North exited with the queen of spades and again the defenders had four tricks, no swing.

The winning strategy for declarer is to attack the side suit before playing trumps. After an initial spade lead declarer should run the jack of clubs, repeat the finesse, cash the top hearts and then play the ace of clubs. With North unable to ruff, declarer crosses to dummy with a spade and plays a club, which results in an overtrick. Even after an initial diamond, playing on clubs will result in at least 10 tricks (11 if South does not cash a second diamond). Lithuania picked up 5 IMPs on this board, but it could have been more:

Board 6. Dealer East. EW Vul.

♠AJ83		
♥KJ62		
♦75		
♣764		
♠KQ1064		♠75
♥A8		♥Q1093
♦A92		♦1043
♣J53		♣AKQ9
	♠92	
	♥754	
	♦KQJ86	
	♣Q1064	

Kowalski	Coenrates	Romanski	Bigdeli
West	North	East	South
—	—	Pass	Pass
1NT	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♠	Pass	3NT	All Pass

North led the diamond seven and declarer won the third round of the suit, North discarding the six of clubs. Declarer went to dummy with a club and played a spade to the ten, North winning with the jack and exiting with a club. Declarer won with the jack, cashed two more clubs pitching a heart and played a spade to the queen and ace. North exited with the jack of hearts and that meant two down, -200.

North's opening lead from a doubleton strongly suggests values in both majors and it is clear that if South has the ace of spades the contract cannot be made. Having crossed to dummy with a club declarer can play a spade to the king. If North wins and exits with a club declarer wins, and must now play on hearts, cashing the ace and then playing a heart to the queen. When that holds declarer cashes dummy's remaining clubs. Here is the position with North still to discard:

♠ J8		
♥ KJ		
♦ -		
♣ -		
♠ Q106		♠ 7
♥ -		♥ 109
♦ -		♦ -
♣ -		♣ -
	♠ 9	
	♥ 7	
	♦ 8	
	♣ -	

North has no good move. Discarding a spade is immediately fatal, while pitching a heart allows declarer to exit with a heart forcing a lead into the ♠Q10.

No one found the top spot of 6♣ on this deal from the round of 16, but one declarer made 6NT (see next page):

Board 22. Dealer East. NS Vul.

♠ 3	
♥ 87654	
♦ 109862	
♣ 42	
♠ A98	♠ Q72
♥ A92	♥ KQ103
♦ K74	♦ A5
♣ Q1053	♣ AKJ8
♠ KJ10654	
♥ J	
♦ QJ3	
♣ 976	

At one table South led the seven of clubs against 6NT and declarer took four rounds in the suit, North pitching the five of hearts and the six of diamonds while South discarded the six of spades. When declarer continued with a spade to the queen South won and returned the jack and declarer had to lose another trick, losing 11 IMPs against 3NT at the other table.

If declarer postpones a decision about the spades and plays on hearts he can cash four tricks in the suit, which puts South under pressure. Still, declarer would have to read the position to get home.

Anatol Filip was the only one to make 6NT. South had overcalled his 1♣ opening with 1♠ and he made no mistake, reducing down to three spades in each hand before endplaying South by exiting from dummy with the eight of spades. It was worth 14 IMPs as 6NT went down in the other room.

The quarterfinals were hard fought with a host of exciting deals. From USA Lusk v Poland Bocheński:

Board 7. Dealer South. Both sides vulnerable.

♠ 8	
♥ A8	
♦ QJ965	
♣ AKJ62	
♠ 732	♠ QJ9654
♥ KJ	♥ 75
♦ A10732	♦ 84
♣ 874	♣ Q53
♠ AK10	
♥ Q1096432	
♦ K	
♣ 109	

Rigal	Miszewska	Rubin	Zawiślak
West	North	East	South
			1♥
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♥
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♦
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

South's 3♦ was an artificial bid showing six hearts, as 2♥ could have been just five. East led the spade queen and declarer won with dummy's ace and ran the ten of clubs. When it held, she repeated the finesse and East won and exited with the seven of hearts to the jack and ace. Declarer played back a heart and West won, cashed the diamond ace and exited with the seven of clubs. Declarer won, and cashed the clubs and a top diamond:

♠ -		♠ J96
♥ -		♥ -
♦ J96		♦ -
♣ -		♣ -
♠ -		♠ -
♥ -		♥ -
♦ 1073		♦ -
♣ -		♣ -
♠ K		
♥ 109		
♦ -		
♣ -		

The winning move now is to exit with a low diamond, but when declarer cashed the jack instead she was one down, -100 and 13 IMPs poorer (with the other table scoring +650 in 4♥).

A player who cannot defend accurately should try to be declarer.

Alfred Sheinwold

A simpler way to make 3NT is to play on hearts. West can win the second round and play two rounds of diamonds, but declarer wins in dummy and can play a low club, forcing an entry to hand with the ♣109. The two Polish teams faced off in the semi-final, where both tables bid this slam:

Board 38. Dealer West. Neither side vulnerable.

♠ 107		
♥ Q765		
♦ Q87653		
♣ 8		
♠ K6	♠ AJ94	
♥ 1084	♥ AJ3	
♦ 92	♦ A10	
♣ AQ7632	♣ KJ104	
♠ Q8532		
♥ K92		
♦ KJ4		
♣ 95		

For Poland 1, Bizon and Blat reached 6♣ by West after a natural 2♣ opening and a relay auction. North led the six of diamonds and declarer won with dummy's ace, drew trumps and played two rounds of spades, finessing to go one down.

If declarer plays North for ♠107 alone, he can take the second round with dummy's ace and advance the jack intending to pitch a diamond. If South covers declarer ruffs, goes to dummy with a club, pitches a diamond on the nine of spades, ruffs a diamond and plays a heart to the jack and king. South will be down to ♥92 ♦K and forced to play a heart. If declarer puts in the eight the slam is home.

One down was 14 IMPs away when Kierznowski made 6♣ at the other table, on a trump lead and subsequent misdefence.

what

...does this bid mean?

1. N-S Vul:

North	South
1♥	1NT
2♣	2♠

What does 2♠ mean?

Answer: 2♠ is a strong club raise, usually the equivalent of an opening bid. An example of a 2♠ bid would be ♠Axx ♥x ♦Axx ♣QJxxxx. With a slightly weaker hand, such as ♠Axx ♥xx ♦Qxx ♣KJxxx, a simple invitational raise to 3♣ would be sufficient.

2. N-S Vul:

North	South
1♥	1NT
2♣	3♠

3♠ here as well must be some sort of club raise. Without any type of agreement, I would expect it to be shortness showing, almost for sure a void. Maybe ♠- ♥xx ♦Axxxx ♣KJxxxx.

Remember, if responder had spades in either of these auctions, they would have started with a 1♠ response.

the GREAT CANADIAN BIDDING CONTEST



JUNE 2023 TGCBC

Host: David Turner

For panelists, and their bids, see page 30

Editor's note: It's my pleasure to welcome David as his first time hosting TGCBC. David is an expert, who has been successful on the Canadian bridge scene for a long time, and is known for his bidding judgement. **Miles, Treble, and Willis** all scored the maximum 50 points – Congrats! **Sheldon Spier** was once again the top reader score. 2nd was **Ashot Harutyunyan**. I will be hosting the August contest, and readers can enter, with the chance of winning cash prizes. Play along and see how your game matches up! Over to you David!

When I participate as a panelist, I always enjoy hearing about the real-life results, so I've largely reported those here, despite the fact these problems are largely taken from past unsuccessful efforts by me. Regardless, it's good to remember we're looking for the best expert consensus here, not what happened to work one time.

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

♠8642 ♥AK7 ♦8 ♣J9853

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

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

(b) What now?

Call	Score	Panelists
(a) Agree	1	17
(a) Other	0	0
(b) 3♥	9	9
(b) 5♣	7	4
(b) 4♣	6	4

On (a) I held this hand and felt a little guilty doubling with 1 HCP in our suits and 7 points in theirs, but did it anyway. All the panel agreed, with Balcombe closest to my view:

Balcombe: How else could you find a 4-4 fit? Well, you could bid 2♣ followed by 2♠ if given the chance. Maybe four to the eight isn't a biddable suit. **Yep, but partner might figure my 2♠ bid as 3145 eight count with Kxx of spades, so I pretended I had 4 spades.**

Thurston: Agree ... they can be SPADES or spades. But not bidding them now would lose the suit forever, wouldn't it?

Kuz: If we have a spade fit, we're ruffing diamonds with the weak trumps, and my heart honours will prevent forces in that suit for the moment.

On (b), there was quite a bit of discussion about how good a hand partner held for this auction, and this of course influenced responder's rebid. Starting high:

Marcinski: 3♦ is GF, ostensibly natural, but might be mainly distributional strength... **[justification edited for length to save paper- DT]. My simple view is that a suit bid in response to a double in competition is non-forcing when an economical cuebid is available.**

L'Ecuyer: Partner probably has a decent hand with interesting shape (56 or 46) vs. high cards.

Grainger: Opposite (12)46 we need very little to make slam as partner has reversed **[emphasis mine -DT]**. A(x)x(x) Axxx, AKxxxx is a laydown grand. We're looking for seven now.

My view (clearly not a universal one!) is that opener can have just shape with a short hearts, and it's my job to save him if I don't have 4+ diamonds (which I was well-equipped to do). I don't think I'd need more than Qx, x, KQxx, KQ10xxx as a minimum; with less shape and more points he can double, and with a strong shapely hand he can cuebid: that's how you force to game in competition, right?

For the folks above, a forcing 4♣ now by responder is easy. Most aren't so sure about that 3♦ bid, and react accordingly:

Balcombe: 3♥. I don't think 4♣ would be forcing, but in Keith's World we don't play in a "constructive" 4 of a minor contract.

Jacob, Treble, Miles, others: 3♥, GF, no rush to bid 5♣.

Hargreaves: 3♥. Always right in a bidding contest.

Cooper gives a compelling reason why 3♥ may not be the best call:

Cooper 5♣: Danger Will Robinson. If you bid 3♥, partner may think you have a diamond fit and you'll have to convert diamond bids at the next level. This would be OK with the minor suit lengths reversed.

Also along that vein:

Kimelman: 5♣. Not a game forcing auction. Avoiding any confusion by making the value bid.

Lindop: 5♣. 3NT might make, but I don't need much from partner to make 5♣, for example: xx, xx, Axxx, AKxxx

Thurston: 5♣. 6♣ if I could guarantee a heart lead. Lebi: 4♣. Seems enough for now. I'm worried about my spade holding. **Not sure if that means "non-forcing" or "let's leave space on the way to slam"**

As to what to do now, I think everyone should put this Weinstein-Levin (and Keith's World) agreement into

their notes: "At IMPs, a constructive four of a minor is always forcing", but lacking that, I think Lindop, Cooper, Thurston and Kimelman's 5♣ answer is the most practical one. Cuebidding an amorphous 3♥ with 1 HCP in partner's suits is going to get partner excited for the wrong reasons, and he'll assume you're coming in diamonds with potentially disastrous results. If he bids on over 5♣, you'll be comfortable putting down this dummy. If partner doesn't think 4♣ is forcing, you'll wish you hadn't bid it.

On this hand, however, the 3♥ bid is the winner, as partner has a perfect: AQ, xx, Axxx, AKxxx, and seven made.

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 GF.
3. Could have bid 2NT with 15+ HCP.
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?

Call	Score	Panelists
(a) Prefer 2♦	3	10
(a) Prefer 3♥	2	5
(a) Agree	1	2
(b) 6♣, 5♥	7	12
(b) 5♦	7	0
(b) Pass	3	5

On (a), I chose 2♠ (i) because I felt a doubleton spade might be required for a slam if partner was GF and (ii) because a 5-0-4-4 shapes are 3-suiters, not 1-suiters. I saw Brad Moss in Lyons(?) treat a 5-0-4-4 hand with a major suit transfer over partner's 1NT followed by an auto-splinter, and there was no 13th trick in their eventual grand slam when partner expected a sixth trump.

There's not a ton of agreement on how best to organize inverted minors, but the approach used above has minimal artificiality, while giving up the ability to stop on a dime in 2NT. The panel, however, favoured 2♦ or the 3♥ auto-splinter route for part (a):

Kuz: Prefer 2♦. Why are we wasting space? Partner might need to value the ♦J in a grand slam search, e.g. xx, KQT, KJx, Kxxxx. **Remember this answer!**

Treble, Thurston: Prefer 2♦ to save space.

Balcombe: Prefer economical 2♦. Why can't Inverted Minors be GF? **Because we need to include a limit raise and a GF raise with one bid. Playing them forcing to 3m means you can show your big hands economically as well. My partner and I once bid successfully: 1♣-2♣-2N-3N-4♣-6♣ (the 2NT bid showed 12-14 or 18-19 with 4+ clubs).**

L'Ecuyer: Prefer 3♥. How about 3♥ and then 4♦ over 3NT? Second choice: 2♦ – both a better suit and saves room.

Kimelman, Marcinski: Prefer 3♥ then 4♥.

Certainly reasonable if you feel you're raising clubs.

(b) At this point, you've got a pretty good idea of partner's strength and honour distribution. So ...? Most think 6♣ is right:

L'Ecuyer: 6♣. Partner has the ♦K, lots of heart waste, and something like K fifth of clubs. Spade holding would be key for 7, but I can't find out.

Jacob: 6♣. With as little as ♦K and ♣Kxxxx we should be OK.

Hargreaves (with L'Ecuyer, Thurston, , Marcinski, Kuz, Jacob (usually with some complaint about the previous bidding)): 6♣ - I'm hoping for something like: xx, KQx, KJx, KJxxx. **Me too ... but I was hoping my 2♠ bid might have encouraged him to bid six, with a doubleton spade and pass with three.**

Willis: 6♣. Not sure where my losing spade will go, but we should have a good play.

Cooper: 6♣ looks like it should have a play, losing at most a spade. Partner should have good stops in the reds, filling in the diamonds. He likely has king fifth of clubs. If he has two spades, easy. If he has three, can throw one on a diamond.

And one or two think there may be more or less than six:

Lindop: 5♥. 7 is not impossible opposite Qx, KJx, KJx, Kxxxx.

Treble: 5♥. A grand slam is still possible ... if responder doesn't have the ♥A or ♠K, he rates to have both minor suit kings.

Grainger: Pass (reluctantly)

Balcombe: Pass – haven't I shown my hand?

Lebi: Pass. I expect to lose a heart and a spade trick.

My view is the bidding has shown that the hands fit quite poorly, BUT partner might have a 5th club, or if he's 3334 (very possible) all the suits might break 3-3, or they might lead the ♥A, or ... In other words, the values in the combined hands should always give the slam some sort of chance (as Willis said), so you should

*just bid it. Unfortunately, I reasoned as Lebi did and passed. Partner had the expected 3 small spades and ♥KQx, but he had *KJ doubleton* of diamonds and 5 clubs king, so the grand was cold. Bob Kuz should get 12 points here ☺*

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	Dbf	Pass	?
1. Weak			

What now?

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

Personal style plays a role here when answering “what” and “how high”:

L’Ecuyer: 3♥. I have a good hand in context, but I think it is wrong to hang partner for his balancing double, and the hand may not play well after a club tap. With spades, hearts, and diamonds and the difficulty in landing at the right level and denomination, maybe it’s right to double 3♣ even with marginal hands like this one.

Kuz: 3♥. I’m not bidding game in hearts, not bidding spades or diamonds, nor risking a -670.

Grainger: 3♥ Partner has too many possibilities to bid anything else. His double doesn’t promise four spades.

Jacob: 3♠. Perhaps 3♦ would be more flexible.

Thurston mentions that partner’s failure to double 1♣ makes him less likely to have 4 spades – some would agree.

The consensus of the rest of the panel was that, though no gem, this hand was maximum for its pass, and should be driven to game at IMPs. Less-experienced players should observe the 4♣ bid chosen by most of them: when slam is not an issue, a cuebid is best used as “choice of games” move:

Balcombe: 4♣. “The hangman cometh”. Since I can’t have 5 spades, 3 hearts, or long diamonds, I must be 4=2=4=3! Easy Peasy. Maybe.

Kimelman: 4♣. And raise 4♦ to 5♦ and pass 4♥.

I think Treble’s idea is better:

Treble: 4♣. Then 4♥ over 4♦.

In the event, the problem hand bid a simple 4♥, and game was crummy but makeable on a club lead away from the king, partner holding Kxx, K9765, KQT, AQ. Note that 3NT has no real play ... maybe I should have made overcaller’s hand the problem ☺

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♣
Pass	3♣	Pass	?

Call	Score	Panelists
4♣	10	13
3♦	10	2
5NT	8	1
4NT	7	1

This hand isn’t fitting too well so far opposite a 3-suit-ed partner (despite 15 points and 7 controls in partner’s suits!), but still slam must be bid it seems. What’s the best route to get there? Many think it’s obvious, and it’s hard to argue with them:

Jacob: 4♣. Set trump, and bid keycard later.

Balcombe: 4♣. What else can we bid? We only need 11 HCPs or so and decent clubs for slam.

Lindop: 4♣. We need to set trumps. In some partnerships I play this as Blackwood for clubs.

Marcinski: 4♣. Natural (I hate Minorwood). I would play 4NT here as natural and invitational. I'm driving to slam but am not sanguine about resolving the 6♣ vs 6NT vs 7♣ dilemma.

L'Ecuyer: 4♣. What else can I do ... partner seems to be 4441 or 5440.

A couple of panelists are worried about that 3♣ bid and take evasive action:

Thurston: 3♦. For now, and RKC likely to follow once a suit has been agreed. While I expect 3♣ was natural, some play it as a "grope" = no stopper and nothing else fits.

Kimelman: 3♦. Set trumps and then RKC on the next round. Don't want to raise clubs in case North has only three. **But of course he might have only four diamonds.**

Kuz: 3♦. Don't know where we are going and how I can find out what I need to know to bid 7.

Todd: 4NT. I think KC in clubs and then 6 or 7 clubs depending on his response. *If I bid 3♦ we lose clarity in the auction [emphasis mine -DT]*

Grainger: 5NT. Pick a slam. I'm not sure how to interpret 3♣ exactly, but I can at least find out if partner has 4144 or good diamonds by making this call. Partner should expect these kinds of minor suit holdings.

I think Grainger has the right idea, but in my view, no one found the best sequence, found by my other-table counterpart: first 3♦, to find out if partner is 4441 or

5440 and then, over his 3N, 5N, which brought forth partner's 6♣. This was the best spot opposite: 9xxx, x, KQJx, KQJx. This unfortunately cost them 2 IMPs against my much poorer 6NT. Think how you would make it when lefty leads a high diamond and holds: Qxxxx, J10xx, xx, xx.

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♦	Pass	3♣
Pass	3♥	Pass	3NT
Pass	4♣	Pass	4♦
Pass	6NT	Pass	?

Had enough? Or too much already?

Call	Score	Panelists
Pass	10	16
7♣	9	1
7NT	7	0

The majority of the panel was not impressed by partner's sequence ... I think the Brits might call the auction "agricultural":

Marcinski: Pass. I've shown 11-16 and probably 4-6 shape, and that's what I have. 6NT makes no sense unless he was worried 4NT would be natural, not Blackwood. **(And "solo flight of fancy" is mentioned someplace - DT).**

Grainger: Pass. I should have bid RKC over 4♣. Backed into a corner now.

Balcombe: Pass. The auction looks reasonable to me.

Jacob: PASS.

I think a quote from Terence Reese sums up my view of this apparent non-problem: "A pass could not be

*criticized, but I am playing for points, not praise ...". So, assuming partner didn't bid 6NT as a solo flight of fancy, but rather was trying his best to describe his hand, what does he have? Indeed, he knows our likely distribution and minimum high cards as Marcinski observes, so why stop off in 4♣ whatever he has? The conclusion I came to was that partner's sequence showed he was too good to bid 6NT immediately, so his delayed 6NT was **invitational**. Other panelists took the view that they should look at their hand before passing, but most still did:*

Lindop: Pass – we're high enough. We could be missing the ♠K and ♣Q. Partner might hold: xx, AKQ765, KQx, Ax.

Kuz: Pass. I expect a claim unless hearts split badly; something like Kx, KQJT9x, Kxxx, A.

L'Écuyer (Hargreaves, similarly): Pass. I think we're missing the ♣Q.

Willis: Pass. Seems like enough... partner had other options and the fit isn't great. We could also have some transport challenges.

Kimelman: Pass. Partner must have at most Hx in clubs. He probably has solid hearts like: ♠KJx ♥AKQJx ♦KQ10 ♣xxx

Treble: Pass. I have had enough, and we might be too high already. **Wow! Your opening bid standards are pretty high!**

Cimon: Pass. I play partner for ♣Ax or ♣Qx, so too dangerous to continue, but *I've never really shown the strength of my hand [emphasis mine –DT].*

*I think the concern about the ♣Q is valid, but why did partner cuebid *only* clubs? We know from the 6NT bid he must have honours in diamonds and spades as well. Most of the "solid heart" examples look like Blackwood to me.. Lone wolf:*

Thurston: 7♣. For sure this sequence will generate some post-session discussion (maybe even the heated

variety). Much as I hate guessing a grand, this looks like the hand to do it with.

I held this hand, and it seemed to me I had a good hand in context opposite an invitation: the ♠Q wasn't promised, the ♦A could be the king, and the good club spots might be important. And, if he had a hand with a giant near-solid heart suit, my stiff was better than a void would be. So I bid 7NT after an outsize tank (maybe 7♣ makes more sense, but 7NT could be making without the ♣Q), and John Gowdy laid down a claimer: KJx, AKxxxx, QJ, AQ. Nice 4♣ bid by him! At the other table, John's counterpart simply raised 3NT to 6NT.



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PANELIST ANSWERS

June 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	yes/3♥	10	no/Pass	6	4♣	10	4♣	10	Pass	10	46
Francine Cimon	yes/3♥	10	no/6♣	10	3♥	6	4♣	10	Pass	10	46
Stephen Cooper	yes/5♣	8	no/6♣	10	3♥	6	4♣	10	Pass	10	44
David Grainger	yes/4♣	7	no/6♣	5	3♥	6	5NT	8	Pass	10	36
Mike Hargreaves	yes/3♥	10	no/6♣	8	4♥	8	4♣	10	Pass	10	46
Dan Jacob	yes/3♥	10	no/6♣	9	3♠	5	4♣	10	Pass	10	44
Neil Kimelman	yes/5♣	8	no/Pass	5	4♣	10	3♦	10	Pass	10	43
Bob Kuz	yes/3♥	10	no/6♣	10	3♥	6	3♦	10	Pass	10	46
Nic L'Ecuyer	yes/3♥	10	no/6♣	9	3♥	6	4♣	10	Pass	10	45
Robert Lebi	yes/4♣	7	no/Pass	5	4♣	10	4♣	10	Pass	10	42
David Lindop	yes/5♣	8	yes/5♥	8	4♣	10	4♣	10	Pass	10	46
Zyg Marcinski	yes/4♣	7	no/6♣	9	4♣	10	4♣	10	Pass	10	46
Danny Miles	yes/3♥	10	no/6♣	10	4♣	10	4♣	10	Pass	10	50
Paul Thurston	yes/5♣	8	no/6♣	10	4♣	10	3♦	10	7♣	9	47
Bob Todd	yes/4♣	7	no/6♣	10	3♥	6	4NT	7	Pass	10	40
Bill Treble	yes/3♥	10	no/5♥	10	4♣	10	4♣	10	Pass	10	50
David Willis	yes/3♥	10	no/6♣	10	4♣	10	4♣	10	Pass	10	50



Samantha and her close friend Emma were discussing the level of play of their spouse:

Emma: It isn't even close, Gerald is worse than Ethan.

Samantha: I don't agree.

Emma: Listen to what Ethan did last night playing 7NT. He had 11 tricks outside of spades and the dummy had the AQ of spades and the spade finesse was onside and he had plenty of entries to his hand to take the finesse, but instead of taking the spade finesse he went to dummy and led the SQ from the dummy!

Samantha: Yes, but he was playing against Ethan, who didn't play the spade king on the queen, so Gerald made his grand slam!!

AUGUST PROBLEMS

Host: Neil Kimelman

CBF members are invited to submit their answers to win cash prizes. If interested, please send your answers to editor@cbf.ca by July 11th.

1. N-S vul, IMPs. As South you hold
♠AQ9 ♥AKQ93 ♦A754 ♣J.

West	North	East	South
2♠	Pass	3♠	?

What do you bid?

2. IMPs. Both Vul., you hold as South:
♠AK7 ♥64 ♦A109852 ♣84.

West	North	East	South
1NT ¹	Db1 ²	Pass	?

1. 15-17

2. 5 cards in a minor, 4 cards in a major. (Note: 2♣ would be pass if this is your minor, or correct to 2♦, and 2♥ would be pass if this is your major, otherwise correct to 2♠.)

What do you bid?

3. Both vul, teams. As South, you hold
♠- ♥QJ952 ♦J653 ♣A863.

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

1. Positive response, but artificial.
What do you bid?

4. E-W vul, matchpoints. As east you hold
♠2 ♥AQ432 ♦J9532 ♣K6.

West	North	East	South
			1♥
1♠	2NT ¹	Pass	3♥
3♠	Db1	Pass	?

1. 4+ hearts, limit raise or better.

What do you bid?

5. N-S vul, IMPs. As south, you hold
♠AK4 ♥AK753 ♦J9 ♣1098.

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♣	Pass	1♥
Pass	2♣	Pass	?

a) What do you bid?

b) Over your answer to a), North rebids 3♣. Now what?



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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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