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Canada



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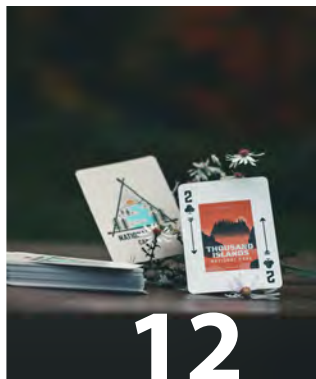
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THE CANADIAN BRIDGE FEDERATION

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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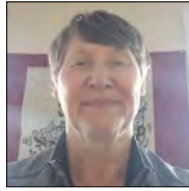
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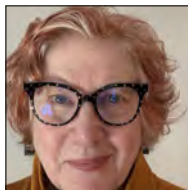
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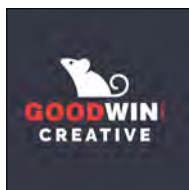
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THE CANADIAN BRIDGE FEDERATION PRESENTS



MAPLE LEAF BRIDGE NIGHTS

ACBL Sanctioned Duplicate Games on RealBridge

The Canadian Bridge Federation is proud to present an exciting opportunity for bridge players everywhere to take part in the new **MAPLE LEAF** online games, earn masterpoints, and support their home clubs in Canada.

We have formed a special partnership with **RealBridge**

RealBridge features a modern, user-friendly interface with built-in video and sound, delivering an authentic face-to-face bridge experience. It's entirely web-based—there's nothing to install—and it's incredibly easy to use. Even if you've never played online before!



- A RealBridge account is required. Visit www.realbridge.online to set up your account and deposit funds.
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Official Weekly **Maple Leaf** Games Every Friday

- 16-board pairs game: \$5 Cdn or \$4 US; 2nd Friday 24 board pairs game \$8 Cdn or \$6 US.
- 499er 7 pm ET, Top flight 7:10 pm ET, Mid flight 7:20 pm ET.
- Non-ACBL members can set up an ACBL Guest Account.

Since 1966, the Canadian Bridge Federation (CBF) has proudly represented the interests of all Canadian bridge players. To learn more about our work and how we support the bridge community, please visit our website at www.cbf.ca. When you sign up or renew your membership with the American Contract Bridge League (ACBL), don't forget to check the box to also join the CBF. For only **C\$25 per year**, your membership helps support the activities of your Canadian National Bridge Organization. You can also join the CBF directly through our website.

Be sure to check out our **Bridge Canada eMagazine**, available to the public and filled with news, stories, and insights for all bridge enthusiasts.



EDITOR'S MESSAGE

The Goods

WELCOME

I would like to recognize and welcome some new faces to the CBF umbrella of volunteers and staff:

Marielle Decelles-Brentnall – Zone IV Director.

Lois Matton – Zone V Director.

Sheila Xu – CBF Treasurer.

I would also like to thank **Cathy Walsh**, who was the Treasurer before Sheila. Thank you Cathy for all of your hard work: it was wonderful working with you!!

Ginger Grant – Board member-at-large. Ginger's portfolio will be Grant applications and education.

Mike Hargreaves – Board Member-at-large. Mike will be focusing primarily on legal and procedural matters. In addition Mike has been gracious enough to share his bridge expertise by being the host for this issue's The Great Canadian Bidding Contest (TGCBBC) article.

Sondra Blank – General administrative support.

Welcome all!! I look forward to working together on behalf of all Canadian bridge players.

CBF'S UPCOMING FALL AND WINTER BRIDGE SEASONS

The summer (and hopefully the smoke) season has come to the end, and with it some important and fun Canadian bridge events coming up, in which to consider participating.

BRAND NEW:

FUN MAPLE LEAF MATCHPOINT GAMES

For more information, please see the **flyer** and the **President's Message** found elsewhere in this issue.

ONLINE TEAMS

Yes, the CBF Online Team event is returning this fall. See the **President's Message** for more information. Teams can be up to eight players, so start planning now!

DON'T LOOK NOW...

The team trials, to select the Canadian representatives for the 2026 World Championships, is also just around the corner. Registration deadline is November 30th for some events, and December 15th for the rest. The round robin segment is on line, taking place in January 2026. The knockout phase will take place in BC, June 11-16, 2026, in conjunction with the great Penticton Regional. What a potentially great Bridge trip! With Open, Mixed, Senior's, Women's, Flight B and Flight C competitions, there is an event for everyone! What a great way to develop and improve your bridge game!

For more info on all of the above, please visit www.cbf.ca. See you in December, with reports from the Canadian Teams participating in the World Championships that just ended.

Neil Kimelman

Bridge Canada Managing Editor





PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*Hello Canadian Bridge
Players,*

MAPLE LEAF GAMES

I am extremely happy to see that our Canadian Clubs and players are excited about our **Maple Leaf game initiative**. These Friday evening games are a way that we can **build community** between Canadians and with our friends in other countries, as well as **financially helping our Canadian Clubs**.

Given the enthusiasm that we have seen, we are offering 3 different games each Friday – **499er, Mid Flight and Top Flight**. I encourage players to show up early so that they can socialize with their table mates and partner before the game starts!

I am encouraged by the offers of support by individuals and Club managers through the responses received to our Registration Survey. **Thank you** to the many Club Managers, Teachers and individuals who have promoted our Maple Leaf games.

ONLINE TEAM LEAGUE

The CBF plans to increase our communication and engagement with Clubs and members to let you know of upcoming events. We want to involve your developing players, and we hope that you will encourage them to play in our **Online Team League**. We plan to offer **Open, <4,000 MP, <1,500 MP and <299 MP brackets** so that there will be a grouping that will be comfortable for all levels of players. We plan to offer cash prizes and Masterpoints too!

We are excited to offer our Maple Leaf games and Team League on **RealBridge**. It's as easy as clicking on a link to play, and it really feels like you are there in person. We want to make it as flexible as possible, so we will offer Saturdays 12:00 ET and Thursdays 8:00 ET as weekly Team League options for all divisions, but will allow makeups at other times as required.

Signup deadline is the end of September, and round robin play will be October to December. Finals will be held in January.

CANADIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS AND ONLINE ROUND ROBIN

We will run **Open, Seniors, Mixed and Women's Team championships** (watch for qualification games at your Club and online games offered by the CBF), as well as **B Teams** and **C Teams**.

The Round Robins will be held in January and February, and the playoffs of our Canadian Championships will be held in Penticton June 15-21, 2026.

We have decided to run our **Canadian Open Pairs** online, on RealBridge so that there is more opportunity for players to play. It will be a 2 day qualifying event some time in the Spring 2026. Watch our website for more details.

SPRING ONLINE FUNDRAISER AND FEBRUARY 23, 2026 CELEBRITY ONLINE GAME

Please save **February 23**, 2026 to participate in our online Celebrity game where we invite top players to be auctioned off as Celebrity players. Already we have

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE ... CONTINUED

several International players who have committed to being in our auction.

We need your help in inviting people to participate in our fundraiser. They can be top players, teachers, or someone who wants to donate something for our cause of fostering Bridge in Canada.

This is going to be a super fun event, and you will be able to bid on one of your favourite Celebrity players!

ONLINE AGM SEPTEMBER 16 7:30 ET

Please mark your calendars for our online **AGM September 16 at 7:30**, to be held on Zoom. Watch for details on our website.

UPDATE

We have been extremely busy at the CBF. I heartily welcome our newest Zone 5 Director **Lois Matton** and our new Executive Administrator **Sondra Blank**. We have already spent many hours together working on new initiatives, and I know that both will be invaluable members of our team. Catherine Kinsella will continue as our Executive Administrator and will work with Sondra over the next few months.

I would also like to **thank Marc-Andre** for his valuable contributions to the CBF during his time as Director at Large.

Sincerely,

Shelley Burns

CBF President
President@cbf.ca





BRIDGE HAND OF A LIFETIME

By Gary Westfall

I have played bridge for over 50 years, but have never encountered this situation. Both vul, East dealer, I was sitting South and picked up ♠-♥AK98542 ♦K ♣AKQ105. I was preparing to bid 2♣ when the dealer to my right opened 2♣ themselves!!

What to do? I figured that the dealer had long spades, with the missing spade and diamond honours. I decided to make a tactical bid of 5♥ to keep them from finding their spade fit.

Mel Norton was West, playing with a pickup partner, doubled to (hopefully) show a bust hand, and was willing to go -1050, rather -1430. All passed! The full yet abbreviated auction and complete deal:

| West | North | East | South |
|---------|-----------|------------|-------|
| - | - | 2♣ | 5♥ |
| Dbl | All Pass | | |
| | ♠ 3 | | |
| | ♥ Q10 | | |
| | ♦ J8654 | | |
| | ♣ J9732 | | |
| ♠ J9542 | | ♠ AKQ10876 | |
| ♥ 763 | | ♥ J | |
| ♦ 1072 | | ♦ AQ93 | |
| ♣ 84 | | ♣ 6 | |
| | ♠ | | |
| | ♥ AK98542 | | |
| | ♦ K | | |
| | ♣ AKQ105 | | |

N-S + 1050. It was a six table game. The bidding at the other five tables:

Table 1

| West | North | East | South |
|----------|-------|------|-------|
| - | - | 1♠ | Dbl |
| 3♠ | Pass | 4♠ | 5♥ |
| Pass | Pass | 5♠ | 6♥ |
| All Pass | | | |

N-S +1430.

Table 2

| West | North | East | South |
|----------|-------|------|-------|
| - | - | 1♠ | 2♠ |
| Pass | 2NT | 4♠ | 6♣ |
| All Pass | | | |

N-S +1390

Table 3

| West | North | East | South |
|----------|-------|------|-------|
| - | - | 2♣ | 4♥ |
| Pass | Pass | 4♠ | 5♥ |
| Pass | Pass | 5♠ | 6♣ |
| All Pass | | | |

N-S +1390

Table 4

| West | North | East | South |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| - | - | 1♣ | 4♥ |
| Pass | Pass | 4♠ | 5♣ |
| 5♠ | Pass | Pass | 6♣ |
| Pass | Pass | 6♠ | All Pass |

N-S +200.

Table 5

| West | North | East | South |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| - | - | 1♠ | 2♠ |
| 3♠ | Pass | 4♠ | 5♣ |
| Pass | Pass | 5♠ | 6♥ |
| Pass | Pass | 6♠ | All Pass |

N-S +200.

Obviously at tables 1, 2 & 3 East should takeout insurance and bid 6♠. I thought I made a good tactical bid but was not rewarded.

I think if opener had the ♦J instead of ♥J he would have a 2♣ bid, having nine tricks in their own hand.



Question: Why are DJs bad at duplicate bridge?

Answer: Because they only play in clubs.



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HE DIDN'T READ MY BOOKS PART 2.

By Neil Kimelman

In the December 24 issue of Bridge Canada, I included a hand, reported in the ACBL Bulletin, played in the 2024 Reisinger Championships. I suggested that there was a better bid than was suggested by the author, and made by more than one contestant. This point I elaborated on, in more than one of my books on Bidding Judgement. Here is another published article which reinforces the points I made in my books. A recent hand that Bob Jones included in his weekly bidding problems in Saturdays Winnipeg Free Press:

As South, you hold: ♠J763 ♥A85 ♦AQJ5 ♣K8.

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

What do you bid?

Bob's answer was to bid 1♠, so you can find a 4-4 spade fit.

This is an ok response especially for newer players, but is definitely the wrong expert bid. Why?

Because you are going to play at least game in hearts on this hand, and you may easily have a slam opposite a decent fitting minimum opening bid. The best way to go about investigating is by starting with 2♦, and then supporting hearts. Partner will devalue queens and kings in the black suits, and value the ♦K and black suit aces.

What if partner has ♠AQxx ♥KQxxx ♦xx ♣xx? Then they can bid 2♠ over 2♦. You could then bid 3♠ (your minor suit cards are not all working likely, so slam is unlikely unless partner has extra values.)

If you respond 1♠, and then use fourth suit forcing, and then bid hearts, partner will be thinking that Qxx in spades is good value. Here are some hands partner may have:

1. ♠Kxx ♥KQJxx ♦x ♣Axxx. First with a 1♠ response:

| North | South |
|-------|-------|
| 1♥ | 1♠ |
| 2♠ | |

Now you will have a problem playing in hearts, never mind investigating slam.

2. If North instead rebids 2♣ with the above hand:

| North | South |
|-------|-----------------|
| 1♥ | 1♠ |
| 2♣ | 2♦ ¹ |
| 2♠ | 3♥ |
| 4♣ | 4♦ |
| ? | |

1. 4th suit forcing.

Now North might either take another call, thinking they have a great hand for you, or even drive to slam. However contrast with this auction:

| North | South |
|-------|-------|
| 1♥ | 2♦ |
| 2♥ | 3♥ |
| 4♣ | 4♦ |
| 4♥ | Pass |

No danger in getting to high.

3. Here is a different 13 HCPs for North ♠x ♥KQJxx ♦Kxx ♣Axxx.

| North | South |
|-------|-------|
| 1♥ | 2♦ |
| 3♦ | 3♥ |
| 4♣ | 4♦ |
| 4♠ | 4NT |
| 5♠ | 6♥ |

The lesson to learn is that each hand may require a different approach. The goals are:

- 1) To describe your hand as accurately as possible, and
- 2) To help partner evaluate whether their holdings fit well, or poorly with yours.



BELIEVE YOU CAN AND
YOU ARE HALFWAY THERE.

Theodore Roosevelt

DECLARER PLAY PROBLEM

SOLUTION PAGE 23

The contract is 4♠, on the following auction:

| West | North | East | South |
|------|---------|----------|-------|
| | | | 1♠ |
| Dbl | Rdbl | 2♣ | Pass |
| Pass | 4♠ | All Pass | |
| | ♠ AKJ | | |
| | ♥ 9863 | | |
| | ♦ AJ52 | | |
| | ♣ 97 | | |
| | ♠ 86532 | | |
| | ♥ A102 | | |
| | ♦ 9 | | |
| | ♣ AK32 | | |

West leads the ♥K. Plan the play.



TEST YOUR DEFENCE

SOLUTION PAGE 20

You hold as East: ♠J10 ♥AQ109 ♦Q87 ♣KJ43.
North dealer, neither vulnerable. The bidding has gone:

| West | North | East | South |
|----------|-------|------|-------|
| - | 1♣ | Pass | 1♦ |
| Pass | 1NT | Pass | 3NT |
| All Pass | | | |

You lead the ♠J. Dummy is:

♠ AK98
♥ 6532
♦ A9542
♣ -

The first two tricks (underline indicates who is on lead):

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------------|------------|
| 5 | 6 | ♠ <u>J</u> | A |
| 3 | J | Q | ♦ <u>2</u> |

Your defensive agreements against notrump contracts are standard honour leads, 3rd and low leads, upside count and attitude (attitude at trick one), and reverse Smith. All other defensive carding is standard.

What do you play to trick 3?



Sam: Who was that person kibitzing you all day? I saw you talking to them after the game.

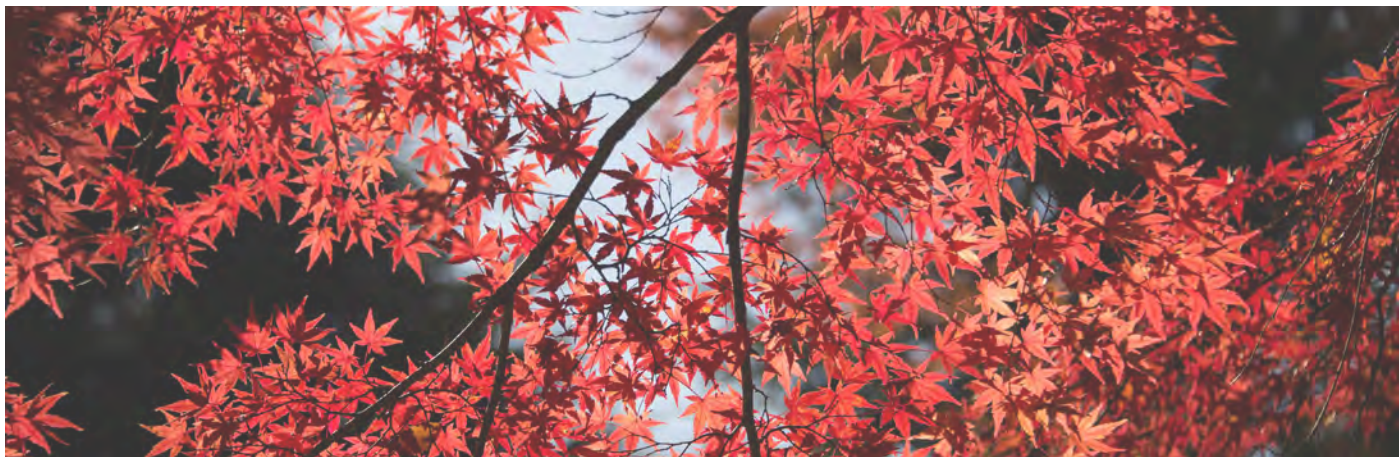
Ethan: Well that turns out to be a weird story. After the game they reveal they are a genie, and can grant me one wish. I think about that, and open a map of the Middle East on my phone, and say, 'I would like these countries to live in peace in harmony.'

The genie says to me, *'well that is very complex, don't you want something for yourself instead?'*

I respond, 'sure, I would like to be one of the top 10 bridge players in the world.'

Sam: 'So is the genie going to help your bridge game?'

Ethan: 'I don't know. All they said was, *'Can I see that map again?'*



the GREAT CANADIAN BIDDING CONTEST

♥ ♠ ♦ ♣



June 2025 TGCBC

Host: David Turner

For panelists, and their bids, see page 21

Welcome back panelist, and host David. As always, you have provided us with some interesting problems, especially the first one.

I would also like to welcome a new panelist, Michel Lorber. Michel will be representing the CBF as part of the team that represented Canada in the d'Orsi World Seniors Championship in Denmark. Top reader this month was (who else) Sheldon Spier with 43. Fellow Winnipegger, Rasim Sari, was a close second. Let's look at that first problem!

1. IMPs, Dealer: West, vul: N-S. As South you hold
♠1097532 ♥AK5 ♦3 ♣AK7.

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 1♠ | 2♦ | 2♠ | ? |

a) What do you bid?

| Bid | Votes | Score |
|------|-------|-------|
| Pass | 6 | 2 |
| DbI | 11 | 2 |
| 3NT | 4 | 2 |
| 2NT | 1 | 1 |

b) What is your plan over partner's likely next calls?"
Be specific.

| Bid | Votes | Score |
|------|-------|-------|
| 5♦ | 6 | 8 |
| 3NT | 4 | 8 |
| 3♠ | 1 | 8 |
| Pass | 8 | 8 |
| 4♥ | 1 | 8 |
| 4♠ | 1 | 6 |
| 4♦ | 1 | 5 |

Well, this is unexpected! What's going on? Partner may be light with a long suit with his spade void, but what about the opponents? Panelists have some ideas about that, usually in view of when they've volunteered a 7-card fit in the past.

Cooper: I suspect ... East having two honours, doubleton. Raising freely on a doubleton is atypical, so they should be very strong.

L'Ecuyer: Strange auction. Looks like righty raised on two cards and, or could not make a negative double.

Lindop: Impossible problem! Did West open a four-card major? Did East raise with a doubleton? It actually looks as though West psyched.

Miles: Many will mention the possibility of a psychic opening; these tend to "occur" a lot in bidding polls but less often at the table. More likely is West has opened light perhaps with a shapely hand.

And East raised with two on the same hand?

Cimon: Did West make a psychic bid or did he open with four spades AKQJ? In my 55-year bridge career, I have faced three psychic bids.

Hargreaves: It's been so long since anyone psyched against me that I had to read the problem several times, but the combination of the vulnerability and RHO's almost assured 3+ spade suit persuades me that LHO has decided to be the joker.

I sometimes lean towards a non-system bid of 1♠ rather than 1♣ on the likes of AQJx QJx QJx Jxx, or might raise to 2♠ with something like Kx xxx xxx

KQxxx, so it's not clear what's really happening, but Hargreaves might well be right. How do we account for all these possibilities?

There are three general approaches favoured by the panel: Pass, Double, and 3NT. I've only marked down those who won't insist on game when partner shows long diamonds and a weakish hand ...surely 5♦ will always have some play. For the passers:

Deng: I would pass. Its obvious partner is short in spades, so partner is likely to double. If partner has a very weak 2♦ overcall, partner may pass, but I'm ok with that as well.

Presumably the passers will pass partner's double as well. I hope partner will risk a balance with the likes of void QJx AQJ10xxx xxx ...But that usually shows a pretty good hand opposite a passing partner! And if partner does double, maybe we beat it only three tricks into our game or slam if their spades are actually 5-2. A large plurality went for the double:

Jacob: Dbl: A sort of discovery bid. Bidding 2NT is another possibility. 3NT next over 3♣ or 3♦.

Miles: Dbl. Then 5♦ over 3♦, cuebid 3♠ over 3♣ or 3♥. Kimelman has the same plans, and adds he'll bid 5NT pick-a-slam over 4♣ or 4♥.

Xu: Dbl. Assuming partner's void is in spades, I bid 4♠! Over 3♦, 5♦ over other minimum bids, and 6♦ over jumps in diamonds.

I admit I laughed at the 4♠ bid - it's just the kind of bid I would make: "Just letting you know I know you're void in spades." BridgeWorld readers will recognize this as a weird kind of "Bluhmer".

I'm always worried about sorting things out after doubling with less than four hearts. It would be a shame if partner got creative, and jumped to 4♥ with

the likes of void Q10x AKxxxx QJxx (but you might make it in high cards on the 3-3!). Hargreaves will pass partner's 4♥.

For the 3NT bidders:

Cooper: 3NT. If they can run four spades on the go, they will set up two tricks for me and I will have 6 tricks on my own. If partner pulls, slam next in that suit.

Thurston: When in doubt, 3NT!

No doubt this rates to work OK, but a partner who is lighter than usual with a long suit and spade void will probably leave it in and hope – and 5♦ might be a lot better.

There were a couple of outliers:

Stark: 3♠. Partner may find your diamond support lacking!

Lorber: 2NT? I like to play 2NT forcing after an overcall of two of a minor suit. The reason is that usually a less strong overcall will be based on a longer suit with more distribution and therefore will likely be better off in three of our minor than 2NT. Partner must have a spade void and probably at least six Diamonds since no take-out double and no unusual 2NT.

Editor's note: *I have learned that when the overcaller does not bid game over 2NT, it is better for them to sign off in 3♦, and rather than pass 2NT.*

Oddly enough, even without that agreement, 2NT is tempting. I fell for that temptation: at the table I bid 2NT non-forcing, figuring I'd raise a pull to 3♦ to 5♦, and if partner did anything else the psyche would be confirmed.

That worked out well, as partner raised to 3NT on A Q9xx AKxxxx Qx, and I passed. Perhaps I should have mentioned that the 1♠ opener was Joey Silver – one of only two Canadian experts extant that I'd suspect of a psyche if there was no other explanation 😊.

2. IMPs, Dealer: South. Vul: NS. As South you hold:
 ♠A1032 ♥AKQ765 ♦4 ♣K8.

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| | | | 1♥ |
| Pass | 1♠ | 2♣ | 4♣1 |
| 4♦ | 5♦ | Pass | 5♥ |
| Pass | 5♠ | Pass | ? |

1. Splinter

a) Do you agree with 4♣?

| Bid | Votes | Score |
|-----|-------|-------|
| No | 15 | 2 |
| Yes | 9 | 2 |

b) What now?

| Bid | Votes | Score |
|------|-------|-------|
| 6♠ | 14 | 8 |
| 6♥ | 3 | 6 |
| Pass | 7 | 3 |

A number of panelists felt that 4♣ was somewhere between “acceptable” and “wonderful”, but the majority felt otherwise (including one optometrist recommendation for me). I squinted my way to an atypical 4♣ at the table, insofar as the hand has: 1) 2nd round club control, 2) a 4-card spade fit, 3) provides room for a diamond cuebid from partner, and 4) shows some slam interest. No other bid does all that (but see Cimon and Thurston below), but it's not without drawbacks ...

Du: No, I prefer RKC.

I don't agree with driving to the 5-level when partner might easily have an unsuitable 6-count and zero keycards.

Fung: No, I bid 3♣ or 4♦. I don't get the bid, you can bid 3♣ and save room. Too strong to splinter.

Hornby: No, I prefer 3♣ or a direct 4♠.

The problem with 3♣ in competition is that it can show a variety of strong hands, and the opponents might not permit you time to show what kind of hand you have below the 5-level. I'd say that 4♦ is the “normal” bid with this hand, but it will leave partner worrying about a club control and little room to maneuver. However, Thurston, Cimon, and Todd play something I've never heard of, but I think makes sense:

Thurston: No – seems to be one too many clubs for a “real” splinter – why trick poor partner! BTW, I've found it useful that to make a club splinter here does require bidder to have some form of club control that isn't a singleton (**Cimon, Todd as well**). **Nice!!!**

As to what to do now ...

That 5♦ bid from partner is a big bid (too bad he didn't get to make it at the 4-level), but your spades are so-so and you're minimum for the auction. Shame you didn't have Kx in diamonds and a stiff club like you promised. No one objected to the 5♥ bid, so here we are. What now indeed?

Cimon: Pass. I have already shown a very good hand. My concern is the spade suit.

Treble: Pass. If partner had KQxxx of spades and the ace of diamonds, wouldn't he have key carded after my 4♣ splinter (**and Hornby likewise**). I'm expecting to be off at least one (or both) minor-suit aces, and there might be a possible hole in the trump suit.

Grainger: Pass. Partner knows all the controls are accounted for, and I have weak trumps, as well as no minor suit aces. I'm also wasting three of my points controlling the second round of clubs that partner won't be expecting, even though the diamond singleton will be useful.

Yes, I felt the same way ... the 4♣ “splinter” wasn’t perfect. With Kx, x in the minors I’d be bidding slam for sure now. And my trumps are probably a bit threadbare for the auction – with AJ10x of spades I’d go on.

Fung (and Chen and Lindop likewise): 6♥. Since partner bid 5♦, there is something about the hand that he likes. I like 6♥ but the auction is fundamentally flawed with the 4♣ bid.

I hadn’t considered strain choice much, but that could be the winning call if we have a late spade loser, but I’m not sure where we’d discard the losing spade. Also, I think I’d want the heart Jack for 6♥ ... partner sounds like he may be short in hearts.

A large majority went on to 6♠ – a sample:

Du: 6♠ - partner’s 5♦ indicates he has ♦A and ♠KQ (or Kxxxx) and denies ♣A.

Feldman: 6♠. Bidding what I think we can make. Partner should have the ♦A and a good spade suit, as they had an easy 4♥ available as last train (assuming that’s our agreement). *It isn’t, but he presumably could have doubled or passed with a less suitable hand.*

Xu: 6♠. Partner cuebid diamonds at the five level, I’ll bid slam directly not 5♥.

I bet if you passed 5♠ like I did, and I told you partner had KQxxx of spades and that ♦A, you’d blame him for missing the slam. I’m not so sure you’d say so if you knew partner had Ace sixth of diamonds with 5062 shape ... he was a bit concerned about where to put three of those diamonds even if you had the ♦K. My great hearts turned out to be the most important feature.

3. IMPs, Dealer: North, Vul: None. As South you hold:
♠KQJ32 ♥2 ♦AK1092 ♣KJ.

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

| Bid | Votes | Score |
|-----|-------|-------|
| 3♦ | 10 | 10 |
| 3♥ | 3 | 9 |
| 2♦ | 8 | 8 |
| 4NT | 2 | 5 |
| 4♠ | 1 | 3 |

This is not a particularly impactful problem in terms of actual results, but it was the first time I’d ever considered jumping to anything but game after an overcall and a passed hand cuebid. The panel opted almost unanimously for either 2♦ or 3♦:

Smith: 3♦. Forcing, and showing interest in slam.

Stark: 2♦. However, with ♣KJ I should splinter in clubs 😊 With only five trumps I don’t think splintering in hearts is the right way to go. For slam I will need two aces and a little something.

Thurston: 3♦. Testing the waters.

Kimelman: 2♦. Partner promises another bid. I will cue bid clubs next, trying for slam. 3♦ has some merit, and should be game forcing after the cuebid, but I wouldn’t want to risk it. Plus, it uses up more space.

Deng: 4♠. I know we could make a slam in some cases. For example: if my partner has two Aces and ♦Q, I could make 6♠ but I am not a person who always wants to bid a perfect slam.

Todd: 4NT. I could go slowly and bid 2♦ but I’ll hide my hand for now. If partner has two aces I can never likely find out if he has 3rd round diamond control – even if I start with 2♦.

While it’s true that there are often advantages in bidding game directly when slam is remote, in this

case 4♠ is unlikely to fail, 3NT is a lively possibility, and partner will know just what to do if he has those “two aces and the diamond queen”. While 3♦ uses up a lot of space it tells partner slam is possible, and focuses on the key issue. In the event the 3♦ rebid found partner with Axx Axx QJxx xxx and slam was easily reached.

4. IMPs, Dealer: South, Vul: Both. As South you hold:
 ♠Q9 ♥AKQ92 ♦KQJ97 ♣4

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

What do you bid?

| Bid | Votes | Score |
|-----|-------|-------|
| 3♦ | 16 | 10 |
| Dbl | 1 | 7 |
| 2♦ | 7 | 7 |

This is a made-up problem based on a recent partnership discussion my partner and I had - and one you should probably have also, even if it’s “just checking, pard”.

Feldman: 3♦. A slight overbid (**emphasis mine**) but gets my hand across well.

Chen: 3♦, with two strong suits, a useful ♠Q and no wasted values in clubs, I would upgrade this hand to game forcing.

Du: 3♦. This bid should be a game try. The game is possible if partner has a non-dead minimum hand.

Treble: 3♦. Shade too good a hand for a mere 2♦. The alternative would be to dbl (if it’s for takeout) followed by a diamond bid to show a very good but not absolutely game-forcing hand.

Cooper: 3♦. The choice is between 2♦ and 3♦. In competition, a jump shift should NOT be game forcing. The jump seems a good description. With a game forcing hand, you cue bid or jump to game or jump as in Problem #2 in this Set. If I had the same strength and 2542, I’d bid 2♦, so the jump to me suggests at least 5/5 in addition to extra values. I must admit that if the hand had 19 or 20 and this pattern I’d have to make a general purpose cue-bid with the approach that I’ve laid out.

Cooper (and indirectly Treble) hits the nail on the head: if a cuebid is game-forcing and with various possible shapes, then shouldn’t 3♦ be simply invitational? It appears that the panel (like my partner) seems to feel that a jump shift is game forcing, despite having a cuebid available. I’ve given it top marks on that basis, but talk to your partner about this. Turned out my partner’s view is “if it was forcing absent interference, it’s still forcing now”

Editor’s note: I am very surprised that most panelists thought 3♦ is forcing on this auction. The opponent’s bid gives you two extra tools: 1) cuebid, and 2) double to show a game force and extra values, respectively.

As the host didn’t address my choice, double, I will (the power of the pen 😊). Not only does double show extra values, but it allows partner to pass with ♠Jxxxx ♥x ♦xx ♣AQxxx or the like.

5. IMPs, Dealer: North, Vul: Both. As South you hold: ♠9 ♥65 ♦J8742 ♣KQ1043

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| | 1♥ | Pass | 1NT |
| Pass | 3♣ | Pass | 4♣ |
| Pass | 4♥ | Pass | ? |

| Bid | Votes | Score |
|------|-------|-------|
| 4♠ | 9 | 10 |
| Pass | 15 | 7 |

Expectedly, the panel is in agreement on how to interpret partner’s sequence:

Fung: Pass. Likely to be a fake jump-shift with a maximum 1-loser heart suit. Close to a 4♠ cuebid.

Jacob: Pass. I don't normally play 3♣ as natural, however with two hearts I am done bidding. Partner is likely 6-4. What happened to the spade suit? Are we playing against BBO robots? **See L'Ecuyer below for a likely explanation.**

Thurston: Pass. Have to assume partner's 3♣ Jump shift is trustworthy and that he's offering 4♥ as a place to play, likely highlighting two fast diamond losers - How about A AKQxxx Qx AJxx or similar?

I think partner's priority must be to show his hand type (i.e. great hearts, clubs suspect) before cuebidding 4♦, which might/must be club-oriented.

I think it's worth noting that for some of us, this sequence is more likely to include real clubs than had partner opened 1♠: we play 2♥ second-negative to 2♣, so good 6/4 2-suiters with hearts might risk opening 1♥ to save space. But most people would expect at least a fragment in clubs for this sequence. If so, our hand is quite valuable:

Feldman: 4♠ - could be getting a bit high, but it seems like I may have what partner needs.

Hargreaves: 4♠. Toughest problem of one of the toughest sets I've seen. My immediate reaction was a WTP pass, but then I tried constructing hands consistent with the bidding and this hand is too powerful, imo, to give up on slam. Assuming he is 6-3 or 6-4 in hearts and clubs, with game force values, our stiff spade could be huge. Picture Axx AKQxxx x AJx. So 4♠. He knows I have at most two hearts and the best I'll have is Jx....I'd always bid 3♥ over 3♣ with better, no matter how my clubs look.

L'Ecuyer: 4♠. Sounds like partner is 6/3 or 6/4. Again, this is a matter of style. What would have been 4♦ by partner? The opps never bid and I have a stiff spade. Partner surely has some spade length, so I expect diamond shortness, possibly a void. Something along the lines of: Axx AKxxxx void Axxx. **Wow-DT.**

4♠ keeps the bidding open and partner could easily raise to 6♣ or even 7♣. Passing is dangerous here. When I am guessing, I dislike passing which is the most committal bid (**emphasis mine -DT**). 4♠ might be an overbid but if partner deliberately chose a fake 3♣, I owe him a bid.

While there's some risk associated with bidding on, I liked to remind a former partner that "there are bids between pass and slam", and I think this is a good example. Partner's actual hand (in an old BW bidding contest) was: xxx AKQJxx A AJx and bid an immediate 6♥ over 4♠. Note that he had a diamond control, but chose to show his hand type definitively to avoid confusion and allow partner to pass comfortably with a poorer fitting hand.

Hope you enjoyed the hands and the panel's comments ... bridge is a tough game, ain't it?



TEST YOUR DEFENCE SOLUTION

PROBLEM PAGE 13

You hold as East: ♠J10 ♥AQ109 ♦Q87 ♣KJ43.
North dealer, neither vulnerable. The bidding has gone:

| West | North | East | South |
|----------|-------|------|-------|
| - | 1♣ | Pass | 1♦ |
| Pass | 1NT | Pass | 3NT |
| All Pass | | | |

ou lead the ♠J. Dummy is:

♠ AK98
♥ 6532
♦ A9542
♣ -

The first two tricks (underline indicates who is on lead):

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|-----------|-----------|
| 5 | 6 | <u>♠J</u> | A |
| 3 | J | Q | <u>♦2</u> |

Your defensive agreements against notrump contracts are standard honour leads, 3rd and low leads, upside count and attitude (attitude at trick one), and reverse Smith. All other defensive carding is standard.

What do you play to trick 3?

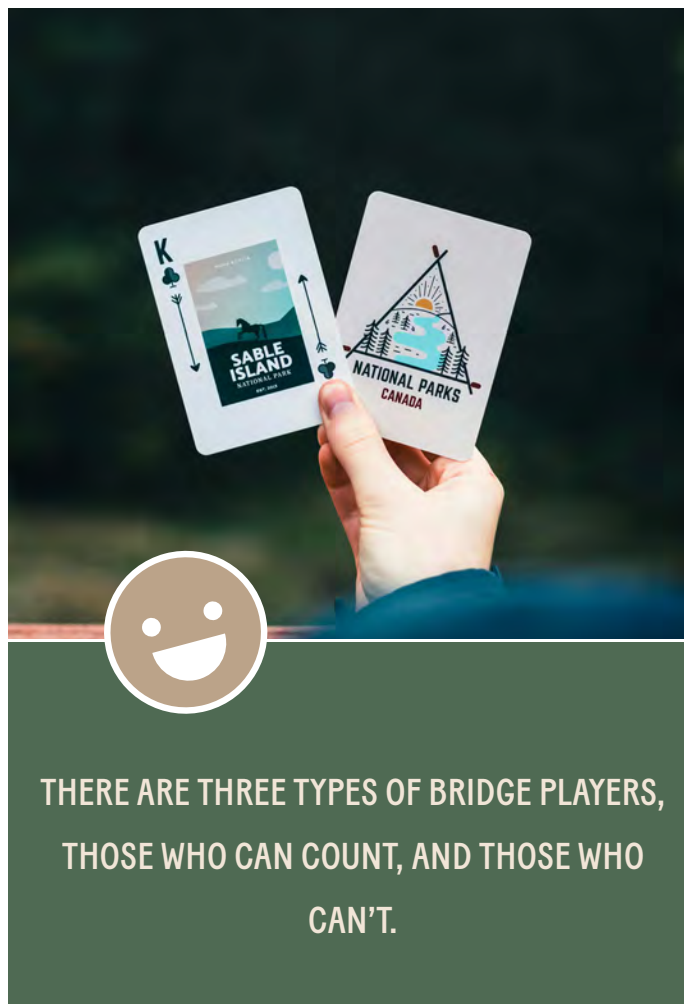
Solution

Lead the ♣3, attitude. Why? Normally partner's ♦3 play would be reverse Smith indicating he wants spades continued. On the bidding and carding to trick one, partner's interest in spades is obvious. Where the four, three and two of spades? Thus the diamond play at trick two should be

suit preference. Partner played the lowest spot to indicate a club card. The full deal:

| | |
|----------|---------|
| ♠ Q76 | ♠ J10 |
| ♥ KJ8 | ♥ AQ109 |
| ♦ KJ | ♦ Q87 |
| ♣ Q10652 | ♣ KJ43 |
| ♠ 5432 | ♠ AK98 |
| ♥ 74 | ♥ 6532 |
| ♦ 1063 | ♦ A9542 |
| ♣ A987 | ♣ - |

If instead, North's card at trick one is a count card, the best chance is to lead the ♥A. If partner discourages, shift the club three. If they encourage, continue with the ♥9, hoping partner started with at least three hearts to the king.



PANELIST ANSWERS

September 2025 Bidding Contest

| | | Hand 1 | | Hand 2 | | Hand 3 | | Hand 4 | | Hand 5 | | |
|--|-----------------|--------|-------|--------|-------|--------|-------|--------|-------|--------|-------|-------|
| | Name | Bid | Score | Bid | Score | Bid | Score | Bid | Score | Bid | Score | Total |
|  | Fengming Chen | Pass | 10 | y/6♥ | 8 | 3♥ | 9 | 3♦ | 10 | Pass | 7 | 44 |
|  | Francine Cimon | Dbl | 10 | n/pass | 8 | 2♦ | 8 | 2♦ | 7 | Pass | 7 | 40 |
|  | Stephen Cooper | 3NT | 10 | y/6♠ | 10 | 3♦ | 10 | 3♦ | 10 | Pass | 7 | 47 |
|  | Eve Deng | Pass | 10 | n/6♠ | 10 | 4♠ | 3 | 2♦ | 7 | Pass | 7 | 37 |
|  | Terry Du | Pass | 10 | n/6♠ | 10 | 3♦ | 10 | 3♦ | 10 | Pass | 7 | 47 |
|  | Jason Feldman | Pass | 10 | y/6♠ | 10 | 3♥ | 9 | 3♦ | 10 | 4♠ | 10 | 49 |
|  | Kismet Fung | Pass | 10 | n/6♥ | 8 | 2♦ | 8 | 3♦ | 10 | Pass | 7 | 43 |
|  | David Grainger | 3♠ | 9 | n/pass | 8 | 2♦ | 8 | 3♦ | 10 | Pass | 7 | 42 |
|  | Mike Hargreaves | 3NT | 10 | n/6♠ | 10 | 3♦ | 10 | 3♦ | 10 | 4♠ | 10 | 50 |
|  | Ray Hornby | Dbl | 10 | n/p | 8 | 3♦ | 10 | 2♦ | 7 | Pass | 7 | 42 |
|  | Dan Jacob | Dbl | 10 | n/6♠ | 10 | 3♦ | 10 | 3♦ | 10 | Pass | 7 | 47 |
|  | Neil Kimelman | Dbl | 10 | y/6♠ | 10 | 2♦ | 8 | Dbl | 7 | 4♠ | 10 | 45 |
|  | Bob Kuz | Dbl | 10 | n/6♠ | 10 | 2♦ | 8 | 3♦ | 10 | 4♠ | 10 | 48 |
|  | Robert Lebi | Dbl | 10 | n/pass | 8 | 3♦ | 10 | 3♦ | 10 | Pass | 7 | 45 |
|  | Nick L'Ecuyer | Dbl | 10 | y/pass | 8 | 2♦ | 8 | 3♦ | 10 | 4♠ | 10 | 46 |
|  | David Lindop | 3NT | 10 | n/6♥ | 8 | 4NT | 5 | 2♦ | 7 | 4♠ | 10 | 40 |
|  | Michel Lorber | 2NT | 6 | n/pass | 8 | 3♦ | 10 | 3♦ | 10 | Pass | 7 | 41 |
|  | Danny Miles | Dbl | 10 | y/6♠ | 10 | 3♥ | 9 | 2♦ | 7 | Pass | 7 | 43 |
|  | Julie Smith | Dbl | 10 | y/6♠ | 10 | 3♦ | 10 | 2♦ | 7 | 4♠ | 10 | 47 |
|  | Andy Stark | 3♠ | 9 | y/6♠ | 10 | 2♦ | 8 | 2♦ | 7 | 4♠ | 10 | 44 |
|  | Paul Thurston | 3NT | 10 | n/6♠ | 10 | 3♦ | 10 | 3♦ | 10 | Pass | 7 | 47 |
|  | Bob Todd | Pass | 10 | n/6♠ | 10 | 4NT | 5 | 3♦ | 10 | Pass | 7 | 42 |
|  | Bill Treble | Dbl | 7 | n/pass | 8 | 2♦ | 8 | 3♦ | 10 | Pass | 7 | 40 |
|  | Edward Xu | Dbl | 8 | n/6♠ | 10 | 3♦ | 10 | 3♦ | 10 | 4♠ | 10 | 48 |



DECEMBER 2025 PROBLEMS

Host: Mike Hargreaves

To readers: submit your answers by November 5th.

1. IMPs, North is the dealer, both vul. As South you hold
♠52 ♥Q ♦AKQJ93 ♣10854.

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

1. Promises at least 4-5 in spades and clubs, respectively.

2. 4th suit forcing.

a) Do you agree with 2♥? If not, what would you have bid?

b) What do you bid over 3♣?

2. IMPs, South is the dealer, N-S vul. As South you hold:
♠AQ632 ♥- ♦AKQ7653 ♣8.

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

1. Natural, game force.

2. Promises some values. 2NT would have been a form of Lebensohl.

a) Do you agree with 1♦?

b) Do you agree with 2♠?

c) Do you agree with 3♠?

d) What now?

3. Matchpoints, West is the dealer, both vul. As South you hold: ♠J106 ♥AKJ42 ♦53 ♣A87.

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 1♦ | Pass | 1♥ | Pass |
| 1NT | Dbl | 2♦ | ? |

What do you bid?

4. IMPs, South is the dealer, N-S vul. As South you hold:
♠J6 ♥J53 ♦AQJ10 ♣AK42.

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

1. Negative.

What do you bid?

5. IMPs, North is the dealer, neither Vul. As South you hold ♠AK2 ♥QJ6 ♦A987654 ♣-.

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| | | | 1♦ |
| Pass | 1♥ | Pass | ? |

What do you bid?



THINKING ABOUT YOUR MISTAKES FROM THE
LAST HAND IS A SURE FIRE WAY TO HAVE YOUR
MISTAKE STREAK CONTINUE.

Neil Kimelman

DECLARER PLAY SOLUTION

PUZZLE ON PAGE 12

The contract is 4♠, on the following auction:

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|----------|-------|
| | | | 1♠ |
| Dbf | Rdbl | 2♣ | Pass |
| Pass | 4♠ | All Pass | |

♠ AKJ

♥ 9863

♦ AJ52

♣ 97

♠ 86532

♥ A102

♦ 9

♣ AK32

Lead: ♥K. Plan the play

South decided to pass 2♣ because his club pips were too weak. Even if South had doubled, North would probably still drive to the spade game at this vulnerability, since he had an opening bid with strong spade support. The full deal:

♠ AKJ

♥ 9863

♦ AJ52

♣ 97

♠ Q

♥ KQJ5

♦ KQ864

♣ KQ864

♠ 10974

♥ 74

♦ 1073

♣ J1054

♠ 86532

♥ A102

♦ 9

♣ AK32

Even if you look at all of the hands, it's not obvious how to make ten tricks: declarer has a trump loser and two more in hearts, not to mention possible losers in clubs. Of course, declarer did not have the option of trying to make ten tricks at double dummy.

Declarer counted four winners in the side suits. If he could add six trump tricks to the total he would make his contract. Declarer planned to do this by scoring one top trump, three ruffs in hand and two club ruffs in dummy. Declarer won the opening lead with the ace of hearts and led a low trump to West's queen and dummy's ace. After playing the ace of diamonds and ruffing a diamond, declarer cashed the ace and king of clubs. Declarer continued by ruffing a club with the jack of trumps and ruffing a second diamond in hand.

Next, declarer ruffed his last club with dummy's king to make his ninth trick. Finally, declarer led dummy's jack of diamonds from dummy. East held ten-nine-seven in trumps, but could not prevent declarer from scoring a further trump trick with his remaining eight-six. Declarer had brought home a tricky spade game by making the projected six trump tricks.

If you wonder where the 'inescapable' loser went, you will find that East ruffed at least one of West's heart winners. This plan will also succeed if West began with 2-4-4-3 shape with ♠Q9 or ♠Q10 and the king-queen of diamonds. When declarer ruffs a second club, West is caught in a dilemma about his remaining diamond. If he keeps the king of diamonds, declarer will ruff the jack of diamonds with impunity for his tenth trick. However, if he discards it, declarer throws a heart on the good jack of diamonds. West ruffs this, but declarer must make a trump trick with his remaining eight-six for his contract.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

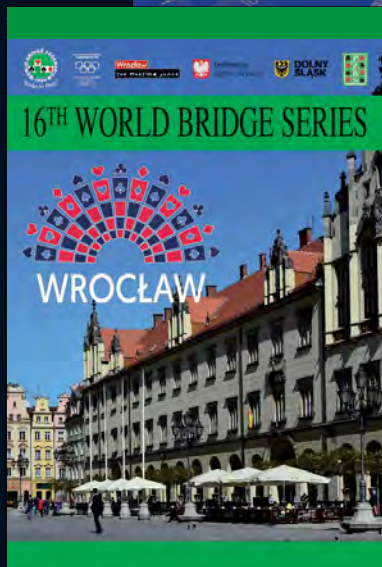
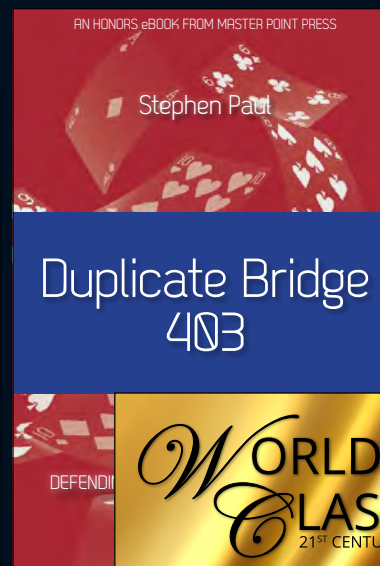
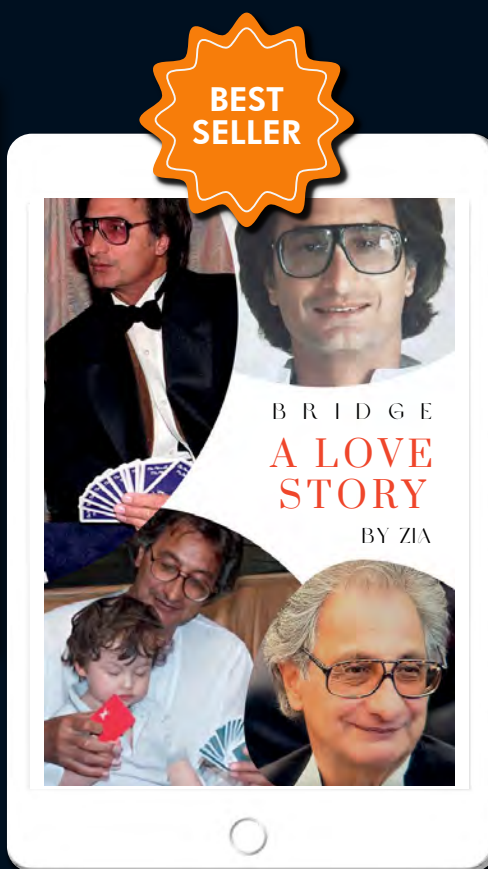
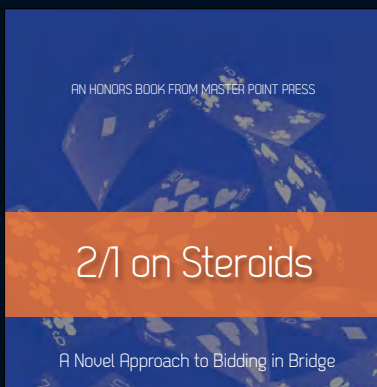
2025

| MONTH | DATE | EVENTS |
|-----------|----------------|--|
| SEPTEMBER | All Month | Qualifying games in clubs for the 2026 CBC – Sept. to Dec. (CNTC and COPC) |
| | All Month | International Fund games – In person Clubs |
| | Sept. 15-30 | Registration for CBF Online Team League |
| | September 20 | CBF Online Game on BBO – 1:15 EST – COPC 2026 Qualifier |
| OCTOBER | All Month | Qualifying games in clubs for the 2026 CBC – Sept. to Dec. (CNTC and COPC) |
| | All Month | CBF Online Team League – Oct. through Feb. |
| | Oct. 16 (Thur) | Erin Berry Rookie Master Game at in person Clubs |
| | October 18 | CBF Online Game on BBO – 1:15 EST – COPC 2026 Qualifier |
| | October 20 | CBC 2026 – Round Robin Registration Opens (Teams) |
| NOVEMBER | All Month | Qualifying games in clubs for the 2026 CBC – Sept. to Dec. (CNTC and COPC) |
| | November 15 | CBF Online Game on BBO – 1:15 EST – COPC 2026 Qualifier |
| DECEMBER | All Month | Qualifying games in clubs for the 2026 CBC – Sept. to Dec. (CNTC and COPC) |
| | December 15-21 | Stardust Week – Gold Points at Clubs |
| | December 20 | CBF Online Game on BBO – 1:15 EST – COPC 2026 Qualifier |

Qualifiers for team events will be added on BBO in Oct/Nov/Dec.

[Check the website](#) for dates and information.

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