

BRIDGE

Number: 215

November 2020

Julian Pottage's Double Dummy Problem

THE INTERTAINER

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

Contract 2NT by South
Lead: ♠Q

BRIDGE is ceasing publication.

The last issue will be number 216 - December 2020.

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Should The Director Examine A Player's Cards?

Q It is with regret that I read of BRIDGE's demise and can no longer enjoy your column. To keep things alive I would like to return to the issue of hesitations/fumbles and director's procedure.

In your reply to my letter of August 2020 you stated that directors should not look at players' hands. I have to say that your example of differentiating between a misbid and a system misunderstanding in a Blackwood situation was not very helpful.

I refer back to March 2020 and your reply to Lyn Fryby. This appeared to involve a much more common potential infraction.

Opener bids 1♥, his partner clearly hesitates and maybe fumbles with the bidding box, but eventually lays down 2♥. Opener then bids 4♥. Now in a club situation, if the contract romps home and opener reveals around 18 points a nice 6-card suit, a singleton and a good side suit, opposition are unlikely to complain. If the contract goes two off, similarly no comeback.

The difficulty for the playing director is firstly shortage of time, secondly s/he has already played that board – maybe in a

different orientation – or is due to play it on the next round but one.

All in all, I cannot see how the director can judge whether unauthorised information has arisen and whether opener took advantage without looking at opener's hand. One would then need to make a judgement – yes raise to 4♥ on the basis of 6-9 with partner is clearly justified – a minimum suggests a pass and therefore do I have to incur displeasure by adjusting the score back to 2♥ – is the hand worth an invitational 3♥, so I have to look at responder's hand to see if a raise to 4♥ is reasonable.

In addition, especially if my table has played this board, is a look at the traveller, if it has been played several times, which might give some further clues.

It seems to me that this situation sort of assumes that responder wanted to bid 2.5♥, but the indecision may have been between Pass, 1♠, 1NT, 2♠, 2♦, 2♥ or 3♥.

Any thoughts for a club situation, rather than the itinerant non-playing director stalking the tables at a congress who may have prior knowledge or access to the hands – and

crucially time and no real risk of upsetting members who he has to play with/against next week.

Club Player, North Wales

A If you are a club director you will suffer from time to time with rulings. You have to go to the table, ask questions and make a judgment from the answers as to whether there was a hesitation or a fumble or whatever.

You must not look at the players' hands because that will mean you have to make a bridge judgment at the table (very difficult and inappropriate) and you may give information away.

But that is only the decision as to whether there was a hesitation. Any ruling from that if you decide there was one will not be given at the time, but later.

For that decision the director can look at the hands and should consult with another player or two. I do not advise looking at the traveller because the problems at other tables are often different.

As to the future of this column, subscribers to Bernard Magee Bridge will find that Ask David, for laws and similar, and Ask Julian, for bridge queries, will be available on that website. ■

BRIDGE

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Ryden Grange, Knaphill,
Surrey GU21 2TH
☎ 01483 489961

bridge@mrbridge.co.uk
www.mrbridge.co.uk
shop: mrbridge.co.uk/shop

Publisher/Managing Editor
Mr Bridge

Associate Editor
Julian Pottage
julian@mrbridge.co.uk

Accounts
Joanne Jackson
jo@mrbridge.co.uk

Cartoons & Illustrations
Marguerite Lihou
www.margueritelihou.co.uk

Technical Consultant
Tony Gordon

Typesetting
Jessica Galt
jessica@mrbridge.co.uk

Proof Reading Team
Julian Pottage
Mark Rixon
Mike Orriel
Richard When

Office
☎ 01483 489961
Jessica Galt
jessica@mrbridge.co.uk

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Features this month include:

- 1 **November Double Dummy Bridge Problem**
by Julian Pottage
- 2 **David Stevenson Answers Your Bridge Questions**
- 4 **October Double Dummy Bridge Problem Answer**
by Julian Pottage
- 4 **Mr Bridge**
- 5 **Bidding Quiz** by Bernard Magee
- 6 **The 70 Advantages Of Online Bridge** by Ian Dalziel
- 8 **Acol & The Robson System Compared** by Ned Paul
- 12 **Jubert Wilmer's Threat** by David Bird
- 14 **Simple Doubles. Part 5** by Sally Brock
- 15 **Simple Doubles. Part 5 Quiz** by Sally Brock
- 16 **Declarer Play Quiz** by David Huggett
- 16 **Julian Pottage Answers Your Bridge Questions**
- 17 **Defence Quiz** by Julian Pottage
- 19 **Bridge Glossary – R** by Julian Pottage
- 26 **Bridge Glossary – S** by Julian Pottage
- 35 **Common Mistakes By Club Players. Part 1**
by Andrew Kambites
- 39 **Simple Doubles. Part 5 Quiz Answers**
by Sally Brock
- 40 **Catching Up** with Sally Brock
- 40 **Seven Days** by Sally Brock
- 41 **Defence Quiz Answers** by Julian Pottage
- 43 **Declarer Play Quiz Answers** by David Huggett
- 45 **Bidding Quiz Answers (1-3)** by Bernard Magee
- 47 **Bidding Quiz Answers (4-6)** by Bernard Magee
- 48 **The Diaries Of Wendy Wensum**
- 49 **Bidding Quiz Answers (7-9)** by Bernard Magee
- 50 **Sally's Slam Clinic**
- 51 **Bidding Quiz Answers (10-12)** by Bernard Magee

ADVERTISERS' INDEX

- 2 **Mr Bridge Playing Cards**
- 3 **Clive Goff's Stamps**
- 11 **Q Plus 15**
- 11 **Duplicate Bridge Rules Simplified**
- 18 **SR Designs**
- 36 **Little Voice**
- 39 **Declarer Play with Bernard Magee**
- 44 **2021 Luxury Diaries**
- 46 **Advanced Acol Bidding with Bernard Magee**
- 47 **Defence with Bernard Magee**
- 49 **Duplicate Bridge Rules Simplified**
- 50 **Advanced Declarer Play with Bernard Magee**
- 51 **Acol Bidding with Bernard Magee**
- 52 **Bernard Magee Bridge**

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FOUR ACES

<p>♠ K Q J 10 9</p> <p>♥ K Q J 10</p> <p>♦ 10</p> <p>♣ J 10 9</p>	<p>♠ 3 2</p> <p>♥ A 3 2</p> <p>♦ Q</p> <p>♣ A Q 6 5 4 3 2</p>	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td>N</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td></tr> </table>	N	W	E	S	<p>♠ 8 7</p> <p>♥ 9 8 7</p> <p>♦ K J 9 8 7 6 5</p> <p>♣ K</p> <p>♠ A 6 5 4</p> <p>♥ 6 5 4</p> <p>♦ A 4 3 2</p> <p>♣ 8 7</p>
N							
W							
E							
S							

Contract 3NT by South
Lead: ♠K

13. FOUR ACES © Mr Bridge 01483 489961. Printed in the UK on 100% cotton.

SUB REFUNDS



14 remain to be claimed. I will publish the final tally of donations to Cancer Research UK and Little Voice in the next issue.

READERS' LETTERS

Two regular contributors have grabbed all the spare space (and more) in this months issue. Ian Dalziel gives online bridge a real boost. His seventy good reasons in support are food for thought and a basis for the *what comes after covid* debate. If readers can think of more, please send them in to me a.s.a.p by email at: mrbridge@mrbridge.co.uk Meanwhile, in the three pages following Ian Dalziel's light-hearted glimpse of the future, Ned Paul debates the future of Acol. Read on.

2021 DIARIES

These diaries are £14.95 each. They come in three cover colours; ruby red, navy blue and bottle green.



They each have a useful ballpoint pen in their spine. The club offer is 10 for £55.

FUND RAISING

Bridge has always been a very popular means of fund-raising. Those attending charity lunches, teas and even the occasional dinner, are given the opportunity to support a national charity or local good cause while enjoying some bridge and catching up with all the local gossip.

These events have now all disappeared along with duplicates at club venues and holiday bridge. Can online bridge be the answer? Answers on a postcard please.

REST IN PEACE



Elena Jeronimidis has died. Her bridge obituary will be published next month.

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All good wishes
Mr Bridge

FOUR ACES

The Solution to October's Double Dummy Bridge Problem

1. Hold up the ♠A until precisely the second round
2. If West switches to hearts, hold up the ♥A until the third round
3. If West ever switches to diamonds, take the ♦A on the first round
4. If West has only led major-suit cards before you gain the lead, duck the first round of clubs. This sets up the clubs while keeping West, who has a major suit to run, off lead
5. If West has switched to diamonds, cash the ♣A and continue the suit. This sets up the clubs while keeping East, who has diamond winners to cash, off lead. The ♥A will be an entry to the good clubs

If you do not hold up one of the major-suit aces long enough, you will lose four tricks in the major suits and a club. If you hold up one of the pointed-suit aces too long, a heart switch will give the defenders five tricks. ■

Bernard Magee's Acol Bidding Quiz

This month we are dealing with hands where the same suit is bid by both sides. You are West in the auctions below, playing 'Standard Acol' with a weak no-trump (12-14 points) and four-card majors. It is your turn to call.

1. Dealer East. E/W Game.

♠ K 4 2
♥ 9 7 2
♦ A 4 3
♣ K 8 7 6



West	North	East	South
?		1♦	2♦*

* Michaels – showing both majors

4. Dealer South. N/S Game.

♠ 3 2
♥ A K 8 7 6 5 4
♦ 7 6
♣ A 3



West	North	East	South
?			1♥

7. Dealer South. N/S Game.

♠ 2
♥ K Q 8 2
♦ K 9 5 4
♣ A 8 7 6



West	North	East	South
Dbl	Pass	2♠*	Pass
?			

* you alert 2♠

10. Dealer West. Game All.

♠ A K J 10 4
♥ J 10 9 4
♦ A K 8
♣ 7



West	North	East	South
1♠	2♣	3♣*	4♣
?			

* you alert

2. Dealer North. Love All.

♠ A
♥ 9 6 5 3
♦ K Q 9 8 7
♣ 10 5 2



West	North	East	South
?	3♥	4♥*	Pass

* you alert partner's bid

5. Dealer North. Love All.

♠ 7 6
♥ J 8 7 6 5
♦ 4 3 2
♣ A 5 3



West	North	East	South
?	1♥	Dbl	Pass

8. Dealer East. Love All.

♠ Q 9 8
♥ 5 3
♦ A 2
♣ A Q 9 6 5 3



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

* you alert 2♥

11. Dealer South. Game All.

♠ A 3 2
♥ 7
♦ A K 5 4
♣ J 9 8 7 6



West	North	East	South
Dbl	1♠	2♠	Pass
?			

3. Dealer North. Love All.

♠ J 7 6 5 4 3
♥ 9 6 5 3
♦ K 7
♣ 2



West	North	East	South
?	1♦	3♦*	Pass

* you alert partner's bid

6. Dealer East. Love All.

♠ J 10 6
♥ A J 4 3
♦ 7
♣ A Q 4 3 2



West	North	East	South
?		1♥	2♦

9. Dealer North. Game All.

♠ 9 8 7 6
♥ 2
♦ A 8 7 6 5
♣ A 4 3



West	North	East	South
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠
?	INT	2♥	Pass

12. Dealer West. Game All.

♠ A Q J 4 3 2
♥ 7 6 5
♦ K 2
♣ K 4



West	North	East	South
1♠	2♥	4♥*	Pass
?			

* you alert partner's bid

My Answers:

- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....

My Answers:

- 4.....
- 5.....
- 6.....

My Answers:

- 7.....
- 8.....
- 9.....

My Answers:

- 10.....
- 11.....
- 12.....



The 70 Advantages Of Online Bridge

We all miss the social interaction of Face to Face (F2F) bridge and look forward to its return, but in the meantime we have online bridge (eg Bridge Base Online) which so many players are enjoying.

There are, however, a substantial minority of players, let us call them 'refuseniks', who stubbornly will not even try it.

Online bridge does not need great computer skills. Any bridge player with a computer, tablet or smartphone is more than capable of joining in. There are many YouTube videos showing how it is done. Some of the best are by Paul Gipson of Berwick Bridge Club, or you should ask a friend to take you through it.

You can join (or set up) a casual game or have a teaching table and practice your bidding with your partner any time of the day or night. There are also team games and pairs competitions, called virtual clubs, which are very popular.

Although online bridge cannot compete with F2F bridge in the social dimension, it does have many advantages. In pairs competitions, I can think of 70 and these I have listed below.

If you are a refusenik then of course nothing will change your mind, but if you are 'wavering', then you might be swayed to join us. I am quite sure you will enjoy it.

Extra Benefits

1. There never need be a half table

as the director can usually find substitutes, if not robots, to fill in.

2. If there is one person short then a substitute partner or a robot can fill in.
3. If someone takes ill or has a 'home crisis' they can be quickly replaced by a substitute or a robot.
4. If everyone puts their names on their profile you know who you are playing against, which you often do not know at a F2F club.
5. You can easily view an opponent's convention card any time during the game.
6. You self alert your bids so there are no mistaken explanations and no possibility of unauthorised information.
7. You can watch your partner play the hand when dummy.
8. You can review the bidding during the play.
9. If a player is prone to making the wrong bid or playing the wrong card (perhaps for medical reasons) they can use the 'confirm bids/cards' option.
10. You can see all four hands once the board is played.
11. If the Goacher app is installed on your device you can also see the computer predictions at the end of each hand.
12. Everyone can see the traveller after the board is played - you are not waiting to snatch a glance at the Bridgmate if North allows you.
13. As everyone plays the same hands at the same time, at the end of each round you can see your score



on each board and your running score.

14. If you finish the round early you can look back at any previous hand or traveller.
15. You can discuss previous hands with partner or opponents as they have played the same hands as you.
16. The final results are displayed as soon as the last board is played.
17. You can refer back to any hand or any traveller afterwards for as long as you like.
18. You can see how every hand was bid and played at every table afterwards.
19. You and partner can go over your bidding and play later.

Things you don't need to do

20. You do not need to count your cards.
21. You do not need to sort your cards.
22. You never play with sticky or dirty cards.
23. You never make a wrong bid due to missorting your hand.
24. You do not need to replace cards, boards, bidding boxes or bridge tables.
25. You do not need to keep a personal scorecard (the computer does that for you).
26. You do not have to move from table to table.

Things that don't happen online

27. There are no revokes (computers do not allow such happenings).
28. No-one can bid or play out of turn or make an insufficient bid.
29. There is no STOP card, which with F2F bridge caused more problems than it solved.
30. There are no mistakes entering the data at the end of each hand (the computer does that).
31. The movement never goes wrong.
32. No club computer crashes.
33. You do not overhear the result at other tables.

Slow play solved at last

34. Slow play is not a problem,

the computer ensures this.

35. The club sets the time per board and the computer ensures this happens.
36. You don't need to wait on the board from a sharing table.
37. The room is never held up by a slow table.
38. Play can finish exactly on time.
39. If a table is slow the director can identify which side and which player is at fault.

Best behaviour

40. People are by and large pleasant and rarely criticise their partner or opponents.
41. The general culture is if you cannot say anything positive, say nothing.
42. You quite often get humour in the chat box, it is becoming an art.
43. When new opponents meet, no-one is still talking about a previous hand.
44. If anyone is unpleasant (which is rare) then everything they say is recorded and cannot be denied.

Practicalities

45. There is no danger of COVID or any other infection.
46. You do not need to travel to play
47. On line tournaments usually last 2½ hours, at most, compared with at least 4 hours for a F2F club including travelling, leaving you time to do other things for the rest of the afternoon or evening.
48. You save petrol money.
49. Table money is usually a lot cheaper.
50. You do not need to get dressed up or have your hair nicely groomed, if you are a lady that is. I am afraid most men just do not bother.
51. The room does not need setting out.
52. No tea duty.
53. The furniture does not need to be put away.
54. The room is never too noisy, too cold, too hot, too stuffy, too draughty or too dark (as you control it).
55. Your chair need never be uncomfortable.

56. By filling a flask you have your tea or coffee any time and as often as you want.
57. Having poor hearing is not a problem.
58. Poor vision is not a problem as you can enlarge the screen.

Your opponents don't have annoying habits like...

59. Not holding their cards up.
60. Giving unauthorised information.
61. Playing before their turn.
62. Putting the bid cards away before the lead is made.
63. Not releasing their cards.
64. Detaching cards before it is their turn to play.
65. Scooping up their cards before the tricks are agreed.
66. Putting dummy down like a dog's breakfast.
67. Dummy playing cards before declarer nominates them.
68. Moving the board from the middle of the table.
69. Not letting you see the bridgemate.
70. Making revealing comments out loud.

Board	Result	NS	EW	NS	EW
94	4♥S=	420		5.9	
95	4♠E-1	50		7.7	
96	3NTE-1	100		0.3	
97	2NTW=		120		4
98	1NTE-2	100		5.4	
99	4♦S+1	150			9
100	2♠E+1		140	3.8	
				104.8	87.2

Player	Hand
N red jaguar	♠6 ♥Q7653 ♦K75 ♣Q743
W ruthdownar	♠Q8 ♥KJ82 ♦J1083 ♣865
S rogaler	♠10932 ♥1094 ♦642 ♣AK10
E pet0	♠AKJ754 ♥A ♦AQ9 ♣J92



Acol & The Robson System Compared

Mike Gurney of Holt Bridge Club, Norfolk asks about the difference (Letters BRIDGE 213, p20) between the Acol system and the bidding system Andrew Robson teaches. Yes, they are two different systems and should not be treated as the same.

The most contentious difference is that the basic Robson system stresses the sanctity of the 6-card suit rebid. This is not part of Acol. Acol starts from the premise that a 4-card suit is biddable, and a 5-card suit is rebiddable. You don't often need to rebid a 5-card suit but I will show in a moment that you still need the agreement to be able to do so.

Insisting on a 6-card suit for a rebid requires two significant changes from the generally mainstream Acol approach.

1) To achieve the 6-card rebid, all 5-3-3-2 hands in the 12-14 range **MUST** be opened 1NT. This is irrespective of whether the 5-card suit is a major suit of a quality that is better suited to a suit bid or whether the doubleton is two low cards. This is the less contentious of the two differences. Many Acol players also have this agreement, though Acol retains some flexibility to prefer the 5-card major. I'll comment on this as well.

2) The second and more serious is the requirement for Robson taught players to 'bid out' a 5-4 shape. This is not controversial when the 5-card suit is higher ranking. The bidding goes, for example, 1♥-1♠-2♦ and the

responder with a weak hand can pass or give normal preference back to hearts. But when the 5-card suit is lower ranking than the 4-card suit, or the 4-card suit is eclipsed by partner's response, the Robson system gets on rocky ground.

a) An example of the first sequence (the 5-card suit lower ranking than the 4-card suit) is:

West	East
1♦	1♠
2♥	

This is forcing in Acol and shows extra strength. It does not show extra strength in Robson. A Robson-taught player might hold a minimum opening bid such as this:

♠ 7
♥ K 7 6 4
♦ A J 10 7 6
♣ K J 3

An Acol player will be very wary in this situation.

Reflect on this: **by bidding 2♥ you are bidding a suit that partner has already had the chance to bid but has not done so.** East, you should remember skipped straight past the 1♥ card in the bidding box to select 1♠. Unless he has five or more spades, he will not have four hearts, so the Acol player reasons that it is generally not worth bidding this suit since partner

most likely has not got support. Instead the Acol player makes a simple, minimum-sounding and sensible rebid of 2♦. The message is this: "I do not have support for you partner, I have no other biddable suit that I feel safe in showing, and thirdly that I am concerned about my lack of strength. Expect a maximum of 15 HCP from me". Partner with four hearts and suitable strength can introduce hearts over your 2♦ rebid, so the heart fit is not always lost.

Change the hand to this:

♠ 7
♥ A K 6 4
♦ A Q 10 7 6
♣ K J 3

Now things are quite different. West holds 17 HCP and wants to show interest in game opposite quite a modest responding hand. So go right ahead and rebid 2♥.

In Acol, such a bidding sequence is called a 'reverse'. The bid is forcing. Some bridge teachers talk about 'breaking the barrier', the barrier being marked by a rebid of two of your original suit. Bid beyond the barrier, and you are showing extra strength. The accepted minimum is 16 total points or more (allowing for shape). This added value allows you to play more safely at the 3-level, should partner with a rock-bottom responding hand wish to give weak

preference back to your first bid suit. In Robson, where the opener can still hold a minimum, there can be this frisson of uncertainty as preference back to opener's first suit would put the auction up to the 3-level.

b) An example of the second sequence, in which your partner's response eclipses your 4-card suit, is this:

West	East
1♠	2♦
3♣	

In Acol this is game-forcing. You are showing reversing values opposite a 2-level response. Or in points you are showing 16+ opposite 10+. You have the combined values for game and both partners are aware that this is so.

Playing Acol, you would not bid 3♣ with this hand:

♠ A J 10 7 6
♥ K J 3
♦ 4
♣ K 7 6 4

It's simply not safe to do so. You may be forcing partner to drive to game with a misfitting minimum 10 HCP. Just rebid a safe and minimal-feeling 2♠ and let partner do any advancing towards game. However, change the hand to this:

♠ A J 10 7 6
♥ K J 3
♦ 4
♣ A K 6 4

Now you do have the values to press on towards game. Bid where you live and show the club suit (and as you do so, the fifth spade).

In my experience Robson players are quite happy to say 'We don't play reverses', expecting to bid 3♣ with either hand. How is poor responder to know whether to bid on or bail out? And of course you may already be out of your depth at the 3-level.

So in Acol does a rebid never show a 6-card suit? Well, yes it can. There are

two sequences to note:

West	East
1♥	1NT
2♥	

As West you have opened 1♥ and partner has responded 1NT, denying heart support and also denying four spades. Do not rebid a 5-card suit. Partner has a minor suit orientated hand and, if the spades are short, partner has had the opportunity to bid 2♥ with 3-card support and has not done so. Suppose your hand is this:

♠ K J 3 2
♥ A J 10 7 6
♦ 4
♣ A 10 4

Would you fancy playing 2♥ opposite this hand?

♠ Q 6 5
♥ 3
♦ Q J 9 7
♣ Q J 7 5 2

Or would you prefer partner to have a go at 1NT? Remember the hearts may divide badly and you may also suffer club ruffs in a heart contract.

So if you rebid 2♥ you will be promising six hearts. (As a side note Robson players might bid 2♠ – "We don't play reverses" – and play there. Let them: 1NT will play just as well though, especially if the spades don't break evenly.)

Now look at this sequence:

West	East
1♥	1♠
2♥	

2♥ also shows 6-hearts here as you have had the opportunity to support spades, or introduce a 4-card club suit or a 4-card diamond suit. In either case this could have been done without reversing. It is just possible of course (if you are not playing Robson methods) that West has a 5-3-3-2 hand of 12-14 HCP and has not opened 1NT.

I discuss that below.

Change partner's response:

West	East
1♥	2♣
2♥	

Now partner has skipped over a suit (spades) so the rule about not reversing with a minimum hand may be in operation. Thus the rebid only guarantees 5-card length. You may of course have six or even seven.

What do you say when an opponent enquires about your rebid? "Does that show a 6-card suit?", they will ask. This is what you should reply: "My partner's rebid shows a 6-card suit, or a 5-card suit in a hand too weak to reverse."

Andrew Robson is one of the best teachers of bridge there is. He is also a friend and professional colleague and in large part responsible for starting me off on the path of bridge teaching and organisation that I pursue today. So I was able to ask Andrew directly whether I was being fair in my comments about his system. This is how he replied:

"The main point I'd make is that my methods are pretty similar to the "Acol" most people play these days. Many modern experts open 1NT with all 5-3-3-2 hands, and teachers are catching up (dare I say it, finally). I don't think that cornerstone of AR bidding is very contentious.

"The reverse/shape showing issue is more contentious. New players want simple guidelines. The six-card repeat rule is one of those. I've lost count of the number of new students I've met elsewhere who are confused by reverses / the barrier – some even who give up the game at least in part as a result. So I start by being quite definitive about the six-card repeat rule – and by using auctions such as 1♥-1♠-2♥, where the six-card repeat rule does apply 100%. As students become more confident, you can talk about "cramped auctions" and it's not hard for more experienced students to realise that rebidding 3♣ (after 1♠-2♥) with say ♠K-Q-10-9-x, ♥x, ♦A-Q-x, ♣J-x-x-x is not a great idea – that 2♠ is a better bridge bid. Audrey Grant of the US and other top teachers ▶

◀ of 5-card majors all try to discourage their students from repeating five-card suits, I'm just another ...

"In my writing, I do talk about ways to dodge the barrier eg opening off-shape 1NTs, and let's be honest, I know better than anyone that bidding 3♣ with the above hand is inferior. But it's all about a simple structure with solid guidelines to encourage the less experienced player.

"I suppose what I'm saying is that the no-reverse system you outline is 'Robson Beginner' – it's not 'Robson Experienced'".

5-Card Major Land

As an aside, since Mike Gurney mentioned it and Andrew does above as well, what is the situation when you are playing 5-card majors? Does a rebid of the opening bid always promise six cards?

In American bridge ('SAYC') a major suit rebid is indeed normally expected to show a 6-card suit. An online summary of the ubiquitous SAYC at: <http://nulda.bridgecz.cz/Systemy/sayc.pdf> states: "Non-jump rebid of opener's suit (shows) 6+ cards, with 5 cards in a minor suit as a last resort".

Prominent US bridge teacher Richard Pavlicek is slightly more pragmatic (<http://www.rpbridge.net/3c00.htm>): "Opener usually has six cards when he repeats the same suit, however, there are times when it is necessary to repeat a five-card suit. With 5-4 shape and insufficient strength to make a reverse bid, it is permissible to rebid a decent five-card suit. Be sure to understand that rebidding a five-card suit is the exception, not the normal practice."

The normal SAYC rebid to show a weak opening hand with only a 5-card suit after a 2-level response is 2NT. This is a hand that most likely would have opened a weak NT playing Acol but may be a hand with a singleton in responder's suit. 2NT as a contract requires a combined 22-23 HCP to be safe. That is why a 2-over-1 response in SAYC requires a good 11 HCP compared with just 10 HCP in modern Acol, just in case it catches a minimum 11-12 HCP opening bid opposite.

Raising the point count requirement for a 2-level suit response widens

out the range for 1NT to 6-10 HCP though, so you will need to take that into account. You can see that in that scenario there is some pressure to make 1NT a forcing bid just like a change of suit bid. If you do that, then it is a short step to widen the range of the 1NT response more dramatically to 6-12 HCP. This allows you to make ANY 2-over-1 response game forcing. This is the basis of the now common American tournament system usually called simply "2-over-1" or in full "2-over-1 game forcing". If you are an Acol player, stick to what you know, and don't even think about going there: you're not just changing one thing when you alter the meaning of a 2-level response, and there are too many nuances in the 2-over-1/forcing 1NT response system to get your head around simply.

The French 5-card system ("Majeur 5-eme" or "SEF" – le Système d'Enseignement Français) does allow you to rebid a 5-card suit if you have no better rebid.

1NT with a 5-card Major

I promised I would also comment about the 1NT-with-a-5-card-major quagmire. Before I give you my own personal view, with which I realise not everyone reading this will agree, let me give you the most common methods.

Playing what Robson teaches, it is simple: in order to keep the integrity of the 6-card rebid, ALL 5-3-3-2 hands in range without exception open 1NT. Yet according to the EBU's Bridge For All advice, until last year the recommendation was always to open the suit. To be fair to the EBU, this is now regarded as slightly old fashioned, so with a change of personnel at the EBU and throwing the baby out with bathwater, the advice has now switched to opening 1NT on these hands.

The truth is there are hands suitable for both actions. The issue is to identify them. The generally received advice is open to 1NT if the 5-card major is poor quality, say ♥J-9-5-3-2 but open 1 of the major ("1M") if the suit is good. I agree with the first part: if you have a suit of that quality then, of your opening 12-14 HCP, as much as 13 HCP could be in your short suits. That should give you plenty of stoppers

in no trumps and time therefore to establish the heart length winners, even if it takes a couple of rounds.

If the suit is good, isn't it obvious to open 1 of the major? Well, not for me. Say, in extremis, you have this hand:

♠ A K Q J 10
♥ Q 7 3
♦ 8 6
♣ J 10 5

The first point to note is that your robust spade suit is a 'source of tricks'. The second thing to think about is that the most common way of making extra tricks when you have a 5-card trump suit is by 'ruffs in the short hand', ie using dummy's trumps to ruff one of your losers. You are balanced so the rest of the suits are short and partner may not be able to help you with a short enough suit to enable you to take a ruff. Draw trumps and you may as well be playing 1NT. Open 1♠ and rebid 2♣ and you commit yourself to a) making an extra trick than you would have to in 1NT and b) if the eighth trick is available to the no-trump player as well, scoring ten points less for your pains. So in my opinion this is a 1NT opener. If the opponents overcall your 1NT, you can compete with 2♣, having already shown partner your range and generally balanced shape.

Let us weaken the hand slightly:

♠ A K 8 6 3
♥ Q 6 5
♦ 8 6
♣ K 10 5

I still open 1NT as I may be able to establish the spade suit with one duck, or on a red-letter day, partner may even have the ♠Q.


So on which hands don't I open 1NT? Take this example:

♠ A Q 9 3 2
♥ 9 7 3
♦ A 3
♣ K 7 2

Here you have six of your thirteen points tied up in the spade suit, yet it is a long way from being established. If partner has no spade honour and I lose the finesse (or have no access to dummy) I will need to lose the lead at least twice. The opponents will be able to win the race to establish their long suit, and in no trumps I won't be able to interrupt the flow of their tricks by ruffing.

It is exactly this kind of hand that I recommend that you don't open 1NT on. You have 4-6 HCP tied up in your suit, but it is gappy and finesse-y. Because you have too many of your points in the suit yet have no easy source of tricks, you may not have enough stoppers in your short suits yet will have difficulty establishing the long suit. Make the long suit trumps so you can rely on the small long cards pulling their weight.

This last hand is actually from a real life duplicate at Kingston Bridge Club. (Remember 'real life'?) and this was the full deal:

Dealer South. E/W Game.			
	♠ J 10 6		
	♥ Q 2		
	♦ K J 7 6		
	♣ Q J 10 9		
♠ K		♠ 8 7 5 4	
♥ A J 10 6 4		♥ K 8 5	
♦ 9 8 5		♦ Q 10 4 2	
♣ A 6 5 3		♣ 8 4	
	♠ A Q 9 3 2		
	♥ 9 7 3		
	♦ A 3		
	♣ K 7 2		

Those Souths that opened 1♠ made as many as nine tricks for +140. The pair that opened 1NT played there when West chose not to overcall. A heart was

led (♥J) and the defenders collected the first five tricks. West then switched to a diamond won by South. South who wanted to reach dummy to take the spade finesse now led a club. West jumped in with the ♣A and continued diamonds. Declarer needed to make the rest of the tricks and so rose with the ♦K and ran the ♠J. Disaster! West won with the ♠K for the defence's seventh trick. The defence actually lost their way at this point and failed to take their diamond tricks, else it could have been three down. Even so, one down in 1NT was close to a bottom score, the top going to those who played in 2♠. The anti-percentage play of dropping the singleton ♠K would have given South the 1NT contract, but apart from raising a few eyebrows would have left South +90 – still a terrible matchpoint score.

The result illustrated the shortcomings of opening 1NT with the South hand. 1♠ in my opinion is clearly the better opening, intending to rebid 2♠ over 2♣/2♦ with my-5-card suit.

These opinions are my own, based on my own observations and experience. I have nowhere seen the subject reasoned out to the extent I have set out above. Most players (and teachers) are dogmatically wedded to the way they have always done it. If I choose to discuss it with my partners they tend to focus on a point on the wall behind me. I would like to hear from other people on this subject, especially those with greater experience than myself. ■

The ideas expressed above are my own, but a big thank you to Julian Pottage of the Mr Bridge team for reading this article and making a number of suggestions for correction and improvement. Ned Paul.

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Jubert Wilmere's Threat

Jubert Wilmere, King John's senior tax inspector, looked up from a table covered with paperwork. 'The total is nearly 9,500 pounds short of the King's expectation,' he declared.

'But we have squeezed the last penny out of the shire's citizenry,' protested the Sheriff. 'Many of them barely have enough money to avoid starvation.'

'A year ago, you blamed thefts and hold-ups by the outlaw, Robin Hood,' Wilmere persisted. 'I trust you have dealt with this problem. Has he been executed, or is he in the dungeons here?'

'I entrusted his capture to Guy of Gisborne,' the Sheriff replied. 'He has been singularly unsuccessful.'

'Perhaps a month or two in one of your worst dungeons will sharpen his resolve,' said Wilmere. 'As for tonight's session, I will be partnering Sergeant Heade again. He understands more about the game than you and Gisborne put together.'

Despite the Sheriff's instructions to

the official responsible for the table movements, the final round of the session saw the Sheriff and Gisborne facing Wilmere and Sergeant Heade.

With Wilmere's verdict on the tax receipts already set in stone, the Sheriff was tempted to play well against him, rather than attempt to humour him with some good boards. Enjoyable as this might be, the long-term consequences could be ruinous.

West	North	East	South
<i>The Sheriff</i>	<i>Sgt Heade</i>	<i>Guy of Gisborne</i>	<i>Jubert Wilmere</i>
2♠	Pass	Pass	2NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

The Sheriff opened with a Feeble Two in spades and, a few moments later, had to find a lead against 3NT. Should he lead the ♠J, hoping to find partner with a doubleton spade and an outside entry? Perhaps it would be better to lead one of the other suits, hoping to reach partner's hand for a spade lead through declarer's ♠Q.

The Sheriff placed the ♣10 on the table. Jubert Wilmere won with the ace and made the strange-looking play of the ♠2 from his hand. His intention was to break the defenders' communications.

The Sheriff won with the ♠9. His next move was to play the ♠A, to see a signal from his partner.

When Gisborne discarded the ♥8, the Sheriff retained his last top spade and switched to the ♥9. Wilmere won with the queen and cashed five more tricks in the minors, finding that the diamonds did not break 3-3. His final move was to throw East in with a fourth round of diamonds. Gisborne had to concede a second heart trick to dummy's king and the game was made.

Wilmere turned towards the Sheriff. 'Lead a heart, not a club!' he exclaimed. 'Your partner lets my queen win and I am one down when the diamonds are not 3-3.'

Gisborne nodded. 'He's right, my Lord,' he said. 'I had five hearts to the

Dealer West. Game All.

♠ 8 4											
♥ K 6 5 4											
♦ K 5 3											
♣ Q J 8 5											
♠ A K J 10 9 3	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ 5
	N										
W		E									
	S										
♥ 9 3		♥ A J 10 8 7									
♦ J 6		♦ 10 9 8 4									
♣ 10 9 2		♣ 6 4 3									
		♠ Q 7 6 2									
		♥ Q 2									
		♦ A Q 7 2									
		♣ A K 7									




ace-jack-ten.'

The Sheriff raised his eyes to the ceiling. Gisborne could be so tiresome at times. 'I did well not to lead the ♠J,' he replied. 'Having decided that, you would have led from 9-x rather 10-9-x? Is that what you're telling me?'

'In London, we often lead the other major,' declared Wilmere. 'The shorter your suit is, the better your partner's holding will be.'

The next board was soon on the table:

Dealer East. E/W Game.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>The Sheriff</i>	<i>Sgt Heade</i>	<i>Guy of Gisborne</i>	<i>Jubert Wilmere</i>
Pass	3♥	1♣	1♥
All Pass		Pass	4♥

The Sheriff led the ♣3 and down went the dummy. Wilmere did not like his prospects. The ♠A was likely to be offside. A 3-3 diamond break might give him a spade discard, but he would need to lose a diamond trick to East, the safe hand who could not lead through the ♠K.

Wilmere won with dummy's ♣A and drew two rounds of trumps with the ace and king. He then crossed to the ♦K, two spot cards appearing from the defenders. 'Low diamond,' he said.

If Gisborne rose with the queen on the second round, declarer would allow it to hold. The defenders would be unable to score three spade tricks with East on lead. Nothing could then have prevented declarer from discarding a spade loser on the thirteenth diamond.

When Gisborne played low on the second round of diamonds, declarer

won with the ace and played a third round. Gisborne had to win with the queen and the contract was made.

'Not the best opening lead, my Lord,' Gisborne declared. 'Lead the jack of spades and we take three spade tricks, followed by a diamond.'

'You total buffoon!' cried the Sheriff. 'You fail to drop your queen of diamonds under dummy's king and then see fit to blame me for the opening lead?'


'After the Sheriff missed the best lead, my play in diamonds was the only way to make it,' Wilmere informed his partner.

'Leading through Gisborne's queen, you mean?' Sgt Heade replied. 'Yes, if he plays it on the second round, you will duck. That's very clever.'

The Sheriff gritted his teeth. The pompous Wilmere character had misplayed the deal at trick one. Had he played a low club from dummy, forcing East to win, he could have discarded a diamond on the ♣A. He could then have set up the thirteenth diamond safely, without relying on a defender's mistake. It was tempting to point this out. Only the £9,500 tax deficit was preventing him from doing so.

This was the final deal of the session:

Dealer South. Love All.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>The Sheriff</i>	<i>Sgt Heade</i>	<i>Guy of Gisborne</i>	<i>Jubert Wilmere</i>
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♣
Pass	3♣	Pass	4♣
Pass	4♦	Pass	6♣
All Pass			

Jubert Wilmere won the ♥9 lead

with the ace and played the ace of trumps. When the Sheriff showed out, discarding a diamond, it was clear that two diamond entries would be needed to dummy. He could then pick up East's trumps without loss.

When Gilbert led the ♦8 at trick two, the position was clear to the Sheriff. The only chance for the defence was to find declarer with a doubleton ♦Q. Rising with the ♦K on the first round would then force dummy's ace and kill the second diamond entry.

Deciding to forego this defence, in a desperate attempt to keep Wilmere in as good a mood as possible, the Sheriff followed with a low diamond. Thank the Lord, none of the other three players were capable of noting such an expert defence.

A successful finesse of the ♦J was followed by a trump finesse, a diamond to the ace and a repeated trump finesse. Wilmere drew the last trump with the ace and made the slam, conceding a club trick.

'Boldly bid and boldly played,' congratulated the Sheriff. 'You played well against us.'

'You could have beaten it, my Lord,' said Gisborne.

The Sheriff exhaled audibly. Was the notion of tact unknown to his partner?

'Your best opening lead is a diamond,' Gisborne continued. 'A finesse of the jack wins, but declarer would then have no reason to finesse in trumps, rather than clubs.'

The session was over and Wilmere turned towards Gisborne. 'You will give me a tour of the castle dungeons,' he informed him.

'I wish to see the very worst of them,' continued Wilmere, as he and Gisborne descended the stone steps into increasing darkness.

A few moments later, Gisborne turned the key of an unoccupied evil-smelling dungeon no more than six foot by six. Well below ground-level, it had no natural light whatsoever.

'In one month's time, you will have Robin Hood incarcerated here,' declared Wilmere. 'If you fritter away your time playing cards and drinking ale, it is you who will be chained here, inhaling this foul vapour. Do I make myself clear?' Gisborne suddenly felt very unwell. 'You do,' he replied. ■

Simple Doubles

Part 5

In this article, we will look at doubles of 1NT.

a. Requirements

A double of a 1NT opening bid is generally played as a penalty double – after all, no-one has yet bid a suit so it can hardly be for take-out. You should generally have a hand a little stronger than opener’s maximum, but it does depend a bit on whether or not you have a good lead. If you had A-K-Q-J-x-x-x and nothing, you could try a double and maybe it would be passed out. But, as less extreme examples, look at the following two hands after a 12-14 1NT opening:

Hand A	Hand B
♠ A J 5 4	♠ K Q J 10 4
♥ K J 3	♥ A 6 5
♦ A Q 6	♦ A 3
♣ Q 5 4	♣ Q 6 5

No doubt you would double with both hands, but you would be much happier if it was passed out and you had Hand B. You would lead a top spade and be fairly sure it wouldn’t be making overtricks. With Hand A you would not know what to lead and whatever you chose could easily lead to the contract making – and with overtricks too. If the bidding went 1NT–Pass–Pass, however, you would be quite happy to double with Hand A. You want partner to lead his best suit. Although, with two aces, it may not matter what partner leads when you have Hand B, a spade lead would suit you best.

b. Removing partner's double

Most of the time you should pass the

double and hope for the best, especially when you have a balanced hand. The only time you might remove with a very weak balanced hand is when you are at favourable vulnerability, otherwise even if it is right to remove you may get doubled and suffer a worse fate.

Hand C	Hand D
♠ J 10 9 4 3	♠ 6 5 3
♥ 6 5 4	♥ J 5 4
♦ 3	♦ 8 7 4 2
♣ 7 6 3 2	♣ 8 7 2

With Hand C, I would remove to 2♠. If you pass, partner is bound to lead a diamond. You have some chance of making 2♠ if partner has a strong balanced hand, while 1NT is likely to make too.

However, with Hand D, although 1NT doubled is likely to make, anything you remove to might also be doubled and still go for a large number. Your best chance is that partner has a hand like Hand B, adjacent, and even if 1NT doesn’t go down it might make without overtricks.

c. The opposition remove the double

These days opponents never seem to leave in the double, and it is important that you know when to double them and when to bid yourself. My experience is that they usually remove to two of a minor, either directly, or via a pass or redouble. I like to play that if this happens the pass is forcing both from the doubler and the doubler’s partner – after all, if the other side is choosing to remove the double then your side must have about half the points in the pack or more, or they would have left in the double. Then the

quicker doubler's partner bids a suit the worse a hand he has. Let’s look at some examples after the bidding has gone 1NT–Dbl–2♣:

Hand E	Hand F
♠ J 10 9 4 3	♠ J 10 9 4 3
♥ 6 5 4	♥ A 5 4
♦ 3	♦ 3
♣ 7 6 3 2	♣ 7 6 3 2

With Hand E, I would bid 2♠ immediately. This tells my partner I have a truly terrible hand – and also makes it hard for the opponents to find a red-suit fit should they have one.

With Hand F, I would pass the double and bid 2♠ on the next round, thus telling my partner that I am not ashamed of my hand and think we are likely to make 2♠.

As well as knowing when to bid when you have some distribution, what should you do if you are balanced?

My agreement is that if I am in a forcing auction (whatever it may be) then double is for penalties. If I am not in a forcing auction, double is take-out. So if my opponent removes to two of a minor (however he does so) then double is for penalties, but if he removes to two of a major then double is take-out. A penalty double directly over the bid should generally hold four trumps, while a double in the pass-out seat may have only three trumps.

So, suppose the bidding goes like this:

West	North	East	South
1NT	Dbl	Pass	Pass
Rdbl	Pass	2♣	

You hold:

Sally Brock's Simple Double Part 5 Quiz

(Answers on page 39)

What do you bid on the following hands with the auction given? The vulnerability and scoring method should not affect your answers.

Hand 1	Hand 2
♠ A K Q J 10 4	♠ K J 3 2
♥ A 4 3	♥ A 5 4
♦ 6 5	♦ A 4 3
♣ 7 6	♣ K 4 3

West	North	East	South
1NT*	?		
* 12-14			

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

West	North	East	South
1NT*	Dbl	Pass	?
* 12-14			

Hand 5	Hand 6
♠ 5	♠ K J 10 4
♥ K J 10 3	♥ 7 6 2
♦ Q 5 4 2	♦ Q 3 2
♣ K 7 6 2	♣ 6 5 2

West	North	East	South
1NT*	Dbl	2♣	?
* 12-14			

d. Non-penalty doubles of 1NT

Some people don't like to play a penalty double of a strong NT; and, of course, you might double 1NT as a passed hand when you can't possibly have enough high-card points. How you should play this non-penalty double depends on your general defensive methods. You want to plug a gap. If you play a natural defence to 1NT, you might like to play a double by a passed hand (or a double of a strong NT) to show the majors. One common defence to 1NT these days is Multi Landy. Playing that method, after 1NT, a bid of 2♣ shows both majors; 2♦ shows a single-suited major; 2♥/♠ show five cards in the bid major along with a 4-card or longer minor. If you were playing this, then it would be useful to have a double (of a strong NT, or a weak NT by a passed hand) to show four cards in a major with a 5-card or longer minor.

e. Doubling a 1NT response to an opening

This is usually played as a take-out bid of the suit opened. Although you might have at least 16 points and a balanced hand, there is no guarantee that 1NT would be going off, and even if it is then you might just be converting 50 to 100 or 100 to 200. On the other hand, maybe 1NT is making for your opponents while you can make two or three of a suit. That is a bigger swing to play for. Suppose the bidding goes: 1♥-Pass-1NT and you hold:

Hand K	Hand L
♠ A Q 3 2	♠ K 5
♥ 4	♥ K J 10 3
♦ K 10 3	♦ A Q 5 4
♣ Q J 7 6 3	♣ A 5 4

With Hand K you should double. You have a near-perfect take-out double of a 1♥ opening. You want partner to compete if he has a fit with you. On Hand L, however, you are perfectly content to defend 1NT (though you don't have an easy opening lead), so just pass and hope they go down. ■

Next month Sally Brock will look at competitive and responsive doubles.

Hand G

♠ Q 4
♥ 7 6 2
♦ J 10 9 3
♣ Q 10 9 2

Hand H

♠ J 10 9 3
♥ Q 10 9 2
♦ 7 6 2
♣ Q 4

With Hand G you double 2♣. This may seem like a big bid with a poor hand, but partner has shown 16 or so points so you have the balance of power and it looks as if your opponents are in trouble. Also, if the worst comes to the worst, 2♣ doubled making is not game. With Hand H you would not double, but if partner doubled in the pass-out seat you would pass. You would prefer to have three trumps for such a pass but you have no good alternative. If you have enough for game with both majors and only two clubs, then you might prefer to bid 3♣ asking partner to bid a major. However, if your opponents are vulnerable, again you might try for the penalty.

It is usually best to lead a trump against such contracts. You have more high cards than they do and they are only likely to succeed if they can make ruffs.

Sometimes it is the doubler who has to decide what to bid on the next round. Suppose the bidding starts like this:

West	North	East	South
1NT	Dbl	2♣	Pass
Pass			

You hold:

Hand I	Hand J
♠ A K 5 4	♠ A K 6 5 4
♥ A J 10	♥ A J 10
♦ K 5 4	♦ K 5
♣ 7 6 2	♣ 7 6 2

With Hand I you should double and hope partner leads a trump. Although 2♣ might make, it is your best chance of a decent score. With Hand J, you have a decent 5-card spade suit and the odds favour your bidding it. Partner could even have 4-card support and then your defensive chances against 2♣ would be much reduced.

DECLARER PLAY QUIZ



by David Huggett

(Answers on page 43)

You are South as declarer playing rubber bridge or teams, thus aiming to fulfill the contract. In each case what is your play strategy?

1.

♠ 8 5 4 3
♥ K 9 8 3
♦ Q 3
♣ K 10 5

♠ AK
♥ A 2
♦ K 8 4 2
♣ AJ 9 6 2

You are in 3NT after West opened 1♠ and East passed. West leads the ♠Q. How do you plan the play?

3.

♠ 9 7
♥ A 8 7 5 2
♦ A 8 6 4
♣ Q 2

♠ AKJ 10 8
♥ K 3
♦ 2
♣ KJ 10 9 6

You are declarer in 4♠. West leads the ♦Q. How do you plan the play?

2.

♠ 6 4
♥ 5 3 2
♦ 7 5 3
♣ AJ 10 9 3

♠ AKQ 3
♥ AK 7
♦ A 8 6 2
♣ Q 4

You are declarer in 3NT and West leads the ♠J. How do you plan the play?

4.

♠ 6
♥ AQ 3
♦ KJ 8 6 5 4 3
♣ 10 4

♠ AQ 8
♥ K 7 6 2
♦ A 7
♣ J 8 5 2

You are declarer in 3NT after your opening 1NT is raised to game. West leads the ♠K and follows with a low club and East returns the suit. After the defenders have made four club tricks, West switches to the ♥8. How do you plan the play?

How Can You Weak Justify



Q This deal comes from one of the regular EBU 12 board matchpoint games on BBO:

Dealer South. E/W Game.

♠ 8 4
♥ K 6 2
♦ K 8 7 6
♣ Q J 10 7

♠ 5 2
♥ A Q J 10 8 7 3
♦ 9
♣ 6 3 2

♠ J 9 7 3
♥ Void
♦ A Q 5 4
♣ K 9 8 5 4

♠ AKQ 10 6
♥ 9 5 4
♦ J 10 3 2
♣ A

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

The defenders (a human West and a robot East) took the first seven tricks with their red suit winners and by scoring ruffs. -150 yielded only 16.7% of the matchpoints for North-South.

Who should have bid differently?
Name and address supplied.

A The way the cards lie, South does better to pass 3♥ doubled. It should be possible to take two spades, a heart, a club and a club ruff to collect 200. Passing with

three small trumps is a risky venture of course – North might have had a small singleton rather than K-x-x.

It strikes me that North's double was rather aggressive. Without an overall, North would have responded 1NT or scraped up 2♣. Doubling 3♥ is asking partner to bid at a much higher level. The strength and shape of the hand does not seem to justify this.



Q I have seen Bernard Magee talk about 'a responsive type of double'.

Please summarise the convention for me.

What happens if one does not play this convention?

The double may not apply and what is the alternative?

Eardley Berkeley, Warwick.

A A responsive double is a take-out double after partner has already made a take-out double:

West	North	East	South
1♦	Dbl	2♦	Dbl

North's double invites South to bid a suit and South's double then invites North to do so. You are responding to a double with a second double, hence the term responsive.

You Counter A mp Overcall?

Because it is so unlikely that you would wish to double the opponents for penalties at a low level when they have a fit, it is almost universal to play responsive doubles. If you do not play them, I suppose you could save it for a hand when you hold K-Q-J-10-9 in the opposing suit – but that will come up very rarely.



Q We were East-West on the deal below from the Northallerton Virtual club on BBO:

Dealer South. E/W Game.

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

West	North	East	South
			Pass
Pass	2NT ¹	Pass	3♦ ²
Pass	3♥	Pass	4♣
Pass	4♦ ³	Pass	4♥

All Pass

¹ 20-22

² 5+ hearts

³ Thinking 4♣ was ace asking

4♥ by North down 2 occurred three times for a score of 68.8% to E/W.

2NT by North down 3 occurred four times for a better score.

2NT by North down 1 occurred twice.

4♠ by North down 1 occurred once.

4♣ by South down 1 occurred once.

Was the hand a lottery?

Alex Mathers.

Northallerton.

A If I am reading the scores right, North-South played in hearts at only three tables, each time in game and every declarer making only 8 tricks. This I do find surprising on two counts.

Firstly, passing 2NT is bizarre with the South hand. Perhaps the players had overlooked the possibility of making a transfer and then passing.

Secondly, with the ♣Q doubleton, you can make 11 tricks with hearts as trumps, just losing two trump tricks. It would seem that all three declarers failed to unblock the ♠A-K early enough and ran out of trumps.

You were unlucky that your opponents found the best contract when so many did not but lucky that they failed to play the contract to best advantage, lending weight to your lottery comment.

DEFENCE QUIZ

by Julian Pottage

(Answers on page 41)

You are West in the defensive positions below playing matchpoint pairs with both sides vulnerable. While you usually aim to beat the contract, you may also need to consider the risk of conceding overtricks.

1.

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



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

3.

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



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

You lead the ♥A: ♥7, ♥10 and ♥J. What is your plan?

You lead the ♠K (asking for a count signal): ♠2, ♠3 and ♠6. What is your plan?

2.

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



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

¹ Two-suited hand (5-5+)

You lead the ♥4: ♥A, ♥10 and ♥5. After the ♣Q lead from dummy, partner wins with the ♠A and returns the ♥3, covered by the ♥6. What is your plan?

4.

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



West	North	East	South
			Pass
All Pass	1NT	3♥ ¹	4♠
			¹ Pre-emptive

You lead the ♥2: ♥K, ♥A and ♥5. Partner continues with the ♥J, on which declarer plays the ♥9. What is your plan?

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Q This was board 13 in a BBO club session:

Dealer North. Game All.

♠ 10 5
 ♥ K Q J 10
 ♦ K Q 9 4 3 2
 ♣ 2

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

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

At our table the bidding went as follows:

West	North	East	South
	1♦	1♥	2♣
2♥	Pass	Pass	3♣
Pass	3NT	Pass	4♣
Dbf	All Pass		

It is obviously a freak deal and many N/S pairs got into a mess, usually too high in clubs doubled.

Is there any way to avoid a poor score or do you just accept it?

The computer says the optimum result is 2♥+1 E/W. Roger Harris, Stratford-upon-Avon Bridge Club.

If the auction you have given me is correct then there certainly was a way to avoid getting so high.

If East-West bid only as high as 2♥, South can reopen with 2♠ – the jump to 3♣ was quite unnecessary. North can bid 2NT over 2♠ and South pulls to 3♣, ending

the auction. South has great shape but few points while North clearly has a minimum opening and there is no great fit. In practice East might well compete to 3♥ and then South finishes in 4♣.

So long as you stop in a part-score nobody is going to double.



Q I note that in the third hand of your BRIDGE 213, you say that the 3♣ rebid to the 2♥ transfer bid shows a minimum hand and 4 spades.

This suggests to me that a hand with 4 spades and a maximum (14 points) should rebid 4♣. Surely risking a punitive penalty double?

No guarantee that the opponents can make game? Hugh Ball, Eastbourne, East Sussex.

No, a maximum 1NT hand with 4-card support should not jump all the way to game. Instead with such a hand you should make a descriptive bid. 2NT or any suit bid below 3 of the responder's suit shows a maximum with 4-card support. Playing a weak no-trump, it is customary for a new suit bid to show a losing doubleton (so 2NT shows a hand with 4-card support and a maximum but no losing doubleton). Those playing a strong no-trump and some weak no-trump players would break into a strong suit rather than a weak one – it does not matter a great deal so long as you and your partner are on the same wavelength. ■

Email your questions (including your postal address) for Julian to: julianpottage@mrbridge.co.uk

A to Z of Bridge

compiled by Julian Pottage



RABBIT

An inexperienced or weak player.

RACK

Apparatus to hold cards for handicapped players.

RAGS

A poor holding, eg 'two rags', a low doubleton.

RANK

1. The relative value of the cards: the ace is the highest and the two the lowest.
2. The status achieved in a ranking system.
3. The rank of the suits as used to distinguish between the major suits (spades and hearts) and the minor suits (diamonds and clubs).

RANKING SYSTEM

A system of measuring a player's ability and/or experience relative to other players.

The English Bridge Union Ranking System works on Master Points accumulated.

Rank	Master Points
Local Master	100
Club Master	200
Area Master	500
District Master	1,000
County Master	2,500
Master	5,000
Advanced Master	7,500
* Master	10,000
** Master	15,000
*** Master	20,000
**** Master	25,000

**** Master	30,000
Tournament Master	40,000
* Tournament Master	50,000
(plus a further star for each 10,000)	
Premier Master	5,000
including 10 Green Points	
(plus a star, up to five, for each 5,000)	
Premier Tournament Master	40,000
including 10 Green Points	
(plus a star for each 10,000)	
Regional Master	10,000
including 25 Green Points	
(plus a star for each 10,000)	
Premier Regional Master	20,000
including 50 Green Points	
(plus a star for each 10,000)	
National Master	30,000
including 75 Green Points	
Premier National Master	40,000
including 100 Green Points	
Life Master	60,000
including 150 Green Points	
Premier Life Master	90,000
including 300 Green Points	
Grand Master	120,000
including 600 Green Points	
(plus a star for each 200 Green Points)	
Premier Grand Master	1,500
Green Points	

The SBU, WBU and NIBU have similar ranking systems.

RAISE

To increase the level of the contract in partner's last-mentioned denomination. West's last call, shown in the auctions below, are both a raise.

Auction 1			
West	North	East	South
		1♥	Pass
2♥			

Auction 2			
West	North	East	South
1♠	Pass	2♦	Pass
3♦			

Unless partner has bid the suit strongly, a raise normally shows support for partner's suit.

Example West hands consistent with the above auctions are:

Hand 1	Hand 2
♠ J 9 4	♠ A J 9 4 2
♥ A 8 5 3	♥ 9 4
♦ Q 9 4	♦ K J 9 3
♣ 10 3 2	♣ K 4

RAISE TO FIVE OF A MAJOR

In a slam sequence, when the bidding reveals one potentially weak suit (eg the opponents have bid it or the partnership has bid the other three suits), a raise to five of the agreed major asks partner to bid on with a suitable holding in the weak suit.

Continuations are:

Pass	No first- or second-round control
5NT	King
6 agreed suit	Singleton
Any other bid	Ace or void in the suit

For example:

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

West	North	East	South
?	3♥	3♠	Pass

West wants to play in a slam unless there are two fast heart losers and bids 5♠ to ask.

REBIDDABLE SUIT

A suit of five cards, normally headed by at least two of the top honours (ace, king, queen). Any six-card or longer suit. Bidding a suit twice or overcalling in it at the two level or higher normally shows a rebiddable suit.

Hand 1	Hand 2
♠ 8 4	♠ 8 4
♥ A J 4	♥ K 10 4
♦ A Q 5	♦ A 5
♣ K 9 4 3 2	♣ K J 9 4 3 2

With the first hand, you do not have a rebiddable suit. You open 1NT (weak) or, if RHO opens 1♠, you double. With the second hand, you do. You open 1♣ or, if RHO opens 1♠ (or a red suit), you overcall 2♣.

RECAPITULATION SHEET

Sheet on which the results of each board, the totals for each pair and the final placings are on display after a duplicate event.

RECTIFYING THE COUNT

The deliberate loss of a trick or tricks in preparation for a squeeze. For most squeezes to succeed, you need to play the squeeze card when you have the ready winners to take all the remaining tricks but one. If you have two tricks to lose, usually the squeeze will fail. However, you can often remedy the situation by giving up a trick before playing the squeeze card.

For example:

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

As South, you play in 6NT and receive

the lead of the ♠Q. With eleven top tricks, the contract will be simple if either red suit divides 3-3. You can also succeed if either opponent holds at least four cards in both red suits, for then a squeeze is possible. However, if you win the opening lead and then cash four clubs, only five tricks will have gone. Each player will have eight cards left, so anyone who started with four hearts and four diamonds will have no difficulty in retaining them and a squeeze will not operate. Instead, you duck the opening lead, win the spade continuation and then cash four clubs. At this point six tricks will have gone and only seven cards will remain in each hand. Neither defender will be able to retain four cards in both hearts and diamonds. Ducking the opening lead 'rectifies the count'.

RED

1. This is one of the traffic-light terms that the Laws and Ethics Committee of the English Bridge Union uses to categorize psychic bids. A 'red' psyche is one where the partnership's subsequent actions provide sufficient evidence of an unauthorized partnership understanding to warrant an adjusted score.
2. Shorthand for describing the vulnerability of both partnerships on a board and meaning that the 'red' partnership is vulnerable but their opponents are not vulnerable.

RED DOT

A marking to go on a convention card signifying that the partnership employs nonstandard leads.

RED POINT

Scottish National Master Point, equivalent to an English Green Point.

REDEAL

A fresh deal following an irregularity during the original deal or, in Chicago, a fresh deal after a pass-out.

REDOUBLE

A call that doubles again the value of the trick score, the penalty for undertricks and the bonuses for overtricks of a contract that an opponent has already doubled. It will

also lead to an additional bonus ('for the insult') of 100 points if the contract makes.

Redoubled contracts are rare because whichever side loses on the deal is likely to record a large loss. At low levels, many redoubles are conventional, either suggesting general strength or, if the opponents have made a penalty double, the desire for a rescue.

RE-ENTRY

A second entry. A re-entry can be useful for a number of purposes, such as to repeat a successful finesse or to cash an established winner.

REFUSE

You refuse (to win a trick) if you play a low card when you have a winner available. Duck and hold up are more common terms for such a play.

RELAY

A conventional bid (often the cheapest bid) that conveys little or no information, but mainly marks time while partner describes his hand. For example, with the Multi 2♦ convention, a 2♥ response to 2♦ conveys the information that responder wishes to play in 2♥ if the opener has a weak two bid in hearts, and paves the way for the 2♦ bidder to clarify his hand type.

RELAY SYSTEM

A bidding system employing relays so that one member of the partnership describes his hand accurately and the other decides the final contract.

RELAY TABLE

Table used for boards not in play, particularly during a Howell movement or a relay Mitchell. Boards move from playing tables on to the relay table(s) and then back to playing tables.

REMAINING COUNT

A method of defensive signalling after your first play in the suit did not show your length (for example if you were covering an honour, playing third-hand-high). If you have an odd number of cards left, you discard or lead your lowest card (just as you would play low from an odd number if

you were signalling length on the first play of the suit.) If you have an even number left, you play a high card.

For example, suppose you hold Q-J-6-3 and your first play is to put up the jack third in hand. You have an odd number of cards remaining, so if you lead or discard from the suit, you play the three. If a partnership's primary discarding method is suit preference or attitude, it is also quite common to play that a second discard shows remaining count even in a new suit.

REMOVE A DOUBLE

To bid again after partner has made a penalty double, thus signifying an unwillingness to defend the doubled contract. Removing a penalty double tends to be an exceptional action. You would need to have significantly better offensive potential or significantly weaker defensive potential than your previous bidding has indicated.

♠ 8 7
♥ 6
♦ K J 10 7 4 3 2
♣ Q 10 3

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

Although the strength of your hand is within the expected range, your 1NT response did nothing to suggest a singleton heart or a 7-card diamond suit.

RENEGE

Old-fashioned term for revoke.

REOPEN THE BIDDING

A call made by a player who is sitting in the position that, were he to pass, the bidding would end. He may be acting in a balancing role, deducing that his partner has some values from the opponents' lack of desire to bid higher. The lower the level, the more likely it is that you will want to reopen.

REOPENING DOUBLE

A double, intended for take-out, used by the player in the pass-out seat to

keep the auction alive. A common situation is for opener to reopen with a double as an effective way of competing after partner has passed over an opponent's intervention, especially if negative doubles are part of the system.

♠ A Q 8 6 4
♥ K 10 4
♦ A Q 7 3
♣ 3

West	North	East	South
1♠	2♣	Pass	Pass
?			

Double is a much better call than 2♦ partly because it gives East the option to convert to penalties by passing and partly because the best contract may be in hearts.

REPEATED FINESSE

To finesse more than once in the same suit against the same opponent.

♦ 8 5 2

♦ A Q J

If you lead a diamond to the queen and it wins, you will want to return to the North hand and repeat the finesse against East's presumed king by leading up to the jack.

REPECHAGE

A competition whereby competitors, knocked out in the qualifying stages of the main event, have a second opportunity to qualify for the final of the main event by winning a secondary event. Depending on the event, a repechage can qualify more than one competitor for the final.

RESCUE

To take out into what you hope to be a safer contract. The term usually applies after the opponents have made a penalty double (or left in a take-out double for penalties).

West	North	East	South
		1♣	Pass
Pass	Dbl	Pass	Pass
1♥			

West's rescue into 1♥ suggests long hearts and short clubs, clearly in a hand too weak to bid the first time. West might hold:

♠ 9 8
♥ Q 10 7 5 3 2
♦ J 8 5
♣ 4 2

RESERVE

To have an alternative line of play available, eg 'To keep the heart finesse in reserve'.

RESERVE ONE'S RIGHTS

To alert the opponents at the table that you believe an irregularity has occurred and therefore that you may need to call the Tournament Director.

RESPOND

To make a bid, usually in a new denomination after partner has opened the bidding but also if partner has made a conventional asking bid (such as Stayman or Blackwood). Unless partner's bid was forcing, you do not have to respond with a very weak hand.

RESPONDER

The partner of the player who makes the opening bid. For example, if West opens 1♣, East is the responder.

RESPONDER'S REVERSE

A non-jump rebid by responder in a new suit that is higher-ranking than his first suit and is at the two-level or above.

Opener	Responder
1♣	1♥
2♣	2♠

By tradition, a responder's reverse is forcing for one round, though some modern players treat it as a game force.

RESPONSE

This is a bid made following ►

◀ partner's bid (usually an opening bid but sometimes a conventional enquiry). For example, in the sequence 1♣-Pass-1♥, the 1♥ bid is a response to the 1♣ opening bid. If the response is in the suit partner bid, it is usual to call it a raise rather than a response.

The range for a simple response at the one level is very wide. You can have as few as 5 or 6 points. With a hand unsuitable for a jump shift, you could have 20 or even more points. For a two-level response, the minimum threshold is higher, 9 or 10 points in Acol, but more in some other systems.

Hand 1	Hand 2
♠ 8 5	♠ K 4
♥ K 10 7 3	♥ A K 10 7 4
♦ J 7 4	♦ 4
♣ Q 8 5 4	♣ A Q J 7 4

With the first hand, you respond 1♥ to 1♦ (or 1♣) but 1NT to 1♠. With the second hand, you respond 1♥ to 1♦ or 2♥ to 1♠.

RESPONSIVE DOUBLE

The use of a double for take-out when partner has already made a take-out double and the third player has supported the opener. For example:

West	North	East	South
1♣	Dbl	3♣	Dbl

South's double suggests the values to compete but with no strong preference for a particular suit. A partnership needs to agree how high responsive doubles apply. Up to and including 4♦ (the highest part-score bid) is popular.

RESTRICTED CHOICE

The Principle of Restricted Choice is that a player is more likely to have played a particular card because it is a forced, ie restricted, play than because it is a chosen play from equals. For example:

	K 10 9 8 7 6	
(J)-5-4		Q-(J)
	A 3 2	

South, the declarer, cashes the ace and East drops the queen. Assuming that with queen-jack doubleton, East will play the jack half the time and the queen half the time, East is roughly twice as likely to hold the singleton queen as he is to hold the queen-jack doubleton.

RESTRICTED LICENCE

A treatment or convention licensed by the EBU for use only in certain competitions.

RESULTS MERCHANT

A player who extols the merits of a line of play, either because on the actual layout of the cards it would have succeeded, or because on the actual results on a board it would have scored well, rather than on logical analysis.

RETAIN THE LEAD

To keep the lead by playing a card known to be a winner. If you know the opponents have enough tricks ready to run to defeat your contract or make their contract, it can be a good idea to play in such a way as to retain the lead for as long as possible.

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

As South, you play in 3NT and receive a spade lead. You have seven top tricks and a successful finesse against one of the missing queens would give you two more. However, a losing finesse would spell instant defeat. You therefore play to retain the lead early in the play, thereby maximising your chances. You cash the ♦A-K and the ♣A-K. If neither queen has dropped, you fall back on playing West for the ♥Q.

RETURN

1. If you lead a suit that your partner

has previously led, this is a return.

2. To make such a lead eg West led a spade. East won with the ace and returned the three.
3. To re-enter a hand eg South took a heart finesse and returned to dummy to finesse again.

RE-EVALUATION

The mental adjustment to the value of one's hand in the light of the previous bidding. For example, a holding of K-x is likely to improve in value if one's right hand opponent bids the suit but decline in value if one's left-hand opponent bids it. Even a holding of small cards can improve (or decline) in value as the bidding progresses. For example, if you have 8-5-2 in a suit and RHO bids it, you will treat this as a poor holding as any honours partner has in the suit will be under the bid. However, if LHO supports the suit strongly, you will place partner with a shortage and adjust upwards, knowing you have no wasted values in the suit.

REVERSE

A non-jump rebid in a new suit that takes the bidding above the level of two of your original suit, usually in a higher-ranking suit. Any player can reverse, though the term most commonly applies to a reverse by opener. In the first three of the sequences shown below, the last bid shown is a reverse.

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

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

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

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

The 2♠ bid in the fourth sequence is not a reverse; this is because the 2♦ response had already taken the bidding above the level of 2♣.

When a reverse is in a higher-ranking suit, the first bid suit will always be longer than the second suit. A reverse nearly always shows values beyond those already promised.

REVERSE SIGNALS/DISCARDS

A method of signalling/discarding whereby you play a low card to encourage and a high card to discourage. This reverses the standard high-low signals/discards. The chief advantage is that, with a doubleton, you do not need to use what may be an important card that you cannot afford to encourage. Despite their technical superiority over standard signals, few pairs use them.

REVERSING THE DUMMY

This is the same as a dummy reversal. It involves taking multiple ruffs in the long trump hand, thereby generating an extra trump winner, while leaving the short trump hand to draw the opposing trumps. Suppose you have a trump suit of A-Q-10-x-x facing K-J-9. If you take three (or more ruffs) in the long trump hand, you will make more than the five trump tricks with which you started. For reversing the dummy to be successful, you will usually need strong trumps and plenty of entries in the short trump hand.

Another good reason for reversing the dummy is that dummy's trumps are strong but yours are not. For example, with a trump suit of 6-5-4-3-2 facing A-K-Q, ruffing with the high short trumps is going to be unproductive.

REVIEWING THE BIDDING

At his turn to call, a player may request a review of the auction. At duplicate, an opponent must give such a review and must include every call, with alerts.

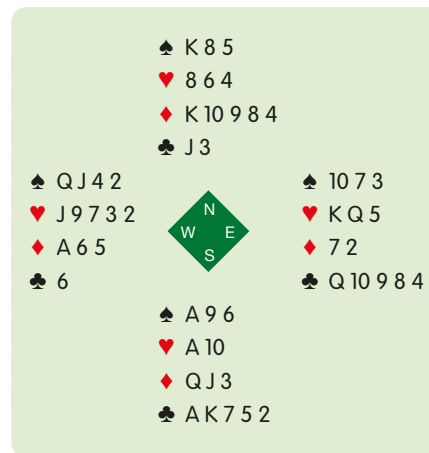
REVOKE

To fail to follow suit when able to do so. A revoke becomes established when either member of the offending side plays to the next trick. The Laws apply.

REVOLVING DISCARDS

A system of discards whereby the rank of the discard signals for a lead in another suit. A discard of a high card asks for the lead of the suit ranking immediately above the suit of

the discard (clubs above spades) and similarly for a low ranking discard (spades below clubs).



West leads the ♥3 against South's 3NT. East plays the queen, taken by South's ace. When declarer plays diamonds, West holds up his ace until the third round to allow his partner the chance to signal. Playing 'revolving discards', on the third round of diamonds the ♠3 or the ♣10 will ask for a heart.

RHO

Short for Right-Hand Opponent.

RHYTHM

To bid or play in rhythm is to bid or play at an even speed.

RIDE

To take a finesse by playing a card and letting it run if it is not covered by LHO.



You lead the queen from the North hand and let it 'ride' unless East covers with the king.

RIFFLE SHUFFLE

An effective form of shuffling by interweaving two portions of a pack and repeating the process several times. A perfect riffle shuffle (two portions perfectly interwoven) is not a true shuffle since a second identical shuffle restores the pack to its original form.

RIPSTRA

A little used defence to an opening 1NT whereby a 2♣ overcall shows both majors with longer clubs than diamonds and a 2♦ overcall shows both majors with longer diamonds than clubs.

ROCK-CRUSHER

A hand of tremendous trick-taking ability; powerhouse is a similar term.

ROLLING BLACKWOOD

After a Blackwood 4NT enquiry some players use the cheapest available (non-trump suit) bid to ask for kings. This goes by the name 'Rolling Blackwood' or 'Sliding Blackwood'.

ROLLING GERBER

A convention whereby after the response to a Gerber 4♣ enquiry, a bid in the cheapest non-trump suit subsequently asks for kings. This also goes by the name 'Sliding Gerber'.

ROMAN ASKING BIDS

A method of establishing the suitability of the two hands for slam purposes. In certain situations, when a partnership has agreed a trump suit, a bid of a new suit asks partner to describe his holding in that suit on the following scale:

- 1st step No control
- 2nd step King or singleton
- 3rd step Ace or void
- 4th step Ace-king or ace-queen

ROMAN BLACKWOOD

A version of Blackwood originally used in the Roman system but now rare. After 4NT, the responses are:

- 5♣ zero or three aces
- 5♦ one or four aces

The responses of 5♥, 5♠ and 5NT show two aces, either of the same colour, the same rank or the two other aces. The original school of thought was:

- 5♥ two aces of the same colour
- 5♠ two aces neither of the same rank nor the same colour (ie spades and diamonds or hearts and clubs)
- 5NT two aces of the same rank

Some players prefer the CRO principle, ie 5♥ same Colour, 5♠ same Rank, ▶

◀ 5NT the two Others. A player can then ask for kings in a similar way.

ROMAN GERBER

A version of Gerber modelled on the same lines as Roman Blackwood.

ROMAN JUMP OVERCALL

A system of two-suited jump overcalls whereby immediate jump suit overcalls show intermediate two-suiters. You bid the lower ranking of two touching suits (excluding the opener's suit), whilst a 2NT overcall shows a strong unspecified two-suiter. Since this method does not allow you to make single-suited jump overcalls, very few pairs play it.

ROMAN KEY-CARD BLACKWOOD

A sophisticated variation of Blackwood in which the king of the trump suit is like a 'fifth' ace; the four aces and the king of trumps are all key cards. The usual responses to 4NT are:

- 5♣ 0 or 3 Key Cards
- 5♦ 1 or 4 Key Cards*
- 5♥ 2 or 5 Key Cards but not the queen of trumps*
- 5♠ 2 or 5 Key Cards including the queen of trumps

After a 5♣ or 5♦ response, the 4NT bidder may continue with a bid in the lowest non-trump suit to enquire about the queen of trumps. The responder returns to the trump suit at the lowest level without the queen or, with it, bids 5NT or cue bids a second-round control. An alternative method is for responder to proceed: one step without the queen, two steps with it.
* Some partnerships interchange the meaning of the 5♣ and 5♦ replies, the thinking being that the 4NT bidder is more likely to want to enquire further facing 1 than 0.

The 4NT bidder can continue with a bid of 5NT to ask for the non-trump kings. Responses can be to show the lowest king or on the standard step principle:

- 6♣ 0 King
- 6♦ 1 King
- 6♥ 2 Kings
- 6♠ 3 Kings

♠ A J 10 7 4	N W E S	♠ K Q 8 3
♥ A 8 5 4		♥ 6
♦ A Q 5		♦ K 8 6 2
♣ Q		♣ A 8 5 2

West	East
1♠	4♥ ¹
4NT	5♠ ²
5NT	6♦ ³
7♠	

¹splinter

²two key cards and the ♠Q

³the ♦K or one non-trump king

Roman Keycard Blackwood is a powerful tool and popular amongst tournament players.

ROMAN LEADS

A system of leads whereby one leads the second highest card from a sequence. For example, from K-Q-J-x you lead the queen. From an interior sequence, the lead is the same as the standard lead eg from K-10-9-x you lead the ten.

ROMAN SYSTEM

System devised by Walter Avarelli and Giorgio Belladonna and used by them as members of the Italian Blue Team. The system uses an artificial 1♣ opening (either a balanced 12-16 points or 17+ points) and canapé.

ROMAN TWO DIAMONDS

A convention whereby a 2♦ opening bid shows a strong three-suited hand with, typically, 17-20 high card points.

ROMEX TRIAL BIDS

A method usually used in conjunction with a strong club system that allows a player to make both long-suit and short-suit trial bids, by employing relays after a single raise of a major suit.

ROPE

After an opponent doubles a 4NT ace enquiry, Redouble shows an Odd number of aces, Pass an Even number.

ROPI

After an opponent doubles a 4NT ace enquiry, Redouble shows zero (O) aces, Pass shows one (I) ace and the

lowest bid (5♣) shows two aces etc. This method is in popular use in the UK.

ROTATION

The sequence and order in which the bidding and play occur at the table.

ROUND

The number of boards in a duplicate event that a pair plays against the same opposition.

ROUND OFF

To round off the net score at the end of a rubber to the nearest hundred, with most players rounding 50 downwards.

ROUND ROBIN

A form of contest in which each competing group (team, pair or individual) plays against every other competing group.

ROUNDED SUITS

Clubs and hearts, so named because of the shape of their symbols. Likewise, spades and diamonds are the 'Pointed Suits'.

ROVER

A pair in a Mitchell movement that displaces a different North-South pair each round, known as a 'roving pair'. Using a rover can help to accommodate a pair that arrives late when there was originally a complete number of tables.

RUBBER

The best of three games in rubber bridge. The term 'rubber' probably derives from the game of bowls.

RUBBER BRIDGE

The original form of contract bridge in which the objective is to make two games before your opponents, and thereby win the rubber bonus. You can make game by scoring 100 points 'below the line' either on one deal or by accumulating partscores to reach that total.

RUBBER DUPLICATE

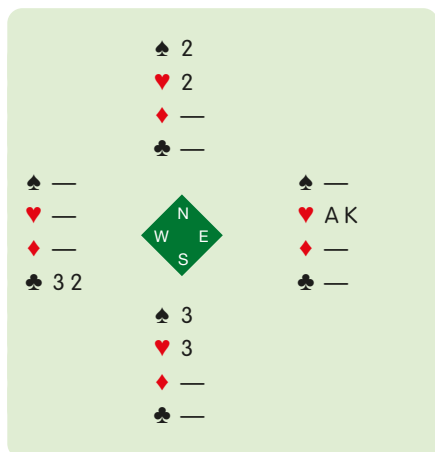
A teams-of-four event in which the players play boards in a fixed order in each room until one room reaches the end of a rubber.

RUFF

To play a trump on the lead of a side suit. You can ruff a trick if you are void in the suit led and have one or more trumps in your hand.

RUFF AND DISCARD

To discard a loser from one hand while ruffing in the other.

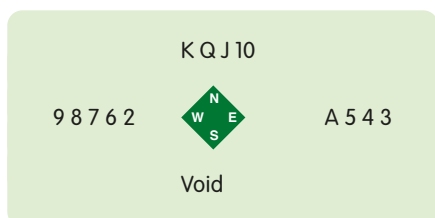


South is declarer and spades are trumps. If any hand other than West is on lead then East will win a heart trick.

However, with West on lead and obliged to lead a club, South can ruff in dummy and discard a heart from hand. Alternatively, he could choose to discard a heart from dummy and ruff in his own hand. As a defender, you generally want to avoid giving a ruff and discard if you can help it.

RUFFING FINESSE

The lead of one of a sequence of high cards towards a void. If the player in second seat does not cover, you allow the lead to run; if there is a cover, you ruff and later return to cash the established winners. For example:



As South, you lead the king of this side-suit from dummy. If East plays his ace, you ruff, thus establishing the Q-J-10 as winners without losing the lead. If East plays low, you discard a loser.

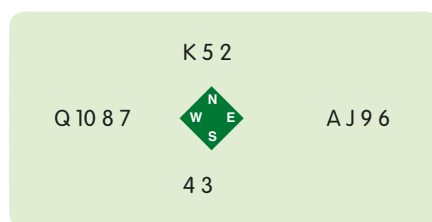
If West held the ace, the ruffing finesse would fail, though you might still be able to discard a loser and succeed in setting up dummy's winners.

RUFFING TRICK

A trick won by a ruff.

RULE OF ELEVEN

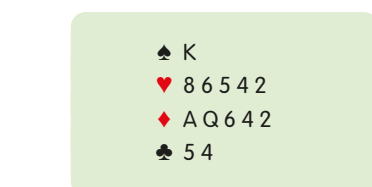
A simple mathematical formula stating that, if the lead is fourth highest, the number of cards capable of beating it in the other three hands is equal to eleven minus the pip value of the card led. For example:



If East judges that the seven is a fourth-highest lead, he can use the rule of eleven. Taking seven from eleven leaves four cards higher than the seven, all of which he can see between his hand and dummy. He can deduce that South has no card higher than the seven and hence that he can play low at trick one to leave West on lead to play a second round of the suit through dummy's king at trick two.

RULE OF NINETEEN

Rule established by the Laws and Ethics Committee of the EBU, stating that the minimum agreeable standard for an opening suit bid at the one-level is that the sum of the number of high-card points and the lengths of the two longest suits must total at least nineteen. For example:



With 9 high-card points and two 5-card suits, this hand would be minimally acceptable under the Rule of Nineteen for an opening bid (9+5+5).

Note that this Rule does not suggest that weak hands of this type justify a sensible opening bid (especially here when the singleton king may be worth less than 3 points), but rather that bidding with a lower total than 19 would constitute a psyche.

Most players use either the rule of 20 or a more sophisticated rule that also takes account of the hand's defensive potential.

RULE OF TWO AND THREE

The doctrine, in pre-emptive bidding, that one should not risk going down more than two tricks, if vulnerable, and three tricks if not vulnerable.

If you adhere to the rule, the opponents double you and partner has a useless hand, you will lose a penalty of 500, broadly the same as an opposing game.

With the rule, if you have seven tricks in your hand, you can pre-empt to the four level non-vulnerable or the three level vulnerable.

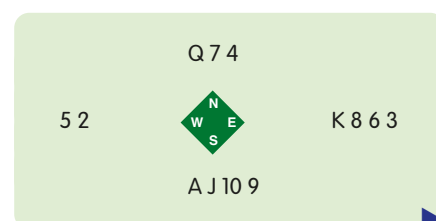
Many modern players pre-empt a little more aggressively than the rule of two and three, partly because the opponents may have a slam if partner has a bust and partly because the opponents rarely double for penalties.

RULING

A decision based upon the Laws of the game, made by a Tournament Director or by an Appeals Committee.

RUN

1. To change to a different suit or to no-trumps if an opponent doubles your contract for penalties.
2. To run a suit is to play it card after card without losing the lead. For example, if dummy has ♣A-K-Q-J-7-5, declarer is likely to 'run' the clubs.
3. To take a finesse by leading an honour and play low if a higher honour does not cover it. For example:



◀ Here you might lead the queen from dummy (North) and 'run' it, thereby retaining the lead in dummy for a further finesse.

RUSINOW LEADS

A lead method by which you lead second highest from a standard honour sequence (eg Q from K-Q-J) and third highest from an interior sequence (eg 10 from K-J-10).



SACRIFICE

A bid made in the full expectation that the contract will go down, but in the hope that the points lost will be fewer than those that the opponents would have scored if left to play in their own contract.

♠ 9 6 4 3 2
♥ 9
♦ 9 5 2
♣ J 10 4 2

West	North	East	South
	1♥	1♠	4♥
?			

It is a near certainty that 4♥ will make. West may bid 4♠, not expecting to make it but in the belief that the penalty in 4♠ doubled will be cheaper than letting the opponents make 4♥. The vulnerability is often crucial in sacrifice decisions. At duplicate, the best time to sacrifice is when only the opponents are vulnerable. In this example, you could afford to go three down doubled and still show a profit (losing 500 instead of 620). If, however, only your side is vulnerable, you need to get out for one down to show a profit (losing 200 instead of 420)

SAFETY PLAY

A way of handling a suit combination to give the greatest chance of making the required number of tricks in the suit at the expense of abandoning the

possibility of gaining extra tricks.

J 6 4 2

 A K 8 7 5

If you need four tricks from the above holding, the safety play is to lead low to the jack, catering for a 4-0 break on either side. If West is void, you will be able to take marked finesses against East on the second and third rounds of the suit.

SAVE

Used in the same sense as 'Sacrifice'.

SBU

Abbreviation for the Scottish Bridge Union, the national bridge organisation for duplicate bridge in Scotland.

SCISSORS COUP

A play used, as the name implies, to cut communications between the opposing hands usually to destroy an enemy entry needed to give his partner a ruff. For example:

♠ Q 6
♥ 6 3
♦ A Q 9 5
♣ Q J 10 6 3

♠ 5 4
♥ K Q 8 2
♦ J 7 6 2
♣ 8 7 4

♠ A 8 2
♥ A J 10 7 4
♦ K 10 8 4
♣ 2

♠ K J 10 9 7 3
♥ 9 5
♦ 3
♣ A K 9 5

As South, you play in 4♠ after East opened 1♥ and West raised hearts. East overtakes West's ♥K lead with the ♥A and switches to the ♣2. East's plan is clear – to get in with the ♠A, put West in with the ♥Q and score a club ruff. To snip communications between the opposing hands, you win the club, cross to the ♦A and throw your remaining heart on the ♦Q when East covers with his marked ♦K.

SCORE

The written result of a contract.

To denote the result on a board, eg 'We scored well on board thirteen'.

SCORE CARD

A card for keeping a play record and used to score in a teams event or as a personal record in a pairs or individual event.

SCORE SHEET

Sheet on which the results of each board, the totals for each pair and the final placings are on display after a duplicate event.

SCORE SLIP

1. At rubber bridge or Chicago, printed paper or pad to record the score.
2. In duplicate, the traveller that accompanies the board.

SCORING CORRECTIONS

It may be possible to correct an error in computing or tabulating the agreed score, whether by a player or a scorer, within a timescale set by the sponsoring organisation. If the organisers do not set a time, the period for correction is for thirty minutes after the official score is displayed. To minimise the risk of scoring errors, players should write as legibly as possible and agree the score before returning the scoresheet to the board.

SCOTTISH BRIDGE UNION

The national bridge organisation for duplicate bridge in Scotland.

SCRAMBLE

A term to denote a bid in a competitive auction where one is simply trying to find a safe place to play at a low level.

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

Not having a long suit to show, South bids 2NT as a scramble, asking North to suggest a suit.

SCRAMBLED MITCHELL

A method of producing a single winner from a Mitchell event by arrow switching the compass points of the pairs (on certain rounds). On

such rounds, the East-West pairs (and the boards) move normally, but they then play the North-South cards and vice versa. Generally, the final one or two rounds are arrow switched in a scrambled movement.

Avid collectors of master points like a Scrambled Mitchell because the master points on offer are higher than in a simple Mitchell.

SCREEN

In major championships, a large screen rests diagonally across the table preventing each player from being able to see his partner and one of his opponents. A small slit in the screen allows a tray to slide from one side of the table to the other. The players bid, using bidding boxes, by placing the bids on this tray and repeatedly sliding it from one side of the table to the other. During the play, a flap comes up to allow all players to see the dummy and the cards the others play. One purpose of screens is to prevent players conveying information to their partners through their mannerisms or eye contact. Another benefit is that if there is a delay in the return of the bidding tray, it will often be unclear whether your partner or an opponent has been thinking.

SCREEN-MATE

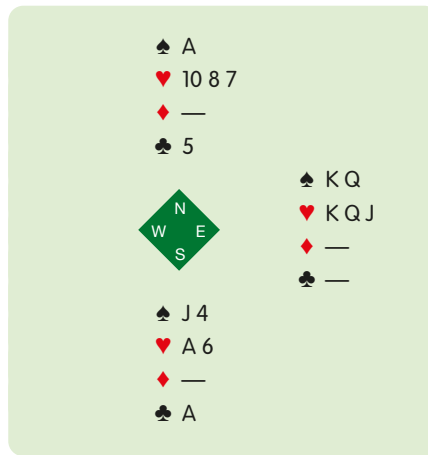
When screens are in use, he is the opponent seated on one's own side of the screen.

SECOND AND FOURTH LEADS

A popular method of leading from suits without an honour sequence, by which one leads second highest from poor suits and fourth highest from better suits. Most players treat poor suits as those without an honour, though some regard a ten-high suit as poor too. For example, with 9-7-5-3 you lead the seven. When using the method, if partner leads a high spot card it is likely to be from a poor suit.

SECONDARY SQUEEZE

A squeeze in which the opponents win one or more tricks after the play of the squeeze card. In this example there are no trumps and declarer (South) needs four of the last five tricks:



South leads the ♣A. If East discards a heart, South continues with ace and another heart to leave dummy high. If East discards a spade, South crosses to the ♠A and later scores the ♠J.

SECOND HAND LOW

A favourite maxim of card play that, following the lead of a small card, the second hand to play to the trick should play his lowest card of the suit led.



If South leads low, West must duck, saving the ace to capture the queen. Equally, if the lead is low from the North hand, East must play low or South could cover the jack with the queen and later finesse the nine.

SECONDARY SUPPORT

A useful holding in a suit bid by partner, often a three-card suit as distinct from four-card (primary) support. A delayed bid in partner's suit, especially if it is a major, shows secondary support because you would have raised immediately with primary support.

In the examples below, West is almost certain to have exactly three hearts.

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

West	North	East	South
1♣	Pass	1♥	Pass
1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♥			

SECOND NEGATIVE

In the sequence 2♣-Pass-2♦-Pass-2♥-Pass-2NT, most partnerships agree that the 2NT bid is a second negative, showing a very poor hand. The need to make a second negative arises because an Acol 2♣ opening, unless followed by a 2NT rebid, creates a game force. Responder therefore needs a bid to keep the bidding alive without promising values.

SECOND SUIT

Your second longest suit or the second suit you bid. For example, if you open 1♠ and rebid 2♥, hearts is your second suit.

SECTION

If the director splits a competition field into separate groups, each group is a section. For example, with 26 tables, it would be normal to split them into two sections with 13 tables in each, thereby facilitating a convenient Mitchell movement in each.

SEMI-BALANCED

This refers to hands with no void or singleton but two doubletons, ie a 5-4-2-2 or 6-3-2-2 shape. Players using a strong no-trump opening are much happier about opening 1NT on a semi-balanced hand than are players who favour a weak no-trump. Opening 2NT on a semi-balanced hand has widespread acceptance.

SEMI-PSYCHIC

A 'semi-psychic' bid is a bid made deliberately with the intention of confusing the opponents but which only slightly misdescribes the hand. Examples are the 'third-in-hand opener' on A-K-J-x-x in the suit with a bust outside or a no-trump bid that is a few points under strength or lacking a stopper in the opposing suit.

SEMI-SOLID SUIT

A suit that is likely to play for only one loser, for example: A-Q-J-10-8-4.



SEQUENCE

Cards in consecutive rank order, for example K-Q-J.

SEQUENCE DISCARDS

The discard of an honour guarantees the honour immediately below it and denies the honour immediately above it. When the opening leader discards an honour, it nearly always shows an interior sequence (for example, the discard of the queen strongly suggests A-Q-J) because otherwise the initial lead might have been in the suit.

SELF-SUPPORTING SUIT

A suit that you are happy to have as the trump suit even facing a void. The suit is likely to be solid or semi-solid, such as K-Q-J-10-x-x-x.

SENIOR

In events with an age restriction, a player over a certain age. Currently, to qualify as a senior in a given year, the player must have attained the age of 62 by the end of the year. It will increase to 63 in 2022, 64 in 2024 and will be 65 from 2026 onwards.

SESSION

A period of play during which competitors play a given number of boards. Sessions usually consist of 24-32 boards, lasting 3-4 hours.

SET

1. To set a contract means you defeat it.
2. Set of duplicate boards or wallets. There are usually 32 boards in a set.
3. A set can mean a stanza, which is usually 2 or 3 boards in a club duplicate, 8 or 16 boards in a match.
4. A pre-arranged rubber bridge match played between two fixed partnerships.

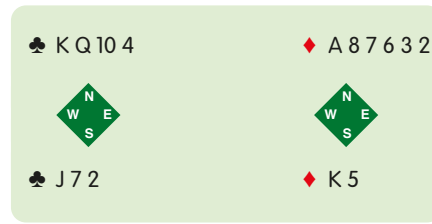
SETTING TRICK

The defensive trick that ensures a contract's defeat. For example, against a 4♠ contract, the fourth defensive trick will be the setting trick.

SET UP

To set up a suit is to establish it. Common methods of setting up a suit are knocking out the opposing high cards, giving up a slow loser and

ruffing a suit.



The first suit you can set up by playing high cards to drive out the ace. Once the ace has gone, you will have set up the suit.

To set up the second suit on the normal 3-2 break, you cash the king, ace and play a third round. In a no-trump contract, you will lose the third round; in a suit contract, you ruff the third round and avoid a loser. If the suit breaks 4-1, you will need to work harder, ruffing the fourth round as well. In either case, once the opponents have no diamonds left, you will have set up the suit.

SHADED

A bid is said to be shaded if it is slightly below the normal strength requirements, for example if you open a 15-17 1NT with 14 points. While it is fine to take a rosy view of your hand every so often, if it becomes a regular practice then it is an agreement that you should disclose to your opponents.

SHAPE

The way in which you might arrange your hand into suits, expressed as the number of cards in each suit. For example: a 5-4-3-1 shape means you have a five-card suit, a four-card suit, a tripleton and a singleton. If there are dashes in between the numbers, this is likely to indicate a specific shape. For example, a 2-4-6-1 shape means two spades, four hearts, six diamonds and one club.

Another name for shape is the hand's 'pattern' or 'distribution'.

SHARING BOARDS

In some movements, such as a Mitchell with an even number of tables but no skip, it is necessary for two or more tables to play the same set of boards on the same round. This practice is 'Sharing boards'.

Of necessity, the tables sharing

boards will play them in a different sequence as a result. For example, if tables 1 and 8 are sharing boards 4-6, table 1 might play them in the order 4, 5, 6 while table 8 plays them in the order 5, 6, 4. It is important when sharing boards that the two tables do not leave themselves the same board to play at the end.

SHARK

Colloquialism for a type of expert player who specializes in playing rubber bridge for money and who is particularly adept at this type of competition.

SHARPLES DEFENCE TO 1NT

A defence to 1NT whereby an overcall of 2♣ shows a hand of unspecified shape but with at least four spades and 2♦ shows a weak distributional hand with short clubs.

SHIFT

In the auction, a change of suit as in 'Jump shift'. In the play, a switch to another suit.

SHOOTING FOR A TOP

To make an apparently inferior bid or play in a deliberate attempt to score a top. You might employ this tactic towards the end of a duplicate session in an attempt to convert a good score into a winning score. For example, if you were sure that a normal score would be no good for you and that playing a contract normally would result in an average score, you might take an anti-percentage play.

Suppose you have a suit combination of 10-9-x facing A-K-J-x-x. You might cash the ace-king in the hope of felling the doubleton queen offside. You risk a bottom (when the finesse would have worked but the queen does not drop) for the chance of a top.

In the bidding, an example of shooting for a top is bidding a grand slam that you know depends upon a finesse.

SHORT CLUB

Some pairs, using a mini (10-12) or strong (15-17) 1NT opening, open 1♣ on balanced hands outside the range for a 1NT opening.

If you encounter this, even though

the opener may have a doubleton club, it is usual to treat the 1♣ opening as a natural bid eg a 2♣ overcall is a cue bid, not a natural bid.

SHORT HAND

The hand with the fewer number of cards in a suit (usually trumps). Usually it is more productive to take ruffs in the short trump hand than in the long trump hand.

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

If you are South in 6♥, you can generate an extra trick by giving up a spade and ruffing a spade in dummy, the short hand. This way you make six trump tricks rather than five.

Ruffing in the long trump hand (South) would not be a good idea. If you ruff two clubs, you will have fewer trumps than East and so be unable to draw trumps and cash the diamonds.

SHORT SUIT GAME TRIES

A game try whereby, after trump agreement, opener shows his shortest suit and invites responder to judge accordingly.

SHORT SUIT LEADS

1. Against a no-trump contract, the lead of a doubleton or tripleton, usually when partner has bid the suit, or the opponents have bid the other suits. Sometimes it can be a deceptive play hoping that declarer will think that the wrong hand has the long suit.
2. Against a suit contract, the lead of a singleton or doubleton trying for a ruff is a short-suit lead.

♠ 10 5 2 ♥ 9 7 4 ♦ K 8 4 2 ♣ 9 7 4		
---	--	--

West	North	East	South
	1♥	Pass	2♦
Pass	2♥	Pass	3NT
End			

Since South has bid your only long suit, you should make a short suit lead. As East will not hold five spades and fair values (no 1♠ overcall), the ♣7 is a good choice.

SHORTEN

To reduce in length. Commonly refers to the situation where a defender attacks dummy's or declarer's trump length by leading plain-suit winners, forcing a ruff. Shortening also refers to the situation where declarer deliberately takes ruffs in preparation for a trump endplay or coup.

SHOW OUT

To reveal a void by discarding on the lead of a suit.

SHOW UP SQUEEZE

A method of squeezing a player who does not guard a crucial suit, in order to drop a singleton honour, instead of taking a losing finesse.

Declarer, playing in no-trumps and needing the remainder, has a count of the hand and knows that West holds the ♠A in this example.

♠ A ♥ 6 4 ♦ — ♣ —		♠ — ♥ K ♦ 6 5 ♣ —
♠ K ♥ A Q ♦ — ♣ —		♠ 8 ♥ 5 ♦ A ♣ —

South leads the ♦A. West must discard a heart and dummy discards the ♠K.

When South then leads a heart, he knows that if West has the ♥K it will show up because his last card must be the ♠A. When in fact West follows low, he will drop East's singleton king.

SHUFFLE

To mix the cards randomly.

SHUTOUT BID

Either a sign off or a pre-emptive bid.

SID

An acronym for Stayman in Doubt.

SIDE

A partnership in a rubber bridge game, a pairs game or a teams-of-four match.

SIDE GAME

A second competition at a championship for pairs or teams not involved in the main event.

SIDE SUIT

A suit other than trumps. Or 'Plain suit'.

SIGN-OFF

A discouraging bid suggesting that the partnership should progress no further. Usually a sign off occurs after a trial bid or asking bid. When the person making the sign off made an asking bid on the previous round, the sign off is more a command than a suggestion.

West	East	West	East
	1♥		1♠
2♥	3♣	3♠	4♣
3♥		4♠	

West	East	West	East
	1♦		1♦
2♥	3♥	2♥	3♥
4NT	5♦	4NT	5♥
5♥		6♥	

In each case, West's final bid is a sign-off. In the first auction, it looks as if East has made a game try, which West has declined. East would only bid on if in fact he had aspirations towards a slam. In the second auction, East has suggested a slam and West has shown no interest. In the third and fourth auctions, West has found out how many aces are missing and placed the final contract. ►

◀ SIGNALS, SIGNALLING

The method of conveying information between the defenders. You can do this both when following to a suit and when discarding. Common types of signal are attitude signals – when you indicate whether you like a suit or not – length signals – when you show whether you have an odd or even number of cards in the suit – and suit-preference signals – when you show a preference for some other suit. Defensive signals are vital for defending accurately. For signals to work it is important not only that you give the right signal but also that partner is watching – and vice versa when partner gives a signal.

Here is an example where you can give all three of the common types of signal on the same deal:

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

South plays in 3NT without having bid any suits. When West leads the ♠Q, you, East, follow with the ♠4, your lowest card in the suit, as an attitude signal to say that you do not like spades. Declarer plays a club to the queen and you follow with the ♣2, your lowest card in that suit, as a count signal to show an odd number of clubs. On the second round of clubs, having already given count, you play the ♣8, the higher of your remaining clubs, as a suit-preference signal for the higher red suit.

SILENT

To keep 'silent' is to pass throughout the auction.

SILENT BIDDER

Device to permit silent bidding. It is a

board placed in the centre of the table, subdivided into labelled regions, 1♣, 1♦, 1♥, 1♠, 1NT, 2♣ etc. (up to 7NT), Dbl, Redbl, Alert, Stop and Pass. A player makes his call by touching the appropriate region of the board with a pen or pencil, or moving a small counter placed on the dumb bidder. Bidding boxes have rendered silent bidders almost obsolete.

SIMPLE FINESSE

A finesse against one outstanding card eg if you have A-K-J facing low cards, leading up to the jack is a simple finesse against the queen.

SIMPLE OVERCALL

A non-jump overcall: if an opponent opens 1♥, any of 1♠, 1NT, 2♣ and 2♦ from you are simple overcalls. If you make an overcall, it is usual to hold at least five card suits in your long suit, often six cards if the overcall is at the two level. If the suit is good, you might overcall on a hand that is slightly too weak for an opening bid. For example with ♠K-Q-10-x-x and an ace on the side, it would be normal to overcall 1♠ over one of any other suit.

SIMULTANEOUS PAIRS

Event played in many different venues on the same date and with identical hands nationwide or even worldwide. Scoring is on the matchpoint basis and calculated by computer. Clubs upload their results to the organiser's computer so that competitors can see their results. Most organisers provide a booklet with an expert commentary on the deals so that you can see where you have done well and how you might have done better.

Bridge Great Britain organises simultaneous pairs events, as do most of the Home Bridge Unions and some county associations. In general, the greater the number of participating clubs, the higher the number of master points on offer.

SINGLE-DUMMY PROBLEMS

Bridge problems presented as if in the position of declarer.

SINGLE RAISE

A raise of partner's denomination by one level eg 1♥-Pass-2♥, 1♣-Pass-1♥-

Pass-2♥ or 1♣-1♠-Pass-2♠. A single raise usually indicates support for partner and modest values.

SINGLE-SUITED HAND

A hand with one long suit and no other biddable suit. Assuming you have the strength to bid at all, you are likely to show a single-suited hand by bidding the suit a couple of times or perhaps by making a pre-emptive bid in the suit.

West	East	West	East
1♠	1NT		1♣
2♠		1♠	1NT
		2♠	

West	East	West	East
2♠(weak)		3♠	

In each sequence, West is suggesting a single-suited spade hand. The first three sequences suggest a six-card suit, the fourth a seven-card suit.

SINGLETON

A holding of only one card in a suit.

SIT OUT

1. If there are an odd number of pairs in a duplicate event, one pair must sit out each round.
2. In long teams matches it is common for a team to have more pairs than it requires in play at any one time, typically six players for a team of four match. The player(s) not playing in any given stanza sit out.
3. It also means to wait to cut in to a game of rubber bridge.

SKIP BID

This is the same as a jump bid ie a bid at a level higher than necessary to beat the current bid.

SKIP BID WARNING

Sponsoring organisations may require that players give a warning before a jump bid (skip bid) and require the next player to pause for a specified period before bidding. The common arrangement in duplicate in the UK is that you prefix your bid with the stop card (if using bidding boxes) or say the word 'stop' (if you are not doing so); the next player is then expected to wait for 10 seconds before bidding.

SKIP ROUND

A round during a Mitchell movement at which the East-West pairs 'skip', moving two tables instead of the usual one. The boards move as normal. The objective of the skip is to prevent the East-West pairs from meeting boards that they have already played.

SLAM

A contract for twelve tricks (Small Slam) or thirteen tricks (Grand Slam). For bidding and making either type of slam, considerable bonuses are on offer. Slams are an exciting part of the game and, especially at rubber bridge, a potentially lucrative event. Before contracting for a slam, it is normally a good idea to establish that the partnership has the playing strength to produce at least 12 tricks as well as sufficient high cards or shortages in every suit so that the opponents cannot take two fast winners.

With two balanced hands, about 33-34 points produces a small slam, 37 points a grand slam. Most slams require fewer high card points than this because long cards or ruffs can produce extra tricks.

SLAM CONVENTION

An agreed bidding convention, such as Blackwood, for checking on controls, trumps or other key cards held by the partnership to investigate slam possibilities.

SLAM DOUBLES

If the opponents bid freely to a slam, it is most unlikely that you can collect a lucrative penalty by doubling. If the contract they have reached is due to fail by several tricks, it is likely they have had a bidding misunderstanding and have a better spot available. If the defender not on lead doubles a slam, it calls for an unusual lead.

SLAM TRY

A bid that takes the partnership towards a slam but without committing to it. For example:

West	North	East	South
1♣	Pass	1♦	Pass
3NT	Pass	4♣	

Without slam interest, East would

pass 3NT or perhaps jump to 5♣.

SLUFF

Slang term meaning to discard a loser.

SMALL CARD

In general, a card below honour rank, sometimes denoted by an 'x' on a hand record.

SMALL SLAM

To contract to make twelve tricks is to bid a Small Slam. Also, 'Little Slam'.

SMITH PETER

Against no trumps, on the lead of declarer's first suit, the defenders play high or low to indicate their interest in the suit led at trick one. Some play that high asks for a continuation while others play that high asks for a switch and some pairs play that the opening leader plays high to ask for a switch while the leader's partner plays high to ask for a continuation – it is a matter of partnership agreement.

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

South plays in 3NT. West leads the five of spades, covered by the jack, queen and king. When declarer crosses to the ace of clubs to take the diamond finesse, East follows with the eight of clubs to indicate a desire for a spade continuation. Without the ten of spades but perhaps with the ace of hearts, East would follow with the two of clubs, asking for a switch.

If you play Smith Peters, it is usual to play count signals at trick one and show whether you like the suit via a Smith signal later.

SMOTHER PLAY

A rare endplay in which you can cause

a seemingly certain losing trump trick to vanish. For this to work the defending hand with trump length must have only trumps left while his partner must have the lead and be able only to play suits in which both declarer and dummy are void.

When his partner's lead is ruffed, the defender with the trump length faces the choice of underruffing or overruffing and being overruffed again. For example:

♠ A		
♥ —		
♦ 9		
♣ —		
♠ K 7		♠ —
♥ —		♥ J 10
♦ —		♦ —
♣ —		♣ —
	♠ Q J	
	♥ —	
	♦ —	
	♣ —	

With spades as trumps, East, on lead, plays a heart. You, South, ruff and subject West to a 'smother play' or coup. You will play dummy's ace of trumps on this trick only if West overruffs with the king.

SNAP

An acronym for Strong Notrupp After Passing, this convention uses the response of 1NT to an opening bid of one of a suit, made after partner has opened third or fourth in hand, to show 8-10 points.

SOFT VALUES

These are queens and jacks. By comparison, aces and kings are 'hard values'.

SOLID

1. Describes a suit with no losers eg A-K-Q-J-x-x.
2. A solid contract is an unbeatable one.

SOS REDOUBLE

A redouble suggesting that partner choose an alternative denomination from the one that an opponent has doubled.

For example: ▶



West	North	East	South
1♠	2♣	Pass	Pass
Dbl	Pass	Pass	Rdbl

South probably holds a fistful of cards in the red suits and a singleton or void in clubs. North should remove the redouble to 2♦ or 2♥.

SOUTH

One of the positions at the bridge table.

SOUTH AFRICAN TEXAS

The use of 4♣ and 4♦ bids as transfers to 4♥ and 4♠ respectively, either as opening bids or in response to 1NT/2NT. The transfer to 4♥ via 4♣ suggests a stronger hand than bidding 4♥ directly.

One benefit of playing that the transfer bid is two suits below the one shown is that it leaves room for partner to bid the in-between suit as a slam try.

Another is that partner is less likely to forget the bid is a transfer.

Hand 1	Hand 2
♠ K Q J 8 7 4 3 2	♠ K Q J 8 7 4 3 2
♥ 8 3	♥ A 10 3
♦ 5 3	♦ 4
♣ 5	♣ 6

Playing South African Texas, the first hand would be a 4♣ opening and the second (stronger) hand a 4♦ opening.

SPLINTER BID

A jump response, at a level higher than needed to create a force, showing trump support, the values for game, and a singleton or void in the suit bid.

Auction 1		Auction 2	
West	East	West	East
	1♥	1♦	1♥
4♣		4♣	

Auction 3	
West	East
1♠	2♥
4♣	

In these auctions, West's 4♣ is a splinter, showing the support and values to raise to 4♥ with a shortage in clubs.

Typical West hands for these

sequences are:


Hand 1	Hand 2	Hand 3
♠ Q 9 5 3	♠ Q 8 5	♠ A K 8 5 2
♥ A J 7 4	♥ A Q 9 3	♥ K Q 6 3
♦ A J 8 3	♦ A K Q 8 3	♦ 8 5 3 2
♣ 5	♣ 5	♣ Void

SPLIT

The way a suit divides between two hands – break is a synonymous term.

SPLITTING HONOURS

The play of an honour, from two or more in sequence, in the second position. For example:

	A J 4	
K Q 9		10 8 3 2
	7 6 5	

South leads the 5 and, if West plays the king or queen, he is said to 'split his honours'.

SPOT CARDS

Cards from the 2 to the 9 inclusive.

SPREAD

- To place the cards of the dummy face up on the table.
- To lay one's hand on the table in making a claim.
- This can be a term for an unbeatable contract, as in '4♠ was a spread'.


SPUTNIK DOUBLE


This is the original name for a negative doubled, so named because its launch coincided with the launch of the Sputnik space rocket. In the sequence 1♣-1♠-double, the double suggests four hearts rather than a desire to penalise spades.

SQUEEZE


Descriptive term for a variety of plays where you force an opponent to discard from a suit or suits that he wishes to guard. The result is that you make a trick (sometimes more) that seemed unlikely at the start of play. There are a great many squeeze plays,

many with set names, varying from the simple to the complex. Here are two basic ones:

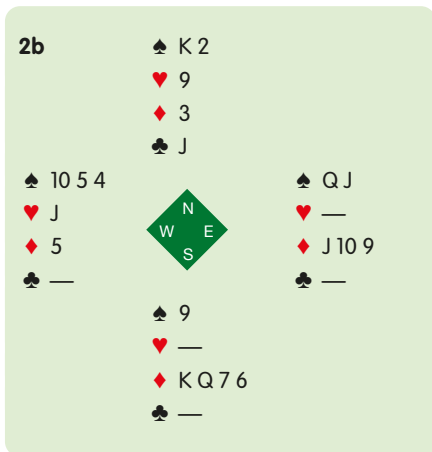
1a	♠ 9 6	
	♥ 10 2	
	♦ A 9 7 5	
	♣ A K Q 7 3	
		
♠ K Q J 8 3		♠ 10 7 4 2
♥ 8 7 4 3		♥ 9 6
♦ 10 4		♦ Q J 2
♣ 9 6		♣ J 10 8 2
	♠ A 5	
	♥ A K Q J 5	
	♦ K 8 6 3	
	♣ 5 4	

1b	♠ —	
	♥ —	
	♦ —	
	♣ A K Q 7 3	
		
♠ J 8 3		♠ —
♥ —		♥ —
♦ —		♦ Q
♣ 9 6		♣ J 10 8 2
	♠ —	
	♥ 5	
	♦ 8 6	
	♣ 5 4	

You can make 6♣, 6♦ or 6♥ without problem but go for a top score by playing in 6NT. West leads the ♠K. You duck the first spade (see RECTIFYING THE COUNT) and win the continuation. You then cash the ♦A-K and play off your hearts to reach the position in 1b). The last heart catches East in a simple squeeze, obliging him to unguard one of his minor suits.

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

As South, you play in 7NT. West leads the ♣10. You have twelve top tricks and if either red suit breaks 3-3 then there will be no problem. You start by cashing two clubs and three top hearts. The heart suit fails to break kindly but you give yourself an extra chance by arriving in position 2b) where East has already discarded a club on a heart.



When dummy leads the ♣J, East must discard a spade to avoid conceding a trick immediately. You throw a diamond. When you now cash the ♦K-Q, West must discard a spade or a heart on the second diamond. Either is fatal and you have squeezed both opponents.

SQUEEZE WITHOUT THE COUNT

Term for a squeeze that you can execute even though you have to give up the lead after playing the squeeze card. Secondary squeeze is another name for this type of squeeze.

STACKED

Having the cards 'stacked' against one means that a single opponent holds all or nearly all the crucial cards in a given suit. For example, if you hold A-Q-10-x-x facing x-x-x-x and there is K-J-9-x over the strong holding, that would be a stacked suit.

STAKES

Rubber bridge and Chicago players usually play for a small amount of money, known as 'stakes'. Although it is a social game, the addition of a stake, even of a nominal amount, provides an incentive to bid and play carefully and accurately.

Stakes can vary from a few pence per hundred in a home game to £30 per hundred at the top table in one of the London clubs.

STAND A DOUBLE

To pass your partner's double or to leave in a contract that an opponent has doubled.

STAND UP

Having a card 'stand up' means that it wins a trick. It is usual to use this expression when defending a trump contract and there is doubt about whether declarer will follow to the plain suit that you are leading.

STANDARD AMERICAN

Nebulous term for bidding methods commonly used in America, approximately those that Charles H. Goren originally laid down.

STANDARD AMERICAN YELLOW CARD

A standardized version of Standard American, published on a yellow ACBL convention card and often used by casual partnerships in online bridge clubs.

STANDARD HONOUR LEADS

The standard lead from a sequence eg K-Q-J is the top card and the standard lead from an interior sequence eg K-10-9 is the highest of the touching cards.

STANZA

A set of boards played before scoring or moving to another table.

STAYMAN CONVENTION

A 2♣ response to a 1NT opening bid, used to enquire about major-suit holdings. In reply, opener rebids:

- 2♦ No four-card major
- 2♥ Four hearts (and possibly four spades)
- 2♠ Four spades

Hand 1	Hand 2
♠ Q 8 5 3	♠ J 8 5 2
♥ A K J 4	♥ 10 7 4 2
♦ 5 2	♦ K 9 7 5 2
♣ K 10 2	♣ Void

With the first responding hand, you have the values to raise 1NT to 3NT but want to play in a 4-4 fit in a major if one exists. You intend to raise 2♥ to 4♥, 2♠ to 4♠ or to jump to 3NT over 2♦. On the second hand, you use Stayman intending to pass at your next turn, confident that a suit contract will play better than 1NT.

Responder can safely use Stayman on any hand with the values to bid at least 2NT and four cards in at least one major. Depending upon the partnership methods, responder may also be able to use Stayman on other hand types (such as a weak hand with both majors or a weak single-suited club hand).

STAYMAN IN DOUBT (SID)

After a positive reply to the 2♣ enquiry (2♥/2♠), a bid of 3♦ indicates a four-card fit in the bid major, values for game but a 4-3-3-3 or 3-4-3-3 hand pattern. Partner chooses either to bid four of the major or 3NT depending on his hand pattern. Duplication of distribution may mean that 3NT is an easier game contract despite the 4-4 major suit fit. This convention is not in widespread use because many players do not use Stayman at all with a 4-3-3-3 hand type.

STAYMAN THREE CLUBS

The use of 3♣ in response to a 2NT opening bid to enquire about four-card majors in the same way that one might use 2♣ in response to 1NT. In other words, after the 3♣ response, 3♥/3♠ from opener shows four cards in that major while 3♦ denies a four-card major.

STEP RESPONSES

System of responses, especially to an artificial bid such as a Blackwood 4NT enquiry, whereby you show the number of features (aces, controls, points etc.) by steps.

STIFF

Colloquialism for a singleton, usually a high honour card, as in 'The stiff king'.

STOP

A method of alerting opponents that a player is about to make a jump bid. ►

◀ Using bidding boxes, the player who is about to make such a jump bid immediately precedes his bid with the 'Stop' card.

If you are not using bidding boxes, you use the words 'Stop' or 'Skip bid'. Whichever method is used, the next player should then pause for about ten seconds before bidding.

STOPPER (A STOP)

A holding that prevents the immediate run of a suit by an opponent. Certain stoppers (if held in the closed hand) include A, K-x, Q-J-x and J-10-x-x. Certain stoppers if the holding is in dummy include A, K-10-x and Q-J-x.

STRAIN

A synonym for denomination, meaning clubs, diamonds, hearts, spades, or no-trumps.

STRIP PLAY

To strip a player of safe exit cards, so that when you put him on lead he cannot avoid conceding a trick.

♠ Q 10 7 5 4 2
♥ A 10 5
♦ 8 5
♣ A 4

♠ A K J 8 6
♥ K J 6
♦ A 10
♣ K 8 2

As South, you play in 6♠ on a diamond lead. You win and draw trumps, stripping the opponents of safe exit cards in spades.

You next take the ace-king of clubs and a club ruff, stripping your hands of clubs, thereby making it unsafe for a defender to lead a club. When you then give up a diamond, whoever wins will have no safe exit cards and you avoid having to guess who has the queen of hearts.

STRIP SQUEEZE

If you strip a player of safe exit cards by running a long suit to obtain one or more forced discards, this is a strip squeeze.

♠ 7 3
♥ K 2
♦ A K 2
♣ Q 10 9 6 5 3

♠ K Q J 10 8 4
♥ J 8
♦ 10 5
♣ K J 7

♠ 6
♥ 10 9 6 5 4 3
♦ J 9 6 4
♣ 8 2

♠ A 9 5 2
♥ A Q 7
♦ Q 8 7 3
♣ A 4

As South, you play in 3NT after West opened 1♠. West leads top spades and you take your ace on the second round, having seen East show out. You know from the bidding that West holds the ♣K but there is no point playing on clubs as West has plenty of spade winners to cash. Instead, you try three rounds of diamonds and West discards a club on the third round. You continue with three rounds of hearts. Reducing to only five cards, West cannot keep the ♣K, a club to guard the king and enough spades to beat you. He is likely to throw a spade. You then exit with a spade and score two club tricks at the end.

STRIPED-TAILED APE DOUBLE

A double of a game (or slam) contract in the expectation that the opponents could make a Small Slam (or Grand Slam) and in the hope that they will accept the apparently good score for making a doubled game (or slam) with overtricks rather than go on to the higher-scoring slam. The convention takes its name because the doubler flees like a 'striped-tailed ape' in the face of a redouble. The doubler will need to have an escape suit, or a good fit for partner's suit. The stripe-tailed ape double is a type of psychic bid. For example:

♠ J 7 5
♥ 10 7 3
♦ J 8 6 4
♣ 8 3 2

West	North	East	South
		3♣	4♥
			Dbl

West is almost certain that North-South can make a slam and so doubles 4♥. If North redoubles, West retreats to 4♠. The penalty in 4♠ doubled will certainly be less than that in 6♣ doubled and probably cheaper than defending 6♥.

STRONG JUMP OVERCALLS

A single jump overcall showing a good six-card suit and about 15-17 HCP or a seven-card suit and about 13-15 HCP.

Hand 1	Hand 2
♠ A 5	♠ 5
♥ 7 4	♥ 7 4
♦ K J 2	♦ A J 2
♣ A K J 9 4 3	♣ A K J 8 4 3 2

Either hand would be suitable for a strong jump overcall of 3♣ if RHO opens one of some other suit.

Strong jump overcalls remain traditional at the rubber bridge table but have fallen into disfavour amongst tournament players, who generally prefer weak jump overcalls, which occur more often.

STRONG KINGS AND TENS

A system of honour leads against a no-trump contract whereby the lead of a king or 10 suggests a strong holding, and the lead of an ace, queen or jack suggests a relatively weak holding.

- Ace from: A K x
- King from: A K Q, A K J, A K 10, K Q J, K Q 10
- Queen from: K Q x, K Q 9, Q J 10
- Jack from: J 10 x
- Ten from: A J 10, A 10 9, K J 10, K 10 9, Q 10 9
- Nine from: 10 9 x

STRONG NO TRUMP

An opening 1NT bid with usually 15-17 or 16-18 points and a balanced hand.

STRONG PASS SYSTEMS

Systems featuring an opening pass in first or second position to show about 16+ points. Few tournaments allow these partly because of the need to prepare a defence to the concomitant weak opening bids and partly because of their parasitic nature.

S continued in the December issue. ■

BRIDGE is ceasing publication.

The last issue will be number 216 - December 2020.

Please call 01483 489961 for details.

by Andrew Kambites



Common Mistakes By Club Players. Part 1.

For my final two articles for BRIDGE, I have picked out thematic errors that I have seen repeated over and over again by club players. Perhaps you will recognise your partner (or heaven forbid, even yourself) In this article I focus on card play, declarer and defence.

Declarer Play

Plan the play in Layouts A and B. No catches. All you have to do is to avoid being too impetuous.

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

that you never ruff in the long hand, but you should have a fully understood reason: maybe setting up dummy's long suit or embarking on a cross ruff. Suppose declarer had won the ♠A, cashed the ♥A K Q and then started on diamonds. Easy.

Layout B features the same theme but is a little harder. Here are all four hands:

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

Declarer won the ♠A, ruffed a spade at trick 2 and then paused to think. Too late.

He cashed the ♥A-K-Q and discovered the 4-2 break. Next he turned his attention to diamonds. East won with the ♦A and continued spades. Declarer had to ruff and played on diamonds but West was in control. He ruffed the third diamond and cashed two spades for one down.

What exactly did declarer think he was achieving by ruffing a spade at trick 2? He wasn't generating an extra trick. His fifth heart was a winner anyhow. Ruffing a loser in the short trump hand before drawing trumps frequently gives an extra trick. Ruffing in the long trump hand usually achieves nothing except threatening your trump control. I am not saying

Declarer won the ♠A and immediately ruffed a spade before planning. Again too late. He then cashed the ♥A-K-Q to draw trumps. Now what? He continued with the ♦A-J, overtaking with the ♦K. He was able to discard the fourth club on the ♦Q but the 4-2 diamond break meant the contract could no longer be made, and as East had the ♣K he was two down. ▶

Layout A. Game All. ♠ A 6 4 3 ♥ 7 3 ♦ Q 9 8 ♣ 8 6 5 3 ♠ 2 ♥ A K Q 6 5 ♦ K J 10 4 2 ♣ A 4 Contract: 4♥ Lead: ♠K	Layout B. N/S Game. ♠ 5 ♥ 7 4 3 2 ♦ K Q 6 5 4 ♣ Q 5 4 ♠ A 4 ♥ A K Q 8 5 ♦ A J ♣ A 7 3 2 Contract: 7♥ Lead: ♠K
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Here we have all four hands from Layout A:

◀ Played correctly, 13 tricks were easy. Win the ♠A, cash ♥A-K-Q and unblock ♦A-J. Only now ruff the spade loser and run three diamond tricks, discarding clubs.

Do you see the common themes in layouts A and B? The main theme was enjoying your long suit, in each case diamonds. Early ruffing threatened this plan. In layout A it weakened your trump control. In layout B it removed a vital entry to dummy. We all make mistakes at bridge but a requirement for improvement is to recognise the mistakes that repeatedly occur. Bridge players love ruffing things. In both layouts A and B ruffing a spade gave instant gratification: an early cheap trick to impress the casual onlooker. The problem is that on many hands setting up a long suit is key. It takes some work and tends to bring reward later in the hand. Too much early ruffing can be counterproductive. This goes against the instincts of players.

On hands when ruffing losers and enjoying a long suit are options, attention to the long suit needs to be given priority.

Defence

The love of ruffing isn't unique to declarer. Plan your defence on the following hand. Partner leads the ♣K (denying the ♣A but promising the ♣Q).

Layout C.
Love All.

♠ Q 8 6 5
♥ 9 8 6
♦ A K 6
♣ 9 8 7

♠ A J 10 3 2
♥ Q 4 3
♦ 10 9 8 5 2
♣ Void

West	North	East	South
3♣	Pass	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♥	End	

I suppose my last sentence gives the game away. East ruffed, reasoning that it couldn't cost as surely declarer would know he had the ♥Q and would finesse it. Wrong. Here is Layout C in full:

♠ Q 8 6 5
♥ 9 8 6
♦ A K 6
♣ 9 8 7

♠ 9 7
♥ J 2
♦ J 4
♣ K Q J 10 4 3 2

♠ K 4
♥ A K 10 7 5
♦ Q 7 3
♣ A 6 5

♠ A J 10 3 2
♥ Q 4 3
♦ 10 9 8 5 2
♣ Void

East knows West has the ♣K-Q and cannot have much more for his preempt but unless he has something else the contract will surely make. The point is that if East ruffs declarer will certainly not follow with the ace. It is definite that East is ruffing declarer's loser. However, it is not definite that it couldn't cost, as the full layout shows. Declarer is likely to have two losing clubs as well as the winning ♣A. What is he going to do with them?

There is no obvious long suit in dummy that he can use for discards – perhaps he can get one club away if he has Q-x of diamonds but it is very unlikely he can get rid of two. If East allows the ♣A to win trick 1, declarer will in the fullness of time lose a spade, two clubs and a trump. Once again the instant thrill of a cheap ruff early in the hand bites you in the latter stages of card play.

Don't jeopardise a possible trump trick by trumping declarer's loser.

Here is another common theme:

Layout D.
Game All.

♠ K 10 4
♥ K Q 6
♦ J 4 2
♣ K 9 4 3

♠ A Q J 8 6 2
♥ Void
♦ 10 7 3
♣ Q 10 6 2

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

2♠ is a weak two bid.

West leads the ♠9 and dummy plays the ♠10. Your ♠J wins. What next?

East correctly identified that the ♠9 has to be a singleton or a doubleton. (Their methods were to lead the middle card from three small, called MUD for Middle, Up, Down). He reasoned that he could cash the ♠A and even though that would set up the ♠K as a winner a third spade would result in the ♠K being destroyed because partner would win the trick by ruffing. However, here is the full layout:

♠ K 10 4
♥ K Q 6
♦ J 4 2
♣ K 9 4 3

♠ 9 5
♥ J 9 7 2
♦ Q 9 6 5
♣ J 8 5

♠ A Q J 8 6 2
♥ Void
♦ 10 7 3
♣ Q 10 6 2

♠ 7 3
♥ A 10 8 5 4 3
♦ A K 8
♣ A 7

Declarer discarded his losing diamond on the third spade and West had to use a winning trump trick to neutralise dummy's ♠K. Contract made.

What is the hurry? Declarer has losing spades. They are going nowhere. There is no long suit in dummy which would allow spade discards. Was it so unlikely that West had a winning trump? Admittedly dummy's trumps are strong but East's trump void does suggest the possibility that partner has a natural trump winner.


Of course there are times when it would be correct for West to aim for a trump promotion in this way but normally one of the following two criteria needs to be satisfied.


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1) Dummy has a long suit that suggests that if you do not take your winners you might never make them. For example, Layout E:

Layout E.
E/W Game.

<p>♠ K 10 4 ♥ K Q 7 ♦ K Q J 10 ♣ K J 4</p>		<p>♠ A Q J 8 6 2 ♥ Void ♦ 9 7 3 ♣ 10 6 3 2</p>
--	---	--

<p>♠ 9 ♥ J 9 8 ♦ A 6 5 4 2 ♣ 9 8 7 5</p>		<p>♠ 7 5 3 ♥ A 10 6 5 4 3 2 ♦ 8 ♣ A Q</p>
--	---	---

West	North	East	South
Pass	4♥	All Pass	3♥


West leads the ♠9. East wins the ♠J and considers. Dummy is strong and the minor suits in dummy suggest that given time declarer will be able to discard losing spades. It is probably best to continue by cashing the ♠A and giving West a ruff. After that West can cash his ♦A to beat the contract.


Or

2) You have good reason to believe that declarer has no further side suit loser that can be discarded on the winner you have set up. For example, Layout F.

West leads the ♠9 to East's ♠J. How should East continue?

Layout F.
Love All.

<p>♠ K 10 4 ♥ K Q 6 ♦ J 10 2 ♣ K Q 4 3</p>		<p>♠ A Q J 8 6 2 ♥ Void ♦ A 7 3 ♣ 7 6 5 2</p>
--	---	---

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

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

After taking the ♠J, East cashes the ♦A. At this point it is perfectly safe to cash the ♠A and lead a third spade. Declarer has to ruff, otherwise West's ruff is the decisive fourth defensive trick. Indeed South has to ruff with the ♥A, which promotes West's ♥J-9-6 into a winner.

Think twice about putting a possible trump trick at risk by trumping declarer's loser or forcing your partner to do likewise.


Aiming for a trump promotion is usually a good tactic when you have reason to believe declarer has no side suit loser.

When dummy has a long suit with entries that make it likely that declarer can discard losers in other side suits you need to hurry to cash your winners.

Layouts E and F are about using trumps to trump declarer's potential losers. Trumping declarer's winners is another matter.

In Layout G West leads the ♠6 and East's ♠K forces out declarer's ♠A. Declarer cashes three top trumps and discovers the 4-1 break. He then cashes the ♦Q, enters dummy with the ♦A and continues with the ♦K.

Layout G
N/S Game.


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


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

When this hand was played East dithered, and decided he would keep his winning trump. Declarer discarded the ♠2 and called for the ♦J. East finally woke to the fact that the problem would not go away. If he allowed the ♦J to win a fifth diamond would follow and all declarer's spades would disappear so he ruffed in. Too late again. Declarer discarded the ♠J and claimed.

East's excuse was irrational. 'How did I know that partner had underled the ♠Q? Of course he didn't but if declarer had started with ♠A Q there was no hope of beating the contract. A better response would be: 'Well done partner for finding the only lead to beat the contract.'

Here is the full deal.

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

<p>♠ Q 10 7 6 4 ♥ 4 ♦ 10 5 4 2 ♣ 7 5 2</p>		<p>♠ A J 2 ♥ A Q 8 7 6 ♦ Q 9 ♣ J 10 8</p>
--	---	---

There is usually no point in clinging on to a trump winner rather than trumping declarer's winners if you will continue to face the same predicament.

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Planning the next trick

In Layout H you hit upon the best lead of a trump against your opponents' 4♣. Declarer wins the trick in dummy with the ♠Q and leads a low heart. East wins the ♥K and continues with a second trump. Declarer takes the ♠K in his hand and leads a low heart. What is your plan?

Layout H.
Love All.

♠ Q 10 7
♥ J 4
♦ A K 4 3
♣ K 7 4 3

♠ 8 4
♥ Q 7 5
♦ J 9 8 5
♣ A J 10 5

West	North	East	South
			1♠
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♠
Pass	4♣	All Pass	

When this hand was played, West grabbed the ♥Q and then thought what to do next. Irrespective of the layout, this is poor defence. Look at the evidence here.

Partner clearly has the ♥A as well as the ♥K because East would have no reason to rise with an unsupported king second in hand. Declarer must have virtually everything else to justify his opening bid. So it should be clear to West that he has the choice of winning the second heart trick or allowing partner to do so. Declarer is clearly aiming for a heart ruff in dummy. Thanks to West's opening lead the defence is able to stop this. The key is that West doesn't have a third trump. Hopefully East has got a trump left. West should allow East to win the ♥A and persevere with his last trump.

Then, provided the defenders discard carefully, declarer will lose three hearts and the ♣A.

Here is the full deal:

♠ Q 10 7
♥ J 4
♦ A K 4 3
♣ K 7 4 3

♠ 8 4
♥ Q 7 5
♦ J 9 8 5
♣ A J 10 5

♠ 6 3 2
♥ A K 9 8 6
♦ 10 2
♣ 9 8 6

♠ A K J 9 5
♥ 10 3 2
♦ Q 7 6
♣ Q 2

When a defender has a choice as to whether to win a trick or allow his partner to win it, he should decide if either of them needs to be on lead to the next trick and act accordingly.

Fourth hand in play

Beginners love to win tricks. They are then taught that winning early tricks can lead to the inevitable loss of later tricks. They learn that taking a finesse might lose but there is usually a 50% chance it will win. They learn that allowing declarer to win a trick can lead to destroying his communications. All well and good but the reality is that defenders often have the view that ducking a trick that could be won is mystical. This leads to random ducking, defenders withholding an ace and then never making it.

I don't intend to disrupt all you have learned so I will begin by reinforcing established guidelines.

Normally in defence, to put it simply:

Second hand plays low.

This is because your partner will often have a chance to win the trick.

Third hand plays high.

That is because partner will not have another chance to win the trick so you need to stake a claim.

Of course there are lots of exceptions to these, which are not the purpose of this article.

I want to concentrate on the position fourth in hand, whether you are declarer or defender. You are the last player to play to a trick. Do you win or duck?

Look at Layout J:

Layout J.
Game All.

♠ 10 3
♥ A K J
♦ K J 5 2
♣ K J 10 2

♠ 8 4 2
♥ 8 7 6 5 2
♦ 4 3
♣ A 6 5

West	North	East	South
			1NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

West leads the ♠Q, taken by declarer's ♠A. Declarer continues with a club to dummy's ♣J. How should East defend?

Here is the full deal:

♠ 10 3
♥ A K J
♦ K J 5 2
♣ K J 10 2

♠ Q J 9 7 6 5
♥ 9 3
♦ A 8 7
♣ 9 8

♠ 8 4 2
♥ 8 7 6 5 2
♦ 4 3
♣ A 6 5

♠ A K
♥ Q 10 4
♦ Q 10 9 6
♣ Q 7 4 3

A beginner would get this right. Win with the ♣A and return a spade. Despite his high point count declarer can take only eight tricks before he has to let West in with the ♦A. West cashes spades for one down. A defender who would regard himself as a good club player decided to withhold the ♣A without any particular reason. That was all declarer needed. Declarer abandoned clubs and turned his attention to diamonds for nine easy tricks.

I often see declarers and defenders duck a trick fourth in hand. When I ask the players involved why they ducked, I often hear the answer: 'I didn't know whether to win or duck.' That is not a good answer. Sometimes it is right to duck, but you should have a reason to do so. **The default in fourth position is to win a trick.**

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Answers to Sally Brock's Simple Doubles Part 5 Quiz, on page 15

What do you bid on the following hands with the auction given? The vulnerability and scoring method should not affect your answers.

Hand 1	Hand 2
♠ A K Q J 10 4	♠ K J 3 2
♥ A 4 3	♥ A 5 4
♦ 6 5	♦ A 4 3
♣ 7 6	♣ K 4 3

West	North	East	South
1NT*	?		

* 12-14

Hand 1 Double. Although you have only 14 HCP, you have seven tricks to take against 1NT. Hopefully they will pass out the double, but even if they don't you can bid 2♠ on the next round and show partner you have a good hand with a spade suit.

Hand 2 Pass. Although this hand has 15 HCP I don't much fancy it for a double. Although 1NT could easily go down, I will probably find the wrong opening lead.

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

West	North	East	South
1NT*	Dbl	Pass	?

* 12-14

Hand 3 Bid 3♠. You have a good hand and if you knew partner would lead a spade you would pass, but your 'idiot' over there would probably lead a diamond and 1NT

might make when you can make game yourself. Jump to 3♠ to show partner a decent hand with a strong spade suit and leave the rest up to him.

Hand 4 Bid 2NT. This may seem a bit strange, but if you think about it, if you had a balanced hand you would pass the double, which means 2NT cannot be natural. So what does 2NT mean? It is an artificial bid showing a decent hand with two suits. Partner should bid his 3-card or longer suits up-the-line. Whatever he bids you will bid 3♠ next showing your 5-card major and hope to land in a decent spot.

Hand 5	Hand 6
♠ 5	♠ K J 10 4
♥ K J 10 3	♥ 7 6 2
♦ Q 5 4 2	♦ Q 3 2
♣ K 7 6 2	♣ 6 5 2

West	North	East	South
1NT*	Dbl	2♣	?

* 12-14

Hand 5 Double. They have removed to a major, not a minor, and this we take more seriously. Pass would not be forcing by you, so you need to double for take-out.

Hand 6 Pass. You would like to make a penalty double, but in the methods I have described that is not what your double would mean. Best is to pass in tempo and hope partner makes a take-out double, which you will pass.

Catching Up

with Sally Brock

It has been quiet without the children. I've been over to Toby's new place – actually we met at IKEA and filled the car with various purchases. It looks very suitable for him and I feel as if he has properly joined the real world. Although I will miss him, it's definitely a good thing. Briony texts/rings me regularly from Mombasa. She has met another couple of girls she is spending a lot of time with and generally seems happy, although quite irritated by small aspects of the organisation. It seems they promised many things that they were never going to be able to deliver. It's just important that she doesn't let small things spoil her trip.

Otherwise, life continues in a rather boring fashion. Without the children here, Barry comes to me more than I go to him as my flat is bigger. I'm not sure that is totally a good thing as one of his pleasures in life was to think up menus and cook for me. I still have several clients who keep me occupied and we play a fair amount of online social bridge with friends.

We have booked a week's holiday in northern Italy, on Lake Maggiore, staying in an air bnb in Stresa. I can't wait – so looking forward to it. Let's hope nothing crops up to stop it happening. I'll tell you all about it in the next issue. ■

Seven Days


by Sally Brock

MONDAY

We had a dinner party last night so there is plenty of clearing up to do. Not a coincidence that my cleaner comes on a Monday, so I manage to avoid most of it. In the morning I have my weekly session with Jovi – this week it is with Gilly from Cardiff and Diane from Belfast. Although Covid-19 is stopping a lot of the bridge we are used to, it is opening up other avenues. There is no way that we would play all this social bridge otherwise. I am lucky with this deal:

Dealer North. Game All.

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



The bidding is:

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

I only redouble for the hell of it. Luckily for me it causes West to lead the ♠A – something I need in order to have any chance. I win the spade continuation and immediately err by playing a top trump. I then play three rounds of diamonds, losing to West's queen. A fourth round of the suit would have led to East overruffing dummy and then she can get off lead with a trump and would have to come to a club at some stage. But West errs here and switches to a club so when I get that suit right I am home.

To make it for sure after the ♠A lead and continuation I have to play a low trump to the nine immediately. East wins and continues trumps. Then I play the ♣A and a low club, ducking to East's king. All she can do is exit with a heart, after which I play the rest of the trumps, squeezing West in the minors. If I play a high trump first, and

then give up a trump, East continues trumps so that when she gets in with the ♣K she can force me with a spade. Oh well, I still enjoyed the deal.

Immediately after this, I have a session with Debbie and Kath. This is a regular weekly occurrence, though sometimes just with Debbie. She has just come back from a holiday in Tuscany; as we are going to Italy next week, I am interested to hear about her experience – which was very positive.

In the evening our team play in the Lockdown League, but without us. We are not allowed to watch the match but join in the post mortem. The match is drawn – leaving us in the same mediocre position we generally seem to occupy in this event. I spend the rest of the evening catching up on *Casualty*.

TUESDAY

In the morning I give a free taster session to Richard and Penny. It seems to go well and I hope it will lead to some paid work. Anyone interested in online coaching can contact me for a free half-hour taster session:

sally@sallybrock.com

Continued on page 42 ... ►

Answers to Julian Pottage's Defence Quiz on page 17

1.

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

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

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

You lead the ♥A: ♥7, ♥10 and ♥J. What is your plan?

You should read the ♥10 as an encouraging signal, no doubt signifying possession of the ♥K. You should not allow declarer's ♥J to deflect you. It is unlikely that the hearts are 6-1 between the other two hands, especially if you play weak two openings, because partner passed as dealer. With the weak clubs in dummy, you expect a club switch next whatever heart you lead at trick two, though you might as well lead the low ♥2 to ask for the low-ranking club suit. This way your side take the first four tricks.

2.

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

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

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

¹ Two-suited hand (5-5+)

You lead the ♥4: ♥A, ♥10 and ♥5. After the ♣Q lead from dummy, partner wins with the ♣A and returns the ♥3, covered by the ♥6. What is your plan?

How do you read the heart position? Since your ♥J is about to win, partner must have the ♥K-Q left. This means that a third heart would give a ruff and discard. It also means that your partner was keen to have you on lead. You can work out not to try for a club ruff. Declarer has shown two hearts and promised five spades, so cannot have seven clubs.

You should switch to a diamond, aiming to weaken declarer's trumps. Best is to lead the ♦Q. Partner will force declarer to ruff a second time after getting in with the ♠K, which will beat the contract.

3.

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

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

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

You lead the ♠K (asking for a count signal): ♠2, ♠3 and ♠6. What is your plan?

You start by reading the missing spades as 3-3. Partner cannot have five and not

have raised. On the bidding you place declarer with five clubs and four hearts, which leaves a singleton diamond. You hope to make a trump trick either by force if partner has the ♥J or if declarer has the ♥J but finesses. You can also see that a couple of ruffs will set up dummy's diamond suit. Can you do anything to stop it from running? Yes, you can. You can take your second spade trick and continue with the ♠J, forcing dummy to ruff. Eventually your side makes a trump and one more trick.

4.

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

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

West	North	East	South
	1NT	3♥ ¹	4♣

All Pass

¹ Pre-emptive

You lead the ♥2: ♥K, ♥A and ♥5. Partner continues with the ♥J, on which declarer plays the ♥9. What is your plan?

You need to focus on the fact that partner can see those three tiny trumps in dummy. If you do nothing special, you can be sure a third round of hearts is coming. If you had almost any trump holding other than Q-x-x, you would be glad of the chance to ruff. As it is, you want a diamond switch. Playing standard signals you cannot ask for a diamond directly. The best you can do is discard the ♣J. This denies the ♣Q and should act as a wake-up call. A diamond switch through declarer while the clubs are blocked beats the contract. ■

◀ ... Continued from page 40.

Then I meet Debbie for lunch and to deliver one of my wall hangings (I have written before about the mosaic patchworks of pets I have been working on). In the afternoon I get home for a coaching session with Andy, and then a bit of work before a social session with Frances and Graham.

Dealer East. Game All.

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

♠ 8 7 2
♥ A Q 7 4
♦ K 6 5
♣ 6 4 3

♠ Q 10 4
♥ J 10 6 5 2
♦ Q
♣ 9 8 5 2

♠ A K J
♥ K 9 8 3
♦ A 10 9 7 2
♣ A

This is a pleasing slam deal from that game:

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

Barry does rather well here. His first problem is his initial response. He has to decide whether to bid 1♠, or raise diamonds. He hates bidding poor suits if he can avoid it, so he goes for the diamond raise. We don't play inverted raises in diamonds, so he has to choose between a simple raise (which is often only 3-card support), a pre-emptive raise of 3♦, or 3♣ which is a limit raise in diamonds (nothing about clubs). It can work well to underbid on the first round as then you can bid a lot later, so he decides to take the low road. I rebid a natural 3NT (which he knows will be a very good hand), so he proceeds with 4♣. I have no real idea what is going on, so bid 4♦ for the time being. A couple of cue-bids follow and he leaps to the slam – which is a pretty good contract. In the event West leads the ♥A which does not cause me any trouble. I soon unblock the ♣A, ruff a

heart, discard a spade on a club, come to a spade, ruff the last heart loser and play a diamond – I was always playing the ♦A and another diamond but in the event the ♦Q shows up and again life is easy.

WEDNESDAY

I've been feeling a bit bored – not enough to do. One of the problems with making things is that you need an outlet for whatever it is you make. You don't necessarily need to sell your product but you do need willing people to take them off your hands. I think my wall hangings are terrific but I've made them already for my family and close friends who have pets. As is often the case with handmade goods, no-one wants to buy them at a cost that is even vaguely viable for me (£500 or so). So I have to come up with something else and I am now focused on using all my scraps of fabric to make rag rugs. I do some research and order a book and a starter kit. I don't suppose anyone will really want these either but at least it's a change.

I have also decided to do some volunteering – not that this is as easy as you might think. I have registered to be a driver for a charity that provides meals and also something to do with the Brompton Cemetery (but unclear when/if they will ever need me). Today I wander along the High Street and offer my services to the Oxfam shop. They seem keen but I have to fill in a long form and need references.

At six o'clock Barry and I play in the Lockdown League. Generally we are pretty mediocre in this but today we have a good set (or rather our opponents don't and we sit back and collect everything thrown our way) and win by 34 IMPs. Immediately after this I have a Young Chelsea Super

League match – this time playing with David Burn. We personally struggle a bit early on but get a couple of good swings at the end so that, helped by a very good card by our team-mates, we win by 26 IMPs. Things went well on this deal:

Dealer South. Love All.

♠ A Q 7
♥ J 6
♦ Q 6 4
♣ A Q 10 8 3

♠ 8
♥ K Q 8 4 2
♦ 8 7 2
♣ 9 7 5 2

♠ J 6 5 4 3
♥ 10 3
♦ A K 9 5
♣ K 6

♠ K 10 9 2
♥ A 9 7 5
♦ J 10 3
♣ J 4

What would you bid with that South hand after West opens 2♥, showing five hearts plus a 4-card minor, and your partner doubles? Our opponent goes for an invitational 3♠. So this is the auction:

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

I lead a club; partner wins, tries a top diamond and switches to a heart, won by declarer. She then plays the ♠A and ♠Q and is not happy to see me show out. It is all fairly hopeless from here and she drifts two down.

In the other room my hand passes and North opens a strong no-trump, East bids 2♠ showing spades and a minor and South goes straight to 3NT.

Continued on page 44 ... ▶

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Answers to David Huggett's Play Quiz on page 16

1.

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

You are in 3NT after West opened 1♣ and East passed. West leads the ♠Q. How do you plan the play?

As there are only thirteen points missing it is tempting to think West has them all and run the ♣9 from hand in an attempt to win all five clubs. But if East is able to win the ♣Q he will return a second spade most likely and you will be in trouble. You can cash your winning clubs but if the opposition defends sensibly you will be unable to come to more than eight tricks. Although it would be unlucky to find the ♣Q with East he certainly will not have the ♦A. At trick two you should play a diamond towards the queen. If it holds you can run the ♣10 from dummy not caring whether it loses. If instead West rises with the ♦A to play another spade you simply finesse clubs into the East hand.

2.

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

You are declarer in 3NT and West leads the ♠J. How do you plan the play?

With seven top tricks the obvious place to look for more is the club suit, but should you just take the club finesse at trick two? It would be poor play for East to win the trick even if he does hold the king and if you repeat the finesse and it loses then dummy is cut off. Instead duck a diamond at trick two, win the probable heart switch and then play the ♣Q. Although this is likely to win, you can next play ace and another diamond; if they are 3-3 then you do not need to rely on bringing in the club suit. If diamonds break 4-2 then you have to rely on the club finesse. It is better to duck the diamond before playing on clubs because if you do it the other way around a devious West might win the diamond and play a club, forcing you to make a premature decision.

3.

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

You are declarer in 4♠. West leads the ♦Q. How do you plan the play?

With a slam not being unreasonable you have to be careful not to misplay the game contract. Suppose you win the first trick in dummy and immediately take a losing spade finesse. Another diamond will force you to ruff and then if trumps are not 3-3 you will be in deep trouble. If you leave one trump outstanding and knock out the club ace, the opponents will merely force you again and the hand falls

to pieces. Instead simply play off the two top trumps before attempting to knock out the club ace. You can now accept a diamond force and carry on playing the club suit, letting the defenders make their remaining trumps.

On a normal trump split, they will make two trumps and the ace of clubs but no more.

4.

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

You are declarer in 3NT after your opening 1NT is raised to game. West leads the ♣K and follows with a low club to his partner's ace and East returns the suit. After cashing the first four club tricks West switches to the ♥8. How do you plan the play?

Clearly this contract is only going to make if you can bring in the diamond suit without loss and while it might be right just to play the top two cards in the suit it would be better to hunt around for clues; these might persuade you to play the diamonds in a different manner. If you play the hearts first you might find that West shows out on the third round which means that if diamonds are 2-2 then West started with a 5-2-2-4 shape. But then why would he have led a club rather than a spade especially when there was no major suit enquiry in the bidding? More likely in this case West has three diamonds, which means you should cash the ace and then boldly finesse against the queen. ■

◀ ... Continued from page 42.

East starts with a top diamond and, rather strangely, switches to the ♣K. Declarer has no problem in making eleven tricks. A heart switch at trick two would have given declarer insuperable problems, as she would not have been able to avoid losing four red-suit tricks along with the ♣K.

THURSDAY

A quiet morning, followed by 12 boards with Margaret in the Fast Pairs on BBO. I have rarely contributed so little to a 12-board session. She declares on five boards to my one and I barely have a bid. That's probably why the following deal goes to my head:

Dealer South. Game All.

♠ J 2
♥ A Q
♦ Q 8
♣ K J 9 8 7 6 2

♠ Q 8 4
♥ J 7 5
♦ K 10 7 5 4 2
♣ A

♠ K 10 5 3
♥ K 9 8 4
♦ 9 6 3
♣ 5 4

♠ A 9 7 6
♥ 10 6 3 2
♦ A J
♣ Q 10 3

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

Despite having such poor hands, I resist the temptation of opening my South hand a weak no-trump. However, when partner opens 3♣, vulnerable, in third seat, I have to bid game – she should have a decent hand vulnerable and A-K-x-x-x-x would be enough to give 3NT a good chance. I am rewarded with a very good dummy and make an easy ten tricks on a diamond lead.

Later on, Fiona and I have one of our regular sessions practising against Heather and Maggie. That's always good fun. Then, after a quickly prepared supper, Barry and I play against Paul and Claire. They do rather well against us on this early deal:

Dealer East. N/S Game.

♠ A J 4 3
♥ 4
♦ A 10 9 8 2
♣ A Q 2

♠ 9 8
♥ J 7
♦ J 5 4
♣ J 10 7 5 4 3

♠ K 7 6 5
♥ K Q 10 9
♦ K Q 3
♣ 9 6

♠ Q 10 2
♥ A 8 6 5 3 2
♦ 7 6
♣ K 8

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

My 1NT opening is 12–14, and Barry's 2♠ shows clubs, any strength. Paul as North doubles to show spades – while he would normally have a 5-card suit for this action he hopes that what he lacks in spade length he makes up for in strength. Also, he knows that on the next round he would have a problem bidding over 3♣ because of his heart shortage. Claire is happy to raise spades and Paul presses on to game. According to Deep Finesse there are ten tricks on any lead. In practice, Barry leads a heart which does not give declarer any problems. I guess a spade lead might have made it harder but with diamonds breaking 3-3 it is difficult to see how we might beat it.

FRIDAY

After my usual morning routine, I go in the car to Tesco to buy food for the weekend (unusual for me to go to an actual supermarket rather than use Ocado). I get home and dash up the High Street to deliver my Oxfam form and to get a new watch battery. Then it is back home for a quick Zoom meeting with my old school friends. We have a meeting at 11.30 every Friday – we don't all go every week, or stay for the whole time, but it is good to know it is happening so we can hook up whenever we want to. There are number of social interactions that we enjoy much more frequently than before Covid. After that I go to Margaret's for lunch.

We sit on her balcony and put the world to rights while enjoying a chicken curry (she has recently become allergic to tomatoes, which rather restricts her options when ordering Indian food). I dash home just in time for the first Lockdown League of the day at 16.30.

On this deal I do not do as well as my counterpart in the other room, but manage to get away with it. Our opponents are playing Precision, hence North's strange looking choice of opening bid.

Decide what you would do before reading on:

Continued on page 46 ... ▶

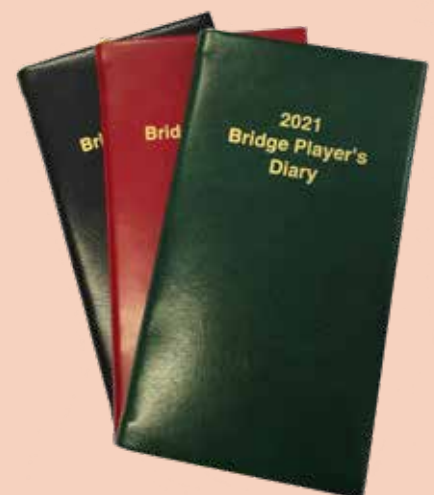
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Answers to Bernard Magee's Bidding Quizzes 1-3 on page 5

1. Dealer East. E/W Game.

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



West	North	East	South
?		1♦	2♦*

* Michaels – showing both majors

2. Dealer North. Love All.

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



West	North	East	South
?	3♥	4♥*	Pass

* you alert partner's bid

3. Dealer North. Love All.

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



West	North	East	South
?	1♦	3♦*	Pass

* you alert partner's bid

Db1. You cannot choose the conventions your opponents play and they have chosen to play the Michaels Cuebid. This utilises a bid of the opener's suit to show a two-suited hand; in this situation it shows both majors and should be at least 5-5 in shape.

How does this affect your bidding?

With this hand you are not tremendously excited – the shape is awful, in contrast to South. However, although your shape is bad, you do hold 10 high card points. What is important is to get across to your partner that you have some strength. To do this, you use the extra call that has been offered to you – double. Doubling a two-suited bid like this generally shows strength and gives partner permission to bid on or double the opponents.

It is really important because otherwise, your partner is all alone – you could if you pass have zero points. With your double, East will be able to rebid 2NT and the partnership reach 3NT.

If you do not double, it is difficult for East to bid again – bidding 2NT when you might put three points down will look silly.

5♣. Your partner has bid the opponents' suit – he cannot want to play in hearts because North has seven of them. What are you expecting from him?

Generally, a cuebid directly over a pre-emptive opening shows a big two-suited hand – it is game-forcing and means partner expects to have a chance of making game in one of his two suits. Here, since partner would bid 4NT with both minors, he must have spades and a minor.

Your job is to bid the lowest suit that you are comfortable with as trumps. Clearly spades are no good, but clubs would be fine (you expect a minimum of five from partner), so you bid 5♣.

Note that if partner did not have clubs he would continue with 5♦ and we would find the best fit. 5♣ is a good contract.

3NT. What on earth does partner's jump cue bid mean?

It is quite an unusual bid this one, but it is certainly not natural, so once again you alert it.

If asked what it means, the response will probably be: 'we have no partnership agreement' – it is important to understand this response – you only tell your opponents your agreements – you might be in the dark as much as your opponents if you have not discussed it with partner – you have to use your bridge knowledge to guess the meaning of the bid.

A jump cuebid at the start of the auction is generally used to demand that partner bid 3NT if he has a stopper in the opponents' suit.

You have to be very trusting, but your bid is 3NT. Your ♦K is enough for your partner and as you can see, with you as declarer 3NT is unbeatable – 9 tricks off the top, with an overtrick if they lead a diamond up to your king.

East found a good bid; anything else fails to describe the hand – if he doubles then you, as West, will fancy your major suit holdings – it is very difficult to find 3NT without this particular bid. ■

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◀ ... Continued from page 44.

Dealer North. E/W Game.

♠ 10 9 8 7

♥ J 6

♦ K 7 5

♣ A K 7 4



♠ Void

♥ Q 5 2

♦ A Q J 10 9 8 2

♣ 10 6 3

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

Your partner leads the ♦6, low from dummy, and you play the ♦9, declarer playing the ♦3. What now?

This was the full deal:

♠ 10 9 8 7

♥ J 6

♦ K 7 5

♣ A K 7 4

♠ 6 5 4

♥ A 10 9 7

♦ 6

♣ Q J 9 8 2



♠ Void

♥ Q 5 2

♦ A Q J 10 9 8 2

♣ 10 6 3

♠ A K Q J 3 2

♥ K 8 4 3

♦ 4 3

♣ 5

Jonathan Harris in the other room cashes the ♦A and plays another. In the fullness of time E/W also come to two heart tricks, making four defensive tricks in total.

Maybe I try to be too clever. I am worried that it is declarer who has the singleton diamond (years of experience that partner never has what I want him to have). So I don't want to set up dummy's ♦K in case he needs a club discard. I could switch to a club but that would let the contract through immediately if the layout is as above, so I play a low heart, to give declarer a guess. It works. Phew. She goes up with her ♥K, partner wins the ace and plays the ♥10 (a suit-preference signal) and I finally get the message and cash the ♦A. One down.

The match is very flat and we lose by

5 IMPs. We go to our Zoom meeting to go through the hands (usually as enjoyable as actually playing), have a quick supper and then, at 6 o'clock we have another match.

This time we do marginally better and win by three. We are still above average but need to get some positively good results if we are going to threaten the leaders. After the matches Barry comes over and we have a nice chilled evening – a good meal, a bit of TV and a few Sudokus.

SATURDAY

Up early for an hour's practice with Hanna and Siyu. Fiona is away this weekend so Barry plays instead. Later on we go to Kitty's house on the Overground (that's a first – the Overground, I mean – since Lockdown for me) and she takes us to the Hurlingham Club. We sit companionably for a while with Steve and Tove, sharing a few bottles of wine, and then having something to eat (completely unnecessary, of course, in the middle of the afternoon): sole goujons, padron peppers and chips. In the evening we play a four-way match – us, Jon & Lou, Norman & Kay and Cameron & Sarah, after which we Zoom and go through the hands.

SUNDAY

Our usual Sunday morning session against Karen and Axel in Sydney. This time they don't go for a single penalty – the only time we try to punish them we lose 870.

The rest of the day is complete laziness, though we do make a start on going through and simplifying our system. We find as we get older that our memories are fading. It's no good playing the best system in the world if you keep forgetting it. In my opinion the best example of this is when people play something other than 4NT as asking for aces – I am sure it can be theoretically superior, but the disasters I have witnessed because people were not on the same wavelength ...

I cook pork tenderloin for dinner, after which Barry goes home so he can make an early start with work in the morning. ■

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Answers to Bernard Magee's Bidding Quizzes 4-6 on page 5

4. Dealer South. N/S Game.

♠ 3 2			♠ Q J 10 9
♥ A K 8 7 6 5 4	N W E S		♥ Void
♦ 7 6			♦ 10 9 8 4 3 2
♣ A 3			♣ K 9 8

West	North	East	South
			1♥
			?

Pass. Once you have seen all the other questions, you will see that bridge players use immediate bids of the opponents' suit for all sorts of reasons, none of which are natural. While on later rounds you can try bidding hearts as a natural bid, on the first round pass is your only sensible choice. Note that you do not necessarily want to play in hearts anyway – if South has five hearts, it could be an unpleasant experience.

5. Dealer North. Love All.

♠ 7 6			♠ A 9 8 5
♥ J 8 7 6 5	N W E S		♥ 2
♦ 4 3 2			♦ K Q 8 7
♣ A 5 3			♣ Q J 9 4

West	North	East	South
	1♥	Db1	Pass
			?

2♣. North opens in your best suit, after which your partner makes a take-out double leaving you with a tricky choice.

You should only pass 1♥ doubled if you feel you are likely to take the contract

off. Your hearts are very weak and you just have one high card outside – there may well be overtricks in 1♥. You do best to bid your best suit outside hearts: 2♣.

Bear in mind that when your partner makes a take-out double he is asking you to bid your best suit, so you should only disobey with a good reason. Here, you do not have a good enough reason.

6. Dealer East. Love All.

♠ J 10 6			♠ A K Q 2
♥ A J 4 3	N W E S		♥ K Q 9 8 7
♦ 7			♦ 8 6 4
♣ A Q 4 3 2			♣ 7

West	North	East	South
		1♥	2♦
			?

4♦. Given the topic of the month, you might have guessed that the answer is going to be a bid of the opponents' suit. You have a very nice hand for supporting hearts – game should be the least of your ambitions – you need to be suggesting a slam as well. A bid of 3♦ would show a decent hand with heart support, but there is a better bid. A jump to 4♦ is a splinter bid, showing heart support, 11+ high card points and a singleton or void in diamonds. By showing all of your attributes in one bid, you allow your partner to assess the situation accurately. With three little diamonds, his hand fits beautifully – his only weakness can be ruffed away. He can follow up with Blackwood and on finding two aces he can bid 6♥.



The Diaries of Wendy Wensum

Episode 103: As You Like It

Millie and I were sitting out for two boards in the evening duplicate pairs at the Riverside BC. I was telling her about a trip to London. It had started badly at Norwich station when the train was delayed for twenty minutes by a signal failure. Spouse and I were heading for the Globe Theatre in London. It was an extremely hot day and there was another delay with a points' problem. We would normally walk from Liverpool Street station to the South Bank, but now running well behind schedule; we decided to catch a number 11 bus. Bad move. Unknown to us the service was on diversion and we alighted some way from our intended stop at St Paul's cathedral. With Spouse leading the way, we meandered back towards the Thames, crossing the river at Millennium Bridge only to find our restaurant reservation had been cancelled. This was not totally unexpected as we were now over an hour late. We finally

took our seats in the Globe for the afternoon performance of *As You Like It* and thoroughly enjoyed the play. Fortunately the journey home was uneventful.

At this point, commotion in the bridge room indicated that the move had been called; with drinks in hand, Millie and I wandered back to our table where the following board awaited us.

Following three passes, Millie opened 2♣, an artificial opening with game-forcing values. East and West passed throughout. I gave the artificial negative response of 2♦. Millie's 2NT showed a balanced 24-25 HCP. With a long heart suit I bid 3♦ as a transfer. Millie obliged with 3♥. So far, so good. In case Millie held four spades, I bid 3♠ to give her a choice of trump suits. Millie now bounced to 6NT thus ending the auction.

Dealer West. Love All.

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

West	North	East	South
	<i>Wendy</i>		<i>Millie</i>
Pass	Pass	Pass	2♣ ¹
Pass	2♦ ²	Pass	2NT ³
Pass	3♦ ⁴	Pass	3♥
Pass	3♠	Pass	6NT

All Pass

¹ Artificial, game force

² Relay

³ 24-25 HCP

⁴ Hearts

West led her ♣K. Millie proceeded



speedily and rather crossly to take the obvious ten top tricks for two off, an absolute bottom. Most of the field had finished in 4♥. A minority had reached 6♥ making all thirteen tricks. In the pub later we discussed the board with Jo and Kate. Their sequence had started the same as ours, but finished more abruptly.

West	North	East	South
	Jo		Kate
Pass	Pass	Pass	2♣ ¹
Pass	2♦ ²	Pass	2NT ³
Pass	3♦ ⁴	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

Millie was still annoyed with my bid of 3♣. 'What was that all about?' she asked accusingly. I explained that with shortages in the minors I was offering her a choice of trump suits in case she held four spades. I suggested that knowing that I held at least nine cards in the majors she should have realised I was unlikely to offer any help with the minors in a no-trump contract. Unwisely I also noted that with the ♠Q and ♦K favourable she can make one more trick. To be fair this manoeuvre would have added nothing to our match-point tally, as all the other North-South scores were positive. Millie defence was instant: 'Maybe after my 6NT, you should convert to 7♥.' With some restraint, I held back from remarking, 'Your 6NT bid may have been As You Like It, but it was certainly not As I Like It.' Playing with Millie is rather like a trip to London; there is always a need to expect the unexpected.

Discussion then centred on whether 6♥ was a reasonable contract to reach. It appears that the certain tricks are six hearts, three spades, one diamond and one club. A favourable layout in diamonds or spades then gives the extra trick. ■

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Answers to Bernard Magee's Bidding Quizzes 7-9 on page 5

7. Dealer South. N/S Game.

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

West	North	East	South
			1♠
Dbl	Pass	2♣*	Pass
?			

* you alert 2♣

3♣. It is all well and good using a bid in the opponents' suit as an artificial bid, but you do need to know how to respond to the bid. If in doubt, a bid of the opponents' suit shows strength and excitement. When responding to partner's cue bid just bid naturally – in this auction, the partnership can bid until they find a fit and then bid game – the 2♣ bid sets up a forcing auction (until you and your partner agree a suit) and gives the partnership the time to find the best contract.

So, you should bid your suits up the line, starting with 3♣.

East certainly had his bid: 14 HCP opposite your double, so he expected to be in game – in the end the game is going to have to be 5♣.

8. Dealer East. Love All.

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

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

* you alert 2♥

3♣. You respond 2♣, a natural bid showing 10+ points, then your partner bids the opponents' suit, which you alert. Your partner is showing a strong hand and expects your partnership to make game. When you are bidding the minor suits, the expectation is often for no-trumps. However, you need a stopper in hearts between the partnership – your partner could have bid no-trumps himself if he had a stopper, so he is hoping that you have one. Since you do not have a heart stopper you cannot bid no-trumps either – without three-card support for diamonds, your only option is to rebid your suit: 3♣.

East will raise to 5♣ and the best game is reached.

9. Dealer North. Game All.

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

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

Pass. Having said that a bid of the opponents' suit is almost always unnatural, I have clearly left room for the odd occasion when it can be natural. Particularly in longer auctions where a player has been silent, if this player then comes up with a bid of the opponents' suit it is reasonable to assume that he has a long strong holding in the suit. East has been silent because he knew that an early bid of the opponents' suit would be unnatural.

You should pass, trusting your partner to have a good heart suit, as he does have here. ■

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Sally Brock Looks At Your Slam Bidding

Sally's Slam Clinic

Where did we go wrong?

Sean Haffey of Hook, Hampshire, didn't tell me how he and his partner bid the slam below, but I assume he didn't manage to bid the grand slam in clubs. He asked how he and his partner could have bid the hand playing Acol with a weak no-trump and inverted minors.

Dealer South. E/W Game.

♠ Void
♥ Q 4
♦ K Q 10 3 2
♣ A Q 10 9 5 4

♠ A J 8 6 3
♥ J 10 3
♦ 8 7 5
♣ J 6

♠ Q 10 5 4 2
♥ K 9 7 6 5
♦ 9 6
♣ 7

♠ K 9 7
♥ A 8 2
♦ A J 4
♣ K 8 3 2

How about this?

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

After the inverted raise, 2NT (if you are playing a weak NT opening) should show a strong no-trump and be forcing to game. North's 3♦ is natural and South bids 3NT with his major-suit stoppers. That shouldn't stop North who cue-bids 4♠. This definitely denies a heart control (and even more definitely a first-round heart control), so, with his two red-suit aces, South certainly must accept the slam try. He bids 5♦ which not only shows the ♦A, but also the ♥A. That is because 5♦ (a bid above 5♣) allows for the possibility of a grand slam, which South would not contemplate unless he had the ♥A.

North has heard all he needs to know and bids the grand slam, knowing that declarer will be able to discard his heart losers on dummy's diamonds.

Slam of the month

I'm afraid no reader sent in a hand that was even remotely well bid (people tend to prefer to send in hands where they went wrong rather than when they went right), so I will present a hand my partner and I bid simply and well to a good slam:

Dealer South. Love All.

♠ A
♥ Q 10 5 3
♦ A 5 4 2
♣ A 9 6 2

♠ J 8 6 2
♥ 9 8 7 2
♦ 10 3
♣ Q 8 7

♠ Q 10 9 7
♥ A J
♦ K Q
♣ K J 10 4 3

♠ K 5 4 3
♥ K 6 4
♦ J 9 8 7 6
♣ 5

This was our auction:

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

The first three bids were natural and then as North could not make an immediate forcing bid in clubs, he introduced fourth-suit forcing. My 3NT showed medium strength – say 15–17 HCP – and almost certainly this exact shape. Partner thought 6♣ probably had play and so bid it. In the event, West led a heart and all my troubles were over. I just cashed my ♣A and ♣K, then cashed winners and cross-ruffed, letting West make his trump trick whenever he wanted. ■

Answers to Bernard Magee's Bidding Quizzes 10-12 on page 5

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10. Dealer West. Game All.

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

West	North	East	South
1♠	2♣	3♣*	4♣
?			

* you alert

4♦. You alert your partner's bid, but how do you explain it?

Your partner is showing strength and support – he has at least the values for a sound raise to 3♣ and may have more – the partnership has agreed spades to be trumps. You, in turn, should be a little excited – you have a much better than minimum hand, with very strong trumps. Your only weakness is in top cards in hearts, so you would need to find some strength in hearts in your partner's hand before launching into Blackwood.

You do best to make a cuebid of 4♦ – showing a control in that suit and hoping for a return cuebid of 4♥, which you will get here. You can then bid Blackwood and go for 6♠.

11. Dealer South. Game All.

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

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

Pass. This particular auction is a tricky one – throughout these hands we have identified an immediate bid of the opponents' suit as artificial, yet this one is an exception.

This particular sequence was encountered by many experts, when they

were susceptible to cheeky North players who chose to psyche. North knows his opponents are likely to be looking for a fit in the unbid major, so he unscrupulously bids 1♠ on any given hand, to muddy the waters. This kind of bid is not allowed if done regularly (or at least it would need to be alerted), however, a countermeasure was sought just in case. The answer to solve this situation was to treat a 2♠ bid by the doubler's partner over an intervening 1♠ bid as a natural call. So in this auction East is showing five spades with the values for a free bid: 6-9 HCP. With only 12 HCP you do not have enough to raise but holding 3-card support you are happy to pass.

12. Dealer West. Game All.

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

West	North	East	South
1♠	2♥	4♥*	Pass
?			

* you alert

4NT. Your partner has made a jump in the opponents' suit – this is certainly not natural. In fact the bid means the same as if there had not been an overcall. Without the overcall 4♥ would be a double jump in response to a major suit opening, which can be used as a splinter bid. With the overcall, you have 3♥ available to show strong supporting hands without a heart shortage, so 4♥ is used more specifically to show the splinter – Support, Points and Lack of hearts: SPL-inter.

Expecting your partner to have spade support and a singleton heart, your hand fits perfectly – remember he has to have points in the minors, so you could reasonably hope for him to have 3 key cards and therefore to get to slam. With your heart weakness taken care of, you can bid 4NT and on receiving a three key-card response, you are able to bid 6♠. ■

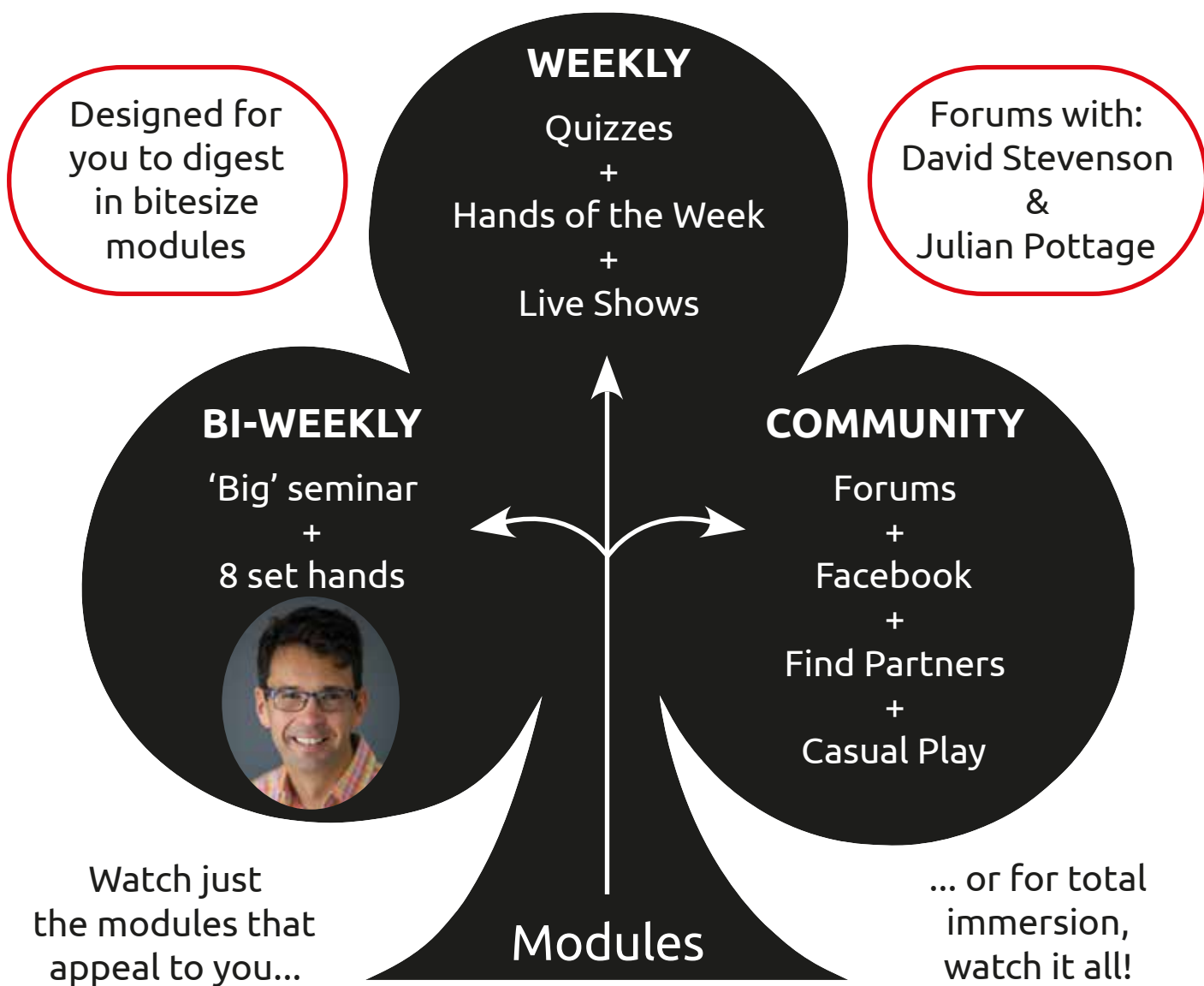


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