

ABF NEWSLETTER

AUSTRALIAN BRIDGE FEDERATION INC.



Editor: Brad Coles (abf@redgrover.com)

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ALICE'S ADVENTURES IN WONDERLAND by Jan Colville

SOUTHERN AND ANCIENT BEACHES BRIDGE CHALLENGE

One pavlova / two tiramisu / three sausages / pass the sauce, says the person with a very large hat. Pass, says the White Rabbit. Pass, says the Pink Flamingo, who's already tucked into the famous tiramisu. Yes, it's that crazy, fun, whimsical bridge event at South Arm once again: a small town 20km down the Derwent River from Hobart, perched precariously on the edge of the Southern Ocean with a clear route to Antarctica. It's the Southern and Ancient Beaches Challenge that's been happening for the last eight years. The bridge is taken seriously and so is the dressing up, general camaraderie and enjoyment – along with a delicious barbecue lunch.



Members of the hard-working SAAB committee, as well as the Tasmanian Bridge Association and the South Arm Bridge Club, give generous practical, logistical and in-kind support. Players from several southern bridge clubs arrive to cram the hall, looking forward to a day of bridge and fun.



Teams such as the Personality Disorderlies, The Mad Hatters, The Four Aces, The Magic Mushrooms, The Four Knaves of Hearts, told

their story and strutted their stuff in the lunch-hour Grand Parade. They were competing for the Strutters' Prize. It was the Personality Disorderlies who won that one – their team

peopled with disordered or disorderly characters from the Alice story: a cat that smiles and evaporates into thin air, a hookah-smoking caterpillar, a cake that makes you grow and a drink that could make you shrink, as well a young woman living in a different reality.



Meanwhile the best overall team presentation was also competing for gold. It was the very pink Pink Flamingos who took out that one, demonstrating a remarkable capacity for standing on one leg, while contemplating their next flight of fancy. A very well-dressed Dormouse took the judge's eye and was awarded the prize for best individual costume.



This year the Beer Card was introduced. It's a bit of fun: making your contract and winning the thirteenth trick in hand with the seven of diamonds. In other words, the Beer Card is the seven of diamonds, and you can win a bit of cash, enough to buy a couple of beers... perhaps.

In a day of good bridge, good fun and good food, a very good time was had by all. "More fun please," they all said. "We're working on it," said the hard-working committee.

Jan Colville, aka the Knave of Hearts

SEE PAGE 4 FOR ANSWER

Teams ♠ Q 5 4 2
 W/EW ♥ 6 5 3
 ♦ 2
 ♣ A Q J 8 4



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

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
pass	pass	pass	1NT ¹
pass	3♦ ²	pass	3♥
pass	3♠	pass	4♣
pass	5♣	all pass	

1. 15-17.

2. Zero or one diamond, no five-card major.

West leads the ♣7, taken by the ♣A, and the ♦2 is led. You rise with the ♦A. What do you play next?

See page 4 for the solution

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SEE PAGE 15 FOR ANSWERS

HAND 1

♠ 10 8 6 2
 ♥ A K 10 7
 ♦ 6 3
 ♣ K 10 2

♠ K Q J 9 7 4
 ♥ Q 6 3
 ♦ 10 7
 ♣ A Q

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
		pass	1♠
pass	3♠	pass	4♠
all pass			

West leads the ♦K. East overtakes with the ♦A, then returns the ♥2. What is your plan?

HAND 2

♠ K 8 6
 ♥ 9 6 4
 ♦ A Q 6 2
 ♣ A K J

♠ A Q J 7
 ♥ 5
 ♦ 8 7 5 3
 ♣ Q 10 9 3

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
2♥	dbl	pass	3♠
pass	4♠	all pass	

West leads the ♥A, then the ♥K. What is your plan?

HAND 3

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

♠ A K Q J 8
 ♥ 5 2
 ♦ A K 6 3
 ♣ A Q

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			2♣
pass	2♦	pass	2♠
pass	3♠	pass	4♠
all pass			

West leads the ♥Q, which holds the trick. West continues with the ♥J, ducked again. West continues with a third heart. What is your plan?

See page 15 for the solutions

BEATING THE VIRUS BLUES

As you will all know, the ABF Management Committee recommended the closure of bridge clubs on 15 March because of the coronavirus, and nearly all clubs seem to have followed that advice.

A number of Congresses have been cancelled, including the SFOB in Tasmania, the Autumn Nationals in Adelaide, the Barrier Reef Congress and very unfortunately, the Asia Pacific Bridge Congress in Perth.

We will try to keep you informed on developments with other congresses in the future but check the ABF web site for current updates, and your state bodies web sites as well as for information on local congresses.

The ABF is very conscious of their responsibility for the business and welfare of the clubs, state bodies, the congress organisers, the thousands who volunteer or work in bridge around Australia and the health of all our 37,000 players.

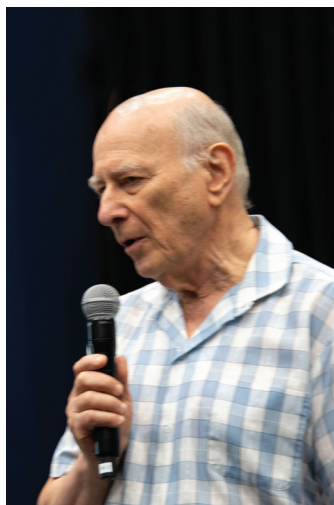
BRIDGE PLAYING OPPORTUNITIES

The ABF would like to bring all our players up to date on what steps we are taking to fight the coronavirus, and what we are doing to try and assist all bridge players to be able to continue to enjoy some bridge in these difficult times.

We are here for you so it is important that we keep you informed on developments and that you stay in touch with us.

As a result the ABF is looking for ways to assist in giving you a bridge fix, and here are some suggestions and contributions that the ABF have been offered, and others we are working on:

Ron Klinger, an Australian icon of the bridge world, has offered to provide a daily bridge column for free whilst the pandemic is on. This is an extraordinarily generous offer by Ron and the ABF will host the column on the ABF web site, which will have a link on the front page for you to read it.



<http://www.abfevents.com.au/abfdbc/>

Barbara Travis, one of Australia's leading players for many years and a bridge journalist, has also contributed a guide on how to set up 'preset' matches on BBO where you can compare yourself with the world's best. She has also started a paid weekly bridge column which can be found at

<http://www.bridgewithbarbara.com>

which is excellent for club players as well as experts.

Paul Marston has won more than 50 national Open titles, as well as six international Pairs events and the Cavendish Teams twice. His books have sold more than 500,000 copies. He has been writing a weekly bridge column for the past 45 years and still writes for the Weekend Australian. Paul is reproducing old columns of historical interest for his friends. They will be able

to play the hands on Bridge Solver as well. If you would like to receive the columns just contact Paul at

<https://bridgelounge.online/free-subscription/>

ONLINE BRIDGE

There are a number of online bridge clubs that already exist in Australia and internationally, where you can play with and against other players or robots. Here are a few suggestions, but there are also others:

stepbridge.com.au is an Australian not-for-profit online bridge site that is affiliated with the South Australian Bridge Federation. It usually has one competition session a day at 8pm AEST, or 4pm on weekends, with ABF masterpoints just like any other bridge club in Australia. The current playing fees are basically \$3 a tournament game, and once a month they hold a red masterpoint game. You can also play social bridge with no fees. Now they have added a second session each day at 1pm AEST.

bridgebase.com, or BBO, is the biggest online bridge site in the world where you can play bridge, practise with partners or robots, test your play, challenge your friends and watch (kibitzing) the best players in the world playing in tournaments. One can organise a game with friends, or play anonymously for free with strangers or robots, which you may find to be more friendly.

Funbridge has 400,000 members from 190 countries, who play more than 800,000 deals a day. You can play at **funbridge.com** even on your phone, 24/7 at your own pace and pause a deal and resume it later. I am trying to organise a Funbridge Australia club that may be more suitable for many club players.

The English Bridge Union (EBU) has regular daily games on Funbridge and BBO, plus Bridge Club Live has over 500 people playing a day now.

Online dating for bridge players: several people have suggested an app that would match up people wanting to play in homes. So if you are an app builder and could come up with a simple but effective way of matching people in local communities, please get in contact with me at

petercox@ozemail.com.au

SOCIAL DISTANCING? HERE'S A DIGITAL CARE PACKAGE...

Nick Fahrer has put together the following:

<https://bridgewinners.com/article/view/social-distancing-heres-a-digital-care-package/>

CONTRIBUTIONS

Please contribute any suggestions you have on how we can improve the bridge experience whilst clubs are closed. If you are not receiving the ABF Marketing Bulletins to keep up with all bridge playing opportunities, then please join the ABF Emailing List. You can contact me at

petercox@ozemail.com.au

or phone 0413 676 326.

Peter Cox

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The COVID-19 crisis has introduced a new and unwanted dynamic into all of our daily lives. Although the landscape is changing quickly, the health and safety of all players and officials has, and will continue to be, the ABF's number one priority. The ABF Management Committee considered very carefully what actions needed to be taken in relation to the playing of bridge at club level and the staging of tournaments as scheduled given that bridge is a game that involves contact around a bridge table.



People are capable of amazing things in a time of crisis. I am very proud of the work all of ABF Management Committee has done at this difficult time. We are a team and recent announcements and recommendations are a result of a combined effort. I also thank all of the bridge administrators at club, state and territory levels, who heeded the recommendation to temporarily close or cancel ANC qualifying events and/or ABF licensed events.

Lastly, thank you to Ron Klinger who offered the ABF a daily column free of charge, until the bridge clubs can reopen and ABF events are on again. Of course we accepted and you can find a column each day on the ABF website,

<http://www.abfevents.com.au/abfdbbc/>

Others have followed Ron's lead and I also thank them. Check the ABF website "Latest News" for updates. Last but not least, thank you to all the ABF employees and contractors who have worked so hard to keep the Bridge community connected.

Congratulations to the QBA, Tim Runting, Kim Ellaway and all of the support staff on another hugely successful Gold Coast Congress. The GCC again lived up to its reputation as a world-class tournament with the first day of the teams events seeing 536 tables in play and the total number of individual players for the entire event was 2,761. 2021 will be the 60th Anniversary of this amazing event, and I encourage all players to save the dates so that you can be a part of the huge celebrations.

Stay safe and keep checking with your family, friends and bridge partners to make sure they are coping in these difficult times.

If you have any issues you would like to raise with me or the ABF Management Committee please email:

abf.pres@gmail.com

Allison Stralow, ABF President

Convenor Tim and manager Kim



IMPROVE YOUR DEFENCE – SOLUTION

FOLLOW THE LEADER

Using the 1NT : 3-suit response as a splinter proved useful on this deal from a national teams' event:



W/EW ♠ Q 5 4 2
 ♡ 6 5 3
 ♦ 2
 ♣ A Q J 8 4

♠ J 7 3
 ♡ Q J 8 7
 ♦ Q 8 5 4 3
 ♣ 7

♠ A 10 8 6
 ♡ 9 2
 ♦ A J 10 7
 ♣ 6 5 2

♠ K 9
 ♡ A K 10 4
 ♦ K 9 6
 ♣ K 10 9 3

Lead: ♣7

After North revealed the diamond shortage, South suggested hearts as a contract. North's 3♠ denied four hearts and showed four spades. South was not prepared to play 3NT with just one stopper opposite a singleton and bid 4♣ to show four clubs and deny spade support. North was delighted with that offer.

The datum NS 80 strongly suggests that many pairs perished in 3NT, probably after the sequence

pass	1NT
2♣	2♥
3NT	

If West leads a diamond, the defence will come to four diamonds and a spade easily enough.

Against 5♣ West found the killing lead, a trump, often the best start after a splinter auction. This was taken in dummy and a diamond led. East rose with the ace and had to decide how to continue.

To defeat 5♣ East has to continue trumps. South can win, cash the ♦K to pitch a heart and ruff a diamond. After ♥A, ♥K, ruff a heart, followed by a low spade, East rises with the ♠A and plays a third trump, leaving South one trick short.

At the table declarer had a lucky escape when East shifted to a heart. South won, pitched a heart on the ♦K, cashed ♥A, ♥K and ruffed a heart. Now when a low spade is led from dummy East cannot prevent South from ruffing his last heart loser.

There was no rush to shift to a heart. If South had ♥A and ♦KQ, the heart shift would do no good. There was no need to switch to hearts if West had the ♥A or the ♥K plus ♦Q. The defence would then always have a heart trick.

At the other table South was also in 5♣. Here West led a diamond and declarer had no problems. No swing.

Ron Klinger

**DEADLINE FOR JUNE EDITION
 ADVERTISING: 15 MAY 2020
 ARTICLES: 15 MAY 2020**

SOUTH PACIFIC NATIONAL TOURNAMENT DIRECTORS' DEVELOPMENT COURSE

As the sun rose over Zenith Bay, Nelson Bay on 31 January 2020, it shone brightly on the start of the 1st South Pacific National Tournament Directors' Development Course.

The aim of the course was twofold: firstly, to develop the knowledge and skills of Tournament Directors; and secondly to help create a network of directors around the region.

A total of 28 National Directors, and aspiring ones from each State & Territory (plus New Zealand) attended this new venture in terms of an educational process for and of directors at National Events. The course was fully supported and sponsored by our Australian Bridge Federation and NZ Bridge. In addition, there were our presenters, our three leading (and International) Directors, plus members of the National Directors Accreditation Committee (NDAC) to oversee all the development of the participants. It was a gruelling three days of intense study and work. All participants were given homework on movements, claims and revokes, to get them in the correct mindset for the start of the course.

So, for three days, the structure was:

Component 1. An entry test, to see what we knew (or didn't, as the case may be).

Component 2. Lectures on
"Polling" (new in Australia from 1st January) and
"Procedures and Pitfalls" (good procedure, consistently applied, leads to better rulings).

Component 3. Table simulations, where we had to **RULE** under live conditions in front of the facilitator and observer and our peers. We remained in the same three groupings and went through 12 different simulations.

Component 4. An exit test, to see how we had developed with all the newfound information.



Everyone gathered on the Thursday evening, having flown into Williamtown / Newcastle airport. There are direct flights from Canberra, Melbourne, Brisbane and Auckland. From any other city one needed to change flights.

As the sun set over Nelson Bay on Sunday 2nd February, we all had to say goodbye to all our renewed and newfound colleagues. One of the main trusts of the weekend was "networking" and this was a huge success, achieved partly through group dinners where we enjoyed each other's company. We started with tapas style on the Thursday evening, Italian cuisine on Friday and buffet at the local bowling club on Saturday.

Special mention and thanks must go to our presenters, Laurie Kelso, Matthew McManus and Peter Marley, without whom the course would not have been as successful as it turned out to be. Also, to our observers John Brockwell (Chairman) and Jon Free (member) of the NDAC. In closing, this venture would never have got off the ground without the total support and financial commitment of the Australian Bridge Federation and NZ Bridge organisations. To you, thanks from all the directors who attended and benefitted so much from your investment in this training, educational and personal development course. We are all better for the experience.

*John McIlrath
ABF National Director Development Officer*





We're all missing each other, and when it's over, imagine the excitement of seeing each other across the bridge table again! In the meantime, spend time doing bridge things online. There are marvellous offers around from all the leading teachers, and I'd like to add mine to the mix. So, no excuse for saying you're out of practice in a few months.

I'm offering one month free (it's usually \$15 a month) as a Gold Member of my online platform (the Online School of Bridge).

It includes:

- a huge curriculum of over 130 lessons (bidding is Standard and 2/1 Game Force),
- 500 videos that cover all topics,
- a Play Online feature where you can practise against the robots,
- a Challenge Hand to test your skill.

To take advantage of this offer, go to

<https://www.joanbuttsbridge.com/join>

and sign up as a Gold Member. (You need to be new to the site to qualify for this offer). Make sure you enter the correct coupon code to receive your free month. The code is: BRIDGE.

One interesting thing people are getting into more these days is commenting on the ABF Facebook page. It allows us to know what you're thinking. When I put this hand up recently, I was surprised at some of the comments.

Here's the question. You South hold:

♠ 8 7 4 3 ♥ Q 5 2 ♦ A 7 ♣ 10 9 8 3

Both vul, West deals and the bidding goes

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
3♦	dbl	pass	?

The answer of course is to bid 3♠, but a number of people thought they would pass and beat 3♦ (doubled). Some thought that the double was for penalty because it was at a high level. Why would anyone expect to beat this contract? They will make nine tricks easily.

Partner's hand was

♠ A K 6 2 ♥ A K J 4 ♦ 10 4 ♣ J 7 4

Here's another example, this time one of the hands from the Negative Doubles lesson on my Online School of Bridge.

What would you bid as North after the following auction?

♠ 9 6 2 ♥ 4 ♦ K Q 5 3 ♣ A Q 10 7 2

Partner (South) is the dealer, and opponents are vulnerable.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			1♥
2♣	?		

The best thing to do is to pass. Then the bidding proceeds pass by East, and partner South says double which is passed to you.

When the smoke clears you have scored +1400.

The whole hand was, almost predictably:

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

Many people wanted to bid something on the North hand, mainly notrumps.

I think more time needs to be spent on when to think about penalties and when to think about declaring a hand.

Joan Butts, ABF National Teaching Coordinator

All upcoming ABF Accreditation workshops may be viewed at

<https://www.abf.com.au/education/>



For those bridge players who care about the environment, the ABF's sponsor, PENLINE, makes Reusable Coffee cups and Water Bottles, as part of its "War on Waste". If you are interested in more information, please contact Maryo Derofe by email: maryo@penline.com.au





paul@bridgegear.com

WHEN THEY DOUBLE OUR TRANSFER

You open 1NT (15-17), partner responds 2♦ (transfer to hearts) and RHO doubles.

What would you call on the following hands, nil vulnerable:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
(pass)	2♦	dbl	1NT ?

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

SOLUTIONS

1. Pass. Partnerships should agree on the meaning of calls when RHO doubles a transfer response to 1NT. Indeed the double allows an extra call to the 1NT opener – pass, to show a doubleton heart, vital information.

2. 2♥. Your hand is nothing special but you accept the transfer and bid 2♥ to show you have three of them. You are well positioned in the competitive auction that may follow.

3. Redouble. Meant as a strong suggestion to play in 2♦ redoubled. Assuming the doubler is showing diamonds your AJ1086 sits over something like KQ97x and figures to take four diamond tricks. Together with your ♠A and ♣AK that gives you seven tricks so you need very little from partner to make 2♦ redoubled. With a totally unsuitable hand like

♠ x x ♥ Q J x x x x ♦ x ♣ x x x x

the transferer should not sit the redouble but retreat to 2♥.

In days of yore (say 1990) redouble showed a maximum 1NT with three hearts, but redoubling for penalties started to come into vogue when good players saw the huge penalty potential. For example, 3NT non-vulnerable scores 400 (if you make it) but 2♦ redoubled making only eight tricks scores 560 and

making nine tricks is 760. Vulnerable, 2♦ redoubled scores 760 and making with an overtrick is a whopping 1160.

It is hardly an error to double 2♣ Stayman or a 2♦ or 2♥ transfer with an ace and KQ975 or KJ975. By alerting partner to lead your suit, you will defeat many 3NT contracts. And if you don't double, you won't get partner off to the right lead, and you will lose many partscore battles when your side has the balance of power.

When you are prepared to redouble when you have a well-positioned holding in the suit doubled, the opponents will be much more wary of doubling artificial bids. Some of Australia's best have been redoubled and conceded embarrassingly large scores.

4. Redouble. Here you have only four diamonds, but you have an equally good hand to redouble and turn the tables on the doubler. A diamond or two and a few top cards in partner's hand should be enough to rack up an overtrick and +1160.

5. 3♥. A minimum with 4+ hearts so you jump to 3♥ to both describe your hand and preempt opponents if the hand belongs to them. If partner is as poor as ♥J10xxx and little else then opponents will make at least ten tricks in spades.

6. 2♥. Here you also have four hearts and a minimum but you have no fear of spades and your hand is very defensive. Thus bid 2♥ only and hope to buy it there if responder is weak.

7. 2NT. You have a maximum with four trumps but a 4-3-3-3 shape. Your hand is very notrumpy and 2NT indicates this. Despite having at least a 5-4 heart fit you should suggest notrumps on the way. Responder should now bid 3NT or re-transfer with 3♦ to 3♥ and then either pass 3♥ or bid 4♥.

It is important that the strong hand be declarer. When the strong hand is exposed as dummy it is much easier for the opponents to find the best defence.

8. 2NT. Even though you are not 3-4-3-3, as in Hand 7, your hand strongly suggests notrumps so you should bid 2NT.

9. 2♠. There are many possible ways to agree to show a maximum with four- or five-card support. My style is to show my doubleton, which is very useful information.

10. 4♥. An unusual bid, but if the transfer bidder has four or five useful points, they will never dream of bidding 4♥ even if you show a maximum. Give responder say ♥K, a doubleton club and little else and you will make ten tricks in hearts. And the ♦A looks for sure to be onside, as does the ♠A.

Paul Lavings

HOW TO PLAY STAYMAN

This month I'm discussing how to play Stayman. This convention is widely used, but not everyone understands all the different continuations. I'm going to start by covering the basics of Stayman: how it is used, in what situations we actually want to use it, and in what situations we don't want to use it. Then I'll talk about continuations, and how I prefer to play all the follow-up bids to show different hands.



As you know, Stayman is used after a 1NT opening. Responder bids 2♣, which asks "do you have a four card major". The answers are simple: opener bids 2♥ with four hearts, 2♠ with four spades, and 2♦ with neither major. Those are the only three responses to Stayman.

The reason we need Stayman is so that responder can find four-four major fits. If responder has a five-card major they can bid it (or transfer to it if you play transfers) but if you want to find a four-four fit, Stayman is the tool.

If opener does not have a major, he bids an artificial 2♦:

♠ A K 2 ♥ Q 10 4 ♦ J 4 ♣ K Q 8 7 3

2♦ says nothing about diamonds; here, even when we have just two diamonds, we still bid 2♦ because all it is saying is "no, I do not have a four card major".

If opener happens to have both majors, bid the cheaper one (2♥). This does not (yet) say whether or not you have four spades. 2♠, however, does deny four hearts.

WHEN DOES STAYMAN APPLY?

You can use Stayman after a 1NT opening, and most people also play it after a 1NT overcall.

You can also play Stayman a level higher after a 2NT opening, or a natural 2NT overcall (such as when the opponents have opened at the two-level).

Also over this auction:

2♣ strong	2♦ negative
2NT	3♣ Stayman

Here, the 2NT bid is exactly the same as a 2NT opening, only stronger, so 3♣ is still Stayman.

We don't use it when opener rebids 1NT:

1♣	1♥
1NT	?

You wouldn't use Stayman in this position. There is no need to use Stayman to find a 4-4 fit when you have already started bidding your suits naturally. There are several different conventions you can learn for after a 1NT rebid, with different goals, but Stayman does not apply.

CONTESTED AUCTIONS

Can you use it after interference? Let's say that partner opens 1NT and the opponents bid 2♣. Now we can't bid 2♣, but lots of people use double here as Stayman:

1NT (2♣) dbl^{Stayman}

However, one thing you have to actually check is what the opponent's 2♣ bid means. They might be playing 2♣ as an artificial bid, showing both majors – you would not want to play Stayman if your opponent has both majors.

Can you play Stayman over a double?

1NT (dbl) 2♣^{Stayman}

If 1NT gets doubled, do you still play system on? I like to play system on, so I'd still have 2♣ as Stayman here. Some people prefer not to do this, and you will need to explicitly discuss both of these auctions with your partner.

WHAT KIND OF HAND USES STAYMAN?

Stayman is used when you have an invitational or better hand, and at least one four-card major. (There are times when you can do it with a weaker hand, but we'll come back to that later.)

Opposite a 15-17 notrump, I don't like to invite with a bad eight, so I would need a good eight-count to use Stayman:

♠ 10 8 ♥ K 7 6 3 ♦ 8 6 ♣ A J 8 5 3

This is an invitational hand opposite a 15-17 opener. We want to invite to 4♥ if we find a fit, or else invite to 3NT. We start with 2♣, and opener will answer with either 2♦, 2♥ or 2♠.

If opener bids 2♦ (no major) or 2♠ (his cheaper major) then we do not have a heart fit. If he bids 2♥, we do have a heart fit.

If we do not have a heart fit, we will follow with 2NT, inviting partner to bid 3NT:

1NT	2♣ ^{Stayman}
2♦/♠	2NT ^{invitational}

Opener will bid on to 3NT with a maximum.

If we do find a heart fit, we will support the hearts:

1NT	2♣ ^{Stayman}
2♥	3♥ ^{invitational}

Again, opener will go on to game (4♥) with a maximum.

If we were a bit stronger:

♠ Q ♥ A 8 6 4 ♦ 7 6 3 ♣ K Q 6 5 4

we would go straight to game after checking for a fit. If opener shows hearts we will raise to 4♥, otherwise we will settle for 3NT over 2♦ or 2♠.

If we swap the majors, the situation is slightly different:

♠ A 8 6 4 ♥ Q ♦ 7 6 3 ♣ K Q 6 5 4

We start with Stayman, opener bids 2♥, and we go to 3NT. In this case, we may still have a spade fit; opener's 2♥ bid does not deny four spades, as with both majors he would always show the cheaper one first. The spade fit will not go unnoticed, however. Opener knows that we must have a four-card major, because we used Stayman. If not hearts, it must be spades, and opener should therefore correct the contract to 4♠:

1NT	2♣ ^{Stayman}
2♥	3NT ^{denies four hearts, so must have four spades}
4♠	

That covers the invitational and game-forcing hands, but what if you have a weaker hand?

♠ 8 2 ♥ 9 8 4 3 ♦ A 4 3 2 ♣ Q 10 7

With this hand we just pass. We might have a heart fit, but we can't actually explore it, because if we try to find our heart fit we risk getting too high. If we bid 2♣, partner might bid 2♠, and then we would have to bid 2NT. That is not only too high, but it is also invitational – partner will go on to 3NT with a maximum. So if we have a weak hand with a four card major we don't have the ability to actually explore for that, and we just pass.

USING STAYMAN WITH BOTH MAJORS

If you have both majors, you can use Stayman in the same way as with one major. If opener is revealed to have either major, you have a fit; over a 2♦ reply, you will bid notrumps at the appropriate level.

But what do you do with a four card major and a five card major? Remember, we need to consider weak hands, invitational hands, and game forcing hands.

Stayman comes with many variations in this area, which you will need to discuss with your partner. I'll start by discussing my preferred variation: with 5-4 majors, I use Stayman with weak hands, and with game forcing hands. For invitational hands, I use transfers – if you don't play transfers, there are no good methods for showing a five-card major and an invitational hand, so you generally have to choose to show one or the other.

♠ A 9 8 7 4 ♥ Q J 6 5 ♦ 3 ♣ K 7 5

With this hand, I start with Stayman, of course. If opener shows hearts, we have a heart fit, and I will raise to 4♥. Likewise, if opener shows spades, I will raise to 4♠. However, if opener bids 2♦ (no major) then we do not have a heart fit, but we might have a 5-3 spade fit. What should we do?

The most common convention for this hand is a Stayman extension called Smolen. Playing Smolen, after a 2♦ response to Stayman, you jump in your shorter major. This shows five cards in the other major, and asks opener choose between that major and 3NT.

1NT 2♣ Stayman
2♦ 3♥ four hearts, longer spades

This auction shows four hearts, five spades, and a game forcing hand. If we had jumped to 3♠ instead, this would have shown four spades and five hearts.

Why do we jump in the shorter major, instead of bidding our long major? Because if partner chooses to play in our five-card major, the Smolen auction allows partner to be declarer.

Tricky to remember, but quite useful.

That covers the strong hands, but what about the weak hands?

♠ K J 9 5 4 ♥ 8 7 6 2 ♦ 7 6 3 ♣ 3

With this hand, you could just bid 2♠ (or transfer to 2♠ if you play transfers). That will be fine, but it would be nicer to find a 4-4 heart fit if we have one, rather than settling for what could be a 5-2 spade fit.

We mentioned earlier that there is a time when you can use Stayman with a weak hand, and this is it. Commonly referred to as "garbage Stayman", you can safely bid 2♣ with this hand. If opener shows hearts or spades, you will be very happy to play there. The tricky part is if opener bids 2♦ (no major). I like to use 2♥ and 2♠ now to show just a weak hand. On this hand, I can bid 2♠ to show a weak hand with five spades and four hearts.

Most people play the 2♥ bid this way (weak with five hearts and four spades), but with the 2♠ bid people have different methods. Many people play 2♠ as invitational, so (as always) you will need to discuss this sequence with your partner before adopting Stayman.

The only other time you could use Stayman with a weak hand is when you have both majors AND four or five diamonds. With that hand, you can pass partner's 2♦ bid if necessary, as discussed in Will's workshop in the previous Newsletter.

FOUR MAJOR AND A LONGER MINOR

Our next hand type is game forcing with a four-card major and long minor.

♠ 9 6 ♥ Q J 7 3 ♦ 5 ♣ A K 9 8 6 2

With this sort of hand you'll typically want to play in your major, if there is a fit, or in 3NT. But occasionally partner will have well-fitting cards and you might want to play in clubs. So how do we describe these hands?

Start with Stayman, of course, to check for a heart fit. If opener bids 2♦ or 2♠, denying four hearts, then we can bid our minor. This shows a game forcing hand with five (usually six) cards in the minor. Partner can choose between 3NT and 5♣.

Bidding the minor usually shows six, because with only five you would prefer 3NT. You may have just five if you have a very strong hand, with the possibility of a minor-suit slam.

INVITATIONAL BALANCED HANDS

If you have a balanced hand with no major, there is no reason to use Stayman. You would just raise 1NT to 2NT, asking opener to bid on to 3NT with a maximum.

However, many tournament players cannot do this, because they use 2NT as an artificial bid (typically a transfer). For these pairs, Stayman also fills in for the 2NT bid:

♠ 6 5 2 ♥ K 9 8 ♦ Q 10 8 7 ♣ K J 9

If your methods do not allow a natural 2NT invitation with this hand, 2♣ is your bid. Over whatever opener bids, you will follow with 2NT to show an invitational hand (in this one special case, not promising a major at all). Extremely important to discuss this one with your partner.

SLAM BIDDING

The final thing to talk about is slam bidding.

♠ A K J 3 ♥ A 3 ♦ J 9 6 5 ♣ Q 8 3

We have 15 points, which means we could have 32 HCP opposite a 15-17 opening. We could have a slam, but it will be close, and we don't want to make too much of a commitment. If we start with Stayman and opener shows four spades, we would like to suggest a spade slam, but don't want to force beyond 4♠ on our own.

The answer: when partner responds to Stayman with a major, you bid three of the other major to show a good raise.

1NT 2♣ Stayman
2♠ 3♥ good spade raise, too good to bid 4♠

Here, 3♥ shows a good spade raise. 3♥ is not needed as a natural bid, because opener's 2♠ has already denied a 4-4 heart fit. We also can't have a five-card we need to show; the only time we would use Stayman with five hearts is when we also have four spades. Similarly, if opener had shown hearts, a jump to 3♠ would not be needed as a natural bid.

From here, you can get into a cue bidding auction. Even if you don't play cue bids, any bid from opener (other than an immediate signoff in game) will imply cooperation for slam.

Imagine you were a bit stronger, like

♠ A Q 9 3 ♥ A 3 ♦ K J 6 5 ♣ K 8 3 ,

willing to go straight to Blackwood over partner's 2♠ bid. First, use the 3♥ convention to set spades as trumps, then bid 4NT. If you bid 4NT immediately, before setting the trump suit, that should be "quantitative" – natural and invitational.

For a convention that everyone uses, there's a lot to Stayman, so make sure you discuss all the sequences with your partner.

Peter Hollands

<https://bridgevid.com>

Click [here](#) for the video version of this article.

Peter uploads new videos to his Bridge Vid channel every Tuesday, Thursday and Friday.



FEBRUARY ON THE AUSTRALIAN YOUTH SCENE

The highlight of the February calendar has to be the Gold Coast Congress. With record breaking numbers it was good to see some well-deserved media publicity, whilst many youth players competed in their category events with varying levels of success.

One highlight of the week is the Youth Night at the Gold Coast Bridge Club, organised by Paul Brake and Jessica Brake. This annual event merges the current youth players with the recently too old for youth. The event was hosted by the experienced Laura Ginnan and her entertaining apprentice Damon.

In true Youth style, the night was made more interesting with rule changes for each hand (see the report by Paul Brake on the facing page). With the South Africans taking out the night, they nearly claimed the double title at the Gold Coast Teams, pipped at the post during the semi-finals.

The Gold Coast event itself was as usual the event to strive for. Great atmosphere, competition and ran like clockwork! Well done to all involved.

The finals will be talked about for a very long time, with many recent youth players in the mix. Ashley Bach, Matthew Brown, Nabil Edgton and Alex Antonios (many at youth night) just eclipsed Michael Ware, Nick Jacob, Geo Tislevoll, Terje Lie, David Wilshire and Max Henbest.

The Ware team was leading by 30imps with three boards to go and... lost by 12! See article on page 22 for details.

Recently ex-Youth players Charles and John McMahon also performed well, winning the Intermediate Pairs.



TURNING ISOLATION INTO AN OPPORTUNITY!

As many of our beloved events and clubs shut down across Australia, it is important to continue to focus on why we play and what we love about bridge.



Many events that our Youth players are scheduled to play in, such as the PABF and Italy, have now been postponed or cancelled. With that news, like the rest of the world, we put our plans and aspirations on hold.

Whilst we are unable to attend events or our clubs, there are many things we can continue to do to be part of the bridge community.

We are aware that it isn't only young players that read this column. There are others who want to get younger players involved. Here are some ideas and pointers to help you stay involved.

For 5-9 year olds who really are at the start of their youth bridge experiences: it is important to continue to learn from your mentors and teachers, some of your mentors may not want to go outside so it's really important that you keep playing cards with them and sharing your love of the game.

Why not learn to make your own card holder? Learn to shuffle or even find friends to teach two-player bridge.



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10-17 year olds: if your school hasn't closed during this period, you are lucky. Continue to try and learn at your lunch time bridge club or with your mentors. Remember this outbreak will really affect your teachers and mentors, so remember to continue to be grateful that they are helping, and try to find other ways to help them.

18-26 year olds: I understand a lot of you are also in turmoil. Whether it be university or work, there is no doubt that you have been affected. Use bridge as your activity to get away from the stress.

Below are some more specific things you can do:

1. Take the opportunity to have a systemic check up with your partner. It is best to do this with a third person, teacher or mentor. Simply go through your entire system and see where your "holes" are. There may be a bidding sequence that continues to bring you unstuck; or see if you can use this time to learn a new convention, such as upgrading from Blackwood to Roman Key Card.
2. Venture astray... arrange to play with a potentially new partner on BBO or similar programs.
3. Private lessons: Whether it be a confidence building exercise, wanting to improve enough to get your dream partner, or have partnership lessons to improve your knowledge? Many bridge teachers do private lessons, reducing your exposure and new learning a new skill – win/win.
4. Team up with grandparent or a younger child, depending on your level of experience:



With a new player, remember a book for older players may not always be fun. Get them playing cards as soon as possible. Preferably two-player bridge, to learn basic trick-taking. Then gradually add in more rules.

If you would like more information on what sort of activities you can do with your children, or some free tips, email your details and ages to

info@tricksandtrumps.com.au

YOUTH BRIDGE FUN NIGHT by Paul Brake



The Gold Coast Bridge Club hosted (and generously paid for) the 5th Annual Youth Bridge Fun Night held during the Gold Coast Congress, the largest bridge event in the world outside the USA.

24 youths (from all over Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and one from the USA) had a great time at our club. Following a feed of pizzas and snacks, they competed in several different variations of bridge, designed to be fun and encourage the players to socialise and get to know each other.

We started off with standard bridge, but with the ranking of suits reversed, with clubs being the highest ranking suit, and notrump being the lowest ranking. It takes some mental gymnastics to get your head around the fact that, for instance, after the opposition opened 1♠, you can overcall 1♦.

The second variation was when each partnership had to finish the bidding with only two bids per player (with a pass not counting as a bid). The bidding was fast, furious, and very natural.

The next variation was when players had to bid their hands after only seeing eight of their cards, with the balance of their hand only being picked up after the bidding had been completed.

This was followed with bridge being played using the "snap" principle. If one could not follow suit, then if a discard was of the same rank as a card already played on the trick, it won the trick.

In another round, the final contract had to be doubled or redoubled.

The final variation required a player to always beat his partner's card if he had a higher-ranking card in the suit led.

It was a fun-filled evening. The youths expressed their appreciation to the Gold Coast Bridge Club for organising this truly unique annual event, and to Laura Ginnan (who again was the creative volunteer director for the night). We look forward to seeing the youth players at the GCBC when they are at the Gold Coast in the future.

Paul Brake, GCBC Chair Tournament Committee & QBA Youth Coordinator

Bobby Richman Open Pairs Final

FINAL A

- 1 **Sascha Wernle - Jovi Smederevac** 176.48
- 2 Sven-Ake Bjerregard - Alon Apteker 169.79
- 3 Kismet Fung - Jeffrey Smith 169.64
- 4 Justin Mill - Gray McMullin 163.24
- 5 Matthew Brown - Andrew Spooner 162.46
- 6 Philip Markey - Ron Klinger 161.5
- 7 Giselle Mundell - Matt Smith 161.49
- 8 Liam Milne - James Coutts 161.37
- 9 Geo Tislevoll - Terje Lie 160.81
- 10 Michael Ware - Nick Jacob 158.96
- 11 Max Henbest - David Wiltshire 158.77
- 12 Simon Hinge - Jamie Thompson 152.9
- 13 Noah Apteker - Rob Stephens 152.13
- 14 Stephen Mendick - Bernard Waters 151.9
- 15 Eva Caplan - Pablo Lambardi 149.76
- 16 Maurits van der Vlugt - Marshall Lewis 148.11
- 17 Will Jenner-O'Shea - Mike Doecke 143.15
- 18 Sartaj Hans - Marty Fleisher 143.05
- 19 Paul Dalley - Kieran Dyke 141.93
- 20 Marjorie Askew - William Powell 138.69



FINAL B

- 1 **Kim Frazer - Jamie Ebery**
- 2 Sue Ingham - Michael Courtney
- 3 Jan Cormack - Kathryn Yule
- 4 Jenny Millington - Barry Jones
- 5 Martin Bloom - Nigel Rosendorff
- 6 Peter Livesey - Peter Gill
- 7 Edward Levy - Liz Sylvester
- 8 Therese Demarco - Fraser Rew



FINAL C

- 1 **Peter Chan - Bob Sebesfi**
- 2 Mark Siegrist - Andrew Janisz



FINAL D

- 1 Michael Whibley - Susan Humphries
- 2 Robert Simpson - Jo Simpson

FINAL E

- 1 **Anne Jackson - Janet Brown**
- 2 Kim Morrison - Chris Hughes



FINAL F

- 1 Charlie Lu - Martin Qin
- 2 Maggie Callander - Shirley Collins

FINAL G

- 1 Richard Fox - Andrew Woollons
- 2 Owen Camp - Anisia Shami

FINAL H

- 1 Liz Fisher - Blair Fisher
- 2 Carol Loth - Lesleigh Egan

FINAL I

- 1 Anne Morris - Patricia Lacey
- 2 Cynthia Belonogoff - Val Biltoft

Restricted Pairs

FINAL A

- 1 **Suzanne & Steven Goldberg** 171.08
- 2 Pam Whitehead - Stuart Grant 167.81
- 3 Sue Martin - Sue Falkingham 164.39
- 4 Ray Hurst - Heidi Colenbrander 159.83
- 5 Suzette McIlroy - Dave Tocker 159.12
- 6 Diana Saul - Douglas Harrah 157.41
- 7 Stephen Miller - Bill Forbes 157.12
- 8 Nick Edginton - Rhonda Graham 156.98
- 9 Barry Feyder - Robbie Feyder 156.41



FINAL B

- 1 Gary Petterson - Laurie Bell
- 2 Gary Gibbards - Debbie Gibbards

FINAL C

- 1 Sandra Coomes - Julie Hegarty
- 2 Gary Wardrop - Ross Shardlow

FINAL D

- 1 **Greta Davis - Libby Tonkin**
- 2 Marlise Jones - Kerry Watson



FINAL E

- 1 Joan Elliott - Margaret Dousset
- 2 Helen Nicholson - Kenneth Biddick

FINAL F

- 1 Christine Thomas - Bob Thomas
- 2 Lisa Yoffa - Shayne Wurf

FINAL G

- 1 Jill Cox - Ken Jones

Intermediate Pairs

FINAL A

- 1 Charles McMahon - John McMahon 187.17
- 2 Janice Coventry - Margaret Glover 167.37
- 3 Chris Depasquale - Ross Davis 164.23
- 4 Chris Larter - John Lahey 163.31
- 5 Shirley Bettman - Hannah Fuzi 161.18
- 6 David Johnson - John Watson 160.55
- 7 Carol Joseph - Richard Stuart 159.98
- 8 Gwyneira Brahma - Vicki Taylor 159.27
- 9 Mark Doust - Belinda Taranto 158.05

FINAL B

- 1 **David Christian - Gabrielle Elich**
- 2 Chris Fraser - Graham Carson



FINAL C

- 1 Jim Stewart - David Owen
- 2 Jane Henderson - Karen Wallwork

FINAL D

- 1 Ross Murtagh - Helen Chamberlin
- 2 Marilyn Paris - Chris Barnwell

TOURNAMENT RESULTS

Novice Pairs

FINAL A

- 1 Michelle Rubin - Lauren Ehrlich
- 2 Sebastian MacMillan - William Han
- 3 Wendy Casey - Barbara Moni
- 4 Tony White - Mary Poynten
- 5 Colin Speller - Jodie Gudaitis
- 6 Lesley Sutherland - Lindell Day
- 7 Margaret Cummins - DeeJay East
- 8 Kathy Duke - David Duke
- 9 Peter Allingham - Paddy Taylor
- 10 James Parker - Warwick Wilkins



FINAL B

- 1 Julie Scott - Elizabeth van Vugt
- 2 Philip Young - Mark Cassar



FINAL C

- 1 Ming Ting - David Ting
- 2 Pamela Steele - Dennis Lincoln



FINAL D

- 1 Phillip Douglas - Deborah Nilsson
- 2 Carla Ferro - Merit Morgan

Gold Coast Open Teams

OPEN TEAMS "ROUND OF FOUR"

Apteker 39 def The Stream Team (Vanessa Brown, Peter Hollands, Mike Doecke, Will Jenner-O'Shea, Simon Hinge, Laura Ginnan) 29

Ware 79 def van der Vlucht (Maurits van der Vlucht, Marshall Lewis, Chris Hughes, Kim Morrison) 43

OPEN TEAMS SEMI-FINALS

Ware 76 def Ashton (Sophie Ashton, Peter Gill, Sartaj Hans, Marty Fleisher, Andy Hung) 55

Cornell 103 def Apteker (Alon Apteker, Sven-Ake Bjerregard, Noah Apteker, Rob Stephens) 80

OPEN TEAMS FINAL

Cornell (Ashley Bach, Matthew Brown, Michael Whibley, Alex Antonios, Nabil Edgton) 162 def Ware (Michael Ware, Nick Jacob, Geo Tislevoll, Terje Lie, Max Henbest, David Wiltshire) 150

Gold Coast Teams Category Finals

SENIORS' TEAMS PLAYOFF

KROCHMALIK (Robert Krochmalik, Paul Lavings, George Kozakos, Stephen Burgess, Arjuna de Livera) 143 def LUSK (David Lusk, Gary Chua, Peter Chan, Bob Sebesfi, David Parrott, Ian Hilditch) 96

WOMEN'S TEAMS PLAYOFF

LUSK (Sue Lusk, Viv Wood, Stephanie Jacob, Rochelle Pelkman) 126 def BILTOFT (Val Biltoft, Cynthia Belonogoff, Pauline Collett, Catherine Hood) 96

INTERMEDIATE TEAMS

Aquino (John Aquino, John McMullan, Belinda Taranto, Mark Doust) 109 def Elich (Gabrielle Elich, David Christian, Adrian Riepsamen, Jeff Lassman) 87



RESTRICTED TEAMS

Gillies (Nerida Gillies, Annegrete Kolding, Heidi Colenbrander, Ray Hurst) 91 def Harrah (Douglas Harrah, Diana Saul, Anthea Gedge, Maria Campbell) 90



NOVICE TEAMS

Speller (Colin Kleinig, Jane Stephens, Colin Speller, Jodie Gudaitis) 146 def Young (Daphne Young, Sheila Parsons, Andrea Pappas, Speros Pappas) 64



Other Pairs Events

0-50 MASTERPOINT PAIRS

Jenny Burchmore - Barbara Richardson, Philip Argyris - Rob Swann, Jenny Reid - Dianne Dwyer, Philip & Lynda Young

FRIDAY NOVICE PAIRS

Philip Young - Lynda Young

BUTLER SWISS PAIRS

Rick Gryg - Jane Gryg, Brad Tattersfield - Jan Borren

WEEKEND MATCHPOINT SWISS PAIRS (0-500)

Esther Saunders - Colin Saunders

MONDAY BUTLER SWISS PAIRS (0-500)

Graham Westenra - Mary Penington

Rookie Pairs Events

Clockwise from top left: Joyanne Gissing - David Saunders, Mary Doneley - Jennie Tucker, Helen Blake - Jenny Munro, Stephen & Louise Bennett



All Gold Coast photos in this issue by Anne Russell

As the long-time convenor of the Australia-Wide Pairs events, I spend a lot of time talking to players about Matchpoint scoring. The results booklets from those events are designed to encourage people to think about how their scores are calculated, which leads to interesting emails and phone calls.

This article is the third in a series of short articles addressing some of the common questions and misconceptions that have crossed my path. Today's article will discuss vulnerability.

VULNERABILITY

People often say, "I had to bid game because I was vulnerable". Or alternatively, they might go the complete opposite direction: "I was scared to bid too high because I was vulnerable".

So which is it? Is vulnerability a good thing or a scary thing?

The truth is, at Matchpoints, vulnerability is completely irrelevant unless a competitive auction is likely.

If you bid and make game, you will beat all the pairs in a part-score, no matter whether you get 420 or 620. And if you go down in game, you will lose to the partscore pairs.

In a Teams game, the vulnerability is important, because 620 is a more attractive score than 420. If the other table is scoring 170, then 620 will be worth a swing of 450 (620 minus 170) while 420 is only worth 250. Vulnerable, at Teams you have more to gain from getting the larger game bonus.

But in club duplicate game, no one cares whether you beat the other pairs by 450 or 250. A win is a win, and a 620 game scores exactly the same number of matchpoints as a 420 game. Being vulnerable doesn't make your game bonus bigger than everyone else's.

Competitive auctions are another story...

COMPETITIVE AUCTIONS

I used to think that the best time to compete was at favourable vulnerability (they are vul, we are not). If you read Andrew Robson's regular Matchpoint column in Australian Bridge Magazine, or if you saw Peter Hollands' column in the December issue of this Newsletter, you will already know that this is not true. The best time to compete is when neither side is vulnerable, as there is a lower chance of either side scoring 200 in defence.

Here is an example from Peter Hall's 1996 book, *Competitive Bidding at Pairs*:

	N/EW		
	♠ Q 6		
	♥ K Q 7 6 3		
	♦ K 10 4		
	♣ Q J 3		
	♠ 10 9 7		♠ A K 8 5 4
	♥ J 10 5		♥ 9 4
	♦ J 5 3		♦ A 9
	♣ A 8 6 4		♣ 10 9 5 2
	♠ J 3 2		
	♥ A 8 2		
	♦ Q 8 7 6 2		
	♣ K 7		
WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	1♥	1♠	2♥
2♠	pass	pass	?

Should South compete to 3♥, at favourable vulnerability? Hall argues that South would be wrong to settle for 140 from 3♥, when others are doubling 2♠ for 200. But if East-West were not vulnerable, it would be correct for North-South to bid on.

Of course, in order to get the theoretical 200-point penalty, you'd need to double 2♠. Were you planning to do that? No, me neither. That's a small flaw in Hall's argument. But in theory at least, South's winning action on this particular deal is to double 2♠. If you're not willing to double 2♠, then bidding 3♥ is the next best option (essentially treating the hand as nil vulnerable, since you are not planning to take advantage of East-West's vulnerability anyway).

There is another important thing to consider in this situation: as a general rule, it is a bad strategy to bid your hand twice. If South does choose to bid 3♥ now, having bid only 2♥ the first time, that looks like a case of "taking the last guess". If South is willing to compete to 3♥, then why didn't he bid it on the first round (depriving West of the ability to support his partner)?

That is a valid point; in fact, if South bids an immediate 3♥ on the first round, he may push an undisciplined West to 3♠, two off. However, 3♥ would be premature, not yet knowing if EW even have a spade fit. Also, a jump to 3♥ would show four trumps (see Mike Lawrence's article on page 18) – this could cause North to make an error if he has to make a decision over 3♠. But it is interesting to observe that a "non-standard" 3♥ bid on the first round does have some upside, compared with the traditional "last guess" 3♥ bid on the second round.

FEAR OF 200

Getting back to the topic of doubling opponents for 200, take a look at this real deal from Grand Slam Bridge Centre:

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

With both sides vulnerable, the par contract is 3♣ or 3♦ by East-West. If North-South attempt to compete to 3♠ doubled, they are looking at the death-number – a 200-point penalty and a bottom board.

What happened at the table? Well, in a 33-table game, about half the tables competed to the doomed 3♠. Many of these were allowed to play in 3♠, one off, for a healthy 55% score, while others did even better when opponents "saved" in 4♦.

A double of 3♠ would have wiped the smile off their face, but not one person was doubled. Maybe they should have been, but the fact is, these bids escape undoubled time after time.

So maybe there is no such thing as a bad vulnerability for bidding! There's a saying, "Pairs is a bidder's game"... that's probably true.

Brad Coles

HOW WOULD YOU PLAY? – SOLUTIONS by Barbara Travis

HAND 1

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

Against your 4♠, West leads the ♦K. East overtakes with the ♦A, then returns the ♥2. What is your plan?

It seems like that heart switch is a singleton. Given you have three certain losers (two diamonds, one trump), you cannot afford a heart ruff. You also need East to have the ♠A, otherwise he will always get a heart ruff. The only way to avoid the heart ruff is to sever the defensive communications, which lie in the diamond suit.

So, after playing low on the heart switch, win in dummy. You then have to make use of the club suit – in the following manner. Cash the ♣A, then overtake the ♣Q with dummy's king, and finally lead the ♣10. When East plays the jack, discard your diamond loser – and if East plays low, still discard your diamond, for an overtrick!

Now you can trump East's diamond exit, then play a trump. When East proves to hold the ♠A, you make your contract.

HAND 2

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

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
2♥	dbl	pass	3♠
pass	4♠	all pass	

Having opened 2♥, West leads the ♥A, then the ♥K against your 4♠ contract.

There is little point discarding a diamond on the second heart, so you should ruff. Having seen the ♥A-K from West, it is extremely likely that East holds the ♦K. If spades don't break 3-3 (anti-percentage), it is important to sever the defensive communications between the two hands. Therefore, you should plan to trump dummy's third heart too.

Cash the ♠A and ♠Q, then cross to dummy with a club to the ace to ruff dummy's last heart. You now lead a club to dummy's king to draw a third round of trumps, discarding a diamond from hand.

If the spades break 3-3, you now have three spade tricks, two heart ruffs, four clubs and one diamond – ten tricks.

When West discards on the third round of trumps, as in the actual situation, you continue with the ♣J, East following, and you overtake with your queen to lead the ♣10. East is now facing an impossible situation. If they ruff, they only have diamonds left – so they have to lead a diamond around to dummy's ♦A-Q – for three spades, two ruffs, three clubs, two diamonds. If they discard, you simply win your ♦A next – for ten tricks again.

HAND 3

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

Against your 4♠, West leads the ♥Q, which holds the trick. West continues with the ♥J, ducked again. West continues with a third heart.

If you ruff the third heart with the ♠8, then play ♦A, ♦K, then a third diamond, planning to ruff a diamond loser in dummy with the ♠10 should diamonds break 4-2, you are relying on the club finesse.

It is better to rely on trumps being 3-2 (nearly 68%) and the clubs not breaking worse than 5-2.

Ruff the third heart with a high spade, keeping the ♠8 so you can cross to dummy's ♠10. Cash the ♠A, then lead the ♣Q! West wins the club, but now you are in control. You can win any return, then cash a second top trump. Lead the ♣A, then cross to dummy's ♠10, and you are able to discard both diamond losers on dummy's good clubs.

If West allows the ♣Q to win, you should discontinue this plan and revert the original idea, leading diamonds and ruffing the third round in dummy.



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SHOWING A FIT

We ended last month's column with the following question: can South bid 3♥ in the following position if he has only three trumps?

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♣	1♥	2♣	3♥

The answer is no!

The jump raise above can be compared to other jump raises. The one underlining requirement is that it shows four-card support. Your values may vary according to system, but the number of trumps must be consistent.

Why?

In the December issue I showed a hand where NS got to 4♠ with ♠Qxxxx opposite ♠AKx. The values were there, but it didn't make. By changing the hand slightly, giving dummy the ♠AKxx instead, game was cold. The message? The more trumps, the better.

When you make a jump raise, you must promise four trumps so that your partner can judge the hand. If he knows you have four trumps, he can estimate the worth of the combined hands better than if he does not know how many trumps you have.

♠ A J 3 ♥ 3 2 ♦ Q 8 7 6 ♣ A 6 3 2

Your partner opens 1♠. Eyeing your doubleton heart and otherwise nice points, you feel good about this hand and ultimately push to game. You find partner with this hand:

♠ K Q 10 9 2 ♥ Q 8 4 ♦ K 3 ♣ K Q 4 .

The contract looks good except for the fact that the opening lead happens to be a trump. When you lead a heart, the defenders take it and continue trumps. You lead more hearts and they lead more trumps. No heart ruff for you today. Down one when the clubs don't split.

RULE: When your hand has three trumps, your distribution will be less valuable than when you have four or more trumps.

This rule is so important that you should never make a jump raise with just three trumps. It may feel natural to make a compromise. Is it not OK to make a limit raise with three trumps if you have an extra point or two to make up the difference? No. That is compounding the error. If you do that, your partner will not realise that the correct final contract is 3NT. He will be evaluating his hand on the basis that you have jump raise points plus four trumps. He will evaluate his hand for play in his suit.

I promise that even if you are just getting around to this aspect of bridge, you will be doing yourself and your partner a big favour by having four trumps.

One more question for you to answer:

♠ A K 9 7 6 ♥ 8 7 3 ♦ A Q 10 2 ♣ 5

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
2♥	3♠	4♥	1♠ ?

No one vulnerable, you open 1♠ and LHO bids 2♥. Your partner makes an invitational raise of 3♠ and RHO goes to 4♥. What do you do?

What would you do if you somehow knew partner had three spades to the queen?

I think if partner had only three spades you might double 4♥. If you knew he had four trumps, though, you might decide to bid 4♠.



Remember these two factors:

- If partner has only three trumps, the defenders can lead them and stop you from ruffing all of your heart losers.
- If partner has only three trumps, you have a fair chance of taking two spade tricks on defence.

If North is known to have four or more spades, you can't be stopped from ruffing hearts, and you have fewer spade tricks on defence.

Previously published in Australian Bridge Magazine

OH DEAR, I DO FEEL ILL by Di Brooks

Oh Dear, I do feel ill
I've been shopping in the town,
My legs are tired and swollen
I really must sit down...

Oh Dear, I do feel sick
I don't know what's wrong with me,
I need to put my feet up
And have a cup of tea.

Oh, Dear, I don't feel well
I have to have a rest,
Maybe another cup of tea
Will help me feel the best.

Oh Dear, I do feel queer
It makes me want to rage,
I feel so very weak
I can't even turn a page.

Oh Dear, I do feel bad
Whatever can it be?
I'll take two aspirins
With my cup of tea.

Oh, Dear, is that the phone?
Cecilia, she wants me?
I'm off to play bridge
And I'll be late for tea!

MANAGING YOUR TRUMPS by Dennis Zines

You (South) have opened 1NT (15-17 HCP) and your partner has optimistically (some would say foolishly) pushed you to game by transferring to spades and then bidding hearts (game forcing). How do you justify his high opinion of your declarer play?



This is the situation with West leading the ♠K against 4♠:

S/NS ♠ 10 9 8 6 2
 ♥ A 6 4 3
 ♦ 4
 ♣ A 7 4

 ♠ A K 5
 ♥ K Q
 ♦ Q 9 5 2
 ♣ J 9 8 2

At first glance, it looks as if you have at least four losers: two clubs, one diamond and one or more spade losers (unless the ♠QJ are doubleton in which case there are no losers in spades). To have any chance, you need to assume that the spades are no worse than 3-2, so that you have no more than the four obvious losers. Step one.

Step two is to follow a plan that makes use of all the trumps.

Step three: duck the ♠K lead.

West is too smart to fall for the club continuation and switches to a low heart to your ♥Q. While you are there, you also cash the ♥K. Now it's time to lead a diamond (any one will do).

East wins cheaply and plays a second club to the ♣8, ♣10 and ♣A.

It's worth seeing the whole hand at this point to follow what happens.

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

You lead a low spade to your ♠K with East playing the ♠3 and West the ♠7. Thus, no doubleton ♠QJ this time. Regardless, you play on by ruffing a diamond low. Another spade to your ♠A sees both opponents follow, leaving just the high ♠Q outstanding. A second diamond ruff follows, leaving you in the North hand. West couldn't afford to throw a heart on the third diamond, which would set up your fourth heart (enabling you to pitch two clubs in the South hand), so throws a club. Note a ruff by West at this point would see the club loser in the North hand disappear.

You now cash the ♥A and then ruff a heart, leaving this position with South on lead:

♠ 10	♠ —
♥ —	♥ —
♦ —	♦ K J
♣ 4	♣ —
♠ Q	♠ —
♥ —	♥ —
♦ —	♦ Q
♣ K	♣ J

The diamond lead generates the tenth trick, en passant, with West starting with two potential winners but only making one.

You are pleased with the outcome, and thank partner for his confidence in you, and for the opportunity to execute this coup while having a good story for the score-up.

Dennis Zines

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THE INAPPROPRIATE PSYCHE

Hi Brad,

I wish to take exception to the article, "A bit of fun in the open playoff final" by Sartaj Hans (December issue page 15).

Firstly, your magazine is supposed to be about the promotion of bridge. I consider that articles on psyching, whether successful or not, should not be part of your magazine as they do not "promote" bridge to the average player.

Secondly, as any "normal bridge player" knows, a double followed by a bid shows at least 16 HCP, so how did Mr Gill pass his partner's 5♠ when he himself had 15 HCP? The psych was not "successful". It succeeded because West didn't continue the bidding after the 5♠ bid.

East is also at fault at not bidding 5♥ over the 4NT by West; and there was no explanation as to what the 4NT bid was; was it Blackwood, and if it was then East showed two aces and 7NT should have been correct contract.

How can I promote the ABF Newsletter if it includes such rubbish as this article?

Ian Mansell, Melbourne Bridge Club

Ian,

Firstly, I must apologise for failing to add an alert to the 4NT and 5♠ bids. This will have been confusing for many readers.

The 4NT convention being used is called Keycard Blackwood, and it treats the trump king as an ace. East's 5♠ response shows two "aces" (in this case the ace and king of trumps) and it also shows the trump queen. The convention is commonly used at tournament level because on many hands, the king and queen of trumps are just as important as an ace. I will include an article on this topic in an upcoming issue.

On the given auction, Peter Gill knew his side was missing a key card (the ♣A) as well as a possible trump trick (the ♠J), despite the known 31+ HCP. I'm sure he considered 6NT as an alternative, but he decided to settle for a sure plus score for various reasons.

Regarding your general comment, the article you describe as rubbish is a report of Australia's best players in the final of our most important and prestigious event. We include articles for all types of player in this newsletter, and that particular article will be mainly of interest to experienced tournament players.

I'm not at all concerned that the article might spark a nationwide outbreak of psyching in club games. I wouldn't expect inexperienced players to attempt to emulate Andy's psyche any more than I would expect them to emulate Barbara's award-nominated card reading in our August issue (page 6), or Matt Smith's "card play psyche" in the December issue (page 24). Developing players don't spend their time trying to get inside the heads of their opponents – the challenge of bidding and playing one's own cards accurately should keep most players occupied for several years.

For the more experienced players, who will inevitably come across a psyche at some point in their lives, I hope that the article serves as a lesson on how players should behave at the table. I once saw a player at my club (in the A-section) cause a public scene when an opponent psyched against her. An article like this might help to promote a more sportsmanlike attitude to the game, where players at all levels can accept a bad result with good grace, whether the cause is a deliberate psyche or an accidental misbid.

Editor

GAINING THE MENTAL EDGE AT BRIDGE

by Kim Frazer

We all want to become better bridge players... don't we? I'd say most of us who want better results focus on improving at a partnership level: we discuss system and defense with our partners, and go over the hands after the session.

To get to the next level – regularly winning club duplicates, getting good results at congresses or bigger events – requires more than a fancy system card. You need the right mental approach and attitude. This is where Kim Frazer can help you out. Kim is a well credentialed, Commonwealth Games gold medal winner. Her discipline was target shooting, a sport that requires the utmost in focus and mental stamina.

Kim draws parallels with shooting and bridge – a loss of focus and concentration means you miss a target or misplay or mis-defend a hand. The whole book is full of good, common-sense practical advice, and checklists of what we need to do to up our mental game.

My favourite chapter is Comfort Zones. Aspiring players need to firstly recognise where their comfort zone sits (complexity of bidding system, familiarity of playing environment and opponents, ability to cope with poor or even good results). Greater success should come with expanding your comfort zone. Kim presents this list of elements you should target:

1. Foster good habits during the card play: brush up on your knowledge of card combinations, count the hand out, watch all the card pips.
2. Know your system inside out. Review your system before each event, and practise bidding regularly with your partner. You'll be surprised what comes up while practising.
3. Increase your exposure to being outside your comfort zone. Play more congresses and national events, and switch from Restricted to Open events.
4. Learn to maintain focus. When playing or defending, think solely about the hand, not what's going on at the table next door, or what you plan for lunch.
5. Learn to relax at the table. If you're dummy, zone out of the hand and just play the cards your partner calls for.
6. Imagine yourself in situations outside your comfort zone. Get warmed up for playing at the top tables by imagining you are actually there, or visualising.
7. Change your 'self-talk'. Don't get negative when you're in a hopeless contract; think positively about how to minimise the penalty or what contract the opponents may be making.

No matter your playing level, there is plenty of good material in this book to recalibrate your mental approach to your game.

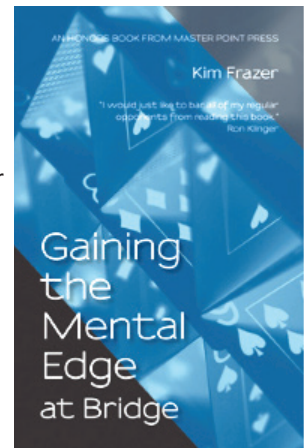
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To buy the book as paperback (\$34.95) or PDF (\$26.99):

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Nick Fahrer, The Bridge Shop



A GAME AT THE CLUB by Barbara Travis

Recently I played with a new partner to make the movement work at my club. There were lots of interesting or challenging hands during the session.

Firstly, here is my favourite 'problem' hand. Your RHO opens 3♦ and you hold:

♠ A ♥ A Q J 3 ♦ J 3 2 ♣ K 10 8 5 2

What can you bid? 4♣ seems somewhat 'gross'. Double is worse. It seems you should pass. As it happened, partner decided that she had to take some action, and doubled on this hand. I hate being a result merchant, but her action proved highly successful given that I held

♠ J 6 3 2 ♥ 10 8 7 6 5 4 ♦ K ♣ A J

and responded 4♥. As dummy came down, I did ask what she would have done if I'd bid 3♠ or, worse, 4♠. She didn't have an answer for that... and we scored 100% for the outcome (on a club lead, making 12 tricks).

Preempts continued to prove awkward. Imagine RHO opens 3♠ and you hold:

♠ 5 ♥ A J 8 7 6 2 ♦ — ♣ A K 9 7 5 4

This hand came up two hands after the first hand and I had probably rattled my partner a little, even though her previous action was so successful. (It's OK, she did ask for 'lessons'.)

Unless I was playing Non-Leaping Michaels, I would bid 4♥ on this hand, planning to rebid 5♣ over the anticipated raise to 4♠. Partner chose to bid 4♣ instead, rather than 4♥. I had an automatic raise to 5♣. However, if she had bid a practical 4♥, and LHO had passed (as she did over 4♣), we would have played there, with 4♥ making 11 tricks scoring better than 5♣, making 12 tricks. My hand:

♠ 7 6 ♥ K 9 ♦ K Q 7 6 5 ♣ Q 8 6 3

Reaching our slam was too hard (and always would be unless you play non-Leaping Michaels).

One of my bugbears is how people lead in their partner's suit. On the following hand, my opposition led and played correctly, much to my pleasure (but disappointment at the outcome):

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

South opened, West overcalled 1♠ and North ended up in 3NT.

I constantly hear people tell their partner to lead the highest card in the suit that they have bid. Those people are WRONG. The card you lead should tell your partner about the length of your holding in their suit (unless you have raised). Therefore, the East hand should lead the ♠6, low from length (three or more). If she had led the ♠A, I have two spade tricks, giving me a very comfortable nine tricks. On the other hand, when she led a low spade, and her partner wisely contributed the nine, forcing my jack, I was in trouble. When West regained the lead, she could lead the ♠Q through my king, smothering my ten, so I was going down.

How would you bid this hand?

♠ — ♥ J 7 5 2 ♦ A K Q J 8 2 ♣ A 8 2

Partner opens 1♣. You choose to respond 1♦, being strong enough to reverse to 2♥ next round. Somewhat surprisingly, partner rebids 1♥. I could have worked through Fourth Suit Forcing, but hadn't discussed such niceties with my partner. Therefore, I went with the practical rebid of 6♥, much to everyone's shock. This worked perfectly when our hands were:

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

and hearts broke 3-2 with the queen offside.

What does this auction mean to you?

OPENER	RESPONDER
1NT	2♦
2♥	4♥

To me, responder's transfer shows five hearts, but their jump to 4♥ now confirms 6+ hearts. After all, opener may have only two hearts. How do you continue after the transfer when you hold a hand such as the one below?

♠ K 10 ♥ A 10 8 7 6 ♦ A Q 5 2 ♣ 8 6

Responder has two options available. One is to rebid 3NT, showing game values but confirming only five hearts. This is not terminal to the auction, rather it is a "choice of game bid", asking opener to choose between 3NT or 4♥ depending on how many hearts they have. The alternative is to rebid a new suit at the three-level, which is natural and game forcing.

Just remember, once you have transferred you have already shown your five-card suit, so your next bid should tell opener something they do not know about your hand – i.e. points and/or extra length or other suits.

Barbara Travis

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THINKING IN DEFENCE

This month's workshop focussed on defence, and there was a lot of discussion of opening leads. One of the easiest leads to make is top of touching honours. Against a suit contract, two touching honours is enough, especially ace-king or king-queen. The suit will usually only go around once or twice before someone is trumping. It is important to establish, or take your tricks, relatively quickly. Against notrumps, I recommend leading top from a three-card sequence, and with a suit like Q-J-4-3-2 I would lead a low one (specifically the three, fourth-highest). The objective in notrumps is to establish the whole suit, and with this suit you need some help.

Getting the opening lead correct is satisfying, but it is how partner uses that information that will make a difference in the scoring. Your partner leads the ♥Q against 3NT and here is the situation:

Dummy		WEST NORTH EAST SOUTH
♠ J 6 5		pass 3NT all pass
♥ A 4		
♦ K J 9 6		
♣ Q 10 8 5		
	You	
	♠ 10 7 3	
	♥ 9 7 3 2	
	♦ A 4 3	
	♣ A 4 3	

Partner leads ♥Q



From the opening lead you can work out that declarer has the ♥K, and that partner has ♥QJ10 and that hearts is likely to be her longest suit. When declarer wins the ♥K in their hand, and starts to play the minors, you will get the lead (sooner or later). The goal on this hand is to establish the long hearts in



partner's hand. Win your aces and return hearts each time. The defence should be able to establish a few tricks, and if partner started with five hearts you can defeat 3NT by taking three heart tricks and two aces.

Try this hand. You are defending 4♠ and partner leads the ♥Q:

Dummy		WEST NORTH EAST SOUTH
♠ 10 9 8 5		pass 3♠ pass 4♠
♥ A 5		all pass
♦ K Q J 10		
♣ 6 5 2		
	You	
	♠ J 3	
	♥ 9 6 2	
	♦ A 9 8 2	
	♣ J 10 4 3	

Partner leads ♥Q



From the opening lead you can work out that declarer has the ♥K, and that partner has at least the ♥QJ, but maybe not the ♥10 this time (two touching honours against a suit contract is enough).

Declarer wins the ♥A and draws trumps. When declarer plays a diamond, you should take your ace quickly, not knowing how many diamonds declarer has, and you must choose what to return. You know that a heart lead is pointless, since declarer has the ♥K and dummy only has one more heart. You should switch to a club. Even in the middle of the hand, you should use the opening lead rules, so you should play the ♣J. If your partner has the ♣AQ, and declarer has the king, then you might be able to score three club tricks to go with your ♦A and defeat 4♠.

On the first hand, the defence principle of "Always return partner's lead" would have led to success, but the second hand proves that thinking about the lead will give you the information you need to come to the right answer.

Will Jenner-O'Shea

SUGGESTIONS FOR PLAYING ONLINE

Keeping on the light and bright side during the isolation period, there are some advantages to playing and learning online:

- You don't have to thank your partner when they put down a terrible dummy.
- You don't have to dress up.
- You can drink and eat at the same time as playing.
- You can yell at your partner when their defence is shocking.
- You can pull faces and be slow to play your cards.
- If partner is playing too slowly you can get up and have another drink.

Remember:

- Too many drinks will ruin your declarer play and defence.
- Too much food will mean you'll need a whole new wardrobe when this is over.
- Crumbs from cookies and other delicious food may ruin your keyboard.

Joan Butts

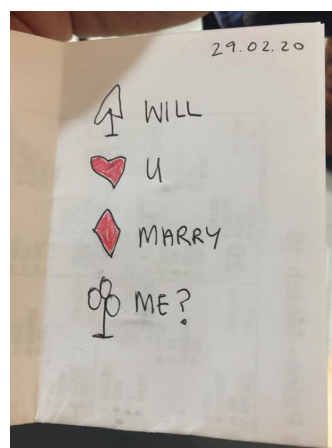
LEAP DAY BIDDING PROBLEM

Just before the annual Dine & Dance at this year's Gold Coast Congress, on February 29th, Australian Women's Team member Susan Humphries gave Liam Milne one final bidding problem to end the week.



The hand was:

♠ WILL ♥ U ♦ MARRY ♣ ME?



Liam got the answer right of course!



THINK ABOUT THOSE PIPS by Steve Hurley

In the last round of the Gold Coast Teams, on Board 22, you as North pick up the following:

♠ 7 ♥ 5 4 3 2 ♦ K 8 3 ♣ A Q 9 8 4

It's nothing out of the ordinary. Then the fun starts. With EW vul, East (on your left) opens 4♥ in first seat. South (partner) bids 4NT, showing both minors. West, on your right, doubles. Your go.

With partner showing both minors, you have a clear 5♣ bid. East also reaches for the axe and doubles this. This becomes the final contract – 5♣ doubled.

Left-hand opponent (LHO) leads the ♥A, and dummy comes down. You see:

♠ A 6
♥ K
♦ Q 9 7 5 4
♣ K J 7 3 2

♠ 7
♥ 5 4 3 2
♦ K 8 3
♣ A Q 9 8 4

You follow with the ♥K, and RHO discards a encouraging spade. After some thought, LHO switches to the ♠J. Interesting! No heart continuation aiming for a ruff. Winning the ♠A, what are your thoughts?

- 4♥ will likely make. LHO can only play hearts from hand, meaning he will drop the singleton king. This means that going one or two off in 5♣ should be ok.

- Where are all the spades? RHO must be stacked. They can probably make 4♠ too.
- Can 5♣ make? Can there be a favourable lie in diamonds where the ace is doubleton? Miracles need to happen.

Time to test suits. You lead a club to hand, and RHO discards another spade. WOW! RHO has no clubs OR hearts. You win with the ♣A and take that on board:

- LHO has eight hearts, three clubs, and shown one spade. So LHO has either another spade or a diamond.
- RHO must have eight spades and five diamonds, or nine spades and four diamonds.

Given that RHO did not bid spades, it is likely that they have only eight spades, with five diamonds. This is especially so with a longer holding in the opposition's second suit, giving more justification to doubling 4NT. Considering that, what can be done?

The answer is: plenty. And in the words of Baldrick to Blackadder, "I have a cunning plan".

Draw two more rounds of trumps, ending in dummy. Here are the remaining cards:

♠ 6
♥ —
♦ Q 9 7 5 4
♣ J 7

♠ —
♥ 5 4 3
♦ K 8 3
♣ 9 8

Think about your pips. In this case, those in the diamond suit. Lead a small diamond from dummy. If RHO opponent plays the two (as expected), you follow with the three, and LHO shows out! You have manufactured a trick with the ♦4, on the first round of the suit no less. And just as importantly, you are still in dummy. You now lead another diamond, the five. RHO must now split their ♦J10, else the eight will win. You win with the king, and now return the eight to the nine, driving out the jack (or ten) of diamonds. RHO leads a spade, which you ruff. You now play a heart, ruffing in dummy, and with ♦Q7, lead the ♦Q through RHO's ♦A6, to establish the ♦7 as a winner beating the ♦6; the 11th, and contract fulfilling, trick. Miracles, indeed, do happen.

♠ 7
♥ 5 4 3 2
♦ K 8 3
♣ A Q 9 8 4

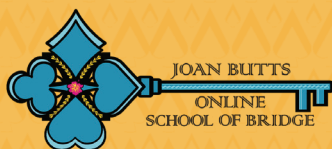
♠ K Q 10 9 8 5 3 2
♥ —
♦ A J 10 6 2
♣ —

♠ J 4
♥ A Q J 10 9 8 7 6
♦ —
♣ 10 6 5

♠ A 6
♥ K
♦ Q 9 7 5 4
♣ K J 7 3 2

A truly amazing hand. Deep Finesse advises that East makes only eight tricks in 4♥, and East (not West) can make 6♠. Note that the scores across the room ranges accordingly, from 5♣ doubled North-South to 6♠ doubled making East-West.

Steve Hurley



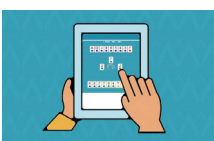
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THE GREATEST COMEBACK by Liam Milne

The 2020 Gold Coast Open Teams final between Ware (Michael Ware, Nick Jacob, Dave Wiltshire, Max Henbest, GeO Tislevoll, Terje Lie) and Cornell (Ashley Bach, Nabil Edgtton, Alex Antonios, Matthew Brown, Michael Whibley) was one of the most entertaining Australian matches in recent times. It had all the drama of the final of any major sporting event. It had twists and turns, marvellous pieces of play, and equally astounding errors. The closest analogy I can think of is a boxing match between two well-regarded fighters: each lands convincing blows but you are never sure who is going to win until the knockout punch.

Ware won the first three segments, but by small margins. They had amassed a lead of 24 by the start of the fourth quarter, and Wiltshire - Henbest bid a slam on the first board to increase the lead to 37. Cornell struck back with gains on the next four boards, but Wiltshire broke the run by making a cold-off game on a fortunate lead to extend the lead by 12. Ware picked up four more when Whibley doubled a making 4♥, getting off lightly when Jacob declined the opportunity for an overtrick.

This left Ware 30 imps in front with five to go, and after two flat boards it looked like the event was over.

But it wasn't over.

These were the decisive final three boards:

Board 22	♠ 6			
E/EW	♥ K J 9 4 3 2			
	♦ Q 10 7			
	♣ Q J 4			
	♠ A 10 7	♠ K Q J 8 4 2		
	♥ A Q 7	♥ 8		
	♦ K 4 2	♦ 9 5		
	♣ K 8 7 3	♣ A 10 6 2		
	♠ 9 5 3			
	♥ 10 6 5			
	♦ A J 8 6 3			
	♣ 9 5			

WEST Ware	NORTH Whibley	EAST Jacob	SOUTH Brown
		1♠	pass
2♣	2♥	2♠	3♥
4♥ ^{cue}	pass	6♣	pass
6♠	all pass		

Ware - Jacob were playing Acol in an occasional partnership, and Jacob was under the impression that 2♠ was non-forcing, and hence limited his strength. Opposite a 4♥ slam try, he was happy to reveal his club support and try for a slam, believing that he had extras in context. Ware, on the other hand, believed 2♠ was simply showing the sixth spade in competition, and made no statement about strength; under those assumptions he was too strong to just bid game. 6♠ had no real play and finished down two: NS +200.

WEST Edgtton	NORTH Wiltshire	EAST Bach	SOUTH Henbest
		1♠	pass
2♣	2♥	2♠	3♥
3♠	pass	4♣ ^{weak cue}	pass
4♠	all pass		

Playing two-over-one, 2♠ contained no information about strength. After Edgtton's raise to 3♠, Bach's 4♣ cuebid was 'non-serious' by agreement, cooperating with the slam try but showing minimum strength. Edgtton gave his partner a range of various hands and decided slam was doubtful; signing off in 4♠ saved the board. Well done. Bach made 11 tricks in 4♠ for NS -650 and 13 imps to Cornell. The margin was back to 17 imps with two boards to play – doable in theory but unlikely in practice.

Board 23	♠ A J		
S/All	♥ A K Q 8		
	♦ 10 7 2		
	♣ A K 10 9		
	♠ Q 10 9 7 6 4	♠ K 5 3 2	
	♥ J 9 7	♥ 3	
	♦ A K 3	♦ Q J 8 6	
	♣ 2	♣ 8 5 4 3	
	♠ 8		
	♥ 10 6 5 4 2		
	♦ 9 5 4		
	♣ Q J 7 6		

WEST Ware	NORTH Whibley	EAST Jacob	SOUTH Brown
		3♣ ^{Bergen}	pass
1♠	dbl	pass	pass
3♠	dbl	pass	4♥
all pass			



Gold Coast Teams winners: Matthew Brown, Michael Whibley, Nabil Edgtton (front), Ashley Bach (absent)

Ware's decision to bid 3♠ is right on points but these ten-card fits make a lot of tricks, especially when there is shape about. This hand is a prime example: NS and EW both make the same number of tricks in their major suit fit despite NS having 24 points and EW having only 16. Ware could have saved the day by bidding 4♠ as a two-way shot over 4♥, but he took his chances on defence and they turned out to be poor. EW could only take three diamond tricks; NS +620.

WEST Edgtton	NORTH Wiltshire	EAST Bach	SOUTH Henbest
1♠	dbl	3♣ Bergen	pass
4♠	all pass		pass

Edgtton had no doubt about jumping to 4♠ after discovering the ten-card fit when Bach made a Bergen raise. Opposite the right hand 4♠ could easily make, and meanwhile the opponents were still in the auction and might make something their way. This time both of those things were true. 4♠ posed no difficulties in the play: NS -620, and that was a double game swing for 15imps to Cornell.

Suddenly the margin was a mere two imps to Ware, with the last board to play.

Board 24	♠ 5
W/Nil	♥ 5
	♦ A K Q 6 4 3
	♣ Q 8 6 4 3
♠ K J 9 6	♠ Q 10 8 4 2
♥ A 9 8 6 2	♥ 10 7 3
♦ 10 7 2	♦ J 9
♣ 7	♣ J 10 5
	♠ A 7 3
	♥ K Q J 4
	♦ 8 5
	♣ A K 9 2

WEST Ware	NORTH Whibley	EAST Jacob	SOUTH Brown
pass	1♦	1♠	dbl
3♦	5♣	pass	5♥ cue
pass	6♣	all pass	

This looked like a flattish slam board. With North having fantastic shape and South having a club fit and sound values, it was hard to imagine either pair missing 6♣. Facing spirited competition, Brown tested the grand slam waters with a 5♥ cuebid, but Whibley had done enough: NS +920.

WEST Edgtton	NORTH Wiltshire	EAST Bach	SOUTH Henbest
pass	1♦	pass	1♥
pass	2♣	pass	2♠ fourth suit
pass	3♦	pass	4♣
pass	4♦	pass	4♥ cue
pass	4♠ cue	pass	4NT RKC
pass	5♣ 1 KC	pass	5♦ queen ask
pass	5♠ yes	pass	6♣ signoff
pass	7♣	pass	pass
dbl heart lead	all pass		

Wiltshire - Henbest had the auction to themselves with Bach seeing no reason to overcall on the East cards. Up to 4♣, the auction seemed normal: NS used fourth suit forcing then

Gold Coast Teams runners-up: Nick Jacob, Michael Ware, GeO Tislevoll, Dave Wiltshire, Max Henbest, Terje Lie (absent)



presumably agreed the trump suit. However, there was some doubt in Wiltshire's mind about whether diamonds or clubs were agreed.

After a series of cuebids, Henbest used keycard and discovered partner had one plus the queen of trumps. His 6♣ was an attempt to play there, but Wiltshire went on to grand slam! Why was that?

If clubs were trumps 5♦ was asking for the queen, but this committed the partnership to at least 6♣; hence, grand slam must also be in the picture and 5♦ should guarantee all the keycards. With running diamonds, Wiltshire's hand was good enough to have a go at 13 tricks. Henbest, on the other hand, was interested in investigating 6NT as a superior contract and believed his side had an agreement that asking for the queen did not guarantee all the keycards.

Whatever the reason, NS were not on the same page and reached a contract which was not best. It was not over yet, though. 7♣ had fair play with East on lead; in fact, it was cold on every lead but a heart.

Edgtton was awake and happy to double 7♣, Lightner, asking for an unusual lead of dummy's first bid suit. Time stood still as Bach considered his options. Eventually he led... the ♥3. That was 14 imps to Cornell, their third double digit swing in as many boards and a 'comfortable' win 162.1-150, having picked up 42 imps in the last three boards.

For many kibitzers, this was the moment shock set in. The match had been 'over' three boards ago. Indeed, many had logged off BBO and planned to congratulate the Ware team's hands at the victory dinner. Bridge is a game of such depth that it's not over until the match is really dead and buried, and everyone on the Ware team would have known that every board was crucial up until the very end. Doubtless they contributed to their own demise, but they were also incredibly unlucky that the last few boards all had swing potential that materialised.

To the Cornell team, we can only raise our glasses and congratulate them on a feat of perseverance and patience. Alex Antonios rates special mention: although he only played the first set of the final, he deserves recognition for his feat of winning the first Australian national event he ever contested, surely a rare accomplishment. He was taught bridge just three months ago by Nabil Edgtton, and the Gold Coast Congress was not only his first national win, but his first gold master-points period. If he continues to apply himself to the game, he is likely to prove to be a rare natural talent like his teammates.

Liam Milne

CAPITAL BRIDGE CLUB SUPPORTS THARWA VOLUNTEERS

Following the generous allocation of Red Masterpoints by the ABF to Clubs who ran an event to raise money for the bushfire appeal, the Capital Bridge Club in Canberra ran a two-day event.

Besides giving all table money for those nights, our club members personally donated \$600 towards the fire appeal. Club finances then matched all donations dollar-for-dollar, bringing the total to \$1,500.

Our members wanted to donate the money to local volunteer fire fighters and we chose the Southern ACT Volunteer Bushfire Brigade based in Tharwa.

These volunteers worked tirelessly to control major fires south of Canberra.

In accepting the cheque David Pennock, the Brigade Captain, said that although the government supplied big items such as trucks etc, money for smaller items, some of which were damaged while fighting the fires, was not easy to find and the donation was therefore greatly appreciated.

*Enid Rushforth
Capital Bridge Club*

BUSHFIRE APPEALS AROUND AUSTRALIA

In the February issue (page 18) we published an article from the Dendy Park Bridge Club about their fund-raising activities for the Bushfire Appeal. In the article, it was claimed that the club was "the only one in Victoria to do so."

We did notice at the time that this was an odd thing to say, and planned to investigate further, but unfortunately several of the February articles had to go to print in incomplete or unedited form (while the Editor was making what luckily turned out to be an unnecessary fire evacuation).

Of course, Dendy Park was far from the only club to host a bushfire appeal, and we've been flooded with letters from Victorian players to tell us about their clubs' fund-raising efforts, some of which date back to early January.

Clubs that have been mentioned include Frankston, Mt Eliza, Paynesville, Phillip Island, Sale/Traralgon, Mornington, Rye Beach, and others. Lindsay Young reported that she was aware of many players who attended several of these events, and who therefore contributed to multiple appeals.

I am sure many other Victorian clubs, and clubs from all over Australia, did the same, and we all thank you for your efforts.

Brad Coles, Editor

