

NEWSLETTER

AUSTRALIAN BRIDGE FEDERATION LTD

Editor: Brad Coles (editor@abf.com.au)

No. 208 April 2021

ABN 70 053 651 666

Approved for Print Post S65001/00163



World Press Photo Foundation "Photo of the Year" awards

By Peter Johansson in Borlänge, Sweden reported on www.svenskbridge.se (Suzanne Lemborn)

On Wednesday at midday, the news of the nominations for the world's leading photo competition, World Press Photo, was released. Henrik Hansson from Borlänge is nominated for this prestigious award, and the category he is nominated in is "Sports Stories".

The nomination is for a series of eight pictures, in black and white, that were taken between July and October 2020 at Bridgens Hus in Borlänge, during the club's game nights.

It all started in the last week of July when Borlänge Bridge Club was one of the first clubs in the country to receive the famous "table cross" screens. I went down to Bridgeförlaget in Krylbo and picked them up so we could test drive later that evening. Everything felt good and I took pictures and posted on my private Facebook account when I got home after the game.



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APRIL 2021 ISSUE

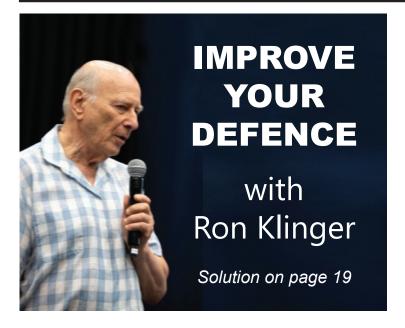
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DEADLINE FOR JUNE EDITION

ADVERTISING: 15 MAY ARTICLES: 12 MAY

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E/Nil	♠ Q 9 8 ♥ A K 10 4 ♦ K J 10 ♣ J 8 7
A 4 3♥ 3◆ Q 6 3♣ A Q 1	W E S
WEST	NORTH FA

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	
		pass	pass	
1♣	pass	1 ♦ ¹	pass	
1 ♠ ²	pass	1NT	2	
all pass				
1. 4+ hearts. 2. 5+ clubs, 4 spades, 0-2 hearts.				

West leads the ♥3: ace - two - five. Declarer plays the ♠K: five - two - three, followed by the ♠J: eight - four - queen. What should West play now?



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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Allison Stralow

After 12 months of unusual times, it is wonderful to see that ABF Licensed events are attracting players back to the



table to play in national events. We have all suffered withdrawal symptoms, but the good news is we have nearly recovered as we continue to return to face-to-face bridge. It is happening. Aren't we a lucky country!

The 2020 Gold Coast Congress was the last truly national event before COVID-19 and I know a number of players are keen to play their first interstate event after all the lockdowns. It is pleasing to see that the Tasmanian Swiss Pairs, the ANOT in Adelaide, and the Barrier Reef Congress all have a healthy list of entries. I value the many friendships that I have forged playing in national events over the years and look forward to catching up with my bridge family and renewing friendships when I play in the ANOT.

In 2018 Mark Guthrie agreed to take on the role of ABF National Technology Officer. Mark has decided to leave this role at the end of March 2021, although he will stay on the ABF Technology Committee. During the years of his engagement Mark designed and developed the ABF's new technology platform "MyABF" which when completed will have everything needed to run the game of bridge. I thank Mark for his professionalism and his vision to build a platform to support states, clubs and members into the future.

After eight years of service to the Ethics Committee, Julia Hoffman has decided to hand over the reins as she feels the committee will be well served by several new, and younger, members. Julia has been a valued member of this committee, who readily made herself available to assist with the often complex and time-consuming issues the Ethics Committee had to determine. The Committee and the ABF appreciate her wisdom, experience and service over many years.

The ANC draws people of all ages together, provides opportunities for social interaction, and creates a community spirit of belonging.

All of the information on the Perth ANC is on MyABF and you can now enter the Open, Women, Senior, Restricted, Mixed Butlers, and congress events at

www.myabf.com.au/events/congress/view/7

The Swan River Swiss Pairs will be held as a precursor to the event and entries are now open:

www.myabf.com.au/events/congress/view/6

I look forward to welcoming all players to Perth in July.

If you have any feedback on the above change or on any other issues you would like to raise with me or the ABF Management Committee please email

abf.pres@gmail.com







Something to look forward to at last! Plan now to come to the....

Territory Gold Bridge Festival in Alice Springs

8-12 September 2021

Alice Springs Convention Centre

Matchpoint Pairs: Wed Sept 8th 9.30am & 2.15 pm and Thur Sept 9th 9.30am

Swiss Teams: Thur Sept 9th 7.30pm and Fri Sept 10th 9.30am & 2.15pm

Swiss Pairs: (with PQP's) Sat and Sun Sept 11th & 12th at 9.30am & 2.15 pm

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Make it part of a great "Red Centre" holiday. Alice Springs and the surrounding area offers so much to see in this unique part of Australia. Alice Springs Visitor Information Ph: 0889525800 Website: www.discovercentralaustralia.com

ACCOMMODATION

Crowne Plaza Lasseters Hotel Casino and Convention Centre is an excellent venue, with exclusive event accommodation packages: 20% off Best Flexible Rates Rates valid for up to two adults, subject to availability at time of booking.

Booking methods to ensure your special rate:

Ref: Territory Gold Bridge Festival when booking by PH: (08) 89507765 or Email: reservations@crowneplazaalicesprings.com.au or

Visit http://www.crowneplazaalicesprings.com.au and use *Group Code TBF*

Rooms are limited.
BOOK EARLY TO ENSURE A GOOD PRICE!

Enquiries to the Tournament Organiser: Eileen Boocock Ph: (08) 89524061 Mob: 0409 677 356 tgbf@abf.com.au

2021 World Press Photo Awards

continued from page 1

The very next day, a good friend, Henrik Hansson, heard about it and thought it looked very exciting to his photographic eye. We booked the next game opportunity, planning to take pictures of it all for SVT Dalarna's series *An Unusual Everyday Life*.

He called me on the evening of the game, sounding bothered, saying he would be a little late... one of his sons was turning one year old, and he had overlooked the birthday party in his calendar. He swallowed some birthday cake, passed on his congratulations, threw himself in the car and raced into the bridge club parking lot shortly after the game's coffee break. No time to lose: he hauled in photo equipment of all kinds, and began shooting.

High and low, standing on his knees or on a step, he snuck around the club quietly during the game, unnoticed apart from the eternal clatter from his camera.

After only a few days, the pictures appeared on Henrik's platforms on social media, and also on SVT's website, and they spread quickly in the days that followed. Henrik came back a few times to take more pictures, which eventually appeared in *Bridge*, the national bridge magazine.

One day, much later, Henrik called me and asked me to come to his studio at midday. He said he had been cleaning out the office, and found some print-



ed photos that he wanted to donate to the club to decorate the walls. I was happy to accept, and went to his studio the next day.

When I arrived, Henrik said, "Sorry, I tricked you here for a big event". In addition to Henrik, the other attendees were his colleague and client Hasse Eriksson, Henrik's parents, and a few more friends who had been tricked into coming.

We were there to witness the nominations for World Press Photo, with Henrik's photo series *Faces of Bridge* among the nominees. This meant a lot to Henrik, and he had a hard time keeping his emotions to himself while his pictures of bridge players in Borlänge were laid out for viewing by the rest of the world. In the context of photography, this is the biggest thing that can happen – the equivalent of an Oscar nomination. In Henrik's words, "...just being nominated feels like an award, and means a lot to me."

Once the "jungle telegraph" had done its thing, a reporter from Swedish Radio Dalarna appeared. Both Henrik and I were interviewed and the news was released in a live broadcast.



Henrik's phone rings constantly, and he has a hard time keeping his voice in balance when everyone wants to congratulate him. As I leave the studio, Henrik is standing outside doing an interview with SVT, happy as a child on Christmas Eve.

We are glad the nomination is in the Sports Stories category. It will be something for the Swedish Bridge Association to bring with them in the next application to the Swedish Sports Confederation!

The award winners will be announced on 15 April.



MARKETING REPORT

with Peter Cox



In the last ABF Newsletter I wrote that, "The provision of a friendly social experience is absolutely essential for both clubs and congresses." This was supported by the responses to the ABF Player Survey 2020-21 in answer to the question, "Why do you play bridge," where 40 per cent ranked Social/New Friends as the single most important reason to play bridge.

The revelations in Canberra over the last two months about sexual misconduct, misogyny, bullying, corruption, lying and bad behaviour in our most important institution, the Australian Parliament, is a systemic cultural problem. It leads to substantial physical and mental health issues, a loss of belief in the democratic system and contributes to the decline in support for the two major parties.

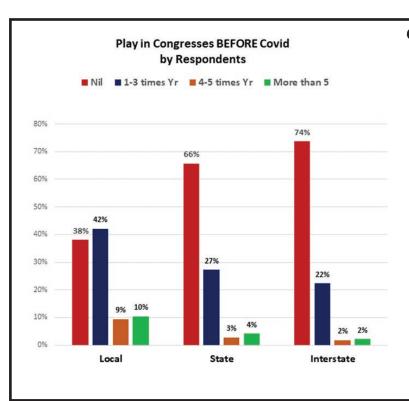
Bridge also suffers from some of these behavioural problems which can lead to a loss of belief in bridge and the ABF leading to a decline in volunteer support and membership of bridge clubs.

Bridge is a microcosm of the general population and as we age some become more grumpy, loud

and belligerent with unethical and overly competitive behaviour. This affects new players who try out our clubs. Those who remain perhaps play less often and others may leave to form breakaway groups or just stop playing in ABF affiliated clubs. All the clubs and the state bodies are responsible for creating a friendly and welcoming environment and ensuring positive behavioural standards of both players and officials. Remember if you cannot see the problem then perhaps you are the problem so try our Management Workshops that are provided by the ABF to clubs for free.

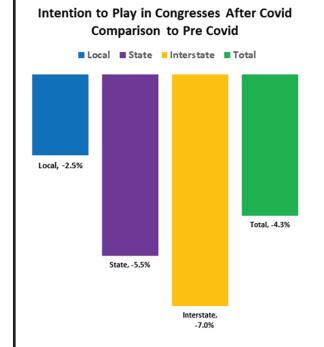
The New Bridge Normal - Congresses

The theme for this issue is the return to face-to-face congresses so I am going to share some of the results from the ABF Player Survey 2020-21 concerning playing in congresses. A fabulous 2,500 players responded which were highly representative of gender, age and location of all registered ABF players but slightly biased towards higher-ranked and competitive congress players.



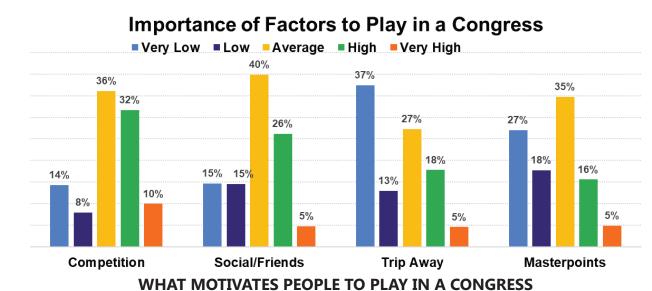
CONGRESS PLAYERS BEFORE COVID

- 38% of respondents did not play in local congresses, nor 66% in state and 74% in interstate congresses
- 42% play 1-3 times a year in local, 27% in state and 22% in interstate congresses
- 9% play 4-5 times a year in local congresses, 3% in state and 2% in interstate congresses
- 10% play more than five times a year in local congresses plus about 2-4% in interstate congresses
- Local congresses which can mostly be reached by a relatively short drive and no overnight accommodation are the most popular
- The frequency declines as the distance and costs involved increase for airfares and accommodation
- The average frequency of playing in congresses was just under three times a year
- These factors are important for event organisers choosing venues
- Local congresses are far more popular than state or interstate congresses for all frequencies of attendances



CONGRESS PLAYERS AFTER COVID

- The number of players who did NOT play in congresses before COVID will increase by 3% after COVID
- People who play 1-3 times a year in local congresses will increase by 4.9% but will decline by 3.7% for state congresses and by 7.3% for interstate congresses
- Those who play in local congresses 4-5 times a year will decline by 2.1% but increase for state and interstate by 32% and 26% respectively
- This is because the numbers playing more than five times a year will fall by 32% for local, 43% for state and 29% for interstate congresses
- In summary, those that play in many congresses a year are going to play in slightly fewer in the future
- In total, players are saying they will play less in local congresses by 2.5%, state congresses by 5.5%, interstate by 7.0%
- Overall players expect to play in 4% fewer congresses in the future
- If people actually play in congresses as they responded, this would appear to be a limited loss in congress play because of COVID
- Strong marketing to local players by clubs and state bodies with lower health risks from smaller fields than major congresses may reduce this decline
- Major state and interstate congress will need to market the health measures taken for bigger events and improve the benefits offered to players nationally



- The motivations for people to play in congresses is a important subject in bridge
- Respondents ranked Competition, Social/Friends, Trips Away and Masterpoints of similar importance
- It is very important for event organisers to provide a social environment which is clearly obvious with the outstanding success of the GCC in Broadbeach which attracts about 2,600 individual players
- The next highest congress attracts only about 1,000 players and the others even less
- Masterpoints are more important in congresses than clubs because larger numbers of Red and Gold points are available to improve players' rankings
- Medallions, trophies, prize money and PQP all have a similar but very low importance to players

Players' responses on congresses was only one section of the ABF Bridge Player Survey 2020-21. Other issues included exploring how many will return to face-to-face play in clubs after immunisation, the impact online bridge is likely to have in the future both to clubs and congresses and the vexed question of the importance of masterpoints.

The ABF would like to discuss the results and investigate ways to rebuild club and congress participation. If you would like to participate then please contact petercox@ozemail.com.au or call me on 0413 676 326.



MYABF UPDATE

with Julian Foster

The MyABF platform continues to grow. At the time of writing 882 members have signed up. Almost \$45,000 has now been paid via the Bridge Credits payment system. (By the way, for the avoidance of doubt: 1 bridge credit = 1 Australian dollar).



More congresses are being listed for entry and payment in the system. The first major national event using the system is the ANOT. I am planning to be there and will be holding a lunchtime question and answer session on the system. The ANC in Perth is also now listed, plus some other club congresses.

We have now held active discussions with almost all state bodies. So far two states (WA and TAS) have decided to move entries and payments for all their State Championship events into MyABF. I thank them for their confidence and support of the system! Remember any club across the country can now list a congress and accept online payments through MyABF. Contact me if you are interested – details below.

RECENT AND UPCOMING CHANGES

• You can now access the system from the top menu on the ABF website home page:





- We are developing a MyABF Resources page which will contain various support materials to assist you

 some "How to" guides for common activities, links to videos, ability to directly contact Support, etc.
- Assorted improvements are currently being made to the Congresses area. One is that you'll be able to see entries without having to be logged in. Most others are things for Tournament Organisers, but a highly visible change coming after that will be the main listing of congresses. This has always been the intention – a single listing is obviously untenable as more and more congresses across the whole coun-

try get added. So we will be adding the ability to view just the events you are interested in (e.g. by state, club, date range, type of event, etc).

FORUMS

Even if you are not wanting to enter a congress, MyABF also includes various discussion forums. So far usage has been low but anyone can post comments across a number of forums. Feel free to get involved!

To learn more open the support page from the main menu and view the "Forums" section about half way down.

All Forums *** Approved ** Approved *** A

NEXT MAJOR RELEASE

The next major release coming later this year will focus on "cashless bridge" – that is, extending the Bridge Credits system so that clubs are able to offer that payment method for players in club sessions as well as those playing congresses. We are currently gathering and documenting the detailed functions needed in the system to make that happen. Like all these things, when you start delving right down into the detail there's an awful lot to consider! We are engaging with a working group of interested clubs to make sure that what we build will be suitable.

Julian Foster, MyABF Project Manager (julian.foster@abf.com.au)







ACCREDITED BRIDGE TEACHERS

We'd like to congratulate our newly accredited teachers so far in 2021:

- Chris Jenkins, Jenny Skinner and Joanna Tennyson (Undercroft Bridge Club, pictured)
- Tony Abbot (Darwin Bridge Club)
- Peter Clarke (Peninsula Bridge Club, pictured)
- Patricia and John Elliott (Alexandrina Bridge Club)
- Colleen Searle (Glenelg Bridge Club)





2021 ABF Teacher Training Workshops

The ABF are continuing to offer teacher training events to help new bridge teachers prepare for their first lesson and inspire current teachers with new ideas.

These free workshops hosted by Joan Butts, are made possible by the ABF and aim to provide teachers with the necessary skills to run successful bridge lessons and help with play sessions.

Monday 19 April: Teacher Training Programme

Wednesday 5 May: CPD 4: Declarer Play

Sunday 23 May: ABF Day: Toowong Bridge Club

/ CPD 2: Defence

Monday 14 June: CPD 5: Slam Bidding
Wednesday 7 July: CPD 6: Help with Play

Monday 9 August: CPD 1: Competitive Bidding

Wednesday 8 September: CPD 2: Defence

Monday 4 October: CPD 3: Two Over One Game

Force

Wednesday 3 November: Teacher Training Programme

Monday 6 December: CPD 4: Declarer Play

IBPA BOOK OF THE YEAR AWARDS

The annual awards from the International Bridge Press Association (IBPA), sponsored by Master Point Press, are usually presented each year at the Hainan Bridge Festival. With the cancellation of all events last year, most of the 2020 awards (such as Best Declarer Play Of The Year and Best Defence Of The Year) have been postponed until later this year.

However, two of the awards were announced in advance: the Alan Truscott Memorial Award (given to Jan van den Hoek and Tom Reynolds for their roles

in online bridge during the pandemic) and the Book Of The Year Award.

The Book Of The Year was Kim Frazer's *Gaining the Mental Edge At Bridge*, winning from a field that included David Bird and Larry Cohen, Nicolas Hammond, Mike Lawrence, Krzysztof Martens and Marek Wojcicki, and Mats Nilsland.

The IBPA wrote: "Bridge players spend countless hours working on bidding conventions and card play techniques, yet give little attention to the mental side of the game. Maintaining focus and concentration, dealing with nerves, and other issues are largely ignored. In this book, Kim Frazer – an Olympian, winner of gold medals at three consecutive Commonwealth Games and an Australian international bridge player – has adapted the mental techniques that brought her success in shooting and explains in easily-understood terms how to use these at the bridge table."



YOUTH BRIDGE CHAMPIONSHIPS

The age of a youth player has changed over the years. Prior to the introduction of the World Youth Bridge Championships in the 1980s, players still contested the youth week in Canberra well into their 30s. When the WBF introduced a Youth category for the World Championships, they also set an age limit, which Australia adopted. Up until 2001 this was set at the date you qualified, and had to be below 26 at the 1st of January of that year. The USAF (USA, Canada and Mexico) and Europe used this loophole by qualifying their team a year before the event, to sneak in an extra year for their players.

In 2002, this loophole was plugged by having a strict rule that you must be below 27 at the 1st January of the year the championship takes place. This was returned to under 26 by the end of the decade and has remained the same until this year. In January 2020, six pairs qualified into the Australian Youth Squad, and it was the expectation that several youth teams were to be sent to the APBF in Perth and a Team was to be sent for the Jamie Ortiz-Pationo Trophy at the World Bridge Teams Championships in Salsomaggiore Terme, Italy.

As we all know, this never took place as COVID spread across the world, shutting down all face-to-face competitive bridge. Because of this, the WBF has increased the age for 2021 to cater for players who missed last year, to play this year. While traveling to a World Championship outside Australia is unlikely to take place, the ABF would like the junior pairs to compete in the Australian Butler Pairs to be held in Perth in July. We hope the affected pairs take up this great opportunity to play in one of Australia's premier events.

YOUTH BRIDGE NEWS

2021 offers a chance for new beginnings, and each state/ territory association has resumed state events, some states like NSW have chosen to continue using an online model via Real Bridge, while others have moved back into the clubrooms. This hasn't resulted in youth players returning to competitions as a whole, with most continuing to enjoy playing within their own youth nights, so it was great to see a youth team enter arguably the toughest form of bridge competition, the Board-a-Match. While the board in question was flat, both declarers played well to find the dummy reversal line to make 6.

S/All **♠** A Q 7 5 2 **♥** K 7 4 3 ◆ Q 3 2 **♠** 4 3 ♠ J 6 **♥** Q J 8 **9** 5 2 ◆ A K J 10 98654 ♣ Q 6 5 3 **4** 1094 ♠ K 10 9 8 ♥ A 10 6 **•** 7 ♣ KJ872

Danni Fuller, playing with partner Rebecca O'Reilly, bid to 6♠ by North. After the ◆9 lead, won by the king, a spade was returned and Danni, winning in hand, had to consider how 12 tricks could be made on this hand. Having already lost one trick, a heart couldn't be conceded to set up this suit, so the only hope lies with the clubs. Based on the more normal 4-3 distribution of the remaining clubs, Danni cashed ♣A, crossed to the ♥A and trumped a club. Trumping a diamond, ♣K was cashed, pitching a heart, and another club was trumped. A diamond was trumped with dummy's last trump and the fifth club was used to pitch the remaining heart in Danni's hand, making 6♠.

If you, or another youth player you know plays a great hand, please make sure you send us the details at

youth@abf.com.au

RETURN TO LIVE BRIDGE

Kim Frazer

Live national competitions return

Hooray! Hooray! April brings the return of live bridge on the national stage. While event numbers continue to be limited, we are very excited that we can finally get back to the table and catch up with our bridge friends from around the nation in person.

First up will be the Tasmanian Gold Swiss Pairs from the 9th to 11th April at the Tasmanian Racing Club's Elwick Function Centre in Glenorchy. The very spacious venue, which hosted the ANC a few years ago, also boasts loads of parking space. Located a short drive from the Hobart CBD, it is an ideal location, and players will have the added benefit of being able to take advantage of all the wonderful restaurants Hobart has to offer.

Then at the end of April the Autumn Nationals kicks off at the Adelaide Showgrounds from April 29th to May 3rd. Adelaide is a beautiful place to visit in April, with clear skies and pleasant weather (please don't rain and make a fool of me!) This year's event features all the traditional Pairs and Teams events and adds a new event – the Mixed Pairs – to the format. The Autumn Nationals is also one of the first national events to take entries via the MyABF website and the ABF appreciates both player and organiser's patience with adapting to the new entry system.

Running at the same time is the Barrier Reef Congress which is already fully booked – obviously the great beaches and weather makes this location so attractive.

Players can then head West in May for the ever popular Western Senior Pairs hosted by the Melville Bridge Club. Be sure to book early so you don't miss out on a place.

Winter will bring the return of the Victor Champion Cup in Melbourne from June 10-14th. Details on this most prestigious event will be available on the ABF website soon.

ZONE 7 PLAYOFF AUSTRALIA VS NEW ZEALAND: MAY 22-23

Around this time of year, our international teams are normally preparing to head off for the first of the international competitions – the Asia Pacific Bridge Federation Championships. However the current restrictions on international travel caused the cancellation of many events – the APBF amongst them. This was disappointing for our teams who achieved national selection as they didn't have the opportunity to represent their country in 2020 or 2021.

Australia and New Zealand are the main players in what is known as Zone 7, and the two countries' management groups who have been meeting regularly via zoom over the past year both agreed it was desirable to give our respective national teams a chance to playoff against each other in an online event.

Laurie Kelso drafted the rules for the online competition and with the agreement of both countries, the Zone 7 Playoff will be held online on the weekend of May 22-23, 2021. The event will be played online using the RealBridge platform. Kibitzing will be possible since matches will be broadcast using a time-delay and each division will use a unique set of boards. The ABF website will provide a link to the platform for kibitzers.

Running this event is not a light undertaking, with Australian representatives being located in seven sites around the country, New Zealanders being located in at least two sites and supervisors required in each location to ensure the integrity of the competition. Nevertheless, the teams are delighted to have this chance for a bit of cross-Tasman rivalry.

The playoff format will also be watched keenly by overseas bridge organisations who may need to carry out their own playoffs in a similar format.

The teams are:

Open Team : Dave Wiltshire (NPC) Peter Gill - Sartaj Hans, Michael Courtney - Paul Wyer.

Women's Team: Mike Doecke (NPC), Jessica Brake - Susan Humphries, Marianne Bookallil - Jodi Tutty, and Giselle Mundell - Rena Kaplan

Seniors' Team: Peter Buchen (NPC), Robert Krochmalik - Paul Lavings, Stephen Burgess - Gabi Lorentz, and George Kozakos - George Smolanko

Mixed Team: Julian Foster (NPC), Trevor Fuller - Leone Fuller, Stephen Fischer - Pele Rankin, and Hugh Grosvenor - Tania Lloyd

Youth Team: Phil Markey (NPC), Andrew Spooner -Renee Cooper, Jamie Thompson - David Gue, and Bertie Morgan - George Bartley.



A GAME AT THE (virtual) CLUB

with Barbara Travis

Having responded to partner's 1♠ opening with 1NT, you are quickly in 3NT with:

- ♠ A Q 10 7 3
- **♥** K 3 2
- ◆ A K 8
- ♣ Q 10
- **4** 5
- **V** 10 6
- ◆ J 10 6 5 2
- ♣ A 8 5 3 2

West leads the ♥8 to East's queen, and a heart is returned to the ace. West leads a third heart which you win with dummy's king as East discards the ◆9. When you ask about the opponents' discarding, you are informed that this shows that East likes spades.

You cash the ◆A and ◆K, dropping West's ◆Q. You now have eight tricks, so have to work on the ninth trick. In these situations, it is wise to cash your long suit's winners, simply to force more discards from the opponents. Let's say you cash your diamonds, discarding two spades from dummy. East discards one club and two spades.

You are now at the critical moment of the hand. One thing to realise is that if West holds the *K you will go down, because East will have an exit card. Therefore, lead a spade to dummy's *10, leaving East in an endplay, to lead a spade into dummy's *AQ or a club around to dummy's *Q.

This is the end position that you have created:

- **♠** A Q 10
- _
- O 10
- ♣ Q 10



- **∧** K J 9
- **∨ →** —
- ♣ K 6
- **♠** 5
- **V** —
- ♣ A 8 5 3

Here's another problem:

1. Weakish, bearing in mind the 1NT overcall.

You lead the ♥4, fourth-highest, and see this:

Dummy

- ♠ K Q 10
- **∀** A J 8 7
- **♦** 10 6 2
- **♣** K Q 5

You

- **♠** A 9 2
- ♥Q9643
- ◆ A J 7
- **4** 6 3



Declarer wins the ♥A in dummy, discarding a spade. He leads the ♣K from dummy and partner wins the ace, switching to the ◆5 - king - ace. You continue with another heart (correct), declarer trumping. Two more rounds of trumps are led, finishing in dummy. Partner follows to both rounds. Next the ♠K is led from dummy, and you win the ♠A. What is your next lead?

This hand is about counting. South has shown up with only five clubs. If he had started with four spades, he would probably have made some sort of takeout double, so he should have no more than three spades. You already know he started with a heart void, so he has five diamonds and, despite partner's ◆5 lead, you should avoid that suit like the plague! You have taken three tricks, and just need to wait for your ◆J to take the setting trick. In fact, if you continue another heart, you will remove declarer's last trump and he will go down two tricks.

Keep counting. Keep working out the shape of the hand (or the points on the hand).

Some hands are very simple in one bidding system, but challenging for others. Here's one such hand, which proved ideal for 2-over-1 game forcing:

- **♠** K Q 3
- **V** 10 6 5
- **8**
- ♣ A K J 10 8 7
- ♠ A J 9 8 5 2
- **Y** A K 7
- ♦ Q 5 3
- **%** 6

SOUTH	NORTH
1	2 ♣ ¹
2 ♠ ²	3 ♠ ³
4♥ ⁴	4NT 5
5 6	6♠

- 1. Natural, game forcing.
- 2. Guarantees six spades (over 2*).
- 3. Setting spades, at least some slam interest.
- 4. 1st or 2nd round cue bid in hearts, denying cue bids for diamonds or clubs. (Only cue bid an honour in partner's first suit – clubs.)
- 5. Roman Key Card Blackwood.
- 6. Two key cards.

West led the ◆A and another diamond, ruffed in dummy. Declarer cashed the ♠K to check the trump break (not 4-0), then crossed to her ♥A to ruff her last diamond with the ♠Q. Now she could return to hand with her ♥K to draw trumps and claim, discarding her heart loser on the second top club.

It seemed this slam was challenging to bid for Acol and Standard bidders.

On my final hand, sitting South, you hold:

♠ J 7	V 10 9 6	◆ A 10 8 3	♣ A 8 5 2
WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
pass	1	pass	1NT
pass	3 ♣ ¹	pass	?

1. Game forcing.

What would you bid now?

Since 3. is game forcing, you now have plenty of space to apply the principles of fast or slow arrival. Bidding 5. is fast arrival, showing the weakest sort of hand you can have. Therefore, this hand is a 4. bid, with two aces and even the AJ – all useful cards. By bidding 4. you are setting the trump suit and leaving partner space either to cue bid or use Roman Key Card Blackwood.

Partner held:

and a 5% rebid left him 'nowhere to go'. With moderate breaks in the black suits, even though the &K was offside, 6% was an excellent contract.

My 'rule of thumb' in such situations is that if I have two key cards (or useful cards in partner's suits) then I cooperate, by using slow arrival. This rule is also applied in 2-over-1 game-forcing auctions (such as the one above). It has proven beneficial, because the rapid jump to game indicates zero or one key cards, which helps partner judge their hand.

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A BALANCING ACT

Joan Butts

A guide to how and when to reopen the bidding in fourth seat



"Some players are so elated when their opponents have stopped bidding in a partscore, (instead of getting to game or slam), that they always pass; they are afraid that if they reopen the bidding, the opponents will change their minds and bid game. But you should compete readily in these auctions..." — Bill Root, US Teacher.

For example, the bidding goes:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	1♥	pass	pass
?			
		or	
WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	1♥	pass	2♥
pass	pass	?	

How often should you compete here? After all, your side might have as much strength as the opponents and maybe you have a trump fit. There are advantages and disadvantages to competing. On the positive side you could make a partscore or even game. You'll never find out if you're not in the auction.

If the opponents have an eight-card trump fit, it is very likely that your side also has an eight-card or longer fit in some other suit. If the opponents have a nine-card or longer fit, your side must have at least one eight-card fit in another suit. Why let the opponents play the hand? By competing for the contract, you might also push the opponents beyond their comfort level if they come back into the auction.

But, there are disadvantages to competing too. You might be doubled for penalty; you might push the opponents into an excellent contract they would never reach on their own; you might give away information about your distribution or the location of your side's high cards. In general though, there's more to be said for bidding than passing.

Let's look at your position at the table, and how this affects the meaning of your bids.

The direct position

If an opponent opens and you're next:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
		1♥	?

you're in the direct seat. Now you need sound values to make a competitive bid.

If you choose to bid here, you're entering a "live" auction. You don't yet know anything about your left-hand opponent's hand, or partner's. If you interfere, your left hand opponent is well placed to deal with you. If you bid too much you might be doubled for a large penalty. That's a good reason for having sound values.

The balancing position

Things are a little different if it's the player on our left who opens the bidding and it goes:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♥	pass	pass	?

You still have the same options as in the direct position, that is to overcall, double or pass, but you are now in what's called the balancing seat. This means that if you pass, the auction will be over. You also know something about all three of the other hands:

- (1) Your left-hand opponent has enough to open at the one-level, but not enough to open with a strong two-bid
- (2) Partner doesn't have the right type of hand to compete with an overcall or a double. They could be weak or strong without the correct shape to bid
- (3) The player on your right does not have enough to respond to the opening bid, that is fewer than 6 points.

The origin of the term "balancing" is that your side might have the balance of power. When the opponents stop in a low-level partscore, there's an inference that they have only half the points in the deck. If they had 26 they would have been bidding game.

The theory in balancing situations is that you may, and should, bid a suit or make a takeout double with fewer values than usual (say 8+ points). The reason is that partner is known to have values, and for some reason, they have passed. Sometimes it's called a "trap pass" because they are waiting to penalise the opponent because partner holds values in their suit, and they want you to balance with a double (which they will pass).

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
		1♥	pass
2♥	pass	pass	?

Your partner (North) might have a hand like this:

♠ K 2 ♥ A Q 10 9 4 ◆ 10 5 2 ♣ A 6 2

Your partner certainly can't say anything over 2♥. A double would be for takeout, and the shape is totally wrong

for that. They are making a "trap" pass, planning to pass your takeout double for penalties.

If the opponents are known to have an eight-card fit, you should bid with shortage in their suit, and 8+ points. However, it is not so important to balance when the opponents do not have a known fit, and when you have too many cards in the opponent's suit. Being active and balancing is more effective at Matchpoints (Pairs) than IMPs (Teams).

Balance with what?

Overcall, if you hold the same requirements as usual, ie. a good 5+ card suit and 8+ points.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♥	pass	pass	?
♠ K J 10 6	2 🔻 4 2	◆ A 10 9	* 8 6 3

You should bid 1♠.

Balance with a JUMP bid if you hold 13+ points and a good six-card suit. NB: this is NOT a weak jump overcall.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOU	TH
1♥	pass	pass	?	
♠ A Q J 1	LO 6 3 Y	10 4	A 7 3	♣ K 6

You should bid 2♠.

Balance with a double if you hold 8+ points, and, very importantly, shortage in the suit opened.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♥	pass	pass	?
∧ K J 10 2	V 4 2	◆ A 10 9 4	* 8 6 3

You should double.

Balance with 1NT if you hold 11-14 points, and a stopper in the opponent's suit.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♥	pass	pass	?
∧ K 10 9	∀ A J 10	♦ Q J 5	♣ J 10 9 8

You should bid 1NT.

Balance with 2NT if you hold 19-20 points and a stopper in their suit.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♥	pass	pass	?
∧ K Q 6	♥ A Q 10	◆ A J 4	♣ K 10 9 3

You should bid 2NT.

Balance with a cue of opener's suit if you hold two five card suits (Michaels)

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♥	pass	pass	?
∧ K J 10 9 4	4 🗸 4	◆ A J 10 6	2

You should bid 2♥, showing spades and a minor.

WHEN YOU SHOULD STRETCH TO BALANCE

- When the opponents have found a fit, and have stopped in a partscore.
- When you don't have wasted values in the opponents' suit.
- When you are prepared to handle the subsequent auction.

WHEN YOU SHOULD BE CAUTIOUS OF BALANCING

• When the opponents have NOT found a fit, eg.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♥	pass	1 ♠	pass
1NT	pass	pass	?

- When you have wasted values in the opponent's suit.
- When your side is vulnerable.

Summary of adjustments for bidding in the balancing position

 Overcalls and doubles may be made on less than normal values (about a king less):

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♥	pass	pass	1 ♠

This would show about 8+ points.

• 1NT in balancing seat is usually 11-14:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♥	pass	pass	1NT

Alternatively, some play it as 11-16.

• To jump in your suit in balancing is not weak, it's an intermediate to strong hand:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1V	pass	pass	2♠

This shows 13+ points. It shows partner that you have a good hand that wants to play in spades.

• 2NT in the balancing seat is also strong, not the unusual variety:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♥	pass	pass	2NT

This shows 19-20.

• Michaels applies in balancing seat, same as in the direct seat:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♥	pass	pass	2♥

This shows spades and a minor.

- Don't balance without the correct shape.
- When your partner has balanced, you should bid with more caution, assuming partner may be weaker than usual. The "king less" that partner has balanced on, should be the "king more" that you have "up your sleeve" so to speak.

HOW WOULD YOU PLAY?

with Barbara Travis



Solutions on page 21

QUESTION 1

- **♠** J 7 2
- **V** A 10 9 2
- ◆ Q 5 2
- ♣ A 5 3
- ♠ KQ109853
- ♥ Q 6 4
- **♦** K 4
- **.** O

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			1
pass	1NT forcing	pass	2♠
pass	4♠	all pass	

West leads the ♣J. How would you play?

QUESTION 2

- **♠** A K 7
- **V** 8 7 5
- ◆ Q 6 4 3 2
- **♣** J 8
- **♠** 6 5 4 3
- ♥ A Q J 9 6 3
- **1**0
- ♣ A 5

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUT
		pass	1♥
pass	2•	pass	2♥
pass	3♥	pass	4♥
all pass			

West leads the ♠2 which you win in dummy with the ace. You lead a heart to your queen, which wins.

How will you play?

QUESTION 3

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

WEST NORTH EAST SOUTH
3♠
pass 4♠ all pass

South opened 3♠ and was raised to game, keeping East out of the auction.

West led the \$J, threatening a club loser, together with a diamond loser and two heart losers. How would you play?



PARTNER OVERCALLS 2*

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

	•		_	
		NORTH 2♣	EAST pass	SOUTH ?
1.	. ♠82	♥ J 10 6 2	◆ Q 9 8	7 🗚 Q 10 7
2.	. ♠83	♥ J 10 6 5	◆ A K Q	♣ Q 9 8 7
3.	1 09	2 Y A K C	2 10 3 🔸	83 * 1092
4.	♠ A 7	♥ J 9 8 4 2	972	2 + Q73
5.	♠ A 6	♥ K Q J 7 (63 • 3	2 ♣ K 7 6
6.	. A A J 8	37 ♥ K 4	◆ J 9 8 2	. ♣ J 10 4
7.	. ♠ A Q	32 Y Q1	03 ♦ J:	10 8 7 👫 K 10
8.	1 08	73 Y A9	53 • 4	4 10 9 5 2
9.	. •832	2 ♥76 ◆	K 10 6	♣ K Q 9 8 2
10	0. 春 7	7 3 ♦QJ8	8732	Q 10 9 7 6

SOLUTIONS

1. Pass. I would pass because my partner would expect more for a raise to 34 and may bid too much. However it makes good sense to agree that your raise here is weakish and shows about 3-7 HCP and with 8+ HCP and a fit you cuebid their suit.

When the responder to 1 passes it's likely the opener has quite a good hand so you want to be able to take some space away from opponents. Not all these pushes and nudges show a profit but you will be quite a bit ahead in the long run.

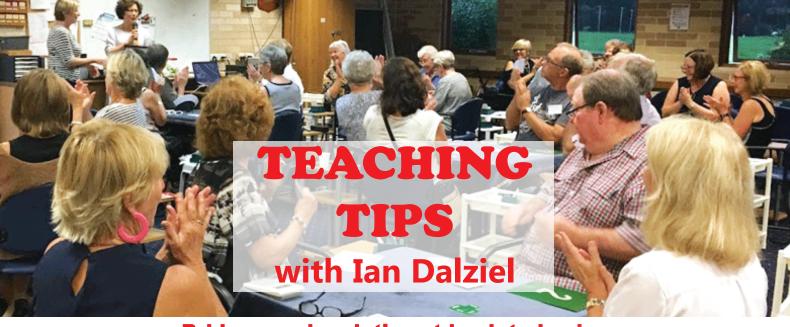
Your choice of calls also relates back to what you need to overcall 2. Some show a good hand and some like to get in frequently with hands of 11-12 HCP and a five-card suit. There are risks involved in lighter overcalls but the gains make them worthwhile.

- 2. 2. You are much too good to simply bid 3. plus you could have a 4-4 heart fit. The cue of the opponent's suit here should be about 10+ HCP and when overcaller rebids you may pass if you wish.
- 3. 2. Some play change of suit to an overcall is forcing in all situations. On the other hand, nearly all play a new suit at the same level as the overcall as forcing for one round.

If the $2\clubsuit$ overcaller makes a minimum sounding rebid like $3\clubsuit$ or $3\blacktriangledown$ you should now pass, and if the overcaller bids 2NT return to $3\clubsuit$. This would be invitational as you didn't raise to $3\clubsuit$ immediately.

- 4. 3. As both your hearts and your hand are poor, a simple raise to 3. is in order. You are showing 6-9 HCP.
- 5. 2♥. As 2♥ is a one round force there is no need to bid more for the moment. Most likely you will end up in 4♥ but perhaps 3NT or 5♣ is better, or maybe you can make 6♥ or 6♣. The more space you leave, then the more chance to find the best contract.
- 6. 2NT. Despite only 10 HCP, your hand has hidden strengths. The ♠87 and ◆98 could well play a starring role in the play plus ♣J104 could prove invaluable. Your 2NT is only invitational, and if the 2♣ overcaller rebids 3♣ showing 6+ and a minimum you will be happy to pass.
- 7. 3NT. You have a full opening bid, and AQ means a spade lead would give you two tricks in spades. A heart or a diamond lead may not be any better for your opponents. As you are a favourite to make 3NT you should bid it without further ado.
- 8. 4♣. Preemptive in nature with 4+ support. The agreement I have with my partners is that they can now sacrifice in 5♣ if they wish. Nevertheless your singleton diamond could make your hand a goldmine. You will have good play for 11 tricks in clubs if the 2♣ overcaller has as little as
 - **♦**6 ♥84 ◆A875 **♣**AK8743.
- 9. 3♣. Despite five-card club support you don't want to suggest a sacrifice in 5♣ with such a bland and balanced hand. It looks like opponents will have some play for 4♠ or 4♥, maybe your raise to 3♣ will cloud the issue for them and they will stop in a partscore.
- 10. 5. Your weak hand with a big club fit with partner indicates that opponents have a game contract somewhere. By jumping all the way to 5. % you give them the last guess do they make 5. %, 5. % or 5. %, do they make a slam, or are they better off not going to the five-level and if so, should they be doubling you.

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Bridge scoring: let's get back to basics

Newcomers to duplicate bridge find the scoring difficult, even off-putting. Many who have played the game for years still make mistakes in basic scoring, struggle with slams and are lost when it comes to doubles. It can be a nightmare for the club scorer afterwards.

However, help is at hand as, on the back of the cards in the bidding box, you will find every possible score, as long as you choose the right one. If you have a Smartphone you can get an app which will work out any score easily. Indeed, if your club has Bridgemates, scoring errors are a thing of the past – all you need do is enter declarer / contract / tricks and the score is worked out for you.

So technology has solved the problem. Or has it? Just as pocket calculators did away with the need for mental or manual arithmetic, are we creating a generation of bridge players who can't score manually?

Does this matter? It certainly does. How can you bid correctly if you don't know the score you are trying to achieve? How can you sacrifice if you can't compare mentally opponents' game score with what you might lose in a penalty double? Have you any idea what a doubled contract making will score and

do you understand doubling into game? I suspect most bridge teachers never get round to teaching doubled scoring, and even if they do, it is soon forgotten unless it's regularly practised at the table.

Many years ago, I designed a table number / scorer which shows you how to work out any bridge score

clearly and logically in easy steps. I use the mnemonic TIBO for doubled contracts made (Tricks, Insult, Bonus, Overtricks). These cards have been used successfully at my bridge classes and clubs. We still have ready reckoners for a final check of a difficult score or if time is short at the club, but everyone is encouraged to try and work out their scores manually.

My table numbers go from 1 to 20 and all are different colours (Table 1 front and back is shown). On the front is the table number, NSEW and basic scoring. On the back is double, redouble and slam scores. Anyone wishing a digital copy (at no charge) of the full set (PDF only) or just a scorer should email

ildalziel@talktalk.net

Then, you can print your own cards and laminate them if desired.

Bridge must be the only game or sport where so many of the players don't have a good grasp of the scoring. Can you imagine a snooker or tennis player not knowing the scoring perfectly? Their whole game depends upon it. Any football supporter will tell you exactly how many wins, draws, points or goal difference their team needs to qualify, get

promoted or avoid relegation. Yet a complete knowledge of the scoring is just as vital in bridge as in other games – perhaps even more so. No one can ever play bridge perfectly, but everyone is capable of working out any bridge score if they would just take the time to learn it.

Let's get back to basics.

IMPROVE YOUR DEFENCE

with Ron Klinger

Solution to problem on page 2

PARTNER'S INDICATOR

♠ J 6 5

***** 8 5

♣ K 9 2

♥ O J 8 6 2

14

all pass

WEST NORTH EAST

pass

pass

pass

pass

pass

1♦*

1NT

1♦ shows 4+ hearts.1♠ denies three hearts.

E/Nil

- **♠** Q 9 8
- ♥ A K 10 4
 ◆ K J 10
- **♣** J 8 7
- **♠** A 4 3 2
- **¥** 3
- ◆ Q 6 3
- ♣ A Q 10 6 5
 - **∧** K 10 7
 - **9** 7 5
 - ◆ A 9 7 4 2
 - **4** 4 3

West leads the ♥3: ace - two - five. Declarer plays the ♦K: five - two - three, followed by the ◆J: eight - four - queen. What should West play now?

East has given a suit-preference signal at trick 1 with the ♥2. Although you might play low-encourage normally, this is clearly a suit-preference situation. East knows that West's ♥3 is a singleton. West's 1♠ denied three hearts and anyway, if West had three hearts, West would have supported hearts at some point. There is mild confirmation of the club request with the trump signal of ◆5, then ◆8, lowest card first = preference for lowest suit.

West should play either ♣A and a club to East or a low club to East. East can then return a heart for West to ruff. West exits with the ♣Q (or ♣A then ♣Q). South ruffs and now has to find the ♠J. Given the auction there is a good chance that declarer will play West for the ♠J.

What you must not do, of course, is cash the A. That simply gives declarer the contract.

Also when East wins with the ♣K, it is vital to give West the heart ruff. If you simply continue clubs, South ruffs the third round, draws the missing trump and runs the ♥9 to East, who has to open up spades or return a heart, on which South can pitch a spade loser.



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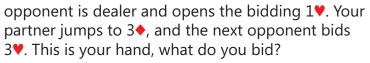
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HIGH-LEVEL JUDGEMENT

This month's Workshop at Sydney Bridge Centre was all about Competitive Bidding Decisions.

This hand from the lesson has several instructive points for both sides, and on this hand neither team is vulnerable. Your



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

The first comment is that partner's 3◆ preempt might be a six- or seven-card suit as an overcaller, since she couldn't jump a weak jump overcall to the two-level. However, you have at least 10 trumps, a weak hand, and a singleton. You have very little defence, so you should bid straight to 5◆. Sometimes players bid 4◆, thinking that they will get another chance to bid 5◆, but this allows the opponents more chances to bid. When preempting, or raising a preempt, bid has high as you feel comfortable, and just bid once.

You bid 5◆. Now let's put ourselves back in the opener's shoes!

You open 1♥, and your opponent preempts 3♦, your partner raises to 3♥ and the next opponent bids 5♦. What now?

♠ A Q 5 **♥** K Q 9 8 5 **♦** J **♣** A K 6 5

Although your partner bid to 3♥, they had to bid at that level to bid over the pre-empt. Partner is only competing, and is not necessarily inviting game. Partner has roughly 8-11 points, maybe a little more or less, and could have three or four trumps. Now that the opponents have bid to 5♦ you appear to have three options: Bid 5♥, Double, or Pass.

Although you have a very strong hand, you potentially have one or two losers in spades and clubs,

and the two red aces. It is not clear that you will make 5♥. People occasionally make a mistake in thinking that going one or two off could be a good sacrifice. A good tip is that the team with the most HCP (usually the opening team) should not sacrifice. The stronger team should aim to get a positive score, either by defeating the opponents or making what they bid.

It's not obvious that you have enough tricks to defeat 5♠, especially when you don't have any possible diamond winners. Everyone has had their aces trumped before!

You can't be sure of making 5♥ or of defeating 5♠, which leaves Pass. Many players chose to pass, however, a great tip in a high-level competitive auction is: if you think that you can make your game (4♥) and the opponents bid over you, don't pass. Either bid, or double. Your game would be worth a large score, at least 420, and defeating your opponents won't be a very good score. Since bidding 5♥ might be too high, the best choice on this hand is to double your opponents and try to defeat them.

On the actual hand, 5♥ probably goes down by one, and 5♦ goes down by two tricks. The best outcome for you would be to make 4♥, but once the opponents outbid you, the best option was to double and defend.

↑ A K 6 5

∧ K 10 9 6 3

♥ 10 7 6 ♦ A 6 5 4

♣ 2

♠ 7

4 4 3

◆ K Q 10 9 7 2

♣ J 10 8 4

♠ J 8 4 2

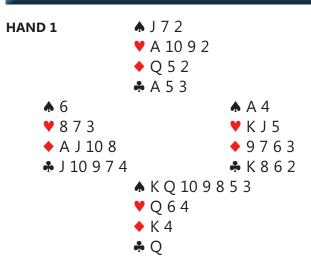
∨ A J 2 **♦** 8 3

♣ Q 9 7 3

HOW WOULD YOU PLAY?

with Barbara Travis

Solutions to problems on page 16



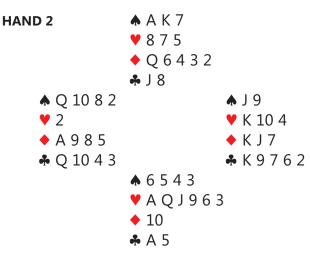
Against South's 4A, West leads the AJ.

One option is to win the AA, draw trumps and then to finesse twice in hearts. This will work 75% of the time, i.e. when one of the heart honours is with West. Is there a better option?

It is better to give a little more time to your planning at trick 1. Perhaps you may be able to organise an elimination, leading to a 100% line, and not relying on the double finesse in hearts.

Win the AA and ruff a club. Now play a spade to dummy's A7. East wins the ace, and it doesn't matter what he exits with – let's say a spade (least helpful!). Declarer wins in dummy with the AJ, then ruffs dummy's last club.

Now you lead the ◆K from hand, West winning the ace. The ◆J is won with dummy's queen and dummy's last diamond is trumped. You have now set the scene for an elimination, with neither hand having diamonds or clubs, and both hands having a trump remaining. Just lead the ♥Q and run it to East's king. East will be endplayed, forced to concede the contract – either with a heart return to dummy's ♥A-10 or giving a ruff-and-discard.



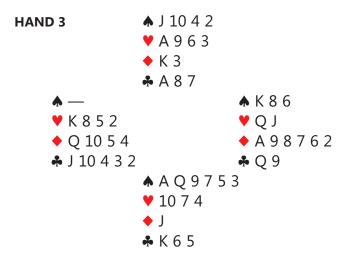
Against your 4♥, West leads the ♠2 which you win in dummy with the ace. You lead a heart to your queen, which wins. How will you continue?

The danger is that you may lose one spade, one diamond, one club and be over-trumped when ruffing the fourth spade in dummy. Is there a solution?

The solution requires a little lateral thinking. You should transfer the ruff to clubs!

At trick 3, cash the **A**K, then exit with a spade. Win the probable club return with the ace and lead your fourth spade, discarding dummy's club loser. Now you can trump your club, then repeat the trump finesse.

This line sees you lose two spades and one diamond only.



This hand comes from the South Australian State Teams and was delicately played by both declarers, Attilio De Luca and Nic Croft, for a flat board.

Against 4♠, West led the ♣J, threatening a club loser, together with a diamond loser and two heart losers. The ♣A won the first trick, then the ♠J was led and finessed. Three rounds of trumps were drawn, and now it was time to hope the ◆A was onside. The ◆J was led - queen - king - ace. The ♣Q was returned to declarer's king.

Declarer's only option was to rely on an endplay in hearts. If someone held either Q-J, K-Q or K-J doubleton, they would be endplayed, to give a ruff and discard. A heart was led to dummy's ace, the diamond loser was ruffed (to remove any exit card), then a small heart was led from hand. East had to win with the ♥Q, but only held diamonds. The diamond return provided the hoped-for ruff and discard − declarer being able to discard either the heart loser or club loser from hand, whilst ruffing in dummy.

UNUSUAL TIMES

Ian McKinnon

COVID-19 has certainly impacted our bridge games at the local clubs. If it is possible to run an event at all there are typically restrictions on the

number of tables, social distancing, cleaning and canteen to name the obvious. As a result most clubs are finding they can only cater for a few tables at best.

With a small number of tables the director only has a few options. Having two tables usually means a teams match but an individuals movement is another possibility. With three tables the best option is a Howell movement run over five rounds with 5 or 6 boards per round. If you happen to have 9, 10 or 11 players the only real option is an individual game. Other than that if you have an even number of pairs a Howell or small Mitchell movement are your usual choices.

That said, there are a few other issues that can affect your game:

- The need for more stationary pairs.
- The number of boards per session are restricted.
- Your club does not have Howell guide cards.
- There is a half table and more than a three-board sit-out is unattractive at best.
- Social distancing.
- Many players and directors dislike the Howell movement.

I will now discuss some of the other options available to the director without using the Howell movement. If you find some of the terms unfamiliar, consider purchasing my book *Duplicate Bridge Schedules* from Paul Lavings' book shop

www.bridgegear.com

To make it easier I can supply movement templates for your scoring program.

An ideal number of boards for a low numbers of tables with two winners is often around 27. Playing nine three-board rounds delivers a reasonable length round (say 20 minutes) and is not too many boards for the sit-out.

Consider the following options where the North-South players are stationary. In some cases a minor disadvantage is that pairs play other pairs two or three times, though ultimately it is no different than playing a Mitchell for the same number of tables and boards. Where the movement has one winner you may choose to switch the last one or two rounds. That said, switching is not recommended and generally not of much real value. Any movement where pairs only play about half the field, the balance quality will always be poor and difficult to improve. The rover guides below show the seating positions before any switches. The sit-out pairs will only ever be idle for two or three boards.

Mitchell movements

The Mitchell movement is fine so long as the number of rounds produces a session of a reasonable number of boards. With four tables you have a 28-board session (4×7) , five tables 25 boards (5×5) and six tables 24 boards (6×4) . Adding one or removing one board from each set will sometimes suit your needs. Using a fattened movement (p115) will give you a lot of flexibility on the number of boards played.

Adding a half table to each of these cases will often prove to be a nuisance. In most cases the number of boards in the sit-out is unacceptable. One solution is to use a roving pair playing half the boards at each table they visit, first playing half with the North-South pair and half with the East-West pair (p106). For practical reasons use the same number of boards against each pair. The rover schedules are found on page 107 and repeated here. At the first table the rover sits out for the first half round and replaces the North-South pair for the second half. For all other rounds they replace the East-West pair first for half of the boards and then North-South for the second half.

• 4 Tables: 2, 3, 1, 4

• 5 Tables: 1, 3, 5, 2, 4

• 6 Tables: 1, 3, 5, 2, 4, 6

• 7 Tables: 1, 3, 5, 7, 2, 4, 6

Eight tables play a 9-table Mitchell with each East-West pair sitting out for one three-board round.

Clay movements

The Clay movement (pp51 and 231) would be new to most directors. The setup is very similar to the Mitchell movement. The difference is the distribution of the boards. Half the boards of the first board set are placed on table 1 (say boards 1 and 2). The other half (say 3-4) are placed on a relay table between tables 1 and 2. Then 5-6 on table 2 and 7-8 on a relay between tables 2 and 3, and so forth with the last half set on the relay at the end of the movement. When the end of each round is called, the East-West pairs pick up the boards they have just played and place them on the relay table just before their next table. The East-West pair then pick up the boards from that relay and play them at their next table. This proceeds in this way until the end of the movement irrespective of the number of tables in the movement.

The similarity to the Mitchell and the American Whist League movements means that the players have no problems with the routine. Never needing skip rounds or board sharing with even numbers of tables is a bonus. The North-South field is always stationary, just like the Mitchell movement.

The unusual thing is the East-West pairs traverse the movement twice to complete all the boards, playing each pair twice. You will find the revenge round becomes almost a favored feature of the movement. For practical reasons, only play two or three boards against each pair. The number of boards played is no different from that played in a Mitchell movement of the same number of tables.

The shorter rounds means less waiting time at the end of each round for the faster players. The real bonus is the ability to introduce a rover pair displacing either North-South or East-West pairs throughout the session.

Where you have a half table the East-West pair numbers are equal to the starting table number plus the number of tables, and you have a one winner movement. Note the regular pattern for the Rover schedules in the 5-table and 7-table examples (click on the link below, which will take you to a full collection of seating charts). Any movement can be shortened by stopping after and even number of rounds. For example with seven tables you may stop play after round 12, playing 24 boards.

Click here to view seating charts for each number of tables.

Web Mitchell movements

The Web Mitchell movement (p104) is essentially the same as a normal Mitchell movement. That is, East-West pairs move up one table and boards down one table. Typically two complete sets of boards are needed but this is not a problem today as most clubs have dealing machines. The distribution of the board sets is different from the standard Mitchell movement. You need an even number of tables (excluding a half table) though an odd number can be handled in different ways. The number of board sets is flexible, though for our discussion here nine sets of three boards (total 27) are being used so we have a three-board sit-out. Note the number of boards has no correlation to the number of tables in the movement.

For distributing the boards the movement is divided into two partitions, each partition having the same number of tables. The first partition of the movement use one set of boards and the other partition the second set. Place board set one (say 1-3) on table one, set two (4-6) on table two and so forth. After the last table in the first partition the rest of the boards are placed on a relay table. For the second partition the last table in the movement gets the last board set (25-27) of the second duplicate set of boards. The second last table gets set one (1-3), the third last table set two (4-6) and so forth down to the first table of the second partition. The remainder of the boards are placed on a relay at the end of the movement. The boards at all tables always move down one table at each change, but staying in their original partition. Boards from table one move to the relay table in the middle of the movement. Boards from the first table

in partition two move to the relay table at the end of the movement. Note in partition one the North-South pairs play the boards in ascending order and in partition two the North-South pairs play the boards in descending order.

When you add an extra pair (½ table) to these movements they become a one-winner movement with a roving pair. For the East-West pair numbers, add the number of tables to the East-West pair starting table. The roving pair has the next pair number.

Click here to view seating charts for each number of tables.

Extra board Mitchell movements

The extra-board Mitchell (p114 Parker Modification) is simply a Mitchell movement playing more boards than would normally be used. The extra boards (an even number of sets) are placed on one or two relay tables. With an even number of tables there is no skip or share. Pairs often play each other more than once. East-West pairs always move up one table and boards down one table or onto the relay tables. All tables play boards in ascending order. Adding a half table makes it a one winner movement, with the EW pair numbers equal to their starting table number plus the number of tables in the movement.

Click here to view seating charts for each number of tables.

1½ Table Appendix Mitchell movements

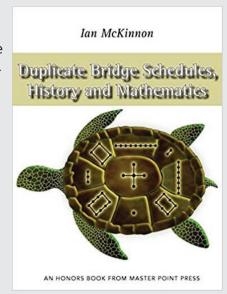
The 1½ table appendix Mitchell (p101) from the players' point of view is just another Mitchell movement with two winners. For the director it caters for those really pesky numbers of tables plus an extra pair, namely 10½ and 11½ tables. Subtract 1½ tables from the total and set up a normal Mitchell movement for those numbers of tables (9 and 10 in these cases) with three boards per table. Place one more table next to table 1 (tables 10 or 11 in the attached seating charts) so they may share boards with table 1. The extra pair sits out after the last table and then moves to table 1. With three-board rounds they sit out for three boards.

Click here to view seating charts for each number of tables.

2 Table Appendix Mitchell movements

For this discussion the two table appendix Mitchell (p101) has one really good application. It gives us nine-round movements for 11, 11½ and 12 tables playing 27 boards. Note they are all two winner movements.

Click here to view seating charts for each number of tables.



NO ALTERNATIVE

by **Dennis Zines**



As South, you hold:

After two passes, you open 1♠, West bids 2♦ and your previously passed partner leaps to 4♠. Gasp!

West leads the ◆A and this is what you see:

- **♠** 10 7 3
- **Y** K 10 8 2
- **♦** 7 2
- NORTH EAST SOUTH ♣ A K 10 3 1 pass pass all pass
- **↑** A K 8 5 4
- **Y** A 4
- ◆ J 10 8 2
- **\$** 5 4

Partner has pushed the boat out (possibly hoping your values will lie outside of the diamond suit), but he did not make any allowances for a light thirdseat opening. Can you reward his optimism and save the situation?

You follow in dummy and East plays the ◆6. West continues with the ◆K, you follow and East discards a club. West now plays the ◆4. It is time for you to take the only alternative. Play for spades 3-2 with East holding the third one. Pitch a low club (for example). East ruffs and when you next get in, cash the two high spades which now break 2-2, allowing you to freely ruff the fourth diamond after drawing two rounds of trumps.

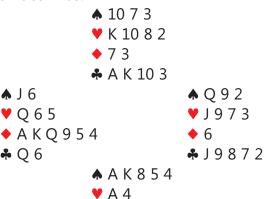
If East doesn't ruff, your diamond wins. Again, draw two rounds of trumps and ruff the fourth diamond for the same ten tricks.

The full deal was:

♠ J 6

♣ Q 6

♥ Q 6 5



Because there is no other layout that works, this is not necessarily a very interesting hand. You expect West will always lead one or two of the top two diamonds, but the hand can still make on other leads.

◆ J 10 8 2

\$ 5 4

Let us say West makes a bold lead of the ♣Q at trick two. As before, draw two trumps, play ♥A, ♥K and ruff a heart. Re-enter dummy with the remaining high club and ruff a third club (just in case West started with three). You have stripped the West hand of all cards except diamonds, so exit with the ◆J. West can win his two diamonds but faces the earlier dilemma of having to lead a third diamond. Either one results in your success.

So, partner was right about game making, but wrong about your diamond values. Those ◆J and ♦10 sparklers were the key to the success of the contract, given the lie of the spades.

Suddenly, this hand becomes worth writing about.



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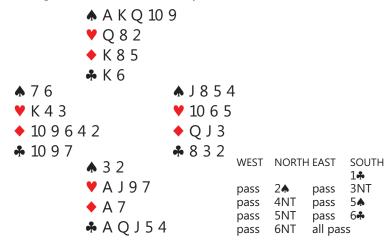
TONY BEMROSE INSURANCE BROKERS

AROUND THE CLUBS

Bridge can be played anywhere and doesn't even require all players to be in the same room. A group of players from Warwick, the Granite Belt and Tenterfield played teams matches online during the suspension of faceto-face play last year. Last weekend they took it a step further when Brough Warren had to play in an online match at the same time as he and Margaret had to drive to the border to meet a friend. With the use of his mobile phone Brough joined the game while en route to Wallangarra with Margaret at the wheel. Sadly, there was no fairy-tale ending as Brough's team went down to the team of Judy Mobbs, Sue Goddard, Neil Bonnell from



Warwick and Dave Hambly from Tenterfield. Board 12 was a good one for the mainly northern team:



Dave (North) guided his team to the very good contract of 6NT while Brough's teammates languished in 3NT. Over his partner's 1♣ Dave bid a strong 2♠. He then correctly interpreted partner's 3NT (by-passing 2NT) as a better than average opening. His ace-asking sequence discovered that partner held three aces and no kings. 6NT was about right. West led a small heart and South called for the two from dummy. Declarer beat East's ten with the jack, then cashed five clubs, three spades and two diamonds before parting with the VA. The play was straightforward but it was Dave's bidding that found the optimum contract.

Back at the club: congratulations to Barbara Reid and Leanne Munson on their first win as a pair.

Carol Axworthy, Warwick Bridge Club

NO TOP **HONOUR**

by John Elliott

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

all pass

This hand was taken from play on a Tuesday night duplicate session. No one expected to become rich and famous with these cards; the most that the computer estimated was 3♥ by East-West, but that's not the point. There is a good lesson to be learned from the North-South hands.

At my table, North opened a thrilling 1, passed by East (no prizes for guessing why!) and South responded 1. North showed their spade support, and 2♠ became the contract.

The lead was ♥K, East took the continuation with the ♥A, and looked at dummy for some inspiration. A club looked to be the best bet. South won the AA and pondered over the trump suit, spades.

In my teaching, I tell the beginners that not having the top trumps is no excuse for not leading them, and in this case, NS had nine trumps, topped by the jack. What if the missing ace, king and queen are all in the same hand? That is the deterrent that stops a lot of players from leading the suit, but the disciplined attitude is to lead the trumps and watch the top honours fall under or over each other, leaving the lower orders to take the day. And a look at the spades in the hands above illustrates the point.

Of course, there are no guarantees in bridge!

pass



The Box Around Your Hand

In today's lesson I'm going to talk about "putting the box around your hand". What I mean by that is, when you are bidding, imagine you've got a sliding scale: at the start of a deal, your point range can be between zero points and 37 points. Let's say you open the bidding at the one-level – now the range starts to narrow, and your range is around 12 points up to about 21. So you've narrowed the scale by a lot.

Or maybe you open 1NT, narrowing the range to 15-17. Once my range has been narrowed, I like to be aware of where my hand actually fits in relation to what I've already shown. So if I've shown 15 to 17, is my hand at the 15-point mark, or is it closer to 17? Once you've placed your hand in a box, narrowing the range around your hand, always keep in mind where you sit within that range.

This is important in the bidding when your partner is still showing some interest. Most people will already be familiar with this idea, in the context of an invitational raise after a 1NT opening. Partner raises to 2NT, asking if you would like to go on to game, and you bid on with a maximum or pass with a minimum. For example:

You open 1NT, and your range is now 15-17. Where are you within that box?

This hand is such a bad 15-count, I would consider not opening this 1NT at all. I would strongly consider showing this as 12 to 14 points (opening 1% and rebidding 1NT). So I am right at that bottom edge of the range that I've actually shown. If partner shows any interest in game...

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			1NT
pass	2NT	pass	?

this hand is definitely a no-go. I have an easy pass. Another example:

♦ K 7 2 ♥ A K 7 6 ♦ 6 2 ♣ A K 10 4

This time I've got 17, a small doubleton, and the hand is full of aces and kings. When it comes to hand evaluation, I like to look at my aces and kings versus my queens and jacks. Aces and kings are powerful, but queens and jacks are overrated. Another thing to look for is points in your long suits, and this hand also passes that test. You also want connected honours – here, my kings are especially powerful, with the support of their aces. Then you look for intermediates: my ten of clubs is well placed, with excellent prospects of scoring a trick in its own right. Everything about this hand is really good, and this is the best hand that I would ever open 1NT. If partner bids 2NT, I will definitely go on to 3NT and expect to make it easily.

This is the most common auction where you would need to consider your position within your hand range. However, imagine that you decided this hand was too good to open 1NT, and you decided to upgrade it to 18 points. Now you would open 1% and jump-rebid 2NT, showing 18-19. Now, imagine partner invited you to slam (say, with a quantitative 4NT bid):

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH 1♣
pass	1 ♠	pass	2NT
pass	4NT	pass	?

Obviously this hand was fantastic when it was in a 15-17 box, but once you have described the hand as 18-19, now the hand is clearly a minimum. In this scenario, this hand is at the bottom of the scale.

To look at it another way, there are two ways to bid this hand. You could take an ordinary action on the first round, and then behave aggressively on the next round, or you could start with an aggressive opening, and then be conservative on the next round. It's all about where you initially positioned yourself on the spectrum.

Similarly, going back to the earlier hand, which was a very bad 15-count, I considered treating that as a 14-count and opening 1. (planning to rebid 1NT). If that had happened, and partner had invited me to game, I would have been happy to accept – once I put the hand in a "12-14 box", the poor 15-count becomes an excellent hand.

A more subtle example:

♦ K2 ♥J6542 ♦963 ♣J92

Partner opens 1♠, and let's say we pass. Now, instead of 0-37, we have put a box around our hand and we are now 0-5. Inside a 0-5 box, this hand is a premium hand. If my partner shows interest and wants me to enter the bidding, this hand is fantastic.

Let's say West reopens the bidding and North rebids 2♥:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	1♦	pass	pass
2.	2 🗸	nass	?

Partner's 2♥ should show a very good hand. As far as he knows, I might have zero points and two or three hearts, and he still thinks it is safe to bid 2♥. In this position, I have a huge hand, and I would jump straight to 4♥. I've got five points, I've got five-card support – once I've put the 0-5 box around my hand, this hand is several tricks better than it might have been.

Let's look at the higher end of the spectrum:

♠KQJ3 ♥KQ ◆AQ4 ♣KQJ5

This is a really good hand, enough to open 2♣. But as soon as we've opened 2♣, we have to start thinking about the hand from the perspective of hands that would open 2♣. Here, if partner bids 2◆ and we rebid 2NT (23-24) we have put a very narrow box around our hand, and in terms of a 23-24 box, this is not a good hand. We have only one ace, we have five points in our doubleton, and we have lots of queens and jacks.

If partner invites us to bid slam...

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			2♣
pass	2	pass	2NT
pass	4NT	pass	?

we are not interested. When considering slam, I like to have lots of keycards, or lots of distribution (a nice five-card suit would be a great help in making 6NT). With this hand, I'm happy to pass as soon as partner gives me a chance.

One final example:

♦ A 9 5 4 2 ♥ 10 9 4 3 ♦ 8 6 4 **♣** 4

Let's say our RHO passes, we pass, LHO opens 1♦ and our partner doubles for takeout:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
		pass	pass
1	dbl	pass	?

We respond 1♠, and we have limited our hand for a second time. Our first pass placed us at around 0-11, and now our 1♠ bid (failing to bid 2♠ or something stronger) narrows this a little bit further, to about 0-8. Now partner bids 1NT:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
		pass	pass
1 ♦	dbl	pass	1 ♠
pass	1NT	pass	?

Doubling and then bidding 1NT shows a hand that was too strong to overcall 1NT, so this should be about 18 or 19 to 21 points. We would like to play in a major, so we will bid the hearts now; we might be able to make game, so we could bid 3♥, but let's say we settle for 2♥. This could be passed, so now we've limited our hand to not necessarily wanting to be in game opposite 19 points (so about 0-4 points).

If partner now raises to 3♥, we are at the very top of our range – in fact, after finding the fit, we can add some points for distribution, and we are actually well above the top of our range.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
		pass	pass
1 ♦	dbl	pass	1♠
pass	1NT	pass	2♥
pass	3♥	pass	4♥

We've been continually narrowing our range, or the box around our hand, with lots of low-level non-encouraging bids, but now we find ourselves with a huge hand, and can confidently bid game.

https://bridgevid.com

Click <u>here</u> for the video version of this article. Peter uploads new videos to his Bridge Vid channel regularly.

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Gold Point Event

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Please Note: There will be no lunch available for purchase at the venue, however there are lunch options 5min walk away.

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*PQP's subject to travel restrictions.

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