



NEWSLETTER

AUSTRALIAN BRIDGE FEDERATION INC.

Editor: Barbara Travis (editor@abf.com.au)

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GENESIS 1: THE ORIGINS OF YOUTH WEEK by John Brockwell

Having convened 80 national tournaments over the past 49 years, John Brockwell has offered to write some personal insights into the origins of some of our major tournaments. Youth Week celebrates its 50th year in 2018, so it seemed appropriate to start by recalling the early days of youth bridge.

In the late 1960s, youth bridge in Australia was at its zenith. The universities were major breeding grounds. There were strong groups in Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide and at the ANU in Canberra, but there was nothing to bring the groups together. There was nowhere for them to meet, to test themselves against one another or to exchange ideas.

When George Jesner arrived in Canberra from Glasgow in 1964, he brought with him an enthusiasm for congresses and the entrepreneurial skills to make them work. An immediate consequence of his coming was the inaugural January Congress held in Canberra over the Australia Day weekend in January 1965. That first tournament attracted 30 tables. It was deemed an outstanding success and deserving of a permanent place on Australia's infant bridge calendar.

Jessel Rothfield, then ABF President, was a strong supporter of youth bridge and its most vocal advocate. In 1968, the ABF decreed that the two days immediately preceding the 1969 January Congress be set aside to stage the first Australian Youth Championships. George Jesner, as Congress Convenor, was told to make the new tournament work. But George had his hands full with the January Congress itself, so he delegated the job of Youth Convenor to John Brockwell. Brockwell was a relative newcomer to the bridge scene and still very wet behind the ears. He knew absolutely nothing about promoting a congress. As it happened, that didn't matter. All he had to do was open the doors and stand back to avoid being killed in the rush. Organised youth bridge in Australia had arrived, and young players had found their common meeting ground.

The 1969 championships comprised a day of pairs and a day of teams, then wound up with a social function. The first winners were Barry Burton and Len Colgan (South Australia, Pairs) and Robert Grynberg, Ron Klinger, Ian McKinnon and Alan Walsh (New South Wales, Teams). Astoundingly, nearly 50 years on, three of them – Grynberg, Klinger, Walsh – took part in the 2017 Spring Nationals. How's that for longevity? In early days, the age limit was 30. It was not until the World Bridge Federation embraced youth bridge that the limit was reduced universally to 26.

It was realised early on that youth players wanted possession of their own tournament. They did not fancy its being merely an appendage to something else. So, the Youth Championships divorced itself from the Australia Day Congress and moved to other venues in and around Canberra, and some of them weren't too good. That never seemed to matter. The bridge was the thing, and the post-tournament celebrations. These social functions began as formal affairs.

An early one at the Parkroyal was particularly notable; young women wore ball gowns, even Zoli Nagy cast aside his shorts and put on long trousers for the occasion. Formality soon subsided into relaxation. A favourite place to celebrate is around a barbecue on the shores of Lake Burley Griffin.

The camaraderie and the enthusiasm of Australian Youth Championships has always been infectious. Finding convenors was never a problem. Barry Turner took over from John Brockwell in 1976 and occupied the position for more than 15 years. Top tournament directors queued up to officiate at the tournament. Attendances waxed and waned, for no good reason, between 10 and 20 tables. Latterly, there has been an ingress of some very young players into the Youth Championships, including a few sub-teenagers. This development caused angst among some officials. "What about duty of care to un-chaperoned minors?" they asked, and "Will those older players who enjoy a beer be a bad influence on the younger ones?". The doubters need not have worried. Chaperoning was never a problem, and the beer drinkers put their tinnies and stubbies to one side and made impeccable role models. Nowadays, the tournament is known as Youth Week. There has been but one major addition to the format since 1969: there is now an event to select the Australian Youth Team to represent our country internationally.

Some great players have cut their teeth on the Australian Youth Championships, none greater than Ballina girl, Fiona Brown. Since emigrating to UK, she has been a fixture in England's women's team. In 2012, Fiona became a gold medallist at the World Mind Sports Olympiad in Lille and is the holder of numerous other medals from World and European championships. The tournament has spawned wonderful writers about the game – Tim Bourke, Ron Klinger – and inventive tournament directors – David Anderson, Phil Gue, Jeff Lathbury, Ian McKinnon, Matthew McManus. More than that, it has generated an enthusiasm for bridge that, for hundreds of people, has lasted a lifetime. If there is a single word to sum up the championships, it is FUN.

The year 2018 will see the 50th staging of the Australian Youth Championships. Plans are underway to open the Pairs event to anyone who has ever participated in the Youth Championships, celebrating with a Hall of Fame event rather than the traditional Youth Pairs. Len Dixon is likely to attend. As bridge correspondent to the Canberra Times, Len reported on the tournament in 1969 and will do so again in 2018. (More astounding longevity!) We can be sure of one thing. It will be FUN.

(See page 15 for 2018 Youth Week.)



Feature Stories

- Genesis 1: The Origins of Youth Week: John Brockwell
- New Zealand Nationals
- Escaping an Aussie Winter in Toronto: Liam Milne
- Spring National Championships, Sydney
- Australian Recipients of International Awards
- Youth Week 2018: Laura Ginnan
- Making Fewer Mistakes
- Hands from Helgemo: Peter Gill
- Phrekwent Sykes: Peter Gill

Regular Articles

- President's Report: Bruce Neill
- Around the Clubs
- Teacher's Corner: Joan Butts
- Major Tournament Results
- How Would You Play? 16 / 20
- Improve Your Defence: Ron Klinger
- Coup of the Month: Brian Senior
- Laurie's Laws - Revokes: Laurie Kelso
- Letters to the Editor
- My Favourite Hand: Lauren Travis
- Coaching Cathy at Contract: David Lusk
- Common Mistakes: Barbara Travis
- Improving Your 1NT Structure: Andy Hung
- Basic Bridge 101: Chris Hughes
- Bridge into the 21st Century: Paul Lavings

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*Peter Cox,
 ABF Head of Marketing (from 1st November 2017)*

MARKETING CHANGES

On behalf of the ABF, I give our warmest thanks to Sandra Mulcahy who steps down from the ABF marketing role after six years.

I am also delighted that Peter Cox has agreed to take on the role of ABF Head of Marketing starting on 1st November 2017.

A keen bridge payer, Peter is also the leading independent economist, financial analyst, strategist and speaker on the media industry in Australia, and he brings exceptional insights and knowledge of media economics, marketing, programming, finance and strategy. He will be a great addition to the ABF team and we look forward to working with him to update our marketing strategy and drive forward the marketing of bridge in Australia.

Peter would be pleased to hear thoughts and suggestions on the marketing of bridge in Australia by:
 email: marketing@abf.com.au or by phone: 0413 676 326.

ANC REVIEW

The ANC Review has finished public consultations and we have announced new arrangements for the Hobart ANC in 2018:

- The Interstate Teams will have the qualifying stage shortened by one day. The 2nd and 3rd placed teams will play a Repechage Final on the Thursday morning while the leading team sit out. The winner of the Repechage will play the top qualifying team in the Final on Thursday afternoon and Friday.
- An Interstate Pairs event will be re-introduced, starting on Thursday afternoon and finishing on Friday. The Pairs will be open to all team members who did not qualify for the final. They do not have to play in the same partnerships [but do have to remain within their 'State']. It is also open to any pair whose home clubs are in the same State. Team members do not pay an entry fee, but non-team members will pay a fee. It will be one field, with category prizes for Open, Women's and Seniors'.
- There will be a single stage Youth Butler, to be played on Monday and Tuesday, alongside Stage 1 of the Seniors' and Women's Butler.
- There will be no Restricted Teams this year, as some states were hesitant about the concept.

Full details will be announced in due course, as will any other longer-term ANC changes.

SUCCESSION PLANNING

In my last President's report, I outlined the work of the ABF Succession Planning Committee (Therese Tully, David Morgan, Julia Hoffman and me).

I have announced my intention to retire at the 2018 AGM next May after four years as President.

Further information on a candidate search for President is available on the ABF web-site at <http://www.abf.com.au/abf-succession-planning/>. If you wish to express your interest in the position of ABF President, or suggest someone else for the position, please contact any member of the Succession Planning Committee.

You can also contact me at president@abf.com.au with the word "Succession" in the title of your email.

Bruce Neill

A "5 OR 7" HAND

GRAND SLAM ON A FINESSE

This article, by Larry Cohen (USA), appeared in the latest edition of Australian Bridge magazine. Brad Coles, the Owner/Editor of Australian Bridge [not the ABF Newsletter], has generously allowed me to reprint this article which explains the notion of "5 or 7 hands". The website is www.australianbridge.com. It's a rare hand when you know that you belong either at the 5-level or 7-level during the auction (rather than after you see dummy).

On this hand, I faced a most unusual situation late in the auction. My partner opened 1♥ and I held:

♠ A J 2
♥ J 9 8 4
♦ 3
♣ A Q J 10 7

I think this hand is too good for a splinter bid. Maybe 2♣ is the right call, but that might make it easy for the opponents to eventually find the killing opening lead. So, I withheld information about my hand and, instead, asked about partner's hand. I bid 2NT, Jacoby. Partner bid 3♥, which meant he had no voids or singletons, but not a dead minimum hand (with a minimum, he'd have bid 4♥). Now what?

Slam was still in the picture, so I made a control cue bid of 3♣. LHO doubled for the lead, and this was passed back to me. At this point, I redoubled. A redouble of such a control bid should promise specifically first-round control (an ace or a void). After my redouble, partner bid 4♦ showing a control there.

I decided he had shown enough slam interest: Blackwood time. He showed three key cards. So he must have the ♦A and the ♥A-K. I asked for the trump Queen (the next step) and he showed it. When showing the trump Queen, you can also show side Kings. His response, 6♥, meant that along with the trump Queen he had no side Kings at all. What did this all mean and what should I bid?

Partner has the ♥A-K-Q (at least five) and the ♦A. He has no singletons or voids, and you know a spade lead is coming. Picture the play. He will win the ♠A and draw trumps, but then what? He will need to take a club finesse. If it loses, he won't even make a small slam (the opponents will cash at least one spade trick). What if the club finesse wins? In that case, partner will probably take all 13 tricks.

Have you ever heard of a "5 or 7 hand"? Usually that comes in the post-mortem. Here, you can envision it during the auction. There was no good reason to play in 6♥; exactly 12 tricks was not in the picture. So, as the saying goes, 'in for a penny, in for a pound'. I bid 7♥, and this was the full deal:

♠ A J 2
♥ J 9 8 4
♦ 3
♣ A Q J 10 7

♠ 5 4 3
♥ 6 3
♦ K Q 7 6 5
♣ K 8 3

♠ K Q 10 9 8
♥ 7 2
♦ 10 9 8 2
♣ 5 4

♠ 7 6
♥ A K Q 10 5
♦ A J 4
♣ 9 6 2

West	North	East	South
Pass	2NT	Pass	1♥
Pass	3♠	Double	3♥
Pass	Redouble	Pass	Pass
Pass	4NT	Pass	4♦
Pass	5♦	Pass	5♣
Pass	7♥	All Pass	6♥

After the expected spade lead (or any other lead), there's nothing to the play. With the club finesse working (thank you!), my partner took an easy 13 tricks for +2210. Had the club finesse lost, we'd have been two down, -200. Yes, 6♥ would be down only 100 in that case, but surely the risk / reward for being in 7♥ was well worth the gamble. The other table played in 6♥, so we won 13 IMPs. Had the ♠K been offside, we'd have lost 3 IMPs. Those are my kind of odds.

Larry Cohen





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CARD COMBINATION 1

A K J 2 7 6 5

If you wish to play this suit for 3 winners (not 4), the best play is to cash the Ace and King, then cross to the other hand and lead towards the Jack. This allows for the singleton or doubleton Queen offside, the Queen onside, or any 3-3 break.

(Finessing on the first or second round loses if there is a singleton or doubleton Queen offside.)

GENEROUS DONATIONS HELP MELTON BRIDGE CLUB AFTER FIRE

Ocean Grove Bridge Club recently hosted four members from Melton Bridge Club for lunch and an afternoon of Bridge. Melton Bridge Club recently lost most of their bridge equipment in a fire in their community centre, and Ocean Grove Bridge Club were pleased to hand over a cheque for \$500 to assist a fellow Bridge Club in their time of need. The VBA made a similar donation, whilst Ballarat Bridge Club has donated some boards and cards.

While Melton is a young and growing club, there was still more than \$1,000 worth of damage to tables, cloths, boards, cards, etc. Club Secretary Rosemary Hare said it was lucky she had taken the computer and BridgeMates home, or they would also have been lost.

Unfortunately, Melton BC didn't have insurance to cover their equipment, and neither were they covered by their community centre's insurance, nor the ABF insurance which covers a lot of things but not contents. In the meantime, Melton BC is up and running with loan items. The good news is that Steve Weil of TBIB, insurance brokers to the ABF and its members, has donated \$1,000 to help Melton BC to get back on its feet.



Ocean Grove Bridge Club Committee and guests from Melton Bridge Club

JOAN HARRISON TURNS 101

Joan Harrison has been a valued member of the Grafton Bridge Club since its inception in the early 1980s. Joan celebrated turning 101 in October.

She enjoys home bridge and is still so sharp with her play. We always count on Joan holding the four aces, particularly the Ace of Clubs! Joan has been an inspiration to us and has also demonstrated the importance of playing bridge.



GRIFFITH EX-SERVICEMEN'S CLUB BRIDGE CLUB AND THEIR "COME AND TRY" BRIDGE DISPLAY

On Saturday, 5th August 2017 the Griffith Ex-Servicemen's Club Bridge Club organised a "Come and Try Bridge" morning in the Griffith Central shopping mall. We had strong support from the mall management in running the event, including organising media and distributing vouchers to members of the public who showed an interest in what was going on. A radio interview was conducted several days in advance.

Four tables were in action, complete with electronic scoring and associated computer equipment. Shoppers were fascinated to observe the dealing machine dealing some boards.

Interested onlookers were encouraged to sit at the tables and play some hands. Much interest was shown, with many questions asked and lots of laughter as members of the bridge club thoroughly enjoyed guiding prospective players through the basics of playing a hand of bridge. Plenty of enthusiastic club members were on hand to promote and demonstrate the appeal of bridge, with an emphasis on bridge being fun.

We were very fortunate to have Claire and Dane, enthusiastic presenters from our local Triple M radio station encouraging shoppers to come and have a chat and try their hand at bridge.

Introductory bridge lessons were to begin within two weeks of this event and already a couple of people who came and tried bridge in the mall have signed up.

Club members who participated in the exercise agreed that the opportunity to showcase our club was very positive and moderately successful in attracting a few new members. The proof of genuine success or otherwise will be gauged in due course by the ultimate measure of whether any new players have been attracted as a result of this effort.



MY FAVOURITE TEACHING HAND

On the subject of responder's role, and making preemptive or obstructive bids, this hand always brings home the point well and creates a lot of fun in the room.

It shows timid bidders that they should "bid-em-up" with a good fit, and to forget about points.

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

After East opens with a weak 2♥, West should raise preemptively to game, 4♥, whether or not South bids.

North now has a problem. A double should be for takeout, but North has only two spades. 4NT would be for the minors, but that might get the partnership too high. It's possible that East-West might buy the contract in 4♥, undoubled. Even if East-West are doubled in 4♥, the contract goes only two down, yet North-South can make a slam in either minor.

The real fun comes when you ask the class to shuffle and redeal the North-South cards, and ask for the bidding to be the same for East West (2♥ - 4♥) but insist that North South bid all the way to slam.

Then tell them you'll bet that, even with the new hands, they will still make at least small slam, 6♣ or 6♦.

It works every time (unless the hand is misplayed).

Joan Butts



Jamal & Parveen Rayani,
 winners of the Restricted section
 of the Spider Orchid Novice & Restricted Swiss Pairs
 (Louise & Michael Brassil finished in 1st place but were in the
 Novice section), Canberra in Bloom Festival

Several years ago, Bridge Today ran a "Great Hand" competition and this hand was one of the winners.

Mr Moysian move over, here comes the 3-3. Nikolas Bausback describes this so-called unbidable contract arrived at in a local duplicate a few years ago.

Dealer South NS Vul ♠ 8 7 6 4 ♥ 10 5 2 ♦ Q 10 5 4 ♣ J 8	♠ Q J 10 ♥ 6 3 ♦ J 8 3 ♣ A K 7 5 2 ♠ A K 9 ♥ A K J 7 4 ♦ 7 6 2 ♣ 9 3	♠ 5 3 2 ♥ Q 9 8 ♦ A K 9 ♣ Q 10 6 4
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"Playing with a chess player at his first appearance in a bridge club, the auction went:

West Pass Pass	North Chess Player 2♣ 4♣	East Pass All Pass	South Nikolas 1♥ 2♣
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"So I ended in a lovely 3-3 fit. The player on my left led a trump. Counting my tricks, I saw that I needed three heart tricks in addition to the ♣AK and five trumps on a cross-ruff (and the initial trump lead). I duly took these and scored 10 tricks. This was not a top, because somebody did not find the diamond lead against 3NT."

Nikolas goes on to point out that 4♣ is the best contract. 4♥ can be beaten by four rounds of diamonds, East ruffing (promoting a trump trick for East-West). 3NT requires the same as 4♣: 3-3 hearts with the ♥Q onside, but also needs diamonds 4-3. Without a trump lead, 4♣ would be terrific, needing only 4-2 breaks in hearts and clubs (and six trump tricks on a cross-ruff!).

CARD COMBINATION 2

How do you play this combination to ensure 4 tricks (1 loser at most)?

Declarer K 8 7 4	Dummy A 10 9 3 2
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The correct way to play this suit is to lead low – either from dummy towards your hand, or vice versa. Let's consider leading low from your hand towards dummy. If North follows suit, you cover as cheaply as possible. That allows for North to have Q-J-6-5. If North discards, rise with the Ace and finesse against South's Q-J-6-5 on the next round. Equally, if you lead low from dummy towards your hand, the same principles apply. If South follows suit, you cover, but if South shows out, you win the King and finesse on the way back to dummy.

If you cannot afford to have a particular defender on lead, you switch which way you play the suit.

MAJOR TOURNAMENT RESULTS

TERRITORY GOLD BRIDGE FESTIVAL

Alice Springs, 6th - 10th September

MATCHPOINT PAIRS

FINAL

- 1st Ian Robinson - George Kozakos
- 2nd David Hoffman - Robbie Van Riel
- 3rd Julia Hoffman - Chris Quail

PLATE A

- 1st Helen & Paul Lavings

PLATE B

- 1st Rosemary Mooney - Roberta Tait

CONSOLATION

- 1st Pam & Ross Crichton

SWISS TEAMS

- 1st CRICHTON: Pam & Ross Crichton, Julia Hoffman - Chris Quail, David Hoffman - Robbie Van Riel
- 2nd ROBINSON: Ian Robinson - George Kozakos, Simon Hinge - Andrew Mill
- 3rd O'BRIEN: Sue O'Brien - Jan Malinas, Kitty Muntz - Leigh Gold

SWISS PAIRS

- 1st David Hoffman - Robbie Van Riel
- 2nd Ian Afflick - Paul Collins
- 3rd Simon Hinge - Andrew Mill

HGR MEMORIAL CONGRESS

Perth, 16th-17th September

HGR RESTRICTED SWISS PAIRS

- 1st Dave Sloan - Gary Frampton
- 2nd Meredith Goodlet - Jennifer Andrews
- 3rd Joanne Payne - Stephen Thyer

HGR WOMEN'S SWISS PAIRS

- 1st Leone Fuller - Marnie Leybourne
- 2nd Catherine Hood - Doreen Jones
- 3rd Lauren Shiels - Allison Stralow

CANBERRA IN BLOOM BRIDGE FESTIVAL

Canberra, 29th September - 2nd October

ROYAL BLUEBELL MATCHPOINT SWISS PAIRS

- 1st Chris Stead - John Brockwell
- 2nd Kim Morrison - David Weston
- 3rd Ian Thomson - Roy Nixon

SPIDER ORCHID NOVICE & RESTRICTED MP SWISS PAIRS

- 1st Louise & Michael Brassil (*Novice*)
- 2nd Parveen & Jamal Rayani (*Restricted*)
- 3rd Michael Francis - Terry Dold (*Restricted*)

GOLDEN WATTLE OPEN TEAMS

- 1st ROBINSON: Ian Robinson - George Kozakos, Khokan Bagchi - David Lilley
- 2nd MENDICK: Stephen Mendick - Bernie Waters, Pam & Ross Crichton
- 3rd THOMSON: Ian Thomson - Jon Hunt - Arjuna de Livera - Sean Mullanphy - Matt Mullanphy

SILVER WATTLE NOVICE & RESTRICTED TRIATHLON PAIRS

- 1st Hadi Aghakhani - Shane Woodburn
- 2nd John Shield - Tony Matthews
- 3rd Pamela McKittrick - Claire Hughes

CANBERRA BELL SWISS PAIRS

- 1st Richard Hills - Hashmat Ali
- 2nd Jodi & Bill Tutty
- 3rd Stephen Fischer - David Appleton

FEDERATION ROSE NOVICE & RESTRICTED SWISS PAIRS

- 1st Subhash Jalota - Desh Gupta (*Restricted*)
- 2nd John Kelly - George Zuber (*Restricted*)
- 3rd Mary Robbie - Margot Moylan (*Restricted*)

SPRING NATIONALS

Sydney, 18th - 26th October

TBIB SPRING NATIONAL OPEN TEAMS

QUALIFYING:

- 1st JACOB: Tom Jacob - Brian Mace, Justin Williams - Johnno Newman
- 2nd FISCHER: Stephen Fischer - David Morgan, Richard Brightling - David Hoffman
- 3rd DALLEY: Paul Dalley - Ashley Bach (*1st datums*), Justin Mill - Ervin Otvosi
- 4th HAFFER: Joe Haffer - Ron Cooper, Matt Smith - Jamie Thompson

SEMI-FINALS:

- JACOB 144.1 *defeated* DALLEY 56 (*conceded*)
FISCHER 139.1 *defeated* HAFFER 99

FINAL:

- JACOB 92.1 *defeated* FISCHER 74

TWO MEAN & A TRUCK RESTRICTED TEAMS

- 1st VAN WEEREN: Hans Van Weeren - Peter Clarke, Jill Blenkley - Jeff Conroy (*1st datums*)
- 2nd RAYANI: Parveen & Jamal Rayani, Shanti Korathota - Henry Tan
- 3rd BROOKS: Bevin Brooks - Ingrid Cooke, Ceda Nikolic - Rod Macey

DICK CUMMINGS OPEN PAIRS

- 1st Ron Klinger - Matt Mullanphy
- 2nd Dee Harley - Robbie Van Riel
- 3rd Ed Barnes - David Wiltshire

TED CHADWICK RESTRICTED PAIRS

- 1st Martin Clear - Phillip Halloran
- 2nd Sheena Arora - Mardi Svensson
- 3rd Hans Van Weeren - Peter Clarke

SPRING NATIONAL NOVICE PAIRS

- 1st Martin Brown - Gail McKenzie
- 2nd Robbie Feyder - Barry Feyder
- 3rd Helen Barnes - Frank Broos

BOBBY EVANS SENIORS' TEAMS

QUALIFYING:

- 1st BEAUCHAMP: Pauline Gumby - Warren Lazer, Bruce Neill - David Beauchamp - Avi Kanetkar
- 2nd WALSH: Alan Walsh - Barbara McDonald, Mike Hughes - Ted Griffin (*withdrew*)
- 3rd HOFFMAN: David Hoffman - Richard Brightling, Stephen Mendick - Bernie Waters

FINAL:

- HOFFMAN 129 *defeated* BEAUCHAMP 122.4

PENLINE PAIRS

- 1st Marcia & John Scudder
- 2nd Bina Kassam - Claire Schafer
- 3rd Alex Penklis - Phillip Halloran

LINDA STERN WOMEN'S TEAMS

QUALIFYING:

- 1st KAPLAN: Rena Kaplan - Anita Curtis,
Judy Osie - Pauline Evans
- 2nd WOOD: Viv Wood - Jane Reynolds,
Lynn Kalmin - Lorna Ichilcik (1st datums)
- 3rd TRAVIS: Sue Lusk - Margaret Bourke, Jodi Tutty -
Marianne Bookallil, Candice Ginsberg - Barbara Travis

FINAL:

KAPLAN 131.6 *defeated* WOOD 115

NEW ZEALAND NATIONALS

Each year, Australians head to Hamilton for the NZ Nationals, and each year we seem to have at least some degree of success. Here are this year's Australian 'success stories' from the New Zealand Nationals.

NZ OPEN PAIRS

3rd Liam Milne – Tony Nunn

NZ MIXED PAIRS

1st Kitty Muntz – Leigh Gold

NZ SENIORS' PAIRS

1st Tom Kiss – Alasdair Beck
2nd Elizabeth Havas – Beverley Stacey

NZ OPEN TEAMS

1st COUTTS: Liam Milne – Tony Nunn, Michael Courtney
– Rosie Don, Nick Jacob – James Coutts (*Australia-NZ*)

NZ SENIORS' TEAMS

2nd VAN RIEL: Robbie Van Riel – Dee Harley, Bob Sebesfi –
Richard Douglas

YOUTH TEST

AUSTRALIA 199
John & Charles McMahon, Ella Pattison – Cesca McGrath
defeated

NEW ZEALAND 167
Brad Johnston - Nikolas Mitchell, Feitong Chen - Matthew
Hughes

A KIWI SUB-MOYSIAN

This hand appeared in the Daily Bulletins from the New Zealand Nationals. On the previous page we saw a 3-3 fit, which I think is rare enough not to have a name. Here we have a 4-2 fit, known as the sub-Moysian fit.

We all learn very early in our bridge lives that we should strive to find a trump fit of at least eight cards, with a 4-4 fit to be particularly cherished. Alphonse "Sonny" Moysie was publisher and editor of The Bridge World from 1955-1966, but his name will always be remembered in bridge circles for his advocacy of the 4-3 fit, which has become known as the Moysian Fit. He did not advocate the 4-2 fit, but that would be known as a sub-Moysian. One came up in Round 4 of the NZ Swiss Teams.

Dealer South ♠ 9 4 3
Nil Vul ♥ 10 9 4 3
♦ Q 9 4
♣ 7 6 2

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

♠ A K J 10 7 6
♥ 8 6 5
♦ J 7
♣ 8 4

West	North	East	South
S. Coutts		Bailey	
3♦	Pass	3♥	2♦ (multi)
4♥	All Pass		Pass

When South opened with a Multi 2♦, Sam Coutts overcalled 3♦ and Sam Bailey tried 3♥. Coutts could see that spades was surely South's suit, so raised to 4♥, thereby reaching the sub-Moysian fit.

The defence led three rounds of spades – a ruff and discard is often the best shot against a sub-Moysian, but Bailey ruffed with the ♥J, cashed the ♥K and came to hand with a club to cash the ♥A and ♥Q. The 4-3 split means that he could now just play out his clubs. North was able to trump in whenever she liked, but that was the final trick for the defence.

5♣ is rather more secure as a contract, but who could resist the sub-Moysian?

What is remarkable is that, altogether, 8 of the 110 pairs played in 4♥ (making 10 or 11 tricks)! In one match, the board was even flat, with both East-West pairs playing in 4♥!

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE NEW ZEALAND OPEN TEAM IN LYON. THEY QUALIFIED FOR THE KNOCKOUTS FOR THEIR FIRST TIME EVER, THEN FINISHED 4TH.



Winners of the NZ Teams: Liam Milne, James Coutts, Tony Nunn, Nick Jacob, Rosie Don, Michael Courtney

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At the end of July, I decided to journey over for the ACBL Summer Nationals in Toronto, partly because my sister was getting married near Seattle soon after, and partly because I have always felt the pull of the American Nationals, ever since I first heard of the Spingold and the Vanderbilt, two of the big American tournaments. Susan Humphries, a New Zealand Women's international (and my girlfriend) must have felt this trip was a good idea too. Coming across an online special on flights to the US, we booked a trip from Sydney to Los Angeles, on to Toronto, back to Seattle, and then back home for me (and on to Lyon for the Venice Cup for Susan).

In Toronto, I had three partners over the week. The first, for the Life Master Pairs, was Peter Gill (also from Sydney). Secondly, while I was over there I was lucky enough to score a last-minute game with Larry Lebowitz, a money manager from Boston and a keen student of the game. Finally, for the majority of the week including the Spingold, I partnered Bart Bramley from Dallas – a 17-time US national champion, 2nd in the World Par Contest and a bit of a legend (in my opinion!).

In the first few days, Peter and I struggled in the Life Master Pairs, but Susan was having a ball in the Wager Women's Pairs. With her Canadian partner Julie Smith, who she had never met before Toronto, they started with a 49.9% game in the first session of the qualifying, but bounced back with 57.5% in the evening to qualify comfortably for the final.

In the first session of the final, Susan and Julie had a monster 63.2% score. All of a sudden, they were coming second, with one session to go! They were just 4 matchpoints behind the leaders, Sylvia Shi and Pamela Granovetter. With a decent second session in the evening, they might be in the running to win it.

The second session of the final didn't start well for Susan and Julie. In their first six or seven rounds, they had only one plus score. It was a good one though:

Dealer North ♠ A Q 2
NS Vul ♥ K 9 5 3
 ♦ J 9 5 2
 ♣ A 4

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

♠ J 5 3
♥ Q J 10 6
♦ A 8 4 3
♣ 7 2

West	North	East	South
	1♦	Pass	1♥
Pass	2♥	Pass	Pass
2♠	3♥	Double	All Pass

Susan was sitting West, Julie was East. On the first round of the auction, Susan chose to Pass rather than come in with 1♠ on her terrible hand, which risked getting her side overboard, or getting partner off to the wrong lead – a crucial consideration at matchpoints. However, she couldn't pass out 2♥ at favourable vulnerability with her 5-5 shape, and balanced back in with 2♠. Next thing she knew, Julie had doubled 3♥ for penalties! This wasn't exactly what Susan wanted to hear, but she wasn't going to pull it to 4♣, so she passed and led the ♣Q.

As you can see, Susan had nothing to worry about. Partner's hand was more than enough take 3♥ down, and the defence

ended up taking one club, two diamonds, one spade, the ♥A, and a spade ruff, because the 4-1 trump break complicated declarer's work. That was good for +500 and a top board, providing some relief.

As the session progressed, the girls felt like they were having a fairly average set, with not a lot of hands going their way. This deal came up towards the end:

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

West	North	East	South
	Pass	1♥	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♠	Pass
Pass	2NT (minors)	Pass	3♣
Double!	All Pass		

Although Susan didn't have much to spare, she felt that her strong holdings in the minors meant that North had made a mistake wandering in after already passing twice, and decided to double for penalties and go for a top. South must have been feeling somewhat optimistic, looking at the best hand at the table and hardly having taken a bid! Susan led the ♥9 to Julie's ♥K, and Julie switched to the ♠Q. After winning the spade switch, declarer tried a diamond to the ♦A and a diamond ruff, followed by the ♠K and a spade ruff. Another diamond ruff in hand and declarer was up to six tricks already, with the ace and king of clubs still to come!

Declarer played their fourth spade, and as Julie still held the nine of clubs (threatening to overruff the dummy), dummy ruffed high with the king. Next, declarer played a heart from dummy to Julie's ♥K, leaving declarer with ♥Q-10 and ♠A-J, and Susan still holding all four of her trumps.

Needing three of the last four tricks, Julie made no mistake, switching to her ♣9 to set up all of Susan's trumps. One down, +100, and a great score to finish the session. Any other return would have forced Susan to ruff and then she would have been end-played, after which declarer would make both the ♣A and ♣J.

After the somewhat disappointing session was over, they found out they had scored 52.63%, which was not a total disaster, but almost certainly not enough to win...

...Until they found out the leaders from the first session had scored only 50.29%, no one else had overtaken them, and Susan and Julie were sitting at the top of the leaderboard with no boards left to play! Susan's first tournament in North America, and she had won it.

Suddenly doing poorly with Peter didn't matter as much to me! Everyone made sure we knew this was a big deal: photographers around, front page of the Daily Bulletin, posts on BridgeWinners – you name it. What a fantastic experience for Susan and Julie.

After a day off, I got started on the Spingold. This is one of the

most important American events of the year, with the format being straight knockouts for seven days. In the first round, our team (David Bakhshi - Russ Ekeblad, Bart - me) drew a fairly low-seeded Polish team, but this wasn't necessarily a cause for celebration. I had heard from friends that there were three types of (low-seeded) teams you didn't want to draw in the first round: four Polish names you didn't recognise, four Chinese names you didn't recognise, or four youth players. The foreigners are often under-seeded, and the youth players are frequently the most dangerous and most likely to take the scalp of a top team. Not only that, but I found out the Poles we were playing had knocked out a team including Bart and Bob Hamman, in the first round last year!

Luckily, lightning didn't strike twice for Bart, and I got to play more than one day of the Spingold. Our opponents had a tough day, seeming to miss slams when they were making and bidding all the ones that weren't there. This was a particularly interesting, and potentially spectacular, defensive hand from the match, that has stuck with me:



Liam Milne

North
 ♠ A K
 ♥ 9 8 3
 ♦ 10 9 5 4
 ♣ A J 10 9

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

West	North	East	South
Pass	2♥ (2)	Pass	1♣ (1)
Pass	3NT	All Pass	2NT

- (1) Polish club: 12-14 balanced without five diamonds, or 11-16 with clubs, or 17+ any
- (2) Game-forcing balanced hand, no major

You are East, defending 3NT. Your partner, Bart, leads the ♥5 (fourth best) to your ♥A, declarer playing the ♥7. You return the ♥2 to declarer's ♥J and partner's ♥Q, and partner comes back the ♥4 (confirming that he started with five). Plan the defence.

I discarded the ♠8, discouraging, as declarer won the ♥K. Next came the ♣K - 2 - 9 - 3, followed by a second club to the ♣6 - J - and your Q. Any ideas on how to beat this contract?

After showing up with three hearts and two clubs, declarer is marked with 4-3-4-2 shape. It is tempting to play a low diamond now, or ace and another, attempting to put partner in to cash their hearts. However, after doing a bit of counting we can see that it is impossible for declarer to make nine tricks without playing diamonds themselves, so we don't need to do anything too hasty.

It looks like partner has about 2-4 HCPs outside hearts. If those values include the ♦K or ♦Q, either declarer is going down always, or will have to make it regardless of our defence (declarer won't mis-guess diamonds with the ♦K-J, since they can't afford partner to hold the ♦A as an entry).

The key layout is when partner has only the ♦J. If you play a club, you give declarer an extra entry to the dummy, but if you play a spade, declarer will have to guess the diamond layout in a very awkward position. The full hand:



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

♠ Q 7 3
 ♥ Q 10 6 5 4
 ♦ J 7 6
 ♣ 6 2

♠ 10 9 6 4
 ♥ A 2
 ♦ A 3
 ♣ Q 8 7 4 3

♠ J 8 5 2
 ♥ K J 7
 ♦ K Q 8 2
 ♣ K 5

Do you see what happens on a spade return? Declarer is in the dummy, needing to play diamonds for three tricks. He can't afford to lead a diamond to the ♦K and return to dummy for another diamond lead, as we can win the second diamond lead and put partner in with their newly created entry, the ♠Q. Therefore, declarer has to guess diamonds straight away. He could play me for ♦A-doubleton (low to the ♦K, then small), ♦A-x-x (low to the ♦K, then ♦Q), or ♦A-J-x (run the ♦10). Without much to go on, he ran the ♦10 to partner's beautiful ♦J for three down. Phew!

Perhaps the spade return was too easy for you. I thought of a different option before playing a spade back – try to throw away my ♦A to force an entry to partner's hand! It was only at this point I realised my earlier mistake: I should have thrown the ♦A at trick 3 - on partner's third heart!

One of the more idiosyncratic features of American tournaments is the general lack of pre-dealt boards. Even in the first two rounds of the Spingold, we had to shuffle and deal all our own boards at the start of play, and the caddies' main job is to swap boards back and forth between the two tables in a match. This has some advantages: every table is

playing their own boards, so a stray comment from the table next to you doesn't hurt anyone, and security is a lot higher in that respect. However, the process is a bit tedious, there is potential for cheating (peeking at cards or sneaking an honour into someone's hand as you are shuffling), there are no hand records and no web results for matches where you have shuffled your own cards. I much prefer the Australian way. We don't tend to appreciate just how good we have it here - with scoring, directors, web results, etc. - until we go overseas.

By the way, remember my comment about who you don't want to draw in the first round of the Spingold? This year, superstar team Monaco drew a 90+ seeded USA youth team, and lost by single digits. The field of talent runs deep in America!

After beating the Poles in the first round of the Spingold, we managed to win our Round of 64 match as well, but we drew a tough team in Round of 32: a professional team featuring Dror Padon and Alon Birman from Israel and Cornelis Van Prooijen and Louk Verhees from the Netherlands. They played well against us and our team lost comfortably, which was naturally disappointing (making the Round of 16 would have been great) but meant we had the luxury of a day off before the next "national-rated" event, the Roth Open Swiss Teams.

On our day off, Bart, Susan and I went to check out a baseball game (the first for Susan and me, and roughly the millionth for Bart). The rules were baffling, but after Bart had explained the history of the game for a few hours while we were watching, I got some idea about what was going on. It was a real American experience: hot dogs, Budweiser, the national anthem. Lots of fun, and worth doing if you are ever in that neck of the woods.

Bart and I still didn't have team-mates for the last event of

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the week, the Roth Swiss, so we wandered back to the playing site to see if we could throw a team together. This is another difference from Australian events – here, it's common to have teams sorted months in advance, and entries have a deadline. Over in America, you can often still enter the event 10 minutes after the official start time! Turn up, put your name down, pay in cash, and take your seats. No kidding. Finding team-mates an hour before play is not unusual.

While I had a rare game in an evening side pairs event with Susan, Bart managed to find us some great teammates: Marty Seligman (a famous psychologist) and Mark Lair (a top Texan pro). We cruised through the first day and managed to continue our streak on the second day, qualifying in third place for the third and final day.

One of my strong impressions from Toronto was just how many excellent players there are in almost every event you play. The Spingold was still going and the Swiss was 'sort of' a side event (although still being prestigious, being a national title), but that didn't mean we were playing weaklings. Just on day 2, we played the Nickell team (Meckstroth-Rodwell), Michael Rosenberg and Roger Lee, then-reigning Bermuda Bowl holders Kalita and Nowosadzki from Poland... the list goes on. It was a lot of fun!

This was my favourite hand from the Roth Swiss, near the end of day 2:

♠ 5 4

♠ A Q 10 8 3

West had opened 2♥, showing 5-5 hearts and a minor. After two passes, I bought the contract in 2♠.

You might ask why there is only one suit shown above. Simple: these were shuffled hands, there were no hand records, and my memory isn't the best!

West led a minor suit, which looked like it was from length. I had three sure tricks outside trumps, and I had to somehow manage to make as many of my spades as possible. Because West hadn't led a singleton in a side-suit, it seemed very likely that West had a singleton spade. The best play in the suit seemed to be to take some sort of deep finesse then see what I could do, so I won the lead in the dummy and played a spade to the ♠8. West smiled at me and produced the... ♠7!

After this it was smooth sailing, despite the spades breaking 5-1. I crossed to dummy, took a ruff with my ♠3, then exited to the opponents. They had to let me ruff something else with my ♠10, and I could take my last side suit trick, exit again, and wait to make my ♠A-Q. Making 2♠, for a very satisfying result. At the other table, declarer didn't have the same 'hearts and a minor' information as me, and naturally took a different line which ran into trouble with the foul trump break.

On the final day of the Roth Open Swiss, our team was leading after a few matches, but slumped towards the end to finish ninth. Not such a bad result, and a fine finish to a long week of bridge. I'll definitely be back.

If you are considering playing some bridge in North America, I strongly encourage you to make the trip over for an NABC (North American Bridge Championship), as the Nationals are officially called. There are three per year: one in March (the Spring Nationals - Vanderbilt), one in July (Summer Nationals - Spingold) and one in November (Fall Nationals - Reisinger). The cities where the NABCs are held rotate around the USA and Canada, and you can see a list of upcoming NABCs online here: http://www.acbl.org/tournaments_page/nabcs/upcoming-nabcs/

Next year, the NABCs will be in Philadelphia, Atlanta, and Honolulu. I am particularly looking forward to going to Hawaii next November – doesn't that sound appealing to you? I would love to see an Aussie contingent over there. Get a team together and have a go in the big game. You won't regret it.

Liam Milne



The JACOB team, winners of the Spring Nationals Open Teams: Johnno Newman, Justin Williams, Tom Jacob, Brian Mace

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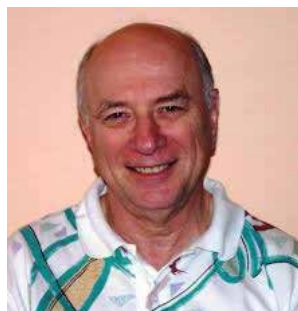
Each year the International Bridge Press Association issues awards for 'the best': declarer play, defence, bidding, new book published, and personality. I thought it would be appropriate to recognise those Australians who have received accolades over the years.

MASTER POINT PRESS BOOK OF THE YEAR

This award has been won by Australians three times in recent years! (Now four times... In the September edition, it was reported that **Sartaj Hans** won the Master Point Press Book of the Year.)



Sartaj Hans



Ron Klinger

In 2009, **Ron Klinger** won for "Right Through the Pack Again".

"Right Through the Pack (A Bridge Fantasy)", by Robert Darvas and Norman de V. Hart, was published in 1948 and the idea of each card in the pack telling its own story was an instant hit. It is on virtually every bridge magazine's and bridge player's list of the top 10 books of all time and has become a bridge classic.

This new book follows the original but also continues the story of the Old Master, a character featured in a series of articles Klinger wrote for "The Bridge World" magazine. The Old Master managed to snatch victory from impossible-seeming situations but in the final article, he collapsed and died... or did he? In "Right Through the Pack Again" the cards strive to keep the Old Master alive. Each card tells its own tale and how it was the key feature in a particular hand. Not only will you be entertained by the deals, you will also learn more about why the Old Master has lost the zest for life. Will the cards be able to restore his desire to live?

In 2013, **Bill Jacobs** won for "Fantunes Revealed".

Not since the introduction of Precision has a new bidding system created such an immediate impact as Fantunes, the unique methods of Fulvio Fantunes and Claudio Nunes, the world's number-one ranked pair. [Unfortunately, the partnership and their record were tarnished by cheating allegations, and they have since been banned from bridge. However, there is nothing to suggest that their bidding system was flawed. Ed.] This book delves into the system, explaining how it works and, just as importantly, why it works. Two words best describe Fantunes: natural and fun. This is the definitive text for those who would like to try this innovative and proven new bidding system.

In 2014, **Tim Bourke** and Justin Corfield (who lives in Ireland) won for "The Art of Declarer Play".



Bill Jacobs



Tim Bourke

"The Art of Declarer Play" belongs in the ranks of Watson, Reese and Kelsey as one of the best books on declarer play ever written.

Anybody can make straightforward contracts. "The Art of Declarer Play" is about how to handle the rest. If you already have a good grasp of declarer play technique, the blocking and unblocking plays, the eliminations and squeezes, then this is the book for you. Bourke and Corfield begin where most of the other books finish, and reveal what goes on inside the mind of the expert, explaining how to anticipate the likely distribution, how to use logic and visualisation, how to listen to the cards, and many other ways to make 'impossible' contracts.

ALAN TRUSCOTT AWARD

The Alan Truscott Award is presented periodically to a person who does something for bridge that the IBPA Executive believes Alan would appreciate.

In 2012, the recipient was **Tim Bourke**, who not only produces the IBPA column service each month, but also converts all the BBO files into text for journalists.

This was followed up in 2013 with the award being presented to **Ian McKinnon**, for producing "Duplicate Bridge Schedules, History and Mathematics", an essential book for tournament directors, as well as bridge players, about the history of the game of duplicate bridge. This comprehensive volume supplies all the movements ever thought of, and many hundreds of new ones. Each movement is also assessed for its measure of quality, called calibre.

He also presents a brand new event type, the Scissor movement, in which any event can be run and scored as both a pairs game and a teams game. The book also delves into the lives of John T. Mitchell and Edwin C. Howell (the most common pairs movements are named after them).



Ian McKinnon

"ITES" AWARD FOR BEST DEFENCE OF THE YEAR

In 2004 this was awarded to **Martin Bloom and Peter Gill**.

Ron Klinger wrote the article "Bloom 'n' Gill" about the hand.

"Peter Gill pulled off a neat coup against a top-class defender (in the NSW Open Team selection). He later said, "As an avid reader of the Sydney Morning Herald bridge column, I noticed the coup earlier this year. I was delighted to put it into practice." Here is the deal where Gill employed the manoeuvre to which he referred:

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

<i>West</i> Bloom	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i> Gill	<i>South</i>
Pass	3NT	All Pass	1NT

Bloom led a fourth-highest ♦3 – 4 – 2 – 7. Declarer continued with the ♣2 – 7 – Q – 5!! Declarer expected the ♣A to be on his left, of course, and it seemed that clubs were 3-3. He continued with the ♣3 – 10 – 4 – 9. Gill now cashed the ♣A, followed by the ♣J, and the diamond return gave the defence five tricks."



Peter Gill

SOLOMON AWARD FOR THE HAND OF THE YEAR

In 1976 the Charles Solomon Award for the "Hand of the Year" went to a hand played by Australia's **Tim Seres**, and reported by Denis Howard. Howard received the cash - \$100 - for his write-up; the wistful Seres received an IBPA plaque.

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

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		1♣	1♠
Pass	2♠	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

After posing the East hand as a defensive problem, Howard continued: So much for an eminently reasonable analysis of the defensive chances. However, when Tim Seres held the East cards a week ago, he won West's lead of the ♣7 with the ♣A and, after the briefest of pauses, played the ♥K!

Declarer deduced from the opening bid and the switch to the ♥K that East held ♥K-Q. Wouldn't anyone?

With the ♥J up his sleeve, declarer was lured into a false sense of security. He could have played three rounds of diamonds and thrown a heart, but that is not risk-free; for example, the diamonds could break 5-2 or East could promote a second trump trick by later taking the ♠A, cashing one heart, and playing the fourth diamond.

The sensible thing to do was to win the ♥A and play a spade from dummy at trick 3, and declarer did just that. The raptorial Seres pounced on the spade, and laid the ♥9 on the table. Declarer had barely time to murmur 'moriturus te saluto' before West had wrapped up two heart tricks.

Declarer, numbed to further pain, sat quietly while West then played the last heart. East hit that with the ♠J (known in the trade as an uppercut) and West's ♠10 became a trick. Two down in an ice-cold contract, but who would blame the hapless declarer.

This is an enlightening hand because it illustrates the buccaneering insight that can transmute defeat into victory in any competitive arena.

Seres wrote a BOLS tip on the theme that the defence should always be alert to present declarer with a choice of plays and thus hope to induce error, when with no choice there could be no error. The above hand is a brilliant practical application of that theory.

This award was renamed the Rose Cliff Declarer Play of the Year by the time **Michael Courtney** won in 2010 (*ABF Newsletter September 2017*).

From 2011 the award became the Keri Klinger Memorial Declarer Play of the Year, which **Richard Jedrychowski** won in 2016, for a hand (again) written up by Ron Klinger, "The Force of the Jedi". [For those who do not know Richard, his nickname is a far-easier-to-pronounce: "Jedi".] This was mentioned in the ABF Newsletter of November 2016, with a link to the hand: <http://www.abf.com.au/2016-ibpa-awards>.



Tim Seres



Richard Jedrychowski

ROSENKRANZ AWARD

In 1983 the Rosenkranz Award for the best article about a convention or system went to **Bruce Neill** for his article about "Rubensohl".

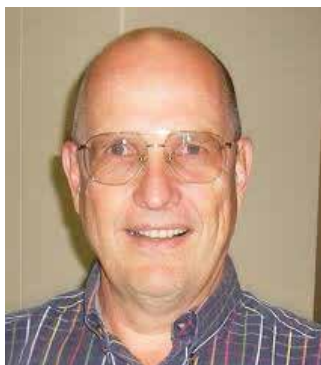
The article is too long to reproduce, however here is a summary. It works much like Lebensohl after your side has opened 1NT or made a takeout double, but with the advantage that it works over both major and minor suits. It also includes a method of enquiring about 4-card majors and/or stoppers in the enemy suit, when responder is strong enough for game.

Rubensohl is based on all bids from 2NT to 3♣ being transfers to the next suit when faced with 2-level interference over your 1NT opening bid, or after doubles of 2-level opening bids. [Ed: I played the system for many years and found it to be very effective. Current trends towards transfer bidding after interference complement Rubensohl once again.]

Another major advantage of Rubensohl is that you can also use it effectively in a wide range of other competitive situations.

Here is a link to the full article:

http://www.jannersten.org:1500/~server/IBPA/archive/Handbook/IBPA%20Handbook.pdf_pages_156-159



Bruce Neill

BOLS BRILLIANCY PRIZE

(awarded from 1976 to 1986)

Ron Klinger won this award in 1976, and his hand was published in My Favourite Hand (May 2017).

In 1980, **Dick Cummings** won the award for a hand written up by Ron Klinger, in an article "Bid 'em up, play 'em up".

"If one is going to bid a hand to the hilt, then one needs the resources of expert technique to justify such bidding. Dick Cummings left no doubt as to his resourcefulness on this hand from the match between Australia and Indonesia.

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

The Indonesian West had opened 1♥ and rebid 2♥ over East's 1♠. He played it right there. He ruffed the diamond lead, played ♥A and a low heart, and wound up making 10 tricks, thanks to the club finesse and the spade break, which allowed the club loser to be discarded.

At the other table (on Vugraph):

West	North	East	South
Cummings		Seres	
1♥	Pass	2♣	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

North again led the ♦Q, and Cummings demonstrated that he needed neither the club finesse nor the safety play in trumps. With this trump combination, provided there are sufficient entries to dummy, the safety play is to lead from dummy and insert the Jack, gaining in the precise layout that existed, and also if South, with K-Q-x, fails to split his honours. However, the black suit entries in dummy could not be spared for the safety play since they might be vital later in the play.

Cummings cashed the ♥A, and when the ♥10 dropped he carefully continued with the ♥J. If trumps were 3-2, the ♥J could be spared, and if South started with K-Q-8-5 the ♥J was necessary to set the stage for a trump coup. South won the ♥Q and switched to the ♠4 – 5- Jack – Ace. Cummings shortened his trump holding by ruffing another diamond and cashed the ♠K and ♠Q. This was now the position, with declarer holding one trump more than South – one too many for the trump coup to operate:

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

Cummings led a club to the ♣A! The Vugraph audience groaned, but they had not seen Cummings' plan. The contract was cold regardless of the location of the ♣K.

Dummy's ♠10 was now played. South could not afford to ruff or he would lose any chance of an extra trump trick, so he discarded. Cummings discarded a club. Next dummy's last diamond was trumped, declarer finally reducing to the same length in trumps as South. The ♣J was his exit card. No matter who won that, Cummings was assured of his tenth trick with the ♥9-7 poised over South's ♥10-8.

(To appreciate what an error it would have been to finesse clubs, mentally give South the ♣K-5. The club finesse loses and South leads his remaining club. Now South will be able to ruff a club or West will be stuck in his own hand at the crucial 11th trick, and have to yield two more trump tricks to South.) "

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MARGARET PARNIS JUNIOR SPORTSMANSHIP

IBPA Sportsmanship Awards are granted occasionally for acts of sportsmanship that define how we should all act. In 2013 the Award was specifically targeted at junior players. **Justin Howard (now Mill)** was one of the joint recipients.

Firstly, in the semi-final of the World Open Youth Team Championship, Howard allowed an opponent to retract a card inadvertently dropped, even though it cost him the contract and jeopardised the match. His team won that match on the last board. Secondly, in the final, he allowed his opponents to field a player who had not previously played in the event due to continued success in the Spingold (a US national event, run concurrently). "We want to play against your best," was Justin's argument. Unfortunately, Justin's team lost that match. The behaviour of Justin Howard is laudatory and shows that there is excellent sportsmanship in the Junior game as well as the Open game.



Justin Mill



Nabil Edgton

RICHARD FREEMAN JUNIOR DEAL OF THE YEAR

As reported in September 2017, **Nabil Edgton** was this year's recipient of the award, based on the article written by Liam Milne.

The American Bridge Teachers' Association also presents their own annual awards for the "Book of the Year":

BEGINNER (Book of the Year)

This award has been awarded to Australians four times since its inception in 1982:

Ron Klinger was the recipient of the ABTA Award in 1991 for his "Guide to Better Card Play".

In 2007, the award was presented to **Gary Brown**, for "Learning to Play Bridge".

Patrick O'Connor won the Award twice: in 2012 for "A First Book of Bridge Problems, and in 2014 for "A Second Book of Bridge Problems".



Patrick O'Connor

ADVANCED (Book of the Year)

Tim Bourke, with David Bird, won this award in 2013 for their book, "15 Winning Cardplay Techniques".

Barbara Travis

YOUTH WEEK 2018



<http://www.abfevents.com.au/events/ayc/2018/>



This coming January will mark the 50th Anniversary of the Australian Youth Bridge Championships. Many of our Australian legends of the game developed their skills playing in the Youth Championships. In 2018, the event will bring together past and present youth players and start the journey for a whole new set of future champions.

Anyone who has ever participated in the Championships is invited to join in festivities on Thursday January 11 and Friday January 12, taking part in the Hall of Fame events. It will be wonderful to have every year of the championships represented by past participants.

In addition to the normal schedule which includes the Australian Youth Teams and Pairs Championships and the Australian Youth Selection Butler there will also be an opportunity for new players to join in a bridge Crash Course on January 6 and 7.

The Championships are open to players who are 35 years or younger (with the exception of the Hall of Fame players) and will be held at the Bush Capital Lodge in Canberra and run from January 6 -12.

Full details of the event can be found at <http://www.abf.com.au/event/2018-australian-youth-championships/> or email the convenors (Laura Ginnan and Justin Mill) at youthweek2018@gmail.com.

Laura Ginnan



Winners of the Spring Nationals Linda Stern Women's Teams: Pauline Evans - Judy Osie, Anita Curtis - Rena Kaplan



The HOFFMAN team, 2nd in the Spring National Open Teams: Stephen Fischer, Richard Brightling, David Hoffman, David Morgan

HOW WOULD YOU PLAY?

HAND 1

♠ A Q 5
♥ J 9 5 3
♦ Q 10 7 3
♣ 6 4

♠ 7 4
♥ A K Q 10 6 2
♦ A J
♣ K 9 3

You, South, are playing in 4♥ with no interference bidding. West leads the ♠J. What is your plan?

HAND 2

♠ 7 6 4
♥ Q 5 4
♦ A K J 2
♣ A K J

♠ K 2
♥ A K 2
♦ 10 8 7 3
♣ 8 7 3 2

You, South, are playing in 3NT with no opposition bidding. West leads ♠5 which East wins with the ♠A, and returns the ♠J. What is your plan?

HAND 3

♠ A
♥ A Q 3
♦ K Q 9 5 3
♣ J 10 9 8

♠ K 7 5 3
♥ K 9 5
♦ J 2
♣ K Q 7 5

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

West leads ♠10 against your 3NT. What is your plan?

The solutions can be found on Page 20.



Ron Klinger and Matt Mullamphy,
winners of the Dick Cummings Open Pairs
at the Sydney Spring Nationals

PLAY THIS HAND

This hand and its interesting solution were provided by Nick Hardy, from Tasmania.

♠ A K
♥ Q 8 6 2
♦ 8 7 6
♣ 8 7 5 3

♠ 9 8 5 4
♥ A K 6 4
♦ A Q 10
♣ A J

West	North	East	South
1♠	Pass	Pass	Double
Pass	3♥	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

North plays 4♥. The lead is the ♠Q. What is your plan?

SOLUTION:

♠ A K
♥ Q 8 6 2
♦ 8 7 6
♣ 8 7 5 3

♠ Q J 10 6 3
♥ 10 9
♦ K J 9
♣ K Q 2

♠ 7 2
♥ J 5 3
♦ 5 4 3 2
♣ 10 9 6 4

♠ 9 8 5 4
♥ A K 6 4
♦ A Q 10
♣ A J

You would like to ruff two clubs but communications are a problem. The ♦K will be off-side but there is just room for East to hold the ♦J. Is there a better line than finessing the ♦10?

After winning the spade lead, you play ♠A and another club. Suppose West returns a spade and you ruff a club, West having played ♣2, then ♣Q and ♣K. Now you can't return to hand for another club ruff without sacrificing a trump trick, since East can over-trump spades. But look what happens if you play ♥A and ♥K, then ruff a spade with the ♥Q. West is in trouble when you ruff another club. A diamond discard allows you to establish a diamond trick, while a spade discard enables you to lead the last spade and end-play him in diamonds.

Nick Hardy

CARD COMBINATION 3

Dummy	Declarer
7 6 5	A Q 9

If you need to play this suit for only 1 loser (and you may have extra length in the suit), entries permitting, you should first lead towards the A-Q-9 and insert the 9. This allows for your RHO to hold the J-10, or even the K-J-10. If the 9 loses to LHO's 10 or Jack, you will lead from dummy again, and take the finesse of the Queen next time.

SELF-PRESERVATION

Dealer West : East-West vulnerable

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	?	

What would you do as East with:

♠ A K Q 3
♥ J 8 5 3
♦ A K 6 4
♣ 6

You should open 1♦. If partner responds 1♥ or 1♠, you are good enough to jump to game in partner's suit. After 1♦ : 1♥ or 1♦ : 1♠, you might even jump to 4♣, a splinter raise, showing enough strength to bid game with 4-card support for responder and 0-1 cards in clubs. If partner responds 2♣, you are strong enough to reverse with 2♥, forcing to game after a 2-level response.

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	1♦	2NT
Pass	4♣	?	

What does South's 2NT mean?

The unusual 2NT overcall normally shows at least 5-5 in the two cheapest unbid suits. After a major-suit opening, 2NT is played for the minors. After a 1♦ opening, most play it as at least 5-5 in hearts and clubs.

What about North's jump to 4♣?

North figures to have 4+ clubs and possibly a good passed hand. Given the vulnerability, North might merely be suggesting a sacrifice.

What do you do now?

You are worth some action and the best chance to find a contract your way is via a takeout double. With some defensive strength and a trump trick or two, West might leave the double in for penalties.

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

What now?

You should Pass. You have done as much as you could reasonably do. You cannot guarantee that you will defeat 4♥, and doubling for one down is generally a losing proposition.

West leads the ♦7 (fourth-highest) and this is what you see:

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

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

Trick 1: ♦7 – 2 – King – Queen.

What is the diamond position?

West might have J-9-8-7 or J-9-8-7-3 and South ♦Q-3 or ♦Q bare.

How can you find out which it is?

On the bidding, South is known to have at least 5 hearts and 5 clubs and at most three cards in the other suits. If you find out how many spades partner has, that will tell you how many spades South has. A common agreement is that the play of a King asks for count. At trick 2 East should play the ♠K – 5 – 10 – 6. West's ♠10 (high-low with an even number) not only tells you that West began with four spades and South two, but the 10 also means that South has the ♠J left. With J-10-x-x, West would have played the ♠J under the king. Therefore, it is safe to cash a spade.

You play the ♠Q – Jack – 2 – 7.

Should you cash a diamond next? Or a third spade?

Hardly. South has followed to two spades and one diamond. South cannot have any more cards in those suits.

What should you play at trick 4?

If partner happens to have a club trick, partner will always make it whatever you do. You know partner has only one heart. Your heart holding is in jeopardy.

Can you foresee what declarer will do if you play a spade or a diamond next?

South will ruff and cash two top hearts if partner's heart singleton is low. Finding the 4-1 break, South will cross to dummy and finesse against your ♥J.

What can you do about that?

Here is the full deal from the final of a National Team Selection in 2015:

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

If East plays a spade or a diamond at trick 4, South ruffs and cashes ♥A, ♥K, followed by the ♣3 to the ♣Q and the ♥9 – 8 – 10 (discard), and the ♥Q, 10 tricks, +420.

At trick 4, East should switch to the ♣6. In theory, South could win in dummy and take a first round finesse in hearts. That is highly improbable. If South wins the club and plays ♥A, ♥K, the contract is one down. South cannot now reach dummy for the ♥10 finesse.

Ron Klinger

Although its aim is different, the Deschapelles Coup is a close relative of the Merrimac Coup which we looked at last time.

Again, the play involves the sacrifice of a high honour card but this time the goal is to force an entry to partner's hand rather than to attack declarer's communications. The coup is named after Guillaume Deschapelles, who invented it at whist.

Dealer North

EW Vul ♠ A J 10 4
♥ A J
♦ J 3
♣ K J 10 9 7

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

♠ K Q
♥ 10 6 5 3
♦ 8 6 5 2
♣ Q 8 2

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

North overbid when she raised to 3NT. She had no right to expect more than South's actual strength for 1♦ followed by 1NT, though South could have been a little stronger, of course.

When West led the ♦K to East's bare Ace, it looked as though North might get very lucky, courtesy of the 6-1 diamond split. And, against most players in the East seat, North would indeed have got lucky. Our actual East stopped to think, however. She expected West's diamonds to be running if West ever gained the lead, because West had led the King despite South having bid the suit. Surely, with the Ace and Jack visible, West had to have KQ109x(x) to justify the lead. But how to find an entry to the West hand? South must have most, if not all, the missing high cards. A club or spade honour could be finessed by declarer, leaving only the ♥Q as a possibility to defeat the contract.

Accordingly, East switched to the ♥K! The Deschapelles Coup forced an entry to the established winners and the contract was defeated by two tricks. Very impressive.

[If declarer won the ♥A immediately then, on winning the ♣A, East could reach West's hand with the ♥Q. On the other hand, if the ♥K was ducked, the next round of hearts would remove the ♥A anyway, and East still held the ♥Q.]

Brian Senior



"It is not the handling of difficult hands that makes the winning player. There aren't enough of them. It is the ability to avoid messing up the easy ones." (Alan Sontag)

The American Contract Bridge League Bulletin of July 2007 had an interesting article about how to improve your game. 10 common errors and how to avoid them were mentioned:

1. PLAYING TOO FAST

Whether you are declaring or defending you are allowed to stop and think before playing to trick 1. As declarer you should be developing a plan and this plan may determine where you win the first trick.

Slow down and think about the hand.

2. CASHING TRICKS TOO EARLY

Try to establish extra tricks, not just cash the ones you started with. Aces are made to take Kings, not spot cards. This applies to both declarer and defenders. Work on your long suits, whether by losing a trick or by trumping.

Plan ahead as both declarer and defenders.

3. TRUMP MISMANAGEMENT 1

One error is having winners trumped because you failed to remove the opponents' trumps.

If you have winners outside the trump suit, remove the outstanding trumps so your winners are not ruffed.

4. TRUMP MISMANAGEMENT 2

Another error is drawing too many rounds of trumps.

If you need to cross-ruff the hand or if you need to trump losers, don't draw trumps until after those jobs have been done.

5. BAD BIDDING AFTER DOUBLES

Remember what your partner's takeout doubles show, and bid accordingly. If you know you belong in game, let partner know you belong in game (i.e. bid game yourself).

Don't make partner guess what to do; tell her what you've got instead.

6. BAD BIDDING AFTER OVERCALLS

Support your partner's overcall if you have support. Treat an overcall like an opening bid until you find out otherwise.

When partner overcalls, respond as if it was an opening bid.

7. BAD PENALTY DOUBLES

Don't penalty double the opponents based on points only. Long suits are not winners; they are likely to be trumped. You need tricks and usually trump tricks to make penalty doubles.

Don't double for penalties just because you have a strong hand.

8. DESCRIBING v. DECIDING

Overbidding or underbidding occurs because you and your partner are both 'describing' or neither of you has taken a 'deciding' role.

Describe your hand to your partner and then let partner decide where you belong. Similarly, when partner has finished describing their hand to you, you must decide the final contract.

9. TELLING THE SAME STORY TWICE

Don't rebid 5-card suits if there is a reasonable alternative. Either introduce a second suit or rebid NT.

10. PHYSICAL OR MECHANICAL ERRORS

Slow down and concentrate on what you are doing. Check it is your bid, check what you bid, check you have followed suit.

These 'rules' should minimise those silly errors one makes.

REVOKES (Laws 61 - 64)

The Laws consider a revoke to be a very serious offence:
"In playing to a trick, each player must follow suit if possible. This obligation takes precedence over all other requirements..."
 (Law 44C).

In an effort to negate the effect of revokes, the laws require their immediate correction, but only if discovered before a member of the offending side (that means either the revoker or his partner) plays to the next trick.

To correct a revoke, the offender simply substitutes a legal card for the illegal one. In addition, if the revoker is a defender then the illegally exposed card becomes a penalty card, which stays on the table to be played at the first legal opportunity. The good news is that when a revoke is discovered within time, there's no further penalty.

Whenever a player fails to follow suit, his partner has the right to enquire as to whether he has a card of the suit led. This right to ask varies slightly depending upon of the player:

- Dummy may only ask declarer.
- Declarer may ask either defender.
- Defenders may ask one another or declarer.

A revoke that remains undetected until after a member of the offending side plays to the next trick is said to have become established. Other ways that a revoke can be established include claiming, conceding and agreeing to a claim or a concession. It is only an established revoke (those discovered too late to correct) that can incur a penalty. Now the hand must be played to completion before the Director can apply any sort of rectification.

When a revoke is established, at least one of the subsequent tricks won by the offending side is usually transferred to the opponents. The exact number of tricks varies with circumstance:

- If the offending side lost the revoke trick and all subsequent ones, no tricks are transferred.
- If the revoke card actually won the trick and the offending side also won a subsequent trick, a minimum of two tricks are transferred to the opposition.
- In all other cases, the offenders only give away one trick.

Note specifically that it is only two tricks if the revoke card won the trick. If the revoking player's partner won it then the standard adjustment is just one trick. Also, you never have to give up tricks won before the offence occurred. It's only the revoke trick and the subsequent tricks which are up for grabs.

The automatic transfer of tricks following a revoke is non-discretionary and independent of any potential damage that might have been caused. Sometimes the non-offenders gain an unexpected windfall due to a revoke, sometimes the number of tricks received just balances the actual loss, and sometimes the non-offenders still find themselves disadvantaged.

In a situation where the automatic trick transfer fails to compensate the non-offending side adequately for the damage sustained, the Director is still empowered (via Law 64C1) to award an adjusted score. Since the general underlying principle of any score adjustment is to redress damage, the Director simply adjusts the result back to what he believes would have been the normal outcome without any infraction.

Laurie Kelso



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HAND 1

♠ A Q 5
♥ J 9 5 3
♦ Q 10 7 3
♣ 6 4

♠ J 10 9 8
♥ 4
♦ K 8 6
♣ A 8 7 5 2

♠ K 6 3 2
♥ 8 7
♦ 9 5 4 2
♣ Q J 10

♠ 7 4
♥ A K Q 10 6 2
♦ A J
♣ K 9 3

You are playing in 4♥, South, with no interference bidding. West leads the ♠J. What is your plan?

This hand comes from "That Elusive Extra Trick", by Terence Reese and David Bird. It deals with stopping and thinking at trick one.

There are several potential finesses available on this hand, and many declarers would just tackle each finesse, one by one. However, suppose you finesse the ♠Q. If this loses and East switches to a club through your ♣K, you are now dependent on the diamond finesse. If that also fails, you would consider yourself unlucky, with three key cards offside.

The key to the hand is thinking about your need to keep East off lead; you want to protect your minor suit holdings. If you duck the ♠J at trick one, East can overtake with the ♠K but that will allow you a diamond discard, and now your contract is safe. On the other hand, if the ♠J holds the first trick, the play changes. West leads a second spade, which you now win with the ♠A. Having drawn trumps, ending in dummy, you finesse the ♦J. If it loses to West, your ♣K is still safe. You have two discards available on diamonds, so 10 tricks are assured.

HAND 2

♠ 7 6 4
♥ Q 5 4
♦ A K J 2
♣ A K J

♠ Q 10 8 5 3
♥ 10 8 6
♦ 9 6 5
♣ 10 9

♠ A J 9
♥ J 9 7 3
♦ Q 4
♣ Q 6 5 4

♠ K 2
♥ A K 2
♦ 10 8 7 3
♣ 8 7 3 2

You, South, are playing in 3NT with no opposition bidding. West leads ♠5 which East wins with the ♠A, and returns the ♣J. What is your plan?

This hand comes from Larry Cohen's latest offering, teaching you improved declarer play techniques playing no trump contracts: www.larryco.com/bridge-store/detail/larry-teaches-declarer-play-at-notrump

You have eight tricks (1 spade, 3 hearts, 2 diamonds, 2 clubs) and have to work out how to get one more trick. At the same time, you need to consider how the spade suit is breaking.

When East returns a high spade and West plays the ♣3 at trick 2, you should realise that spades are breaking 5-3, which means you cannot afford to lose the lead. This means that if a finesse fails you will lose a trick in that suit plus four spade tricks.

You have two finesses available, one in clubs and another in diamonds. Which should you take? You should try to combine your chances, instead of guessing to take one finesse. The best way to combine your two chances is to cash the ♦A and ♦K first. If the ♦Q drops singleton or doubleton you will have 10 tricks. (This will happen more than one third of the time.) If the ♦Q does not drop, then, having cashed the ♣A first, you should cross to hand and try the club finesse.

Why do you try to drop the doubleton ♦Q rather than the ♣Q? You try to drop the doubleton Queen in the suit in which you have 8 cards, rather than the suit with 7 cards, because the likelihood of a doubleton Queen is higher in the suit in which you have greater length.

HAND 3

♠ A
♥ A K 3
♦ K Q 9 5 3
♣ J 10 9 8

♠ Q 10 9 8 6 4
♥ J 10 2
♦ A 6
♣ A 4

♠ J 2
♥ 8 7 6 4
♦ 10 8 7 4
♣ 6 3 2

♠ K 7 5 3
♥ Q 9 5
♦ J 2
♣ K Q 7 5

Bobby Wolff writes a daily bridge blog, and this article comes from his website: <http://aces.bridgeblogging.com>

"The three little pigs have become quite proficient at duplicate bridge. On this deal, they revealed aspects of their personalities in their play of 3NT. All three of them sat South at different tables, and all played in 3NT after West had made a 1♣ overcall. That player made his natural lead of the ♠10 and, when dummy put up the ♠A, East unblocked the ♠J.

"The little pig that made his house out of straw insouciantly drove out the ♠A, won the third spade, and tried to drive out the ♦A. West won and cashed out in spades for down two.

"The little pig who relied on sticks led a diamond from dummy towards his ♦J. Again, West won and cleared spades. Declarer could now test diamonds before committing himself to clubs but, when West produced the ♠A, the defenders again had six tricks.

"The little pig who put his trust in bricks and mortar understood that West's decision to overcall, and not make a weak jump, very likely marked him with both outstanding minor-suit Aces. He came to hand with a heart to the ♥Q, then led the ♦2 towards dummy's honours. If West had risen with the ♦A, South would have four diamond tricks. When he played low, that gave declarer an extra trick, and he could now knock out the ♣A to claim his game (2 spades, 3 hearts, 1 diamond, 3 clubs)."

Barbara Travis

HANDS FROM HELGEMO by Peter Gill

Peter Gill provided these hands, where Geir Helgemo starred, from the World Championships in Lyon. Many top players consider Helgemo to be the best player in the world. Certainly, his ability to picture the cards, accordingly finding imaginative plays (both as declarer and defender) is second to none.

When Monaco played Australia, Helgemo faced a defensive problem on the following hand:

Dlr East	♠ A Q 6 3 2		
EW Vul	♥ 3		
	♦ 9 8 3		
	♣ K 10 9 6		
♠ K J 8 5		♠ 10 4	
♥ K 9		♥ Q 10 8 7 2	
♦ J 10 7 2		♦ K 6 5	
♣ J 8 7		♣ Q 5 3	
	♠ 9 7		
	♥ A J 6 5 4		
	♦ A Q 4		
	♣ A 4 2		
West	North	East	South
Helgemo	Gill	Helness	Peake
Pass	2♥	Pass	1NT (14-16)
Pass	3NT	All Pass	2♠

Helgemo led the ♦J to the ♦K and ♦A. Andrew Peake led the ♠9 to the ♠J and ♠Q, cashed the ♠A, and led another spade which Helgemo won, with Helness discarding a diamond.

What should Geir Helgemo do now? No exit card seems safe. He led the ♥9! This went to the ♥Q and ♥A. Declarer now led a club to the ♣9, won by the ♣Q, and the diamond return meant that the contract failed.

There was no way that Andrew could envisage that the winning play was to play for Helgemo to have ♥K-9 doubleton.

If Helgemo had exited with the ♥K instead of the ♥9, Andrew Peake would have ducked, and Helgemo would have been end-played. [Many declarers made the contract on the lead of the ♦J to the ♦K, whereas 3NT failed when West started with the ♦2 instead; the ♦J-10 then allowed diamonds to be continued. Ed.]

On the next hand, Monaco was the only team in the Bermuda Bowl (Open event) to defeat South's 3NT contract.

CARD COMBINATION 4

I expect most people are aware of the following combination:

Declarer	Dummy
A Q 9 2	K 10 7 6 5

To allow for any 4-0 break, your first lead should be from the hand with two honours. This allows you to keep a tenace (finesse position: Q-9 and K-10) over whichever opponent has J-8-4-3.

What would you do if the combined holding was:

Declarer	Dummy
A Q 9 2	K 8 7 6 5

Dlr South	♠ K Q J 10		
NS Vul	♥ K 10 9		
	♦ 10 8 7 4		
	♣ Q 10		
♠ A 5 4		♠ 8 7 6	
♥ Q 6 5 3		♥ J 8 4	
♦ 9 6 5		♦ A 3	
♣ K J 2		♣ 9 8 7 6 5	
	♠ 9 3 2		
	♥ A 7 2		
	♦ K Q J 2		
	♣ A 4 3		
West	North	East	South
Pass	2♣	Pass	1NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	2♦

59 of the 62 Wests on lead found a small heart lead, and two led a diamond. Geir Helgemo was the only person to find a different lead.

It seems that his reasoning was something along these lines: "All the suits are breaking 3-3 or 3-2 for declarer, so the contract will make on a passive defence. I'll have to be active to make five tricks before declarer makes his contract.

"I have 10 HCP, so partner has about 4-5 HCP at most.

"A heart lead might work if partner has something like ♥K-J-x-x, but even then we need to find a fifth trick (in clubs?). However, if East holds those hearts, then North will have four spades, given the auction, and that would give declarer 9 tricks via 3 spades, 1 heart, 4 diamonds, 1 club.

"Given that North has at least one 4-card major, perhaps East will hold long clubs instead. Four or five clubs including the ♣Q is more likely than the perfect heart holding. That even gives partner a few other values."

Anyway, Helgemo backed his instincts (judgement), leading the ♠K! His intention was to unblock the club suit, in the hope that partner held long clubs.

Declarer ducked the ♠K lead, so Helgemo continued his ♠J, and dummy won the ♠Q. Declarer now tackled the spade suit, unfortunately picking the 'wrong' suit in terms of the defenders' entries, and Helgemo won his ♠A to play his third club, establishing Helness's two club winners whilst he still had the ♦A as his entry.

Despite such stunning efforts from Helgemo, Monaco did not qualify for the final eight teams in the Bermuda Bowl.

Peter Gill

CARD COMBINATION 4 continued

Now you are missing J-10-4-3 instead.

The lack of 10 changes the situation. If North holds all four cards, you will have a loser no matter what you do. Therefore, the only scenario that should concern you is if South holds all four cards in the suit. You should start by leading the King (or 'single' honour), and this allows you to finesse twice should South hold all four cards. So this time, because you may need two finesses, you need to keep both the honours – for the equivalent of a double finesse.

Dear Barbara,

The following hand appeared at the Berry Bridge Club. Seated North, partner held:

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

West opened 1♦. What are you going to bid with this two-suited potential slam hand?

One option is to overcall 1♥, planning to rebid 4♠. On the other hand, the easy way out is to overcall 1♠, then bid 4♥.

Let's consider the possibilities:

1♦ - 1♥ - 3♦ - Pass
Pass - 3♠ : Partner may Pass with very few points;

1♦ - 1♥ - 3♦ - Pass
Pass - 4♠ : This is choice of suits, and clearly a big hand (5♥ if heart preference). If partner passes, you may have missed a slam;

1♦ - 1♠ - 3♦ - Pass
Pass - 5♥ : This should be a slam invitation, choice of suit, but partner may pass;

1♦ - 1♠ - 3♦ - Pass
Pass - 6♥ : Are you game? Of course.

Here we go, into the rarefied air of slam level. My hand was:

♠ 8 6 5 4
♥ 10
♦ 7 5 3
♣ K 9 8 6 2

Happiness is partner's often dreadfully uncontrolled 'every hand is an adventure' optimism. Would I have bid the slam with that hand? I think so.

Kath Kean, Nowra & Berry BC

This is a huge hand in terms of playing strength. It also demonstrates the benefits of using Michaels Cue Bids, and then being able to raise partner's choice of suit to slam. Ed.



Louise and Michael Brassil, overall winners of the Spdier Orchid Restricted Swiss Pairs, and winners of the Novice section (naturally), Canberra in Bloom Festival

COINCIDENCE: It was a dark and stormy night

Actually it wasn't, but it was cold and drizzly and miserable in the kind of way that West Melbourne seems to favour, and we had only six tables instead of the usual 11 or 12.

During our 5-table Mitchell, we all met this hand:

Dlr: North	♠ void	
E-W Vul	♥ A Q 9 7 5 4	
	♦ K Q 10	
	♣ A 10 8 3	
♠ 9 8 7 6		♠ J 4 3 2
♥ 10 2		♥ 8
♦ J 9 7 6 5 4 3		♦ A 8
♣ void		♣ J 9 6 5 4 2
	♠ A K Q 10 5	
	♥ K J 6 3	
	♦ 2	
	♣ K Q 7	

Every table finished with North playing 6♥. East led the ♦A, then gave West a club ruff for one down.

Some Easts might have led clubs for two down; some might even have found a reason to lead a major and give North the chance to take all 13 tricks.

What happened instead was that all five Norths scored 11 tricks, meaning that each East-West must have defended in exactly the same way. Perhaps we can put it down to telepathy or ESP or the funny electromagnetics of the place. But... more likely, coincidence.

Frank O'Shea, Williamstown BC



Desh Gupta & Subhash Jalota, winners of the Federation Rose Novice & Restricted Pairs, Canberra in Bloom Festival



Martin Clear (left) and Phillip Halloran (right), winners of the Ted Chadwick Restricted Pairs at the Sydney Spring Nationals, with Marilyn Chadwick

Hi Barbara,

I picked up a copy of the ABF Newsletter (September 2017) at the club on Thursday. I haven't read one for years, but it was well put together with some interesting stuff; a credit to you.

I came across a hand with which I was familiar, in *Teacher's Corner (Joan Butts)* on page 4. I held the West hand and opened 4♠. North doubled crisply and that was the end of the auction. I don't know whether there was a misunderstanding about the double or not, but we scored +790. At the other table our team-mates played in 5♦, down 1, for -50.

This was a highlight for me because I am a devotee of opening 7-4 hand shapes at the 4-level – though I felt some trepidation at the vulnerability (vulnerable v. not vulnerable) – and was very chuffed with the outcome.

I note that, of the players canvassed by Joan Butts, only Jim Wallis recommended the 4♠ opening bid. I spoke to a few other other players but did not find one who seriously considered opening 4♠.

I believe Stephen Burgess and Paul Marston were leading proponents of this bid.

Graham Pellen, SA Bridge Association

The other side of the coin was submitted by Lynn Kalmin:

Hi Barbara,

I read Joan Butts' article in the September ABF Newsletter yesterday, then picked up this hand at a Congress today.

I was sitting East, and North (dealer) passed. My hand (nil vulnerable):

♠ A 8 6 5
♥ K Q 10 8 5 3 2
♦ 4
♣ 8

I opened 4♥ only to find that this was the full hand:

♠ Q 9
♥ A J 9 5
♦ A 8 7
♣ 7 6 5 3

♠ K J 10 3
♥ void
♦ Q 10 3 2
♣ A J 10 4 2

♠ A 8 6 5
♥ K Q 10 8 5 3 2
♦ 4
♣ 8

♠ 7 4 2
♥ 7 6
♦ K J 9 6 5
♣ K Q 9

After the 4♥ opening bid, there was no further bidding, and 4♥ failed. At the other table, East opened 1♥ and was delighted by West's 1♠ response. Opener's jump rebid to 4♠ was an overbid, although successful.

Lynn Kalmin, North Shore BC

*Unexpected finalists in the Spring Nationals
Bobby Evans Seniors' Teams, then winners:
Richard Brightling, Stephen Mendick,
Michael Evans (son of Bobby Evans),
David Hoffman, Bernie Waters*



LAUREN TRAVIS

A SPECTACULAR SUCCESS

Lauren played this hand during the ANC in Adelaide, 2013. It was reported by her opponent, Paul Gosney.

Lauren, South, was playing in 3NT with the following cards:

Dir West ♠ 10 5 4 3
All Vul ♥ Q 10
♦ 9 3
♣ K Q 5 4 2

♠ K J
♥ K 9 4 2
♦ A 6 4
♣ A 8 6 3

West	North	East	South
2♦ (multi)	Pass	Pass	2NT
Pass	3♣	Pass	3♥
Pass	3♠	Pass	3NT

West should have led a diamond on this auction, given that East's initial Pass of 2♦ says, "I love diamonds", but then there would be no story. She led a spade which ran around to Lauren's ♠J. She had only seven tricks, but could mark the spade honours on her left (with no spades remaining on her right), giving West few of the remaining honour cards.

At trick 2, she led a heart to dummy's ♥Q, which held. At trick 3, she led a heart to her ♥K, which held (as expected). At trick 4, she claimed.

♠ 10 5 4 3
♥ Q 10
♦ 9 3
♣ K Q 5 4 2

♠ A Q 9 8 7 2
♥ J 7 6 5
♦ 7
♣ J 7

♠ 6
♥ A 8 3
♦ K Q J 10 8 5 2
♣ 10 9

♠ K J
♥ K 9 4 2
♦ A 6 4
♣ A 8 6 3

Double dummy, she can obviously lead to the ♥10 but, in reality, she could not afford for East to gain the lead if he held the ♥J, because she anticipated the diamond switch. Apparently, the speed with which she found her line and played to the ♥Q was daunting, but Paul Gosney ducked the ♥Q equally quickly. And the speed with which she led back to her ♥K had to be seen to be believed.

This article was written by Peter Gill in 1992, about his first national event in 1974. He believes it has never been published.

Did you know that in 1974, the ABF decided that the winners of the National Youth Teams in Canberra (in January) would become the Australian Open Team that year? This was a radical move by the ABF, which had a beneficial effect as the winners – Elizabeth and George Havas, Ted Griffin and Alan Walsh – profited from the experience, becoming some of Australia's top bridge players.

In those days, I was a schoolboy who had played bridge at school and home, and had recently been introduced to the challenge of duplicate bridge. The Youth Teams seemed beyond us that year, but my brother, John, and I decided to take on the Youth Pairs, a two-day event held while the final of the Youth Teams took place.

The first session was drawing to a close, and we were scoring well-below average. For the last two boards, we sat down to play two ultra-long-haired Sydney Uni students. Their system was, by 1974 standards, hyper-modern, being Kaplan-Sheinwold, and their convention card was absolutely covered by the enormous words **PHREKWENT SYKES**.

I looked at my hand:

♠ 8 2
♥ A Q 10 8 7 5 4 3
♦ 6
♣ 9 7

and noticed that the dealer on my right had opened 1♥, promising 5+ hearts!

Now is the time to reveal that my RHO was Bob Sebesfi, and LHO was Paul Woods, who were later to become legendary as the inventors of SWINE (Sebesfi-Woods 1-NT Extraction), a useful convention which is included in the Encyclopaedia of Bridge. Many of you will know Bob, and will be aware of his penchant (compulsion?) for psyching.

I restrained myself and passed in tempo, hoping to be able to penalty double a heart contract later, but they reached the normal contract of 5♦ XX; 'normal' because in those days most of our contracts somehow ended up redoubled. Dummy came down with ♥ K J 9 6 2 and other goodies, and Paul Woods observed that 11 tricks were cold. But he thought he may as well try for the overtrick by leading the ♥2 from dummy, in case I rose with the ♥A. So Trick 2 went ♥2 - ♥3 - ♦2 - ♦3! With the 'impossible' 8-0 break, 11 tricks had been reduced to 10.

Our +400 lifted our score from 41% to 45%. Paul ordered a double scotch from the bar at the Hotel Canberra, while Bob remained unperturbed.

On board 2, Paul and Bob quickly reached 6♣. Holding ♠ K 6 3 and an outside Ace, I had (in those youthful days) an automatic double, so naturally the contract became 6♣ XX. Bob put down ♠ Q J 10 9 in dummy, and I realised that my ♠K was under the Ace. Paul thanked Bob for the dummy, and knowing that my double meant that the trump finesse was working, exclaimed with joy about revenge for the previous hand, as he won the opening lead in his hand and led the ♠Q from dummy.

This is the first time in my life I can ever recall calling the Director.

The Director ruled – correctly, until Law changes in 1986 – that declarer, who had led from the wrong hand, had to lead a spade from his hand. [In 1986 the Laws were changed, and now Paul would be allowed to lead any card from his hand, allowing the redoubled contract to make. Ed.] I therefore made my ♠K in amazing circumstances. +400 again, and our score reached 49%.

Paul downed the scotch in one gulp, and in one elegant sweeping movement, threw his glass, which sailed through the air over all 12 tables in our section, fortunately hitting the curtain at the end of the room, ensuring a soft landing. Nobody else had even noticed the glass's flight and, of course, Bob remained unperturbed.

Our 49% score placed us 7th out of the 12 pairs in our section. Despite their horror finish, Bob and Paul who, like us, were newcomers to serious bridge, had 55% for 3rd in their direction. No wonder Paul had uttered some choice words after his second successive redoubled accident; they would have topped their section otherwise. Paul Lavings and Andrew Markovics (1974's equivalent of Peter Newman and John Spooner; or Justin Mill and Peter Hollands nowadays) led our section with 71%.

You may be surprised that we got as much as 49% with so little experience, but we did have a secret weapon. I had obtained a booklet about the latest Chinese bidding sensation, called the Precision system. I taught John the system in 30 minutes, we went to Lindfield Bridge Club and won (John's second game of duplicate bridge), and so we felt well-prepared to take on the stars.

In the second qualifying session, our attempts at Precision produced some good scores. For example, on one hand John opened 1NT (13-15 HCP) with:

♠ 9 6 4 3
♥ A K Q 10 5
♦ 6 4
♣ A 6

I responded 2♦, Game Forcing Stayman, according to the booklet. The 30 minutes' system training wasn't enough; John passed. But RHO, a pleasant young man named John Wilson, hadn't passed it out yet. He was peering at our system card... Little did he know that I had never seen a system card until that day, and I had mistakenly ticked the 'Extended Stayman' box.

I didn't realise that this suggested to Mr Wilson (yes, I hadn't yet adjusted to the duplicate bridge world where everyone uses their given name, so people in their mid-20s were "Mr" to me) that 2♣ was our only artificial Stayman response, so he thought that the 2♦ bid was natural. Mr Wilson therefore bid his 5-card spade suit. When I called 4♥ over his 2♣ bid, Mr Wilson and his wife Margaret understandably called the Director. The correct ruling is to allow play to continue (4♥ goes down one) then adjust the score at the end of the hand to 2♦ (in our 3-2 fit) down 4, as my RHO would have passed out 2♦ had I completed the system card properly. But this Director said, "You can't get away with misinforming the opponents about the meaning of 2♦; please play the contract in 2♣ (by RHO)." The Wilsons protested mildly and politely at this injustice (politeness to the Director being a fundamental Law of bridge), but we ended up with a top score for +200 when 2♣ failed by 2 tricks.

What a strange game this is, I thought. I commit an infraction, the innocent opponents call the Director to restore equity, but I end up having my poor score (4♥ -1) altered to a top score. You will be glad to know that this Director didn't direct any more ABF events after 1974! But it did happen to us again the next day...

Paul Lavings, on my left, opened 4♠ - Pass - Pass - to me. I held:

♠ K 6 4
♥ A Q 10 6 2
♦ K J 4
♣ J 6

Anyone who played teenage bridge will accept my 5♥ call as being automatic; older bridge players (including me in 1992) may regard the 5♥ call as abominable. Anyway, the Director was called, and I was asked, "Did your brother hesitate over 4♠ before passing?" "Yes, he did, but it didn't affect me at all," I replied.

The correct ruling is to allow play to continue, with the Director advising Lavings – Markovics to call him back at the end of the hand if they feel that the partner of the hesitator has not got a clear-cut bid. There is no suggestion that I was unethical or behaved improperly, but if the 5♥ contract was successful and the Director was called back at the end of the hand, adjusting the score to 4♠ undoubled would be a sensible ruling.

At the table, the Director stuck to his "Wilson" form by taking a look at my brother, John's, hand, seeing 6-card heart support there, and saying to me, "You don't have anything like a 5♥ bid, please play the hand in 4♠ doubled." When 4♠ X went down, with only 10 tricks available in hearts, the Director's poor ruling had given us another undeserved good score.

In the last 18 years, standards of tournament directing in Australia have improved immeasurably, so young players today may have to rely on playing good bridge to get good scores!

But back to the tournament... Helped by the Director's mistakes, we came 3rd out of 12 in the second session, and qualified for the Final by the barest margin: the elite top 14 pairs. Bob and Paul also qualified, with the top qualifiers being Lavings – Markovics with 71% and 72%.

After the first session of the Final, I commented to my brother that we had played "perfect bridge", or so we thought. The fact that we weren't experienced enough even to notice our mistakes was shown by our score of 37%. Bob and Paul were 13th on 39%, with a big gap to 12th place. There was still a lot for us to learn about this game.

Unlike 1992, the Youth Pairs was held at the end of Youth Week, so the last session of the Pairs was after a long week's bridge. Frivolity started to affect the results. Tony Ong, desperate for tops to try to catch up to the leaders, decided to punt for tops against us young kids. Double, we said, giving him several bottom scores. Against the leaders, Lavings – Markovics, (with a first session of 68%) we had two remarkable boards – the first described earlier where the Director wrongly gave us a near-top, and another top when John, holding

♠ A K x x x x x
♥ x x
♦ x x
♣ x x

passed RHO's 1NT opening, which was raised to 3NT. He cashed his 7 spade tricks when the suit broke 2-2-2.

Things were looking up. One of the leading players went down twice against us, and complained that "the defence was so bad that they found the only way to beat me" both times. When the smoke cleared, we had scored 63%, 2nd for the session (to Lavings – Markovics), and we had come 8th overall. It took another 12 years before I was able to improve 7 places and win the event.

To conclude an article called Frequent Psyches, I'd better include a hand which shows the damage done by over-indulging in psychic activity. At the Parramatta Congress in 1977, my partner, the illustrious Bob Sebesfi, opened 1♥ as dealer at favourable vulnerability. RHO passed and I held:

♠ A K
♥ A Q 8 6 4
♦ A J 9 3
♣ A Q

The thought crossed my mind that partner may have psyched, but no worries! I could respond 2NT, a game forcing raise which would force partner to continue bidding even if he had psyched! 4♥, said partner, and, forgetting that 3♥ would expose the psyche, whereas 4♥ showed a minimum opening bid, I passed! My partner held:

♠ J 9 3
♥ K J 10 9 4
♦ K 6
♣ K J 4

and claimed 13 tricks, then had the agony of surveying a flat scoresheet of six +1510s (7♥ making) and our solitary score of +510.

This was enough to deter Bob from psyching for the next 5... (years) days.

Peter Gill

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SLAM HAPPY

Me Again,

I have had some hard luck stories in recent times when I have picked up really large hands and partner has opened the bidding. I think I was let down on one hand when my partner (a beginner, dare I suggest?) passed my Blackwood bid. However, I digress. Please be gentle.

SLAM (UN)HAPPY #1

I was playing with someone new and I thought that it would be best to keep it simple. My partner opened 1♥, playing 5 card Majors, and I held:

- ♠ A Q 10 7 3
- ♥ K J 5
- ♦ A Q 7 6
- ♣ 5

Anyway, I wasn't sure whether 4♣ would be Gerber, so I just went 4NT. Partner was a bit confused by this and ... PASSED. Well, that was a bit of a let-down. Even though he managed to make 11 tricks in 4NT, obviously we got a bad score because 6♥ was easy.

SLAM (UN)HAPPY #2

This one was with Glenda. She opened 1♦ and I had this hand:

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

Well, we play Gerber, key card style, so I bid 4♣ and she showed 2 key cards. Then I asked for Kings and she showed 2. So now I wasn't sure and settled for 6♦ instead of 6NT. Actually, she made 7♦ but it was only an average score. Her hand was:

- ♠ K Q 10 4
- ♥ K 3
- ♦ A 10 4 3 2
- ♣ A 7

SLAM (UN)HAPPY #3

Glenda opened 1NT (15-17 HCP) and I had:

- ♠ K Q J 9 7 3
- ♥ K 5 2
- ♦ 3
- ♣ A J 5

Well, I'm ashamed to tell you that I tried 3♣ and when partner didn't support, I signed off in 4♣, making 12 tricks. I think I was a bit pessimistic.

*Your thoughts, please,
Guess Who.*

Dear Cathy,

Did you have a bus to catch on those first two hands? What was the hurry?

Let me remind you what happens when you respond 1♠ on a hand such as the first one. Even your not-so-well-trained partner will give you some excellent insight into the strength

and shape of the hand. Then you can ask for aces. If your partner supports spades, you may well find an alternative trump suit. I accept that you were trying to keep things simple for your less experienced partner but I suspect that you did so by creating a situation that a novice has never yet experienced, so little wonder that he got confused.

I guess that the moral of Hand #1 is that you usually get the best information by making a forcing new-suit response.

The same principle applies on Hand #2, but I can well understand the potential for disaster if you respond 1♠ and partner supports your 3-card suit. However, 2♣ can do little harm.

On this hand, you would have seen a 2♣ rebid from partner, confirming 5-4 and extra strength. I don't blame you for not reaching 7♦, after all it is only a make if the ♠J comes down, but 6NT starts to look good opposite 16+ HCP. This is a more difficult hand to bid because you don't have a second suit but the principle illustrated on the first hand still holds true.

The third hand was clearly more of a misjudgment on your part. However, over 1NT, this is the sort of hand that Gerber was designed for. In the modern game, Roman Key Card Blackwood is better but, holding the King and Queen of spades, a simple Ace ask is all you should need. If partner shows 2 Aces, have a go!

*Yours,
David*

David Lusk

[Ed: I would give different advice on Hand #3. I would suggest a transfer to spades, followed by a Splinter bid in diamonds to show your shortage, describe your hand to Opener and find out if this encourages them to want to be in slam.]

CARD COMBINATION 5

How would you play this trump suit to ensure at most 1 loser?

Dummy	Declarer
Q 8 4 3	A 10 7 6 5 2

Cashing the Ace first is wrong, because if your RHO started with all three trumps you will have two losers. Equally, leading the Queen first is wrong, because if LHO started with KJ9 you have created two losers. The correct play is to lead low – from either hand...

Imagine you lead low from the A107652 towards dummy's Queen. If your LHO follows suit, you play the Queen – in case they held KJ9. If RHO wins the King, your Ace will draw out the last remaining trump. If LHO shows out, you can play the Queen, then your next trump lead will be from the hand with Q843, finessing RHO's KJ9.

Imagine you lead low from the Q843 towards your length. If your RHO follows suit, you cover whatever card they play – cover the 9 with the 10, cover the Jack or King with the Ace. If RHO holds all the trumps, you have held yourself to one loser. If your RHO shows out, you play the Ace, and lead back towards dummy's Queen, catching LHO's KJ9 in the process.

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*Winners of the Two Men & a Truck Restricted Teams
 at the Sydney Spring Nationals:
 Hans Van Weeren, Jill Blenkley, Peter Clarke, Jeff Conroy*



*Best Novice Team in the Two Men & a Truck Restricted Teams
 at the Sydney Spring Nationals:
 Heidi Colenbrander - Ray Hurst, Marieta Borthwick -
 Annegrete Kolding*

MIS-USING FOURTH SUIT FORCING

Fourth suit forcing is a wonderful convention – one of my favourite conventions. However, you can't use it when it suits and hope that, at other times, it is natural.

You hold:

♠ 3
♥ J 9 7 3 2
♦ A 3
♣ A J 10 7 6

Auction:

You	Partner
	1♦
1♥	1♠
?	

At the table, this player rebid 2♣ which was alerted as fourth suit forcing – forcing to game. Clearly this hand does not qualify as game forcing opposite many opening hands, but the player said, "What can I do?" Well, she could rebid either 1NT (6-9 HCP) or 2NT (11-12 HCP and inviting game); she can decide whether she likes this 10 point hand (upgrade to 2NT) or not (rebid 1NT).

On this hand, either option will work because your partner has 17 HCP and would raise 1NT to 2NT, inviting game with a maximum, which you have, or raise 2NT to 3NT.

However, you cannot bid 2♣ on this hand because it says you have a game force, without clubs being under control. Next time partner will have a minimum hand and you will end up overbidding.

Fourth suit forcing (bidding the fourth suit) has to be used consistently, just as with any bridge convention; it's all about discipline so that your partner will know what is going on at the table. Using the above auction as an example, this is the sort of hand I would expect to bid 2♣:

♠ Q J 4
♥ A Q 8 6 5
♦ A 2
♣ 9 7 5

As responder, you know you belong in game, but so far there is no fit and, furthermore, you should not be the one to be bidding 3NT because:

1. You do not have clubs under control
2. If opener happens to have 3 card support in hearts you may well be better off playing in 4H
3. You do not have a ready rebid since 2H would be weak with long hearts, and 3H (or higher) should be a longer heart suit, given opener may not have heart support.

Another comment I have about using fourth suit forcing is that you and your partner need an agreement about what opener should rebid on minimum hands as opposed to non-minimum hands. Given that, on the original hand, the agreement was that fourth suit forcing was game forcing, then opener should probably be rebidding 2NT on a hand with 17 HCP to find out more about their responder's hand.

Here's a hand where responder should have used fourth suit forcing and didn't, then blamed partner for not bidding enough:

Opener

♠ K J 9
♥ void
♦ Q J 9 5 3
♣ A K J 7 5

Responder

♠ A Q 6
♥ 7 6 5 2
♦ A K 10 6 4
♣ 9

Actual Auction:

1♦	1♥
2♣	5♦

When declarer made all 13 tricks, responder suggested declarer should have bid more, when he had made the bidding error. (His suggestion that opener should have rebid 3♣ was gross, because 3♣ should be game forcing, and opener does not have a game forcing hand.)

Responder's hand was worth even more than its 16 TP, given the 5 card diamond support. He should have used fourth suit forcing, to create the game force, and once you have done that you can set diamonds at a low level:

Improved Auction:

1♦	1♥
2♣	2♠
3♣	3♦ (setting ♦)
3♠ (showing ♠K)	...

Whether you cue bid (and might find 7♦) or responder uses some form of Blackwood, you will now reach at least 6♦.

Bidding 5♦ immediately gives up all prospects for slam. By using fourth suit forcing, you can set diamonds as trumps, indicating you are interested in more than game – since you didn't bid 5♦ immediately – and explore for slam should partner be interested in co-operating.

It is important to remember, if you play fourth suit forcing, that you have it available as a bid, and to use it appropriately.

Barbara Travis



Winners of the Spring Nationals Novice Pairs:
Martin Brown and Gail McKenzie,
with Paul Lavings (sponsor)

Our newest regular contributor is Andy Hung. His first offerings are a series about responding to 1NT opening bids. Enjoy.

THE SMOLEN CONVENTION

Let's say your partner opens 1NT (say 15-17 HCP, but the range does not matter) and you hold:

♠ 9 8 5 3 2
♥ J 8 4 2
♦ 5 4
♣ 8 2

What do you do?

With 5-4 in the majors and a weak hand, it is common to bid 2♣ Stayman, then bid 2♠ if partner responds 2♦ (no major). This allows you to find a potential 4-4 (sometimes 5-4!) heart fit before you commit to the spades. This may wrong-side the contract but, with such a weak hand, it is more important to find the better part-score.

Let me give you a better hand this time, enough strength for game:

♠ A Q 9 8 6
♥ K J 7 6
♦ 5 2
♣ 8 5

Again, partner opens 1NT (15-17 HCP). What's your plan?

With 5-4 in the majors and a strong hand, I often see people transfer to their five-card major (here, it is spades), and rebid their other major to show a 5-4 shape and the strength for game. Can you see any potential problem with this?

Imagine your partner has this hand:

♠ J 3
♥ Q 9 8 3
♦ K 9 6
♣ A K Q 3

You will have found your heart fit, but it will be played by the wrong side. If the 1NT opener had been declaring the hand, his ♦K would be protected from the opening lead. The problem would be the same if you had five hearts instead. Say you hold:

♠ A K 6 3
♥ Q J 5 4 2
♦ 3
♣ 7 4 3

Partner opens 1NT (15-17). What's your plan? Transferring to hearts via 2♦, followed by a 2♣ rebid would be a common route taken by many players.

But if opener has:

♠ Q J 9 5
♥ K 3
♦ A K 8 5
♣ K 6 2

Again, the 4♠ contract would be better if it had been declared by the 1NT opener to protect his ♠K from the opening lead.

In my first example, I mentioned that "right-siding" the contract wasn't much of an issue – however, this only applies for part-score contracts. When it comes to game contracts, it can now mean the difference between +620 and -100.

The solution, of course, is to adopt the Smolen convention – an extension to Simple Stayman. With 5-4 in the majors and enough points for game, you start by bidding 2♣ (Stayman):

- If partner responds 2-Major, you raise to game.
- If partner responds 2♦ (no major), you now jump to your four-card major at the 3-level to say that you have five-cards in the other major.

SMOLEN

1NT		2♣	
2♦			
then	3♥		5 spades + 4 hearts, game forcing
	3♠		5 hearts + 4 spades, game forcing

The reason why you jump to your four-card major suit is so you can right-side the contract if a 5-3 fit exists in the other major (i.e. you can't have a fit in your four-card major because of the 2♦ response).

Playing Smolen frees up the sequences of

1NT		2♦
2♥		2♠
and		
1NT		2♥
2♠		3♥

What can you use them for?

One suggestion might be that you can use the former auction to show 5 hearts + 4 spades and an invitational hand (i.e. a hand type that you could not have shown previously), and the latter auction to show 5+ spades + 5+ hearts and a game forcing hand.

Note that if the strength of your 1NT is weaker (say, 12-14 HCP or weaker), then you may want to jump to your five-card major to allow responder (usually the stronger hand) to declare.

Smolen is a simple and a very effective convention, and is played amongst the top-level players. Of course, like any other convention, you will need to discuss it with your partner, and be able to remember it!!

Andy's Conventions Rule #1:
Be able to remember it,
otherwise it is not worth it!

Andy Hung



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SAFETY PLAYS

During the regular social drink and a quick discussion after the Thursday night bridge session at our local club, Sarah came over to me and said that she was puzzled about a situation. I asked her which board this evening caused her to have this puzzled look. "For a change", she started, "it was not any specific board, but a comment that one of her opponents made after this opponent declared a hand." I enquired as to the comment made. She said the opponent stated that they made a 'safety' play on the hand, thus 'ensuring' a good result. "My question to you", she continued, "is what did the opponent mean?"

She said that her safety, and that of her family and friends, is of paramount importance. "However, even though I drive defensively, I can expect but not 'ensure' a good result (that is, I do not have an accident)."

"That is an excellent analogy", I replied. "Furthermore, since bridge, contrary to the thoughts of some people I know, is a game and not a potentially life-and-death situation like driving, sometimes you need to throw caution to the wind and ignore any safety concerns (that is when you are in a less than optimal contract as declarer), something you would never do as a serious driver."

I continued by saying that 'safety' as applied to declaring at bridge is a very ill-defined word. There are hands, where situations during the play arise, that offer you 'complete safety' (that is where any holding of the opposition's cards guarantees that your contract will be fulfilled). Then there are other hands where making a 'safety' play gives you the best chance of making your contract but you are not 'completely safe' (that is there are holdings of the opposition's cards that can still defeat your contract). Then, as mentioned before, there are hands where a practising health and safety officer would be dismayed since your play verges on the reckless (we will not discuss these here).

"On the first issue of 'complete safety', we can perhaps refer to it as a 'full proof' play rather than a 'safety' play. Please note Sarah, it is 'full proof' rather than 'fool proof' ", I smiled. There are various situations where this can arise but let us look at the following example.

Each player has 3 cards left and each player is known to hold 3 spades. South is on lead and needs two tricks to fulfil the contract.

♠ A Q 8

♠ 10 9 5

South leads any spade and puts in either the ♠8 or the ♠Q and no matter who has the King or the Jack, you must make two tricks. Either East is end-played if they win the trick, or you make the second spade trick immediately if East can't beat dummy's spade.

Sarah said that "it is both 'fool' and 'full' proof", with a grin from ear to ear.

For the second situation, I suggested that we look at a hand that I saw two weeks ago. South opened 1NT and North restrained himself and only bid 6♣, after South showed support for the transfer bid.

West led a small heart and declarer saw that there were no losers in any suits other than two potential losers in spades.

♠ A Q 8 7 6

♥ A Q

♦ Q 10 3 2

♣ K Q 9

♠ 10 9 5 4

♥ K J 3

♦ A K J

♣ A J 10

Without getting too technical, there are four spades missing, the K-J-3-2. After leading a trump, if East has K J 3 2, K J 3 or K J 2 of spades, then the contract can't be made. Therefore, the contract is not 'full proof' but a margin of 'safety' can be applied to maximise your chances in all other cases. By cashing the ♠A first, then coming to the South hand to lead towards the ♠Q, this, in effect, ensures the contract against all the rest of the opposition's spade holdings (ignoring the slight chance of running into a ruff).

For example, if you first lead a spade from the South hand and play the ♠Q when West plays the ♠2, but East wins the ♠K, what spade do you play next time when you next lead a spade from the South hand and West plays the ♠3? West could have started with ♠J-3-2 (and East the singleton ♠K) and you must finesse the spades again. Equally, West could have started with ♠3-2 (and East the ♠K-J) and you must now play the ♠A.

On the other hand, if you first lead a spade from the South hand and play the ♠8 when West plays the ♠2, East winning the ♠J, what spade do you play next time when you next lead a spade from the South hand and West plays the ♠3? West could have started with ♠K-3-2 (and East the singleton ♠J) and you must finesse the spades again. Or West could have started with ♠3-2 (and East the ♠K-J) and you must now play the ♠A. Cashing the ♠A solves either of these two potential headaches.

"Now, Sarah," I said, "how do you play this hand as South in 6♣ on a small club lead?"

♠ A Q 8 7 6

♥ A Q

♦ Q 10 3 2

♣ K Q 9

♠ 10 9 5 4

♥ J 3

♦ A K J 5

♣ A J 10

"I was paying attention," she said. "I cash the ♠A and then come to my hand for a 'relative safety' play."

"What if the heart finesse is wrong?" I said. "Cashing the ♠A is the 'relative safety' play for only one spade loser. For no spade losers, cashing the ♠A only wins if the ♠K is singleton offside."

"You tricked me," she said. "I know! I take the heart finesse first. If it works, I play the ♠A first as you suggested. If it loses, then I need to finesse the ♠Q, which is my best chance for no spade loser."

"Well done," I said, "but look before you leap."

Chris Hughes

RESPONDING TO PARTNER'S PRE-EMPT OF 3♦

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

3♦ (Double) ?

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

1. 4♦. It looks as if opponents can make 3♥ or 3♠, but 4♥ or 4♠ would be a close call so if you passed you would be inclined to bid 4♦ later anyway. It is better to bid 4♦ now, and take away a level of bidding to make it harder for the opponents to judge.

At this vulnerability, a 3♦ opening could be a chunky 6-card suit like AQJxxx, KQJxxx, perhaps a touch less such as QJ10xxx. Suit texture, 9s and 8s, is important to guard against a bad break. It could also be a 7-card suit as good as KQJxxxx or AKJxxxx so you will have good play to make 4♦ much of the time and your ♣K is well-positioned. AKQxxxx is too strong to open a 3-bid; you should open 1♦ or a Gambling 3NT.

2. Pass. If your RHO had passed instead of doubling you might try 4♦, but now that one of the opponents has entered the bidding the danger is much greater. You would expect 4♦ to go 2, 3 or even 4 down and after the double on your right it is easy for your LHO to double 4♦, just to show a good hand. Leave them to their own resources and stay out of trouble. You expect to defend 4-Major, with little hope of defeating the contract.

3. Pass. This is similar to Hand 2 but with more HCP. However, with all your soft values 4♦ will be too expensive if doubled, so you should pass and take your chances. When this hand came up the opponents went one down in 4♣, but 4♥ would have made and 4♦ would have gone three down.

4. 4♦. You are close to bidding 5♦ as a sacrifice but you have good defence and opponents might even end up in 4♥. If you decide to bid 5♦, do it now rather than bid 4♦ and then 5♦ later. Bidding 4♦ then 5♦ grates on experts because it gives the opponents two chances to get it right. When you bid 4♦, you make the opponents guess; if you later bid 5♦, you undo all your good work and offer them 5♦X as an alternative, when they know much more about the hand.

5. 5♦. Clear-cut. Minor suit pre-empts are generally short in a major or both majors so you "know" the opponents have at least a 9-card heart fit and can make at least 10 tricks in hearts, maybe 11 or 12. Your 5♦ bid will take away two levels of bidding and give the opponents the last guess.

6. Pass. I hear some people saying they would always bid 3♣. I repeat – a pre-empt in a minor is ideally short in one or both majors. A typical 3♦ opening might be 1-2-7-3 shape, yes you might have a 6-2 or 6-3 spade fit but the odds are partner has a singleton or void in spades and now you are in a mess instead of the opponents.

7. 4♥. 3♦ doesn't look like much of a contract and the opponents probably have a spade contract, quite likely 4♠. No guarantees, but I suggest a bid of 4♥, which is what you would open anyway. You might steal the pot and 4♥ will certainly make it harder for the opponents to get it right.

8. 3NT. Bid what you expect to make, maybe the opponents will let you play there after such a show of strength. You expect to make 6 (or 7) diamond tricks and 3 aces. Aces are great for notrumps because they are flexible stoppers as well as certain quick tricks.

If the opponents bid 4♥ or 4♠, you should double or pass but not bid 5♦. You expect them to go down, but you do not expect to make 11 tricks in diamonds.

9. Redouble. If 3♦ doubled is passed out you will score +470 for making 9 tricks. Visualise the hand on your right that made a take-out double of 3♦. They surely have the missing ♠K, ♥Q and ♣AQ which is only 11 HCP. You would expect the opponents to make only 2 or 3 tricks in whatever is their best fit which is a penalty of 1700 or 1400.

The equity on your hand when opponents enter the bidding is worth much more than +470 or +570, so you should not accept 3♦X, but redouble, then when opponents run you double whatever contract they bid. If you bid 3NT over the opponent's double then you are not making enough penalty doubles.

10. 4NT. The ♠K is surely on your right after the take-out double of 3♦, so in 6♦ the spade finesse will win and you can ruff one or two spades and set up the suit. The 3♦ opener could well have something like ♦K109xxxx and an Ace so you should investigate slam with 4NT.

If partner shows 0 or 1 key cards then leave the contract in 5♦, but if partner shows 2 key cards with 5H then bid 6♦.

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