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LATEST NEWS

S.A. CLUBS ARE RE-OPENING

With the easing of restrictions in South Australia, moving into Step 3 on Monday 29th June, club bridge is now permitted. Several clubs are re-opening, whilst others are meeting with their Committees to determine their future plans.

This is what is known to date:

BRIDGE IN THE CITY

Re-opening for face-to-face bridge from Friday 3rd July.

BRIDGE AT BEAUMONT

Re-opening for face-to-face bridge on Fridays only (both sessions) from Friday 3rd July.

Retaining two online sessions, Mondays at 1.15pm and Wednesdays at 9.15am.

GLENELG CONTRACT BRIDGE CLUB

Re-opening for face-to-face bridge from Monday 6th July. (Check their website for further information.)

BRIDGE IN THE BAROSSA

Re-opening for face-to-face bridge from Monday 13th July.

BRIDGE AROUND ADELAIDE

Re-opening for face-to-face bridge on Tuesday 14th July (minimum of 6 tables). Contact Sue Lusk to book a place.

ADELAIDE BRIDGE CENTRE

Re-opening for face-to-face bridge from Wednesday 1st July.

SA BRIDGE ASSOC.

SABA plans to re-open gradually, starting with the premises at Unley. The proposed re-opening date is Monday 13th July. (Check the SABA website regularly for confirmation / updates.)

They will also remain online, with their current online sessions being:

SUPERVISED Tuesdays	at 7.30pm
OPEN Wednesdays	at 1pm
OPEN Thursdays	at 1pm
INTERMEDIATE Thursdays	at 1.30pm

STATE BRIDGE EVENTS ARE STARTING

The Tournament Committee's recommendations were adopted by the SABF Management Committee, as follows:

We are planning to resume normal evening play on Thursday evenings, with our first session hopefully being on 23rd July, or 30th July, subject to government and SABA restraints.

The first session will be a Walk-In Pairs, while the first competition, starting 30th July (or 6th August) will be the Open Teams Phase 1. This will be followed by the (Butler) Swiss Pairs, Open Teams Phase 2, and then the Open Trials Qualifying.

The teams events will be over four weeks, the Butlers over four or five nights, possibly with three matches per night.

Nominations for Open Teams Phase 1 are now being accepted, via the website.

The national final of the GNOT has been cancelled. SABA will still run a gold point teams event, possibly on a weekend or else Monday nights.

The State Pairs will be held on the last weekend of November, at the time originally scheduled for the National GNOT finals.

The 2020 Womens & Seniors Trials won't be held. The members of the 2020 Open Team will be given automatic entry, as their original pairings, in the 2021 Open Trials final.

The final two sessions of the Daytime Teams will be held on Wednesdays, at dates to be determined.

Prior to resumption there will be a third Online Teams League, probably starting July 7th.

In the meantime, the SABF will continue to run the Thursday night Stand-Alone Pairs online, with bridge starting at 7.30pm and finishing by 10.20pm. Pre-entry is required, which also involves the purchase of BB\$ to pay your entry fee of BB\$5 (basically US\$5).

For more information, contact David Anderson by email: revoke1@live.com

WE ALL HAVE A BRIDGE STORY: EVAN ALLANSON

To my memory cards were always played at our home. My parents played auction bridge, so I guess I played Snap and other simple games.

I played auction bridge from an early age, then later enjoyed Cribbage, Euchre and 500, but nothing thrilled me more than cricket and football. I never saw *The Don*, but cherished his slender book on how to play cricket. I played second grade district cricket as a sometimes-opening bat and opening bowler. And I won two footy grand finals at Jamestown (S.A.) in 1957.

Mum lost a brother when Singapore fell; he was never captured but was killed in an open boat attempting to escape. As a result, I was not given approval to join the Army but after turning 21, and having completed basic training, I was accepted into the Royal Australian Survey Corps. In December 1962, I was commissioned into the Royal Australian Engineers (RAE) and also married to my wonderful wife Jill.

During a 12-month basic officer training course in N.S.W., the generous lunch periods of 1.5 hours provided time, in the officer's mess, for a reasonably good lunch and auction bridge. We formed a regular foursome with Lieutenant Dick Kidston and me (a humble Second Lieutenant) against Captain Nick Neve (Royal Engineers) and Captain Mark Sisinyack (US Army Engineers), both instructors at the centre.

About May 1963, with a shuffled and cut deck, Nick dealt and then opened 6♣. Everyone sensed the tension mount, and my partner (Dick) bid 6♦, then Mark said 6♥ and I was stunned to have fanned my hand and found 12 spades headed by the ace so of course I bid 6♠. We all gasped, spread our hands and found we each had 12 cards in our respective suits – absolutely amazing! I recently discovered that a 12-1 break is (according to Paul Marston) a 0.00000032% chance. You can work out the odds of it happening four times in the one hand.

We continued to play throughout the year. Mess rules allowed for sixpence (5 cents) per 100 points, the only gambling allowed.

In June the class of 14 officers, and four staff, including our bridge foursome went on an educational tour of the Snowy Mountains Scheme. This massive and wonderful development was in full swing during 1963. Huge dams had been and were to be built, power stations in huge cavities were also nearing completion. The scenery was spectacular, and you can imagine the buzz surrounding such a huge development.

We had quickly established a bridge table in our tour bus and played every day for six days. The stakes were set at sixpence, the bidding and play was absorbing and constant. At one point, we were overlooking a huge dam construction site from very high on mountainside and the view from the bus was compelling. As we stared at the view, Mark said something like, "Let's get back to the game. If you have ever seen the Grand Canyon you wouldn't waste time looking down there."

When the bus arrived back at Casula, Nick checked his records to find that we owed the Captains seven and sixpence (75 cents), which represented a 1500 point win to them over six days.

Nick (UK) was paid and said thank you. Mark (US) said "Thanks, that was fun – forget it."

Funny that I should recall that Nick always consumed a glass of beer at morning tea, but otherwise he hardly consumed alcohol. Mark played a good game of rugby, saying it was much better than gridiron where all he did was push and shove, with no real freedom to run with the ball.

In 1969 Jill and I started playing kitchen bridge, initially with Kay and Brian Honner at the Scheyville Officer Training Unit near Windsor (N.S.W). Brian accompanied me to a local bridge game at the Windsor Golf Club. New players to the game of contract, I recall that we bid and made 5♣ (WOW!), we won the night, thus whetting my enthusiasm for the game.

Having left the Australian Regular Army in 1985, I ended up with a Newsagency stock-taking business. This very productive business led to us becoming owners of the Charnwood Newsagency.

We lived in nearby Scullin and played contract at "Humpy Hall", a non-affiliated club that was a short walk from home. During our time in Canberra we played frequent kitchen bridge with friends, consumed some fine wine, and played into the wee hours on most occasions. After about four years we had enough of the Newsagency so sold it at short notice. So in 1988, we took a trip to Adelaide... Lovely Adelaide – relations – friends – great. A mandatory trip to Barossa was our undoing.

I had suggested to Jill that, when we ceased work, we retire to the east coast. She could paint (she has always been a good artist) and I could play golf. But Jill said, "I don't think so" - no bridge club.

We were in the Barossa and, always good for a laugh, I suggested we buy a vineyard - grape prices low, vine pull in progress and some properties available. Halfway back to Canberra, we discovered the ideal vineyard. So, we arrived back in Canberra and a week later returned to Barossa to negotiate the purchase of 80 acres: 30 with vines, a comfortable house and no idea of the challenge. 1989 saw the best grape prices ever, good income, nice investment, high tax. Why not plant another 10 acres?

We joined the Gawler Bridge Club, Jill became President and we always seemed to be in the top three so it was fun. I do recall that my Aunt Maud Maynard used to walk from Para Para to the Gawler Town Hall to play bridge on Wednesday nights (I think) in about 1946/7. She later joined SABA after moving to Glenelg.

After a year or so we joined SABA and began Thursday night play. We often played at Phil Gue's Norwood club in the morning. Dinner in the evening before bridge was always a treat and the company was a pleasure.

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(Photo on Page 13)*

A Q&A WITH THE ABF PRESIDENT

With Covid-19 adversely impacting many people financially, some clubs have asked the ABF if their capitation fees should be waived or discounted for the 2020 or 2021 membership years.

Here is a Q&A with the ABF President, Allison Stralow, to answer the questions we have received over the past few months from clubs. We hope this will help our 35,000 plus players understand where their capitation fee goes.

Q. How much is the ABF's capitation fee?

A. In 2020, the ABF's capitation fee was set at \$16.10. Most States and Territories charge an additional local capitation fee – usually around \$10. As a player you probably pay one annual fee to your club which includes your club's membership fee, the State/Territory capitation fee and the ABF's capitation fee.

Q. What do you think is the biggest benefit the ABF delivers to clubs and members?

The ABF has taken out three insurances on behalf of all States/Territories and clubs to protect paid employees, directors, volunteers and all clubs members. The Public Liability Insurance and Volunteer Worker Insurances are funded by the ABF and the Management Liability Insurance is shared with States and Territories.

Q. What else does my capitation fee get spent on?

A. Part of your capitation fee is passed on to the WBF as the ABF is required to pay a capitation fee for each of its registered players. The remainder of your capitation fee helps the ABF deliver a range of services to both clubs and players.

Q. Give me some examples of other services delivered to my club?

A. Firstly nearly every bridge club has a bridge teacher who helps new players learn to play. The ABF funds the education of those bridge teachers through the excellent courses conducted by Joan Butts and her team. These courses provide both initial training for bridge teachers as well as on-going professional development. During shutdown, Joan has continued to run professional development training programs via Zoom.

Secondly, to run a bridge session, each club needs a trained director. Training, development and qualification of bridge directors has been a key part of the ABF's program for many years. While some of this work is performed at the State and Territory level, in recent times the National Director Development Officer has run workshops designed to improve the skills of club directors. In early 2020 the ABF, in co-operation with NZ Bridge, funded a major training course designed to improve the knowledge and skills of our national directors from Australia and New Zealand.

Thirdly, getting new players to take up the game is an on-going challenge for clubs. The ABF's Head of Marketing, Peter Cox, has provided invaluable resources and programs and administered marketing grants funded by the ABF to assist clubs with this important activity. In late 2019, Peter expanded his work by running marketing workshops for groups of clubs and this activity will recommence once bridge clubs resume operations.

Q. What has the ABF been doing to provide bridge to clubs during shutdown?

A. The ABF has established a contractual agreement with BBO (Bridgebase Online) to enable games to be played online using the BBO platform for a very small table fee per player. This agreement delivers both organised games and masterpoints for players as well as revenue back to affiliated clubs. This agreement will continue after Covid-19 shutdown ends and will create a new on-going opportunity for clubs to offer games to players who might be reluctant to return to bridge at the club for some time.

Q. What does my capitation fee get me as a player?

A. All registered players receive membership of the ABF's Masterpoint Scheme. This provides you with a way of measuring your progress in the bridge world. Every time you are promoted up a rank in the scheme, the ABF sends a certificate to your club for presentation to you as a player.

Q. I'm not really interested in masterpoints so as a player what else do I get for my fee?

A. You will also receive access to copies of the ABF's free bi-monthly newsletter which are sent to the clubs and made available online. Additionally, your club receives a subscription to Australian Bridge Magazine, so as a member you ought to be able to access that highly regarded journal free of charge. Finally, you can access the excellent online learning videos produced by Joan Butts which the ABF has funded <https://www.abf.com.au/education/learn>.

Q. I really like competing at bridge. What opportunities are there for me to pit my skills against the best?

A. Players can participate in the various national events such as the Summer Festival of Bridge and the Australian National Championships that the ABF organises or supports throughout the year. It also funds two pairs of restricted players from each state to attend the Australian National Championships. Additionally, it funds the annual GNOT event providing travel support for 60 teams from around the country who have qualified via heats and regional finals to contest the final held in Tweed Heads. For our highest-level players, it provides extensive funding support to compete in international championships which are held annually.

Q. Did the ABF reduce its costs during the shutdown? Did the Management Committee take a pay cut?

A. The ABF took steps to review the workloads of all its contractors, redeploying some to support the online bridge efforts and cutting back on hours for others. The ABF Council and the ABF Management Committee are all volunteers and as such receive no remuneration or honorariums. Shutdown hasn't meant that all work has stopped. The ABF's commitment to improving its technology and scoring systems, which will benefit all clubs and players, has continued. The next ABF newsletter's feature story on the technology project will give players an insight into what is coming in a few months' time.

Kim Frazer and Allison Stralow

SA ONLINE LEAGUE 2 FINAL by Barbara Travis

Jon Hunt and Sheila Bird organised a very time-efficient Online League 2. The 12 teams were divided into two groups, with each team in one group playing the six teams in the other group. The top two teams from each group then qualified for semi-finals, with 1st in Division A playing 2nd in Division B and vice versa.

The WILLIAMS team dominated the Qualifying rounds, finishing nearly 36 VPs ahead of the 2nd placed teams.

QUALIFIED TEAMS

- 1st WILLIAMS: Justin Williams – Phil Markey, Jeff Travis – Russel Harms (1st Division A)
 2nd HARGREAVES: Robyn Hargreaves – Peter Dieperink, Bob Clarke – Arthur Porter (2nd Div A)
 3rd ANDERSON: David Anderson – Ian Hilditch, Sharmini Anderson – Anne Harris (1st Division B)
 6th TRAVIS: Barbara Travis – Arjuna de Livera, Bertie Morgan – George Bartley, Howard Melbourne – Nic Croft (2nd Div B)

SEMI-FINALS

WILLIAMS lost to TRAVIS (14 IMPs)
 HARGREAVES defeated ANDERSON (13 IMPs)

FINAL
 TRAVIS defeated HARGREAVES (59 IMPs)

This was my favourite hand from the Final.

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

Other table:

	North	East	South
West Melbourne		Croft	
	Pass	1♦	Pass
1♥	Pass	4♣ (splinter)	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

This contract made 10 tricks, +620. According to GIB (BBO's equivalent of Deep Finesse), the lead to defeat 4♥ is North's singleton ♥7. (Leading a trump is often an excellent defensive start after a splinter auction.)

Our table:

	North	East	South
West	Travis		de Livera
	Pass	1♦	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Would you have passed as North? The reason for my balancing seat Pass was the heart shortage. I teach people that it is unwise to balance, especially over 1-minor, when you hold a singleton or void in one of the unbid majors. After all, partner would likely overcall 1♥ if he held 5+ hearts. Therefore, it is very likely that East-West have a heart fit. (Even though spades are a higher suit, why risk re-opening an auction where the opposition may belong in 4♥?)

(Jon Hunt asked whether I was tempted to open the North hand. I replied NO. However, when playing Multi 2s, if not vulnerable, I would open 2♠ showing my 5-4 in spades and a minor. Vulnerable, I tend to be 5-5.)

Arjuna de Livera found the excellent lead of the ♦Q; I always like trump leads against 1-minor contracts. It is always plausible that partner is sitting with a stack of trumps! Despite knowing each other for 40 years (when I moved to Adelaide), Arjuna and I haven't played together much – with this Online League probably being our first outing together. However, I really liked our defensive work on this hand.

Declarer won the ♦A, cashed the ♥K and then led the ♠K, ducked. He continued with the ♠Q, which I won with the Ace. I was able to draw dummy's last trump with the ♦K, then led the ♠8, hoping to ruff out declarer's high spade. Arjuna, wanting to retain trump control, discarded a heart on the ♠J. Now declarer was in real trouble. He tried the ♥Q, which I ruffed, then I cashed the ♠7.

Now my ♠2 helped to draw trumps. Declarer ruffed with the ♦7, Arjuna overtrumped with his ♦9, and drew the last trump. We now had the rest of the tricks with our club suit. 1♦ went down 3 tricks, adding 300 to our 620 from our team-mates, and 14 IMPs.

While I was delighted with Arjuna's opening lead and our defensive handiwork, I was also happy to see the application of my balancing rule being so successful.

Jon Hunt and Sheila Bird did an excellent job creating and organising Online League 2. Obviously my team appreciated the format; it's not often you can finish a qualifying event in 6th place then win (as one non-bridge-playing spouse pointed out). It was, however, a clever format in terms of suiting a 4-week time frame, without overloading everyone with matches.

They have agreed to organise Online League 3 through July, as clubs re-open, then the SABF events start, although this League will have a 'twist', being Board-a-Match (BAM) scoring. If you are interested in playing, contact Jon (as soon as possible) on ozjono@gmail.com.

Barbara Travis

SA ONLINE LEAGUE 2 by Barbara Travis

PERFECT AUCTION, PERFECT DEFENCE

♠ J 10 7 6 3
♥ K 9 7 2
♦ Q 2
♣ J 9

♠ Q 8 5
♥ A 6
♦ J 10 8 7
♣ A 10 4 2

♠ K 4
♥ J 4
♦ 9 6 5 3
♣ K Q 7 6 3

♠ A 9 2
♥ Q 10 8 5 3
♦ A K 4
♣ 8 5

West Croft	North	East Melbourne	South
Pass	2♥	Pass	1♥
Double	Pass	3♣	Pass
All Pass			3♥

Nic Croft cashed his ♣A and continued a second club to Howard Melbourne's ♠Q. Howard now switched to the ♠K, hoping for a ruff if partner held ♠A-x-x. Nic didn't hold that, but the switch was enough to defeat the contract. Declarer won the spade and led a trump, but Nic rose with his ♥A, then cashed the ♠Q and gave Howard the spade ruff for one off.

The other table also played in 3♥ (after a Bergen auction), but West had a blind lead and led the natural ♦J, allowing three diamonds to be cashed for a club discard before trumps were led. This led to 10 tricks, and a 7 IMP gain.

AN EXCELLENT BID

♠ 8 2
♥ A 9 4 3
♦ K 10 4 2
♣ 8 7 6

♠ A 10 7
♥ K Q 10 8 5
♦ 9
♣ K Q J 4

♠ J 9 4 3
♥ J 7 6 2
♦ 5 3
♣ 5 3 2

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

West	North B Travis	East	South de Livera
1♥	Pass	Pass	Double
2♣	2♦ (1)	2♥	4♥ (2)
Pass	5♦	Pass	Pass
Double	All Pass		

(1) After South's double, despite West's bid, it is vital for North to bid to show some values. Otherwise you leave your partner wondering what to bid next. My 2♦ bid made Arjuna de Livera, newly-returned to Adelaide after a 35 year absence (!), stop and think about the best bid to make.

(2) He found a perfect bid with his 4♥ shortage-showing bid. Holding the ♥A, I lost all interest in the hand, whereas if I had held the ♠A instead I would have made a control-showing cue bid and we would have reached slam. (I was able to throw one of dummy's clubs on my ♥A.)

WHEN NOT TO OVERTRUMP

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

At one table, South opened 2♠ which West doubled for takeout. When East happily passed, there was a particularly unhappy outcome for North-South (-800).

The other table had a normal auction once South chose to pass:

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

(1) Drury, showing a maximum raise to 2♥

North led his ♠9 to South's Ace, and South returned the ♠3 (suit preference but wanting to deter a diamond return). If West trumps with the ♥J, North should discard.

Firstly, your ♥K is always a trick. Secondly, your ♦K is a trick, given that West has shown diamonds (but you could work that out given your club length anyway).

What are you hoping to achieve by NOT over-trumping? You are hoping that your partner, South, has the ♥10. Now your ♥K-9-8 is worth two tricks rather than one, because declarer only has the ♥A-Q-7-2 remaining. On the other hand, if you overtrump with your King, declarer is able to draw trumps with the Ace and Queen, making the contract.

(This wasn't the play at the table, because [with South not opening a weak 2♠] West hoped that North had led a doubleton spade, so discarded on the second spade.)

Barbara Travis

ONLINE BRIDGE (Compilation)

There are various top-level online bridge competitions being held at present. Through June we had an Alt Mixed Teams 1, a few Alt Invitational Teams (which take one week), an Online Contract Bridge League teams event (mostly European), the USBF Invitational teams (those who had registered to enter the US Open Teams playoffs), amongst others. Apart from meaning that I can go to sleep watching European bridge and wake up to American bridge, those with bulletins provide some interesting bridge material.

The final of the first Alt-Mixed Teams was a close affair, which the PEPSI team held on to win by 13 IMPs (having accumulated a 30 IMP lead in the first session). This hand in the final session helped them maintain their lead, giving them a vulnerable game swing.

	♠ A 9 4 ♥ 6 ♦ K 10 9 ♣ A K Q 9 7 3	♠ 10 7 2 ♥ Q 10 5 3 ♦ Q 6 4 ♣ J 10 4	
	♠ Q J 8 6 ♥ K J 8 2 ♦ 7 5 3 2 ♣ 8		
<i>West</i> <i>Bompis</i>	<i>North</i> <i>Gromov</i>	<i>East</i> <i>Willard</i>	<i>South</i> <i>Gulevich</i>
		Pass	Pass
1♣	Double (1)	Pass	1♦ (2)
Pass	3♣ (3)	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

- (1) The double of 1♣ showed a 1♣ opening bid in their Polish club system, either 12-14 balanced or any hand with 16+ HCP.
- (2) 1♦ showed 0-7 HCP in response to a 1♣ 'opening bid'.
- (3) 16+ HCP, natural, non-forcing

Anna Gulevich, who plays on the Russian open team with Gromov, with her maximum hand but no fit, thought she might as well try for nine tricks in 3NT, as in 3♣.

West led the ♥4 to his partner's Queen and declarer's King. Gulevich led the ♠Q, ducked. Now she played clubs and, when the suit broke 3-3, she had nine tricks. She also endplayed West with the ♠K to make either her ♦K or ♥J.

With the other table playing in 2♣ (natural, over 1♣), that was 11 IMPs of their final margin.

In the USBF Invitational Teams, this board produced a challenge for declarers.

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

Regardless of who was declarer, the defenders led a diamond – East the ♦K, West the ♦5.

It is best to duck one round of diamonds, in case they are breaking 6-2. After winning the ♦A, declarer should test hearts. When the hearts split, you can cash the ♣A and ♣K, hoping to drop the doubleton Queen. When the ♣Q fails to appear, declarer can finesse the spade, taking nine tricks when that succeeds. In this way, you are combining more play options. If the ♥J doesn't appear, you will have to rely on the club suit for enough additional winners.

In one match, declarer won the ♦A and immediately finessed the clubs. East won the ♣Q and the defence took five tricks. The other table reached the cast-iron 5♣ contract, so that resulted in a game swing.

In another of the four matches, both Souths played in 3NT, on the ♦5 lead. East won the ♦Q and continued with the King, West following with the ♦6, concealing his ♦2. If diamonds were 4-4, as they appeared to be, declarer could afford to lose a club trick, so he led a club to the ♣J and the defence cashed three more diamond winners. That was a good deceptive play by Curtis Cheek, West.

At the other table, Huub Bertens ducked the diamond lead, winning the second round. As at the other table, West followed with the ♦6. Bertens played a club to the Ace and cashed four rounds of hearts on which all the discards were spades. He then cashed the ♣K in case the Queen was doubleton. When the ♣Q failed to fall, he read the position correctly and played the ♦10 to West. If diamonds were 4-4, then East-West could cash three diamonds and, perhaps, the ♣Q before leading a spade. As it was, West cashed three diamonds but was end-played and had to lead a spade around to declarer's A-Q. (Huub Bertens has written up his line on BridgeWinners: www.bridgewinners.com: USBF1, My Adventures on BBO (1).)

Zia Mahmood also played in 3NT on a diamond lead, but West revealed the 5-3 break at trick 2, playing the ♦2. He followed Bertens' line, playing a club to the ♣A, on which Berkowitz (West) played the ♣9, then cashed the four hearts and the ♣K, on which West played the ♣5. [Note: in America, many people play "old-fashioned" natural carding.]

Zia knew diamonds were 5-3 so he couldn't afford to exit with a diamond if Berkowitz held the ♠Q as well. However, Zia decided that West may have played clubs in a different order if holding three of them, so he also exited with the diamond, executing the same end-play. This was a flat board, with 5♣ making at the other table.

From the Alt Invitational V, Mark Horton wrote up the following hand, entitled "Unlocking the Combination".

♠ A
♥ Q 6
♦ A 9 8 6 5 3
♣ 10 9 7 5

♠ Q J 9
♥ A
♦ J 7 4
♣ K Q 6 4 3 2

The popular contract was 5♣ by South, reached six times of eight tables.

With no major losers, declarer has to avoid losing three tricks in the minors. Nothing can be done about the ♠A, so everything rests on how declarer tackles the diamond suit.

West led a spade and, after winning with dummy's Ace, you play ♠5 – 8 – King – Jack. Take a look at these auctions and decide how you are going to play in each case:

Auction 1			
West	North	East	South
		1♠	2♣
3♣	5♣	All Pass	

East won the next club and returned a heart, declarer winning with the Ace, and playing a diamond. Which one?

Auction 2			
West	North	East	South
		1♠	2♣
3♣ (1)	4♣	4♣	5♣
All Pass			

(1) Mixed Raise: 4 spades, approx. 7-9 HCP

Declarer now eliminated the major suits and played a diamond. Which one?

Auction 3			
West	North	East	South
		1♠	2♣
2♣	5♣	All Pass	

(Same line as above)

Auction 4			
West	North	East	South
		Pass	2♣ (natural)
Pass	2♦ (ask)	3♣ (1)	Pass
3♥	5♣	All Pass	

After the spade lead, declarer played a club to the King, following by a diamond. Which one?

Looking at the diamond suit in isolation, everything is fine if the suit breaks 2-2. The worrying distribution is any 3-1 break. If East happens to have advertised a Major two-suiter then turns up with two clubs, you know he has at best one diamond.

In those auctions where East-West only bid spades, the 4♣ rebid suggests that someone will have distribution. When West turns up with one club, it seems unlikely that he would also have a singleton diamond, since that leaves him with 7+ hearts. It seems clear to play East to be short in diamonds. If that is the case, the only card that will help you is the singleton ♦10. [If East has the singleton King or Queen, then West has the K-10 or Q-10 sitting over your Jack.]

Now for the moment of truth:

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

Three players solved the diamond combination, and three didn't. And yes, there were three game swings on the results!

[It's an interesting diamond combination, and definitely worth thinking about.]

Barbara Travis



BIDDING BOXES

Covid-19 has meant more restrictions and a good idea is for players to have their own bidding box that only they touch.

At Beaumont, when I re-open, I am offering to sell players their own bidding boxes.

It is viable for clubs to buy some to sell individually to players, or they can buy their own in sets of 4.

A set of 4 costs \$60, so I am selling them for \$15 each.

If clubs want to purchase a selection to sell:

Paul Lavings BridgeGear
phone: 0408 888 085
www.bridgegear.com

THROUGH THE EYES OF AN EXPERT

From the USBF Invitational. Huub's team won the event, playing as a team of 4 over 5 days.

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

West	North	East	South
	1♣	Pass	1♥
Pass	1NT	Pass	?

Playing the last hand of the first set in the USBF Invitational, I had to decide which way to go. We had had a great set, so it was no time for heroics. We play two-way checkback, where 2♦ now is game forcing, and 2♣ would show various invitational hands. Although I would have opened this hand 1♥, I didn't think it was good enough to force to game, so I chose to bid 2♣.

West	North	East	South
	1♣	Pass	1♥
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♦ (forced)	Pass	2♥ (invite)
Pass	3NT	Pass	4♥
Double	All Pass		

After my invitational 2♥ bid, showing 5 hearts, our agreements are good. Partner always passes with a minimum and no fit, bids 2NT with a maximum and no fit, 3♥ or 4♥ show a fit and either a medium or good hand, and 3NT shows a maximum with any 4-3-3-3 shape. (If partner rebids 2NT, my hand can be shown by rebidding a non-forcing 3♣.) Obviously, after the 3NT rebid, I converted to 4♥. This was greeted by a fast double by superstar Zach Grossack on my left.

♠ A J 7 5
 ♥ A 4 2
 ♦ K 9 5
 ♣ Q 8 5

♠ 6
 ♥ Q 9 7 5 3
 ♦ Q 7 6
 ♣ A K 9 2

Bridge is a weird game. You are in a normal contract and, although you have a fit and aces and kings, with hardly any wasted values, it is still not a great contract.

West led the ♠4. How was I to play this hand?

I think the normal play is to win the ♠A and lead a heart to the Queen. This is how I would start without the double. What about the double? Sometimes there is a ZIA on your left, and he might double on a singleton heart hoping you misplay the hand. I've now played bridge for long enough that I play as if everything was a 'normal' action, though with Zach Grossack being the doubler, it crossed my mind!

The IMP scale works in my favour here. I don't have to make it. If everything is foul, surely they will go down at the other table too.

I won the ♠A and ruffed a spade, played a diamond to the King and ruffed another spade. Then I cashed the ♣A, led a club to the Queen and ruffed the last spade. This all came off peacefully (7 tricks). This is what is left:

♠ ---
 ♥ A 4 2
 ♦ 9 5
 ♣ 8

♠ ---
 ♥ Q 9
 ♦ Q 7
 ♣ K 9

It's gone well so far. I tried the ♣K, ruffed by West, who then cashed the ♦A and led a diamond to my Queen (8 tricks).

The rest was easy. I led my last club which West ruffed, and dummy under-trumped. West was end-played to lead away from his ♥K, for a very satisfying +590.

♠ A J 7 5
 ♥ A 4 2
 ♦ K 9 5
 ♣ Q 8 5

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

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

♠ 6
 ♥ Q 9 7 5 3
 ♦ Q 7 6
 ♣ A K 9 2

I haven't much sympathy for the double. (In a knockout match, being down and near the end of the match, I would have some sympathy, but this is a round-robin, where all play all.)

It turned out the real ZIA was playing at the other table, but he was dummy in the same contract, undoubled. With no clue from the bidding (double), declarer went down one and we won 12 IMPs.

Huub Bertens (USA)

HOW WOULD YOU PLAY?

This interesting hand popped up in an Online Teams match.

All Vul

♠ 9 6 4
♥ A 2
♦ A 8 6 4
♣ K 9 8 2

♠ 5
♥ K Q 10 8 7
♦ K 5
♣ A J 10 5 4

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	4♣	4NT (1)
All Pass	5♣ (2)	Pass	6♣

- (1) Take-out, two places to play – usually at least 5-5.
- (2) This is a seriously good hand, having passed, so North forced to slam and asked South to bid his suits 'up the line', so they would play in 6♣ or 6♦.

West leads the ♠2 to East's ♠Q, and East continues with the ♣K. How would you play?

If you have watched the lead, you expect the ♠2 to be a singleton, after all West would lead high-low with a doubleton. Therefore, you must decide which trump you will use for ruffing. Should you trump with the ♠10 or ♣A?

There is a theory called the Theory of Vacant Spaces which can be used to guide you here. Since East has eight spades and West one spade, West has far more available cards to hold the ♣Q. I would trump with the ♣A and plan to finesse West for the ♣Q, given the solidity of the spot cards.

Of course, you will go down if East has been cunning with the singleton or doubleton ♣Q, but that's the luck of the game. As it happened, clubs were 2-2, with West holding the Queen.

East had been hoping that West might hold as little as the ♣Q-10, in which case the second spade would have promoted a trump trick no matter what. Give South clubs that are the ♣A-J-6-5-4 and, no matter what card he trumps with, West will make a trump trick!

Barbara Travis

BBO ACCIDENTS

This isn't about the accidents where we accidentally Pass partner's 6♥ bid enroute to 6♠ - which failed. It's about recovery actions (auctions?).

Every now and then, when playing on BBO (enforced during lockdown), an accident occurs.

Playing with my husband, in our South Australian Online League, this was an early experience / auction.

Third in hand, having heard two Passes, I opened 1♦ on this motley collection:

♠ A 6 4
♥ Q 2
♦ A J 6 5
♣ J 7 6 5

My partner, a passed hand, responded 6♦. Fortunately, many years ago, I used to have similar auctions when I lost my 'Aces' online, so I simply said, "I assume you forgot to open."

Howard's reply was that he would have liked to try 5♣ (Exclusion Key Card Blackwood) but didn't want any accidents after his initial Pass, which he was sure he hadn't actually made. I'm confident I would have been very confused, and his 6♦ bid was far more practical, even if we could no longer bid our grand slam.

His hand was:

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

Then, a couple of weeks ago, during an online Bridge at Beaumont tournament, I saw a 'repeat'!

Once again, the auction had begun with two Passes, and South opened 1♦ with:

♠ 6 5 4
♥ 7 5 3
♦ A K 7 6
♣ A 6 5

and had her passed partner respond with 4NT (Roman Key Card Blackwood). Poor South was nearly apoplectic – though I would be very proud to hold 3 key cards. She showed her 3 key cards, and North bid 6♦.

North tabled:

♠ A K Q 2
♥ A K Q
♦ Q 10 9 8 4 3
♣ void

Opposite 3 key cards, she was so panicked that she forgot to count her winners (3 spades, 3 hearts, 6 diamonds, 1 club) and bid 7NT!

Barbara Travis

THE 5-LEVEL BELONGS TO ? by Martin Cantor

There is a saying that the 5-level belongs to the opponents. Equally, there is a saying that the 5-level belongs to the first side to 'sacrifice' at that level. Let's have a look... This article, by Martin Cantor, comes from the *Alt Inv-Mixed 2 Bulletins*.

We all know who is supposed to own the 5-level and, in the Round 5 match between Edmonds and Tiramisu, the truth of the old saying was put to the test:

Board 3			
Dlr South	♠ 8		
EW Vul	♥ 10 8 7 3		
	♦ K Q 6		
	♣ K Q 8 6 4		
		♠ Q 10 9 7 5	
♠ A K J 4 2		♥ 2	
♥ Q 9		♦ J 8 7 2	
♦ A 10 9 5 3		♣ 10 9 5	
♣ A			
	♠ 6 3		
	♥ A K J 6 5 4		
	♦ 4		
	♣ J 7 3 2		
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
<i>Franceschetti</i>	<i>Wooldridge</i>	<i>Setton</i>	<i>Edmonds</i>
			2♥
2♠	4♥	4♣	Pass
Pass	5♥	Pass	Pass
5♠	All Pass		

Franceschetti faced a difficult decision at his final turn. He looks to have good defence to 5♥, with not much chance for overtricks his way, but he also has fair offence. Perhaps he thought that Setton's pass was forcing, or he may have decided that the compensation from defeating 5♥ would not be enough for a vulnerable game. Either way, he took the push and, after a heart lead to the King and a diamond switch, with both diamond honours offside, he was a slightly unlucky one down.

At the other table, a different auction presented Klukowski, West, with the same decision:

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
<i>Klukowski</i>	<i>Zochowska</i>	<i>Zmuda</i>	<i>Lorenzini</i>
			Pass
1♣ (1)	Pass	1♦ (2)	1♥
2♥ (3)	4♣ (4)	4♣	5♥
Double	All Pass		

- (1) Polish 1♣, with 3 meanings
- (2) 0-6 HCP any hand, or 7-11 HCP with no major
- (3) 18+ HCP with spades and a minor (like a strong Michaels Cue Bid)
- (4) Fit showing jump, 5+ clubs and 4 hearts

Having decided to defend, he led his singleton ♣A, with his partner, Zmuda, playing the ♣9, and now he had another decision to make. He could cash his two Aces for a pretty certain one down and +100, maybe 300 if his partner could conjure up another trick.

Or he could hope to find partner with the ♠Q to put her in to give him his club ruff for +300 (or just possibly 500). It is impossible to know what influenced him, possibly a touching faith in his partner's ♣9 (suit preference). In the end, he continued with the ♠2 and got his 300, gaining 9 IMPs.

A few boards later, the 5-level struck again, but would the saying still hold true?

Board 8			
Dlr West	♠ void		
Nil Vul	♥ Q 7 4		
	♦ K 10 9 7 4 3 2		
	♣ A J 8		
		♠ K Q 8 4 2	
♠ A J 7 5		♥ J 8 3	
♥ A K 10 9 6 2		♦ Q 5	
♦ 8		♣ K 10 9	
♣ 6 4			
	♠ 10 9 6 3		
	♥ 5		
	♦ A J 6		
	♣ Q 7 5 3 2		
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
<i>Franceschetti</i>	<i>Wooldridge</i>	<i>Setton</i>	<i>Edmonds</i>
1♥	2♦	3♦ (1)	Pass
4♥	All Pass		
(1) Cue raise for hearts			

A simple auction, for once, and a straightforward contract, losing a diamond, a trump and a club.

The other table reached the cold 4♣, but were not left there:

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
<i>Klukowski</i>	<i>Zochowska</i>	<i>Zmuda</i>	<i>Lorenzini</i>
1♥	2♦	Double	3♦
4♣	5♦	Double	All Pass

This auction was pretty simple too, but here East's negative double allowed Lorenzini to throw in a cheap simple raise of his partner's diamond overcall. That was enough for her to take the 'sacrifice' over 4♣.

This was one of those exceptionally satisfying sacrifices that turn out to be cold. A heart lead was followed by a trump, with trumps being drawn in two round. Then clubs were established, for 11 tricks.

+550 and +420 equates to 14 IMPs. This time, despite the saying, the 5-level belonged to 'us'.

Martin Cantor (Germany)

A FASCINATING MISFIT

This hand appeared in the May edition of the IBPA Bulletin.

West	North	East	South
	Pass	Pass	Pass
1♣	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♥	Pass	3NT	Pass
?			

What would you do as West with:

♠ K
♥ A K 9 5 3
♦ A
♣ A 9 7 6 5 2

The question is whether you should run from 3NT to 4♥ to show your 5-6 pattern. If, in response to the 2♥ reverse, 2NT is not forcing, then responder has to bid 3NT on many balanced hand types and you should remove 3NT to 4♥. That doesn't come with guarantees but it is your best shot.

The full deal:

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

At one table, after the auction given, West bid 4♥ and East removed that to 5♣.

North led the ♦J - 2 - 9 - Ace. West ruffed the ♥3 in dummy and discarded his ♠K on the ♦K. Then came the ♠Q - 2 - ♥5 - ♠9, and the ♠J - 3 - ♥9 - ♠8. Declarer continued with the ♣A and a second club. Had clubs divided 3-2, 5♣ would have made. With the actual layout, East-West went -100.

At the other table, it went...

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

- (1) Weak, 5 spades + 4+ cards in a minor
- (2) To play unless East's minor is clubs (then bid on)

West made 10 tricks, +130 and 6 IMPs.

Which game contracts can East-West make on the layout?

Not 5♣, on any play. You can make 4♥ in the 5-0 fit, 4♠ in the 5-1 fit, 5♦ in the 6-1 fit, but not 5♣ in the 6-2 fit! Not only that, but East can make 10 tricks in 3NT. Amazing.

One solution to cater for these 6-5 problem hands after a reverse is to play a 2NT rebid by responder as forcing, and 3NT to show a total misfit. Using that method, after East bids 3NT, West can choose to pass (or bid clubs or 4♥). Note: The North-South hands will not always be so accommodating to allow 3NT to make.

BIG SWING OR FLAT HAND?

From the IBPA Bulletin, May 2020

This hand arose in the semi-finals of the 2020 European Winter Games, held in Monaco at the end of February.

Dir North	♠ 10 7 5		
Both Vul	♥ 2		
	♦ A K 7 6 3		
	♣ K Q 7 2		
♠ A K Q 9 6		♠ J 8 3 2	
♥ J 10		♥ A K Q 6 5 3	
♦ J 4		♦ void	
♣ 6 5 4 3		♣ A 10 8	
	♠ 4		
	♥ 9 8 7 4		
	♦ Q 10 9 8 5 2		
	♣ J 9		

West	North	East	South
Khokhlov	Gupta	Dubin	Rosenberg
	1♦	1♥	4♦
4♠	5♦	6♦	Pass
6♠	All Pass		

West	North	East	South
Mahmood	Gromov	Meckstroth	Gulevich
	1♦	1♥	5♦
Pass	Pass	Double	All Pass

West	North	East	South
Klukowski	Bilde	Gawrys	Madala
	1♦	1♥	5♦
Double	Pass	6♦	Pass
7♠	All Pass		

West	North	East	South
Sementa	Drijver	Bocchi	Brink
	1♦	1♥	4♦
4♠	5♦	6♦	Double
Pass	Pass	Redouble (1)	Pass
6♠	Pass	Pass	7♦
Double (2)	Pass	7♠	All Pass

- (1) First round control
- (2) Encouraging

RUSSIA scored a huge pick-up when Gulevich's aggressive 5♦ bid won the pot, Mahmood taking a losing view in passing his partner's double, collecting a very meagre +200. In the other room, Khokhlov, despite his powerful spade holding, did not accept his partner's invite, resting in 6♠, probably wondering if he was about to lose 13 IMPs when dummy came down. He must have been relieved to learn his team had won 15 IMPs!

In the other match, Sementa took exactly the same, very pessimistic view, but Brink came to the rescue; over his sacrifice, Sementa (probably regretting his previous shy bid) doubled, suggesting action, and Bocchi was very happy to bid 7♠.

It was a flat board, at 2210 each, when Klukowski was the only one to give full credit to his spade holding and his partner's 6♦ bid. *Ed: This was a fantastic inferential auction.*

DAYS OF GLORY

By Tom Townsend (England), in the May edition of the IBPA Bulletin.

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

West	North	East	South
1NT *	4♣	Pass	1♠
5♦	5♠	All Pass	Pass

The year was 1981. Two geniuses crossed swords at "The Wood" – St John's Wood Bridge Club.

West was the incomparable John Collings. He and Jonathan Cansino, granted good health, might have been Great Britain's greatest-ever bridge pair. Collings, alas, suffered a near-fatal heart attack at 33; Cansino, aged 34, a malignant brain tumour. Collings half-recovered, and played on with some success, but Cansino could no longer compute the cards to his old level. John was a true card artist. You could never tell his hand from the bidding. Then, when he declared a close contract, he would routinely tease the poor defenders by playing the one card they really didn't want to see.

South was Irving Rose, "The Great Rose", so dubbed by Bernard Teltscher. Rose was gifted too, charismatic and almost as unpredictable as Collings.

The Comic 1NT overcall was a bit unimaginative by Collings' standards. Pass, Double, and any number of clubs were more-stylish alternatives. Rose's partner took the push to 5♠.

John underled his diamonds at trick 1 – the ♦3 to East's 10. He ruffed the ♣4 return and could have cashed the ♦A for one down. Looking for down two and the extra GBP10 at the stakes, Collings continued with the ♦4 to his partner's presumed Jack. But Rose produced that card at the second time of asking, and claimed the rest of the tricks! John's initial reaction was unrepeatable; and the more irate he became, the more Irving laughed.

Tom Townsend (England)

A TRUMP COUP

Late at night, in Covid-19 times, I often watch my overseas friends playing bridge on BBO. On this hand, John Holland from England, two-time world Seniors' champion, managing this 4♥ contract.

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

West	North	East	South
1♠	1♣	Pass	1♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	2♠ (forcing)
All Pass	2NT	Pass	4♥

Whilst we can see that 3NT has 9 top tricks (4 diamond losers, otherwise 10 tricks), John opted for 4♥ with his good suit. Now he just had to make the contract, which would also 'out-score' 3NT making 9 tricks.

West led the ♦A, continuing with the ♦K, then another diamond – having seen East's encouraging ♦6 then ♦J. Having won the third trick, East exited with the ♥2, won by declarer's ♥A. John cashed his ♥K and noted West's ♥J. Whilst hearts may have been 3-3, he drew some inferences, deducing that hearts were more likely to be 2-4.

These inferences were:

1. West had at least 5 spades for his overcall.
2. West had the 4-card diamond suit, or East could have continued with the fourth diamond to promote a trump trick.
3. Therefore, it was more likely that West held 2 hearts and 2 clubs, rather than 3 hearts and a singleton club (and no club switch). Accordingly, he played for that distribution, with West being 5-2-4-2.

Of course, for those of you who practise counting regularly, that meant that East held a 3-4-3-3 hand shape, which was equally important to his choice of play.

At trick 6, he led a spade to dummy's Ace, then cashed the ♠K, discarding a club. He needed to reduce his trump length to the same length as East's for his trump coup, so he continued with a third spade, ruffing in hand. Trick 9 consisted of leading the ♣Q to dummy's King, then leading another spade and ruffing. This second ruff reduced his heart length to the same number as East held. East discarded a club, but John knew that this discard had no impact on his play – since East had started with 3 clubs.

He crossed to dummy at trick 11 with the ♣J to dummy's Ace, and now held the ♥Q-9 over East's ♥10-8. When he led a club from dummy, he simply overtrumped whatever East played. That is what is known as a trump coup.

Barbara Travis

J-LALL'S BRILLIANCY ON DISPLAY

From BridgeWinners, written by Joe Stokes

♠ 3
♥ Q 5 4
♦ K 9 7 5 4 2
♣ 9 6 3

♠ A 8 5 2
♥ 8 3
♦ Q J 10 8
♣ J 4 2

♠ J 10 9 7 4
♥ 7 6
♦ A 6
♣ A K Q 7

♠ K Q 6
♥ A K J 10 9 2
♦ 3
♣ 10 8 5

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

In the Semi Finals of the USBF Invitational, Justin Lall, East, declared 4♠ on a high heart lead. After South switched to the ♦3 at trick 2, with dummy's ♦Q winning. He paused and commented on the diamond play: "A diamond shift... weird. Sorry, this is going to take a while."

He thought for what is a long time for him (maybe a minute). Then he crossed to his hand with a club and played the ♠J – Queen – Ace – 3.

Justin now played three more rounds of clubs. South had to ruff the fourth club to prevent a heart being discarded from dummy. Now he had prevented South from obtaining his diamond ruff and just lost two hearts and one trump trick.

At the other table, after the same start, declarer led a second round of trumps, then underled the heart suit to his partner's ♥Q and scored the diamond ruff.

(There was some discussion on BridgeWinners about what Lall would have done had South played low on the ♠J. Would declarer then play for North to hold a singleton spade honour, or would they finesse?)

You are North and hold:

♠ K J 9 7 4
♥ A 9 5 4 3
♦ A 9 2
♣ void

You are playing 2 over 1 game forcing (responder's first bid of a new suit at the 2-level establishes a game forcing auction):

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♣ (1)
Pass	2♥	Pass	3♥ (2)
Pass	3♠ (3)	Pass	4♥
Pass	?		

- (1) Basically natural, game forcing (2♦ or 2♥ guarantee 5 card suits)
- (2) Stronger than 4♥
- (3) 1st or 2nd round cue bid

What does the 4♥ bid now mean? At the table North passed, possibly as a reflex action. However, if you give some more thought to South's 4♥ bid, when in a cue bidding sequence, you would realise that this means that South has not got a cue bid available in either clubs or diamonds. Therefore, she does not hold any of the ♣A or ♣K or the ♦K.

Since she showed some interest in looking for slam via her 3♥ bid (rather than an immediate 4♥ bid), what can she have? Stopping to think a little more will have you realising that she must have good values in spades and hearts – just where you need them! If that's the case, you should definitely bid on to slam.

Partner's hand was:

♠ A Q
♥ K Q J 6
♦ 10 8 5 3
♣ Q J 6

You would be delighted to reach 6♥, but 7♥ relies on hearts breaking 2-2 (so you can trump both North's diamonds) – not a good spot.

Barbara Travis



Evan and Jill Allanson.
Read Evan's story on pages 2 and 23.

THE LIGHTNING THAT BACKFIRED

From the *Alt Invitational V* bulletin, 29 May 2020

There are many stories of Lightner doubles backfiring, and this was one of the more costly ones.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Pepsi</i>	<i>de Wijs</i>	<i>Blass</i>	<i>Muller</i>
	1♥	Pass	1♠ (1)
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♣ (1)
Pass	3♣	Pass	3♦ (1)
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♣ (1)
Pass	4♥	Pass	4♠ (1)
Pass	5♣	Pass	5♦ (1)
Pass	5♠	Pass	7♠
Pass	Pass	Double	7NT
All Pass			

All South's bids were artificial asking bids. North's responses showed a 4-5-2-2 shape with 3 control cards, 1 or 2 of ♥A-K-Q, 0 (or 3) in spades, 1 or 2 in diamonds and 0 in clubs. The 5♠ bid showed 2 of the top 3 heart honours, without the Jack.

It is hard to blame East for doubling for a heart lead, however Muller reverted to 7NT, which had 12 top tricks and the 13th trick came from the marked finesse in hearts.

The other table's auction was somewhat different (simpler?):

West	North	East	South
<i>Bertens</i>	<i>Nowosadzki</i>	<i>Gupta</i>	<i>Kalita</i>
	Pass	2♦	Double
5♦	Double	Pass	5NT
Pass	6♦	Pass	7♠
All Pass			

North, reasonably, passed his 10-count vulnerable (de Wijs-Muller play a variation of Precision that allows for openings with 10 HCP) which made room for Gupta to pre-empt in diamonds. Now North-South did very well to reach 7♠ but, in bridge, you are not always rewarded for excellence. (North's bidding was aimed at showing his partner both Majors, then showing him an absolutely maximum for his original pass.)

Gupta refrained from doubling for the heart lead, but Bertens had enough confidence in his opponents not to lead a diamond and saw the only hope of beating the contract being to find his partner with a void. So he led a low heart, ruffed by Gupta. Gupta gained 20 IMPs on this hand and won the semi-final by 14 IMPs!

Christina Lund Madsen (Denmark)

LIGHTNER DOUBLES Explained

Theodore Lightner devised the notion where a double of a slam contract was a 'lead-directing' double (because people bid slams to make).

The doubler is saying that either a contract can be defeated by trumping the lead of a side suit, or by partner making a lead that will allow the defending side to take their tricks before declarer has enough tricks.

Lightner doubles have been expanded to:

- A DOUBLE of a freely-bid slam asks for an unusual lead – usually dummy's first bid suit. (You may have a void or you may have A-Q or A-K of the suit.)
- A DOUBLE of a freely-bid slam when dummy has not bid a suit (eg 1M 4NT response leading to 6M), is indicating that partner can trump something, so look for your longest suit – and bear in mind the notion of leading SUIT PREFERENCE!
- When neither our side nor dummy has bid a suit, and the opponents play in 3NT, then a DOUBLE asks for a SPADE lead. Typically the auction is: 1NT 3NT or 1NT 2C 2D 3NT (Thus, if partner does NOT double you should consider leading a HEART.)
- When our side has not bid a suit but dummy has, then a DOUBLE asks for the lead of dummy's first bid suit. (The doubler either has a void in the suit or perhaps A-Q over dummy's likely King.)
- When our side has bid one suit, then a DOUBLE of 3NT says "lead our suit". (So if partner does not double, consider leading a different suit.)
- When you have bid one suit and partner has bid another suit, then a DOUBLE of 3NT asks for you to lead YOUR suit. (So if partner does not double, consider leading her suit not yours.)
- Doubles of artificial bids (eg responses to RKCB) are lead-directing too. But only make such doubles when you clearly want the lead (and are not going to be on lead yourself).

Barbara Travis

GAME OR SLAM?

From the USBF Invitational

One of the 'rules' about Weak 2 opening bids is that you shouldn't make a 2-level opening bid with two first round controls outside your suit. Look at this hand from the USBF Invitational. South held:

♠ J 7
♥ 10 8 7 6 5 3
♦ A 7
♣ A 5 3

At favourable vulnerability, three (of the eight) Souths opened 2♥ (or some variation thereof). In each case, they played in 4♥, with North obviously applying the above dictum in making their final bid.

At three tables, South passed, but bid 2♥ over their partner's 1♠ opening bid. Two Norths simply raised to 4♥.

One North opened a strong 1♣ and thereafter North-South reached 6♥.

I liked this auction, although I would have responded 2♥, being a passed hand:

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♠	Pass	Pass
Pass	3♥ (GF)	Pass	1NT
Pass	5♣ (more)	Pass	4♣ (cue)
Double	Pass	Pass	5♦ (cue)
All Pass			7♥

South couldn't have any more than he held (2 aces and 6-card support), and North's bids were all encouraging (even his Pass of the double), so he realised to bid the grand slam.

Phil Markey believes that any hand with two Aces qualifies as an opening bid, so the final auction will warm his heart:

West	North	East	South
Pass	2NT (GF, fit)	Pass	1♥
Pass	4♠ (RKCB)	Pass	3♣ (min)
Pass	7♥	All Pass	5♥

South showed 2 key cards plus the ♥Q. Knowing of 4+ card support opposite, there is a known 10-card fit, so with 6 hearts you show the Queen! North can then work out partner has extra hearts when holding the ♥Q himself. This was a very effective auction.

♠ A K Q 10 4
♥ A K Q 2
♦ 10 9
♣ Q 10

♠ J 7
♥ 10 8 7 6 5 3
♦ A 7
♣ A 5 3

Usually you find that both tables in one of the matches have bid the grand slam and it's flat but, in this event, all three slams resulted in swings. Certainly, the undisciplined Weak 2 opening bid did not pay dividends.

Barbara Travis

SLAM TOO DIFFICULT. REALLY?

This hand comes from an article written by Martin Cantor, from the Bulletins for the "Alt Mixed", an online lockdown tournament

The first round robin of the first Alt Mixed was a feast of entertainment for the spectators.

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

♠ 8 4 3
♥ A K 9 5 3 2
♦ K 5
♣ 8 7

♠ J
♥ Q 10 8 7 6 4
♦ Q 8 6 3
♣ 5 4

♠ A Q 10 9 6 2
♥ J
♦ A J 10
♣ K Q 10

West	North	East	South
<i>M Bilde</i>	<i>de Wijs</i>	<i>V Gupta</i>	<i>Wortel</i>
Pass	3♣	Pass	3♠
5♥	4♥ (1)	Double	4♠
All Pass	Pass	Pass	Double

Simon de Wijs self-alerted his 4♥ bid as, "I hope – good hand for spades."

Maybe unsure what it showed, Meike Wortel took a conservative view and just bid 4♠.

Bilde was doubtless surprised by his partner's double of 4♥, holding A-K-sixth in the suit, but his raised might have pushed his opponents to their slam.

North's pass was not self-alerted, but was surely forcing, and Wortel thought a long time before taking another conservative view.

Down 2 for -300, and when Wortel apologised for doubling rather than bidding on, Simon responded, "Slam is way too difficult after I open 3♣".

And so to the other table:

West	North	East	South
<i>Lund Madsen</i>	<i>Verbeek</i>	<i>Bas Drijver</i>	<i>Bertens</i>
Pass	3♣	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♥ (1)	Pass	4NT (2)
All Pass	5NT (3)	Pass	7♣

Here the self-alert of 4♥ was simply described as "for spades".

Drijver chose not to double, perhaps not necessarily wanting a heart lead. Bertens then asked for key cards and Verbeek's 5NT showed 2 key cards and a void.

Bertens read the 4♥ bid as showing a heart shortage with spade support, and therefore the void was in hearts, despite his own singleton, so bid the grand slam.

Martin Cantor (Germany)

MY FAVOURITE HAND EVER

I found this hand on BridgeWinners (www.bridgewinners.com). Brad Moss was inspired to write about his favourite hand ever.

The hero of the hand is an American called John Lowenthal. To quote Brad, "For those who didn't know him, let's just say he was capable of sheer brilliance."

Playing in the Reisinger Knockout Teams with Phil Martin, against Larry Edwards, John picked up the following hand:

♠ 7
♥ 10 6 5
♦ 10 9 8 4 3 2
♣ 9 4 2

His LHO opened 3♣, Phil Martin bid 3♥ and RHO, Larry Edwards, bid 7♣. John's singleton spade made it fairly clear what Larry held: solid spades, a heart void, and the ♦A. John had little hope of beating 7♣, but there was a good chance that his partner held a void in clubs. If so, he could defeat 7♣. Accordingly, John doubled.

After two passes, Larry glared at John and said, "Nobody ruffs MY suit on opening lead! Seven spades!" John doubled that too and led a club. Now Larry glared at Phil. "You ruff that club and I'm going to kick your ass."

As Phil tells it, "I stood up, tossed a trump on the table, and ran."

Larry, typically, was as delighted as if he had perpetrated this manoeuvre himself. When he found out what John had, he gave him a high-five, leaned back in his chair and roared with laughter.

Here's the hand and auction:

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

West	North	East	South
	3♣	3♥	7♣
Double	Pass	Pass	7♣
Double	All Pass		

THE BRIDGE PLAYER

After John Lowenthal's death, his regular bridge partner, Phil Martin wrote an article, "Remembering John Lowenthal", which I found online. Here are some excerpts from this article:

When John began his series "Develop Your Imagination" in The Bridge World, we had an argument about creativity. I maintained that John approached the game with no preconceptions. Most of us play bridge by considering possible bids and plays from a repertoire we have assembled over the years. Our 'brilliances' are nothing more than repetitions of plays we have read about. If we haven't seen it before, we're not going to do it.

John had a different approach. He focused on his objective and asked himself how to achieve it. No play was so bizarre that he would dismiss it out of hand. As a result, he found plays the rest of us would never even consider. John denied this. He claimed that he, too, simply repeated plays that he had seen before. Creativity, he said, was not a matter of inventing new tactics; it was a matter of applying old tactics in new contexts.

John went through periods, just like Picasso. There was a time when John looked for excuses to avoid opening 1NT. The hand was always too suit-oriented or too control-rich or too concentrated. Then he played a session with Chuck Lamprey where, in Chuck's opinion, this phobia was responsible for several bad boards. "One of my regular partners," said Chuck, "opens 1NT on all kinds of hands: 6-card majors, singleton Kings. Nothing bad ever seems to happen."

Since Chuck felt strongly about this, John agreed to give it a try. He started opening 1NT on a variety of 'inappropriate' hands. Chuck was right. Nothing bad happened. John got more daring. Soon he was opening 1NT on any hand with 15 to 17 HCP. ("It doesn't seem to work to cheat on the high card points," John told me.) We had auctions like these:

<i>John</i>		<i>Me</i>	
1NT	2♣	Pass	4♣
4NT	Pass	6♣	All Pass

John, of course, was 1-1-5-6. Eventually he decided he'd gone too far and started toning it down. But that was John's way. There was no sense in trying out something new unless you were willing to test the limits. *(I reckon I know some people who will identify with these inclinations.)*

When John and I formed our partnership in the late 1970s, I was warned about John's opening leads. Henry Bethe had formulated what he called "Lowenthal's Laws":

1. The lead of an honour denies a touching honour.
2. The lead of a low card promises an honour sequence somewhere in the hand (not necessarily in that suit).
3. The lead of a trump shows a side singleton or void.
4. The lead of a short suit is an attempt to force declarer to draw trumps.

I didn't take these "Laws" seriously at first, so we had a few accidents. John led the ♠K and dummy hit with a singleton. It looked like a good idea to overtake with my ♠A and shift. It wasn't. Not only did this set up declarer's Queen-Jack, it was the wrong approach altogether. We were supposed to be tapping the dummy, not attacking side suits.

"Even if I did have the King-Queen, why would I lead the King if I wanted you on lead at trick 2?" John asked. "If I had anything worth shifting to, I would lead low, or perhaps the Queen."

When I started paying attention to the Laws, we began to do better. Once, against a 4♣ contract, John led a low diamond to my ♦A. I returned a diamond to his King, and John played a heart back to my ♥A. It was now clear that the only thing left for me to do was to try to give John a ruff in a red suit. I had to decide which was more likely – that John had led a low diamond from K-x or that he had failed to lead a singleton heart? A quick review of the Laws gave me the answer. John couldn't have a singleton heart because he hadn't led a trump. I played a diamond and John ruffed.

When Kit Woolsey played with John, I explained the Laws to him before the first session. On the first board, the opponents bid to 4♠. John led a trump. Dummy hit with a 6-card diamond suit and Kit fell off his chair laughing. Dummy thought that Kit was laughing at the auction, but Kit was laughing because he held six diamonds himself. So, he now believed the Laws. John had led a trump with a singleton or void in diamonds. (By the way, at trick 2, declarer led a diamond to his stiff ♦A, John ruffed and led another trump – the only winning defence.)

THE PERSON

John was a stickler for honest reporting. I once wrote up a hand he had misplayed, identifying him simply as "my partner". John chastised me for this. "You name me when I do something good," he said, "so you have to name me when I blunder, as well."

It's fitting that such frankness is what brought John to national attention in the first place. After John won his first regional, he discovered a scoring error that knocked him down to second place. He, of course, reported it, which created a mild sensation. When Oswald Jacoby heard about it, he was so impressed that he asked John to play, and they formed a partnership which lasted several years.

By vocation, John was a software consultant. Since he moved from client to client, he frequently had to submit to job interviews. His penchant for frankness showed in these interviews. John was a late riser. He would go to work around 11am and stay until 8 or 9pm.

One client said that he had heard John liked to work flexible hours.

"Nope," said John. "Nothing flexible about it. You won't see me until 11am."

On another occasion, a client invited his technical expert to the interview to test John's knowledge of programming. John answered a few questions, then closed his eyes and leaned back in his chair. "Are you thinking about your answer?" the expert asked.

"No," said John, "your questions are putting me to sleep." "What kind of questions would you ask?" asked the expert. John opened his eyes and started firing questions at the interviewer, most of which he proved unable to answer.

While John will long be remembered for his imagination and technical prowess, he had an even rarer quality. He knew how to take care of a partner. He could inspire confidence, and he could keep morale up when things went wrong. The best example of this ability is perhaps the most often-told Lowenthal story.

John was playing with his first wife, Linda, who apparently had little talent for the game. She had declared several contracts during the evening, all of them cold, and she had gone down in every one of them. In an effort to boost her confidence, John decided he would see to it that she made a contract before the evening was over. So, when he picked up a fair hand and heard her open 1♦, he passed. His LHO had other ideas, however, and balanced with 1♥. This was passed around to John. He tried to imagine how the play would go in 2♦. Finally, he decided his wife could probably make it, so he bid 2♦. After two passes, it was RHO's turn to get into the act. He competed with 2♥. John thought briefly about bidding 3♦, but he knew it was hopeless. Linda had never taken nine tricks on any hand! Having failed in his initial objective, John decided to bid what he thought HE could make. So, he bid 6NT.

While John never went to such extremes playing with me, he was still an exceptionally supportive partner. Once, I suffered a blind spot and went down in a game there was simply no excuse not to make. John looked at me and uttered the most severe criticism I ever heard from him, "I don't think you played that hand with your usual care." That's the John I'll always remember.

I think there are some lessons about partnership support and consideration that we could all learn from.

BOOK REVIEW: WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP BOOKS

Each year a book is published subsequent to the World Championships. These books contain a wealth of interesting hands, with educational components. With everyone playing the same hands, there are very interesting comparisons about the actions taken at different tables (and in the different fields too).

In lockdown, one of my friends has been reading old editions, and emailed me about a 'typical' hand that caught his eye, so you'll get that hand as an example of some of the offerings. The star of the hand was me!

1987 World Championships, Jamaica.

I was referred to pages 65 and 66, entitled "Big Swings":

Dlr South	♠ 10 9 7 4 3		
NS Vul	♥ K 5 3		
	♦ 9 5 4		
	♣ 7 5		
♠ 5		♠ K 8 6 2	
♥ A 9 7 6 4 2		♥ Q 8	
♦ A J 6 2		♦ 7 3	
♣ 9 3		♣ A K 10 8 4	
	♠ A Q J		
	♥ J 10		
	♦ K Q 10 8		
	♣ Q J 6 2		
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
<i>Travis</i>	<i>Li (China)</i>	<i>Lusk</i>	<i>Lu (China)</i>
			1♣ (1)
1NT (2)	Pass	2♣ (3)	Pass
2♥ (4)	Pass	Pass	Double
Pass	2♠	3♥	Pass
4♥	Pass	Pass	Double
Pass	Pass	Redouble	All Pass

- (1) 16+ HCP
- (2) Either 15-18 HCP or a weak jump overcall (any suit)
- (3) Which is it?
- (4) Weak with hearts

Not many would consider that West hand a weak jump overcall with its two aces and good trick-taking potential. That's why Travis went on to game when her partner raised to 3♥. Lusk had a particularly suitable high-card collection, hence her redouble.

North led the ♣7. Declarer won dummy's Ace and led a diamond, ducking when South went in with the Queen. A heart went to North's King (marking the remaining HCP with South), and a second round was won in dummy. The ♦J was finessed, and then three rounds of hearts squeezed South in three suits. Lu had to keep two clubs and two diamonds, so was forced to bare the ♠A. It was not difficult for Travis to duck a spade to South, bringing down the ♠A and establishing the King as the tenth trick. That is how you score +880, and Australia pocketed 14 IMPs (with 2♠, South, making at the other table).

My correspondent thought the hand must have been particularly delightful, given that South reopened against 2♥, which led us to bid a game, making it redoubled.

In reality, the reason I remember the hand related to the scoring of the redoubled contract. In the middle of 1987, the WBF introduced two changes to the scores. The first related to doubled undertricks when not vulnerable, which had previously been -100, -300, -500, -700 (and continuing in -200 increments). This had caused some consternation when people could make wild sacrifices against vulnerable grand slams because even 10 down was only -1900 (v. 2140 or 2210). The second was only a slight modification to redoubled contracts. Until 1987, the penalty for making a redoubled contract had only been an additional 50 (as with doubled contracts), but it was changed to +100.

Back in 1987, we still provided a manually-recorded score slip at the end of matches (being before the days of electronic scorers). What happened at the table was that my Chinese screen-mate pulled out the bidding card for 4♠ and checked the back for the score redoubled. Since the bidding cards had not yet been re-printed, it showed the score as 830. I knew the scoring had been changed and tried to explain that it was 880 but there were some language difficulties, even with using numbers! It took quite some time to get the score recorded correctly (and I really didn't want to be seen as gloating!).



Sue Lusk and Barbara Travis
in 1987

1984 World Team Olympiad, Seattle

INDONESIA v. AUSTRALIA

There were many interesting hands, and they were made all the more interesting by the unusual bidding system of Paul Marston and Stephen Burgess, who were on VuGraph. As Edgar Kaplan commented at one point, "This hand is too weak to pass, so he'll have to open the bidding." And that's exactly what happened.

AN INTERESTING OPTION

Board 15 was one of the most interesting of the tournament. Burgess was in an extremely difficult 4♠ contract. Jean Besse, at the commentators' table, worked out a way to make the hand while Burgess was giving about 10 minutes of thought to the problem. Kaplan pointed out that Besse had a big advantage – he could see all four hands. Besse agreed this was a major advantage but he thought Burgess might work it out looking at only two hands. Burgess justified Besse's confidence.

Dlr South ♠ 10 5 3 2
NS Vul ♥ K 4
♦ A Q 4
♣ A K J 5

♠ Q J
♥ Q J 10 5 3
♦ K 8 2
♣ Q 8 3

♠ K 9 4
♥ A 8 7 6
♦ 5
♣ 9 7 6 4 2

♠ A 8 7 6
♥ 9 2
♦ J 10 9 7 6 3
♣ 10

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
<i>Manoppo</i>	<i>Burgess</i>	<i>Lasut</i>	<i>Marston</i>
Pass	1NT (2)	Pass	1♥ (1)
Pass	2♠	Pass	2♣ (3)
Pass	4♠	All Pass	3♠

- (1) 0-7 HCP, any distribution
- (2) Like a 1NT hand, 15-17 HCP
- (3) Stayman

Marston raised 2♠ to the 3-level because he had a near maximum for his bidding. The opening lead was the ♦5, and Burgess knew it was a singleton. The problem was how to attack the hand knowing there were two sure trump losers and possibly two heart losers.

Burgess won the first trick with the ♦J, then after long thought he led another diamond, finessing the Queen. Now it was Lasut's turn to think, but he finally ruffed and led a trump – the best defence at this point. Burgess went up with the Ace, led a club to hand and discarded a heart (from dummy) on the top two clubs. Then he led a second spade and, when both honours crashed together, he had his game.

The World Championship books can be purchased from Bridgegear (Paul Lavings) <http://www.bridgegear.com/> or The Bridge Shop <https://www.bridgeshop.com.au/>. You will find a wealth of reading material in each year's copy.

Barbara Travis

The June edition of the ABF Newsletter mentioned this hand from the 2020 Mixed Teams Playoff (p.27).

♠ Q 10 6 3
♥ Q 5
♦ Q 7 4 2
♣ K Q 6

♠ 7 5
♥ 10 9 3
♦ K J 10 3
♣ J 10 8 2

♠ J 2
♥ A 8 4
♦ A 6 5
♣ A 9 7 4 3

♠ A K 9 8 4
♥ K J 7 6 2
♦ 9 8
♣ 5

"This board gave East-West a signalling problem, defending 4♠ by South.

"Some pairs prefer attitude signals, others count. There is, of course, no right answer – either can be essential on a particular hand. Partnerships that refuse to play attitude and only give count would struggle to get the defence right on this hand.

"At both tables, West led the ♣J to the Queen, Ace and ♣5, leaving East in the hot seat. At one table, he cashed the ♥A, partner playing the ♥10, discouraging. Next he tried the ♦A and, this time, partner played the ♦3, encouraging, so the defence cashed their four tricks.

"At the other table, East returned a club at trick 2, allowing South to discard a diamond and the contract to make. Without an attitude signal, East is basically guessing."

What struck me about this hand?

What would West do if declarer ducked the ♣J at trick 1? If West continues a club, South can ruff, draw trumps, then use the established club trick to take a diamond discard. West would have to remain alert and realise that this unusual duck at trick 1 by declarer means that West should switch at trick 2! It strikes me as being worth a try, though it won't work against an astute defender, who would have to solve why declarer played low at trick 1.

Barbara Travis

A GAME AT THE (VIRTUAL) CLUB by Barbara Travis

Instead of running online bridge, I played online bridge...

Nil vulnerable, partner, East, found a nice balancing bid on this auction:

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
Pass	1♥	Pass	2♥
Pass	Pass	Double	Pass
2NT (1)	3♥	All Pass	

(1) Given the two previous passes, this was intended as 'choose a minor'

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

On the ♦10 lead, run around to declarer's Queen, he is going to go close to making 8 tricks in 2♥. The hearts are kind, so he can cross to dummy with the ♥10 to discard a club loser on the ♦A. Then he should work on the spades. It will often fail by one trick, but many made 8 tricks.

We managed to take 3♥ down two tricks, which scored an outright top! I guess people didn't want to balance on that East hand, but it's odds-on that you have some fit somewhere, even with a 3-3-4-3.

This hand shocked me:

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

East-West vulnerable

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			3♦
3NT	4♥	Pass	Pass
Double	All Pass		

Why was I surprised? Well, if I'd been North, I'd just have doubled 3NT, planning to cash the heart winners and take me several down.

On the other hand, if my 3NT had been based on long running clubs and I 'run' to 4♣, then you can try 4♥. This allows for the 3NT bid to be a balanced hand, as opposed to a 'practical bid' hand with long clubs.

Where will I go after 3NT is doubled? Nowhere – I'll go down 3 tricks.

It seems that not many Souths opened 3♦, a fabulous opening bid when holding only three cards in the majors. Only one other pair bid 3NT, but that North chose to defend 3NT (undoubled), for 300 and a top. Our 300 for 4♥ X, down 2, was also a top (the other direction).

This hand caused many Souths a problem. Sitting South, you hold:

♠ A 8 7 4
♥ A K 8 3
♦ J
♣ A 9 8 2

RHO opens with a weak 2♥. Your bid?

My action would depend on East-West's vulnerability. If East was vulnerable, I would pass 2♥, planning to take them down in 100s. If we belong in game then partner, with short hearts, will take some action.

If East-West were not vulnerable and we were vulnerable, then I would bid, because gaining 50s will not offset a part-score, let alone a game. I would bid 2NT. My heart stopper is solid enough, and I have no other 'sensible' bid. We would then have a transfer sequence to 4♠. (Those who bid to 4♠ did not have a 2♥ opening bid made against them.)

Here's the full hand:

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

2♥ plays surprisingly well, though South should lead a long suit, trying to shorten declarer's hearts.

4♠ should make 11 tricks. It's a bidder's world!

The next 'virtual' hand came from one of my Monday sessions. Most Norths arrived in 3NT on an auction similar to this:

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	1♣	Pass	1♠
Pass	1NT	Pass	3♦
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

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THE JOKER

(From the USBF Invitational Bulletins)

Jokers are funny things... Many decks of cards don't have jokers and, in most cases, you can lose the jokers and it doesn't matter. So, why include them? And while we are on the topic, where did any of the cards in the deck come from? Why are there 52 cards, with four suits and 13 cards to a suit?

According to Britannia.com, the 52-card deck that we use today is a modification of part of the standard Tarot deck, made up of Major Arcana and Minor Arcana, minus the knight cards. Probably around the 15th century, the deck started settling into the modern form we know today.

The Joker, however, did not appear until some time around the 1860s. At the time, the game of Euchre was extremely popular (although it was later unseated by Bridge). In Euchre, under the British rules of the game, there is a card known as the Imperial Bower (or Best Bower) that beats all other cards. Decks of cards began to include a special Imperial Bower card, which later morphed into the Joker, as we know it today.

Here is the full hand:

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

Both declarers and defenders found this hand challenging. East generally led the ♥5, with dummy's 10 winning the trick.

At one table, declarer led the ♦J which was allowed to hold. Now another diamond was led, the ♦10. East must win this diamond, ensuring three diamond tricks. Once the second diamond held, declarer was able to cash the ♣A and ♣Q, then the defence would become endplayed, providing an entry to hand to the heart and club winners.

The defence had to win the (first or) second diamond and switch. With the ♥10 winning in dummy marking the A-Q-J in North's hand, East should realise that they need to avoid clubs and hearts, so they can figure out to switch to the ♠Q. Despite this, North will still make their nine tricks.

East can't cash the diamonds, so West will get endplayed in spades, having to lead hearts or clubs for declarer – contract making.

It's an interesting hand because the declaring sides' two hands become 'separated', but the defence will eventually have to give declarer the re-entry to North's hand, and the contract will make.

Finally, you are West playing in 3NT with no opposition bidding (after a strong 2NT opening bid):

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

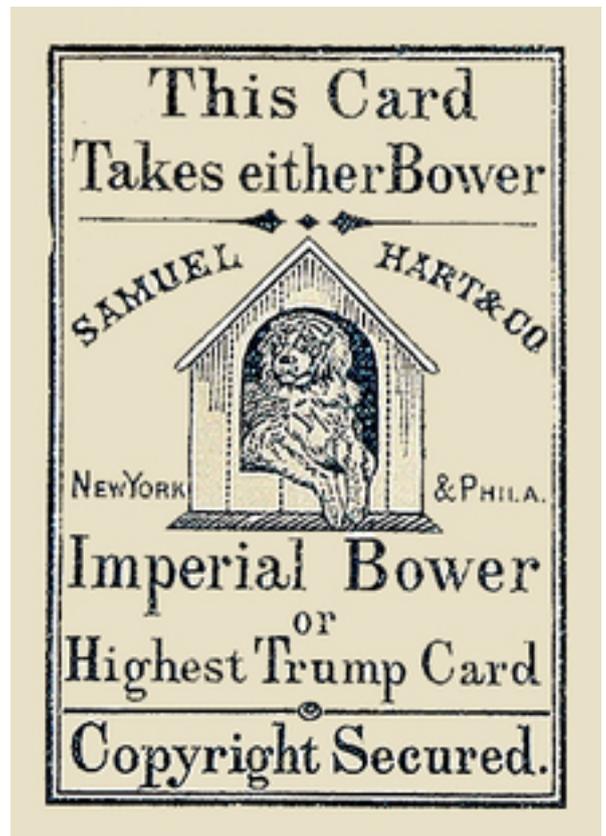
North leads the ♠K, then the ♠Q, and finally you win the ♠J lead, as South discards.

You test the clubs and they break 3-2, meaning you have 8 tricks. Obviously, you need to guess the diamonds to make your ninth trick. How will you play the suit?

It's actually not a guess. If North holds the ♦A, you will go down, since they have 4 spade tricks as well. So you simply lead a diamond to your King and hope it holds, since you 'need' South to hold the ♦A.

This was a flat hand in a teams match, when both Wests did the right thing.

Barbara Travis



The first Imperial Bower
(the first Joker)

THE ABF'S FIRST NATION-WIDE PAIRS

From Sunday 31st May, the ABF has introduced an online pairs event, open to any registered player. (Note: you must register your BBO ID and ABF number by 6pm the evening before in order to be able to play.)

Since my friend Lori Smith has been on Kangaroo Island throughout the Covid-19 lockdown, I suggested that we have a game together. The event was well supported, with 165 tables in play. Lori and I finished in 1st place East-West, with other notable South Australian results being:

NORTH-SOUTH

5th Suzanne King – Julia Hendry

8th Mark Jappe – Phil Gallasch

EAST-WEST

15th Dianne Marler – Jane Davies (UK)

17th Mike Doecke – Andrew Spooner (ACT)

I thought Lori showed a great degree of trust in my bidding (me?) on this hand. Sitting East, she held:

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

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

Having already passed, I showed 5 hearts, then diamond support. By the time Lori bid 3♣, she had shown me 5 spades and 6+ diamonds. I decided to show her my 'moderate' club stopper; my thinking was that I may have bid 2NT on the previous round with a good club stopper.

Lori took a long time deciding to pass. If I held heart values, likely from my 2♥ bid, then 5♦ may have too many losers. Poor North had to lead a spade to defeat the contract. Knowing not to lead a club, she quite reasonably opted to lead a heart and I had nine tricks:

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

Demonstrating how difficult it was to score an outright top (we got NONE), our +600 scored 91.77%. Quite a few people in 3NT must have received a club lead, for the overtrick!

Quite a few of our good scores came from not overbidding. Despite nine tricks always being available, playing in 1NT and taking our nine tricks still scored 88.41%.

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

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	1♦	1♥
1NT	All Pass		

Admittedly, being a passed hand, I could easily have bid 2NT to show my 11 HCP. However, I know my partner loves to bid games (!), whereas I like to ensure that we get our 'plus' score when playing in a pairs tournament, so I made a mild underbid.

North led the ♣4 which gave me two club tricks. South won her Ace and returned a club, won in dummy. I knew South held all the missing hearts, but my first concern was to remove any potential entry to the North hand. That possible entry was in spades so, at trick 3, I led a spade to the Jack and King – which removed North's entry to any long clubs. Now I was free to establish my heart winners, amassing 3 spades, 2 hearts, 2 diamonds and 2 clubs. (Remember to remove the possible entry to the hand with the dangerous long suit as soon as you can.)

Two similar but different hands caught my attention. Firstly:

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

With the ♦J led to South's Ace, then the ♣K onside, there were 12 tricks available (on the non-heart lead). I overlooked the possible 3-3 club break, so took only 11 tricks rather than 12, but fortunately that was still worth 95%. (I wish all my mistakes were so inexpensive!)

Prior to this hand, we'd held:

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

We had a similar auction where I showed 22-23 HCP and Lori raised to 3NT. This hand, however, plays much better in spades, with 12 tricks being available. The difference here is that the East hand has a small doubleton.

GRANNY'S BRIDGE STORY

OUR GREAT GAME HAS BEEN AROUND FOR A WHILE

This anecdote, by Ian MacLaren, appeared in the June newsletter, North Shore Bridge Club (Sydney), under the above title.

My paternal grandparents were very active until they passed away aged 90+.

My grandpa was great – always friendly and generous – everybody loved him. In WW1, he was General Haig's interpreter, being fluent in French, German and Scottish. Post-war he was employed by various American States, setting up their education system. In the 1960s, somehow, he was appointed as Senior Cattle Judge at the local Scottish agricultural shows!

Granny was different – a very severe lady, financially very tight, and her grandkids found her very scary. She was the first to introduce me to bridge. I hated it, along with her permanent harping about my poor bidding and play!

However, back in 1929, Granny entered and won a bridge tournament held throughout northern Scotland. The final session was held in Elgin, her home town. The prize-giving became a bit of a mess when it was announced that the 1st prize of a new Rootes motor car (later Humber) was no longer available as the sponsor, the local dealer, had gone broke in the Depression.

As the story goes, dear Granny would not accept this and created a scene for weeks. Eventually she decided to go and visit Lord Rootes in London to demand the car. The fact that she couldn't drive didn't seem to matter.

The trip by train took days, but eventually she arrived late one afternoon at Lord Rootes' mansion in Mayfair, where the butler opened the door and refused her entry. This caused another argument and, after a while, a gentleman came to investigate the ruckus at his front door. She explained what had occurred and he was very apologetic, but said he knew nothing about this. He asked her which hotel she was staying at, and said that he would investigate and be in touch in a few days. She told him she had no money for fancy hotels and needed the new car now. He pointed out that this wasn't possible but agreed to put her up in one of his many guest rooms.

The next day, after luncheon, a chap arrived, a driver/instructor, with a new car for her. He then drove her as far as the famous Scotch Corner House on the A1 in northern England from where she drove herself back home – a trip that would have taken several days.

After that, she refused to enter another bridge tournament, but continued to play against locals and family until she was well into her 90s.

Ian MacLaren (NSBC)

Therefore, if you play some version of Puppet Stayman, where you can ask for 5-card majors as well as 4-card majors, you should implement it on this hand. Partner responds with 3S (showing 5 spades) and you then opt for 4♣ with your ruffing value being useful in the suit contract.

The two hands make for an interesting exercise in learning when to look beyond 3NT for a major fit, and when to opt for 3NT. The first hand is absolutely flat (4-3-3-3) so is perfect for 3NT. If the second hand had held a doubleton honour in hearts, then it remains a 3NT bid. It's the weak doubleton that makes it workable for looking for the 5-3 fit instead.

It was a very enjoyable way to spend a Sunday afternoon in these unusual times. If you are willing to play online bridge, then it's well worth giving it a try.

Check out the information site:

<https://www.abf.com.au/national-online-game/>

Barbara Travis

EVAN ALLANSON (continued)

continued from page 2

By the end of 1992, I had had enough of vineyards and manual labour so we sold 40 acres, including 30 acres of vines. Jill said, "You're not going to do nothing," so we planted a test patch of lavender and it thrived. Anyway, we had a shed erected and started planting lavender. Deep ripping of our architecturally-designed lavender farm resulted in tonnes of battered micaceous schist being available for walls, pathways and garden edges - and I thought vine work was hard! We opened a shop of sorts, built more stone walls, planted more lavender. We progressed and the lavender business expanded.

After some prompting, we started Bridge in the Barossa. That was on 9 August 2006. Our first meeting was at the Tanunda CWA hall with six people – not very encouraging. Within a week or two we were fielding two and a half tables – most encouraging.

We found that the RSL Hall at the Oval was available, could seat 10 tables and was fairly comfortable. Jill started teaching and one of the first lessons held about 20 beginners. I guess they were all locals wanting to find out what the game was about. They were a mixed bunch including a doctor, real estate owner, in fact a good range from the community.

In the end about eight stayed on to play bridge either on a Monday night or Wednesday afternoon and the lessons were deemed a success.

The RSL Hall was really now too small and very noisy so after four or five years we moved to the nearby Tanunda Football Club rooms underneath the grandstand. Our membership now stands at a little over 80 with sessions on Wednesday afternoons and Monday nights. Two years ago, we relinquished ownership of the Club and passed it to the members who have since amalgamated. With the addition of some very keen players and a sound leadership group, the club has continued as a very happy group.

And now with the Covid-19 virus there is hope that face-to-face bridge will start again in mid-July and we all look forward to that.

Evan Allanson

IF YOU WANT TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE UNIVERSITY OF STIRLING (SCOTLAND) AND ITS RESEARCH PROJECT AIMED AT KEEPING BRIDGE ALIVE, NOW NAMED "BRIDGE: A MIND SPORT FOR ALL", THEY WOULD LOVE TO HEAR YOUR FEEDBACK ABOUT PLAYING BRIDGE DURING THE COVID-19 LOCKDOWN, OR JUST YOUR GENERAL VIEWS ABOUT PLAYING ONLINE.

Love or Hate Playing Bridge Online?

We want to hear your views

How has your life as a bridge player changed and what challenges do you face?

Please share your lockdown experiences of bridge by emailing bamsa@stir.ac.uk

One off accounts or weekly/monthly diary entries are welcomed by players of all ages from all countries - pros, teachers, club owners or service providers.

It doesn't have to take long and will be of use for understanding the short-term and longer term impacts of the current situation for the bridge community.

For more info see:

<https://keepbridgealive.bridgecloud.com/about/bridge-in-the-time-of-covid-19>



"I'm busier now than I've ever been in the real world."



Bridge: A MindSport For All
Connects People, Challenges Minds

THOUGHTFUL PLAY

From the IBPA Bulletin, May 2020.

David Ezekiel, from Bermuda, presented this declarer play problem:

♠ K 8 5
♥ 8 4 3 2
♦ 8 7 6 3
♣ Q 9

♠ A Q J 9 3
♥ A 9
♦ A
♣ A K 7 5 2

West	North	East	South
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♣
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♣
Pass	5♠	Pass	6♠
All Pass			

North appreciated the value of his black suit honours in leaping to 5♠, at the same time denying a red suit control.

West leads the ♥Q. How would you plan the play?

To protect against trumps being 4-1, you should draw two rounds with the Ace and King, then start on clubs, leading the ♣Q and another to hand. Next, lead a third club - if clubs are 3-3, all is well. You ruff, draw the last trump and claim 12 tricks.

What if clubs are 4-2? Well, either of two good things may still happen. This is the full deal:

♠ K 8 5
♥ 8 4 3 2
♦ 8 7 6 3
♣ Q 9

♠ 10 6 4
♥ Q J 10
♦ K Q 5
♣ J 8 6 3

♠ 7 2
♥ K 7 6 5
♦ J 10 9 4 2
♣ 10 4

♠ A Q J 9 3
♥ A 9
♦ A
♣ A K 7 5 2

East shows out on the third club, but cannot over-trump the ♠8. So, now you come to hand, draw the last trump and claim your 12 tricks (losing the heart).

The other good thing that might have happened is that the ♠10 might have fallen doubleton under the Ace and King. That would make dummy's ♠8 high, and a player with the three spades and a doubleton club would have been unable to over-trump anyway.

What if your third club is ruffed with the ♠10? Well, you now go the same one down as you would have done if you had drawn trumps (which relies on clubs being 3-3). The recommended line offers no loss for its potential gain.

David Ezekiel, Bermuda

ACCURATE DEFENCE

This hand was reported in the Alt V online tournament bulletins

♠ Q 8 4
♥ 7
♦ A K 9 8 7 6
♣ A K 4

♠ A J 10 2
♥ A J 10 2
♦ 10 4 3
♣ Q 2

♠ K 9 3
♥ K 8 6 4 3
♦ J 5 2
♣ 10 7

♠ 7 6 5
♥ Q 9 5
♦ Q
♣ J 9 8 6 5 3

West	North	East	South
<i>Bertens</i>	<i>Brogeland</i>	<i>Cheek</i>	<i>Lindqvist</i>
1♣	1♦	Double (1)	Pass
2♥	3♦	All Pass	Pass

(1) Double = 4+ hearts

East-West were playing 3rd / 5th leads. With an even number of cards in the suit led, one leads the 3rd highest. With an odd number, one leads the lowest. East led the ♥3, the lowest heart, so West knew that East held 5 hearts, given he had already promised at least four hearts.

West won the ♥A and knowing that North had played his only heart, he switched. He chose to switch to the ♠J, hoping to finesse North's (perceived) Queen. When the ♠J held, he continued with the ♠2 which East won and returned another spade to West's ♠A. West now led his last spade, promoting a trump trick. North tried trumping with the ♦9, but East's ♦10 was the setting trick. (If North trumped with a high trump, East-West had a trump winner.)

The other table led a fourth-highest ♥3 against North's 3♦. West won the ♥10 and, unable to determine the heart distribution, returned the ♥2. That allowed declarer to ruff, play a diamond to the Queen, a club to the Ace, and draw trumps with the ♦A and ♦K. When the ♣K brought down the Queen, he could run the clubs for 12 tricks!

Ed: 3rd & 5th leads haven't ever really 'taken off' in Australia, but they are far more helpful defensively than straight 4th highest leads. You can often determine the exact distribution of the suit when you have this additional precision for counting out the suit led.

Of course, the Rule of 11 doesn't work with these alternative leads. You actually have to work with the Rules of 10 and 12 (for the different options).

MY CHEATING SCANDAL by Larry Sherman

By Larry Sherman (March 2016)

I enjoyed this humorous article which I somehow found online.

The year was 1971. A lot was going on in my life. I had just graduated high school in West Hartford, Connecticut. I had just broken up with my high school girlfriend. I had just decided not to attend the University of Connecticut since I would run into her for the next four years. I had just received my draft lottery number of 72, which made me wonder whether I should begin college at all. My sister had just decided to go to Israel for the next year to teach instead of starting graduate school. I was working at Bradlees, then the East coast equivalent of Target. In addition to all those unimportant facts, it was also the year I played bridge for the summer!!!

My friend Barry Spaulding was a friend of a mutual high school classmate of ours, Mike Tulin. Mike is the son of Stan Tulin, then a star of the Hartford bridge community (2020, now captaining an online team). Anyway, Barry and I played at the Hartford Bridge Club, where the real bridge players played, once a week that summer. In turn, I introduced another friend, Jonathan Katz, to the game, and he and I played at the Hartford Jewish Community Center (HJCC), where the other players played, once a week.

In those days I had a bit of a stuttering problem. My father, who did not stutter at all, told me that he used to stutter when he was young. I figured he was trying to ease my mind. My parents took the condition seriously enough to take me to the home of my allergy doctor, who was an amateur hypnotist – well, he was practising to become one. I am not sure what faith they put in a fellow qualified to inject me weekly for allergies to grass, pollen, etc, to cure my stuttering problem. He tried to put me under to rid me of this condition, but I wasn't falling for that. After all, take away my stuttering and what distinctive features would I have to hold onto – my hook nose?

In any case, back in those days, there were no bidding boxes. You pronounced your calls verbally. My stuttering condition was focused on certain sounds and letters. I recall having difficulty with words that began with the letter "D" and also words that began with "S". Thus, bidding spades or diamonds was not always the easiest of tasks for me. I don't recall this shortcoming having any impact playing against the real players at the Hartford Bridge Club. After all, the opponents were licking their chops at the prospect of us visiting their tables.

The Hartford Jewish Community Centre was another matter. Back in those days, the local afternoon newspaper, The Hartford Times, actually printed the results from the previous day's bridge games. (OK, they also printed the scores from the 10-year-olds basketball league games, so there you have it.) In any case, I recall one particular pair playing there, Ina and Norman Finkel, who took the results at the HJCC game quite seriously. After all, who doesn't like seeing their names in print? Ina and Norman, particularly Ina if my memory serves me correctly, got it in their heads that whenever I stuttered trying to make a bid, I was communicating a whole plethora of Unauthorised Information. Well, they didn't call it Unauthorised Information back in those days. They would just call the Director and say we were CHEATING. Yikes. I yearned, I dreamed, I hoped, that every time I picked up a hand I would be looking at a wad of clubs and/or hearts. Those were my best friends!

Back in those days, the ACBL was located in Greenwich, Connecticut. Personal computers were being developed in someone's garage. When we did well, we were award slips of paper about 2.5" x 4". At summer's end, this player had earned 12 slips, adding up to the grand total of 1.55 master points.

Let's fast forward 35 years. I had taken a complete break from duplicate bridge. I figured a 35 year break and a 3,000 mile move might get me away from Ina and Norman's scrutiny. OK, they would probably have been about 115 years old in 2006, when I happened to stumble across those 12 slips from the ACBL.

The rest is history. After returning to the game, I immediately saw that my stuttering condition had pushed the ACBL to introduce bidding boxes. I suspect they were pressured by the likes of Ina and Norman.

Cheating amongst professional bridge players has been in the news this past year. However, I am keen to point out that Jonathan Katz and I were never found guilty of any wrongdoing. What's more, the ACBL even accepted my 35-year-old slips worth 1.55 MPs, when I joined the ranks of Rookie Master. Take that, Ina!

FAMOUS PEOPLE WHO LOVE BRIDGE

This was posted on BridgeWinners, www.bridgewinners.com

CHARLES SCHULZ

One of the most well-known cartoonists ever, Charles Schulz was an avid bridge player to the extent that he incorporated the game into his comics. Any Peanuts fan will be aware that Woodstock is often seen playing bridge with his friends in many of Schulz's laugh-out-loud strips. One of Schulz's best works is Bridge Mix, a book collection of cartoons featuring the eccentric nature of the people who play the game.

OMAR SHARIF

There are card games that require very little from the player. Take baccarat, for example, or the popular Indian game Andar Bahar. Both of these games are hot favourites on online casinos, partly because the house has a minimal edge, making them lucrative, but also because once the hand is dealt, the player can sit back and see the action unfold without doing anything.

Contrary to this, Omar Sharif famously said, "Many games provide fun, but bridge grips you. It exercises your mind." That is why the award-winning actor from films like Dr Zhivago and Lawrence of Arabia was known to be a massive advocate of bridge, and even wrote books about the card game.

He even formed the Omar Sharif Bridge Circus in 1967, a group of professional players who then travelled all across the world playing exhibition as well as professional bridge matches. Sharif also represented his home country, Egypt, in the World Bridge Olympiad in 1968.

MARTINA NAVRATILOVA

The Grand Slam-winning tennis star has been a bridge player for as long as she can remember. During her time as a tennis professional, Martina was famous for finding bridge clubs wherever she travelled and even stated that she can "always make new friends on the bridge table". So engrossed was the tennis champion in the card game that she went on to write an introduction for a book on bridge, and even started an email course to teach people the game at one time.

WARREN BUFFETT

You can understand the impact and importance of bridge once you realise that it is the favoured card game of Warren Buffett. The multi-millionaire investor has been playing the game for decades and even got Bill Gates addicted to it. In one of the most famous quotes by Warren Buffett about the game, he says, "If I'm playing bridge and a naked woman walks by, I don't even see her."

MARKETING SKILLS?

The SA Bridge Federation would like to create a Marketing Sub-Committee to develop marketing plans to promote bridge to the community, especially to potential beginners.

Furthermore, the ABF has set aside funds that can be utilised for marketing plans that meet with their approval.

If you have marketing skills and are interested/willing to get involved in this project, please contact the SABF President,

Barbara Travis

either by phone: 0437 919 928

or by email: barbara.travis@hotmail.com

HOW WOULD YOU PLAY?

♠ J 10 3 2
♥ 7 6 4 2
♦ 7 6
♣ A 8 3

♠ A Q 7 5 4
♥ A K
♦ 5 4 2
♣ K 7 6

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

The defence begins with three rounds of diamonds, West ruffing the third round with his ♠6. How would you play?

Assuming East holds the ♠K for his bidding, you should think about the hand. You've lost two diamonds and you have an unavoidable club loser. Therefore, you must ensure no spade loser.

All will be well if East holds either the singleton or doubleton ♣K. What if he holds ♣K-9-8? If you overtrump with dummy's ♠10, you will now have a spade loser – East covers the Jack, and his 9-8 become a winner.

How can you avoid four losers in that situation? Instead of overtrumping in dummy, you should discard dummy's club loser! Now you will be able to trump the club (instead of the diamond); you are just switching your losers around to avoid the trump 'promotion'.

West wins his ♠6 and switches to a heart, which you win in hand. Cross to dummy with the ♣A, then lead the ♠J, finessing when East plays low. Now you can repeat the trump finesse, draw trumps, cash the ♣K and trump your club – assuring your 10 tricks in the safest manner.

Check the hand for yourself – if you overtrump the ♠6 versus discarding the third club from dummy:

♠ J 10 3 2
♥ 7 6 4 2
♦ 7 6
♣ A 8 3

♠ 6
♥ Q J 9 8 5 3
♦ J 8
♣ 9 5 4 2

♠ A Q 7 5 4
♥ A K
♦ 5 4 2
♣ K 7 6

♠ K 9 8
♥ 10
♦ A K Q 10 9 3
♣ Q J 10

Barbara Travis

YOU HAVE TO LAUGH!

A few of my friends play 'my' defence against Multi 2♦ opening bids. The defence centres on transfers, which gives you more bidding space, especially to show two-suited hands or big unbalanced hands.

I recently received an email entitled, "Proof that your defence to Multi 2♦ works".

"You hold:

♠ A K 10 9 8 7 3
♥ void
♦ A K 2
♣ 9 7 6

The auction:

West	North	East	South
2♦ (Multi)	2♥ (1)	Pass	?

(1) Transfer to spades

Now, being completely trusting of partner, I thought the following:

- (1) We have a 12-card fit in spades
- (2) LHO has a weak 2 in hearts
- (3) Partner must have some points in clubs since her spades are not very good
- (4) I'm likely to get a heart lead against any spade contract (*dubious – BT*)

Having had no discussion about forcing bids after transfers, I was a bit stuck as to what bid to make next. I wasn't sure whether 4NT would be quantitative (*NO – BT*).

Not wanting to put partner under pressure, I made the practical bid of 6♣.

Dummy produced:

♠ 5 2
♥ A K J 5 3
♦ 8 5
♣ A 4 3 2

I received a club lead, won with dummy's Ace. I discarded my two losing clubs on the ♥A and ♥K, then cashed the ♦A and ♦K, before ruffing a diamond in dummy. (Better to cash one high spade before the diamond ruff – BT). When spades broke 2-2 I had 13 tricks."

Such dangerous stuff in the hands of babes! I would have thought partner had forgotten the system!! Ed.

Barbara Travis

FRACTURED PHRASES (Solutions) by John Rayner

1. A company mandated relocation to the "Lone Star" state. TEXAS TRANSFERS
2. This type of double has the same name as a flower. SNAPDRAGON
3. This guy wielding a meat cleaver badly misplays a bridge hand. BUTCHER (THE PLAY)
4. An increase in pay for Marty. BERGEN RAISES
5. Barking louder than the other dog. OVER RUFF
6. Marionette "Sam." PUPPET STAYMAN
7. Getting two burgers at a McDonald's drive-thru. TAKEOUT DOUBLE
8. The name of a Russell Crowe movie. (convention) GLADIATOR
9. The Caesarian enquiry regarding the "V" principals. ROMAN KEYCARD BLACKWOOD
10. Finesse Pan's enemy. HOOK
11. Quarantining "Dennis." (a TV character) ISOLATING THE MENACE
12. Re-aligns non-verbal action. SIGNAL
13. Lawrence, Rosenberg and Courtney competing in the high jump. LEAPING MICHAELS
14. An inebriated distaff monarch. STIFF QUEEN
15. Two or more upside-down adolescents. INVERTED MINORS
16. An "operatic" sacrifice. PHANTOM SACRIFICE
17. This "Simpsonian" convention is named after Gloria's husband. BART
18. The opening lead methods preferred by reporters for the Washington Post, New York Times and Sunday Mail. JOURNALIST LEADS
19. An insincere, unfelt, fake hug or embrace. PSEUDO SQUEEZE
20. If a new track and field event, in which each competing team had four runners, were named after "Koach K," what might that event be called? KOKISH RELAY
21. A gainfully employed pasteboard. WORKING CARD
22. The reptilian overthrow of the ruling regime. CROCODILE COUP
23. The head of a school who suffers from premature ejaculation. PRINCIPAL OF FAST ARRIVAL
24. What the combination of an underwire bra and a girdle might be called? SUPPORT DOUBLE

John Rayner, Mississauga (Canada)

BRIDGE AT BEAUMONT PRESENTS

CHRISTMAS IN WINTER BRIDGE CONGRESS



AT

MT OSMOND GOLF CLUB
60 Mt Osmond Rd, Mt Osmond

ON

SUNDAY 19th JULY 2020

2-session Graded Matchpoint Pairs with a
two-course Christmas lunch & Red MP awards

Start time: 9.30am

Finish: approx. 5.15pm

COST

\$55 per person (\$110 per pair)
includes the two-course Christmas lunch

DIRECTOR

Barbara Travis

barbara.travis@hotmail.com

0437 919 928

**IN LINE WITH COVID-SAFE RESTRICTIONS, ONLY 36 PAIRS CAN ENTER.
(NEARLY FULL)**