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<http://www.sabridgefederation.com.au>

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BRIDGE DURING LOCKDOWN

SABF ONLINE LEAGUE #1

Final Results:

- 1st BIRD: Sheila Bird - Felicity Smyth, David Gue - Jon Hunt, David Parrott - Mike Doecke
- 2nd TRAVIS: Lauren Travis - George Evans - Sam Schulz - Barbara Travis - Howard Melbourne - Nic Croft
- 3rd WILLIAMS: Justin Williams - Phil Markey, Jeff Travis - Russel Harms

Congratulations are also due to George Evans who is now the proud father of Benjamin, born during lockdown.

THURSDAY NIGHT BRIDGE RETURNS - ONLINE:

Each Thursday night, there will be a stand-alone pairs-based event held through the SABF's online virtual club.

Bridge starts at 7.30pm, finishing by 10.20pm.

Pre-enty is required, which also involves the purchase of BB\$ to pay for your entry, which is BB\$5 (basically US\$5).

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

SA BRIDGE ASSOC.

- OPEN Wednesdays at 1pm
- OPEN Thursdays at 1pm
- SUPERVISED Tuesdays at 7.30pm
- RESTRICTED Wednesdays at 1.30pm
- INTERMEDIATE Thursdays at 1.30pm
- Contact: manager@saba.asn.au
- Cost: BB\$5

BRIDGE AT BEAUMONT

- Mondays at 1.15pm
- Fridays at 1.15pm
- Contact: barbara.travis@hotmail.com
- Cost: BB\$5

BRIDGE IN THE CITY (and GLENELG)

- Mondays at 12.45pm
- Fridays at 12.45pm
- Contact: suejohnp@tpg.com.au
- Cost: BB\$5

BRIDGE IN BAROSSA (and GAWLER)

- Monday evenings at 6.30pm
- Wednesdays at 1.00pm
- Contact: graham@harmsnet.com
- Cost: BB\$3

SABF ONLINE LEAGUE #2

(2 divisions - teams play all teams in the other division)

Participating Teams:

DIVISION A:

1. COOKE (Ingrid Cooke, John Kikkert, Sue Lusk, John Roper, David Smyth)
2. HARGREAVES (Robyn Hargreaves, Peter Dieperink, Arthur Porter, Bob Clarke)
3. PHILLIPS (Sue Phillips, Judith Roberts, Kay Miki, Deb Bennett)
4. JAPPE (Mark Jappe, John Maddison, Phil Gallasch, Joff Middleton, David Cherry, John Horowitz)
5. LORIMER (Chris Lorimer, Greg Sargent, Andy Babiszewski, Judy Hocking, Kevin Lange)
6. WILLIAMS (Justin Williams, Phil Markey, Russel Harms, Jeff Travis)

DIVISION B:

7. ABDELHAMID (Adel Abdemhamid, Wendy Hooper, Milton Hart, Gamini Amerasinghe, Judy Zollo, John Zollo)
8. ANDERSON (David Anderson, Ian Hilditch, Sharmini Anderson, Anne Harris)
9. BIRD (Sheila Bird, Felicity Smyth, Jon Hunt, David Gue, Mike Doecke, David Parrott)
10. BRADSHAW (Bill Bradshaw, Catherine Ellice-Flint, Joanne Bakas, Tassi Georgiadis)
11. DEMARCO (Therese Demarco, Lori Smith, Pam Morgan-King, Andrew Eddie, Alison Fallon, Barbara Marrett)
12. TRAVIS (Barbara Travis, Howard Melbourne, Nic Croft, Arjuna Delivera, Geroge Bartley, Bertie Morgan)

Results: sabridgefederation.com, Results, Online League 2

ABF FRAMEWORK AND GUIDELINES FOR REBOOTING CLUB BRIDGE

The ABF has sought the assistance of Dr Andrew Slutzkin, a bridge player from Melbourne, with the development of minimum hygiene standards for all tournaments when face-to-face bridge is permitted by our various State governments.

This would include all sessions of bridge conducted by affiliated clubs, state and territory organisations and, of course, the ABF itself.

GLENELG CONTRACT BRIDGE CLUB TURNS 50

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Glenelg Contract Bridge Club on February 27th, 1970. The club first started meeting at the Glenelg Town Hall and after moves to the Rechabite Hall in Gordon Street, and St Mary's Primary School, the club finally settled in 1977 in Partridge House where it stayed for many years. After moving once again in 1997 to the Holdfast Bay Yacht Club, with two sessions being played in Flambouron Hall, Glenelg North, the club made its final move in 2006, with all sessions being played in the bright, comfortable room in the Sea Rescue Squadron.

In 2020, our 50th anniversary, the club is still at the Sea Rescue Squadron with a thriving membership of 176 full members and 56 associate members which includes social members. There are 4 day sessions, 2 evening sessions, 2 morning supervised sessions and an afternoon supervised duplicate session. There are also 4 beginners courses held throughout the year. We have 8 qualified directors and 3 accredited teachers at the club.

We celebrated by having a special lunch at Oceanique Restaurant at which all members were treated to lunch and birthday cake which was cut by our two latest life members, Judy Maloney and Helen Wetherell.

Helen Luxton, who was a founding member, was our honoured guest and she related a funny story about a past President, Keith Berry. We were very pleased to have several past presidents and life members present.

We pride ourselves in being a happy, friendly club and this was certainly in evidence at the luncheon.

*June Hammond,
Glenelg CBC*



Helen Wetherell and Judy Maloney,
new life members of Glenelg CBC

*The SABF congratulates Glenelg on establishing
such a successful, ongoing bridge club.*

ONLINE BRIDGE

Various people have created some interesting high-level online bridge tournaments. The day before one started, the FIDE Steinitz Memorial Blitz CHESS tournament finished. When the reigning women's World Blitz Champion had won she commented:

"Honestly, I don't enjoy to play online. I'm sorry to say it, because it's better than nothing, this is for sure. This tournament keeps me, you know - I have to be in shape, I have to prepare, I have to check my analyses, to do my work. But I've played 26 years in front of an opponent, so it's a lot and I'm used to this. I enjoy to see my opponent, to share ideas, to speak after the game..."

Therein lies the intrinsic problem with Online bridge events. You can no longer enjoy the post-game conviviality that is, for many, an integral part of why they love playing so much.

However, Online Bridge IS better than nothing!

BRIDGE: A MINDSPORT FOR ALL (BAMSA)

LOVE OR HATE PLAYING BRIDGE ONLINE? WE WANT TO HEAR YOUR VIEWS

At the University of Stirling, Scotland, there is a research project being conducted about bridge. As a result of Covid-19, they have added another element to their research:

HOW HAS YOUR LIFE AS A BRIDGE PLAYER CHANGED AND
WHAT CHALLENGES DO YOU FACE?

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

One-off accounts or weekly/monthly diary entries are welcome from bridge players of all ages, from all countries. It doesn't have to take long but will be of use for understanding the short-term and longer-term impacts of the current situation for the bridge community.

For more information see:

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

YOU TAKE YOUR CHANCES by Jon Hunt

The following hand comes from the SABF Online Teams League 1. It could be called "Playing the Odds".

Your partner, North, opens the bidding with 1♦. You show a strong hand with long hearts and a 4-card spade suit and eventually arrive at a contract of 6♥.

♠ J 10 2
♥ 9 2
♦ A J 10 6 4 3
♣ A 6

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

West led the ♠7, East plays a low club and you win with the Jack.

Your initial analysis suggests this is a good contract with a couple of chances that would see you land the required 12 or 13 tricks; firstly, the trumps may be divided 2-2 or the spade finesse might be on. A complication is that you only have one entry to dummy, the ♠A.

Let's say you start with the ♥A - under which West drops the ♥Queen. This is a familiar problem; does West hold the ♥Q-J doubleton or should you finesse East to be holding ♥J-x-x?

Kelsey and Glaubert in Bridge Odds for Practical Players (an essential read for any serious bridge player) demonstrate the odds of finding the Q-J doubleton (after an honour drops) are only slightly better than 1 in 3, significantly less than the 1-3 break (nearly 65%). In other words, taking the finesse in trumps is nearly twice as likely to succeed as playing for the drop.

We've noted though there is another possibility – the spade finesse. And there is an opportunity to combine the two chances by firstly cashing the King of Hearts, hoping for a 2-2 break in trumps and, failing that, falling back on the spade finesse.

You would think that this line might well improve your chances but, in fact, the likely successes of the two lines are less than 1% apart, the finesse in trumps being ever so slightly more likely. (See footnote for a brief explanation of this second calculation).

It is also worth considering the psychology of the situation rather than simply working out the probabilities.

Firstly, does it make a difference which honour drops on the first round of trumps? The Queen or the Jack? In theory, no, since the probability calculation assumes that a player holding both honours doubleton would vary their play such that they play the Queen half the time and the Jack the other half. Is this your experience?

Like me though, you may have noticed that some players often or even always play the higher honour when they hold two touching honours doubleton.

There's an argument, therefore, that when you see the Jack played on the first round that player holds only the Jack, thus making finessing in trumps the superior line. However, as Kelsey & Glaubert noted, you'd better know your opponent well before drawing such an inference!

On the other end of the ability scale, if a very experienced player drops an honour under your Ace, the best advice is not to draw any inference at all! The expert could follow with the Queen holding a singleton Queen, doubleton Q-J or even Q-J-x!

With the probabilities so close, I think I'd favour trying for the drop, falling back on the spade finesse. For me, psychologically at least, that would feel much better than pinning my hopes on the trump finesse. That line would have worked as the ♠K was onside.

<p>♠ J 10 2 ♥ 9 2 ♦ A J 10 6 4 3 ♣ A 6</p> <p>♠ 9 8 6 5 ♥ Q J ♦ K 9 7 ♣ Q 10 7 5</p>	<p>♠ K 3 ♥ 6 4 ♦ Q 8 5 2 ♣ 9 8 4 3 2</p> <p>♠ A Q 7 4 ♥ A K 10 8 7 5 3 ♦ void ♣ K J</p>
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There is one further line; cross to dummy with ♣A and run the ♠J. If the finesse loses, you may have a chance to return to the ♠10 and then try the heart finesse instead. However, this risks a spade ruff in either hand, and you might go off when the trumps were 2-2 all the time.

You pays your money and takes your chances!

NERDY FOOTNOTE!

Probability of either Event A OR event B occurring
 $= P(\text{event A occurs}) + P(\text{event A does not occur}) \times P(\text{event B})$

$P(\text{Hearts dividing 2-2}) = 35\%$
 $P(\text{Hearts dividing 1-3}) = 65\%$
 $P(\text{Spade finesse}) = 45\%$

This last might surprise you, but if we assume the Hearts are 1-3 then West has 12 places in their hand for any particular card in any of the other suits. East with 3 hearts, has only 10 such 'vacant' places. That is the Spade King has only 10 out 22 chances or a 45% chance of being onside.

Overall Probability of the try the drop (2-2 break), then finesse the spade is therefore: $35\% + 65\% \times 45\% = 64.4\%$

Jon Hunt

EDITOR'S FOOTNOTE:

I think the 'best' line (at the table) is to cross to dummy and try the spade finesse – on the basis that spades are not 5-1. If the finesse fails, THEN you have a second entry to dummy, and can decide what to do – although obviously playing for restricted choice is superior.

EVERYBODY MAKES

This was found online, and all I can conclude is that some people have too much time on their hands! This article is attributed to Thomas Andrews, bridge@thomasandrews.com.

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

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

In this symmetrical deal, nine tricks can be made in No Trump by any declarer.

Given the symmetry of the deal, we only need to analyse one declarer, so we pick South as declarer, just for consistency.

Fundamentally, the problem for the defence is that, even though they can set up either diamonds or clubs with one lead of the suit, both suits are blocked, and there is no immediate entry to the hand that is set up.

Isn't declarer similarly blocked? Yes, but look what happens to the deal when West leads a club. North discards a spade, as South wins the trick in his hand, then leads a low spade to the ♠10, East winning with the Jack, leading to:

♠ Q
♥ A 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ K J
♣ ---

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

♠ A 8 7 6 5 4 3
♥ Q 10 9
♦ ---
♣ J

East-West's club suit is blocked, and West has no entry. What does East do here? When North-South regain the lead, they have seven spade tricks and the ♥A, together with the ♣K from trick 1. And at this point, the defence can only take two clubs and the ♦A before surrendering the lead.

What if West has led a diamond? Then North covers and, whatever East does, South pitches a heart. Now, South only needs to lose one heart to take seven tricks in hearts, plus a diamond and the ♠A.

Finally, we have to look at what happens if West leads a heart, which lets East throw away a club, beginning an unblock, but he has done nothing to establish either of the defence's suits. Instead, he has blown his heart winner. Declarer just wins three hearts (the hearts are still blocked) and plays a low spade to the ♠9, forcing East to win and leading to this position:

♠ Q 10
♥ 8 7 6 5 4
♦ K J
♣ ---

♠ A 8 7 6 5 4 3
♥ ---
♦ ---
♣ K J

Whatever East-West pitch on the three hearts and the spade, all they can take when East gets in is their ♣A and ♦A, and then when declarer regains the lead he takes the ♠A, ♠Q and five more hearts, together with the first three hearts. (If the defence cashes the ♣A, North must discard one heart winner, but then South's ♣K has become the extra winner.)

WHAT IS HAPPENING HERE?

Each side has two suits they might try to set up. In order to establish and run the suit, they need to lose a trick in the suit, and also pitch a card from the Q-10-9 holding to unblock the suit, or lose the lead again to create an entry to the long suit because of the blockage.

When West leads a club, he does the first step – losing the mandatory club trick. But the club lead also allows North to pitch a blocking spade, so both sides take a step towards their respective goals. When North leads a spade to lose to East, West gets to pitch, but he holds the Q-10-9 in diamonds. If he discards a diamond, East-West have taken one step towards establishing diamonds and one step towards establishing clubs, however North-South have taken the two steps needed to establish spades.

COMMENTS

I have been informed that this deal was found by John Beasley and reported in "The Games and Puzzles Journal" in 1988.

I have completed double-dummy results for all 16,777,216 different symmetric deals. Of these deals, this is the only one where each side can make nine tricks in No Trumps. In fact, it is the only one that can make more than seven tricks in No Trump. Is this deal unique? I can't claim that at this moment, but I would not be surprised if it is. It is certainly unique amongst symmetric deals.

There are known cases where both SIDES can make 13 tricks in No Trumps. For a simple example:

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

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

♠ void
♥ void
♦ 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ 8 7 6 5 4 3 2

Here, 7NT makes when declared by North or East.

Thomas Andrews

SQUEEZE OUT OF TROUBLE

There is little to compare with the excitement of picking up a monster such as South's hand, from a Teams match. Tempered with that excitement is the thought that there is bound to be a large element of guesswork as to how high to bid. In this instance, you are hardly likely to be able to ascertain whether your partner holds the critical ♦K.

♠ J 10 4 ♥ A 9 6 5 ♦ J 9 8 3 ♣ 7 5	♠ K 7 5 ♥ K J 10 7 4 3 2 ♦ K 5 4 ♣ void	♠ A Q 9 8 6 3 2 ♥ Q 8 ♦ Q 10 7 ♣ 10	♠ void ♥ void ♦ A 6 2 ♣ A K Q J 9 8 6 4 3 2
West Pass Pass Pass All Pass	North 1♥ 2♥ 4♥	East 1♠ 2♠ Pass	South 2♣ 3♠ (1) 7♣ (2)

- (1) Game forcing, still trying to learn more
- (2) Declarer, "No idea how I'm ever going to find out whether partner has the ♦K plus an Ace (or even an entry). I've played for too many years to waste time on hands like this."

I really think your character comes into play here. Which would frustrate you more: bidding 7♣ and not making it when partner holds the wrong hand, or settling in 5♣ or 6♣ and making all 13 tricks when partner holds the right hand?

West led the ♠J. The first card dummy tabled was the ♦K – fabulous, an entry to dummy. But there was nothing further in the good news department.

Undaunted, declarer ruffed the spade and ran all his trumps, reaching this ending as the last trump was led:

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

On the last club West had to release a diamond to retain the ♥A. Dummy's ♥K had done its job and could now be discarded. East also had to discard a diamond to retain his ♠A. Now a diamond to the King and one back to the Ace exhausted East-West of diamonds and declarer had made his grand slam with the ♦6.

A perfect double squeeze to make a grand slam, and a story to dine out on for years.

Andrew Robson (England)

SUPER SENIOR SUPER SQUEEZE

From the IBPA Bulletin, January 2020, by Bob Sanner (USA)

In the Super Senior Pairs (*Ed: I suspect we might call this Veteran Pairs*), my partner Ron Powell showed that seniors still have brain cells left, by executing an elegant strip squeeze.

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

South led the ♠9. Clearly, the spades were off-side and the lead looked like a singleton, so Powell, East, rose with the Ace. He played the ♥A and ♥K, then led a diamond. South rose with the Ace and exited with a club. Declarer won in hand, drew the remaining trump, then returned to hand with a club (as North discarded a spade) and led another diamond. But when South played the Queen, Powell ducked!

South was forced to lead the ♣Q, which declarer ruffed. Now Powell had a full count of the hand: South had started with a 1-3-2-7. This was the position:

♠ Q 2 ♥ --- ♦ K 10 ♣ ---	♠ K J ♥ --- ♦ J 9 ♣ ---	♠ 8 6 ♥ 9 ♦ 7 ♣ ---	♠ --- ♥ --- ♦ --- ♣ 10 8 7 6
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When declarer led the last trump, a spade was discarded from dummy. North was 'fixed'. When he discarded the ♠J, a spade lead put him on lead with his King, forcing him to return a diamond into dummy's tenace for the tenth trick. (Obviously, had he discarded the ♦9, dummy's two diamonds become winners instead.)

PENLINE®

DEFENCE OF THE YEAR?

Marek Wojcicki wrote up this hand from an online teams competition.

On this hand, Jacek Kalita – Michal Nowosadzki excelled in defence.

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

The bidding was short and not so sweet.

West	North	East	South
Kalita	De Wijs	Nowosadzki	Muller
1♦	1NT	Double	All Pass

Nowosadzki led the ♥J. Declarer ducked the first trick and the ♥5 was continued to the Queen and Ace. Now De Wijs played the ♦A followed by the ♦Q. Michal took the trick, and played the ♥9 and ♥10 (declarer discarding a diamond and a spade).

Kalita won the ♥K and paused. What was he contemplating? The ♥9 followed by the ♥10 was clearly a signal for clubs. They could cash their three club tricks and the ♠A for 500. Kalita had a better idea:

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

He found the double dummy exit of the ♦10! Declarer took the trick with dummy's Jack and cashed the ♦9. Both defenders discarded spades, but declarer's hand was squeezed. He discarded a club and when he played a spade from dummy, West won the Ace, but then the defence could take the last four tricks in clubs, for 800.

[Ed: It is always fantastic to squeeze declarer. However, for the defence to make dummy squeeze declarer is enormously satisfying.]

DYNAMIC DECEPTIVE DEFENCE

From the IBPA Bulletin, December 2019

This hand comes from the 2019 APBF Championships in Singapore.

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

In an early round of the Open Teams, East declared 3NT on the lead of the ♠Q.

For most declarers, it then became of question of cashing the top clubs to see if the Queen fell and, when it didn't, falling back on the heart finesse, a classic combining of chances. But how would you play if North had won trick 1 with the ♠A and returned the ♠2?

This is how Australia's Sartaj Hans defended, and his opponent fell for it. Assuming that the ♠2 was an honest card, the spades were either 4-4, when a loser could be afforded to either opponent, or 6-2, when a loser could be afforded to North, not South. Declarer won the second spade then played the ♣A, ♣K and ♣10, and the 5-3 spade break meant that he was one off in what most would claim was a laydown contract as the cards lie.

DINING OUT ON A DISASTER

Every now and then, bridge journalists run a challenge, asking what is the highest number of tricks that each pair of a team have contracted to make in the same suit. After all, when one team makes the same suit trumps at both tables, there is likely to be trouble. I always think that this hand is the 'winner'.

In 1985, Sue Lusk and I played a highly artificial bidding system called Regres, which included forcing pass opening bids – i.e. pass showed 13+ HCP, any hand, with bids showing weaker hands (the 1♦ opening showed any 0-7 HCP hand!).

At the Venice Cup (world championships) in Brazil in 1985, our opponents had a disaster against our forcing pass.

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

Other table:			
West	North	East	South
			2♣ (strong)
5♣	Pass	Pass	5♥
Pass	6♥	7♣	7♥
All Pass			

West would have had to find an unlikely diamond lead to defeat the slam. 7♣ X would have gone down 700, an improvement on the likely -980. (*Until 1988, doubled not vulnerable undertricks scored -100, -300, -500, -700, and onwards in 200 increments.*)

However, South liked her club void, anticipating that her partner had help in diamonds, so went on to 7♥. Even with a club lead, it was doomed to fail. West, Pauline Gumby, led a trump, so 7♥ still failed. Australia +50.

West	North	East	South
	Lusk		Travis
4♣ (2)	Double (3)	4♥ (3)	Pass (1)
All Pass			Double

- (1) Forcing pass, showing any hand with 13+ HCP.
- (2) West intended 4♣ to be natural, but their opening 4♣ bids promised hearts, so West interpreted the bid as the transfer
- (3) East accepted the transfer

Even 35 years later, I do wonder why East accepted the transfer if there was any doubt. If she had just passed, her partner could have 'corrected' to 4♥ if that was her intention. Anyway, I doubled and was shocked when everyone passed!

We didn't defend optimally and declarer managed to trump one spade and take two diamond tricks. Still, 7 down was 1300 (*remember, the old scoring*). That was a 16 IMP swing.

One table attempted all 13 tricks in hearts, and the other pair tried for 10 tricks. I reckon it's tough to beat that accident.

Barbara Travis

THE RABBI'S RULE

THOMAS BESSIS INVOKES THE RABBI'S RULE

by Roland Wald (*bridgewinners.com*)

Many players are thrilled when, against the odds, they drop a singleton King offside. This is known as the Rabbi's Rule, "When the King is singleton offside, play the Ace." Thomas Bessis of France did just that in the Alt-Invitational IV tournament on BBO, but when he did so he played 'with' the odds. [Ed: I watched this hand and thought it newsworthy too.]

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

In the match between Ventin and Smart Shots, Bessis and Jeff Meckstroth reached the very ambitious club slam. Bessis got a spade lead and realised that he needed some luck to make the contract. (He needed to deal with the heart loser or he needed the ♣K-x onside.)

At trick 2 he led a low diamond to the Jack and, when that held, it was time to invoke the Rabbi's Rule. (Now he needed to ensure only one club loser, so allowed for the only 4-1 break he could manage. If there was K-10-9-8 or some combination thereof onside, he still had two clubs to lose.)

He knew that he would now make with clubs 3-2, but he gave himself an extra chance when he played a club to the Ace. If only small cards appeared, he would still make with a 3-2 club split but he was deservedly rewarded when South turned up with the singleton King. Now there was just one club loser in a contract where many would have failed by taking a finesse.

Roland Wald

Sadly, within days of writing this article, Roland Wald died suddenly. This is, perhaps, the last article he wrote about bridge. For many BBO bridge players, his legacy will be the endless (voluntary) hours he gave to the game, bringing VuGraph matches to life with his commentary and via the other commentators (who he spent hours organising).

MASTER OF BRIDGE PSYCHOLOGY

Inside the remarkable mind of Peter Fredin

By Jeppe Juhl with Peter Fredin

This book demonstrates the very different way that Peter Fredin (from Sweden) thinks about bridge. The many spectacular deals show Fredin's mastery of a specific set of skills that one needs to be a top-flight bridge player:

- Excellent card reading
- Superb technique
- Acute table presence and the ability to 'play the player'
- Guts
- Logic

The hands are grouped into various topics, with the final chapter being **FREDIN'S BRIDGE TIPS**.

TIP 1: Don't play partner for a specific hand. Instead, ask yourself, "What have I shown?"

One of the most common mistakes I see in bridge is made by those who play their partner for a very specific hand and take unilateral action based on this assumption. These players forget partner has eyes of his own. He knows better than anyone else in the world what cards he is looking at. I have lost count of the times I've heard players defend their actions with sound bites like, "I was sure you had the king of spades, that's why I..."

This way of thinking is wrong. You should instead ask yourself what you have told partner about your own hand, and draw conclusions from his reactions to what he has been told. I won a tournament in Tenerife this summer with my friend Kjeld "Kello" Hansen. We got a great result by adhering to this tip.

Both Vul

♠	A 10 7 6
♥	A Q J 10 8 4
♦	A J 6
♣	---

♠	2
♥	7
♦	8 3 2
♣	A K 10 8 7 5 4 3

<i>North Hansen</i>	<i>South Fredin</i>
	Pass
1♥	2♣
2♠	3♣
4♥	5♣
Pass!	

Kello's pass of 5♣ secured us a great score. Many players sitting North went totally overboard on this deal by speculating about the different hands that South might have. My partner did the opposite. He knew that he had shown his hand. He knew that I also knew and that, in spite of this, I had still bid 5♣. This way of thinking made passing an easy option.

TIP 2: Eight ever, nine ever!

Bridge teachers have a habit of drilling simple mnemonic rules into their students from the very beginning. I understand very well why this can be necessary, but rules in bridge are never more than 'rules of thumb'. They are generalisations, and they should never keep you from thinking outside the box. One of the most well-known rules deals with what to do if you are missing Q-x-x-x or Q-x-x-x-x in a suit. It goes "Eight ever, nine never," meaning that you finesse when you are missing five in the suit and play the Ace and King when you are missing four. I have never liked "nine never". The odds are very close to begin with: give the offside hand less than two fewer vacant spaces, and the odds swing in favour of a finesse. And there is much more to it than that. Now here is a new and much better rule. I call it:

Eight ever, nine ever... when playing trumps!

In the deal below, North-South reached 4♠ in an uninterrupted bidding sequence. West led a low diamond from ♦K-9-5. That went to East's ♦10. He cashed his ♦A and returned his ♦6 to West's King.

♠	A K 10 4 3
♥	K 7 5 4
♦	Q 7 4
♣	A

♠	J 9 8 2
♥	A 3
♦	8 3 2
♣	K 7 5 3

Now all the players who adhered to the established rule went down when they eventually cashed the ♠A-K, because West had ♠Q-7-6. If they had followed my rule, they would have made this contract easily by taking the obvious finesse against the marked trump Queen in the West hand.

Why is it obvious, you may ask? Well, there is an extended version to my rule that explains why:

Always finesse the player with the opening lead for the Queen of trumps when you are missing four outstanding cards, if the lead is NOT from a natural sequence or in a suit bid by his partner. The player on lead is a big favourite to have the trump Queen, since he didn't lead a trump.

The logic behind this rule is very sound. South has to ask himself why West led a dangerous small diamond when he had so many other alternatives including a trump lead. There can only be one answer to that question: he is looking at the Queen.

TIP 3: Always trust your opponents.

This rule has paid off big-time for me over the years, and even bigger time for my poor partners. The full version including the assumption behind the rule goes like this:

When something REALLY ODD occurs at the table, you are better off trusting your opponents than your partner.

The rule is solely based on the experience I have gained from playing hundreds of thousands of hands. I have no evidence to support this tip but, in the long run, you will thank me for this sound advice.

I promise you.

TIP 4: Don't downgrade 4-3-3-3s when you have a no trump opening.

The vast majority of bridge players tend to downgrade their ultra-balanced 4-3-3-3 no trump hands. I have lost count of the times where I have seen players pass invitational bids from their partner with 4-3-3-3 even though they had a maximum within their no trump range. This is a huge mistake based on flawed thinking. As a matter of fact, a 4-3-3-3 hand is actually the BEST balanced hand for a no trump contract!

It is true that you will be better off with a 4-4-3-2 no trump hand (the most frequent of all distributions) when your partner is ultra-balanced. However, opposite any other distribution, that is whenever partner has a semi-balanced or unbalanced hand, having a 4-3-3-3 distribution is superior. Why is that? The reason is simple: when a semi-balanced or unbalanced partner bids 3NT directly, you will have at least an 8-card fit in his long suit, and frequently more than that.

Let's break it down by looking at responder's four most frequent distributions, and for the moment disregard 4-4 fits in a major where you will end up in 4-Major unless you have mirror distribution (see Tip 5).

You have 4-3-3-3 and partner has:

1. 4-3-3-3. This is the worst-case scenario. The good news, however, is that your opponents never have more than a 7-card fit in their longest suit.
2. 4-4-3-2. Not as bad as above. This time the enemy never has more than a combined 8-card fit in their longest suit, and that suit will often break 4-4. Quite frequently (when you have 4 opposite partner's doubleton) they will have only a 7-card fit.
3. 5-3-3-2. Now you will love your 4-3-3-3 pattern. It is highly superior to all other no trump distributions. Notice that you actually should also aim to play 3NT with a 5-4 major fit with this hand (more on this topic on my next tip)!
4. 6-3-2-2. It gets better and better. This time you have a guaranteed 9-card fit (sometimes a 10-card fit) and no open suits.

From now on: Learn to love your 4-3-3-3 patterns: life is good when you are in balance!

TIP 5: Always use Stayman if you have a 4-card major when partner opens 1NT.

This rule is a direct consequence of the previous tip, where you finally learned to love 4-3-3-3 hand patterns.

Bidding 3NT over partner's 1NT with a 4-3-3-3 or 3-4-3-3 is almost universally recognised as a standard action. In my opinion it is close to brain-dead. The ONLY time Stayman will backfire is when you and partner have mirror distributions with the same 4-card suit in spades or hearts. We can all agree that playing 4-Major with a 4-3-3-3 looking at a 4-3-3-3 in dummy is silly.

But have no fear: there is a cure for that disease.

If you open 1NT with a 3-4-3-3 there is a simple way to avoid ending up in 4♥ if partner has the same distribution. You will add an artificial 2♠ to your Stayman sequence:

Partner	You
1NT	2♣
2♥	2♠

Your 2♠ is now either a balanced hand with slam interest or a game-forcing 3-4-3-3. Opener now bids 2NT and you will bid 3NT with 3-4-3-3; anything else is forward-going with 4 hearts. Now partner can pass 3NT with 3-4-3-3 and convert to 4♥ with any other shape.

There is less room to manoeuvre with 4-3-3-3, but the principle is the same.

Partner	You
1NT	2♣
2♠	3♥

This time 3♥ is either a balanced hand with slam interest or 4-3-3-3. Opener now bids 3NT with 4-3-3-3 and responder will pass, while anything else is forward-going.

The same method can be used over 2NT openings, but obviously only for 4-card heart suit hands.

NOTE: If the no trump opener is 5-3-3-2 with a 5-card major, he should treat his hand as 4-3-3-3. That's because you would prefer to play 3NT with a 5-3-3-2 hand opposite 4-3-3-3 in dummy, because the only ruff available will be in the long suit. The following hand illustrates that point:

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

The bidding should go as follows:

1NT	2♣
2♥	2♠ *
2NT	3NT

As you can see, 4♥ is dependent on the location of the ♠A. 3NT is cold.

TIP 6: Be careful about pre-empting with a void – and never do it with a 7-2-2-2.

Don't pre-empt opponent into a making contract if you have a weak 7-card suit and a void, because odds are that several suits are breaking badly. If you keep silent, there is a really good chance that your opponents will end up in a horrible 3NT.

While pre-empting with a void OFTEN is bad, pre-empting with a weak hand like:

♠ K Q J 5 4 3 2	♥ 6 3	♦ 5 4	♣ 3 2
-----------------	-------	-------	-------

is ALWAYS bad. If you have a 7-2-2-2 distribution, your opponents will make any contract they bid, and you will never make anything your way.

There is no exception to this rule.

ACES ON THE ASTRAL PLANE by David Lusk

Reprinted from *Australian Bridge*, October 1995

With two clubs to play, these were the final cards:

The centenary match between the banshees and the Astral Plane was approaching its climactic conclusion. The audience for Psychograph had gathered from all points to heed the thoughts of the Staffordshire Imp, who had established himself as an expert commentator. As the match went down to the final board, the Aces were suffering a deficit of 5 IMPs. This was the final deal:

Dealer North	♠ 5 2		
All Vul	♥ A Q		
	♦ 7 3		
	♣ A K Q 10 9 6 4		
♠ K 9 8 4		♠ A J 6 3	
♥ J 8 7 6 4 3 2		♥ 10	
♦ A 9		♦ Q 10 5	
♣ void		♣ J 8 7 3 2	
	♠ Q 10 7		
	♥ K 9 5		
	♦ K J 8 6 4 2		
	♣ 5		
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
<i>Olaf</i>	<i>B'shee Gamma</i>	<i>Sir Richard</i>	<i>B'shee Delta</i>
	2♣ (1)	Pass	2♦ (2)
Pass	3♣	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

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

Needing three more tricks for the contract, Banshee Delta (as The Imp gleefully broadcast) had a choice of suicides. He could abandon clubs and play a diamond or spade, but ultimately would be end-played for two more losers, or he could continue clubs and inflict a suicide squeeze on his own hand. When the ♣6 was played from dummy, Sir Richard shed the ♦10. Declarer could not find a discard, even at this point, without abandoning a key control. He decided to discard the diamonds entirely, but Sir Richard kept the ♠A-J and ♦Q, whilst Olaf retained one spade and the ♦A-9. Banshee Delta was forced to concede one light.

At the conclusion of the match, The Imp commented to Father O'Loughlin, "I was unable to complete my post-match analysis."
 "And why would that be?" asked the priest.
 "Have you ever tried making yourself heard alongside a Banshee score-up?"

David Lusk

Sadly, this is the last that I have found of these entertaining articles - unless David can be enticed to write more. Ed.

- (1) Precision, 11-15 HCP, 5+ clubs
- (2) Forcing

Unknown to Olaf, 3NT had been made by the Aztec at the other table. The Banshee on lead had attacked hearts and East had switched to a low spade when in with the ♣J. West continued the suit and allowed South to win his ninth trick with the ♠Q.

Olaf's lead was no different to that of Banshee Alpha, the ♥6. Banshee Delta wailed for the ♥Q and proceeded to set up dummy's clubs. Sir Richard took his ♣J when it was offered and switched to a low spade.

In this instance, when South's ♠10 forced the ♠K, Olaf took careful stock. Declarer had an obvious seven tricks to take in dummy, but no quick winner in hand. Without further ado, he placed a random heart on the table. Banshee Delta screeched as he began running his clubs from dummy. Towards the end of the clubs, something really unnerving happened – he fell absolutely silent.



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A GAME AT THE CLUB by Barbara Travis

Let me continue with more hands from last session.

You open 1NT (15-17 HCP) and partner raises to 2NT, invitational. What do you bid with 16 HCP? This dilemma faced my opponent, who chose to pass, but made 10 tricks on a favourable heart lead and a fortuitous layout of the diamond suit. At the end of the hand, we had a short chat, during which I said that I bid 3NT when I hold a 5-card suit, and I pass when holding a 4-4-3-2 or a 4-3-3-3.

She held:	<i>Dummy</i>
♠ K 8	♠ J 9 6 5
♥ A Q 6	♥ 4 2
♦ K 9 6 5 2	♦ A 10 8 7
♣ A 8 6	♣ K 10 4

Therefore, I would have raised to 3NT. However, if I'd held only four diamonds, I would have passed.

(Sometimes players opt to open 1NT with a 6-card minor, in which case I accept an invitation, even with 15 HCP. The two extra cards often provide extra winners.)

One opponent did very well not to make a 2♥ weak jump overcall of 1♣, when holding:

West
 ♠ 8 6
 ♥ A Q 10 8 6 2
 ♦ 8 5 4
 ♣ 10 8

Instead, the auction proceeded:

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♣
Pass	?	Pass	1NT

Sitting North, I held:

♠ J 10 9 3
 ♥ K J 8 7 4
 ♦ K Q
 ♣ K 9

Whilst I can only dream about the penalty that we would have scored if West had overcalled 2♥ (not that I knew that at the time), I had to work out my best continuation, playing natural methods. I could have rebid 2♠, a responder's reverse and, therefore, game forcing, but I was convinced that partner didn't hold four spades. Stylistically, we rebid 1♣ with a 4-4, so she didn't have that. With that in mind, I just jumped to 3NT. I wasn't worried about the minor suits, given I had more than half my points in my shortages.

As it happened, partner had made an anti-systemic rebid of 1NT with a 4-1-4-4, but 3NT and 4♠ were much of a muchness. However, remember that partner will draw conclusions about your hand from your bids, so it is important to give partner accurate information. Not only that, but shape is potentially more important than HCP, so ensure you describe your shape to partner.

Speaking of shape, what would you do with this hand?

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

We didn't have a suitable opening bid to fit this hand, though I might occasionally open 1♥. I don't mind not having a bid for such a hand, because I'll usually be able to come in later on – often being able to make a Michaels Cue Bid, describing most of my hand with one bid.

That isn't what happened on this hand:

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
Pass	Pass (me)	1♣	1♦
1♠	2♥	3♣	3♥
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

Partner was moderately surprised that, as a passed hand, I could now continue to game.

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

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

♠ 8 5
 ♥ J 6 5
 ♦ A K Q 8 2
 ♣ Q 5 4

East led the ♠A which I ruffed. Being ignorant about West's sub-minimal bid, I innocently led the ♥A and another heart. This line seemed the 'easiest' because, if hearts broke, I had plenty of tricks. East won the second heart and drew dummy's last trump. She didn't want to lead another top club because that would make dummy's Queen into a winner. Instead, thinking her partner held some spade values (they weren't anywhere else!), she continued with the ♠A and another spade to the Queen and King. Watch what happened...

It was now easy to count the hand. East held 6 clubs, 3 hearts and 2 spades. Diamonds were therefore 4-2. So, it was just a matter of cashing my last two hearts and watching West get squeezed between spades and diamonds. A spade discard would mean my spades were all winners, and a diamond discard would make dummy's suit into winners.

Here is the position:

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

West could discard the last club on the penultimate heart, but the last heart left them in an unenviable position.

Keep counting!

How do you play this auction?

<i>West</i>	<i>East</i>
	1NT
2♦	2♥
4NT	

Have you discussed this with your partner? Is 4NT quantitative or is it Roman Key Card Blackwood for hearts? Even as our opponent made this bid, she realised she was in unknown territory. There is, however, a very simple solution: play major transfers at the 4-level as well at the 2-level.

You can play either:

1NT 4♣ = please bid 4♥
 4♦ = please bid 4♠

or
 1NT 4♦ = please bid 4♥
 4♥ = please bid 4♠

I love 4-level transfers for many reasons.

Reason 1: There is no confusion about 4NT bids. If I have transferred at the 4-level, then bid 4NT, it is Roman Key Card Blackwood for my (at least) 6-card suit.

Transfers at the 4-level are either to play at the 4-level or followed by 4NT, slam-going.

Reason 2: This means that a transfer at the 2-level followed by 4NT is quantitative, showing a slam-invitational hand and only 5 cards in the major.

Reason 3: Transferring at the 2-level, followed by a jump to the 4-level now becomes a hand with mild slam interest (and no splinter bid).

Reason 4: You can use the 4-level transfers pre-emptively if you wish – for example if you are really short in the other major and don't want to give the opponents space to either double (the 2♥ transfer) or bid spades (over a 2♦ transfer).

Reason 5: You can use the same structure over intervention, even at the 3-level, and you ensure the hand is played from the strong side (right-sided).

Reason 6: You can still transfer at the 2-level, then splinter, to invite slams too. It doesn't interfere with any pre-existing 'structures'.

Which way do I play 4-level transfers? I play them the same way as at the 2-level, so diamonds is a transfer to hearts, and hearts is a transfer to spades. However, do what works for you – just agree with your partner.

Back to the auction in question:

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		1NT (15-17)	Pass
2♦	Pass	2♥	Pass
4NT	Pass	5♥	Pass
6♥	All Pass		

Our opponents were on the same page:

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

When declarer (East) chose to lead the ♥J on the first round, she also picked up the suit for no losers. South held the ♥Q-7 4 and North held ♥10-2. Well picked, giving us a resounding zero!

Partner did well on this final hand.

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			Pass
Pass	1♣	1♠	2♦
Pass	Pass	2♣	?

Sitting South, she held:

♠ 4
♥ 10 5 4
♦ K Q 10 9 3
♣ K Q 7 3

She knew we had to have a fit, either in clubs or diamonds, so she competed with 3♣, which I corrected to 3♦. and making 10 tricks when clubs broke 3-3.

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

Keep thinking about partner's hand and keep fighting for those part-scores.

Barbara Travis

HOW CAN I HELP PARTNER? by Sheila Bird

The SABF held an OnlineTeams event on BridgeBase Online (BBO). Twelve teams played a complete round robin to determine the winner. Quite a few of the players were new to BBO, but now are probably addicted! It's a good way to get a bridge fix when we aren't able to play face-to-face.

In our final match, we had an interesting defensive hand where you need to help partner if you are going to get the best score possible.

All vulnerable, sitting South, you hold:

♠ A K 4 2
♥ void
♦ K Q J 10 5 4 2
♣ 6 4

Your left hand opponent opens 1♠, partner bids 4♥, right hand opponent bids 4♣, you happily double and that's where you play.

Partner leads the ♥A and you get to see dummy which is:

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

♠ A K 4 2
♥ void
♦ K Q J 10 5 4 2
♣ 6 4

You start thinking about your defensive tricks – probably ♥A-K, a heart ruff (or maybe the ♥Q), ♠A-K, and partner might have a club card or the diamond Ace. It's possible that partner might have 8 hearts, so our tricks might be ♥A-K, ♠A-K, club ruff and maybe a diamond or two. So, the contract will be two or three down.

Declarer plays small from dummy and you discard a club. Partner continues with the ♥K on which you pitch your second club. Partner now plays the ♥J, you trump and declarer plays the ♥Q.

Why did partner play the ♥J? This should be a suit preference signal, with a high card asking you to return the higher suit (diamonds) and a low card asking for the lower suit (clubs). The Jack is the highest card that partner has left in the suit, so it is an emphatic signal. Partner, therefore, must have the ♦A or a diamond void. On this hand, you know it won't be a diamond void, because partner doesn't have any trumps (declarer has 5 and you and dummy each have 4), so it must be the Ace. Thanks, partner, for helping with your defence.

Knowing that partner has the ♦A, we can now recalculate our defensive tricks. ♥A-K, heart ruff, ♠A-K, ♦A and a club ruff! This would defeat the contract by 4 tricks to bring home 1100. But how do you get partner to give you a club ruff? If you play the ♦K, partner will let you win the trick. The same is likely if you play the ♦Q, or even the Jack or 10.

It is important that partner wins the diamond, so you will need to play a small one. If you think partner will take your card as suit preference, then return the ♦2 asking for a club. If you think partner will read the card as an indication about diamond honours, then lead a discouraging 5. It's tricky, but it looks like the best way of getting 1100.

The full hand:

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

As an aside, what would you have done with the East hand when your partner opened 1♠ and RHO bid 4♥? We all like to bid when we have support for partner and we hope that the opponents will make a wrong decision, but is it always right?

Mike Doecke, who was in the East seat at the other table, passed over 4♥. He reasoned that the opponents don't necessarily have a fit in hearts and, unlike an auction where the opponents are known to have a fit, holding 10-x-x in hearts (the pre-empter's suit) is a serious flaw. If partner has values in diamonds, we could easily be beating 4♥.

The fact that the East hand is so weak actually makes passing very safe. If partner has got short hearts, they should also have extra values and will be able to double 4♥ for take-out. After a take-out double, I can happily bid 4♣, confident that we don't have multiple heart losers.

He thought it would be a much tougher decision if he had more points (like a 6 or 7 count) or if he had short hearts, because in both cases partner might not be able to reopen with a double on a hand where 4♣ was the best contract. Thanks, Mike, for sharing your insights (and for passing).

Sheila Bird

WHAT ANNOYS BRIDGE PLAYERS: Part 2

This article, from the Queensland Bridge Association Bulletin and written by Peter Busch (Tournament Director and player) first appeared in the Sunshine Coast Tri-Club Newsletter, "Bridge Matters", in 2014.

In the last issue, I presented a list of things that annoy me at the bridge table. I was prepared to cop some flak for being a grumpy old man, but I have been overwhelmed by the number of people agreeing with me. Many people have shared their own pet hates and I'm going to devote this article to listing some of those. Some of these are actually infractions under the Laws.

DUMMY PERFECTION:

Some dummies are overly fussy about neatness. When laying out dummy, first they place the four suits in four neat piles so you can only see the top card in each pile, then they neatly move each card down, repositioning any cards that are more than a micron out of line. Once done, they will fuss and move any column that is not completely aligned. During all this, the defence is unable to plan their play, waiting for the show to finish.

On the other hand, I guess I'm at the other extreme when it comes to laying out my dummy. I'm sure my partners despair when my 13 cards hit the deck in a very 'casual' layout. Maybe this infuriates opponents too?

HOGGING THE BRIDGEMATE (mainly relevant if the other scores are visible):

In my opinion, the correct way for the East-West player to accept a result is to leave the BridgeMate on the table as they press the Accept button. That way, all four players can see the screen. Some East-West players hold the BridgeMate up in such a way that no one else can see the screen, studying the other results before returning it to the table.

People have also mentioned to me that they don't like it when a player reads out all the results. As well as creating problems when a nearby table overhears any commentary, there are times when the opponents know they got a bad result and don't need to know the gory details. My advice – look at the score if you want, but say nothing; if others want to know, they can look too.

GENERAL RUDENESS AND IMPOLITENESS:

This is something close to the hearts of many players. People complain how rude it is when opponents continue to post-mortem the previous hand, completely disregarding the new players as they arrive at the table. People have also complained about general impoliteness they have encountered at the table – general discourtesies, not helping to pass the boards, not clearing rubbish from the table, etc. Opponents arguing with their partner is something else that people hate. However, I look at this philosophically – partnership disharmony can only worsen their results and improve your score, so my advice is to disregard it and look forward to some good results instead.

CONGRATULATING PARTNER:

The bridge etiquette book tells us it is polite to say, "Well done, partner" after your partner makes a contract. I don't agree – silence is a wonderful thing. There have been times when I know my partner or I have misdefended and it is only because of our misdefence that the contract has made. It seems appropriate to say something when partner has seemingly done something special, but otherwise it is better to remain silent.

MATTERS OF IMPROPRIETY:

Things like hesitating before playing a singleton, hesitating when playing in second seat to make declarer think you have a missing honour, asking questions or making comments to mislead the opponents, making comments to suggest something to partner, asking questions for partner's benefit – all these are infractions under Laws 73 and 74, and could be subject to procedural penalties.

GENERAL HANDLING OF THE CARDS:

At least one opponent must be present at the table before any cards are removed from the board.

Touching another player's cards is also a 'no-no' (except that declarer can touch dummy's cards).

Both these requirements are flouted regularly.

DETACHING A CARD BEFORE IT IS YOUR TURN TO PLAY:

This is a specific item mentioned in Law 74 and seems to irk a lot of people. It's poor form because you are telling your partner that whatever they (or the next hand) does, this is the card you plan to play. It is specifically listed as an infraction in Law 74B3, and also constitutes Unauthorised Information under Law 16.

It also falls under the category of Deception if your aim is to suggest to the opponent that you have only one card that can be played at that turn but, in fact, you don't.

DUMMY PLAYING WITHOUT INSTRUCTIONS FROM DECLARER:

Dummy is just that – dummy. They cannot take any part in the play of the hand and can only do what declarer tells them to do. This means they shouldn't pick up a card and play it until declarer calls for it, and this even applies if there is a singleton on the table, or if dummy thinks declarer's play is obvious. If the director finds that dummy suggested a play that wasn't what declarer was going to do, they can award an adjusted score.

QUITTING A TRICK, THEN RE-FACING IT TO ASK OTHERS TO EXPOSE THEIR PLAYED CARDS:

The Laws allow a player to ask to see all cards played to the last trick until they have turned their card over. However, once they've turned their card over, they can't turn it back and ask others to show their cards. If this happens to you, you are within your rights to refuse – politely.

There are probably plenty more pet hates that I've missed!

Peter Busch

FRACTURED PHRASES by John Rayner

Each of the phrases below is intended to evoke the name of a bridge convention, a card play term or just a general bridge term. John Rayner, from Canada, provided most of the challenges.

EXAMPLES:

A sawed-off 7 iron

SHORT CLUB

Don't go, hombre

STAYMAN

We'll start with a few easy ones:

1. A company-mandated relocation to the "Lone Star" state. (convention)
2. This type of double has the same name as a flower.
3. This guy wielding a meat cleaver badly misplays a bridge hand.
4. An increase in pay for Marty. (convention)
5. Marionette "Sam." (convention)
6. Getting two burgers at a McDonald's drive-thru. (term/convention)
7. Finesse Pan's enemy. (play term)
8. The name of a Russell Crowe movie. (convention)
9. The Caesarian enquiry regarding the "V" principals. (convention)
10. Finesse Pan's enemy. (play term)

Now they get tougher...

11. Quarantining "Dennis." (a TV character) (declarer play term)
12. Re-aligns non-verbal action. (defence term)
13. Lawrence, Rosenberg and Courtney competing in the high jump. (convention)
14. An inebriated distaff monarch. (bridge term)
15. Two or more upside-down adolescents. (convention)
16. An "operatic" sacrifice. (bridge term)
17. This "Simpsonian" convention is named after Gloria's husband.
18. The opening lead methods preferred by reporters for the Washington Post, New York Times and Sunday Mail.
19. An insincere, unfelt, fake hug or embrace. (card play term)
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? (convention)
21. A gainfully employed pasteboard. (bridge term)
23. The head of a school who suffers from premature ejaculation. (bidding term)
24. What the combination of an underwire bra and a girdle might be called? (convention)

SOLUTIONS NEXT ISSUE

(The solutions are John's, and are non-negotiable.)

John Rayner, Mississauga (Canada)