

# South Australian



# Bridge Federation Inc

# SABF NEWS

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### LIVE BRIDGE IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

We are very lucky to have our live bridge back in South Australia, including our State events. Here is a description of a live final in Poland.

#### **LIVE BRIDGE IN POLAND and AUSTRIA:**

During the last weekend of June, live bridge restarted in Poland. The Polish League Finals (four teams) played in Warsaw. Here's what it was like:

"All safety measures recommended by the World Bridge Federation and the Polish State Sanitary Inspectorate were used. Players played in masks or helmets; additional transparent walls separated those sitting on the same side of the screen; bidding boxes and BridgeMates were personalised and used by the same player for all three days. Cards were pre-dealt for all matches, for each table, a few days before the tournament. The playing area was sterilised after each 12-board session."

*Be grateful for our far more lenient playing conditions!*

#### **AN AUSTRIAN PLAYER MADE THIS OBSERVATION:**

Fritz Babsch from Vienna commented about clubs in Vienna re-starting face-to-face tournaments:

"My son Andreas and I believe that it will not be the same as it was before the pandemic. In our opinion, it will be a big problem to handle the disinfection of the playing cards."

*Please ensure you clean your hands regularly. There are sanitising wipes provided as well as hand sanitiser. If you clean your hands regularly, then any risks are minimised from the playing cards being handled by others.*

Western Australia has managed to hold the HGR Memorial Teams, usually a national event, this year contained to an intrastate field given the closed border.

They are also proceeding with the Golden West Pairs, but with a smaller field due to social distancing requirements and the size of the venue.

Meantime, all other national events have been cancelled to the end of March 2021. If the Autumn National Championships proceed, they will be the first truly national event held live in Australia in more than a year!

New South Wales is now experimenting with some State events online, using RealBridge, a UK website that also utilises Zoom so you get a little more of the social aspect of playing at the table. They have also held some online congresses, which involve significant technological know-how.

Sophie Ashton (NSW) organised an online international teams event, held on BBO last weekend. She invited teams from Asia to participate, with any profits going to charity.

The winning team was:

**Phil Markey - Andrew Spooner, Jamie Thompson - Rob Fruewirth.**

Our State Mixed Pairs was held on Sunday 4th October. Congratulations to the new State champions:

**Alice Handley and David Parrott.**

The B Grade section was won by **Anne Stimson and Bob Pearce.**

The Daytime Teams final, which was due to be played in March, on the day SA Bridge Assoc closed its doors due to the pandemic, has been completed with the winners being: **Cathy Chua, Mike Doecke, Philip Markey, David Parrott, George Smolanko, Justin Williams.**

The Swiss Pairs was won by:

**Mark Jappe and John Maddison.**

The Under Grand Master GNOT was won by our youth players: **David Gue - Jamie Simpson, Bertie Morgan - George Bartley.** The GNOT has been cancelled, so this win was for glory.

The first phase of the State Teams has been completed. **John Horowitz - David Cherry, Phil Gallasch - Joff Middleton - Graham Pellen** had a massive win in their final match to clinch first place.

The SABA GNOT saw **Justin Williams - Jeff Travis - Russel Harms, Zolly Nagy** win, with their prize being honour and glory but no trip to the GNOT.

We have had a lot of bridge in the past few months. Let's hope we can continue with the live bridge, which everybody seems to love more than its online counterpart. To do so, we need to continue to satisfy Covid guidelines and regulations.

# AGREEMENTS I LIKE by Matt Smith

## BIDDING AGREEMENTS I LIKE

*This list, written by Matt Smith (Sydney), was published on BridgeWinners, www.bridgewinners.com.*

*I have edited some of the more complex ideas out, so feel free to find the full article to read it.*

1. Always trust partner's judgement. They know what they hold.
2. With 3-3 or 4-4 in the minors, open the stronger one.
3. At matchpoints (Pairs), always try to play the hand when everyone is not vulnerable.
4. 3NT is always natural.
5. When they splinter, double always shows values in the "lower" unbid suit.
6. If they make an artificial opening bid, the first double shows values, the second double is takeout, any subsequent doubles are penalty.
7. Our 2-Major jump overcalls are intermediate, showing a 6+ card Major and 12-16 HCP.
8. When the opponents have revealed a lot about their shape, push more to bid game.
9. When all the opponents' HCP strength is in one hand, push more to bid game (e.g. (1-any) 1NT Pass 3NT).
10. When they make an artificial bid:
  - (a) Double is always lead directing
  - (b) Cue bid is takeout
  - (c) Pass then double is for penalty
11. When they double our stopper ask:
  - (a) Pass = no stopper (partner's redouble now shows half a stopper)
  - (b) Redouble = asks partner to bid 3NT (to right-side 3NT, usually with Axx)
  - (c) Bid = natural, showing shortage in the 'stopper ask' suit
12. Opener's 1NT rebid does not promise a stopper in an overcaller's suit. (*Ed: debatable*)
13. You should play the same system over all their No Trump opening bids, regardless of the level.
14. Make them guess by pre-empting/raising to 3♠ or 4-minor or 4♥ quickly, then leave them alone.
15. 1-minor – 1♥ - Double shows 4 spades, whereas 1♠ shows 5+ spades.
16. After our 1NT opening:
  - (a) 2♠ is either a range ask or transfer to clubs (6+ clubs), with the next bid showing shortage and GF values
  - (b) 2NT is Puppet Stayman
  - (c) 3♣ is a transfer to diamonds (6+ diamonds), with the next bid showing shortage (and 3NT being short clubs) and GF values
17. In a 2 over 1 auction, jumps are splinters but do not show extra values.
18. If partner's overcall is doubled, then a Redouble shows the Ace or King in partner's suit (usually doubleton).
19. If the opponents double our artificial bid:
  - (a) Partner's pass is an offer to play
  - (b) Redouble shows 'no preference'
  - (c) Bids are natural
20. Try to put their strong hand on opening lead.
21. Try to have our 4-3-3-3 hands as dummy.

22. Penalty double situations:
  - (a) Responder never penalty-passes if Vul v. not vul, and holding the values for 3NT
  - (b) (1-suit) Pass (1-new suit) Pass (2-suit) Double - always penalty
  - (c) (1-suit) Pass (1-new suit) Pass (1NT) Double - always penalty (by either of our side)
  - (d) If we find a major suit fit, Double is always penalty (there is no game try double)
  - (e) If they balance, Double from either of us is always penalty
  - (f) If they bid over our Stayman, Double from either of us is always penalty
  - (g) If they bid over our Transfer, only opener's Double is penalty
  - (h) Passing an opponent's Redouble is always to play

## CARDING AGREEMENTS I LIKE

1. At the table, never talk about results, system or carding.
2. Never claim as a defender without every trick in your hand.
3. Bridge before signals. Keep the high-spots unless deliberately false-carding.
4. Attitude signals say, "I think it's best if you do/don't continue".
5. Defending suit contracts:
  - (a) Ace from A-K-x+
  - (b) King from A-K when:
    - a. Defending the 5-level
    - b. Declarer pre-empted
    - c. You hold A-K doubleton
    - d. Leading partner's suit
    - e. You plan to switch to a singleton
  - (c) Queen from A-K-Q+ (opening leader then gives count with the remaining A-K)
  - (d) Third hand wins the Ace from A-K-(Q) if switching to a singleton, but wins with the King otherwise
  - (e) Switching to an Ace denies the King
  - (f) If you lead a King and dummy holds J-x-x+, partner gives count
  - (g) When switching to the K-Q doubleton 'through' declarer, lead the Queen then King.
  - (h) King, then Queen, shows K-Q-x+
  - (i) When leading up to dummy's Queen:
    - a. Jack denies a higher honour
    - b. 10 from H-J-10 (H = higher honour) or from a suit headed by the 10
    - c. 9 from H-10-9 or 9-high suit
  - (j) When only two tricks are needed from a suit:
    - a. Lead low from K-x
    - b. Leading the King shows a singleton
6. Defending NT contracts:
  - (a) King opening lead asks for count (or unblock any honour) – e.g. K-Q-10-x-x, A-K-J-x-x+
  - (b) Lead 3rd highest when leading partner's unsupported suit
  - (c) If switching to dummy's x-x-x suit (in a cash-out situation):
    - a. A low card guarantees at least 4 cards including an honour
    - b. With three cards (H-x-x), lead the honour

*Matt is a young Sydney player who has given significant thought to the game. There are several sound ideas here.*

## TOO MUCH TIME (hand from Paul Hudson)

I asked Paul Hudson if he could write up a hand for this Newsletter because, for those who go back 15 years, we know he used to produce an excellent newsletter for SA Bridge Assoc. We promptly met in the Swiss Pairs and we both felt that a particular hand was noteworthy.

A week later, Paul gave me the hand to write up, fully analysed! Obviously, he has too much time, in terms of analysis, but had lost too much sleep to do the write up himself.

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

West	North	East	South
1NT	Pass	1♠	Pass
		4♠	All Pass

This is what happened at the table. South led the ♦J, obviously a short-suit lead. Paul commented to dummy that he "could have passed 1♠". I bantered back with, "You're assuming I would have balanced", yet I was thinking, "I wonder what I would have done?" Meantime, I said to dummy, "Imagine if Paul had rebid 3♥, game forcing. That would have been ugly!"

Paul put some thought into his line of play, deciding that the club suit provided the best option for his contract (given that he was concerned about losing a heart to North, then suffering various trump 'guesses' on a high diamond return). He led a club to the Jack, winning. Now the contract looked healthy; he needed one black suit to break 3-2. He led his ♠A and ♠K, finding the 4-1 spade break. He just needed three clubs with the long spades now. He cashed his ♠A and double-checked my red card discard.

After a very polite expletive, he claimed down one trick – losing 2 spades and 2 hearts.

We then had a quick discussion about what the North had would/should do if 1♠ was passed around to North. It's far too weak to make a Michaels Cue Bid, forcing partner to bid at the 3-level! You can be pretty confident that partner has some spades and a decent hand, but is not strong enough for a 1NT overcall (so approximately 12-14 HCP). Your options are to pass or to bid 2♥. I think I would have passed! Mind you, 4♥ is cold unless East cashes the ♠A, cashes the ♣A, then leads a small spade – and West's ♥J will win a trick – a defence found at two tables against South's 4♥ contract, with many others making 4♥.

Deep Finesse says that 4♣ by East is cold, though not by West (North having to lead a trump at trick 1). Paul spent some time analysing the hand on South's ♦J lead for us all. At trick 2, he had to lead a small heart, South winning. South cannot return a trump because that concedes a trump winner. Their 'best' return is the ♠10 (not a small club, or it runs around to declarer's ♣9!). East has to win this in hand to take their heart ruff in dummy. Now the challenge is about how to return to hand!

Paul's analysis determined that declarer now has to trump a diamond with the ♠K! Now he can draw North's trump, then take the club finesse, losing only 2 spades and 1 heart.

That would have been a spectacular line. Why did Paul invest so much time into analysing the hand? Because every other declarer in 4♣ (or 4♣ X) made 10 tricks on the ♥A lead, which simplified the play of the hand!

Looking at all the scores, our 50 looks particularly 'odd' in a sea of 420s/590s either one direction or the other!

Thanks, Paul, for analysing a very interesting hand. I'm glad you had too much time and could do the analysis, even if you had me write it up! (There are a few variations, but all involve trumping high in hand.)

*Barbara Travis*



Alice Handley and David Parrott,  
winners of the 2020  
State Mixed Pairs Championship

# 10 LITTLE RUFFS

*Fritz Babsch, from Vienna, submitted this article to the IBPA Bulletin in June 2020.*

This deal, with three voids, is not only a star in my collection of such deals but is really remarkable for another reason. It comes from the Vienna Team Championship of 2015-16, played in two groups.

Dlr North      ♠ A J 10 4 2  
Both Vul      ♥ void  
                  ♦ A K 5 4  
                  ♣ K J 7 6

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

♠ K 9 3  
♥ K Q 9 8 7 5  
♦ void  
♣ 10 9 8 2

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

North can make 6♣, but only 10 tricks in diamonds and 9 tricks in spades!

East-West can always make 6♥ with only 14 HCP. 12 tricks are always made with the ♥A, ♠K and 10 ruffs. Even the lead of South's trump doesn't help. The curiosity is that North can make 6♠ if a heart is led.

The deal was played at 14 tables – 6 times in one section, 8 times in the other. The two groups results are completely different:

Group 1	6♥ X E	making	3 times
	5♥ X E	+1	once
	5♠ N	+1	once
	7♥ X E	-1	once

Group 2	5♥ X E	+1	twice
	6♣ NS	making	twice
	4♠ N	-2	once
	5♠ N	-2	twice
	6♠ N	making	once

The average score for North-South ended up being +170.

*Ed: This proves how difficult it is to judge wildly distributional hands.*



Dlr West      ♠ K 8 4 3  
NS Vul      ♥ A Q 8 7 6 2  
                  ♦ void  
                  ♣ A 5 3

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

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

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

The previous deal has a sister deal! This comes from the Czech Republic Team Championship in 2017. The bidding was rather short at both tables.

Table 1				
West	North	East	South	
1♣	1♥	2♠	6♥	
Double	All Pass			

13 tricks, +1860

Table 2				
West	North	East	South	
1♣	1♥	1♠	5♥	
Pass	Pass	Double	All Pass	

12 tricks, +1250

I don't know whether the North player really made 10 ruffs; it is not necessary as the diamonds break 4-3. Yet the two deals are related!

*Fritz Babsch, Vienna*

## THE ACE OF SPADES

The Ace of Spades (also known as the Spadille and Death Card) is traditionally the highest and most-valued card in the deck of playing cards in English-speaking countries. The actual value of the card varies from game to game.

The fanciful design and manufacturer's logo commonly displayed on the Ace of Spades began under the reign of James I of England, who passed a law requiring an insignia on that card as proof of payment of the tax on manufacture of cards.

Up until the 1960s, decks of playing cards printed and sold in many countries were liable for taxable duty and the Ace of Spades carried the indication of the name of the printer and the fact that the tax had been paid.

The Ace of Spades now carries the maker's name and/or logo.

## A UNIQUE ENDING

The June 1990 edition of the IBPA Bulletin mentions this hand played by Milt Rosenberg. It is an example of the forward-thinking that expert players demonstrate, even in part-scores.

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

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

West found a very effective lead, the ♥Q – 3 – 8 – 5. Two more rounds of hearts were played, Rosenberg finally winning with his Ace. How would you play?

With the diamonds offside and West able to get out of East's way in spades (avoiding any endplay), your only chance if for clubs to break 3-2. You'd plan to make 2 spades, 1 heart and 4 clubs.

However, if you duck a club, what will you discard on the thirteenth heart from East? If you discard a spade, East can shift to a diamond through the King and West can then kill your transportation by returning a club. Discarding a diamond allows West to run the suit, while discarding a club surrenders your seventh trick. Rosenberg found a solution.

At trick 4, he cashed the ♠A! Then he ducked a club. That allowed him to discard a spade on East's long heart, but now he was still able to untangle his seven tricks. What a brilliant, yet simple, play, so difficult to see, even with all the cards exposed.

*During Covid shutdown,  
the Wellington (NSW) Bridge Club ran a challenge where  
the players had to write a limerick for every club member.  
60 limericks were submitted and every member/associate  
member featured in at least one limerick.  
I will publish one of the limericks.*

George and Mick have dispensed with convention  
So their bidding is mostly invention.  
When they get into trouble,  
Mick throws in a double  
Which is designed to grab your attention.

## A REVERSAL RARITY

This example of a dummy reversal was written up by Toine van Hoof in the June edition of the IBPA, and occurred in the Alt-Invitational online tournament in May.

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

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

- (1) 2+ diamonds, 11-15 HCP (1♠ = any hand with 16+ HCP)
- (2) 5+ clubs, 9+ HCP
- (3) Mixed raise, 4 spades and about 8-10 HCP

On a non-spade lead, 5♣ cannot be made, but East can hardly be blamed for leading the ♠K. Simon de Wijs quickly found the winning line: he ruffed the spade and advanced a heart. West took the Jack with the Ace and scared declarer by returning a heart to his partner's King. However, when West followed suit on the third heart, de Wijs was safe.

He ruffed a spade, crossed to the ♣9, ruffed another spade, crossed to the ♠K and ruffed his last spade with the ♠Q. Having taken four spade ruffs, he entered dummy with the ♦Q to draw the last trump, then claimed the last two tricks with the ♦A and ♦K.

*Ed: This dummy reversal obviated the need for a 3-3 diamond break, which is against the odds. Relying on a 4-3 heart break and this line was far superior.*



Tassi Georgiadis and Bill Bradshaw,  
2nd place in the State Mixed Pairs

## BRIDGE: A FUN ANTIDOTE

*I found this article, by Matthew Granovetter, through The Jerusalem Post! I think it's more of an anecdote however, in these times, we need antidotes too. It dates back to May 2020.*

### A DOUBLE DOUBLED SLAM SWING

In these trying times, a game of bridge may be a psychological cure. Somehow, the game absorbs the mind and helps you forget the world.

Years ago, as a teenager, I was playing bridge in the Ashbury Park auditorium when suddenly a scream was heard. Our heads turned to see a player standing on the table with his chair, trying to bring it down on his partner's head. They pulled him down and he continued to play.

At a tournament in California, there was a siren followed by an announcement, "This is a bomb scare! Walk to the nearest exit." No one put down his cards. Everyone finished the hand and the bomb scare was declared false.

These days, we are stuck at home, but we can play on the computer. On BBO, up to 50,000 people watch bridge or play for free. On my own Facebook bridge group, a recent post was made by Roland Wald (since deceased). Roland posted, "When were you last part of a double doubled slam swing? It happened yesterday on BBO."

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

West	North	East	South
1♥	2NT (1)	3♦ (2)	4♣
Pass	Pass	6♥	6♣
Pass	Pass	Double	All Pass

(1) 2NT showed 5/5 with both minors (Unusual 2NT).  
 (2) The cue bid of 3♦ (one of North's suits) showed a limit raise or better with heart support.

6♣ X with an overtrick scored 1860 for North-South.  
 At the other table, East-West played in 6♥ X, making, for 1660.

3520 converts to 23 IMPs (with the maximum IMPs on any one hand being 24).

*Matthew Granovetter*

## HOW WOULD YOU PLAY?

Although I made 4♣, I was aware I had made it on a misdefence late in the hand. However, Deep Finesse insisted that the contract was cold, and that my play had been correct up to a point. Therefore I spent some time analysing the hand and worked out the correct line of play. The successful line involves counting, elimination and end play.

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

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

West	North	East	South
Double	4♣	All Pass	1♠

West led the ♥K. I chose to win the ♥A and ruff a heart, but then I wondered what was best next. The winning line is to plan to end play West, who is odds-on to hold the ♦A, given the double. As long as you work on that premise you will make the contract. I led a diamond at trick 3 and, as long as I played a low diamond, I was making.

West won, and the obvious return was a spade to East's King and Ace. Another heart was ruffed, and a club led from dummy. If East discarded, ruff low and continue your cross-ruff – making. If East ruffed high, as happened at the table, over-trump, then ruff the last heart. Another club can be ruffed, then you exit with your losing spade to West's Jack.

West started with a 2-4-3-4 shape, and you have now led four rounds of hearts, four clubs and stripped the trumps. West is end-played into leading a diamond around to your King – your tenth trick.

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

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

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

Other lines work too – cash the ♣A, ruff a club, ruff a heart, lead a club. If East ruffs (high), overtrump, cash your other high trump, then ruff the last heart. Now you can ruff another club to hand, then exit with a low spade – West having to win. You have cashed four hearts and led four clubs, so now West is end-played to lead a diamond around to your King.

My error: I tried the ♦K when I led the first diamond, and now I should fail in my contract. I had spent so much time thinking about the various lines that I forgot about West's initial double!

*Barbara Travis*

## A UNIQUE ENDING

This hand was written up by Barry Rigal (USA), on BridgeWinners, [www.bridgewinners.com](http://www.bridgewinners.com).

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

This board came up today at Honors (New York), and I felt it deserved a wider audience, not because I did anything good but because I reached a position that I ought to have encountered before, but don't think I have.

In second seat, I overcalled 3NT (South), over the manic 3♣ opening bid to my right. West led the ♠5, East thoughtfully played the Jack and I won my Queen. Why thoughtfully? Read on.

I cashed the ♥K and decided to advance the ♥9 in case West decided he wanted to cover. He did, and I won with the Queen, then took the spade finesse, winning the Queen. When it held, I led a low heart and West didn't spoil my fun – he played low, letting me win my ♥7, and I repeated the spade finesse, winning the Jack. Now I led the ♦9. West twitched and played low and, after some thought, I let it run to the ♦10.

Back came a low club – thank you, East! I won the ♣10 and led a diamond to the Queen. When it held, I had taken 8 of the first 9 tricks (2 spades, 2 clubs, 3 hearts, 1 diamond). I now won the last four tricks with the four aces.

♠ 10  
♥ A  
♦ A 7  
♣ --

♠ A  
♥ 6  
♦ 5  
♣ A

(I couldn't quite combine it with winning the ♦7 – the beer card – at trick 13, but it was high. I'm not counting that as part of my achievement.)

*Barry Rigal, USA*

## HAVE YOU EVER?

### OPENED A 12 COUNT IN THIRD SEAT AND DISCOVERED YOU MISSED A GRAND SLAM?

Hendrik Sharples posted this question/hand on BridgeWinners, [www.bridgewinners.com](http://www.bridgewinners.com).

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

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

West	North	East	South
	Pass	Pass	1♣
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠
Pass	3♠	Pass	6♣
All Pass			

He was bidding with a BBO robot, so there would be no intelligent way to get there.

Feel free to submit any other 'have you ever' hands.

#### HERE ARE MINE:

Two of us that I know of, playing on BBO, have opened 1♦ in third seat with a 12 count, and reached slam, missing a grand slam. Obviously, both times, our partner had somehow accidentally passed – which is a BBO 'problem'.

With Howard:

	Pass	Pass	1♦
Pass	6♦	All Pass	

was his practical solution:

*Howard*  
♠ K Q x x  
♥ A K x x  
♦ K Q x x x  
♣ void

*Me*  
♠ A J x x  
♥ Q x  
♦ A J x x  
♣ x x x

The other I saw – could easily have reached 7♦ (or 7NT):

♠ A K Q x  
♥ A K Q  
♦ Q 10 x x x x  
♣ void

♠ x x x  
♥ x x x  
♦ A K J x  
♣ A x x

with an auction:

	Pass	Pass	1♦
Pass	4NT (!)	Pass	response
Pass	6♦	All Pass	

With partner holding 3 key cards, you can now bid 7NT!

## SOME INTERESTING HANDS

The first hand presents one of my favourite situations – where the opponents re-open, and you now bid to game, making.

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

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

North led the ♥J, won with the Queen. Two more hearts were cashed, allowing the losing diamond to be discarded from dummy. The ♦A was led, then a diamond was ruffed in dummy. Hoping to trump more diamonds, I led a club from dummy. South flew with the ♠A to switch to a trump. The finesse was dangerous (a spade return would deprive me of my second diamond ruff), so I won the ♠A then ruffed another diamond in dummy. I trumped a club back to hand, then exited my last diamond.

This little 'safety play' was designed to allow for spades to be 4-1, with North having the length. In that case, North would have to trump the diamond and lead a spade around to my hand. South won the diamond as North discarded a club. A club return was ruffed low, North over-trumping then I had the last two tricks with my ♠K-J.

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

As it was trumps broke 3-2, so this little touch was not needed – but was wise. Imagine that North had, instead, held:

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

Both vulnerable, partner opens 3♣. What would you bid with:

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

If partner held ♠A-Q-x-x-x-x, they might not hold a lot of other useful high cards, so 3NT looked the most likely contract. It seemed a borderline decision when playing Pairs, but an easy decision at Teams, when one wants to find the 'best' contract, rather than the highest-scoring contract.

Obviously some would think that my bid of 3NT was a 'hog' bid!

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

North led the ♣2, our weakest suit. The good news was they played fourth-highest – so I assumed the clubs were 4-4. The club ran to South's Jack and my King. Now the outcome of the hand (Pairs) depended on who held the ♠A. If South held it, I had four losers and would score badly against 4♣ (10 tricks). If North held the ♠A, I had three losers and would score well against 4♣. What a tricky game this is!

I was lucky. North held the ♠A and I had 10 tricks in 3NT, beating all those in 4♣ making their 10 tricks (given the ♣A was with North – so the King would not provide a discard). Those are the risks one takes at Pairs!

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

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
1♣	Pass	Pass	1♣
Pass	2♦	Pass	3♦
	3NT	All Pass	

Firstly, given that North was a passed hand, South should have passed 2♦. Game was not in the picture, and bidding 3♦ encouraged North to bid on.

Now East was in the spotlight, having to find a good lead to give us prospects of defeating 3NT. She considered the ♥A to be her entry, so started working on the club suit, leading the ♣6. The singleton spade and North's confident 3NT bid put her off leading my bid suit.

On the club lead, declarer only had eight tricks, having found the ♦Q. She unwisely ducked a trick, hoping for a misdefence – so went down two tricks instead.

The club has a member called Kevin.  
 Playing with him is sheer heaven.  
 If you get in a mess  
 He couldn't care less.  
 With Kevin all is forgiven.

## TOUGH TO BID or NOT?

The next hand comes from the Online Teams League. Would you manage to reach 4♠ (if you don't use support doubles/redoubles – which show 3-card support for responder's bid)?

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

West	North	East	South
1♠	Double	1♣	Pass
5♣	All Pass	1NT	2♥

The problem with 5♣ was that there were three top losers. What should West rebid instead? Since they are willing to bid to game, they are better served to rebid 3♥. The cue bid of the opposition suit in this situation is not a 'raise' of anything. Instead, it establishes a game force. East can then rebid 3♠ to show their 3-card spade support or 3NT with only 2 spades and a heart stopper. The bid gives the auction more flexibility in terms of a final contract – allowing you to arrive in 4♠ rather than 5♣.

Keep these game forcing cue bids (of the opponent's suit) in mind. They crop up regularly!

*Barbara Travis*



Bob Pearce and Anne Stimson, winners of the B Grade section, State Mixed Pairs Championship

I was asked how I would bid this freak:

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

Personally, I would open this hand with a 4NT bid. I've written about this opening bid before, though I have never held a 4NT opening hand myself (in 50+ years).

The 4NT opening bid is a Specific Ace Ask – which is very useful when you have a void and a good enough hand to want to know about a particular Ace.

The responses:

5♣	No Aces
5♦	♦A
5♥	♥A
5♠	♠A
6♣	♣A (meaning you are willing to play at the 6-level opposite the ♣A)
5NT	Any 2 Aces

On this hand, if you open 4NT, you can play in 7♥ if partner shows the ♦A, or 6♥ if they deny the ♦A.

On the actual hand, partner would respond with 5♣, showing the ♠A and no other Aces, and you can subside in 6♥, with these being the hands:

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

This 4NT opening bid makes a seemingly impossible-to-bid hand rather biddable!

Strangely enough, during the match against The New Melville BC, another potential 4NT opening bid hand appeared (though no void this time):

♠ A
♥ A K Q J 4 3
♦ 6
♣ K Q J 4 3

This hand is really just about how many Aces partner holds. With one Ace, you want to be in 6♥, but opposite no Aces you want to play in 5♥.

Both pairs opened 2♣, then their actions diverged. One bid to 6♥ missing two aces; the other subsided in 2♥ when responder had only a couple of points. Both made 11 tricks.

On the actual hand, if you open 4NT, you will hear the 5♣ response (no Aces) and stop in 5♥ - perfect.

There is nothing tough about these hands if you utilise the 4NT opening bid. Just remember the Specific Ace responses though, for your problems to be solved.

*Barbara Travis*

## SOME HANDS FROM THE ABF'S NATIONWIDE PAIRS

The following article is about various hands from the ABF's well-run NationWide Pairs, held on BBO on Friday evenings and Sunday afternoons.

Firstly, I'll give you a lead 'problem'. You are North, and this is your hand and the auction:

♠ 10 9 8 6 4  
♥ A 4  
♦ A 4 2  
♣ A 5 4

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

Given your partner's initial pass, I think that leading the ♥A is too aggressive. Hoping for South to hold the ♥K, or perhaps some outside entry, is wishful thinking. In fact, given West's 2♣ bid (rather than a double, indicative of spade shortage), I think that the ♠10 is a promising lead, in case partner is short in spades and can ruff.

It didn't matter on this hand:

♠ 10 9 8 6 4  
♥ A 4  
♦ A 4 2  
♣ A 5 4

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

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

A couple of comments about the bidding: West would do better to double the 1♠ bid, given they have support for each unbid suit, and given the poor quality of the clubs. Overcalls at the 2-level should be good suits. (East may well pass for penalties, then South runs.) And East's simple raise to 3♣ hardly did justice to his hand. He should have made a cue raise or some splinter bid, especially given the spades are likely to be onside. I would be looking for game – in clubs or no trumps – on his hand.

The next hand was a classic example of the need to give count and to count out declarer's hand. Look at the hand from North's perspective:

Dlr South	♠ A J 9 4
EW Vul	♥ A 10 8 3
	♦ A Q 8 7 5
	♣ void

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

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

West	North	East	South
		3♥	3♣
Double	Pass	4♥	Pass
3NT	Pass	All Pass	Pass
Pass	Double		

At the vulnerability, 3♣ should be automatic. I would probably overcall 3NT on the West hand and perhaps North may not double. Her double of 4♥ was excellent. The ♣Q was led, and ruffed, followed by a small trump (good exit). Not wanting to encourage any suit, I simply discarded clubs from the South hand. North won the heart continuation and exited with another heart, won by East.

North should now be counting East for 6 hearts and 4 clubs, therefore only 3 cards in spades and diamonds.

East tried a spade towards dummy's King. Now it was essential to give partner the count (we use reverse count and I played the ♠8 – but probably should play the ♠10). She could now win the ♠A and exit with the ♠J, allowing for East to hold the doubleton ♠10. Now she has plenty of exit cards (spades) and East will end up giving me two more tricks with clubs, for 3 down and 800.

Counting declarer's hand is essential to good defence. Once two suit lengths are known, make sure you concentrate and get the count of the third suit so you will know declarer's full hand shape.

You are sitting West and partner opens 1♠. What would you respond?

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

At our table, the East-West auction was:

West	East
	1♠
2♣	2♥
3♦	3NT
Pass	

There were no alerts, so it seemed to be natural. Whilst I can appreciate West wanting to show their two suits, once East has at least 5-4 in the majors, this hand is a time-bomb.

My comments on the auction:

- 1 3♦ was a new suit at the 3-level, so game forcing.
- 2 If you play fourth-suit forcing (which you should), then 3♦ should be a game force, asking for help. West would have done better to rebid 3♣, showing a minimum for the 2♣ response and 6 clubs.

Some of the other auctions:

West	East
	1♠
2♦	2♥
3♣	3NT

West decided to show their diamonds so that they could bid clubs next, but 3♣ should still be fourth-suit forcing. All worked well when 3NT made.

<i>West</i>	<i>East</i>
2♣	1♠
2NT	2♥
	3NT

2NT was invitational, showing diamonds were stopped and about 10/11-12 HCP. I have no problem with this auction. 3NT made in comfort.

Remember not to get so caught up in your shape that you forget exactly what you are showing to your partner.

Personally, I would find this hand awkward to bid, given that I play 2 over 1 game forcing. Our auction should proceed:

<i>West</i>	<i>East</i>
1NT (up to 11 HCP)	1♠
2NT (10-11 HCP)	2♥
	3NT

There's nothing wrong with the outcome, but I wouldn't be happy never showing either suit when holding a 5-6 in the minors!

Some hands improve and one isn't necessarily sure how to show that, or whether to show it. This North hand is a typical example:

♠ A J 7		
♥ A Q J 6 5		
♦ A J 6		
♣ 6 3		
<i>North</i>	<i>South</i>	
1NT (15-17)	2♥ (transfer)	
2♠	3NT (choose a game)	
?		

You now have an ultra-maximum, but don't know whether South has 10 HCP or a better hand (say 13-14 HCP). You plan to correct to 4♠ however, en route, you should cue bid with 4♦ (denying a club control), showing this maximum and your intention to play in 4♠. This brings South into the consultation process, so they can now bid 4♠ on a minimum game raise or perhaps cue back (as long as they have a club control, i.e. ♠A or ♠KQ – since North will be declarer). South held:

♠ K Q 10 9 8  
♥ K 9 3  
♦ 10 3  
♣ A 8 5

They could now make a cooperative noise by showing their ♥K and you may be able to reach the excellent 6♠ slam.

The next hand is another exercise in counting, but as declarer:

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

We played in 5♣ after West's 3♥ overall derailed us from reaching 3NT, due to lack of bidding space (just what a pre-empt is meant to do), with the auction having started 1♦ - 1NT.

West led the ♠K, then switched to the ♥K, won with dummy's Ace. Once trumps had been drawn, West's shape was known – a singleton spade, 7 hearts, 3 clubs and therefore 2 diamonds. East was known to hold 5 spades and 5 diamonds.

The scene was set for a squeeze – IF East made the slight error of winning the second spade lead. A spade was led to the ♠Q and East's Ace. A diamond return was won in dummy, a heart was ruffed (to confirm the shape) and then clubs were led. Dummy retained the ♠J-6 and a small diamond, South held the ♠9 and ♦K-7, and East had to find a discard on the sixth club. He needed to hold two diamonds AND two spades, but since he couldn't do so, he threw a diamond away.

I could now lead a spade to dummy's Jack, then come back to hand with the ♦K, winning trick 13 with the ♦7 – making my contract on a squeeze with the beer card making!

East immediately apologised to his partner, having realised that he should have ducked the second spade lead. By winning it, he had set up the squeeze on himself!

West opens 2♥ (5 hearts + 5 card other). What bid will you make as North?

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

Did you double? If so, the auction continues:

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
2♥	Double	3♥	4♠
Pass	?		

What will you do now? Do you regret your double, or will you live with the consequences?

My answer is: if you aren't prepared to pass 4♠, then you shouldn't double. I suspect that overcalling 2NT is superior to the double. Then, when partner transfers to 4♠, you will be comfortable with your spade holding. South held:

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

The 4♠ bid was based on a "known" fit, and all that distribution. However, if/when partner 'corrects' to 5♣ you will have to pass – but you should be in 4♠ at Pairs (higher scoring).

*Barbara Travis*

Recently, sitting West, as dealer, I picked up the following hand.

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

This is a terrific looking hand for a pre-emptive opening bid - lots of playing tricks and not much defence! Pre-empts are all about disruption and sacrificing. The disruption comes from stealing the opponents' bidding space - denying them their communication - and, critically, forcing them to guess what to bid or, indeed, whether to bid at all.

The other goal of a pre-empt is to hope to concede a lesser score - going a few tricks short in our contract rather than letting them play in a richer-scoring game or slam contract.

If, like many bridge players these days, you apply the Rule of 2, 3 and 4 to the hand above, you would estimate that you have an effective 7 playing tricks, you would add a further 2 tricks (because you are vulnerable against not) and determine the hand is worth a 9-trick pre-empt - a 3♠ opening bid.

This rather formulaic approach assumes that any game the opponents can make will be worth just over 400 points (being not vulnerable) and that even if we cannot make 3♠ we might score -100, -200 or, at worst, be doubled for -500. This is sound maths; maximising your chances of getting a good result without getting a really bad one. No-one likes calling out "minus 800" or "minus 1100" at the team score-up.

Clearly, at any other vulnerability this is a cast iron 4♠ opening, but vulnerable against not? In the end, I chose 3♠. However, things didn't turn out so well later in the auction (more on that later) despite the sound maths basis for the Rule above. I drove home from bridge with this nagging feeling I'd been a wuss!

Next day, I thought I'd consult some friends to test the waters. Justin Williams was first, and he was not pulling any punches, "No question, you're a wuss not opening 4♠." Hmmm.

Others, though, were strongly of the opposite view, all looking to avoid the big negatives.

Matt Mullamphy: "3♠. Not even close."

Barbara Travis: "Given the vulnerability...I'd open 3♠...No need to go overboard and lose 1100 when I don't need to."

Ron Klinger: "The downside of a 4♠ opening is that the opponents are often left with little choice than to double you rather than commit to the 5-level." Many pairs play a double of a 4♠ opening as penalties, whereas a double of 4♥ is more often played as take-out. This lends some weight to Klinger's other comment "Swap the spades and hearts and I would be happy to open 4♥ at any vul."

It was not quite so black and white for everyone, though. Lauren Travis: "I bid 3♠. I don't think it's completely clear-cut, maybe 85%. Against opponents who won't double me I might bid 4♠." (Oh, if only we could tell one from the other!) Sartaj Hans: "Don't like opening 3 level pre-empts with a void but the vulnerability suggests caution," and presumably also guessing which opponents will double... "Probably open 4♠ against some opponents and 3♠ against others."

Given what is unquestionably a sound argument, at least

mathematically, for a more conservative action at unfavourable vulnerability, why is it that others found 4♠ more to their taste.

Mike Doecke: "Probably 4♠. I can accept 3♠ as an option." Phil Markey: "Any promising major suit pre-empt should be opened at the 4-level." Phil went on to say that begs the question: what is promising? However, he's not anxious to be tied down to any rigid definition, except to say this hand fits the bill!

The larger argument, over and above the mathematical one, is that a more aggressive approach can put the opponents under more pressure and can pay off in so many ways. Perhaps partner will have great cards and you can make the contract. Perhaps the aggressive approach will keep them out of the bidding entirely and you will have stolen the contract. Perhaps they will enter the auction but fail to get to their best contract. Perhaps you will get doubled and either your opponents don't find the right lead or they mis-defend - both of which could allow you to make your contract or go one or two less off than you might have and so you won't suffer the big penalty that was actually available.

Make no mistake, the more aggressive approach does risk the bigger penalty. The more aggressive bidders argue that they only go for the 'big number' infrequently. They are prepared to risk taking back the occasional bad score, against the many more times that they generate good scores! Here's the hand:

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

At the table I chose to open 3♠. This was our auction:

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
3♠	Double	4♣	5♣
All Pass			

We beat 5♣ by a solitary trick. 3♠ was also the opening bid at the other table and a similar auction followed except that East guessed to bid 5♣ over 5♠. North doubled, then unsuccessfully tried to cash the ♦A and declarer wrapped up a quick-fire 11 tricks (ruffing 3 club losers).

It could be argued that my partner should have bid 5♠ over the 5♣ bid. After all, 3 trumps plus A-K-x-x in one side suit and a void in clubs just about guarantees 4 tricks. However, bidding 5-over-5 is always a mine field.

My choice of 3♠ allowed the opponents to enter the auction with an easy take-out double, leaving partner to have the last guess. By comparison, in another match, Jeff Travis opened my hand with 4♠. Systemically, his opponents couldn't double for take-out, so there he played, making 11 tricks.

As Mark Twain wrote in Huckleberry Finn, "You pays your money and you takes your choice."

Jon Hunt

# BRIDGE AT BEAUMONT'S BIRTHDAY CONGRESS

**AT**

MT OSMOND GOLF CLUB  
60 Mt Osmond Rd, Mt Osmond



**ON**

**SUNDAY 15th NOVEMBER 2020**

2-session Graded Matchpoint Pairs  
with a two-course lunch  
& RED masterpoints

Start time: 9.30am

Finish: approx. 5.15pm

**COST**

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

**DIRECTOR**

Barbara Travis

[barbara.travis@hotmail.com](mailto:barbara.travis@hotmail.com)

0437 919 928

IN LINE WITH COVID-SAFE RESTRICTIONS, ONLY 36 PAIRS CAN ENTER.

# BEAUMONT'S INTERNATIONAL CHALLENGES

## THE NEW MELVILLE BRIDGE CLUB, EDINBURGH

Beaumont fielded four teams against The New Melville BC on Tuesday 1st September.

BEAUMONT 1	21	<i>lost to</i>	NEW MELVILLE 1	40
BEAUMONT 2	43	<i>lost to</i>	NEW MELVILLE 2	63
BEAUMONT 3	12	<i>lost to</i>	NEW MELVILLE 3	23
BEAUMONT 4	26	<i>lost to</i>	NEW MELVILLE 4	34

Despite the losses, everyone enjoyed the 'different' experience, playing teams in Scotland. There were definitely some interesting hands, from which we can learn, and I always feel that's one of the reasons we play bridge (since we can't expect to be perfect!).

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

Each match played different boards, so I can only discuss two tables for each hand.

One table:

1♣	1♠
2♦	3NT
Pass	

The 3NT bid was a little 'brutal', leaving the shapely reverse hand with nowhere to go.

The other table:

1♣	1♠
2♦	2♥
3NT (?)	4NT
6♣	Pass

At each table, opener's 2♦ rebid was a reverse, showing 16+ HCP with 4 diamonds and longer clubs. At the second table, responder chose to rebid with 2♥ (defined as fourth suit forcing). Opener's 3NT rebid was a little strange with the singleton ♥K, but it brought a quantitative 4NT from partner and slam was reached.

If 2♥ is fourth suit forcing, then I like 3♣ from opener, showing the strength of the hand (i.e. the club suit being a source of tricks). Now responder could bid 4♣ as some sort of slam interest bid, and the slam will be reached.

If you play "Blackout" after a reverse, then 2♥ would become the Blackout (weakness) bid, but all other bids are game forcing. This allows responder to rebid 2NT or 3♣ as game forcing bids. You would then reach slam quite easily – knowing that partner is stronger, but allowing plenty of bidding space to explore the slam. My auction, playing Blackout, would be:

1♣	1♠
2♦	2NT (game forcing)
3♣ (showing 4-6)	4♣ (asking for cue bids)
4♦	4NT (RKCB for clubs)
5♠ (2 key cards + ♣Q)	6♣ (1 ace missing)

I'm working on convincing people NOT to invite game with 'poor' 11 HCP hands opposite opener's 1NT rebid, showing 12-14 HCP. Here's a typical example:

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

My recommended auction:

1♠	1♥
PASS !!	1NT

One table reached 3NT, going down 2 tricks; the other table reached 4♥, failing by 3 tricks! I would play in 1NT, making 7 tricks, and gain 6 IMPs.

Admittedly, when playing Teams (IMPs), we are encouraged to push for vulnerable games where possible, especially when vulnerable. This is because you gain 10 IMPs when you bid these vulnerable games, losing only 6 or 7 IMPs when they fail. When not vulnerable, however, the win-loss ratio is +6 or 7 IMPs against -6 IMPs, so the games have to be better odds. (This hand was not vulnerable.)

However, there is another line of thought, which one of my NPCs taught me in the 1980s. His saying was, "When the maximum HCP you are known to have is the minimum you need for the NT game, then you need something 'extra' to look for game (either a long suit or lots of 10s and 9s that are working in the hand)." This mantra has been of enormous benefit to me over the years, and is the one to apply on the above auction. Opener is known to have 12-14 HCP and you have a 'poor' 11 HCP hand, given there is no workable suit as a source of extra tricks. Therefore, responder should be passing the 1NT rebid.

The next hand is another classic example of counting an opponent's shape.

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

The ♣K was won with South's Ace. A spade was led to the Queen and Ace, with East returning the ♣Q, ruffed by declarer. A diamond was led to dummy's Ace, and the ♠10 led (West discarding a heart), ducked to the Jack. As East, I would now have given a ruff and discard, but East followed partner's heart signal, returning their heart to West's King and North's Ace.

The ♠K was cashed, leaving East and South with one trump each, West discarding a club. When the ♥Q was cashed, East ruffed and returned the ♣10, removing the last trump.

The contract now hinged on working out who held the ♦Q. However, at this point, declarer had a complete count of East's hand. They had started with 4 spades, 1 heart and 6 clubs – since West had now played 4 clubs. Therefore, diamonds were 2-2, and the suit was running.

Unfortunately for Beaumont, declarer tried finessing the diamond, going down 4 tricks. Given that The New Melville pair reached 5♦, making, this was a 14 IMP loss for our team.

It goes to show what you can do with a small time investment in counting (which I think is easier at the table than on BBO).

Another similar loss occurred on a hand where you had to manage a bad trump break.

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

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

I'm not sure that I would rebid 1NT with a good 7-card suit, but it gave South the opportunity to practise their new "Two-Way Checkback" skills. 2♦ was artificial and game forcing. North denied 3 hearts or 4 spades, showing 5+ clubs with their 3♣ rebid. 3♦ was natural, and 3♥ now showed a doubleton heart (Q-10 being nearly as good as a tripleton). An eminently sensible 4♥ contract was reached.

West, with 5 hearts, led their doubleton club, which would not have been my choice of lead but it did tangle declarer's entry position. The club ran around to declarer's King. The ♥Q was cashed, but East showed out on the ♥10. What to do?

Declarer lacked entries to hand, so their best course of action would have been to overtake the ♥10 and continue to draw trumps. The opponents will now have one heart trick and two diamond tricks, but that's all their winners, so your contract is safe.

You can leave the winning heart alone and continue with clubs if you like, or you can exit with the fifth heart, then lose just the two diamond tricks.

When declarer did not overtake the ♥10, the roof fell in, and the contract failed. The New Melville pair reached 5♣ on the hand, which always had 11 easy tricks, 12 tricks being available on a non-diamond lead.

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

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

2♥ in response to the 1♠ opening bid guarantees 5+ hearts. West should have raised to 3♥ (minimum) and East may have stopped at the 3-level, as happened at the other table. (Sadly, there were 9 tricks in 3NT, so it was a fine place to play!)

South led the ♦K, so declarer was threatened with 4 losers (2 in hearts, 2 in diamonds). Therefore, declarer needed to find a quick parking place (discard) for a diamond loser. This could come from spades (using the ♠J becomes too convoluted entry-wise), so you should lead a spade to the Jack at trick 2. When the finesse works, use the top spades to take a diamond discard.

After that, you can follow declarer's actual line of play, which was to lead the ♣A, cross to the ♣K, then ruff a club, before tackling the trumps. (She hadn't worked the spades first, so was left with her 4 losers.)

One of the joys of Teams is that it makes little difference if you go down 2 tricks instead of 1 trick (-100 instead of -50), searching for 420. At Pairs the extra undertrick may prove disastrous; at Teams, the game bonus is worth the effort.

The 4 matches of 16 boards provided plenty of swings and many hands worthy of discussion. More may appear in other articles!

*Barbara Travis*

## MY 'BIGGEST' HAND

Writing about Michaels Cue Bids made me think of the 'best' hand I've ever held (not in points though):

♠ A K Q 6 5 4
♥ A K Q 10 8 4
♦ void
♣ 4

It's not often that you pick up a 12-trick hand! As I was thinking how to bid it, I realised that my LHO had opened 3♣. That seemed to simplify things; I could make a Michael's Cue bid.

<i>LHO</i>	<i>Partner</i>	<i>RHO</i>	<i>Me</i>
3♣	Pass	Pass	4♣ (majors)
Pass	4♦ (!)	Pass	5♣
Pass	5♠	Pass	6♣

RHO led the ♣A and everyone laughed as I tabled such an enormous dummy.

My 4♣ was a Michael's Cue Bid, showing both Majors, but partner wasn't sure so bid her long diamond suit. My 5♣ bid made it clear that I wanted her to choose another suit, and she complied. She held a 3-1-6-3 hand shape, and 6♥ would fail on the 4-2 break.

*Barbara Travis*

## AFTER PARTNER'S MICHAELS CUE BID

How do you respond to your partner's Michael's cue bids?

Recently I saw some friends have to deal with the following hand:

West

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

West	North	East	South
?	1♣	2♣ (majors)	Pass

West has an excellent hand and, knowing that partner has at least 10 cards in the Majors, considered that game was a certainty with slam a possibility. Therefore, bidding 4♥ was inadequate. He made the best continuation, which was to "counter-cue" with 3♣. This bid should show a good hand, asking partner to clarify whether they have a great hand, game hand or poor hand.

At the table, East now bid 4♣! Another cue bid in response to the cue bid in response to the original cue bid. (This reminds me of a book I received aged 5, called "Angus and the Cat". The last sentence read, "And Angus knew that the cat knew that Angus was glad that the cat was back." Needless to say, to my 5-year-old brain that seemed to have endless "knew thats'!")

This 4♣ bid showed a very good hand, definitely good enough to head to slam if partner was interested. Here's how the auction ended:

West	North	East	South
	1♣	2♣ (majors)	Pass
3♣	Pass	4♣	Pass
5♥	Pass	6♥	All Pass

And the full hand:

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

Even if North had had a pre-emptive opening bid (remove the ♥A and move it elsewhere), you can still use a Michael's Cue Bid. They tend to be a little better at a higher level (given that 4♣ will force to game), so the auction would have been:

West	North	East	South
	3♣	4♣ (majors)	Pass
5♣	Pass	5♥	Pass
6♥	All Pass		

Here's another hand I saw with some top class players at the helm.

West	North	East	South
1♣	2♦ (majors)	Pass	?
	South		
	♠ A J 9 2		
	♥ 7 4		
	♦ A 7 4		
	♣ K J 7 3		

2♦ was a Michael's Cue Bid showing at least 5-5 in the majors. South held a good hand, but that ♣K-J didn't look very useful. Imagine, however that South held:

♠ A J 9 2  
♥ K J 4  
♦ A 7 4  
♣ 7 4 2

Then, he should bid 3♣ as the cue bid, showing a good hand (game forcing) for one of the majors.

Partner has the space to rebid 3♥ with an everyday MCB, or 4♥ or 4♠ (if 6 spades) with better hands, or 4♣ with slam interest.

North's hand was a good MCB hand (not a spectacular one), so then you would reach slam:

North  
♠ K Q 10 6 5  
♥ A Q 10 9 3  
♦ J 10 9  
♣ void

Here's a hand from the State Teams, where I commented to South that I thought he'd underbid. (He wasn't impressed!) Here is South's hand:

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

West	North	East	South
1♥	2♥	Pass	?

2♥ showed at least 5-5 with spades and a minor. At our table, South bid 4♠, then bid 5♠ over West's 5♥ bid.

I don't think 4♠ does justice to this hand. First of all, you know that your partner's 5-card spade suit is poor, so their second suit must be much better (unless you can make these bids on pathetically weak hands – which is unwise). Partner could easily have the ♠K, ♦K-Q-x-x-x and ♣A, and you want to be in slam. I would have bid 3♥, planning to bid slam over partner's 4♠ bid or – best – 4♥ over their 3♠ rebid, which must show a hand very-much interested in slam.

[Another option would be to bid 2NT, asking for partner's second suit. You should have some structure here, where 3-minor shows a minimum with 5-cards in that suit, and 3♥ and 3♠ show the 'respective' minors (hearts = clubs, diamonds = spades) but better hands. At least you will know partner's second suit. You could then cue bid hearts, trying to encourage partner to slam.]

*This article was written by Razorsharp, and appeared on BBO (www.bridgebase.com) in July 2020.*

If you took that line, of cue bidding 3♥ then 4♥, showing a massive hand for partner's Michaels Cue Bid, I think partner should bid slam with their heart void. They held:

♠ K 10 9 6 5  
♥ void  
♦ K Q 10 6 3  
♣ 9 4 3

(On the actual hand, West would rebid 4♥, which would upset your plans, but if North now bid 4♠ you would go to slam. If North passed, you could try 5♥, rather than 4♠ - being willing to play in at least 5♠.

So, having looked at those hands, what would this auction mean to you?

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
1♥	2♥	2♠	3♥ ?

- (a) North's 2♥ is a Michael's Cue Bid, showing at least 5-5 with spades and a minor
- (b) East's 2♠ is a cue raise, showing heart support and at least 10+ HCP (with a 3♥ bid being a weaker raise)
- (c) South's 3♥ is also a cue, and it is a similar cue raise – a better raise to 3♠ than an immediate bid of 3♠, inviting game.

There are many uses of cue bids of the opponent's suit (not slam control cue bidding), and they are a very useful tool to have in your bidding artillery.

*Barbara Travis*

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

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
Pass	1♥	Pass	2♦
Pass	2♥	Pass	2♠
Double	2NT	Pass	3♣
	Redouble	All Pass	

After being 'forced' to rebid 2♥ at my second bid (3♣ would have shown extra values), I thought I had a club stopper so I happily rebid 2NT after partner's rebid of 2♠.

Can you imagine my astonishment when partner offered me 3♣ (at least 3 cards, since we were in a game forcing auction – playing 2 over 1 game forcing) – and West whacked it?

After that random act of violence, each opponent thought the other had a big club stack. We made them pay full price when West led... the ♥A. South could claim four redoubled vulnerable overtricks (and the redouble "insult" is worth 100).

Bidding the grand slam would have been worth +1440 (and one pair managed 7♠ by North). We sure saved a lot of time and effort, and even had extra time to gloat!

*[We are lucky that either BBO or BridgeMates calculate our scores now. Here's how to double-check:*

<i>3♣ XX = 60 x 4 =&gt;</i>	<i>240</i>
<i>4 redoubled overtricks = 4 x 200 =&gt;</i>	<i>800</i>
<i>Insult</i>	<i>100</i>
<i>Game bonus</i>	<i>300 ]</i>

### ONLINE HUMOROUS SITUATIONS 1

In my online game tonight, the opponent called the Director saying that a robot had taken over his hand. (Agree, it was slightly odd that a lot of winners were being thrown away by said robot.) Tournament Director, David Stevenson (England) was on hand to explain to my opponent that he was dummy!

David Stevenson's response: I think this was the fourth time I've had to explain to dummy why his cards were being played for him. I have also had to deal with an alleged revoke (impossible with online bridge), and someone who ruffed a winner but the software did not give him a trick. I had to explain to him that ruffs don't count when defending No Trumps.

Another director commented about the player who refused to continue playing a hand because his opponent had revoked (still impossible) and demanding to see North's cards!

### ONLINE HUMOROUS SITUATIONS 2

My funniest was of someone not bidding. When reminded that it was his bid, he said he couldn't find the Double. I pointed out that you can't double your partner's bid. He claimed to be unused to sitting East, usually sitting South. I made a comment that, on BBO, you always look like you are sitting South!

A month later, when same player had decided to play East-West on an ongoing basis (teams matches), once again he couldn't find his Double. Once again, I pointed out that he couldn't double his partner's bid. Once again, he claimed to be unused to being East. However, by now I had discovered that this pair had been playing East-West for the previous four weeks because their team-mates liked being North-South. Hmmm!

# UNUSUAL v. UNUSUAL: DEFENDING THE UNUSUAL 2NT OVERCALL

## UNUSUAL v. UNUSUAL 2NT

When the opponents make an Unusual 2NT overcall, you now have 2 cue bids available (clubs = hearts; diamonds = spades etc.) Essentially, we match up the lower cue bid to the 'lower suit' and the higher cue bid to the 'higher suit'.

(If the 2NT shows both minors, then the responses are very much like a Multi 2D – 2NT enquiry, i.e.

3C = good with hearts; 3D = good with spades; 3H = weak with hearts; 3S = weak with spades)

<b>Partner Overcall</b>	<b>YOU</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
1S 2NT (minors)	X	Interest in penalising at least 1 of their suits (all doubles now penalties)
	3C	5+ hearts, FORCING (i.e. good hand)
	3D	Cue raise or better in spades: 10+ HCP, 3+ spades (i.e. good hand)
	3H	(probably 6+) Good hearts, NON-FORCING (i.e. not as good a hand)
	3S	Like a 2S or 2½S raise
	3NT	To play (rare – usually double!)
	4m	Splinter
1H 2NT (minors)	X	Interest in penalising at least 1 of their suits (all doubles now penalties)
	3C	Cue raise or better in hearts: 10+ HCP, 3+ hearts (i.e. good hand)
	3D	5+ spades, FORCING (i.e. good hand)
	3H	Like a 2H or 2½H raise
	3S	(probably 6+) Good spades, NON-FORCING (i.e. not as good a hand)
	3NT	To play (rare – usually double!)
	4m	Splinter
1D 2NT (C + H)	X	Interest in penalising at least 1 of their suits (all doubles now penalties)
	3C	Cue raise or better in diamonds: 10+ HCP, diamonds (i.e. good hand)
	3D	Like a 2D or 2½D raise
	3H	5+ spades, FORCING (i.e. good hand)
	3S	(probably 6+) Good spades, NON-FORCING (i.e. not as good a hand)
	3NT	To play
	4C/H	Splinters
	4D	Pre-emptive
1C 2NT (D + H)	X	Interest in penalising at least 1 of their suits (all doubles now penalties)
	3C	Like a 2C or 2½C raise
	3D	Cue raise or better in clubs: 10+ HCP, clubs (i.e. good hand)
	3H	5+ spades, FORCING (i.e. good hand)
	3S	(probably 6+) Good spades, NON-FORCING (i.e. not as good a hand)
	3NT	To play
	4C	Pre-emptive
	4D/H	Splinters
4S	To play	

# UNUSUAL v. UNUSUAL: DEFENDING THE MICHAELS CUE BID

## DEFENCE AGAINST MICHAELS CUE BIDS

<b>Partner</b>	<b>Overcall</b>	<b>YOU</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
1H	2H	X	Interest in penalising at least 1 of their suits (all doubles now penalties)
		3H	Like a 2H or 2½H raise
		2S	Cue raise or better in hearts: 10+ HCP, 3+ hearts (incl. GF hands)
		2NT	J2NT: 4+ hearts, GF
		3m	Natural, F
		3S/4m	Splinters
		3NT	To play
1S	2S	X	Interest in penalising at least 1 of their suits (all doubles now penalties)
		3S	Like a 2S or 2½S raise
		3H	Cue raise or better in spades: 10+ HCP, 3+ spades, (incl. GF hands)
		2NT	J2NT: 4+ spades, GF
		3m	Natural, F
		4m/H	Splinters
		3NT	To play

Defending against 1m – 2m Michaels should be different when the 2m bid shows BOTH MAJORS, because now you have 2 cue bids available again – so it's more like Unusual v. Unusual:

<b>Partner</b>	<b>Overcall</b>	<b>YOU</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
1D	2D (Majors)	X	Interest in penalising at least 1 of their suits (all doubles now penalties)
		2H	5+ clubs, FORCING (i.e. good hand)
		2S	Cue raise or better in diamonds: 10+ HCP (i.e. good hand)
		2NT	?
		3C	Natural, NON-FORCING
		3D	Like a 2 or 2½D raise
		3H/S	Splinter
		3NT	To play
1C	2C (Majors)	X	Interest in penalising at least 1 of their suits (all doubles now penalties)
		2D	Natural, NON-FORCING
		2H	Cue raise or better in clubs (i.e. good hand)
		2S	5+ diamonds, FORCING (i.e. good hand)
		2NT	?
		3C	Like a 2 or 2½C raise
		3D	Splinter
		3H/S	Splinter
3NT	To play		

These defences work against any 2-suited bid where BOTH SUITS are known. You just have to adjust for which suits are known. Lower = matches to the lower suit, Higher = matches to the higher suit.

## THE HOLD- UP PLAY: Whether to Duck or Win (and Why)

The hold-up is a common play, usually made in no trumps when declarer has only one stopper in a suit and is trying to protect against a bad break in the suit led.

### HOLD UP WITH 1 STOPPER:

DUMMY	DECLARER
x x	A x x

If the opponents lead this suit, and you need to establish tricks in another suit, you have to be wary of a 5-3 break in the suit (if the suit breaks 4-4 you simply have 3 losers, but if it breaks 5-3 you want to avoid 4 losers in that suit plus any outside trick). So you duck the suit until the third round is led, hoping to void your RHO in the suit.

Sometimes it is beneficial to duck once even when you have two stoppers in the suit led. That situation usually arises when you will need to lose the lead twice in order to establish all your winners.

### HOLD UP WITH 2 STOPPERS:

DUMMY	DECLARER
x x x	A K x
Q 10 9 x x	J x x x

The opponents lead the suit where you hold A-K-x, and you need tricks from the second suit. However, in order to establish the second suit, you will need to lose the lead twice – once to the King and once to the Ace. If the opening lead suit breaks 4-3 you will lose 2 tricks there and your outside Ace and King. But if the suit breaks 5-2 you need to be more careful. In order to allow for this possibility, you need to duck the first lead but win the next lead. If you win the first lead, then RHO can win YOUR suit and lead another card in their suit. Now if their partner has the next entry, their 5-card suit has 3 winners. If you have ducked the first lead and won the next, when RHO wins YOUR suit, they won't have any cards left in their partner's suit.

Learning to hold up with your Aces is quite an easy concept to grasp, however be careful that you don't do it automatically. On some hands it is wrong to duck. Those occasions arise when there is another suit that is dangerous should the opponents switch OR when the opening lead has given you an extra trick (or another stopper).

### WHEN ANOTHER SUIT IS DANGEROUS:

DUMMY	DECLARER
9 6 2	A x x
J x	A x x

The S3 is led – if that is 4th highest, then the opening leader ONLY has 4 cards in spades (you can see the S2 in dummy). So you know the spades are breaking 4-3 and, at most, you have 3 losers there. However you are definitely worried by a switch to clubs – so you win the SA at trick 1 to avoid a switch to a 'worse' suit.

### WHEN YOU HAVE AN EXTRA STOPPER/TRICK:

DUMMY	DECLARER
10 9 x x	A x

The King is led, so now dummy's 109xx will become an extra trick/stopper in the suit. You should win the Ace. If you duck, they can lead a small card in the suit to remove your Ace, and then you only have the one trick in the suit (and now no additional trick/stopper).

What does this mean? Simply that you have to stop and think at trick 1, planning the play according to your stoppers and your other suits, and whether you can try to keep dangerous opponents from the lead.

## FOURTH SEAT OPENING BIDS by Larry Cohen

*This article, from the North Shore Bridge Club's September Newsletter, was written by Larry Cohen (USA).*

After Pass – Pass – Pass, there are some items to consider such as:

### Fourth-Seat Weak Two Bids

The normal range for a weak two bid is about 6-10 HCP. But, after three Passes, surely you would not open the bidding with 6 HCP (nor 7, 8 or 9). Really, the range for a fourth-seat weak two should be about 10-14 HCP. (Your partner, after all, has already denied opening values.)

After three Passes, I would be happy to open 2♠ with:

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

This combines pre-emption with description. Of course, you cannot open this hand 2♠ in any other position because it is too strong.

3-level pre-empts in fourth seat also show close to opening bid values and 7-card suits – usually with a good suit in case partner now decides to bid 3NT or 4M.

### Rule of 15

The 'book' rule on whether to open with a 1-level bid in fourth seat says to add your HCP to your number of spades. If the total is 15+, open the bidding. If less than 15, pass it out.

The theory is that it will be a part-score battle and, if your hand does not have enough of the highest-ranking suit – spades, you could easily lose the battle.

So, you would Pass out this hand:

♠ 4  
♥ K J 5 4  
♦ K J 8 7  
♣ K 9 8 7 (11 HCP + 1 spade = 12)

## TRUMP TECHNIQUE

*This article, written by Pat O'Connor, was published in North Shore Bridge Club's September Newsletter. Pat O'Connor won awards from his books, First Book of Bridge Problems and Second Book of Bridge Problems, written for the intermediate bridge player.*

but open this hand:

♠ K Q 10 9 2  
 ♥ A J 4  
 ♦ 8 7 6  
 ♣ 5 3 (10 + 5 spades = 15)

### Drury

When you open in fourth seat, you are often on the light side.

If you open 1♠ with the above hand:

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

you do not want partner to get too excited. Say he has a good hand with game interest:

♠ A J 5  
 ♥ 7 6  
 ♦ J 4 2  
 ♣ A J 8 7 2

You would not want to get too high opposite that hand (8 tricks being the limit). The responder is too strong for 2♣, but rather than bid 3♣ (or some Bergen bid), he can bid an artificial 2♣ bid, Drury, which says he has a limit raise in spades (it is coincidental that this example includes a club suit).

The 2♣ Drury bid says nothing about clubs. Playing (modern) Drury, the opener would then rebid 2♠ to say he is not interested in game and the partnership stops safely at the 2-level. Drury is also used after third-seat opening bids (which can also be lighter than the usual HCP).

### CRIFS

Now, forget the Rule of 15 for deciding whether to open or Pass out the deal in fourth seat. I prefer CRIFS – "Cohen's Rule in Fourth Seat". Any time it is borderline whether to open (like 10, 11 or 12 HCP), evaluate your opponents! Yes, I am serious.

If you are playing against Jeff Meckstroth or Eric Rodwell (or the best pair at your local duplicate game), then pass it out. You will likely get a middle matchpoint score/result. Who needs to open and then do battle with an expert pair who will fight hard for the part-score battle and play or defend well?

Conversely, if you look up at your opponents and see the worst pair, then open the bidding. You can push them around in the auction and will get an extra trick or two in play/defence. You rate to go plus – so do not Pass the board out.

Please do not tell your opponents why you opened that 10-count in fourth seat – we do not want them to know what we think of their game!

*Larry Cohen, USA*

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

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

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

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

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♠	Pass	1♥ (Rule 20)
Pass	5♦	All Pass	2♦

West led the ♠A and then the ♠K, switching to the ♦3 at trick 3, to reduce your trumping ability. You play the ♦5 from dummy, East plays the ♦2 and you win in hand with the ♦6. What next?

You have already lost two tricks in clubs. You have four potential losers in hearts. You may be able to establish the heart suit by ruffing some hearts in dummy, but you would need them to break 4-3.

If you consider the trump suit, the only outstanding trump is the ♦4, lower than all your trumps. Should you draw the last trump, then start ruffing? Is there a better way to play the hand?

Rather than relying on either the hearts to behave or the spades to break (4-3), this is the time for a special type of play – the cross-ruff. The aim of the cross-ruff is to make your trumps separately: ♠A, ♥A, one round of trumps and 8 trump tricks made separately gives you the 11 tricks required for your contract.

In general, with a cross-ruff, it is important to cash your side suit winners first because, if you leave them till later, they may be trumped. So cash the ♠A and ♥A. Lead a heart and ruff in dummy, then lead a spade and trump in hand. You keep repeating these plays – heart ruffed, spade ruffed, and then you will have made all your remaining trumps separately, and not be dependent on a favourable break in either hearts or spades.

With East's remaining trump being low, he can play it at any time, but it won't win a trick!

Note: On this particular hand, it would be a mistake to draw the last trump, because then you only have three trumps in each hand and, when the majors don't break, you haven't got your 11th trick.

**Key Point: When you have trump length in both your hand and dummy, and shortness in two side suits, consider a cross-ruff.**

*Pat O'Connor*

## A GAME AT THE CLUB by Barbara Travis

I got to play again with partner from a previous story and, of course, we saw a few more cue raises – great for reinforcement purposes.

Partner held:

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

West	North	East	South
1♠	Pass	3♠	All Pass

Our hands:

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

I got lucky when North led her singleton heart, ♥9 – 2 – Jack – Ace. Now I was able to discard a diamond loser on the ♣A-K, reducing my losers to four: 2 trumps, 1 heart, 1 diamond. North did extremely well, ducking from K-9 when I led a spade from hand!

North held a 2-1-3-7, and South held a good hand. They could make 10 tricks in either minor, so the pre-emptive raise worked.

After the hand, partner asked if she was too weak for the bid, since she is still becoming familiar with its use. I explained that it was perfect (in fact, I probably would have bid 4♣). The 3♠ raise should show 0-6 (or 7) HCP and 4+ card support. When vulnerable, it is usually 3-6 HCP though it can be weaker with a singleton. When not vulnerable, i.e. you are going down in 50s, it can be weaker again.

Anyway, here are the pick of the bunch from the hands. Let's start with an everyday hand.

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

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

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

East leads the ♣ 8 to the Queen and Ace. West returned the ♣J – 10 – 2 – King. How are you going to play this spade suit? Should you finesse the Queen or the 9?

At the table, after West played the ♠8, North finessed the ♠9 and East won the ♠10.

This is wrong on the hand, since you know that East started with a doubleton club too. If East now returns a heart to West's Ace, a further club lead will promote a trump trick for the defence (since you are missing the K-J-4).

Therefore, you should just finesse with the ♠Q on the first round of the suit. You need to be able to remove two rounds of trumps to stop the trump promotion! Given West's 3♣ overcall, either spades are breaking badly (and you are down) or West has the extra values on the hand.

Think about the implications of the auction for your declarer play, and remember what you know about the opposition's distribution – in this case, you know that clubs are 6-2 from the lead and play.

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

In the same round, there was another interesting hand. Here's the auction first:

West	North	East	South
1♥	2♥ (1)	Pass	1♣ (2+ clubs)
3♦	4♣	4♦	3♣ (2)
5♦	6♣	Pass	5♣
Pass (3)			Pass

- (1) Cue raise in clubs
- (2) An underbid opposite a cue raise. This is the weakest bid you can make. Perhaps 2♠ would be better.
- (3) Whoops – I may have bid too much!

Knowing that partner held good diamond support, I led the ♥K (with the King-Queen). Here are the two hands from declarer's perspective:

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

A diamond lead would not have worried declarer unduly. She would have drawn trumps and taken a spade finesse, discarding the heart loser on the long, winning spade.

The heart loser threatened declarer immediately. However, she had only one chance – that being both the ♠K and ♠J onside. If that's your only prospect for making the hand, you have to play accordingly.

That ♠10 in dummy was a huge card and just had to be appreciated. Having drawn trumps, finishing in dummy, lead the ♠10 and finesse. If East covers, return to dummy with a trump and finesse again. Now you have no spade loser, and when the suit proves to be 3-3, you can even discard your heart loser and make all 13 tricks. (In fact, even on a diamond lead, you should play that way, because you score an overtrick if it works.)

We scored a top instead of a bottom, when declarer failed to appreciate the spade pips. Mind you, the auction was undisciplined, given that South had shown a minimum hand. North should have been doubling 5♦, which goes down three tricks with all the spades offside. She thought she lacked defence, but the values in clubs meant that South had to have significant outside defensive values. North's other option is to pass 5♦, and then South will pass with her three aces.

There were several hands on a theme again, this time being the takeout double after the opponents have bid two suits. Here's the first:

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

You, East, hold:

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

Partner (East) overcalled 2♣, whereas I would double. The double shows a maximum hand for your initial pass, and at least 4-4 in the unbid suits. I would bid 1♠ with 5 spades and 4 clubs, but with 4-5 I would prefer to bring both the other suits into the auction.

On this hand, it didn't matter. We competed to 3♣ and subsided when they bid to 3♦, one off.

I held:

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

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
Double	1♥	Pass	2♣ (10+ HCP)

Even though I was lacking points, I was happy to double after my two short suits had been bid. I would much prefer to make a takeout double than to overcall 2♦ on this pusillanimous suit!

Try not to overcall at the 2-level on poorish 5-card suits. If you have a hand that suits a takeout double that is a preferable action. You may have a better fit elsewhere.

You may avoid going for a big penalty. Further, if partner has a decent hand, they may well consider 3NT as a final contract, but they will be expecting your suit to be the main source of winners, therefore it has to have some quality rather than just quantity!

I was particularly proud of my 'student', sitting South on the next hand:

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

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

- (1) Playing 2 over 1, the 1NT response shows 6-11 HCP
- (2) The 2NT rebid shows 10-11 HCP

I was regularly finding rotten leads, and found another with the ♦5 which ran to declarer's 10. In fact, my whole defence was absent-minded. Regardless, declarer did very well.

He cashed four clubs, on which I chose to discard a heart. Now he cashed the ♠K, and I failed to start unblocking, then the ♠A. He could now have exited a spade and established two extra winners in spades, with the ♦A as an entry, but what he did was 'classier'. He crossed to his ♥A, and again I failed to unblock by playing the ♥K. This time it was a 'sin', reflecting that I was not counting – since I now knew his points (♠K, ♥A, ♦Q, ♣Q). He crossed to dummy's ♦A, his ninth trick, and I claimed!

I had totally forgotten that the ♦Q was still out, thinking it had won trick 1. Whoops. Declarer quietly pointed out to me (after a few director calls) that I was endplayed, and he would also score his ♦Q. Well done – one up on the teacher!

(continued next page)

There's a bridge system called Multi Twos  
Which Marelle and Christine often use.  
It's hard to know  
Which way to go  
When all they've bid is fake news.

Nobody was able to reach slam on the next hand, but we talked about 'how' it could be bid.

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

♠ 10 6 4 2  
♥ A Q J 10 9 4  
♦ 10 2  
♣ 9

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

- (1) Disciplined, with his 4-6 in the majors
- (2) Unsure how to show this hand. However, 2♥ is wrong because you are a passed hand, and partner could pass this response! If you don't want to be passed in a bid, don't make that bid!

How could they bid the slam? I explained that I play fit showing jumps when we are already a passed hand (Drury can pick up the good raises) – and no Bergen! On this hand, the fit showing jump would be a bid of 3♥ and it shows at least 4 card spade support and 5 cards in hearts. The other element is that your values are in your suits.

North can now revalue her excellent major cards and the ♦A. Spades are agreed by inference (the known fit), so North could now bid 4♦ as a cue bid, denying club control but showing slam interest. Obviously, the bid is really asking for club control. So, with the singleton club, South can cooperate by cue bidding 4♥. (With no control in clubs, South should revert to 4♠.) That's all the encouragement that North needs, and slam can be reached.

Several Souths must have opened 2♥, with North jumping to 4♥. After a weak 2 opening bid, I now use the 2NT response as a 'feature ask, rather than Ogust. My responsive methods are:

3-own-suit	Minimum
New suit below 3-suit	Ace or King (game forcing)
New suit above 3-suit	Splinter (game forcing)

If you upgraded this to a non-minimum (given the shape), then you would be able to respond with 4♣, showing the club shortage. That may lead you to the good slam, though it is still unlikely. *[Note that if you show a non-minimum via the Ace or King-showing bid, your side is now in a game forcing auction, so responder's bids are now giving opener more space, for instance to show a splinter at the 4-level too.]*

When do I use fit showing jumps? I use them when we overcall, when we open and an opponent overcalls or doubles, and whenever we are already a passed hand. Do they occur very often? Often enough to be useful, and when they do, they are a great tool to have available. Our final agreement is that if the jump could be either fit showing or a splinter, then it's fit showing (unless they have shown the suit).

Barbara Travis



## 2020 Regional GNOT Final

Hosted by the SA Bridge Federation

SABA Clubrooms

243 Young St Unley

10:00 a.m. Sunday October 18th 2020

**Entry is open to all SABF affiliated players who are members of a South Australian club other than SABA.**

**Gold points awarded for each match won.**

**Entrants are asked to bring their own lunches and other refreshments.**

## COMING EVENTS

### STATE EVENTS

Sunday 18th October	REGIONAL GNOT (non-SA Bridge Assoc teams)	SA Bridge Assoc
Thursday 29th October (6 weeks)	OPEN TRIALS QUALIFYING	SA Bridge Assoc
Sunday 1st November	STATE SENIORS' PAIRS	SA Bridge Assoc
Saturday 28th/Sunday 29th November	STATE OPEN and RESTRICTED PAIRS	SA Bridge Assoc

### SPECIAL EVENTS

Friday 9th October (3 weeks)	SABA TEAMS	SA Bridge Assoc
Sunday 15th November	BRIDGE AT BEAUMONT: BIRTHDAY CONGRESS	Mt Osmond Golf Club

## RESULTS

### STATE TEAMS PHASE 1

1st	HOROWITZ: John Horowitz - David Cherry, Phil Gallasch - Joff Middleton, Graham Pellen
2nd	WILLIAMS: Justin Williams, Phil Markey, Jeff Travis, Russel Harms, Zoli Nagy, David Middleton
3rd	ZOLLO: John Zollo - Roger Januszke, David Anderson - Ian Hilditch

### UNDER GRAND MASTER GNOT

1st	BARTLEY: George Bartley - Bertie Morgan, David Gue - Jamie Simpson
2nd	ACFIELD: Paul Acfield - Graham Stucley, Jinny Fuss - Jackie Ward, John Smith - Wendy Hopkins (substitutes)
3rd	COOKE: Ingrid Cooke - Lori Smith, Ray Dohnt - Anthony Gibbs

### SWISS PAIRS

1st	Mark Jappe - John Maddison
2nd	Nic Croft - Arjuna de Livera
3rd	Judy Hocking - Kevin Lange

### DAYTIME TEAMS FINAL

1st	WILLIAMS: Justin Williams, Cathy Chua, Mike Doecke, Phil Markey, David Parrott, George Smolanko <i>defeated</i>
2nd	SMYTH: Felicity Smyth - Sheila Bird, Pam Morgan-King - Jeff Travis, Therese Demarco - Lori Smith

### SABA GNOT

1st	WILLIAMS: Justin Williams - Zolly Nagy, Jeff Travis - Russel Harms
2nd	ZOLLO: John Zollo - Roger Januszke, Paul Hudson - Ian Hilditch, Peter Popp
3rd	PARROTT: Felicity Smyth - Sheila Bird, David Parrott - Jon Hunt

### MIXED PAIRS

1st	Alice Handley - David Parrott
2nd	Tassi Georgiadis - Bill Bradshaw
3rd	Felicity Smyth - Jeff Travis

### B GRADE

1st	Anne Stimson - Bob Pearce
2nd	Monique Haan - Tony Tompkin
3rd	Carolyn & Chris Mroczek