

# BRIDGE

Number: 194

February 2019

## Bernard Magee's Acol Bidding Quiz

This month we are dealing with hands where there has been a weak opening bid.

All the opening bids in these questions are weak.

You are West in the auctions below, playing 'Standard Acol' with a Weak no-trump (12-14 points) and four-card majors. It is your turn to call.

### 1. Dealer South. E/W Game.

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



| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| ?    |       |      | 2♥    |

### 2. Dealer South. Game All.

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



| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| ?    |       |      | 2♥    |

### 3. Dealer South. Love All.

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



| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| ?    |       |      | 2♥    |

Answers on page 43

### 4. Dealer South. Love All.

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



| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| ?    |       |      | 3♥    |

### 5. Dealer South. E/W Game.

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



| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| ?    |       |      | 4♣    |

### 6. Dealer South. Love All.

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



| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| ?    |       |      | 4♣    |

Answers on page 45

### 7. Dealer North. Love All.

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



| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| ?    | 2♠    | Dbl  | 3♠    |

### 8. Dealer North. Love All.

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



| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| ?    | 3♠    | 3NT  | Pass  |

### 9. Dealer North. E/W Game.

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



| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| ?    | 2♥    | 2♠   | 4♥    |

Answers on page 47

### 10. Dealer North. Love All.

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



| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| ?    | 3♥    | Dbl  | Pass  |

### 11. Dealer South. Love All.

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



| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| Dbl  | Pass  | 2♠   | 2♥    |
| ?    |       |      | Pass  |

### 12. Dealer North. Love All.

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



| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 2♠   | 2♥    | Dbl  | Pass  |
| ?    | Pass  | 3♣   | Pass  |

Answers on page 49

# Mr Bridge

## The 2019 cruise programme

LIMITED  
CABINS REMAINING  
ON OUR WINTER  
2018/19 CRUISES

### PASSAGE TO ANCIENT EGYPT & INDIA

Hosted by Martin and  
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#### Athens to Mumbai 29 days

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9 December 2018 From £3,995pp

### IDYLIC ISLANDS OF THE INDIAN OCEAN

Hosted by John and  
Rebecca Ronan

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### BEYOND BURMA & THE MALAY PENINSULA

Hosted by Sandy Bell

#### Singapore to Colombo 18 days

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### SOUTH AFRICA, NAMIBIA & THE SKELETON COAST

Hosted by Will and  
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#### Cape Town to Malaga 33 days

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Bom Bom Island • Praia • Las Palmas  
Agadir (Marrakesh) • Casablanca • Tangier • Malaga

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### CLASSIC CIVILISATIONS of the S. MEDITERRANEAN

Hosted by  
Bernard Magee

#### Malaga to Athens 12 days

Malaga • Trapani • Palermo • Catania  
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Santorini • Athens

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### CLASSICAL GREECE & ISLANDS OF THE AEGEAN

Hosted by Lesley Lewis

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Athens • Santorini • Heraklion • Agios Nikolaos  
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Athens

26 April 2019 From £1,850pp

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#### Rome to Seville 13 days

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Hosted by  
Bernard Magee

#### Seville to London 13 days

Seville • Lisbon • Oporto  
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ODYSSEY  
CLUB  
REUNION  
CRUISE

### ICELAND, FAROES & SHETLANDS

Hosted by Will and  
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#### London to London 16 days

London • Lerwick • Heimaey  
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30 July 2019 From £2,750pp

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CRUISE

### MEDITERRANEAN ODYSSEY

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Bernard Magee

#### Lisbon to Rome 13 days

Lisbon • Cadiz • Malaga • Tarragona • Barcelona  
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26 August 2019 From £2,195pp

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#### Venice to Athens 11 days

Venice • Ancona (Urbino) • Split  
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19 September 2019 From £2,295pp

LIMITED  
AVAILABILITY

### CLASSICAL GREECE & ISLANDS OF THE AEGEAN

Hosted by Sandy Bell

#### Athens to Athens 9 days

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Karthos • Rhodes • Nisyros • Delos • Mykonos  
Athens

7 October 2019 From £1,695pp

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# LAND OF THE MIDNIGHT SUN

## NEW Mr Bridge Cruise

Join Mr Bridge who will be accompanying this cruise

### INAUGURAL VOYAGE 15 DAYS from £2,350pp 18 June 2019

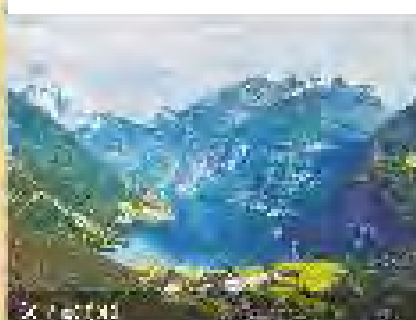
Leave the Arctic Circle on this spectacular summer voyage for 2019, departing from London and cruising through the breathtaking fjords and stunning natural landscapes of Norway's North Coast, with remote parts of Harstad, Honningsvåg, as well as the traditional wooden houses of Lofoten.

Along the way you'll work up the Shetland Islands, as well as some of the island's world famous peatles. Stroll through one of Norway's biggest ports, Bergen, then step ashore in another brand new port of call for days: Olesund, Ålesund, in the new town of the ringed fjord, which is renowned for its abundance of Art Nouveau architecture. Explore Norway's Viking capital of Trondheim, where the Nidarosdomen is also the largest church in the world and visit the charming 18th and 19th century wooden houses of Svolvær.



#### VOYAGE HIGHLIGHTS

- Discover the beauty of the Shetland Islands
- Browsing the Arctic Circle
- Witness the amazing 'Midnight Sun'
- Stunning Lofoten



Mr Bridge special fares include: Sevens or full size cabin • Evening bridge every day • Afternoon bridge when the ship is at sea • Lights and handbars on deck • Fully planned itineraries • Shore excursions in most ports • Well stocked library/guest speakers • Open evening dining • Gratuities on board • Fare with confirmed board without Mr Bridge on this date

#### YOUR ITINERARY

| DATE   | LOCATION                                                                       |
|--------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 18 JUN | LONDON England<br>(Leaving 18 June at 11.00am)                                 |
| 19 JUN | AT SEA                                                                         |
| 20 JUN | LEWIS & CLARK Island, Shetland                                                 |
| 21 JUN | BERGEN Norway                                                                  |
| 22 JUN | AT SEA                                                                         |
| 23 JUN | HARSTAD Lofoten Islands, Norway                                                |
| 24 JUN | HONNINGSVÅG Norway<br>(Arriving 18.00hrs)                                      |
| 25 JUN | TRONDHØM Norway                                                                |
| 26 JUN | AT SEA                                                                         |
| 27 JUN | TRONDHØM Norway                                                                |
| 28 JUN | HELESFJELT Norway &<br>Lofoten Islands, Norway                                 |
| 29 JUN | ÅLESUND Norway                                                                 |
| 30 JUN | ÅLESUND Norway                                                                 |
| 1 JUL  | AT SEA                                                                         |
| 2 JUL  | Trondheim, Norway (Departure 18.00hrs)<br>Svolvær, Norway (Departure 18.00hrs) |

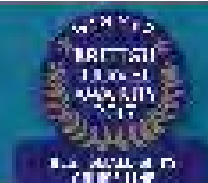
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| Cabin Category  | Cabin | Price  |
|-----------------|-------|--------|
| Single Cabin    | 10    | £2,350 |
| Double Cabin    | 1     | £2,350 |
| Triple Cabin    | 1     | £2,350 |
| Quadruple Cabin | 1     | £2,350 |
| Single Cabin    | 10    | £2,350 |

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# Leanora Adds' Holiday Ideas



This month my top pick has to be New England in the Fall, September 2020 on Balmoral.

My children are desperate to do this cruise (but obviously can't).

We thoroughly enjoyed watching the BBC Autumn Watch from New England. Seeing the prolific wildlife made us intent on making a visit. And to think that is just one element of the trip. There are a number of sea days en route but that is why being part of a bridge group is so special.

If you are interested in going do not leave it too long as when I was assisting a client with a booking, I was shocked at how well sold this cruise already is.

## Lytham St Anne's

28-30 May at Inn on the Prom is a great time to be by the sea. Why not join Bernard Magee and improve your pre-emptive bidding? Learn about all aspects of pre-emptive threes: including vulnerability and position; contrasting a 2nd hand vulnerable pre-empt with a 3rd hand favourable pre-empt. As well as bidding after your opponent has opened with a pre-empt: take-out doubles and aggressive competition. All key elements for any bridge player. £264 per person full board. A limited number of rooms are available with no single supplement.

## Lake Garda

When Lake Garda was mentioned as a new venue, Bernard Magee was keen to be involved. It is a brilliant destination with so many gems to be found around the lake. Getting around is very straightforward using the hop-on ferries. They are much more than just a means of transportation. They are part of the whole experience.

### Portugal - VidaMar Resort Hotel (5\*), Algarve



1-8 April 2019 - from £995

Host: Sandy Bell

One Week Half-Board  
Includes Gatwick flights

Full details on page **14**

### Croatia, Hotel Eden Rovinj



4-18 May 2019 - from £1499

Hosts: Will & Sylvia Parsons

Two Weeks Half-Board  
Includes Gatwick flights

Full details on page **48**

### Malta - DB San Antonio Hotel (4\*) St Paul's Bay



8-15 May 2019 - from £1195

Host: Bernard Magee

One Week All-Inclusive  
Includes Gatwick flights

Full details on page **36**

### Italy - Hotel Caesius Thermae (4\*) Lake Garda



18-25 October 2019 - from £1395

Host: Bernard Magee

One Week Half-Board  
Includes Gatwick flights

Full details on page **6**

For more details of any of these holidays, call my team  
☎ 01483 489961  
or view  
[www.mrbridge.co.uk](http://www.mrbridge.co.uk)

## Fred. Olsen

In the centrefold you will find details of the 2019 Mr Bridge Fred. Olsen cruises on board Balmoral. The current offer of Free Drinks & Tips is a real bonus.

There is a great variety of interesting destinations, so the hardest decision will be choosing which one to join.



## Gourmet Bridge

Our events at Two Bridges in Dartmoor are now established as part of the Mr Bridge events calendar. They follow a similar programme to our standard two night breaks, but with some added gourmet delights including a five course taster menu on the Saturday night. In addition to Bernard Magee hosting 3-5 April, Will & Sylvia Parsons are excited to be hosting the 21-23 October event. Prices start from £349 per person. Please call for details.

## Introducing the Team

### Megan Riccio Office Staff

As our longest standing employee, most of you will already know of Megan Riccio.



Gained over 12 years, Megan's knowledge of Mr Bridge and our products is exceptional and that combined with her freaky memory makes her invaluable.

Megan is currently responsible for the daily administration of the cruise programmes. Working part-time (mornings only) Megan is there every day to help with any enquiry be it a cruise, a weekend or a software problem.



# Hotel Caesius Thermae & Spa Resort (4\*+) Lake Garda, Italy



**18-25 October 2019**

Hosted by Bernard Magee

In October the heaving crowds have departed the shores of Lake Garda, yet its beauty is undiminished. Crystal-clear waters sparkle in the autumn sun, shimmering reflections of Alpine peaks. Elegant resort towns with promenades and grand hotels - evoking a more relaxed and refined age of travel - fringe the lake. What better setting for a bridge holiday?

The 4\*+ Hotel Caesius Thermae & Spa Resort is our Lake Garda hideaway. Rooms are air-conditioned with terrace or balcony and en-suite bathroom, satellite TV and tea/coffee-making facilities. At the spa, relaxing and revitalising treatments are centred around health-giving thermal waters. Our half-board arrangement is based on meals at the main Benacus restaurant, serving up delicious dishes inspired by regional traditions and the finest local produce.

With two included drinks parties, the group will soon get to know each other. Bridge, played in large air-conditioned rooms, fits around the excursions to maximise your enjoyment. Bernard Magee will present two seminars, followed by supervised play of set hands, with valuable support offered by the Mr Bridge team. Singles will always be accommodated.



## Optional Excursions

### Verona, City of Romeo and Juliet

Verona needs little introduction – the city of Shakespeare's 'star-crossed lovers' and two gentlemen; and the city of opera, where epic performances are staged in the 20,000-seat Roman Amphitheatre. Our extended half day excursion (lunch not included) includes a walking tour of Verona's historic highlights and time at leisure to explore this splendid UNESCO World Heritage Centre independently.

**Extended half day • £50 per person**

### Wine and Olive Oil tasting

East of Lake Garda is the region of Valpolicella, where winemaking dates back to the Ancient Greeks. Recipient of the prestigious DOC classification, Valpolicella produces a variety of wines, a selection of which we taste in beautiful surroundings. The world class extra virgin olive oils of Lake Garda are so fragrant and delicious that they may be tasted like wine – we sample them for ourselves in Bardolino, the 'Olive Riviera'.

**Half day • £31 per person**

### Desenzano and Sirmione

Visit two charming resort towns on the southern shore of Lake Garda. Desenzano has a rich artistic and archaeological heritage, with well-preserved Roman antiquities, grand Baroque palaces and an imposing medieval castle to admire. And postcard-perfect Sirmione, set spectacularly on a narrow peninsula and beloved by generations of writers, is famed for the healing properties of its thermal waters.

**Half day • £52 per person**

*Please note – these excursions are specially arranged for Mr Bridge customers and are subject to a minimum number of 18 participants.*

**£1,395 per person | £160 single supplement**

*This price includes international flights with British Airways from London Gatwick, taxes, transfers, half-board accommodation in a Classic room and all bridge activities. Regional departures available on request (extra cost may apply). Terms and conditions apply.*

**Room upgrades (per stay)  
Lake-view | £375 per room**



**For more information or to book, call 01483 489961**

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# Bernard Magee's Acol Bidding Quiz

This month we are dealing with hands where there has been a weak opening bid.

All the opening bids in these questions are weak.

You are West in the auctions below, playing 'Standard Acol' with a Weak no-trump (12-14 points) and four-card majors. It is your turn to call.

1. Dealer South. E/W Game.

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



|      |       |      |       |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
|      |       |      | 2♥    |
| ?    |       |      |       |

4. Dealer South. Love All.

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



|      |       |      |       |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
|      |       |      | 3♥    |
| ?    |       |      |       |

7. Dealer North. Love All.

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



|      |       |      |       |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
|      | 2♠    | Dbl  | 3♠    |
| ?    |       |      |       |

10. Dealer North. Love All.

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



|      |       |      |       |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
|      | 3♥    | Dbl  | Pass  |
| ?    |       |      |       |

2. Dealer South. Game All.

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



|      |       |      |       |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
|      |       |      | 2♥    |
| ?    |       |      |       |

5. Dealer South. E/W Game.

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



|      |       |      |       |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
|      |       |      | 4♣    |
| ?    |       |      |       |

8. Dealer North. Love All.

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



|      |       |      |       |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
|      | 3♠    | 3NT  | Pass  |
| ?    |       |      |       |

11. Dealer South. Love All.

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



|      |       |      |       |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
|      |       |      | 2♥    |
| Dbl  | Pass  | 2♠   | Pass  |
| ?    |       |      |       |

3. Dealer South. Love All.

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



|      |       |      |       |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
|      |       |      | 2♥    |
| ?    |       |      |       |

6. Dealer South. Love All.

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



|      |       |      |       |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
|      |       |      | 4♠    |
| ?    |       |      |       |

9. Dealer North. E/W Game.

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



|      |       |      |       |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
|      | 2♥    | 2♠   | 4♥    |
| ?    |       |      |       |

12. Dealer North. Love All.

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



|      |       |      |       |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
|      | 2♥    | Dbl  | Pass  |
| 2♠   | Pass  | 3♣   | Pass  |
| ?    |       |      |       |

My Answers:

1.....  
2.....  
3.....

My Answers:

4.....  
5.....  
6.....

My Answers:

7.....  
8.....  
9.....

My Answers:

10.....  
11.....  
12.....

Answers on page 43

Answers on page 45

Answers on page 47

Answers on page 49

# Mr Bridge UK Events 2019

Full Board – No Single Supplement\*



Elstead Hotel  
Bournemouth BH1 3QP



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Near Uxbridge, UB9 5DG



Olde Barn Hotel, Grantham  
Marston, Lincs NG32 2HT



Chatsworth Hotel  
Worthing BN11 3DU



Blunsdon House Hotel  
Swindon SN26 7AS

## Just Duplicate

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|----------------|------------|
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| 6-8 September  | from £228* |
| 1-3 November   | from £228* |
| 22-24 November | from £228* |

### Chatsworth Hotel

|                 |                         |
|-----------------|-------------------------|
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|                 | Masterpointed Duplicate |
| 26-28 April     | £218                    |
| 7-9 June        | £218                    |
| 5-7 July        | £218                    |
| 27-29 September | £218                    |
| 1-3 November    | £218                    |
| 15-17 November  | £218                    |

### Denham Grove

|                 |                         |
|-----------------|-------------------------|
| 28-30 June      | £229                    |
|                 | Masterpointed Duplicate |
| 19-21 July      | £218                    |
| 13-15 September | £218                    |
| 25-27 October   | £218                    |

### Elstead Hotel

|                 |      |
|-----------------|------|
| 22-24 February  | £218 |
| 31 May - 2 June | £218 |
| 4-6 October     | £218 |
| 8-10 November   | £218 |

### Olde Barn Hotel

|                |                         |
|----------------|-------------------------|
| 8-10 March     | £208                    |
| 14-16 June     | £218                    |
| 26-28 July     | £229                    |
|                | Masterpointed Duplicate |
| 11-13 October  | £218                    |
| 15-17 November | £218                    |

Please note there are no seminars, set hands or prizes at these events.

## Tutorial Events

### Blunsdon House

|           |                      |
|-----------|----------------------|
| 5-7 April | from £238*           |
|           | Defence to Weak Twos |
|           | Hosted by John Ronan |

### Chatsworth Hotel

|              |                        |
|--------------|------------------------|
| 1-3 February | £228                   |
|              | Hand Evaluation        |
|              | Hosted by Will Parsons |

|                |                             |
|----------------|-----------------------------|
| 22-25 February | £299*                       |
|                | Seminar Plus Training Event |

|           |      |
|-----------|------|
| 10-12 May | £238 |
|-----------|------|

|  |                      |
|--|----------------------|
|  | Doubling             |
|  | Hosted by Sandy Bell |

|              |                               |
|--------------|-------------------------------|
| 16-18 August | £238                          |
|              | Leads and Fundamental Defence |
|              | Hosted by Martin Holcombe     |

### Denham Grove

|           |                       |
|-----------|-----------------------|
| 1-3 March | £228                  |
|           | Endplay and Avoidance |
|           | Hosted by Sandy Bell  |

|             |                       |
|-------------|-----------------------|
| 9-11 August | £238                  |
|             | Responding to 1NT     |
|             | Hosted by Elaine Duff |

### Elstead Hotel

|            |                         |
|------------|-------------------------|
| 8-10 March | £228                    |
|            | Overcalls               |
|            | Hosted by Hilary Levett |

|             |                      |
|-------------|----------------------|
| 26-28 April | £238                 |
|             | Suit Establishment   |
|             | Hosted by Sandy Bell |

|            |      |
|------------|------|
| 21-23 June | £238 |
|------------|------|

|  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
|  | Hand Evaluation        |
|  | Hosted by Will Parsons |

### Olde Barn Hotel

|               |               |
|---------------|---------------|
| 8-10 February | £218          |
|               | Finding Slams |

|           |                       |
|-----------|-----------------------|
|           | Hosted by Gary Conrad |
| 17-19 May | £238                  |

|  |                      |
|--|----------------------|
|  | Drawing Trumps       |
|  | Hosted by John Ronan |

\*Single supplement of £15 applies.  
For tutorial events in October onwards, call the Mr Bridge office or see individual adverts.

## Tutorial Events with Bernard Magee

### Blunsdon House

|               |                          |
|---------------|--------------------------|
| 8-10 February | from £258*               |
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|            |               |
|------------|---------------|
| 28-30 June | from £264*    |
|            | 4-4-4-1 Hands |

|               |            |
|---------------|------------|
| 8-10 November | from £264* |
|               | Game Tries |

### Chatsworth Hotel

|             |                |
|-------------|----------------|
| 29-31 March | £258           |
|             | Drawing Trumps |

|             |      |
|-------------|------|
| 4-6 October | £264 |
|-------------|------|

### Elstead Hotel

|                |                              |
|----------------|------------------------------|
| 15-17 November | £264                         |
|                | Key Card Blackwood and Slams |

### Inn on the Prom

|              |                  |
|--------------|------------------|
| 1-3 February | £258             |
|              | Counting Defence |

|           |                     |
|-----------|---------------------|
| 28-30 May | £264                |
|           | Pre-Emptive Bidding |

### Olde Barn Hotel

|          |                   |
|----------|-------------------|
| 5-7 July | £264              |
|          | Supporting Minors |

|              |                                  |
|--------------|----------------------------------|
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|           |                  |
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Seminar Plus Training Event at The Chatsworth Hotel holds a £15 single supplement.

# DEFENCE QUIZ

by Julian Pottage

(Answers on page 39)

You are East in the defensive positions below playing matchpoints with both sides vulnerable.

1.

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

♠ A 10 4 3 2  
♥ A 8 5 2  
♦ Q 8  
♣ 8 4

| West     | North | East | South |
|----------|-------|------|-------|
|          |       |      | 1♣    |
| Pass     | 3♣    | Pass | 3NT   |
| All Pass |       |      |       |

Partner leads the ♥J: ♥4, ♥A and ♥Q. You return the ♥2. After taking the ♥K, declarer plays the ♣K-Q-J. Partner discards the ♠6 on the third round. What do you discard?

3.

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

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

| West     | North | East | South |
|----------|-------|------|-------|
|          |       |      | 1♣    |
| Pass     | 3♣    | Pass | 3NT   |
| All Pass |       |      |       |

Partner leads the ♥7: ♥8, ♥10 and ♥K. Declarer leads the ♣A-K-J. Partner discards the ♦2 on the third round. What is your plan?

2.

♠ K Q 4  
♥ J  
♦ J 10 8 6 5 4  
♣ K Q 4

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

| West               | North | East     | South            |
|--------------------|-------|----------|------------------|
|                    |       |          | 1NT <sup>1</sup> |
| Pass               | 3NT   | All Pass |                  |
| <sup>1</sup> 12-14 |       |          |                  |

Partner leads the ♥6, covered by the ♥J, ♥Q and ♥K. Declarer leads the ♦K-Q, partner playing low. What do you discard?

4.

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

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

| West               | North | East     | South            |
|--------------------|-------|----------|------------------|
|                    |       |          | 1NT <sup>1</sup> |
| Pass               | 3NT   | All Pass |                  |
| <sup>1</sup> 12-14 |       |          |                  |

Partner leads the ♥J, won by the ♥K. Then comes the ♦J: ♦Q, ♦A and ♦3. Next comes the ♦K: ♦6, ♦10 and ♦7. On the third round of diamonds declarer discards a club. What is your plan?

# DECLARER PLAY QUIZ



by David Huggett

(Answers on page 37)

You are South as declarer playing rubber bridge or teams. In each case what is your play strategy?

1.

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

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

You are declarer in 6♣ and West leads the ♦J. How do you plan the play?

3.

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

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

You are declarer in 4♠. West leads the ♣Q. How do you plan the play?

2.

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

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

You are declarer in 3NT and West leads the ♦8 with East following with the ♦10. How do you plan the play?

4.

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

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

You are declarer in 3NT. West leads the ♠J. How do you plan the play?



# Everything you need to know about two-suited overcalls - Part 1

In this article I consider the decisions you have to make when deciding on which two-suited overcalls you like, and the pros and cons of each system. I will look at the detail next time.

## Why do we need two suited overcalls?

When an opponent opens before you, I have already dealt with how you introduce balanced hands, single-suited hands and three-suited hands. That leaves two-suited hands. They have potential for great playing strength, far in excess of your point count. Partner often has reasonable support for one of your suits and shortage in the other, maybe a singleton. This allows you to trump losers in your second suit in dummy and set up length winners. Look at Layout A:

**Layout A**

|         |        |
|---------|--------|
| ♠ AK876 | ♠ 2    |
| ♥ KQ765 | ♥ AJ98 |
| ♦ 83    | ♦ 9752 |
| ♣ 2     | ♣ A543 |

South opens 1NT and West has to decide what to do. If he can bid 2♣ to show the majors, the partnership should find their way to 4♥, which will probably make with an overtrick. But what if West has only natural bids available? West can only pick a suit to bid, and that suit is inevitably going to be spades. Not only are his spades

stronger, but also he reasons that if he gets another chance he can rebid in hearts. This is the same reasoning as opening the higher of two touching 5-card suits as dealer. By the time you make your rebid the bidding will be more economical (ie 1♠ 1NT 2♥ is more economical than 1♥ 1NT 2♠). Unfortunately 2♠ will be passed out.

## Choice of methods

If an opponent opens with a suit bid you have three combinations of the other two suits. For example, if the opening bid is 1♦ you might have spades and clubs, spades and hearts or clubs and hearts. Ideally you would like to have three bids that are redundant to show these three combinations. Two spare bids are obvious. Over a 1♥ opening bid these are the cue bid of 2♥, and a jump to 2NT. From here the methods differ.

## Ghestem

A system like Ghestem is determined to find a third bid to use conventionally. Ghestem users use the 3♣ bid. Of course that means you don't have a natural 3♣ overcall. This is not a great loss in itself and you do have the advantage of knowing both of partner's suits immediately. Over 1♥: 2♥ shows spades and clubs (the extremes). 2NT shows the minors (the lowest suits). 3♣ shows spades and diamonds (the highest suits).

Perhaps the greatest disadvantage of Ghestem is human frailty. After a 1♥ opening bid, a jump to 3♣ does sound

natural and in practice one or other partner forgets. This gives rise to huge misunderstandings and frequent calls for the director after opponents claim misinformation. As you will have a choice of which method of two-suited overcalls to adopt I will give you an example of a hand I saw recently:

**E/W Game.**

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

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

| West              | North | East            | South |
|-------------------|-------|-----------------|-------|
|                   | 1♥    | 3♣ <sup>1</sup> | 4♥    |
| 4♠ <sup>2</sup>   | Dbl   | 5♣ <sup>3</sup> | Dbl   |
| Pass <sup>4</sup> | Pass  | Pass            |       |

<sup>1</sup> 3♣ was meant as a weak jump overcall but East was surprised to hear West alert the bid. South asked West why he was alerting and West explained that in their system East was showing diamonds and spades. This was indeed the case, but East had forgotten and after his partner's answer the knowledge is unauthorised to East. Players find it hard to understand why when partner is obliged to answer a question they are barred from using this information, but that is the law. East realised his error soon after

the alert but it was too late. He must carry on as if his partner thinks he genuinely has clubs.

<sup>2</sup> Pretty obvious if partner has spades and diamonds. From West's point of view East/West have a fit in both suits.

<sup>3</sup> East cannot do this. He must act as though his partner has freely bid 4♠, knowing East has a weak jump overcall in clubs, in which case East has an obvious pass. East should assume West has seven or eight spades, making 4♠ the right contract. His 5♣ bid was illegal, and indeed the squirms and mannerisms before he bid 5♣ are giving unauthorised information to West, that East is very unhappy with proceedings.

<sup>4</sup> By this time West has a pretty good idea that East has forgotten the system. He should work on the assumption that 5♣ is a cue bid, agreeing spades and looking for a slam. Hence his pass is also dubious.

5♣ doubled made eight tricks after a defensive error, losing 800, but still North/South were not satisfied because they knew very well that both East and West had made bids that used unauthorised information. They asked the director for a ruling and his decision was that (among other things) West should have bid 5♦ over the double of 5♣. That would be doubled and the director ruled five off, for 1400. East/West appealed and I was the referee. I upheld the director's ruling and tried to explain why to East/West. They were not listening and ended up making almost slanderous allegations against North/South for not being satisfied with 800. I have sympathy with players who don't understand the difficult principles of the laws of bridge involved here, but I am afraid that if you choose to play conventions and then forget them you are likely to cause problems for others and ultimately for yourself. You cannot argue that because you do not understand the laws they do not apply to you. If you don't like this, don't play complex conventions.

**If you play a convention, you have some responsibility to your opponents to know your system.**

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## Michaels and unusual no trump

Your right hand opponent opens 1♥. This combination only uses the 2♥ cue bid and the jump to 2NT. 2NT shows the minors (the lowest two unbid suits) and 2♥ (the Michaels cue bid) shows spades and a minor. If your opponents give you space your partner can easily find out which minor you have, but imagine your opponents pre-empt strongly as in the auction below. West, with the hand shown, has a problem.

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
|      | 1♥    | 2♥   | 4♥    |
| ?    |       |      |       |

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

West can only assume that his partner has the black suits based on his own holdings. This will certainly be the case most of the time. West passes 4♥ which becomes the final contract. East decides to lead his singleton club and declarer makes ten tricks, losing only two spade tricks and ♥Q. However West subsequently realises his partner has diamonds, indeed 5♦ is laydown. If East's two suited overcall had specifically shown spades and diamonds West would have found it easy to bid 5♦ over 4♥.

Your partnership has a choice to make: Ghestem or Michaels. Hopefully you can make this choice based on a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of each. In this series I will concentrate on Michaels cue bids and the unusual no trump.

## Weak, intermediate or strong?

A two suited overcall of a suit bid shows at least 5-5 shape. How strong should you be? At present I will look at three hands of gradually increasing strength and assume you can use your two suited overcall with any of them. In Auction F, East's 2♦ shows the

major suits. East could be weak (Hand G), intermediate (Hand H) or strong (Hand J).

| Auction F |       |      |       |
|-----------|-------|------|-------|
| West      | North | East | South |
|           | 1♦    | 2♦   | Pass  |
| 2♥        | Pass  |      |       |

| Weak<br>(6-10 points) | Intermediate<br>(11-15) | Strong<br>(16+) |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| Hand G                | Hand H                  | Hand J          |
| ♠ K J 10 8 7          | ♠ K J 10 8 7            | ♠ A K J 10 7    |
| ♥ Q 9 8 6 5           | ♥ A Q J 6 5             | ♥ A K Q 6 5     |
| ♦ 7 3                 | ♦ 7 3                   | ♦ 7 3           |
| ♣ 2                   | ♣ 2                     | ♣ 2             |

East has Hand H. Should he pass 2♥ or look for game? The problem is that East knows very little about West's hand. West hasn't supported hearts, he has merely preferred hearts to spades. He might have bid 2♥ in desperation. The layout might be as below:

| Layout K. Game All. |                                                                                       |              |  |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|--|
| ♠ 5 2               |  | ♠ K J 10 8 7 |  |
| ♥ 7 3               |                                                                                       | ♥ A Q J 6 5  |  |
| ♦ Q J 6 2           |                                                                                       | ♦ 7 3        |  |
| ♣ K J 8 6 5         |                                                                                       | ♣ 2          |  |

Certainly 2♥ is already too high, so should East pass? Not if the layout is as shown below, where 4♥ is easy:

| Layout L. Love All. |                                                                                       |              |  |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|--|
| ♠ Q 9               |  | ♠ K J 10 8 7 |  |
| ♥ K 7 4             |                                                                                       | ♥ A Q J 6 5  |  |
| ♦ A 8 6 2           |                                                                                       | ♦ 7 3        |  |
| ♣ J 7 4 3           |                                                                                       | ♣ 2          |  |

You might argue that this West has three excellent cards (♠Q, ♥K and ♦A) and should do more than bid 2♥. But imagine the West hand in Layout L opposite Hand G. 3♥ is unlikely to make. Really you cannot blame East or West. The fault is in the system.

The solution is that East only makes a two suited overcall if he is weak (6-10 points) or strong (16+ points). West assumes East has the weak hand (6-10 points) and bids accordingly. If East is strong he makes another bid. ►

Look at some examples.

Layout M should result in Auction N:

**Layout M. N/S Game.**

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



**Auction N**

| West              | North | East | South |
|-------------------|-------|------|-------|
|                   |       |      | 1♣    |
| 2♣                | Pass  | 2♥   | Pass  |
| Pass <sup>2</sup> | Pass  |      |       |

<sup>1</sup> East has a few goodies but he assumes West is weak.

<sup>2</sup> West is indeed weak and passes.

Layout P results in Auction Q:

**Layout P. E/W Game.**

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



**Auction Q**

| West            | North | East            | South |
|-----------------|-------|-----------------|-------|
|                 |       |                 | 1♣    |
| 2♣              | Pass  | 2♥              | Pass  |
| 3♥ <sup>2</sup> | Pass  | 4♥ <sup>3</sup> | Pass  |
| Pass            | Pass  |                 |       |

<sup>1</sup> East assumes West is weak.

<sup>2</sup> West is strong and bids on.

<sup>3</sup> East has easily enough for game opposite a strong Michaels.

If West bids on with a strong hand he can sometimes show extra shape. Layout R should lead to Auction S.

**Layout R. E/W Game.**

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



**Auction S**

| West            | North | East            | South |
|-----------------|-------|-----------------|-------|
|                 |       |                 | 1♣    |
| 2♣ <sup>1</sup> | Pass  | 2♥ <sup>2</sup> | Pass  |
| 2♣ <sup>3</sup> | Pass  | 4♣ <sup>4</sup> | Pass  |
| Pass            | Pass  |                 |       |

<sup>1</sup> West has only 14 points, but his

6-5 shape compensates and he treats his hand as strong.

<sup>2</sup> East assumes West is weak.

<sup>3</sup> West bids on, and in bidding 2♣ shows a sixth spade.

<sup>4</sup> East might have given preference to hearts when he thought West was showing a 5-5 shape, but if West has six spades and five hearts then spades should be trumps.

If West has intermediate strength he must start with a simple overcall. If that results in missing a fit in his other suit, sometimes opponents might help him out. Layout T might lead to Auction U.

**Layout T. Love All.**

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



**Auction U**

| West            | North | East              | South |
|-----------------|-------|-------------------|-------|
|                 |       |                   | 1♦    |
| 1♣ <sup>1</sup> | 3♦    | Pass <sup>2</sup> | Pass  |
| 3♥ <sup>3</sup> | Pass  | 4♥ <sup>4</sup>   | End   |

<sup>1</sup> Intermediate strength so unsuitable for a Michaels 2♦.

<sup>2</sup> No fit with partner.

<sup>3</sup> Glad to get a second chance.

<sup>4</sup> With three valuable honour cards and a fit with West's hearts East is worth game.

## Revisiting Ghestem and Michaels

**Auction V**

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
|      |       |      | 3♦    |
| 1♥   | 2NT   | Pass |       |
| Pass | 4♦    |      |       |

**Auction W**

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
|      |       |      | 3♦    |
| 1♥   | 3♣    | Pass |       |
| Pass | 4♦    |      |       |

In Auction V, 2NT shows the minors (Ghestem or Michaels and the UNT). In Auction W 3♣ shows diamonds and spades (Ghestem). It is worth noting that in each auction a strong North has to show his strength at the four level. Strong two suiters may have only 16 points but as I have shown they are indeed strong, as they have to be bearing in mind that partner might have no points and a misfit. Of course it is advantageous to be able to terminate the auction at the three level, which is easier playing Michaels (where the 3♣ bid is not used) than in Ghestem. That is another advantage of Michaels. ■

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# Two-suited Overcalls: Part 1 Quiz

## by Andrew Kambites

(Answers on page 41)

- 1 At love all you are playing Ghestem, weak or strong.  
What do you bid with hands A, B and C if your right hand opponent opens 1♥?

| Hand A        | Hand B        | Hand C        |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| ♠ A Q 7 6 5   | ♠ A Q J 8 7   | ♠ A Q J 8 7   |
| ♥ 2           | ♥ 2           | ♥ 2           |
| ♦ Q J 8 7 6 5 | ♦ A Q 8 6 5 4 | ♦ A K Q 8 5 4 |
| ♣ 7           | ♣ 7           | ♣ 7           |

- 2 With East/West vulnerable how should South continue with hands A, B and C after the auction shown? You are playing Ghestem weak or strong.

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 1♥   | 3♣    | Pass | ?     |

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

- 3 At love all you are playing Michaels and the unusual no trump, weak or strong. What do you bid with hands A to J if your right hand opponent opens 1♥?

| Hand A       | Hand B       | Hand C       |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| ♠ K J 10 6 5 | ♠ K J 10 6 5 | ♠ A K J 10 6 |
| ♥ 7          | ♥ 7          | ♥ 7          |
| ♦ Q J 10 7 6 | ♦ A K J 6 5  | ♦ A K J 6 5  |
| ♣ 6 2        | ♣ 6 2        | ♣ 6 2        |

| Hand D       | Hand E       | Hand F       |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| ♠ K J 10 6 5 | ♠ K J 10 6 5 | ♠ A K J 10 6 |
| ♥ 7          | ♥ 7          | ♥ 7          |
| ♦ 6 2        | ♦ 6 2        | ♦ 6 2        |
| ♣ Q J 10 7 6 | ♣ A K J 6 5  | ♣ A K J 6 5  |

| Hand G       | Hand H       | Hand J       |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| ♠ 6 2        | ♠ 6 2        | ♠ 6 2        |
| ♥ 7          | ♥ 7          | ♥ 7          |
| ♦ K J 10 6 5 | ♦ K J 10 6 5 | ♦ A K J 10 6 |
| ♣ Q J 10 7 6 | ♣ A K J 6 5  | ♣ A K J 6 5  |

- 4 With East/West vulnerable how should South continue with hands A, B and C after the auction shown? You are playing Michaels weak or strong.

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 1♦   | 2♦    | Pass | ?     |

| Hand A    | Hand B      | Hand C      |
|-----------|-------------|-------------|
| ♠ 8 5 4   | ♠ 7 4       | ♠ A Q 4     |
| ♥ K 7 5   | ♥ 5 3       | ♥ 7         |
| ♦ A K J 7 | ♦ A K J 7   | ♦ A K 7 5   |
| ♣ Q J 6   | ♣ Q J 6 5 2 | ♣ A 5 4 3 2 |

- 5 With East/West vulnerable how should North continue with hands A, B and C after the auction shown? You are playing Michaels weak or strong.

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 1♦   | 2♦    | Pass | 2♥    |
| Pass | ?     |      |       |

| Hand A       | Hand B       | Hand C         |
|--------------|--------------|----------------|
| ♠ A J 10 5 4 | ♠ A J 10 5 4 | ♠ A J 10 5 4 2 |
| ♥ A K Q 7 6  | ♥ K Q 7 6 5  | ♥ A K Q 7 6    |
| ♦ K 2        | ♦ 3 2        | ♦ 2            |
| ♣ 3          | ♣ 3          | ♣ 3            |

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# Entries

## Part One

**E**ntries. I once played a hand with Tobias Stone (1919-2012), one of the great players and personalities of all time. He did not play bridge in later life and chose to play some chess instead, winning a major tournament – and added one more laurel to an already crowded head.

Some years ago, we were playing in Juan Le Pins, in France, where we had acceptable results, if not winning results. One hand in particular stuck out.

Our opponent played in 4♠. Declarer won the opening lead, drew trumps, and went about his business. After winning the first nine tricks, he pointed to dummy which was good. Four winners. He said he was making all 13 tricks. Tobias objected since he knew that declarer could not get there. It seemed that declarer had been so busy setting up his winners that he forgot to allow for an entry to get to them. He was down one in 4♠. Since other declarers around the room were routinely making 13 tricks, with some bidding 7♠, this board was worth a complete top to us.

This article and the next seven will discuss entries. Sometimes the entry will be to dummy. But some of the time the entry will be to your hand. Regardless of where you need to be, you need to be able to get there. In many cases, you will be playing matchpoints where extra tricks count for something.

The hand below is from a teams event where making your contract is the most important thing.

Mike's website:  
michaellawrence.com

**Dealer North. Love All.**

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

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

West North East South

Pass 1♦ Pass 1♥

Pass 2♣ Pass 2NT

Pass 3NT All Pass

Dummy puts down his hand with some pride and notes that he made a very conservative rebid of 2♣. "This ought to be easy," he says after displaying his wares.

West leads the ♠4. The most common scenario is this: South spots that he has been given a free finesse and he plays the ♠J from dummy. Today, that play results in East playing the ♠Q. South wins and goes about the heart suit.

South makes a good play by felling the ♥K with the ace. He continues hearts, knocking out the ♥Q, and later plays a club toward his ♠Q. If East has the king, South will get three spades, four hearts, two diamonds, and two clubs. That adds up to eleven tricks, a fine day's work.

But something bad happens. West has the ♣K and South can't get to his hand for the hearts. South tries to set up a trick in the minors but can't do it.

Contract down.

Did North bid too much? You would be hard pressed to convince him. Or was something else at work?

There is a better line and if you have not spotted it, I will show you the complete deal.

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

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

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

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

One of the things that is often stated but often overlooked is the rule that you should count your tricks.

Here, you predict three in spades, four in hearts, two sure diamonds, and one club. This adds up to ten tricks.

The next thing you have to inspect is your entries. You can set up the four hearts by using the thoughtful overtaking play in hearts but you must keep an entry to your hand. The answer is obvious if you ask yourself what can go wrong.

Win the spade lead with the ♠K. Then play on hearts by overtaking the ♥K with the ace and continuing the suit.

Eventually, you will come to your ace of spades and you will take at least nine certain tricks.

Managing your entries was the key. ■



# Is a Weak or a Strong No-Trump Better?

**Y**ou might be aware that in the UK the majority of bridge players use a weak no-trump opening (12-14 points) while the USA, Continental Europe and indeed much of the world plays a strong no-trump (15-17 points). Are we right (and everyone else wrong) or does it not make much difference?

Let us begin by examining why the Mr Bridge house style is to use a weak no-trump. I would suggest there are two reasons for this. Firstly, the vast majority of people attending Mr Bridge events will be from the UK and by learning what is common in the UK you will be better equipped for playing in the UK. Secondly, opening minimum balanced hands with a weak-no trump makes it practical to play that all suit openings promise at least four cards in the suit opened – in other words, it facilitates a more natural system of bidding.

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

Playing a weak no-trump, you open 1NT. Playing a strong no-trump, it is normal to open a prepared bid of 1♣ because this leaves you an easy rebid of 1NT over a 1♦ or 1♠ response.

Let us now go back to the early days of the Acol system. Many people nowadays might think that a weak no-trump is an integral part of the Acol system – but in fact the original system featured a variable no-trump. The variability is a function of the vulnerability. Playing the standard

form of a variable no-trump, a 1NT opening is weak non-vulnerable and strong vulnerable.

I think that technically a variable no-trump is the best approach. When you are non-vulnerable, you do not mind going down 50 or 100 to stop the opponents from getting in the bidding – it is usually better to concede a small penalty rather than let them make a contract. Sometimes you will steal the contract in 1NT when the opponents have game on if their strength is evenly split. Vulnerable, the situation is different. If you go down anything more than 100, you would be better letting the opponents play in a part-score. Sometimes they will double 1NT (or your escape) and you will go down a lot. While losing a big penalty might not be so significant at matchpoint pairs, losing 1,100 at teams or even more so at rubber bridge can be expensive.

Why do so few people play a variable no-trump? After all, players are used to taking vulnerability into account in all sorts of other bidding areas: whether to make a simple overcall, whether to make a jump overcall, whether to sacrifice, how high to pre-empt and so forth. Probably the reason is that in those other areas the vulnerability has only a marginal effect and does not affect the basic meaning of a bid. In contrast, switching between a weak and a strong no-trump impacts other things. For a start, a 1NT rebid switches between stronger than a 1NT opening and weaker than a 1NT opening. Opening bids in the minors (or at any rate a 1♣ opening) switch between promising a four-card suit and not doing so. I do not play a variable no-trump in any of my

regular partnerships. With my two most regular partners, I play a weak no-trump with one and a strong no-trump with the other.

One question you might ask does have a straightforward answer. Will you open 1NT more often if you play a weak no-trump or if you play a strong no-trump?

Since hands in the 12-14 point range are more common than those in the 15-17 range, you can open 1NT more often playing a weak no-trump. I say 'can' rather than 'will' because if you have a good five-card major you might choose to open one of a suit rather than a weak no-trump. If you are playing a strong no-trump, you more or less have to open 1NT on all 5-3-3-2 hands or risk facing an impossible rebid.

The next question is whether it is a good idea to open 1NT as often as possible.

A 1NT opening not only makes it difficult for the opponents to enter the auction but also allows you and your partner to use your chosen system of responses. Playing transfers, the 1NT opener will often become declarer. This is a factor playing a weak no-trump and a big factor playing a strong no-trump, when the opening hand is stronger than the responding hand the vast majority of the time. Opening 1NT more often does not always gain: sometimes you will miss a 4-4 fit in a major by doing so.

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

### Weak no-trump auction

| West | East |
|------|------|
| 1NT  | Pass |

### Strong no-trump auction

| West | East |
|------|------|
| 1♣   | 1♠   |
| 2♠   | Pass |

1NT is unlikely to make, needing a 4-4 heart split and more. 2♠ is very likely to be cold.

Of course it can happen that you will miss a major-suit fit by opening a strong no-trump if partner is weak – but since partner needs fewer high cards to bid constructively in response it is less likely to happen.

In fairness I should also say that opening 1♣ and finding a fit will not necessarily gain. Let us swap the major suits.

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



Both opponents will have the chance to overcall 1♠ and, even if they do not do that, they might reopen after 1♣-Pass-1♥-Pass-2♥-Pass-Pass.

Let us summarise the advantages of the two methods:

#### Weak no-trump

- More likely to keep the opponents out of the auction
- Makes bidding as natural as possible
- Means you will be playing with the field if you are playing in mainly UK events

#### Strong no-trump

- More likely to find a 4-4 major suit fit on part-score deals
- More likely to make the strong hand declarer
- More likely to avoid conceding a big penalty
- More likely to avoid conceding 200 on a part-score deal
- Makes it easier to partner non-UK players

E-mail your questions for Julian to:  
[julianpottage@mrbridge.co.uk](mailto:julianpottage@mrbridge.co.uk)

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# Catching Up

## with Sally Brock

Two months ago I reported that the first weekend of this year's Premier League was satisfactory enough; we were lying third at the end of it. The second weekend was a complete nightmare. We lost every single match, mostly by a lot. We couldn't do a thing right and the opponents couldn't do a thing wrong. At the end of the weekend we were lying bottom by a significant margin. We were determined to do better in the third weekend – even if we finished bottom at least we could win a few matches! In the end we did pretty well. Although we were still lying in a relegation position with one match to go, it was not hopeless because we were playing the team below us, and the one above us were playing the strong Allfrey team. All we needed was to draw or lose narrowly against Rosen, and for Allfrey to beat Morris heavily – and so it came to pass, and we had avoided relegation with a few VPs to spare.

Then, I went to Malta for a few days with Briony to stay with my friend Margaret Parnis England. I must have written about her and Mario quite a lot in the past as we went to Malta most years. Mario died a couple of years ago – quite suddenly, and a big loss to Margaret, Malta and me. I hadn't been out there since the funeral so it was good to see her and we were very lucky with the weather. I played bridge twice, once with Margaret and once with Briony. Briony only feels like playing bridge every three or four years! She played seven hands and made a very good effort on all of them. The only sticky board was when we, having bid and supported diamonds, let declarer make two tricks in the suit when she had x-x facing Q-8-x. But that was

towards the end and it is hard to keep your concentration up when you are not used to it.

In the middle of November was the hugely successful women's Swiss teams at the Young Chelsea. This is the second annual event and this year there were twenty teams – roughly half from overseas. It is such a fun weekend – I would seriously recommend it for next year. Lots of thanks to Paula Leslie for organising it, and to Janet de Botton for her sponsorship. I played with Sarah Bell, Lizzie Godfrey and Gilly Clench. We never really challenged for the lead but finished in a comfortable second place. It was good fun and I really enjoyed partnering Sarah who I thought played very well. This was not one of my successes:

| Dealer East. E/W Game.                                                                        |                                                                  |                                                                               |  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| <div> <div>♠ A Q 6 4</div> <div>♥ 8</div> <div>♦ 10 6 2</div> <div>♣ K 7 5 3 2</div> </div>   |                                                                  |                                                                               |  |
| <div>♠ 8 3 2</div> <div>♥ J</div> <div>♦ A Q J 8 7 5 3</div> <div>♣ Q 9</div>                 | <div> <div>N</div> <div>W</div> <div>E</div> <div>S</div> </div> | <div>♠ K J 9 7 5</div> <div>♥ 9 6 5 3</div> <div>♦ 4</div> <div>♣ A J 6</div> |  |
| <div> <div>♠ 10</div> <div>♥ A K Q 10 7 4 2</div> <div>♦ K 9</div> <div>♣ 10 8 4</div> </div> |                                                                  |                                                                               |  |

East passed, I opened 1♥, and West's 3♦ overcall was passed round to me. It seemed to me more likely that I would be able to make 3NT than 4♥, so I bid it. West led the ♠8. As East had passed as dealer, it was unlikely that she had six spades, so that marked West with three spades, and probably seven diamonds for her vulnerable jump

overcall. So I won the ♠A and played a heart to my ten. When that lost to the (singleton) jack I didn't make another trick, finishing eight down. I'm glad we weren't vulnerable.

The following weekend was the Tollemache (inter-county teams of eight) qualifying tournament. Barry and I did not play very well but Berks & Bucks qualified despite us.

Then ... we set out on our big adventure. First we flew to New Orleans where we stayed in an Air BnB, and had a couple of full days sightseeing. I was last there in 1978! I'd like to be able to say whether or not it had changed, but I can scarcely remember. However, I thoroughly enjoyed our time there this time. It was lovely to go to a bar after dinner and listen to live music. After three nights we flew on to Honolulu where the Fall US Nationals would be taking place. Although the tournament goes on for 10 days, our plan was to combine bridge at the beginning and end with a holiday in the middle. On arrival we met up with Fiona and boyfriend Paul to stay in another Air BnB, this time in Waikiki. We met other bridge friends for Thanksgiving dinner, and then had a couple of days holiday before the bridge started ...

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# Should We Avoid 3NT With A Shaky Heart Stopper?

**Q** Can you comment on this hand please?

The North-South hands with North as dealer:

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

**N**  
**E**  
**S**  
**W**

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

6♣ makes on a finesse while 3NT failed on a heart lead. Our bidding:

| North | South |
|-------|-------|
| 1♦    | 1♠    |
| 3♣    | 3♠    |
| 3NT   | End   |

**My preference would be to hide the strong side suit, and instead of bidding 3♠, respond 5♣, but even if South rebids 3♠, should North respond 4♦ rather than 3NT?**

Geoff Simpson by email.

**A** To be honest neither player did anything daft, particularly at matchpoint scoring. The bidding up to 3NT seems quite sensible. The real debating point

is South's final pass.

At IMP scoring, South should pull 3NT to 4♣ because it does not matter much if you play in 5♣ just making while others are making an overtrick in 3NT. By repeating the spades before supporting clubs, South has correctly conveyed the impression of good spades and weak clubs.

Maybe South should bid 4♣ over 3NT even at matchpoint scoring because (i) entries to the long spade suit will be a problem in 3NT and (ii) unless North has three good hearts, the heart weakness could be an issue in 3NT:

| North | South |
|-------|-------|
| 1♦    | 1♠    |
| 3♣    | 3♠    |
| 3NT   | 4♣    |
| 4♦    | 4♥    |
| 6♣    |       |

South's heart cuebid allows North to bid on in clubs.

♣♦♥♠

**Q** I wondered if you could elaborate on continuations by partner over a protective 1NT in 4th seat?

**I normally play 'systems on' ie at least 2♣ Stayman, and red suit transfers.**

**A colleague has suggested that the norm is to cue-bid the opener's suit for**

**Stayman, other bids natural non-forcing and a jump rebid natural 1-round force.**

**I must admit that if the opposition open 1♦, I cannot see any advantage to the cue-bid approach, because if I don't have a 4-card major, I am now bidding at the 3-level with 3♦.**

**Maybe the idea is partner is protecting, expecting me to have the 'better hand', so if I happen to bid naturally rather than transfer, then the lead comes around to me through opener.** Name and address supplied.

**A** If you play a reasonably narrow range for a protective 1NT, it is reasonable to play the same continuations as you would after a second seat 1NT overall or a 1NT opening – Stayman and transfers. While some bids are redundant (like transferring into a major in which an opponent has shown five, if they play five-card majors), this has the merit of simplicity. Playing transfers has the advantage of putting the opening bidder on lead rather than giving the weak opponent the chance to lead through the 1NT bidder.

♣♦♥♠

**Q** I would value your opinion on the following:

**Game All.**

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

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
|      | 1♦    | 1♥   | Dbl   |
|      |       |      | ?     |

**What is the best bid? 2♥, 3♥, or 4♥ or 2♦ UCB? I bid the last of these. Opponents got to 4♠, which just makes, but partner with ♥A-K, two jacks and no singleton, bid 5♥ which went for 800. He was critical of my bid, and I of his second bid.**

**Your thoughts, please.** Chris Bickerdike by email.

**A** With 5-card support and 8 points I would not recommend a 2♦ cue bid to show a value raise. Partner will expect more high cards and fewer hearts. Even if you play 2NT as showing a sound 4-card value raise, which I suspect you do not, the hand is not perfect for anything. Non-vulnerable I would bid 4♥. Vulnerable 3♥ is enough – plus even for a pre-emptive raise partner will play you for some values when you are vulnerable.

So far as partner's 5♥ bid goes, this was, to put it politely, highly unwise. I am not sure whether you have heard of the law of

total tricks. There will be an article on it sometime in 2019. In short if both sides have an 8-card fit (I realise you had a 10-card fit but partner did not know that) then there will be 16 tricks available in your respective contracts. In other words, if 4♠ is making (10 tricks their way) then only 6 tricks are available in 5♥, meaning a 1400 penalty in 5♥ doubled.

The fact that bidding 5♥ was wrong, even when your heart support was far better than you had promised, speaks for itself.



**Q** Partner opens 2♦ (Acol, 8 or 9 playing tricks). You hold:

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

**What should you bid?**

Name and address supplied.

**A** With only 4 HCP you need to give a negative response, 2NT. I must admit I cannot remember the last time I came across anyone who plays an Acol 2♦.



**Q** I would much appreciate your guidance on this hand. I was West:

**Dealer West. E/W Game.**

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

**The bidding started:**

**West North East South**  
Pass<sup>1</sup> Pass 1♣ Pass  
2♥ All Pass

<sup>1</sup> I would have much preferred to have bid 2♥ (weak two) but my partner does not play weak twos

**I decided, having passed with 8/10 points depending on the view of the doubleton ♦Q, that 1♥ which is non-forcing and showing as little as 6 points and a four card suit would be inadequate and bid 2♥. Rightly or wrongly, I assumed if having previously passed that when you responded to partner's opening bid you must then bid your hand to its maximum value. My partner did not understand the bid and things went awry thereafter. Playing Acol, is my assumption correct or does this have to be a partnership agreement?**

**The top couple bid and made 4♥ even though East had a singleton heart, we were runners up.**  
Name and address supplied.

**A** The Acol textbooks that I have seen all say that a jump shift by a passed hand shows the suit you bid and support for partner, a 'fit-showing jump'. With six hearts and three clubs you were not far away from having that (five of your suit and four of partner's being the expected lengths), although it seems you did not intend the bid to suggest some club support.

While you are right that a non-jump change-of-suit by a passed hand is not forcing, partner will not pass a 1♥ response very often. Passing a 1♥ response indicates a minimum or sub-minimum opening. Facing such a hand, you are unlikely to be missing an easy game.

Were it not for the fact

that you are vulnerable and that the unsupported honours do not pull full weight, I would suggest a 1♥ opening on the hand.

Weak twos come up a lot more often than strong twos and you are welcome to tell your partner that both Bernard and I recommend playing weak twos.



**Q** Playing Acol, after partner has passed, what do you think you should open with this hand?

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

Peter Calviou by email.

**A** This is a tricky choice. If you open 1♥, you might never catch up. If you open 2♣, you might not get to show all your suits. With such fabulous controls I do not think I could bring myself to open 1♥, so 2♣ it is.



**Q** My husband (North, the dealer) and I had these hands:

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



♠ K J 8 3  
♥ Void  
♦ A K 7 3  
♣ A K Q 7 3

**North opened 1NT, 12-14 points.**

**With 20 points as responder I bid 3♣ to encourage knowing we should be at least in game. Much chat and we ended up in 5 clubs ....but I made a grand slam. Should I have bid Stayman?**

Diana Walters,  
Bakewell, Derbyshire.

**A** Whenever I am playing a weak no trump, I play a 2♣ range enquiry, which responder can use either on hands wishing to invite with 2NT but without a 4-card major or on hands interested in a slam that are not single suited.

My partner and I might therefore bid:

| North            | South           |
|------------------|-----------------|
| 1NT              | 2♣ <sup>1</sup> |
| 2NT <sup>2</sup> | 3♣ <sup>3</sup> |
| 3♥ <sup>4</sup>  | 3♠              |
| 3NT              | 6♣ <sup>5</sup> |

<sup>1</sup> Range enquiry

<sup>2</sup> Minimum

<sup>3</sup> Natural, slam try

<sup>4</sup> Natural, showing four or more hearts, denying four diamonds  
<sup>5</sup> If opener does not have four diamonds or four spades, she is likely to have some club support.

If you do not play 2♣ as I do, responder starts with Stayman and continues with 3♣. In the old days that was an attempt to sign off but in the modern style it is better to play it as forcing. Opener could then bid 3♥ to show the fifth heart and responder continues with 3♠. You will reach a similar situation as in my example sequence. ■

**E-mail your bridge questions for Julian to:**  
**julianpottage@mrbridge.co.uk**



# BERNARD MAGEE TUTORIAL DVDS

## SET 7

### 37 MORE SIGNALLING

Bernard looks at different times when you signal and the messages you might want to give.

### 38 4-4-4-1 HANDS

Everybody's least favourite type of opening hand. Bernard goes through the methods for choosing the right suit to open as well as coping with responses.

### 39 DRAWING TRUMPS

This seminar sounds straightforward, but we will not be simply drawing trumps, we will be considering the reasons for delaying. Keeping control of trumps is an important part of declarer play.

### 40 FIVE-CARD MAJORS

Popular around the world, this method is becoming more popular here.

### 41 FUNDAMENTALS OF DEFENCE

Defence is by far the hardest aspect of bridge: this seminar seeks to show the building blocks that can start you off on a wonderful journey. If you can get the basics right then the more complicated aspects of defence can follow.

### 42 SUPPORTING MINORS

Minors are not as important as majors, but we have to bid them and it is important to know your system. Bidding more 3NT contracts will get you better scores, but being able to spot a minor suit slam will put you a cut above.

£25 per DVD or £105 for the set of six

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## Bernard Magee DVDs – Number Twenty Six

# Landy and Defence to 1NT

This DVD deals with how to defend against a 1NT opening and of course the first thing to discuss is doubling: how much strength do you need to double for penalties?

16 points is ample, but a 'good' 15 should qualify as well. Basically you want to be stronger than a weak no-trump opening, but remember that if you are on lead, you would like to have a sensible card to play. There is nothing worse than doubling with 15 points and then not knowing what to lead – that often results in -180 for 1NT doubled and making.

When I ask the question 'how strong do you need to be to overcall an opposing 1NT?' many players will respond with quite high point counts, but this is not the case in the modern game. Duplicate bridge has changed things as -50 can be a great score, better than 1NT made by your opponents or any partscore for that matter. Once you understand that you do not have to aim to make your contract, you will feel able to be bolder in the bidding. Furthermore the disruption caused by overcalling is worth considering too. Most players have a full system of responses to 1NT (eg Stayman & transfers) but as soon as you overcall their system vanishes and complications ensue.

Take this hand:

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

You are West after South opens 1NT and it is your call at Love all (neither side vulnerable).

2♠ makes sense – a six-card suit is a requirement for a weaker overcall sitting over the 1NT bidder, but when non-vulnerable with a robust suit, you do not need so many high card points. Note that the ♠10 is a valuable card – solidifying the suit and allowing you to cope more easily with a bad fit or a bad break.

This is North's hand:

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

What does he bid over 2♠?

He would have called Stayman without your overcall, but now he is a bit stuck: he has no spade stopper, but at least 2NT shows his strength, but it does not show his four hearts. I like a double to be for penalties, but even if you use it for take-out and do that, what do you do over a 3♣ response? There is no call that fits your hand and yet all West did was make a simple overcall. Seeing the level of disruption an overcall can cause should prompt you to overcall more.

When teaching conventions I aim for a balance between simplicity and usefulness. Landy just about fits the bill: an overcall of 2♣ over 1NT to show the majors.

Later in the DVD I discuss the relative merits of other defences, but constantly the theme revolves

about how complicated do you want your methods to be. All conventions work well without interference, but since one opponent has already bid it will be no surprise to hear the other one bid and things can get difficult. With Landy, because the two suits are defined (hearts and spades) the complications are fewer. I cover the types of hand required for Landy, both the strengths and suit lengths.

What about when the auction starts 1NT-Pass-Pass-? Once again the vulnerability is Love All:

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

The situation is very different now: your opponents have limited their strength because the partner of the 1NT bidder has passed (fewer than 11 points). Perhaps more importantly, you are not on lead: with a spade lead against 1NT you might harbour hopes of defeating the contract, but unless your partner can see through the backs of the cards he is likely to lead one of the other suits. Bearing all this in mind you might bid 2♠, hopeful of making, but not minding -50, since without a spade lead, 1NT is likely to make.

Finally we move on to the extended auction and how you can use doubles of artificial bids to help you. When your opponents use Stayman or transfers they give you a free option: you are able to double their artificial bids to show length/strength in the bid suit. This can help you to compete for a partscore deal or be lead-directing and allow the partnership to find the best start to the defence. An even longer auction can offer up the chance for a delayed take-out double. Generally I teach that once no-trumps are in an auction doubles are for penalties, but after a passed out transfer, the situation is different:

### Books on bridge

Gordon Bickley ☎ 07530553594  
or email [gordonarf@aol.com](mailto:gordonarf@aol.com)

#### Dealer North. Love All.

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
|      | 1NT   | Pass | 2♦    |
| Pass | 2♥    | Pass | Pass  |
| ?    |       |      |       |

South has shown a weak hand with long hearts, so the situation is rather like a weak two opening when you will often want to compete by using a take-out double. As the last bidder West needs to strive to make a call, particularly when he is short in hearts.

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

You have only nine high card points, but your opponents are limited by their failure to go for game, so you can rely on your partner for some strength (borrow a king from him to bolster your confidence). Your hand is ideal for a take-out double. Remember that your ambition is not even always to make the contract you bid to: -50 may be just as good. Here is the full layout:

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

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

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

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

East would respond 2♠ to your take-out double and you have found a great contract. Both 2♥ and 2♠ are likely to make, so you get +110 instead of -110.

Auctions that start with 1NT are very common on this side of the Atlantic because of the prevalence of the weak no-trump. It is important to get better at competing during these auctions because there are many matchpoints to be won. Bid more is the simple answer. ■

## BERNARD MAGEE TUTORIAL DVDS



### SET 8

#### 43 TEAMS OF FOUR

This form of the game is the most common at international level and is great fun to play at club level and even in the home. I will discuss the basic format and then look at the tactics you might use in the bidding and play.

#### 44 GAME TRIES

When your partner raises your suit to the two-level, you have a variety of options available to you, in order to find out whether game is a sensible option. I will talk about major suit game tries to find better games and minor suit game tries, when you consider the option of a no-trump contract.

#### 45 DISRUPTING DECLARER

A defender needs to try and predict what declarer might want to do. Your job is then to disrupt declarer's plan. Stop him ruffing, stop him establishing suits and generally try to put him off, by using only your cards, of course.

#### 46 DEFENDING SLAMS

Making the right plays against slams can make a huge difference. Knowing when to attack and when to lie low: should you lead an ace or not? We will not just consider slam contracts, but also other high level contracts in competitive auctions.

#### 47 OVERCALLING

Duplicate bridge is so much more competitive now and it is important you are part of this. Knowing the reasons for overcalling and understanding them will allow you to compete more and at the right time.

#### 48 PRESSING THE DEFENCE

As declarer there are ways you can make life more awkward for the defenders, particularly by disguising holdings in your hand for a little longer. I will be exploring a number of tactics that will help you to exploit the defenders, including the dreaded squeeze.

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# Suit Preference Signals

## Part 2

Last month we started looking at the suit preference signal, a simple way for partner to give you an idea of what suit he wanted you to play. The situations we started looking at were ones where you were giving partner a ruff and you could indicate what suit you wanted him to play once he had ruffed.

The general idea was:

- ~ A low pip card for partner to ruff asked for a lower ranking suit
- ~ A high pip card for partner to ruff asked for a higher ranking suit

This worked very well when giving a ruff as there were only two suits left, partner being void of one of the 4 and the other one was trumps.

This month we will look at the situation where you hold the lead at trick one and then have to decide what suit to switch to.

South is declarer in 4♥ and we as West are on lead with this hand:

♠ A K 8 2  
♥ 7 6 2  
♦ 8 7 3  
♣ 8 7 3

This has been the auction:

| West | North | East     | South |
|------|-------|----------|-------|
| Pass | 4♥    | All Pass | 1♥    |

An easy decision to start with and we duly lead the top card in our sequence and survey this dummy:

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

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

N  
W E  
S

What should we play at trick two?

The answer lies in which card partner plays at trick one. There is little point in him giving us an attitude or count signal as his holding in spades is no longer relevant; what we need to know is which of the side suits should we switch to.

When a top card is led (against a suit contract) and a singleton hits in the dummy, partner's signal is suit preference – if he wants a switch to the higher ranking side suit he plays a high pip, if he wants a switch to the lower ranking side suit he plays a low pip.

In each case trumps are excluded, as is the suit you led originally.

Let's go back to the example hand, partner follows with ♠9 and declarer with the ♠7. Partner's 9 is surely a high pip card (if it was his lowest from J-10-9 that would leave declarer with a concealed 5-card suit) so he is asking for a higher ranking suit which can only be diamonds (the choice is between diamonds and clubs).

From our holding in diamonds we switch to the same card we would have led at trick one, the middle from 3 small cards (Middle Up Down = MUD) and we see what happens....

this might be the full deal:

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

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

N  
W E  
S

♠ J 9 5 3 2  
♥ Void  
♦ A Q 10 2  
♣ 10 6 5 2

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

Partner will win the diamond switch as cheaply as possible, (beating the 9 with the ten, the jack with the queen or the king with the ace) and exit safely with a club. Declarer is welcome to draw the trumps and mess around with the spades. At some point he must play another diamond and partner will make 3 tricks to beat the contract by one.

What will happen if we don't switch to a diamond at trick two?

Let's imagine we play a trump, not wanting to guess which suit to play. Declarer will win in hand and ruff a spade, come back to his hand in trumps and ruff another spade and then draw the last trump. Before he takes a diamond finesse he will take the precaution of cashing his three top clubs, and when he plays a diamond to dummy partner will win and have to give him a tenth trick with whatever he plays back.

It takes a precise defence of a diamond at trick two to save partner

from the endplay – thank goodness for suit preference signals.

Of course the funny thing was when we switched to a diamond we didn't know what partner held in the suit, and we didn't know why, all we knew was to trust our partner and follow his defence.

The next example hand sees a similar situation, but this time we must fight our natural instincts as partner shows us what to do. Once again, a straight forward auction:

| West     | North | East | South |
|----------|-------|------|-------|
|          |       |      | 1♠    |
| Pass     | 3♠    | Pass | 4♠    |
| All Pass |       |      |       |

And our hand gives us no opening lead problem at all:

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

We start with a top heart and once more survey this dummy:

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

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

The first trick goes A, 9, 10, 4 – what now?

Looking at the dummy a club switch is very tempting as we only need to find partner with the queen or the ace for this to work. It might be vital for us to do this before declarer can get the diamonds going, for example declarer might hold the ♦J and the ♣A, in which case a club switch would be vital.

However, we must remember that our partner knows what he is doing, and he knows more about the situation than we do. His choice of the ♥10 is clearly a high card so he is asking for

the higher ranking of the other two suits, a diamond.

If he just had the ace and weakness he might have chosen a more subtle approach (playing the ♥7), so we should do our duty and switch to the ♦7, the clubs can wait. Surprisingly when we play the ♦7 declarer wins with the ace, and in the fullness of time....goes one down. This is the full deal:

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

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

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

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

When partner wins his ace of trumps he will be sure to switch to the ♣10 and declarer has no recourse. If he tries the queen then we can win the king and safely get off lead with a trump and wait for our second club trick to sink the ship.

Had we switched to the “obvious” small club that would let the contract through with no second chance. Declarer would win the queen, play a trump and lose only a club, a heart and a spade.

On this occasion a trump switch would also have beaten the contract, and so would a heart, but partner, looking at the ♦J-9, was guiding us in the right direction with his carefully chosen card.

The general rule is this: When an ace is led against a suit contract and dummy hits with a singleton then partner's card is suit preference; a high card asking for the higher ranking suit, a low card asking for the lower ranking suit.

If partner has a positive idea either way about what suit he wants he should tell us as clearly as possible; like all good defences it involves the two members of the partnership working in co-operation together. ■

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# READERS' LETTERS

## AU NATUREL

Several recent correspondents to BRIDGE have been afraid that they wouldn't be able to cope with the game nowadays because of modern bidding systems. Don't be afraid. If you play the cards well and use a sound natural bidding system like Acol, you can hold your own in almost any club.

I play at different clubs with a range of different partners, using anything from a quite basic Acol to fairly complex systems, and can get good results with all of them. Conventions are just the icing on the cake. If opponents do something you're not familiar with, don't worry – just carry on playing your natural game. They have to explain their bids if you ask, and you may get useful extra information about their hands as a result. Complex systems can also go wrong and give you a top.

In the last 50 years or so, I would say that there have been only 3 major advances over traditional Acol – weak twos (or Benji), negative doubles and unassuming cue bids. They are all helpful, but you can still do without them. Weak twos are useful because they let you bid more hands, they get in the way of opponents and are quite easy to learn. Even transfers, which are very popular, give only marginal gains and some losses compared with simple weak take-outs.

Some of the answers to

bidding queries in BRIDGE are a bit esoteric, and there are a few hands where clever gadgets may do better, but 95% of the time you are fine with Acol. Several of Ian Dalziel's articles in past issues show this nicely. It's better to play a simple system well than a complex one badly.

**Ian Kemp,  
Ware, Hertfordshire.**

## ANY IDEAS?

I have watched a few of your excellent DVDs on various subjects. They are very helpful but there is one thing about them that I find very difficult to handle.

That is that the camera NEVER stays long enough on the cards or the set-up of the cards being discussed. While I am trying to get a grip of the situation the camera moves to Bernard or to the audience who in fact are staring hard at the card display. They are not looking at Bernard. They are listening intently to him but they are looking intently at the card display. I find myself saying "go back to the card display" instead of scanning the audience or looking at Bernard, much as I like him.

The information being given is so complicated that it needs the visual clues as well as the spoken ones all the time. I hope that you can appreciate my suggestion in the spirit in which it is given.

**Kathleen Parkinson  
by email.**

## STAMP NEWS

There has been a lot in the press over the last few days on stamps and charities. *The Times* on 1 December had an article headlined 'Stamps sent to charities fund criminal gangs' and I've had one or two anxious members of my bridge club voicing their concern as they save their stamps for me all year round. Let me put their minds at rest.

The misdemeanours would seem to be where people donate their stamps direct to charities, who then offer bulk parcels of stamps on sites like ebay and the purchasers have found ways of stripping the post marks from the stamps. They've found a chemical that removes the franking marks.

The stamps that people donate to me are never offered for sale on ebay or any similar site, I'm very fortunate to have a very genuine and sincere stamp dealer who buys the stamps by the kilo (kiloware). I get a better price for foreign as these he sells to collectors all over the world, the GB stamps he sells on to a lady who makes very colourful collages with them.

I only offer this material to my one dealer friend who I know will pay a fair price.

It is particularly unfortunate that these stories have made the headlines in newspapers at this time of year, which is the only time that most of us receive any quantity of stamps in our mail. I do hope that the people who subscribe to your magazine will not be deterred by these newspaper stories and will accept our assurance that Little Voice are the only beneficiaries of their wonderful efforts.

**Malcolm Finebaum  
by email.**

## TRY THESE GENTLE DUPLICATES

A couple of months ago in the editorial of your magazine I believe that you requested details of any 'Gentle Duplicate' Bridge Clubs. Over the past few weeks I have been able to set up a couple:

Freshwater Gentle Duplicate Bridge Club  
Wesley Hall  
Freshwater Methodist Church  
Brookside Road  
Freshwater  
Isle of Wight  
PO40 9ER  
Freshwater Gentle Duplicate meets every second Tuesday of the month, 6.30pm to 9.00pm, ie January 8th; February 12th; March 12th.  
Table Money £2.50 to include tea/coffee and biscuits.  
Host available.  
Free parking nearby.

Young Chelsea Bridge Club (Gentle Duplicate section)  
54 Goldhawk Road  
Shepherd's Bush  
London  
W12 8HA  
(Near Goldhawk underground station – to the rear of Sainsbury's Local)  
Young Chelsea Gentle Duplicate meets every second Sunday of the month, 2.00pm to 5.00pm, ie January 13th; February 10th; March 10th.  
Included in the session is a short presentation, normally on card play technique.  
Table Money £5.00 to include tea/coffee and biscuits.  
Host available.

For further information on either club, please contact Philip Watson  
☎ 0771-210-8645 or email [philipwatson1@btinternet.com](mailto:philipwatson1@btinternet.com)  
**Philip Watson by email.** ■

# Sally's Slam Clinic

## Where did we go wrong?

This month's deal was sent in by Stuart Watson from Scunthorpe Bridge Club:

Love All.

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

Diagram: A diamond shape with 'N' at the top, 'E' at the right, 'S' at the bottom, and 'W' at the left.

Apparently there were problems at most tables, stemming from the fact that West seemed to think he had to bid what he thought he might be able to make without getting any useful information from his partner. At most tables, after 2♣ – 2♦, most Wests bid the final contract: 3NT or 6NT. Stuart asked me if there was any merit in allowing East to respond 2♠ in the first place with such a distributional collection. I am not sure that is such a good idea, but I found myself wondering what was wrong with West simply bidding his long suit. 2♣ is forcing to game, so partner can't pass. Then it would not seem unreasonable for the whole auction to be:

| West | East |
|------|------|
| 2♣   | 2♦   |
| 3♦   | 3♠   |
| 6♣   |      |

Or those of a more optimistic nature might take a shot at the grand slam.

## Slam of the month

Today's deal is simply an example of exuberant enthusiastic bidding that got lucky. And why not? If you always think the worst will happen, then it probably will!

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

Diagram: A diamond shape with 'N' at the top, 'E' at the right, 'S' at the bottom, and 'W' at the left.

Helena Park, who picked up the West hand, playing rubber bridge, opened 2♣ (Benji), and her partner responded 2♦ and raised her 2♠ rebid to 3♠. Helena jumped straight to 6♣ and was lucky with the dummy. Her partner thought she should have asked for aces, but it is not clear to me what help that would have been. Yes, she was risking going minus when she might have gone plus, but 'she who dares wins'.

Tournament players these days have a convention in their armoury which would work well on this deal. It is called Exclusion Blackwood. Using this convention, after 3♠, West would have bid 5♣. This jump in a new suit is not needed as natural, or even a cue-bid, but is used to ask partner how many aces they hold OUTSIDE the suit bid. So here, over 5♣, East would have admitted to an ace and the slam would be bid accurately. ■

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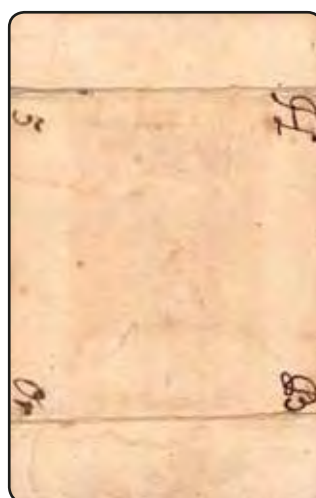


## Playing Cards Re-purposed

A high proportion of very old playing cards owe their survival to the fact that someone somewhere found another use for them. Fortunately, it also turns out that some of the uses are often of interest and the date of the secondary use is often known, along with a location, even if the details are not known for the original card.

Early in their history, makers of playing-cards would have been the only regular users of cardboard. At this time, they had entirely plain unprinted backs. It is therefore quite common to find playing cards that have been used for making library catalogues, for example (the British Library has an example).

Cards regularly found jobs to perform in the household. A particularly interesting pack is one showing a jack of clubs bearing the name of C Hewson. The cards are from around 1685 and when no longer fit for play they were



English Jack of Clubs by "C Hewson" c 1685 (see text). The backs show the owner's initials. A different set from around 1750, still holding threads, is also illustrated.

used for keeping different coloured threads. There are no whole packs of English cards as old as this, so the survival of almost half is a great find. The British Museum has some proof sheets marked with the same name and the US playing card collection has a similar example. This is quite a mystery, as there was no known card-maker named Hewson. There was however a John Hewson, a prominent Cromwell supporter and one of the named regicides of King Charles I. He was disliked in the heavily Royalist City of London and nicknamed 'Cobbler Hewson'. Was this portrayal as a card-maker a joke at his expense?

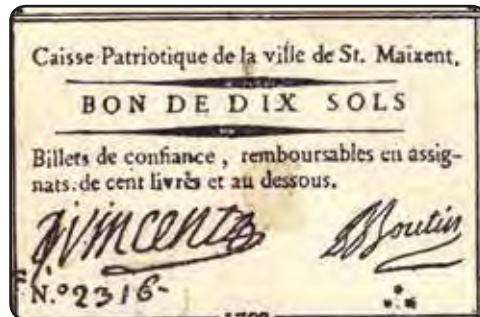
The next item is a single card – another named Jack of Clubs by Nicolas Benieres (a known French cardmaker). This is also late 17th century. The reverse is a print taken from both sides of a coin and it shows a date 1717. At this time, moneylenders were operating in many European centres, and this card was part of their trade. Rather than taking the risk of carrying their money around, they wet a card, folded it in half and imprinted both sides of the coin to show what they had in stock.

The next set show a series of uses in Northern France around the late 18th to early 19th centuries. These show the most obvious uses: in the images below, we see a visiting card for the Count of Rodoan (no date), a funeral notice 'May 1812 at Havre' – probably Le Havre), a promotion for thread seller Loisel "by the big clock in Rouen" (no date) and paper money for St. Maixent (French town, 1792).



Card by Benieres, Rouen, c 1680, with a secondary use for moneylending c 1717.

Invitations to various events, announcements and advertisements were common uses. Our last example is artistic. The shortage of purpose-made card meant that artists would have been natural buyers of clean old cards.



The usefulness of plain card! A visiting card, a funeral note, an advertising notice and paper money. The additional use often provides a location and/or a date.

The leading authority on secondary uses is Gejus van Diggele, and he has a card in his collection with another landscape drawing that is certainly by the same person as that shown below. His card is annotated 'S W Fares, 1808, Piccadilly' but it is not known if the artist or a later owner added this. Fares was a publisher of satirical books and prints and an occasional artist. The face of the card is a conventional jack of spades and looks some time earlier – perhaps from the 1760s or so.



Landscape pen-and-ink drawing attributed to S W Fares, 1808, on the plain reverse of an earlier card.



The author is a Court Assistant in the Worshipful Company of Makers of Playing Cards – see [www.makersofplayingcards.co.uk](http://www.makersofplayingcards.co.uk). Many more sets of cards are illustrated on the author's website [www.plainbacks.com](http://www.plainbacks.com)

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# The Big Charity Match

Robin Hood beckoned Nazir away from the outlaws' current camp site. 'I have received the strangest of missives,' he informed him. 'An elderly couple, living some 10 miles from here, have no relatives to inherit their considerable wealth. They are minded to donate a large portion of their fortune to the poor of Nottingham - a large sum now, and the remainder on their deaths. They wish us to distribute the money on their behalf.'

'Allah be praised!' Nazir exclaimed. 'Times have been hard since the bad harvest. We haven't been able to help as much as usual.'

'There is only one condition attached,' continued Robin Hood. 'Rather than just give us the money, they wish to play a high-stake bridge game against me and a partner of my choosing. They have no pretence to be good players. It would just be their way of making a substantial donation and enjoying themselves at the same time.'

'I shall be so happy to participate,' the Saracen replied. 'We should arrange it as soon as possible, you think?'

'Already done,' said Hood. 'Tomorrow at midday is the appointed time.'

The following day the two outlaws

took their seats in a well-heated chamber of the substantial property owned by Samuel and Esther Roake. Approaching ninety years old, the couple had a commendable sparkle in their eyes. They were looking forward to the encounter immensely, and the stakes had been set at five golden guineas a 100. Even in London Town, it was unlikely that such a high-stake game had ever been played.

'We are much indebted to you,' declared Samuel Roake. 'Esther and I will carry to our death beds the memory of playing against you.'

'You have a good few years in front of you,' Robin Hood replied. 'I'm sure of that.'

This was an early deal:

| Dealer North. Love All. |  |  |               |
|-------------------------|--|--|---------------|
| ♠ A K 5                 |  |  |               |
| ♥ A 7 4 3               |  |  |               |
| ♦ 10 3                  |  |  |               |
| ♣ A K J 3               |  |  |               |
| ♠ J 10 9 8 7 3          |  |  | ♠ Q 6         |
| ♥ K J 5                 |  |  | ♥ 10 8        |
| ♦ A 6                   |  |  | ♦ K Q J 7 5 2 |
| ♣ 8 2                   |  |  | ♣ 9 6 5       |
|                         |  |  |               |
| ♠ 4 2                   |  |  |               |
| ♥ Q 9 6 2               |  |  |               |
| ♦ 9 8 4                 |  |  |               |
| ♣ Q 10 7 4              |  |  |               |

| West            | North | East            | South         |
|-----------------|-------|-----------------|---------------|
| Samuel<br>Roake | Nazir | Esther<br>Roake | Robin<br>Hood |
|                 | 1♣    | 2♦              | Pass          |
| Pass            | Dbl   | Pass            | 2♥            |
| Pass            | 3♥    | Pass            | 4♥            |
| All Pass        |       |                 |               |

Samuel Roake, whose remaining white hair encircled the back of his head, led the ♦A against the heart game.

'You play Feeble Jump Overcalls?' Hood queried.

'We never used to,' Esther Roake replied. 'At our age, though, you need a bit of fun.'

When two more rounds of diamonds were played, West discarded a club. Hood ruffed in the dummy and paused to consider his prospects. He needed to escape for just one loser in the trump suit and the bidding rather suggested that West would hold the king of hearts. What could be done? It seemed best to lead the ♥4 from dummy. East would probably play the king if she held it. Otherwise he could play low from his hand and hope that dummy's ace would drop the king on the second round.

When a low trump was led from dummy, Esther Roake showed no sign of considering whether to play the king. She followed smoothly with the ♥8. Another line of play had now



become possible – one that would succeed if East had begun with ♥J-8 or ♥10-8. Robin Hood covered with the ♥9 and West won with the ♥J.

The ♠J switch was taken in the dummy and Hood crossed to his hand with the ♣10. He then led the ♥Q. West covered with the king, won with dummy's ace, and the ♥10 fell from East. Dummy's ♥7 drew West's ♥5, and declarer had his ten tricks.

'Did you see that, my love?' Samuel Roake exclaimed. 'My king-jack-5 was over his queen and he still managed to make the contract. What wonderful play!'

His wife nodded enthusiastically. 'We never saw play like that when our neighbours, Bayard and Albreda, were still with us,' she replied. 'I'm going to really enjoy this game!'

A couple of deals later, Hood had a chance to win the first rubber:

**Dealer South. N/S Game.**

♠ 8  
♥ 6 5 2  
♦ AK 8 7 5 3  
♣ A 6 5

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

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

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

| West            | North | East            | South         |
|-----------------|-------|-----------------|---------------|
| Samuel<br>Roake | Nazir | Esther<br>Roake | Robin<br>Hood |
| Pass            | 2♦    | Pass            | 2♥            |
| Pass            | 3♦    | Pass            | 3NT           |
| All Pass        |       |                 |               |

Samuel Roake never liked to lead a suit that had been bid against him. Perhaps Esther would have something good in clubs. He reached for the ♣10 and Robin Hood won with the king.

Seven top tricks were on view and it seemed that he might need a 3-3 diamond break to make the game. Was any extra chance available? Ah, yes there was.

Robin Hood led the queen of

diamonds at trick two and overtook with dummy's ace. A gleam came to his eye when the ♦9 appeared from East. He continued with the king of diamonds, East producing the jack.

'A lucky one for us,' declared Robin Hood, as he next played dummy's ♦8. Samuel Roake won with the ♦10 and spent a while looking for some chance to beat the contract.

'The game is safe now,' said Robin Hood, displaying his cards. 'A spade is best for you but I have nine tricks.'

'If Robin and Nazir had held our cards, I think they would have beaten it,' said Esther Roake. 'They would lead a spade from your hand, my love, and we would make two spades and three hearts.'

'Lead a spade, my dearest?' exclaimed Roake. 'Robin opened the bidding in spades.'

'I know,' replied his wife. 'Still, a club lead wasn't going to be much good. He must have good clubs to bid 3NT.'

The second rubber had reached game all, as the players picked up these cards:

**Dealer East. Game All.**

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

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

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

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

| West            | North | East            | South         |
|-----------------|-------|-----------------|---------------|
| Samuel<br>Roake | Nazir | Esther<br>Roake | Robin<br>Hood |
| Pass            | 2♥    | Pass            | 1NT           |
| Pass            | 4♠    | Dbf             | 2♠            |
|                 |       | All Pass        |               |

When Nazir responded 2♥, Robin Hood leaned forward. 'That's a special bid,' he explained. 'It was conceived by Father Jacob from the Beeston Priory. It shows five spades and allows me to become declarer in a spade contract.'

'There's no need for that, surely?'

queried Esther Roake. 'Your partner plays the cards very well, from what I've heard.'

'He does, yes,' Hood replied. 'The idea is that the 1NT opener will hold more high cards, It's known as a Jacob Transfer Bid.'

'Well, I'm going to double, anyway,' declared Esther Roake. 'To let my partner know that I have good hearts.'

Robin Hood soon arrived in 4♠ and West led the ♥4. His wife won with the ♥10 and continued with two more top hearts, forcing the dummy to ruff.

Hood played the ace and king of trumps, surprised to find that East had started with four cards in the suit. That was awkward. If he drew all the trumps, the blockage in the club suit would put him one down.

If clubs divided 3-3, he could play the ♣A-K-Q before drawing any more trumps and then return to dummy with the ♠Q. Still, an even club break was surely a pipe dream when East had shown 4-5 shape in the majors.

Robin Hood soon spotted a better chance. He drew East's remaining trumps and discarded the ace of diamonds from his hand.

'Have it back, have it back!' cried Samuel Roake. 'Surely you didn't intend to do that?'

Declining the kind offer, Hood played the three top clubs from his hand. He then led the ♦10. Roake won with the diamond king and had to surrender the last two tricks to the ♦Q and ♣J in dummy. The rubber was at an end.

Realisation dawned on Samuel Roake. 'I think he did mean to throw away the ace,' he informed his wife. 'It was the only way to get back to dummy and the fourth club trick.'

'He was a bit lucky to find you with the ♦K, my love,' Esther Roake replied.

Hood made no comment but he had known that West would hold the ♦K. East would have opened the bidding otherwise. *To be continued* ■

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# Eight Days

## by Sally Brock

### SUNDAY

We spend a couple of hours discussing our system and then Fee and I set off for the venue. We could walk, but it is the middle of the day and hot, so we opt for an Uber which costs less than \$10. It is the first time we have been to the venue, but the bridge has been going on for a few days. We keep bumping into friends but it takes a while to find our team-mates, Barbara and Migry (with Crystal going to play later). Neither pair has a great first set and we finish with 10.5 points (12 being average). Not good, but the good news is that there are only 13 teams in the event and all we have to do is finish in the top ten! The bridge finishes just after 4.30 and does not restart until 7.30 so Fee and I decide to walk back to our apartment and see the 'boys' (Paul and Barry). We regale them with our errors and then get an Uber back for the restart. This time Migry is playing with Crystal. I play terribly, taking as few tricks as possible every time I am declarer. And we miss a couple of slams. One of the beauties of BAM (Board-a-Match) scoring, though, is that sometimes your mistakes don't count at all. All you have to do is do better than your counterpart at the other table. We finish with 13.5 points and average for the day, qualifying in sixth position. Although there is a carry-forward we will be there fighting fit tomorrow. After the bridge we go for a glass of wine and a slice of pizza and a look at the boards before getting an Uber back to the flat, and a welcome bed.

### MONDAY

Barry has arranged to play a two-

session pairs event with a friend, Sue. So at around 11am we go to the venue to meet her. We look for somewhere for brunch, and settle on IHOP (International House of Pancakes – a US institution). Cheap and cheerful. Our first session of the BAM final isn't too good – a little better than yesterday. In the break I meet up with Barry and Sue and we eat Japanese – good food, if a little expensive. Our evening session goes a bit better and we finish mid-table. This is my favourite board, against the then leaders, a strong Russian ensemble:

| Dealer North. Game All. |                                                                                     |               |  |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|--|
| ♠ 9 8 7 5 4 2           |                                                                                     |               |  |
| ♥ A 4                   |                                                                                     |               |  |
| ♦ 5                     |                                                                                     |               |  |
| ♣ A 9 5 3               |                                                                                     |               |  |
| ♠ 10 6                  |  | ♠ A           |  |
| ♥ 5 3                   |                                                                                     | ♥ Q 2         |  |
| ♦ 9 7 3 2               |                                                                                     | ♦ A K Q J 6 4 |  |
| ♣ Q 8 7 6 2             |                                                                                     | ♣ K J 10 4    |  |
| ♠ K Q J 3               |                                                                                     |               |  |
| ♥ K J 10 9 8 7 6        |                                                                                     |               |  |
| ♦ 10 8                  |                                                                                     |               |  |
| ♣ Void                  |                                                                                     |               |  |

East opens a Polish club (either weak balanced, natural, or any strong hand). I overcall 4♥ and East's double closes the auction. Dummy is a delight. West leads the ♠10 which East wins to return a club. With trumps breaking I have two overtricks, and, of course, a won board.

### TUESDAY

Fiona and Paul leave very early for their flight home. We aren't far behind them but we're going to Maui. First we leave our main luggage at the airport,

and then a shuttle to Commuter Terminal 3. Our flight is with Mokulele Airlines, and our plane is a 10-seater (only half full). No security, no overhead lockers, no rules and regulations. And the whole 45-minute flight – in brilliant sunshine – is fairly low so we can see everything below us – apparently often you can see whales but it was too windy. Fantastic! When we arrive, again we just walk off the plane and into the terminal. Toilets are chemical! But everyone is helpful. We don't seem to be able to make my phone work and so get a taxi to the Budget car rental place. Again, everything is relaxed. As long as Barry is my 'significant other' he can drive the car as well as me for no extra charge (interesting to speculate how the nature of our relationship should affect his ability to drive safely!). First stop is the recommended Java Jazz for coffee – a real pleasure – excellent coffee and friendly service. Since it is now about 11am and we can't get access to our Air BnB till 3pm, we decide to go to Tropical Maui Plantation – a 45-minute drive away. The drive is spectacular with the ocean to our right most of the way – so beautiful. When we get there we decide to go on a train tour of the plantation, but the next one free is the 2pm so first we have lunch, and then take the train. We learn all about growing tropical fruit – pineapples, macadamia nuts, bananas etc. They reckon their bananas are something special – very small, called 'apple bananas' with a special flavour – but they just taste like bananas to us!

Then it is back most of the way we have come to Lahaina and our Air BnB. This is delightful – probably the best we have ever stayed in – on the fourth floor with a partial ocean view from the balcony. We collapse exhausted for a couple of hours and then go out to

The Beach House, just over the road, for a quick dinner before more sleep. It's funny how exhausting it is to have fun!

## WEDNESDAY

We do not sleep very well and are awake early, so we decide to get going and are out of the flat at 7.40. Today's plan is to drive the Hana Highway, reputedly one of the best road trips in the United States. And indeed it is – fabulous. We are under a bit of time pressure to get it all done in a day (certainly if you are ever going to give it a go, I would recommend staying overnight in Hana and letting it fill two days – but we don't have two days). There are a lot of places to stop off en route which we do not have time for. On the other hand, we see a lot of waterfalls, and the coastline is fabulous, with lots of look-out points. We stop off in Pa'ia for coffee – another great independent coffee house – and get to Hana for lunch – a woman has a stall on Hana Bay selling fried chicken/pork, with rice and corn. Delicious! We eat looking over the ocean. The road beyond Hana is a bit iffy, with a long stretch that has a terrible road surface, so we don't stop much on that leg – but find another excellent coffee house (for tea and banana bread) in Keokea when we are more or less back in civilisation. We get home at 5.40, exhausted. Collapse with the second half of a bottle of cheap champagne, and then a snooze before going out to dinner. No energy to try anywhere new, and the Beach House is better today – yesterday it was more or less deserted, but today is hopping with life – the adjoining pool full of people swimming as well as the restaurant itself were much more lively.

## THURSDAY

We are up, packed (brought very little with us) and out just after nine o'clock. First stop is Lahaina itself. Technically we are staying in Lahaina, but the town itself is some six miles away and we have not been there yet. We find Front Street, a seafront road

with lots of touristy shops. I browse and buy bits and pieces for the family while Barry sits nursing a coffee. Then we go to the meeting point for our whale-watching trip (they tell us to be there 45 minutes early, and it is just as well we are obedient because I do not look at the directions properly and we go too far by 15 minutes or so, and therefore are only there at about 12.10 for our 12.30 tour). It is obvious we are really late. Everyone else is registered and halfway through a pre-tour talk. Anyway, no great harm is done and we soon board our boat. We have a great time, with three separate sightings of whales. Blue skies, blue seas, and the occasional whale – what could be better? Afterwards we have a quick lunch before heading off to fill our rental car with petrol and returning it to the Budget office. Then the return trip with Mokulele Airlines. This time the plane is full, but as we take off just after 5.30 we get to see the sunset from the air – beautiful. Then we pick up the suitcases we left at the airport on our way out, and ring for an Uber to take us to our final Air BnB. This time it is a studio apartment on the 19th floor – small, but inventively worked out, with fabulous views. A quick shower (much needed) and then out to Tony Roma's for a typical American rib dinner.

## FRIDAY

One of the problems with American Nationals is the schedule. The first session of the day starts at 1pm until about 5pm, then the restart is 7.30 and the finish about 11.30. So you get up and have breakfast. But then, although you are not really hungry, you know you won't last till five, so you need something either before you start (or to find a sandwich or similar to take with you). Then, again 5.30 seems ridiculously early for dinner, but 11.30 is ridiculously late. I seem to spend the whole time snacking. We have eggs (we were going to hard-boil them but then discover we don't have a cooker, only a microwave, so they have to be scrambled). Then there is a market I want to visit, so we walk the mile or so up the road and I settle Barry

down with a coffee before starting to shop. I see a dress I think Briony would like so take a photo and text it to her. She likes the print, but then I see it in several versions: one with spaghetti straps, then sleeveless, then with short sleeves, and finally without straps at all. Photos go backwards and forwards. She settles for the first one I saw, so I buy that, and then decide to buy a dress for myself – the choice here is overwhelming. I buy some earrings too (more or less compulsory on any holiday). We buy a sandwich and some fruit and eat some of it sitting on a bench outside the bridge area.

I wish I could tell you that the Reisinger was a triumph, but the truth is that none of our three pairs play with distinction.

We need to be in the top 20 out of 34 teams and we don't get close. However, it is great fun and we play some awesome opposition – most of whom seem very charming. In the break we go for coffee/ice cream with Karen & Victor who played with us for the first session (Jovi & Sascha wanted a break after playing much more bridge than the rest of us). At this stage we are only just below average, so are not without chances. However, the second session is a little worse than the first, sending us down towards the bottom of the field. I am pleased with our bidding on this grand slam, however:

**Dealer East. N/S Game.**

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

| West     | North | East | South |
|----------|-------|------|-------|
|          |       | Pass | 1♠    |
| Pass     | 2NT   | Pass | 3♣    |
| Pass     | 4♣    | Pass | 4NT   |
| Pass     | 5♣    | Pass | 7♠    |
| All Pass |       |      |       |

The 2NT response is Jacoby, showing game-forcing values with primary trump support. 3♣ is natural and 4♣ shows club shortage. That is enough for Barry to launch into Roman Key Card Blackwood and bid the grand slam. In truth, I expect this board to be flat as it really isn't difficult, but am rather surprised when our opponents stop in game. Their auction:

| West     | North | East | South |
|----------|-------|------|-------|
|          |       |      | 1♠    |
| Pass     | 4♣    | Pass | 4♠    |
| All Pass |       |      |       |

I see people agreeing to play splinters all the time, but what they often don't agree is how strong the hand should be. For me, the point of a splinter is to bid a low point-count slam, so they should always be on minimum values. We play splinters over one of a major too, but for us they show fewer than opening values. Here North is much too strong. Having said that, North does not need all that much for slam to be cold, so I think the 4♠ sign-off is a bit cautious. It cannot cost South to bid 4♦, and then over 4♥ ask for aces.

After the bridge we go to the bar for a drink and back to our Air BnB, exhausted. The studio flat is delightful, but ... the air conditioner runs at 100 decibels, so you have to choose between not being able to sleep because of the heat, or not being able to sleep because of the noise!

## SATURDAY

In the morning we get an Uber down to Waikiki Beach – I don't feel I should leave here without visiting such a famous place. It looks fabulous – a long, fairly narrow stretch of sand. We sit on a bench in the shade and watch the world go by – there are lots of families, people on paddleboards, and to the right, a little way away, surfers. The sea looks very calm to me, but then out of nowhere they seem to find a wave and surf right back to the beach. We see a nice-looking terrace with blue umbrellas, and track it down to have a drink before heading back to the Hilton for bridge. Today we start playing in the North American

Mixed Swiss Teams. The first match goes well enough – we win 16-4 – and then we sit out and go and find some lunch. An interesting little eco-friendly salad/sandwich bar – they are having a campaign to reduce the usage of disposable plastic straws, so 'for a donation' I buy a couple of metal ones to take home for Briony (who uses a lot of plastic straws). Then, after two sets out, we go back to the bridge. Our team have drawn one and won one, so it all looks healthy enough. However, our next match starts with us going down in a grand slam!

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

| West     | North | East | South |
|----------|-------|------|-------|
|          |       |      | 1♥    |
| Pass     | 2♣    | Pass | 2♦    |
| Pass     | 3♥    | Pass | 4♦    |
| Pass     | 4NT   | Pass | 5♠    |
| Pass     | 5NT   | Pass | 7♥    |
| All Pass |       |      |       |

Maybe the grand slam is not quite as good as it looks. After a spade lead, Barry wins, plays a diamond to the ace and ruffs a diamond, then another top spade and a spade ruff, followed by a second diamond ruff. All he needs to do is get back to hand to draw trumps and it is a bit of a blow when West ruffs the ♣A, so he is one down. Not a great start to a seven-board match.

In the break the others want dinner, but of course we have just had lunch. We sit with them outside a Japanese steak restaurant and have a drink while they eat. Then we play a couple of sets with middling success, before sitting out again and going for dinner. We find a local place, on a terrace, where most of the items on the menu are sold out. However, we find things to

share – grilled abalone, lettuce wraps, grilled shrimps, etc. When we go back to the bridge we find that although we lost the penultimate match we have qualified with a match to go. That is reassuring as the last match didn't go too well.

We need to move up a gear tomorrow if we are to win. Maybe we are all in too much of a holiday mood.

## SUNDAY

It is an 11am start today, so not really time to do anything before the bridge. We start with a heavy loss followed by a heavy win. Then Barry and I are out for a couple of sets. We decide to explore Chinatown. We take a bus but when we get off at the suggested stop it is not clear where it is. We ask someone who tells us we are there – but we still can't see it. We stop a couple of women and ask again – and they are really scary women – dressed up to the eyeballs, one with a mouth full of gold teeth who says we shouldn't go to Chinatown because of all the rats! Anyway, we eventually find it, but it doesn't look very prepossessing – no over-the-top bright-coloured lanterns. We choose a dim sum restaurant and have an excellent lunch – there is only one other white guy there and he comes to talk to us, asking how we found the place (completely random) which does the best dim sum in Honolulu. We have a lot of food for \$23. Then we walk along Honolulu Harbour and find a bar where we can nurse a lager, while we snooze in the sunshine. Then we have to go back and play bridge, this time with Jovi and Sascha. Both matches are small losses, but we are all doing such stupid stuff that we discuss changing partnerships. Then someone suggests that we can withdraw, and that idea is met with great enthusiasm all round. We do that and go straight to the Italian restaurant where we had planned a hurried late dinner, and instead have a much more leisurely meal. Then it is hugs and goodbyes until the next time. We go back to the flat and collapse after setting our alarm for 4.45 as the flight home is at 8.13. A fantastic holiday – pity about the bridge! ■

# Chatsworth Hotel

WORTHING



## 2019

|                                                                |                                                                                 |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1-3 February £228<br>Hand Evaluation<br>Hosted by Will Parsons | 5-7 July £218<br>Just Duplicate                                                 |
| 22-25 February £299*<br>Seminar Plus Training Event            | 16-18 August £238<br>Leads and Fundamental Defence<br>Hosted by Martin Holcombe |
| 15-17 March £258<br>Masterpointed Duplicate                    | 27-29 September £218<br>Just Duplicate                                          |
| 29-31 March £258<br>Drawing Trumps<br>Hosted by Bernard Magee  | 4-6 October £264<br>Hosted by Bernard Magee                                     |
| 26-28 April £218<br>Just Duplicate                             | 18-20 October £238<br>Declarer Play<br>Hosted by Lesley Lewis                   |
| 10-12 May £238<br>Doubling<br>Hosted by Sandy Bell             | 1-3 November £218<br>Just Duplicate                                             |
| 7-9 June £218<br>Just Duplicate                                | 15-17 November £218<br>Just Duplicate                                           |

Prices shown are per person, full board including tea & coffee during breaks and a welcome drinks party. There is no single supplement except on \*Seminar Plus Training Events which hold a £15 supplement. Single players will always be found a partner. The Mr Bridge team will offer support during the set hands sessions, on the seminar events, and make up the numbers in the duplicates, so there should never be a half table.

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## 2019

|                                                                 |                                                                                  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
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| 8-10 March £208<br>Just Duplicate                               | 11-13 October £218<br>Just Duplicate                                             |
| 17-19 May £238<br>Drawing Trumps<br>Hosted by John Ronan        | 25-27 October £238<br>Play & Defence of 1NT<br>Hosted by Michael Haytack         |
| 14-16 June £218<br>Just Duplicate                               | 1-3 November £264<br>Defence as Partner of the Leader<br>Hosted by Bernard Magee |
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**NEW**

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**8-15 May 2019**

Hosted by Bernard Magee

The popular resort area of St Paul's Bay, 10 miles from the capital, Valletta, is the perfect base to explore the fascinating archipelago of Malta. Discover five millennia of history, glorious medieval cities and picturesque coastline – and, of course, enjoy daily bridge in the company of Bernard Magee.

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*\*Seasonal, weather dependent opening hours*



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### Valletta and the Malta Experience

Valletta is the island's capital – a tiny walled city founded by the Knights of St John after the Great Siege of 1565, with many museums, historic buildings and Baroque churches, including St John's Co-Cathedral, home to Caravaggio's *Beheading of John the Baptist*. The 'Malta Experience' is a 45-minute audio-visual presentation of the islands' 7,000-year history.

Half day • £45 per person

### The 'Silent City' of Mdina

The fortified city of Mdina was the capital of the islands until medieval times, and one of the best examples of a walled city in Europe. Known as the 'Silent City', it has recently doubled for King's Landing in the landmark television series *Game of Thrones*.

Half day • £31 per person



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21 islands comprise the Maltese archipelago and Gozo is the second largest, after Malta itself. It is more rural than Malta, known for its Neolithic temples and other prehistoric remains. This full day excursion includes ferry transport and lunch.

Full day • £71 per person

**£1,195 per person | £199 single supplement**

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# Answers to David Huggett's Play Quiz on page 9

1.

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

You are declarer in 6♣ and West leads the ♦J. How do you plan the play?

The slam is reasonable enough although not exactly laydown and with eleven tricks on top the twelfth can only really come from the spade suit. For that to happen you need spades to break 4-3, in which case you need to ruff three spades in hand and still have an entry to dummy to enjoy the remaining one. So win the diamond in hand and play a spade to the ace and ruff a spade. Enter dummy with a trump to the ten and ruff another spade and repeat the process by playing a trump to the ace and ruffing. Finally draw the last trump – you will need trumps to break 3-2 – enter dummy with the diamond king and throw a heart loser on the remaining spade. You can see that a trump lead would have defeated you by taking away an entry to dummy prematurely.

2.

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

You are declarer in 3NT and West leads the ♦8 with East following with the ♦10. How do you plan the play?

With eight tricks on top after winning the first diamond in hand it looks as though you have a choice of finesses for the ninth. Also you might think you could combine some chances by cashing the top two clubs to see if the queen falls, before falling back on playing a spade to the jack. But what you don't want of course is for East to gain the lead to play a diamond through your remaining holding. Once you realise this you can see that the contract is assured if you simply play a club to the ace and one back to the ten, finessing into the safe hand, when a further diamond lead can do you no harm as it would be up to the king.

3.

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

You are declarer in 4♠. West leads the ♣Q. How do you plan the play?

Sometimes a hand will look all too easy and it is at those times when you have to be most vigilant. Here you would expect to draw trumps in two or three rounds making five trump tricks, two hearts and a heart ruff in dummy, together with both minor suit aces. So what can go wrong with that plan? Well the most likely candidate is that trumps will split 4-0 when you will face the possibility of having a trump loser. Almost certainly there is nothing to be done if it is West who holds all four missing trumps, but

if it is East you can usually still prevail by playing a low trump to the queen first. When the bad split becomes apparent you can take two finesses against East, ruffing a heart in dummy on the way.

4.

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

You are declarer in 3NT. West leads the ♠J. How do you plan the play?

The secret of this hand is to realise that you need to make only four club tricks and not five to fulfil your contract. Certainly one plan would be to win the spade in hand, cash the two top clubs and using the spade entry to dummy hope the remaining missing clubs fall under the king. That is against the odds and a much better line is to win the spade lead in hand, cash the ace of clubs and then overtake the queen with the king! If the clubs were originally 3-3 a further round will produce the extra tricks you need, while if they were 4-2 a significant amount of time the jack or the ten will fall doubleton, when you can use the nine to knock out the remaining honour. ■

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## More Tips from Bernard Magee

# Move Your Suit Order to Help You Remember Key Suits

There are a variety of simple tactics that you can use to help you remember things. Changing the order of your suits in your hand for example. I hope that most of the time, you can remember which suit has been led, but if you struggle every so often, then why not place that suit to the right of your hand. That way, even if you need to remember at trick 6, you will be reminded by your suit order. So as a defender you can choose what to do, but also as declarer.

So, this means that you might decide as a partnership that, as dummy, you always put the led suit on your right in a no-trump contract.

Do you ever forget whether you are in no-trumps or a suit contract?

In a suit contract dummy always puts the trumps on his right – this is a rule. Well perhaps you and your partner might choose always to alternate the colour of the suits in dummy when it is a suit contract, but have two suits of the same colour touching when it is a no-trump contract. Little things like this can make a big difference when you are getting tired towards the end of a session.

North chose to show 3-card support rather than respond 1NT – both 2♠ and 1NT responses show 6-9, so the choice is a matter of style. With a weak doubleton (and certainly with a singleton) it is reasonable to choose 2♠.

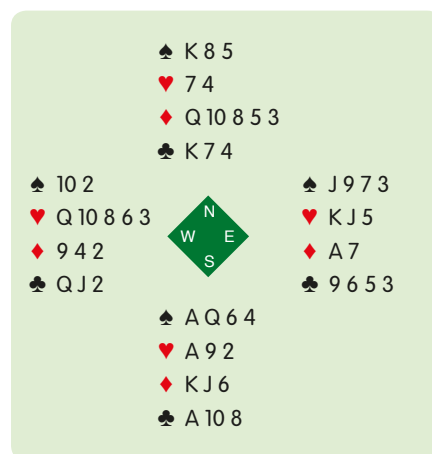
South rebids 2NT to show his balanced hand and the partnership reach 3NT.

Quite often after an auction such as this, South will have been thinking about playing in spades or no-trumps, so it is important to clear your head for the play. Of course dummy can have an important bearing on this by making sure he does NOT put the spades on his right.

With spades elsewhere in the dummy declarer should remember he is in no-trumps – he ducks hearts twice and then establishes his diamonds. It is easy to imagine if dummy makes the mistake of placing spades on his right, that declarer would contemplate the auction and might think about making a heart ruff in dummy for an extra trick.

Clearly one hopes this does not happen to any of us, but the only time I have seen a declarer make the mistake of thinking he is in trumps rather than no-trumps is when the likely trump suit had been placed on dummy's right.

Declarer, dummy and the defenders can make use of these very simple tactics – they may not gain many times, but as one supermarket maintains: 'Every little helps.'



| West | North | East     | South |
|------|-------|----------|-------|
| Pass | 2♠    | Pass     | 1♠    |
| Pass | 3NT   | All Pass | 2NT   |

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# Answers to Julian Pottage's Defence Quiz on page 9

1.

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

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

♠ A 10 4 3 2  
♥ A 8 5 2  
♦ Q 8  
♣ 8 4

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

| West     | North | East | South |
|----------|-------|------|-------|
|          |       |      | 1♣    |
| Pass     | 3♣    | Pass | 3NT   |
| All Pass |       |      |       |

Partner leads the ♥J: ♥4, ♥A and ♥Q. You return the ♥2. After taking the ♥K, declarer plays the ♣K-Q-J. Partner discards the ♠6 on the third round. What do you discard?

The heart position is clear. The ♠A and four heart tricks will suffice to beat the contract – but first you need to gain the lead – and before that partner must find two more discards. You should tell partner that it is safe to abandon spades by discarding the ♠10 so that West keeps all his diamonds.

2.

♠ K Q 4  
♥ J  
♦ J 10 8 6 5 4  
♣ K Q 4

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

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

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

| West | North | East     | South                   |
|------|-------|----------|-------------------------|
|      |       |          | 1NT <sup>(112-14)</sup> |
| Pass | 3NT   | All Pass |                         |

Partner leads the ♥6, covered by the ♥J, ♥Q and ♥K. Declarer leads the ♦K-Q, partner playing low.

What do you discard?

It appears that partner is holding up the ♦A in the hope of getting a signal. This could well be with the idea of getting you in for a heart lead through declarer. If the ♥6 was fourth best, declarer still has one higher heart left. This is most likely to be the ♥9 or ♥10 since the lead might have been an honour from a suit headed by the 10-9-7 or A-10-9. You thus discard the ♣9, signalling your ♣A as strongly as you can. When you get in with the ♣A, you will return the ♥8.

3.

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

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

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

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

| West     | North | East | South |
|----------|-------|------|-------|
|          |       |      | 1♣    |
| Pass     | 3♣    | Pass | 3NT   |
| All Pass |       |      |       |

Partner leads the ♥7: ♥8, ♥10 and ♥K. Declarer leads the ♣A-K-J. Partner discards the ♦2 on the third round.

What is your plan?

If the ♥7 was fourth highest, declarer would have been unable to beat your ♥10. The lead must be second highest. This means that the hearts are not ready to run and that declarer has eight easy tricks: five clubs, two hearts and a diamond. If you are going to beat the contract, partner will need to hold the ♠Q because otherwise declarer could simply knock out your ♠A for a ninth trick.

You cannot spare a flamboyant ♠10

since then dummy's ♠9 could come into play. Nor can you afford any diamonds because then declarer might play ace and another to set up the jack. Your three discards should be your two lower spades and one heart (you need to keep communication with partner). In letting two spades go you risk giving an overtrick if partner has the ♠J rather than the ♠Q – but it usually pays to try for the plus score.

4.

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

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

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

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

| West | North | East     | South                   |
|------|-------|----------|-------------------------|
|      |       |          | 1NT <sup>(112-14)</sup> |
| Pass | 3NT   | All Pass |                         |

Partner leads the ♥J, won by the ♥K. Then comes the ♦J: ♦Q, ♦A and ♦3. Next comes the ♦K: ♦6, ♦10 and ♦7. On the third round of diamonds declarer discards a club.

What is your plan?

Declarer appears to have eight tricks ready to cash: five diamonds and three hearts. If you are going to beat the contract, you must place partner with the ♠A.

While at matchpoints you also consider overtricks, you have a clue from partner's high ♦7 on the second round that the ♠A is indeed where you want it. You must keep enough spades to beat the contract. More importantly, you must be ready to step in smartly with the ♠A on the first round of clubs. You will then lead a low spade (or the king and low) to avoid blocking the suit.



# Can Scorers Adjust The Score?

**Q Are scorers allowed to 'audit' and 'adjust' possible errors on the old paper traveller system or take the traveller as read?**

Mike Gurney,  
Holt, Norfolk.

**A** A scorer is allowed to adjust a possible error when scoring but only if it is obvious. For example, if there is a score of 620 for 4♠ making but it is actually not vulnerable it is obviously wrong and can be adjusted. Another example is that if many East-Wests make 9, 10 or 11 tricks in 4♠ but there is one score of North-South making 10 tricks in 4♠ then it is obviously wrong and can be adjusted.

However if there is a score of 2♠ making ten and the score is 140 it is not obvious whether the number or tricks is wrong or the score is wrong. In such cases the scorer takes 140 as the score. Similarly if there is a score of 2♠ making ten and the score is 420, then again the scorer does not know whether the error is in the contract or the result and will take 420 as the score.

Fairly unlikely results do happen, so if the score reads 170 for 2♠ making nine and a look at the hand suggests ten tricks is impossible, then the scorer still takes 170 as the score. Unlikely

and impossible results do happen! The only reason to look at the hands is if there is doubt as to which side made ten tricks in hearts: even then it is quite common for travellers to mix up which major was being played.

So the approach is simple: if it is completely obvious then alter it, otherwise take the figure as written even if unlikely.



**Q At our local club, we were defending an ambitious 5♣ contract, after my partner made a heart overcall. I led a heart to my partner's A-K. Declarer won the third round of hearts. Declarer had a six-four fit in clubs, and set off to win the next eight tricks on a cross ruff, finishing in hand. Before he could lead to the penultimate trick, partner claimed one trick each, which declarer accepted. I immediately disagreed and the director was called. I had a singleton ♣A and a small diamond, my partner had the ♠K and the ♠9 and declarer had the ♠Q-10. The director ruled that the concession stood. Thus the score was minus one trick, getting us 25% of the match points. The hand was dealt at the table, with no hand record.**

**Was this ruling correct?**

**Was my partner unwise in making this concession?**

**He indicated he assumed declarer held the ace.**

Alex Mathers,  
Brompton, Northallerton.

**A** There is no doubt that your partner was unwise in making unproved assumptions. However since – as I understand it – you made the opening lead so declarer was to your right, then if play had continued declarer would have led a club, you have to play your ace and partner would clearly play the nine. So the defence would make two tricks and the ruling should have given you your tricks.



**Q When I read your Adjusted Scores article in BRIDGE 193, my first thought was: shouldn't you have called the director – if not immediately, when the delayed pair finally arrived, then as soon as they resumed their argument at the end of the first board?**

**As club secretary (not TD) I have several times been approached a few days after an event with a complaint of some kind or another about opponents' behaviour; and my first question each time is: did you call the**

**TD when it happened? And if not, why not?**

Stephen Hanslip by email.

**A** It would never occur to me to complain to the director later if I had not called the director in a timely fashion. It is difficult for a more experienced player to complain about slowness, arguing and late arrival when playing against less experienced players and I do not do it. However I do not expect the director to remove a partially played board for the reasons given.

I agree with you that if a player wishes to complain about slowness, arguing or late arrival he should do so by calling the director at the time. If he does not he should not complain later.



**Q What is the correct approach for the director to take if he makes a ruling in respect of an irregularity or infraction by one pair, which is apparently accepted by all at the table, and later, on reflection, he realises his ruling was incorrect?**

**In the instance I am thinking of, the ruling had the effect of stopping the pair exploring for a slam, but they went on to make all 13 tricks.**

*Continued on page 42* ►

# Answers to Two-Suited Overcalls Quiz on page 13

- 1 At love all you are playing Ghestem, weak or strong. What do you bid with hands A, B and C if your right hand opponent opens 1♥?

| Hand A        | Hand B        | Hand C        |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| ♠ A Q 7 6 5   | ♠ A Q J 8 7   | ♠ A Q J 8 7   |
| ♥ 2           | ♥ 2           | ♥ 2           |
| ♦ Q J 8 7 6 5 | ♦ A Q 8 6 5 4 | ♦ A K Q 8 5 4 |
| ♣ 7           | ♣ 7           | ♣ 7           |

Over a 1♥ opening bid the bid to show diamonds and spades is 3♣. However you can only use this two suited overcall if you are weak (6-10 points) or strong (16+ points). If your hand has intermediate strength (11-15 points) you must start by overcalling one of your suits and hope to bid the other one later.

Hand A 3♣. With nine points this is weak.

Hand B 2♦. With 13 points your hand is intermediate. Start with your longest suit. Hope to bid spades later. Even 4♠ would be reasonable if opponents bid 4♥.

Hand C 3♣. With 16 points this is strong.

- 2 With East/West vulnerable how should South continue with hands A, B and C after the auction shown? You are playing Ghestem weak or strong.

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 1♥   | 3♣    | Pass | ?     |

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

3♣ shows diamonds and spades, at least 5-5 shape.

Hand A 3♣. Where you want to play if partner is weak.

Hand B 4♣. This should be a good contract even if partner is weak.

Hand C 4♣. Perhaps you do prefer diamonds to spades but you

can score game with ten tricks in spades whereas you need eleven tricks in diamonds. You have at least an 8-card spade fit and that should be enough.

- 3 At love all you are playing Michaels and the unusual no trump, weak or strong. What do you bid with hands A to J if your right hand opponent opens 1♥?

| Hand A       | Hand B       | Hand C       |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| ♠ K J 10 6 5 | ♠ K J 10 6 5 | ♠ A K J 10 6 |
| ♥ 7          | ♥ 7          | ♥ 7          |
| ♦ Q J 10 7 6 | ♦ A K J 6 5  | ♦ A K J 6 5  |
| ♣ 6 2        | ♣ 6 2        | ♣ 6 2        |

| Hand D       | Hand E       | Hand F       |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| ♠ K J 10 6 5 | ♠ K J 10 6 5 | ♠ A K J 10 6 |
| ♥ 7          | ♥ 7          | ♥ 7          |
| ♦ 6 2        | ♦ 6 2        | ♦ 6 2        |
| ♣ Q J 10 7 6 | ♣ A K J 6 5  | ♣ A K J 6 5  |

| Hand G       | Hand H       | Hand J       |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| ♠ 6 2        | ♠ 6 2        | ♠ 6 2        |
| ♥ 7          | ♥ 7          | ♥ 7          |
| ♦ K J 10 6 5 | ♦ K J 10 6 5 | ♦ A K J 10 6 |
| ♣ Q J 10 7 6 | ♣ A K J 6 5  | ♣ A K J 6 5  |

Provided you are either weak or strong: with spades and a minor you can overcall 1♥ with 2♥ and with the minors you can overcall 2NT.

Hand A 2♥. Weak with spades and a minor.

Hand B 1♠. Intermediate strength. Hope to bid diamonds cheaply later.

Hand C 2♥. Strong with spades and a minor.

Hand D 2♥. Weak with spades and a minor.

Hand E 1♠. Intermediate strength. Hope to bid clubs cheaply later.

Hand F 2♥. Strong with spades and a minor.

Hand G 2NT. Weak with the minors.

Hand H 2♦. Intermediate strength. Hope to bid clubs cheaply later.

Hand J 2NT. Strong with the minors

- 4 With East/West vulnerable how should South continue with hands A, B and C after the auction shown? You are playing Michaels weak or strong.

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 1♦   | 2♦    | Pass | ?     |

| Hand A    | Hand B      | Hand C      |
|-----------|-------------|-------------|
| ♠ 8 5 4   | ♠ 7 4       | ♠ A Q 4     |
| ♥ K 7 5   | ♥ 5 3       | ♥ 7         |
| ♦ A K J 7 | ♦ A K J 7   | ♦ A K 7 5   |
| ♣ Q J 6   | ♣ Q J 6 5 2 | ♣ A 5 4 3 2 |

2♦ shows the major suits, weak or strong.

Hand A 2♥. You prefer hearts to spades (just about) and don't have enough for game opposite a weak Michaels.

Hand B 2♥. Yuck! Hearts are cheaper than spades. You are showing preference, not support. Hope your opponents don't double.

Hand C. 4♠. Should be good even opposite a weak 5-5 shape.

- 5 With East/West vulnerable how should North continue with hands A, B and C after the auction shown? You are playing Michaels weak or strong.

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 1♦   | 2♦    | Pass | 2♥    |
| Pass | ?     |      |       |

| Hand A       | Hand B       | Hand C         |
|--------------|--------------|----------------|
| ♠ A J 10 5 4 | ♠ A J 10 5 4 | ♠ A J 10 5 4 2 |
| ♥ A K Q 7 6  | ♥ K Q 7 6 5  | ♥ A K Q 7 6    |
| ♦ K 2        | ♦ 3 2        | ♦ 2            |
| ♣ 3          | ♣ 3          | ♣ 3            |

Hand A 3♥. Showing a strong type and inviting game.

Hand B Pass. This shows the weak hand type and will be your most common action after partner gives simple preference.

Hand C 3♠. Showing the strong type, and showing an extra spade in case partner has equal length in the majors. 3♠ is not absolutely forcing but logic dictates it must show a very good hand.

Continued from page 40

**No other pairs bid the slam, and not all made 13 tricks.**

Elizabeth Morrison by email.

**A** Directors are required by law (law 82C) to correct mistakes made by themselves or an assistant director once they become aware of them.

In the case to which you refer the director would adjust the score. He would give each side a weighted score, reflecting his view of the likelihood of bidding the slam and of making 13 tricks, in other words he might give a weighting for each of four results. Furthermore he might give each side a different weighting because the law requires him to give each side an adjustment based on each side being non-offending, so getting the benefit of any doubt.

If he assumed that if playing in the contract they did reach they would make 13 tricks, perhaps he would give the following weighted score (assuming the denomination was spades and they were vulnerable).

For the declaring side:  
..40% of 6♠+1, +1460  
+ 20% of 6♠=, +1430  
+ 40% of 4♠+3, +710

For the defending side:  
..60% of 4♠+3, -710  
+ 20% of 6♠=, -1430  
+ 20% of 6♠+1, -1460

♣♦♥♠

**Q** I was directing at the club when called to answer this query. North bid 1♠ and East passed.

South, who admitted her mind was elsewhere, lifted her pass card from the box and it went halfway to the table before she realised North had bid.

I ruled she could put the pass card back, and make any bid she liked, but that North must not take any advantage from information gained from this.

I advised their opponents that they should call me back if they thought they had been hurt by this information being passed.

If it had been a mechanical error, I knew the ruling, but I could not find out the applicable rule here.

What was correct?

John Williams by email.

**A** Law 25B makes it clear that once a call is made by being removed from the box and such a call was not unintended, a change is only possible if left hand opponent chooses to allow a change. If LHO does not do so, the original call stands and any attempt to change it is unauthorised information to their partner. So in the case you quote unless the next player allows a change then the pass stands.

♣♦♥♠

**Q** This is a query from a teams league match played recently.

On the first board I was the opening bidder as East and called 1♠. South bid 3♣ advised as hearts and diamonds by North. My partner pondered and bid 4♠. North passed, as did I, having the ace plus 3 small diamonds and

thinking a slam was not on as a consequence.

At the completion of the bidding, South advised his partner that they had given the wrong explanation and they should have said hearts and clubs. It was an honest mistake. We played on and I took all 13 tricks, my partner having the missing diamond honours.

If the correct information had been given I would have reached at least 6♠.

As the director was part of the opposing team, should we have sought advice from an external source?

Should I have been able to withdraw my pass and bid on? Would the same be true in duplicate pairs?

Dermot Paddon by email.

**A** This is complicated by the fact that when players become defenders they should not tell declarer he has been misinformed until the end of the hand, because it wakes their partner up. The law is quite clear: declarer or dummy should tell their opponents at the end of the auction but this is not the case for the defenders. No doubt South had the best of motives.

It is true that having discovered the misinformation, the last call by the non-offending side can be withdrawn and changed, and bidding proceed from there. So you could have taken your last pass back once you knew the correct information.

At the end of the hand the director could have adjusted the score.

After all, your partner with his diamond honours might have bid differently. In the first instance you

should approach the director, even if he is involved by being part of the opposing team. Playing directors do occasionally have problems because they are playing, but it is still their job to sort problems out. You could suggest he goes to an outside source. Phone numbers of directors like myself appear on the EBU website and I am happy to deal with a ruling from anywhere.

The ruling would be the same in duplicate pairs.

♣♦♥♠

**Q** I wonder if you have an answer to this. My partner and I play 5-card majors and open the better minor or a major showing 5. If responder has a game going hand, 13 points, he bids 2♣, but of course if I open 1♦ and he bids 1 of a major, I can pass knowing game is not on.

But whilst playing in the local congress when this occurred, my LHO when I passed said you cannot pass your partner's bid. I said yes I could because we didn't have game on. They then said I MUST alert if I pass my partner's bid. They had no intention of bidding.

Peter Scott,  
Newquay BC.

**A** They are perfectly correct about the alerting. It is perfectly legal for you to play the way you do, but it is very unusual since nearly everyone plays a change of suit by responder as a one round force (unless responder has passed initially).

So if you play it as non-forcing you must alert it. ■

E-mail your questions (including your postal address) for David to: [davidstevenson@mrbridge.co.uk](mailto:davidstevenson@mrbridge.co.uk)

# Answers to Bernard Magee's Bidding Quizzes 1-3 on the Cover and page 7

## 1. Dealer South. E/W Game.

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



| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| ?    |       |      | 2♥    |

**Pass.** 'Never pre-empt a pre-empt'.

This is a commonly quoted rule, but not everyone understands its meaning. The idea is that if your opponents make a weak pre-emptive bid, then you should not overcall it with an equally weak bid, because the priority is to bid constructively when the opponents advertise weakness. West has a perfect hand for a weak two in spades (just what South has in hearts probably) – however if you choose to bid 2♠ as an overcall of South's already weak bid, your partner will place you with a stronger hand and bid to game. He expects about 10 or more points.

If you are weak and the opener is weak, then you will expect another bid from somebody, which means you will get the chance to bid later if you wish to.

On this hand your partner might bid 2NT at his turn and now you could transfer to spades and finish in 3♠.

## 2. Dealer South. Game All.

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



| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| ?    |       |      | 2♥    |

**Pass.** As usual when you have an opponent's suit you should stay quiet

on the first round. Doubles of weak bids below the four-level are for take-out. If you make a double here, your partner will respond in spades and you will have no sensible bid.

You are happy to defend a heart contract so simply pass – there is the added chance that your partner, who will be short in hearts, might make a take-out double himself and then you can pass expecting a healthy penalty.

On this particular layout, your partner would pass, but you should be happy defending against 2♥, expecting a positive score.

## 3. Dealer South. Love All.

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



| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| ?    |       |      | 2♥    |

**Dbf.** Should you double or should you overcall 3♣?

Generally, you should choose the more flexible bid – it is true that you would prefer to have four spades for a take-out double of hearts, but your three spades could well come in handy in a spade contract. By doubling you allow your partner to choose his best suit and very often this will result in a better contract than that found if you make a simple overcall.

If you overcall 3♣, your partner will not always find it easy to reach the best contract.

Here, if you double, your partner will jump to 3♠ and your hand will indeed be rather helpful in spades, so going for game should work.

You will probably lose two aces and a trump. ■

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# Answers to Bernard Magee's Bidding Quizzes 4-6 on the Cover and page 7

## 4. Dealer South. Love All.

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



| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| ?    |       |      | 3♥    |

**4♥.** Pre-empt makes your life difficult, so having a few tricks up your sleeve is helpful. You have double for take-out and a natural 3NT overcall. Other weapons are ways to show a two-suited hand, which includes bidding their suit – 4♥.

Your hand is surely going to have a good chance of making game in clubs or spades – there will be times that you get too high, but assuming some kind of fit with one of the suits is reasonable.

4♥ tells your partner you want to play in game in spades or one of the minors. Your partner bids the lowest suit which he is happy to have as trumps. Here you should finish in 5♣ – a couple of spade ruffs might be enough to make 11 tricks.

Note that if your partner had been weaker, then 4♥ their way might have had chances to make as well.

## 5. Dealer South. E/W Game.

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



| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| ?    |       |      | 4♣    |

**4NT.** This is a really tricky choice – 4♣ opening bids can be rather nasty. You expect your opponent to have a weak hand with lots of clubs.

Have you discussed with your partner what a 4NT overcall means?

The answer is that it should depend

on whether double is for take-out or for penalties.

Without discussion I would expect a double of an opening suit bid below the level of game to be for take-out. Most experts would play doubles of 4♥ as for take-out too, but this is up to you.

With double available as a take-out option, it seems reasonable to keep 4NT as a natural bid over a 4♣ or 4♦ opening.

5♦ is a perfectly reasonable choice of bid, but 4NT requires one fewer trick. You can hope for 9 tricks in your hand: surely it is not unreasonable to hope for one from partner?

South held eight clubs to the ace-queen. Even if you could penalise 4♣ you will not get enough points to compensate for your game.

Note that doubling and then bidding 4NT is likely to be taken as Blackwood agreeing the suit that your partner bids.

## 6. Dealer South. Love All.

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



| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| ?    |       |      | 4♠    |

**4NT.** The answer is the same as on 5, but this time it has a different meaning.

A double of a 4♣ opening bid is for take-out, so 4NT can be used as natural. However over 4♠, a double is showing strength and not specifically for take-out. This means it is very important to have a take-out bid available.

4NT over 4♠ does not show the minors, but shows two long suits – here it is the minors, but you might have held hearts as one of your suits. Your partner would respond 5♣ to 4NT and you finish in a reasonable spot.

You are unlikely to make eleven tricks, but with 4♠ often making, it may well be a good save. ■

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# Answers to Bernard Magee's Bidding Quizzes 7-9 on the Cover and page 7

## 7. Dealer North. Love All.

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



| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| ?    | 2♣    | Dbl  | 3♣    |

**Dbl.** Your partner has made a take-out double of a weak 2♣ opening. He should have opening values for his bid and you have ten points so should want to compete for the contract. South's raise to 3♣ makes life difficult for you, but you need to make a call that tells your partner of your strength, as well as your interest in the minors rather than hearts. A responsive double is the answer: a double in response to a double. This is only possible when the original bid is raised as here.

Had you held length in the unbid major, you would surely have bid hearts, so your double suggests length in the minors. On this hand, with five clubs, your partner would respond 4♣.

## 8. Dealer North. Love All.

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



| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| ?    | 3♣    | 3NT  | Pass  |

**Pass.** With a six-card major it would be normal to take a no-trump bid out to

your long suit.

However, when your partner has to bid over a three-level pre-empt he lacks room to describe his hand type, so his 3NT bids will include a lot of hands with long minors that want to play in the no-trump game because it requires fewer tricks.

Generally, when your partner bids 3NT over a pre-empt only take out if your major suit has good internal strength – tens and nines are important.

Here, with a weak suit and with your minor suit kings likely to be helpful in a 3NT contract, you do best to pass.

## 9. Dealer North. E/W Game.

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



| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| ?    | 2♥    | 2♣   | 4♥    |

**4♣.** What does your partner's 2♣ overcall show?

Using the guideline, that 'you never pre-empt a pre-empt', you should expect him to have a sound overcall with about 10 points as a minimum, although the hand he has here, with excellent inner strength is just about OK.

The important aspect about East's overcall is that he regards it as a 'good' hand.

Expecting a decent hand opposite, you should go for your vulnerable game. 4♥ is likely to go down, but you need to get it four off doubled to beat the score for your game. ■

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# Mr Bridge Holidays - Croatia 2019

## Hotel Eden, Rovinj

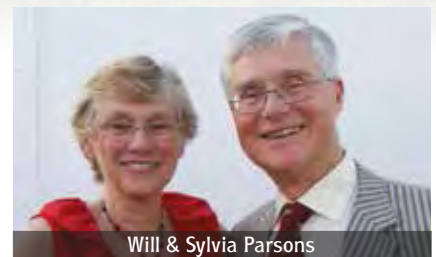
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Half board only, including flights from Gatwick. Birmingham, Manchester & Edinburgh flights may be available at a supplement. Terms and conditions apply. These holidays have been organised for Mr Bridge by Great Little Escapes LLP, ATOL 5933.

\*Excursions are not included in the price of the holiday.

# Answers to Bernard Magee's Bidding Quizzes 10-12 on the Cover and page 7

## 10. Dealer North. Love All.

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



| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
|      | 3♥    | Dbl  | Pass  |
| ?    |       |      |       |

**5♦.** Your partner's double of 3♥ should show an opening hand, so with an opening hand of your own, you should try for game. It would be nice to contemplate 3NT, but without a heart stopper and expecting shortage in your partner's hand, that is unlikely to work. You should go for the obvious game: 5♦.

Remember that bidding 4♦ promises no strength at all and your partner will pass – it is up to the doubler's partner to show his strength by jumping to 5♦.

## 11. Dealer South. Love All.

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



| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
|      |       |      | 2♥    |
| Dbl  | Pass  | 2♠   | Pass  |
| ?    |       |      |       |

**Pass.** You made a take-out double and your partner has responded 2♠. A lot of players get over-excited with hands like these. First of all, remember that your partner might have zero points

– his 2♠ is in response to your double. Furthermore, he expects you to hold spades, so do not get suddenly excited by your fit. Lastly, do not overvalue your hand using the losing trick count – there seem to be only five losers, but the hand is aceless, so you should downgrade it.

All of the above should lead you to simply passing 2♠ and being glad to have found the best partscore.

## 12. Dealer North. Love All.

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



| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
|      | 2♥    | Dbl  | Pass  |
| 2♠   | Pass  | 3♣   | Pass  |
| ?    |       |      |       |

**3NT.** Your partner has made a take-out double of 2♥ to which you showed your best suit, then he followed by rebidding in a new suit. This should show a very strong hand. After all, he could have simply overcalled 3♣ with a weaker hand.

Your ♣Q is valuable and should help the club suit run; along with that, the ♥A as a stopper is probably all your partnership needs for 3NT, so bid it.

East might have bid 3♥ in this auction, but after 2♠ some would take that as agreeing spades as trumps and aiming for higher things. It is surely best to bid your hand naturally: doubling and following with a club bid, would show a hand of about 8 playing tricks, which does not need much help to make a game contract. ■



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Mr Bridge Holidays

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# The Diaries of Wendy Wensum

## Episode 82:

### The Dynamic Duo



Spouse examined his emails, 'Wow,' he exclaimed, 'Travis has been offered a recording contract.' 'How much will it cost him?' I replied rather cynically. 'No, it's genuine. This guy saw us at our latest gig and wants to become our manager. He is going to create a demo disc at his own expense.' 'It sounds too good to be true,' I proclaimed with some trepidation. Spouse was having none of it. 'I could become a pop superstar,' he announced proudly. 'You're more likely to be suffering a mid-life crisis,' I suggested negatively. 'No, you don't understand; this is serious,' Spouse announced emphatically. 'Serious is how to stop Global Warming or implement Brexit,' I reminded him calmly. 'Well, yes,' he agreed adding, 'Perhaps I'm a little over the top here, but it's very exciting.'

Even so I was pleased to see that bridge still took priority. For one evening the pair discarded the acoustic guitar and the drum kit for the green baize at the Riverside to demonstrate their card skills instead. This hand did not go too well for Millie and me, and unfortunately we were playing Spouse and Travis, our tuneful twosome.

Dealer West. E/W Game.

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

As West I opened 1♣. Travis overcalled an intermediate 2♥ showing an opening hand with a minimum of six cards in the suit. Millie passed and Spouse bid 2♠. With a nineteen count, I thought a bid of 3♣ was sound enough. With his three-card support for Spouse's suit, Travis bid game.

| West  | North  | East     | South  |
|-------|--------|----------|--------|
| Wendy | Travis | Millie   | Spouse |
| 1♣    | 2♥     | Pass     | 2♠     |
| 3♣    | 4♣     | All Pass |        |

I led the ace of clubs and studied dummy. A club continuation didn't seem a good idea. A major suit switch didn't seem advisable either, so biting my upper lip I played my top diamond. Millie encouraged so still on lead I continued with the queen which held the trick. Spouse trumped my next diamond, dropped spades in two rounds and then set up the heart suit to make his contract. With a warm-hearted, 'Well bid, partner,' Spouse congratulated Travis on his bidding adding, 'You clearly recognised the importance of your singleton club. A seventeen point game, excellent.' Millie wasn't pleased with me and pointed out that with a nineteen count

I might have sacrificed in a minor suit contract. I sighed inwardly wondering why these things always seem to happen to me. Perhaps my hand was worth a stronger initial bid. In the pub later Kate and Jo recalled their auction on the same hand. West had indeed opened at the two level. Jo overcalled 2♥. West showed his suit to be clubs which closed the bidding.

| West            | North    | East | South |
|-----------------|----------|------|-------|
|                 | Jo       |      | Kate  |
| 2♠ <sup>1</sup> | 2♥       | Pass | Pass  |
| 3♣              | All Pass |      |       |

<sup>1</sup> A near game hand, artificial.

Jo led her ace and king of hearts winning the first two tricks. On the heart continuation, dummy played the jack, ruffed by Kate and over-ruffed in hand by declarer. West now removed the opponents' trumps, and ran five diamond tricks discarding the two losing spades for two overtricks. Better defence could have held the contract to nine tricks. 'Just as well we weren't playing in a team with you this week,' was Millie's curt comment.

The following day Travis and Spouse went to the studio to record their first CD, albeit just a demo. On their return the two men were ecstatic with the buzz of the event. They had both thoroughly enjoyed the occasion. 'I was even allowed to sing on one track,' gushed Spouse with pride. 'I don't think that contribution will be on the demo disc,' advised Travis earnestly. 'I've heard Spouse sing many times and thought that, unless the next music fad was to be based on the sound of an elephant, Travis was probably right. At bridge last night the Dynamic Duo of Spouse and Travis had a good session. Meanwhile their demo disc will soon wing its way to local radio stations. We shall see what transpires. ■

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