



The SBU Monthly News

February 2023

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Findlay Macdonald

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January 2023

Contributions to the Monthly News are welcome!

Don't hesitate to contact the editor:

liz.mcgowan@blueyonder.co.uk

Do you have any questions?

We have many experts lined up to answer queries...

Forthcoming Events

What's on Offer in March

International Events

The 2nd **Camrose Weekend** will be played face-to-face at the City North Hotel in Dublin, **3-5 March**.

Our team is: Gints Freimanis & Derek Sanders
Alan Goodman & Brian Short
Stephen Peterkin & Sam Punch

Npc: Alex Adamson

There will be coverage on RealBridge with live commentary: you can kibitz with the usual half-hour delay.

National Events

Heats of the National Pairs will be held online on **Saturday, 18 March**

This year there are National heats: you can choose to play on RealBridge or BBO, and you will be allocated to a qualifying section accordingly. The Final is on **15 April, face-to-face in Glasgow**.

Easter Pairs and **Bobby Allan Simultaneous Pairs**:

heats are run by clubs from **Monday 20 - Thursday 24 March**: face-to-face or online as preferred.

(For events on **RealBridge**, register on the SBU website and pay in advance to get the link.

For events on **BBO**, pay on the day from your BBO account, but you still need to register on the website.

<https://www.sbu.org.uk/calendar/national-events>)

The SBU National Congress

10th – 12th March 2023

Peebles Hydro Hotel



Programme

Friday	14.00	Open Pairs
	17.45	Congress Teams Session 1
	23.00	Nightcap with the Experts
Saturday	10.30	Congress Pairs Session 1
	15.00	Congress Pairs Session 2
	17.30	Drinks Reception and Gala Dinner
	22.00	Midnight Speedball Pairs
Sunday	13.50	Congress Teams Session 2
	19.45	Congress Teams Session 3
	23.00	Prizegiving

To quote Andrew Robson in The Times, Peebles Hydro is "the Murrayfield of Bridge".

*The atmosphere is friendly, and the main aim of the weekend is to have fun with **real people** playing face-to-face. An opportunity to win **National Master Points!***

More details and entry form on the SBU website: [Peebles Congress-SBU Congresses](#)

Book review: "Simple Squeezes"

Findlay MacDonald

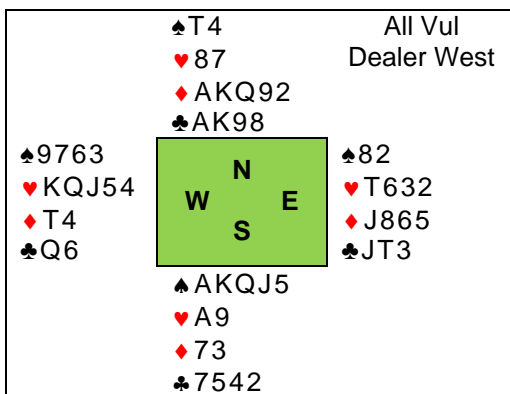
If you have ever read any of the many books written by David Bird, you will know that 99% of the hands in them start on the basis that there are not enough tricks to make the contract, but it's nevertheless achieved by way of some sort of squeeze.

Bridge players learn early on how to carry out a finesse, and then later on they realise that not every finesse should be taken. Even later than that comes the option of adopting a squeeze when crucial tricks are otherwise hard to come by.



Many books that teach you how to set up a squeeze are quite complex, and it's easy to give up and simply ignore the option. However, one I have come across is well worth exploring – it is entitled "Simple Squeezes" by Hugh Kelsey (subtitled "How to make impossible contracts").

Here is an example from the book –



W	N	E	S
Pass	1♦	Pass	2♣
Pass	3♣	Pass	3NT
Pass	6NT	All Pass	

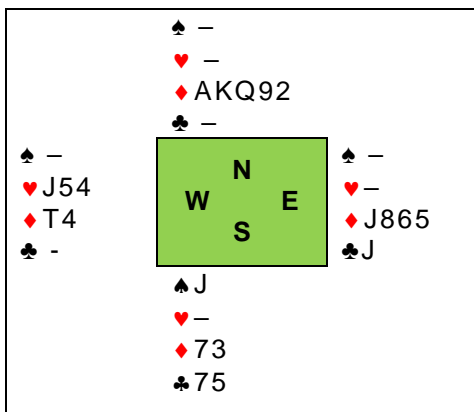
West leads the ♥K.

On a favourable distribution, there are 13 tricks, but you decide to try to ensure your contract and therefore hold off on the first trick. You have now "rectified the count".

West continues with the ♥Q to your Ace.

To prepare for the squeeze and to avoid ambiguity in the ending, you should now cash the top cards in one of the dummy's suits. Which one? Well, if you cash the top diamonds and then run the spades, both "menaces" will lie in dummy, and the only squeeze available will be a positional one against West.

Cashing the top clubs, however, will effect an automatic squeeze, permitting you to hold the club "menace" in your own hand. This will succeed when either defender has length in both minors. As shown in the diagram below, East has no good discard when the last spade is played.



Origins of a Bridge Club

In 2000 Beth Wilson sent an article to "Bridge" describing the origins and development of Biggar Bridge Club:

"The club is wonderful, made so by its membership. We are a friendly bunch, proud of our reputation and success. Our accommodation cannot take large numbers, so our club nights are Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays; Tuesdays are either a workshop or tuition. Gradually we introduce new players as they gain experience: they begin on Tuesday, then include either Monday or Wednesday before progressing to Thursday, which has most of the experienced players. We now enter all the various competitions that are scored on the internet, and have been very pleased with our results,

"We do not have a Committee. We have the usual office-bearers with me as President, but the whole membership help to run the club and take all but the day-to-day running decisions. They are responsible for their own club. If something requires to be done, it need only be mentioned and someone volunteers. If asked to help, someone is always willing to give the necessary support. It has been and still is hard work, but then so is everything if it is to succeed, and the outcome has been very rewarding. It is a pleasure to be the head of such a group, and I am proud to be one of them.

"I believe that the recipe for success is a combination of many things, but the main thing is to have someone enthusiastic, with the time and organising ability, willing to devote their attention to the job of recruiting, then advertising, the new club. It is a good idea to offer classes with a good teacher: we were very lucky in that regard. By the time the classes finished all the students were really keen to join the club.

"A local hotel allows us to play free of charge, but we do pay for tea and biscuits, a mutually beneficial arrangement since we give a good deal of publicity to the hotel in return for the use of their premises. We also arrange matches with other clubs, and when we have our various parties, the meals are provided by the hotel. Since our overheads are low, our charge for membership is low. We do not intend to make money, only to cover our costs.

"I would like to think that writing this may encourage others to either start a new club or to take a long hard look at yourselves within your club. If the game is more important than courtesy, friendliness, and the enjoyment of others, you will not be welcome at our club. In fact, I am not sure where you would be welcome. Bridge is not good if others are unhappy and disgruntled or numbers are falling. We have our share of 'difficult' players, but they are encouraged to be considerate of others; after all, it is a game of partnerships. We start play each evening with a different maxim, but the main one is: 'Be kind to your fellow players, especially to your partner.'

"Finally, do not blame others for any problems your club may have. Find the cause and do something about it. Show an example."

Looking back over 25 years, Beth still has strong views:

I imagine most clubs, or maybe only the smaller ones, face the problem of the membership being split due to different factors, e.g., not everyone has, or wants, access to a computer, and a club divides into face-to-face or computer bridge. I am also being made aware that cheating, a word I have only heard in recent times, has been made easier with regard to online bridge.

One thing that is unacceptable to some members is the awarding of points. This can result in less experienced players choosing not to play at times when it is obviously not an even playing field or experienced players unwilling to share or too willing to share their expertise. It tends to alter the balance of the game, which may not influence large clubs, but smaller clubs struggle to get a fair balance with the less experienced backing off.

In an effort to encourage new members, bridge clubs must take account of the interests of ALL members and not favour those who consider that because they have a 'title' they should have different treatment. We must be fair to the beginners, who are the people to be encouraged into our clubs.

At this time of all kinds of hardship, it would be good if bridge clubs could set an example. For instance, to offer free lessons to people who have the ability and need company but who cannot afford to pay for lessons. This would give bridge clubs the good publicity we deserve while attracting new members. Would this not be a source of pride for any club that could turn around the problem of attracting new members and earn the respect of those who gain from your help?

A response from one reader...

The origins of a bridge club are quite interesting to me. Especially the bit about not awarding points. I think they do make a good point in that the corporate goal of bridge clubs should not just be about 'winning'. I think it's good to accommodate players of all levels and to offer - if wanted - development / training / feedback as a norm during each bridge evening for all players - rather than there being stand-alone teaching sessions for beginners/newbies.

However, abandoning points is a terrible idea in my opinion.

I know that there are - in general - two [and often overlapping] cohorts of player:

- ♥ the keen player looking to advance and progress.
They enjoy the game in terms of learning to gain mastery of the game
- ♥ the person who enjoys the game by playing a few hands of cards for fun with their pals.
And who, for the most part, do not give a monkey's about Bergen or end plays.

Maybe clubs can introduce their own club point systems to allow newbies who want to improve and develop to be able to track their progress [assuming they are not able to win club master points]. And a points-based system is a good bio-feedback tool in this regard - being told you played well is nice but does not allow you to track your growth and expertise.

Irrespective of one's motivation for playing, I think that bridge should be a fun, enjoyable experience.

We can all understand why some folk no longer come to bridge clubs: when you play online - either with pals or with a bridge club - the occasional unpleasant opponent is much less in your face.

Paul Kerr

There is no doubt that some potential members are put off by a competitive atmosphere in a club. But duplicate bridge is, by its nature, competitive, and most of us would rather win than come last. The SBU is conducting a review of the Master Point scheme – we would love to hear your ideas.

Some time ago, we ran a Better Behaviour Campaign emphasising the importance of good manners and high ethical standards. Did it have any effect?

Are we making an effort to be welcoming to new members so that they are not put off?

The Campaign did provoke this tongue-in-cheek response from one member:

Old Yin's Rant

Bridge they say has gone to the dogs
With behaviour that's quite untoward
With coughs & similar cheating ways
With winning the only reward.

Bridge they say has gone to the dogs
Each one to be treated the same
Fools, overbidders, even beginners!
Remember it's only a game!

In days gone by it was ok to shout
At a partner who committed the sin
Of missing a contract or worse a bid
That left you with rubbish to play in.

Now it's smile, be nice, polite to all comers
No discussing the whys or the wherefore
But to old yins like me who've aye been around
Sure, it's not a just a game – it's war!

Alice Cowieson

Counting Quiz

1) Counting ...

West		East
♠AQJ73		♠T98
♥63		♥T84
♦AQ		♦KJ7
♣J652		♣AKT3

Auction:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
-	Pass	Pass	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♣	Pass
3♣	Pass	4♠	End

South leads the ♥K, followed by the ♥A, then the ♥2 to South's ♥Q.
(South follows with the ♥9 and ♥5, signalling an even number)

You ruff the third heart and play a club to the ♣A.

You run the ♠T, but North wins the ♠King.

He plays a club.

- how many points do NS have between them?
- what do you know about North's points?
- who has the ♣Q?

2) ... and more counting

Lead: ♠J	♠Q63	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>N</td> <td>♠742</td> </tr> <tr> <td>W</td> <td>♥J864</td> </tr> <tr> <td>S</td> <td>♦A62</td> </tr> <tr> <td>E</td> <td>♣K63</td> </tr> </table>	N	♠742	W	♥J864	S	♦A62	E	♣K63
	N		♠742							
W	♥J864									
S	♦A62									
E	♣K63									
♥AK										
♦75										
♣AJT952										

Auction:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
-	-	-	1NT
Pass	3NT	End	
*1NT = 12-14			

You are East. Partner leads the ♠J. Declarer lets that run to his ♠K.
He runs the ♣Q to your ♣King.

- How many points can partner have? Which cards might they be?
- How many tricks can declarer cash now?
- How might you beat this contract?
- Which card should you play?

"Third Hand Plays High"

Another bridge adage that merits a closer look.

When partner leads a small card, you should play a big one so that declarer does not win an undeserved cheap trick:

a)	♠T76 ♠AJ42 ♠K95 ♠Q83
----	---

b)	♠964 ♠QT82 ♠K53 ♠AJ7
----	---

West leads the ♠2 against South's No-trump contract:

East plays ♠K, winning the trick.
Back comes ♠9 (higher of 2 remaining),
and the defenders win 4 tricks.

East must play the ♠K so that declarer's ♠J does not score.
If declarer wins, the ♠A East must regain the lead to play ♠5.
If declarer ducks, East returns the ♠5 to establish 3 tricks.

Note: 'High' does not mean 'Highest': when you have 2 touching honour cards, you should play the lower:

c)	♠843 ♠KT72 ♠QJ5 ♠A96
----	---

d)	♠765 ♠K982 ♠JT4 ♠AQ3
----	---

When East plays the ♠J and declarer wins the ♠A.
West can infer that East must have the ♠Q.
If East plays the higher card, West should 'know' that the declarer has the other honour.

East plays the ♠T, and declarer wins the ♠Q.
West cannot tell who has the ♠J but East *may* have it.

It may also be wrong to play your highest card when the dummy has an honour:

e)	♠Q75 ♠A942 ♠KJ6 ♠T83
----	---

f)	♠Q73 ♠AJ62 ♠KT5 ♠984
----	---

When dummy plays the ♠5 the ♠J is high enough.
Save the ♠K to beat the ♠Q next time.

If the dummy plays low, you may as well try the ♠T.
Playing the ♠K means the dummy's ♠Q will score later.

Sometimes we play Third Hand High to Unblock a suit:

g)	♠A97 ♠QJT32 ♠K6 ♠854
----	---

West leads ♠Q. East plays ♠K whatever North does.
Otherwise, he may be forced to win the second round
and cannot continue the suit.

h)	♠Q7 ♠AT9432 ♠J6 ♠K83
----	---

West leads 4, and the dummy plays the ♠Q.
East must **unblock** the ♠J, keeping the ♠6 in order to lead
through declarer's ♠K8 later.

Third Hand High, like most Rules, has exceptions:

When partner has no high cards to promote, playing high may help only the declarer.

i)	♥7 ♥92 ♥KT8653 ♥AQJ4
----	---

East has bid hearts, and South overcalled 1NT.
Third Hand High gives the declarer 3 heart tricks.
Third Hand Low gives only 2.

j)	♥T86 ♥92 ♥AK543 ♥QJ2
----	---

This time you should duck the lead of ♥9.
That leaves West a second heart to play if he gets in.
Duck to keep communication with partner.

Against a suit contract, when partner leads a shortage through the dummy's strength:

i)	♥AJT532 ♥9 ♥Q876 ♥K4
----	---

Playing the ♥Q allows the declarer to draw trump and run ♥s.
Playing low means he has to ruff away your ♥Q
and find another entry to dummy.

j)	♥QJT642 ♥9 ♥K843 ♥A7
----	---

Partner has not underlead the ♥Ace, so playing ♥K
can only lose. Time for a Suit Preference Signal, so
that partner can put you in and to get a ♥ ruff.

It's a Funny Old Game

Zut alors!

French players usually excel at card play.

But even Homer nods - as on this deal from the 1985 European Championships.

France was doing well with two matches to play – but then they faced Switzerland.

	♠KQ	All Vul
	♥KJ875	Dealer S
	♦963	
	♣64	
♠AJT87652		♠943
♥-		♥T
♦T5		♦KJ72
♣QT2		♣K9873
	♠-	
	♥AQ9642	
	♦AQ84	
	♣AJ5	

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	1♥
3♣	4♥	Pass	4♣
Pass	5♥	Pass	6♥
End			

North was the great Paul Chemla. He tried to sign off over his partner's cue bid, but South could not resist bidding on to slam.

The Swiss West led the ♣2, East played a third-hand-high ♣K, and South faced two inevitable losers.

When it came time to score up, Chemla greeted his teammates: "You defeated the small slam on Board 13, I suppose?"

"Not exactly..."

The Swiss team, well out of contention, had their bidding boots on.

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	1♥
3♣	4♥	4♣	5♦
Pass	6♥	Pass	7♥
End			

North's 6♥ call was not well-judged since his spade values were surely duplicated.

But the play's the thing...

The French West led a club, but for reasons that must have appealed at the time, he chose to lead the ♠T.

East saw no point in playing a third-hand-high King when South was marked with ♣AQJ.

And so, declarer scored his ♣J.

There was still an inescapable loser in diamonds.

But the opening lead muddied the waters: East was sure South had at least 4 clubs...

Declarer crossed to dummy twice in trumps to take two spade ruffs in hand and then ran dummy's remaining trumps. East had to find 4 discards. He threw a spade, a club and *two diamonds*.

Declarer finessed in diamonds and claimed 13 tricks.

"Sorry, Paul, we did not defeat the Grand Slam either."

Results Page

Winter 4s

This Double Elimination event used to be run over a single weekend, a stamina test. Online constraints mean it is run over 2-weekends, with 24-board matches.

The Final was played on Sunday, 5 February, between the Undefeated team and the winning semi-finalists: as often happens, the Undefeated team lost!

Winners: Charles & Vi Outred; Clive Owen & Brian Senior **88-36 imps**

Runners-up David Shenkin, Cameron McLatchie, Derek Diamond, Martin Diamond, David Gerrard

In the **Semi-final**, Outred beat the Welsh team:

Adrian Thomas, Tony Disley, Mia Deschepper and Richard Plackett **74-48 imps**

The **Consolation Teams** on Sunday, 5 February, consists of teams eliminated in the later stages and qualifiers from a Drop-in Swiss. It is run as a Multiple teams: 8 teams play 7x8-board matches,

1=	Derek Sanders, Gints Freimanis, Paul Barton, Antone Huang	82 VP
	Martin Seligman (Starkowski, Pszczola, Kwiecen, Novak) – Polish stars, last year's winners: <i>(They were unlucky this time: their quarter-final v Outred ended in a tie, lost on point-a-board)</i>	
3	John Murdoch, Bob Ferrari, Paul Maiolani, Jim McMenemy	72 VP
4	Fiona Greenwood, Julia Palmer, H Wildsmith, T Chanter	70 VP
5	Robert Clow, Troy van de l'Isle, Mike McGinley, David Wiseman	68 VP
6	Bob McKinnon, Alan Whiteford, Cathy Ferguson, Ian Patrick	67 VP
7	David Stevenson, Liz Commins, Paddy Murphy, Mark Roderick, B Pitts	66 VP
8	Jim Hay, Derrick Peden, Alex Adamson, Glen Falconer	53 VP

Winter 4s Swiss (Peploe Trophy)

A separate event, open to all, played on Sunday, 5 February. (Teams eliminated from the Winter 4s on Saturday, 4 February, get free entry.) 26 teams played 8 matches of 6 boards.

1	Rona Moss, Laura Middleton, Tom Robertson, Damien Byron	114.47VP
2	Angus MacDonald, John Hamilton, John Dick, Kevin Strathern	112.83 VP
3	Harry Smith, Roy Bennett, Liam O'Brien, Ronan Valentine	93.70 VP
4	Tom Bagnall, Andrew Harborow, David Briggs, David King	91.77VP
5	Patrick Shields, Rob Lawy, Peter Waggett, Ben Ritacca	89.69 VP
6	Eddie McGeough, Pauline Phillips, Michael Hodder, Graham Johnson	89.08 VP

Thea Teale Salver (Bronze Teams)

18 teams took part, playing 7 matches of 5 boards in a Swiss format.

1	Ishbel & Keith Clark; Edward & Lynette Clutton	92 VP
2	Stuart Morrison & Barbara Reay; Margaret Sinclair & Marian Walmsley	91 VP
3	Norma Kerr & Judith Smeaton; Helen McCormac and Marilyn McDonagh	82 VP
4	Catherine & Daniele Lapi; Susan Dick & Sara Mitchell	79 VP
5	Evelyn Hogg & Carol Lamond; Margaret Cook & Ian Oliver	76 VP

Master Point Promotions

January 2023

Regional Master

Keith Clark E
Sandy Greenhill C
Doreen Hollywood W
Marilyn McDonagh E

Senior Master

David Fotheringham E

2 Star Master

Anne Cattanach A

1 Star Master

Edward Clutton E
Sheila Herd C
Jim McGuinness W

Master

Aileen Brannan E
Jan Dargue E
Jim Marshall C
Elizabeth St Clair W

District Master

Tricia Campbell E
Daihong Dai A
Antone Huang E
Pat May C

Local Master

Stephen Carr H
Susan Chapple C
Janet Glen E
Norma Gourlay W
Linda Juroszek N
Carole Lovie N
Kate Middleton E
Rob Royall N
Maureen Taggart W

Club Master

Hilary Cromar N
Catherine Grainger C
Janet Ironside E
Caroline Mann N
Marie Perry E
Peter Surfleet E
Pat Wilson A

Answers to Quiz

1

	♠K4 ♥AKJ2 ♦9654 ♣974	
♠AQJ73 ♥63 ♦AQ ♣J652	N W E S	♠T98 ♥T84 ♦KJ7 ♣AKT3
	♠652 ♥Q975 ♦T832 ♣Q8	

- a) Your hand and dummy have a combined 25 HCP so NS have 15.
- b) North has shown up with ♥AK and ♠K. = 10 HCP (looks as if he might have ♥J also)
- c) If North had the ♣Q, he would have 12-13 HCP and probably have opened the bidding. South is the favourite to hold the ♣Q, so do not finesse this time – drop it!

2

Lead: ♠J	♠Q63 ♥AK ♦75 ♣AJT952	
♠JT985 ♥732 ♦KJ94 ♣8	N W E S	♠742 ♥J864 ♦A62 ♣K63
	♠AK ♥QT95 ♦QT83 ♣Q74	

- a) You see 22 HCP between your hand and dummy; declarer has 12-14; therefore, partner has 4-6. If partner has ♠AJT South, must have ♦KQ and ♥Q. With no ♠A partner has ♦K, or both red Queens.
- b) Declarer has made 1 spade and now has 5 clubs, and ♥AK = 8 tricks.
- c) If you continue spades ♠Q will surely be the declarer's 9th trick. But if partner has ♦KJ9x, you might cash 4 diamond tricks
- d) lead the ♦2: you need to keep ♦A as an entry to lead a third round of diamonds.