

# Scottish Bridge News

The Official Magazine of the Scottish Bridge Union

October 2021



*Sarah Gunn and Ian Patrick, our two new SBU Trustees.*

*Player Profiles Page 19*

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# Scottish Bridge News

## Editorial

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Major change is afoot at the SBU. The pandemic made it clear that the current structure, where a contract with BBO could not be signed without making one individual responsible for any future legal action, was untenable. You will find information about the new structure on the website.

In contrast the fate of the magazine may seem trivial. This is the last edition in the traditional format, formed over the past thirty-odd years. When the magazine was born there were many printed bridge magazines; now there are virtually none. Moving with the times, the SBU is taking its publications online.

In an effort to communicate more directly with all the members, we hope to produce a monthly newsletter with results, information about future events, and various features. We hope that everybody will contribute with information, anecdotes, opinions and queries.

In addition there will be a bi-monthly Ezine with longer reports and articles and many of the features of the defunct SBNews.

Communication is a two-way street, and we need to hear from you, our members, about what interests you and what you would like us to provide.

The new regime begins in January 2022.

There are no new Bidding Challenges in this issue: these will be published on the website and e-mailed to individual members next month. We hope to run the Bronze Challenge as a monthly feature separate from the newsletter, with prizes for the best performances over the entire year.

The traditional 'Expert' Challenge will appear every two months in the Ezine, with the problems circulated six weeks in advance.

And there is no new crossword. Mike Marshall (aka 'Finesse'), our regular compiler, has been a model contributor for many years and deserves our sincere thanks. He has indicated that he has taken on other responsibilities but has been prevailed upon to perhaps provide two crosswords per year. We hope that one feature of the newsletter will be a Puzzle Corner with different challenges for your entertainment.

We have two Player Profiles: these are the two Trustees who join Alan Goodman, Joan Forsyth and Mike Ash on the Board of the reformed SBU. We wish them all success and ask all our members to support them.

We were deeply saddened to hear of the sudden death of David Kaye, a regular contributor to this magazine since 2002. A man of many interests and a unique pawky wit, David was one of those players you were always pleased to meet. In the words of our crossword compiler: He was very kind to me, as he always was to both his partners and his opponents." We have an obituary from two of his regular partners, and as a tribute we reprint two of his earliest articles. You will be pleased to know that his friend Mike Baron hopes to compile a collection of his articles for publication.

# The End of an Era

The SBU News was born in September 1989.

This was when Cameron Farquharson introduced Individual Membership to the SBU, which up till then had been a Union of Clubs. The voluntary subscription was £6. What could we give the supporters to make membership worthwhile? Would a quarterly magazine do the trick?

The first editor was **David Frew**. The first edition was a slim 8-pager with little content, but there were signs of class to come with contributions from Hugh Kelsey and Alex Adamson. David extracted contributions from all and sundry, notably Dr Jimmy Allan's Player Profiles and Sam Leckie's anecdotes. All went well for the first year or two, but the extraction of material proved a daunting task and publication became increasingly erratic.

In 1992 **Alasdair Forbes** took over as editor. Printing was moved to Stirling University, which was a bargain, but did not give the SBU priority when bigger orders came in. The Magazine grew bigger – between 30 and 40 pages were the norm. Alasdair conscientiously reported on every Home International. He added Carl Dickel, Jimmie Arthur, Ken Baxter, Robert Gray, Norman Yorke, Charles Outred and your editor to the regular contributors.

In February 1994 Iain Sime launched the Bidding Competition, which quickly became a regular feature. In 1997 we had the first Crossword; we have been very fortunate that the various compilers, Gordon Forbes, Iain McIntyre, and most recently Mike Marshall, have kept the feature going for all these years.

In 1997, in preparation for recognition as a separate NBO, the SBU moved from Club to Individual Membership. Everybody paid £2 through their Club. That was clearly

insufficient to support the delivery of a magazine to every household, and readers were asked to take out a Direct Subscription. The Farquharson Trophy, a Pairs event open only to magazine subscribers was introduced as a sweetener. (What will become of it now?)

In 1999 we had a new editor, **David Perry**. His aim was to make the magazine of interest to all players to which end he tried to garner news and views from the Districts. Scotland became a separate NBO in 2000, and the methods of selection of international teams became a burning issue.

In 2001 David passed the editorship to **Archie Bouverie**. Archie had ambitious plans to make the magazine a must-read for all British players, achieving commercial viability through advertising. He set up his own printing room in his back garden, taking on physical labour as well as mental. He increased the number of pages to 60 and redesigned the cover. Perhaps his greatest gift to the magazine was to recognise the writing talent of David Kaye and assure him of a regular slot. But he could not persuade the Council to make the magazine available to the entire membership, so the print run never became big enough to attract serious advertising.

In 2004 Archie handed over to **Jim Patrick**, one of our best players and a keen analyst. Another change of cover – to pictures of actual players. He persuaded John Matheson to share some of his many interesting ideas on bidding and extracted regular columns from many of our other top players. Scotland was playing regularly in European and World Competitions, and these had to be reported.

By now production was in the capable hands of **Stewart Duguid**, who organised the printing at Kestrel Press and found the pictures for the covers. The magazine had become a classy publication, great value for

money but more expensive to produce, published as a service to our members, but not available to all. Debates about its value began to rage.

By 2011 Jim felt he had been editor long enough. Nigel Guthrie volunteered to take over. Nigel did not realise just how much he was taking on, and never managed to produce a full issue. Into the breach stepped **Bob McKinnon**. He produced the July issue at speed and went on to develop the magazine with new contributors and features. The Player Profile was introduced to try to familiarise the membership with those who run bridge in Scotland as well as its top players. Bob encouraged the big clubs to take out a large subscription for their entire membership, but still could not increase the circulation of what had become a great publication. He celebrated the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the SBNews in 2014. It is an unfortunate fact that after a disagreement with the powers-that-were over expenses Bob felt forced to resign in 2016.

Liz McGowan stepped into the breach to make sure there was continuity. Her 'temporary' editorship became permanent when no-one else wanted the job.

## The Future

In 2003 Anne Reid wrote a Letter to the Editor:

"If you wish to attract more subscribers there needs to be something to appeal to everyone. I suggest the following:

- 1 A regular item for novices
- 2 News from the Districts
- 3 Items on TD Rulings
- 4 Conventions
- 5 Hints for Average Players
- 6 Personalities
- 7 Humanise the SBU Council and those running the Districts
- 8 Book and Computer Program Reviews
- 9 Readers' Letters

Most of these have been introduced, but others are dependent on your co-operation. If the readers do not write, or no-one reports from the Districts what is an Editor to do?

The future of online publication is in your hands – do you have any ideas?

Online publication will allow more flexibility and more colourful presentation. And the E-zine will be readily available to all our members. Will it prove more popular than the printed version?

We have rather ambitious plans. A monthly Newsletter will replace the current Bronze Section with results, information about events and classes, Teachers' Tips, Quizzes, lists of MP promotions and various entertaining regular features. Alongside the Newsletter we hope to produce a bi-monthly E-zine with reports on national and international events and other regular features of the current magazine.

Hopefully these will arouse interest and encourage our membership to get in touch with ideas, suggestions, opinions and contributions....

But the work involved is daunting and will require the co-operation of numerous volunteers.

Might you be one?

Or can you volunteer a more modest friend?



## The EBL Qualifiers

The European Bridge League has decided not to run a face-to-face championship until the pandemic is officially over. But the World Bridge Federation plans to run its Championships (the Bermuda Bowl, Venice Cup, d'Orsi and Wuhan Cup) in Italy from 27 March – 9 April, 2022.

So the EBL ran a qualification event online in August. To avoid any accusations of cheating this was run on RealBridge, and each country was required to gather its players together at a single venue, where they were supervised by scrutineers from other countries. The four events: Open, Women, Seniors and Mixed, played different boards.

The Scots gathered at the Holiday Inn in Edinburgh, supervised by an Englishman and an Irishman. That sounds like the introduction to a joke, but the Scottish Open team were faced with a serious dilemma in their first match against Italy. As the host country Italy already have a place at the World Championships but had entered a team in order to qualify for the Champions Cup. One of their selected players was Fulvio Fantoni, convicted of cheating with his partner Nunes and barred from playing for 5 years. He had been reinstated on a technicality by the Council for Arbitration in Sport. The Scottish players refused to play against him, setting a trend that was followed by every other team in the event. So Italy qualified in third position with a score of 372 (12 for each unplayed match) without playing a board. Their opponents all scored 0 points in matches against them for failing to show. The EBL now has a difficult decision on how to deal with the aftermath.

The Qualifier was played over six days, though the four events were to some extent staggered.

## When is a Club not a Club?

Our Seniors started on Day 1 against Belgium. The second board was not dull.

Board 2	♠J73 ♥98765 ♦K8 ♣J73	NS Vul Dealer E
♠652 ♥T2 ♦AT764 ♣Q62		♠Q ♥4 ♦QJ92 ♣AKT9854
	♠AKT984 ♥AKQJ3 ♦53 ♣-	

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
<i>Goodman</i>	<i>Kaplan</i>	<i>Short</i>	<i>Polet</i>
-	-	1♣	2♣ <sup>1</sup>
Pass	3♥	4♣	5♣
Dbl	5♥	Pass	6♥
Pass	Pass	7♣	Pass
Pass	Dbl	End	

<sup>1</sup>2♣ Michaels Cuebid, 5-5+ in the Majors

The Belgian South trusted his partner to have a diamond honour (he did not appear to have much else) and punted slam. Brian Short did well to sacrifice for -500, the par score on the board. The Scottish NS stopped in 5♥ for +710 and a 5 imp gain.

Scores in other matches ranged quite widely but there were two joke results. How do you show a Major two-suiter over a potentially short 1♣? Some stick with the Michaels 2♣, others prefer 2♣ to be natural and use 2♦ as Michaels. Two pairs were mismatched: one South played in 2♣-5, the other in 2♦-6.

Memory strain is reduced if you play the same methods over the short 1♣ whether it shows 2 or 3. Those who regularly play against 5-card Major systems mostly prefer to use 2♣ as natural and 2♦ as Michaels. Whatever you decide to do, be sure to agree it with partner!

## When it's a Strong Club?

Most partnerships in the Women's event played a 5-card major system, but Estonians are wedded to the Strong Club. We met them in Round 13.

Last century, when Precision Club was at its popularity peak, Liz McGowan and Sandra Penfold were schooled in a defence by the late great John Armstrong. The McGowan / McQuaker system file devotes a whole page to CRASH (ColourRAnkSHape). Over a strong 1♣ double shows hearts; 1♦ spades; and 1♥, 1♠ and 1NT are all two suiters. The plan is to disrupt their auction. The method has its dangers and many experienced players have nightmares about system CRASHes. It is not recommended without a thorough discussion of subsequent bidding.

Board 5	♠83	NS Vul
	♥KQT74	Dealer N
	♦J982	
	♣76	
♠AKQ		♠JT7642
♥AJ5		♥932
♦AQ		♦543
♣A9432		♣5
	♠95	
	♥65	
	♦KT76	
	♣KQJT8	

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
-	Pass	Pass	Pass
1♣	Dbl <sup>1</sup>	End	

<sup>1</sup>Dbl = hearts

There seemed no harm in showing hearts, even Vulnerable, as a passed hand. At my next turn I tried to bid 1♦ but RealBridge does not allow illegal calls. So much for the discussion of subsequent bidding!

We could not quite beat 1♣ doubled, so chalked up an unusual -140. It was a relief to realise that an uninterrupted auction would surely reach the cold 4♣.

## French Toast

In Round 3 the Open Team faced France.

Board 30	♠86	None Vul
	♥942	Dealer E
	♦9864	
	♣T763	
♠943		♠AKQJT752
♥T765		♥Q
♦J72		♦AT
♣QJ4		♣95
	♠-	
	♥AKJ83	
	♦KQ53	
	♣AK82	

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
<i>Punch</i>		<i>Peterkin</i>	
-	-	1♠	Dbl
2♠	Pass	4♣	Dbl
End			

A normal-looking auction to a normal-looking contract. South led out ♥AK, Stephen ruffed and led a club. South took the ♣K and cashed the Ace instead of establishing a diamond. A promising +590.

The French East opened 2♣, weak with diamonds or any game-forcing hand. Derek Sanders doubled, but when East rebid 4♣ he bid 4NT rather than double again. Alex Adamson was not overjoyed to find himself declaring 5♣, but he soon cheered up. He ruffed the spade lead and played a top heart, dropping the Queen. When everybody followed to the two top clubs, he cashed two more hearts, ruffed the fourth and led a diamond. East took his Ace, and Alex claimed 11 tricks. +400 meant 14imps.

Par on the board is 300 to NS from 5♣ doubled. The Romanian NS pair missed that in spectacular fashion. East opened a form of Multi 2♦ and South doubled. West redoubled ('bid your suit') and East bid 4♣. South doubled again. North ran to 4NT and South cuebid 5♠. North panicked and passed! An unusual 8 down, but only -400.

## Mixed Fortunes

Our Mixed Team met England in Round 3.

Board 26	♠J43 ♥Q8732 ♦T652 ♣J	All Vul Dealer E									
♠KT97 ♥6 ♦K9873 ♣K94	<table border="1"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠A ♥AKT5 ♦A ♣AQT8732
	N										
W		E									
	S										
	♠Q8652 ♥J94 ♦QJ4 ♣65										

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
<i>Forsyth</i>		<i>Aitchison</i>	
-	-	2♦	Pass
2♥	Pass	3♣	Pass
4♣	Pass	4♦	Pass
4NT	Pass	5♣	Pass
7♣	End		

Susan and Jim use 2♦ as a game force, and soon landed in the cold Grand. (Purists might point to the superiority of 7NT, but only one pair bid that.)

This produced a surprise 13 imp gain when the English EW were one of only 4 pairs to miss the Grand. After a similar start East bid 4NT over 4♣. He alerted it as Keycard Blackwood, but his partner interpreted it differently. Over her leap to 6♣ East scratched his head for a bit, and eventually passed.

### Overheard in the Playing Area

Scottish Senior (plaintively):

"Something is wrong! The computer is playing my cards for me."

Chorus of other players:

"That's because you are dummy!"

## Women's Misfortunes

Our Women played Iceland in Round 10.

Board 4	♠A632 ♥86 ♦AT4 ♣KQ53	All Vul Dealer W									
♠Q ♥T5432 ♦Q8762 ♣62	<table border="1"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠J9854 ♥- ♦953 ♣A9874
	N										
W		E									
	S										
	♠KT7 ♥AKQJ97 ♦KJ ♣JT										

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	<i>Palmer</i>		<i>Greenwood</i>
-	1♣	Pass	2♥
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♥
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♦
Pass	4NT	Pass	5♣
Pass	6♥	End	

Fiona and Julia play strong jump shifts over one of a minor. 2NT showed a weak no-trump, 3♥ set trump and there followed a couple of cues and a Keycard ask. 6♥ is a fine spot that could even stand a 5-0 trump break if East had the long trump. But on this day 97% was not good enough.

The Icelandic NS were one of only two pairs to reach the fractionally superior 6NT. When hearts are foul there are 11 winners and a 12<sup>th</sup> comes from a good diamond guess, or a favourable spade position, or perhaps a squeeze.

17imps seemed a lot to lose over a fraction.

9 pairs missed slam altogether, but the joke result came when one South bid 5NT, pickaslam, North picked 6♠, and South forgot to convert to 6NT. East knew enough not to double and quietly collected 400.



## Slamfest

Match 5 in the Open saw slam bid on five of the 10 boards.

Bd	Slam	Bid	Made
11	6♠ off 2 Aces	6	0
12	6♦ on KJ guess	14	8
14	6♠ on finesse for ♠Q	10	9
17	7♥ with various chances	9	9
	Cold 6♥	17	17
20	6♣ on a finesse	17	14

The Netherlands set the record for most calls in an auction on Board 17. (You cannot run out of Pass cards on RealBridge.)

Board 17		All Vul
♠AQ	<div style="border: 1px solid green; padding: 5px; width: 100px; height: 100px; display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> <span>N</span> <span>W</span> <span>E</span> <span>S</span> </div>	♠K853
♥8652		♥AKQJT
♦AJ84		♦K9
♣762		♣AQ
		Dealer E

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
<i>Brink</i>		<i>Drijver</i>	
-	-	2♣	Pass
2♦	Pass	2NT	Pass
3♣	Dbl	Pass	Pass
Reddbl	Pass	3♦	Pass
3♠	Pass	2♣	Pass
4♦	Pass	4♥	Pass
4♠	Pass	4NT	Pass
5♥	Pass	5♠	Pass
5NT	Pass	6♦	Pass
6♠	Pass	7♥	Pass
7NT	End		

North's double of 3♣ marked the ♠K in his hand. East's Pass promised a stopper in clubs. Redouble restarted the Puppet Stayman auction. 3♠ showed hearts, and 4♦ was a retransfer. Various Grand Slam tries reached the second-best spot. No worries. South had 5 spades and the ♦Q and was duly squeezed.

A joke result came when one pair failed to agree the trump suit and played in 5♠-4 (intended as the Queen Ask).

Scotland were playing Germany.

Board 20		EW Vul
♠KQT43	<div style="border: 1px solid green; padding: 5px; width: 100px; height: 100px; display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> <span>N</span> <span>W</span> <span>E</span> <span>S</span> </div>	Dealer W
♥9752		♠7
♦4		♥84
♣872		♦QT63
		♣KT9643
♠AJ82		♠965
♥AKQ		♥JT63
♦AJ5		♦K9872
♣AQ5		♣J

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	<i>Punch</i>		<i>Peterkin</i>
1♣	1♠	3♣	Pass
6NT	End		

The cunning 1♣ opener gave Sam room for a slim overcall. West may have forgotten that the lead came up to his hand in 6♣ also.

The ♠K was led. Declarer won and cashed all his clubs. Sam discarded three spades and West concluded that she must be clinging to the guarded ♦K. He cashed ♥AKQ and exited with a spade to her Queen. She nonchalantly cashed the thirteenth heart.

This was not the only plus score for NS on the board. Polish Club had a hiccup. West opened 1♣ and rebid an artificial game-forcing 2♦. Now East thought 3♠ was a relay, but West thought it was natural. East did rather well to escape for -3 in 6♠.

The Greek EW also had a system forget.

After 2♣ – 2♦ – 3NT (24-25) East bid 4♠, showing, in his world, the minors. A less friendly defence meant that was -3 also.

Comforting to know that even the best players can forget parts of the system that rarely occur!

## The Last Gasp

Going into the last round, the English Open Team had scored 324.35 VP. They lay in 10<sup>th</sup> position, one short of qualification. Just ahead were Hungary on 334.99 and Bulgaria on 332.89.

In the last match Bulgaria scored a near-maximum 19.76 VP against Turkey to qualify comfortably in 6<sup>th</sup> place. England played Germany; after 9 boards they led by 20 imps, enough for a 15.97 VP win. Hungary were down to Greece by 1 imp, giving them 9.61. This was the final board.

Board 10	♠J63 ♥76 ♦A976532 ♣Q	All Vul Dealer E									
♠A ♥AKQJ932 ♦- ♣AJ954	<table border="1"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠T52 ♥T54 ♦KQT ♣8732
	N										
W		E									
	S										
	♠KQ9874 ♥8 ♦J84 ♣KT6										

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
-	-	Pass	2♠
4♣ <sup>1</sup>	4♠	5♣	Pass
7♥	End		

4♣<sup>1</sup> = Leaping Michaels, ♠ + ♥

The German EW were at odds. When East made a free bid West assumed he must have a club honour and bid the hopeless Grand. At the other table Tom Townsend did not think his East hand worth a bid, and David Bakhshi played peacefully in 6♥. 17 imps gave England 17.34 VP and a grand total of 341.69.

Over the Hungarian South's weak 2♠, the Greek West punted 6♥ and scored an untroubled 1430. The Hungarian West started with a double, over which the Greek North found a 3♦ call. East passed and South raised to 4♦. West risked 4♥ now,

and North bid 4♠. East doubled that, but the best the defence could do was to collect 500 for a 14-imp loss. This reduced Hungary's score to 5.72 and their total to 340.71.

And so England snatched the last qualifying spot by just .88 of a VP.

There were big swings in other matches. No-one achieved the par score of 6♠X-4, but several Wests missed slam. Scotland gained 13 imps when Derek Sanders made a 'practical' 6♥ overcall and his Slovenian counterpart took a longer route to 5♥. The 13 imps gained secured Scotland's 26<sup>th</sup> place, their best performance since 2006.

The joke result came when Sweden played Poland. Peter Bertheau thought he could afford to start with a double of the Polish Multi 2♦. North was content. East saw no reason to bid. To add insult to injury, there was no way to defeat 2♦ doubled.

Takeout doubles on distributional hands can backfire! If you do not play Leaping Michaels we recommend the unscientific 6♥ which needs so little from partner.

## The Perfect NPC?

Who would willingly captain a Women's Team? Three cheers for Gints Freimanis who cheerfully took on the job and went above and beyond. He organised pre-event get-togethers, allayed our online concerns, summarised opponents' systems and turned up every day with freshly baked banana bread and brownies.

Line-ups were entered blind, but Gints nonetheless demanded to know which opponents his senior player would like to play; after extracting reluctant preference he somehow managed to satisfy it every time. Belief in his psychic powers was rather dented when he confessed that he had E-mailed the French captain to explain that his Elder Player had requested to play against her French counterpart. An amused capitaine sent a copy of his line-up!

## Auld Enemies

Our Seniors met England in Round 17. Paul Hackett likes a 4-card major style, but this was a Bad Day for the method.

Board 16	♠A4 ♥Q5 ♦A9432 ♣A963	EW Vul Dealer W									
♠QT5 ♥KT96 ♦K75 ♣QJ8	<table border="1"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠J8732 ♥432 ♦J6 ♣KT5
	N										
W		E									
	S										
	♠K96 ♥AJ87 ♦QT8 ♣742										

<b>WEST</b>	<b>NORTH</b>	<b>EAST</b>	<b>SOUTH</b>
<i>Senior</i>	<i>Short</i>	<i>Hackett</i>	<i>Goodman</i>
1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass
1NT	Dbl	End	

Brian Short had no convenient bid on the first round but made a takeout double on the second. Alan Goodman eyed the vulnerability: if partner had enough to double a weak no-trump he was happy to pass. A diamond lead brought a tasty 800.

Board 20	♠AKT86 ♥T9 ♦K85 ♣Q52	All Vul Dealer W									
♠Q432 ♥AK7 ♦A97 ♣AJ7	<table border="1"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠95 ♥Q52 ♦QT64 ♣KT98
	N										
W		E									
	S										
	♠J7 ♥J8643 ♦J32 ♣643										

<b>WEST</b>	<b>NORTH</b>	<b>EAST</b>	<b>SOUTH</b>
<i>Senior</i>	<i>Short</i>	<i>Hackett</i>	<i>Goodman</i>
1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass
2NT	Pass	3NT	Pass
Pass	Dbl	End	

The lead-directing double saw the Scots take the first 5 tricks for +200. In the other room John Murdoch played in 3NT as West. The spade lead from North gave a trick, and a good view in clubs saw him home.

Scotland won the match by 19 imps.

## Results

### Open Teams (31 teams)

1	Switzerland	385.09
2	Netherlands	372.34
3	Italy	372.00
4	Israel	364.63
26	Scotland	260.15

### Women's Teams (20 teams)

1	Sweden	249.35
2	Poland	225.40
3	Russia	223.10
4	Turkey	221.56
15	Scotland	170.45

### Senior Teams (24 teams)

1	Netherlands	303.81
2	Bulgaria	278.13
3	France	278.03
4	Denmark	277.09
18	Scotland	204.41

### Mixed Teams (21 teams)

1	France	301.03
2	Belgium	272.05
3	Romania	246.51
4	Germany	244.57
18	Scotland	169.44

# An Unsafety Play

*Iain Sims*

In my Bronze to Silver classes, this is one of the problem hands I set my pupils.

♠432			
♥72			
♦43			
♣AKQ765			
	N		
	W	E	
		S	
♠AQ			
♥A654			
♦AT52			
♣83			

It is teams scoring and you (South) must make 3NT on the lead of the ♠6. How should you play?

Most of my class knew my trick hands by now. If you were missing four trumps to the Jack, they would all be in one hand, so cash the honour to pick up the Jack wherever it lay. They figured that cashing ten top tricks in 3NT wasn't going to happen.

The winning safety play was, of course, to duck a club. Now you pick up the 4=1 breaks, adding more than 20% to the success rate.

In the EBL Seniors Qualifier, this hand arose.

Board	♠AKQ752	EW Vul
	♥J8	Dealer S
	♦JT8	
	♣T6	
♠9		♠J643
♥Q65		♥AK43
♦7652		♦AQ9
♣98753		♣42
	N	
	W	E
		S
	♠T8	
	♥T972	
	♦K43	
	♣AKQJ	

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
-	-	-	1♣
Pass	1♠	Pass	1NT <sup>1</sup>
Pass	2♦ <sup>2</sup>	Pass	2♥
Pass	3♠	Pass	3NT
End			

<sup>1</sup>1NT = 12-14

<sup>2</sup>2♦ = Checkback Major suit enquiry

John Murdoch led the ♣8. How should South play?

South won the ♣Q and ran the ♠T to my Jack. A quick count of South's assets indicated that he probably had the ♦K or the ♥Q, but not both. We successfully cashed out for one down.

This hand puzzled me. If spades were 3=2, there were ten top tricks. Safety plays are fine, but was this the right time? Did South have a wire? I am usually suspicious when somebody does something like this on BBO. But we were on Real Bridge with neutral observers. Could he see another screen?

Our fears were somewhat allayed when we heard the story from the other table. Our teammates play transfer responses to a One Club opener, which meant that 4♠ by South was a possible contract. 4♠ is makeable on a club lead. On a red suit lead, East has an easy cash out. So, if North declared, the contract was inevitably going down.

East doubled the 1♥ (transfer) response making a club lead unlikely. Alan Goodman (South) also played 3NT, and West dutifully led the ♥5. East won the ♥K and played the ♥A. West, not unreasonably, unblocked the Queen! The gift of two heart tricks brought Alan's total to nine. Alan was no doubt pleased to see spades misbehaving. Ten imps to Scotland.

## Thinking it Through

Another attempt to create a step-by-step walk through a real deal. Try to answer each question before reading on past the solid lines.

You are playing in a Lockdown Swiss Teams against expert opponents.

Partner deals at Love All.

♠J97
♥K5
♦AQT
♣AJ963

Partner passes, as does RHO, and you open 1NT (15-17). Partner employs Stayman, then bids game over your 2♦ response. Your contract is 3NT

West leads the ♦4, and dummy appears:

	♠AQ84			
	♥Q982			
	♦J53			
	♣T7			
♦4 lead	<table border="1"><tr><td>N</td></tr><tr><td>W E</td></tr><tr><td>S</td></tr></table>	N	W E	S
N				
W E				
S				
	♠J97			
	♥K5			
	♦AQT			
	♣AJ963			

You count just 4 Sure Tricks – the black Aces and 2 diamond tricks. You have good chances of developing more in various suits.

What do you make of the lead?

---

Most expert players would choose a Major suit on this auction rather than lead into your minors. West is likely 3=3=4=3, or he might have 5 diamonds including the 2.

Where can you find 5 more tricks?

---

You can hope to develop two extra tricks from spades, one from hearts or two or three from clubs.

Which suit should you tackle first?

---

It looks best to play on clubs. If they break 3=3 they just might provide four tricks, and, more importantly, if you lose the lead to West he cannot continue diamonds without giving you an extra trick. East will surely lead a diamond through as soon as he gets in.

After all that thought, how should you play to trick 1?

---

Since you want to lead clubs from dummy you should win trick 1 with the ♦J. East, playing standard count, produces the ♦8.

When you lead the ♣T East follows with the four. What does that tell you?

---

If East had two or three clubs to an honour he should cover the Ten. Either he has no honours, or he has four clubs.

You run the ♣T to West's King. He returns the ♠2. You play low from dummy and East, after some thought, produces the ♠T.

What is going on?

---

East is an ethical player, so his hesitation tells you he must have the ♠K. So why did he not win it to clear diamonds? He should have a fair idea of your holdings in the minors by now and will place you with a heart honour to make up your opening bid. If he thought partner could have a heart entry he would surely win and return a diamond. (He has another diamond – West cannot have more than 5 diamonds.) You are inclined to place him with the ♥A.

What do you play after winning the ♠J?

---

You may as well cash the ♣A in case West has KQ doubleton. When nothing happens play another club to East's Queen. West discards a spade.

East now plays the ♦6.

Do you win or duck?

You have already lost two club tricks, and if you lose a diamond another spade through will give the opponents five tricks. East's carding suggests he has a doubleton diamond, in which case you can make your game by winning, cashing your clubs and conceding a spade. If East has a third diamond you are down anyway.

The full hand:

♠632	♠AQ84	♠KT5
♥JT4	♥Q982	♥A763
♦K9742	♦J53	♦86
♣K5	♣T7	♣Q842
	♠J97	
	♥K5	
	♦AQT	
	♣AJ963	

This was all pretty lucky! On other layouts a heart switch from West would be fatal, but here his best chance was that partner had ♠KJx.

Perhaps you should have a word with partner about not pushing too hard for non-vulnerable games.

## Bridge is a Difficult Game

*John Matheson*

Sometimes one can watch a top-class game on BBO. One such match was Michael Rosenberg / Zach Grossack of the USA v. an excellent Irish pair Mesbur / FitzGibbon.

	♠A63	All Vul
	♥KJ98742	Dealer N
	♦5	
	♣A3	
♠Q98		♠7
♥Q53		♥A6
♦QJ		♦A9632
♣K9654		♣QJ872
	♠KJT542	
	♥T	
	♦KT874	
	♣T	

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Grossack	FitzGibbon	Rosenberg	Mesbur
-	1♥	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♠	2NT	4♣ <sup>1</sup>
5♣	5♦	Pass	5♠
End			

<sup>1</sup>4♣ Splinter

This is a very complex contract. A club was led and won by the Ace. A diamond was played from dummy. It looked natural for Rosenberg to win his Ace. However, often in these positions ducking an Ace gets a trick back. Here it actually defeats the contract!

Declarer ruffed the club return at trick 3. Mesbur played this hand very well, but on this layout he made a small natural error of playing the ♥T to the five, Jack and Ace. Rosenberg played another club which Mesbur ruffed and played the ♠J to the Queen and Ace followed by a spade to the King. He then ruffed a diamond, discarded

a small diamond on the ♥K and ruffed a heart back to hand to draw the last trump. He made a club, six trumps, one heart, the diamond King and Ten plus a ruff – eleven tricks in total. When Rosenberg won his ♥A he had to play a diamond to defeat the contract. This upsets declarer’s timing. In essence he will suffer a trump promotion – he needs to ruff a diamond on which West can pitch the ♥Q.

That is why after ruffing a club at trick 3 South had to start with the ♠J before leading a heart. If you followed all this and found the winning defence at the table you are a world class defender. Rosenberg is one of the world’s very best analysts but this deal was too tough even for him.

	♠KQT	NS Vul
	♥QJ6	Dealer S
	♦A654	
	♣842	
♠J532		♠A976
♥52		♥93
♦KQT		♦972
♣AQ95		♣J763
	♠84	
	♥AKT874	
	♦J83	
	♣KT	

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
<i>Grossack</i>	<i>FitzGibbon</i>	<i>Rosenberg</i>	<i>Mesbur</i>
-	-	Pass	1♥
Dbl	2♦ <sup>1</sup>	Pass	2♥
Pass	3♥	End	

<sup>1</sup> 2♦ Good raise to at least 2♥

West led a trump. A spade to the King at trick 2 was ducked. Declarer returned with a trump to hand and led a spade to the Queen, a natural mis-guess on the auction.

The ♣6 was played to the Ten, Queen and two. West switched to the ♦K and his partner showed him three cards.

West then played the ♠J without seeing the danger. Declarer ruffed and caught him in a strip squeeze. He would be thrown in with his ♣A after the trumps were run down to lead away from his ♦Q. He tried to recover by baring the Queen, but Mesbur read the position. The ♣T was another good play by Mesbur.

My final example is a bidding problem:

	♠KJ	All Vul
	♥AJ76	Dealer S
	♦AK743	
	♣75	
♠AT8632		♠Q74
♥95		♥Q8432
♦QT		♦J2
♣QJ2		♣864
	♠95	
	♥KT	
	♦9865	
	♣AKT93	

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
<i>Mesbur</i>	<i>Grossack</i>	<i>FitzGibbon</i>	<i>Rosenberg</i>
-	-	-	Pass
2♣ <sup>1</sup>	Dbl	3♣	4♣
End			

<sup>1</sup> 2♣ Weak 2

5♦ is where you would like to be, but even a simple Weak Two opener and obstructive raise created problems for these great players.

# Famous Bridge Names

## R F Foster

1853-1945

Who? I hear you ask.

While cataloguing my library of bridge books I came across "*Foster's Modern Bridge Tactics*" first published in 1925.

Roderick Frederick Foster was born in Edinburgh and educated as an architect and civil engineer. He emigrated to the USA in 1872 and dabbled variously until finding his real vocation. He became card editor of the *New York Sun* in 1895.

He wrote fiction and contributed short stories to magazines but his most prolific work was dedicated to indoor games. He wrote over 50 books covering all sorts of card games: euchre, poker, conquian, rummy, whist, auction bridge, contract bridge and many more. He also wrote on other games such as mahjong, dice, chess, and dominoes. One of his greatest achievements was *Foster's Complete Hoyle: An Encyclopedia of All the Indoor Games Played at the Present Day*, published in 1897, which contained descriptions of over 100 indoor games.

His numerous books on Whist and Auction Bridge led Ely Culbertson to refer to him as "*the dean of living bridge authorities*" in his "Official Encyclopedia of Bridge" (1935).

*Modern Bridge Tactics* dates from the era of Auction Bridge, so I skipped the chapters on bidding (which has evolved considerably in the last century), to see what he had to say about play (which has not).

Here are some nuggets from his chapter on **The Opening Lead**:

♠ "The nature of the lead will depend on whether you are playing against a trump contract or no-trumps, as the haste to make all the tricks you can

with your high cards is quite unnecessary at no-trumps but is vital when there is a declared long and strong trump suit against you.

- ♠ "Common sense suggests that a partnership should come to an understanding as quickly as possible by giving each other all the information they can as to their cards.
- ♠ "The moment the dummy goes down the declarer will know exactly what is against him, what he can and cannot do. It is the duty of the partners opposed to him to get on an equal footing if they can.
- ♠ "Against all **trump contracts** the main thing is to get home with all your Aces and Kings; not to establish the small cards in a suit.
- ♠ "Two-card suits, unless they are touching honours or partner's bid, are very bad leads, as they accomplish nothing.
- ♠ "Singletons are gambles, except under certain conditions. They are good leads if you can stop the trump suit once, before all your trumps are drawn, as you can then try some other suit to get your partner in if he fails to win the singleton lead. Singletons are excellent leads if your partner has bid the suit.
- ♠ "In a **no-trump contract** there is no immediate danger of losing your Aces and Kings, as there is no trump suit to interfere with their trick-taking powers. For this reason we have the general rule not to lead high cards unless you have at least three honours in the suit. It is important not only to hold the command of the suit if possible, but to leave partner with a card to lead to you if he gets in before you do.



Foster devotes an entire chapter to the Rule of Eleven which he claims to have invented in 1881.

### The Eleven Rule

“This is based on the consideration that if the Ace is re-numbered as 14, and a player leads his *fourth best card*, deducting that card from eleven will indicate exactly the number of cards higher than the one led that are out against the leader.

Take these cases:

AJ98. Deducting 8 from eleven leaves 3, the King, Queen and Ten

K9872. Deducting 7 from eleven leaves 4, the Ace, Queen Jack and Ten

“*The Rule is infallible* provided the opening lead is precisely fourth best when it is not a card as high as a Ten.

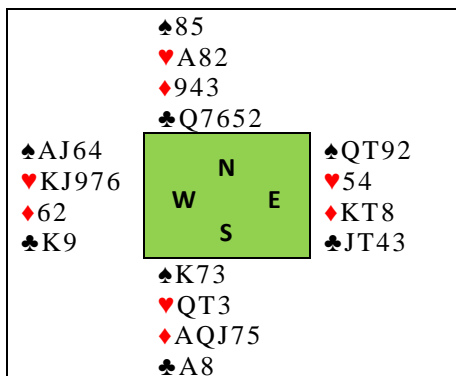
“The primal use of the fourth best lead was to show that the leader held four or more in the suit, which was evident from his later play. If he dropped a card smaller than the one first led, he must have had more than four originally. I was the first to point out the value of fourth-best as showing the high cards that were out against the leader’s hand.

“There are two conditions under which I never allow any opportunity for its use in actual play

- 1) when I am playing against a trump contract.
- 2) when the declarer is a better player than my partner.

“The Rule is of no use with a partner that does not pay any attention to small cards, which is probably true of 90% of those who play bridge. Once a card is turned down they cannot tell you what small cards fell on it; if you ask them what you led the best they can do is to say “Why, it was a small card.”

“I have seen many a game lost by leading fourth best against a strong and attentive player.



“South played in no-trump. West led his fourth highest heart and lost the game.

The declarer, using the Eleven Rule, saw at once that dummy’s eight was better than anything East could hold, since the 4 cards out against the leader were all in sight. By winning the first spade with the eight he made sure of two leads from dummy to finesse diamonds.”

After the Opening Lead, and the Eleven Rule, Foster moves on to **Third Hand Play**.

“The most important rule for the leader’s partner is to win tricks as cheaply as possible when the lead is a small card. One of the most annoying errors is for partner to put the King on a trick third hand when holding the Queen also”

“Holding two cards of equal value such as Ace-King or King-Queen or holding King and Jack when the Queen is in dummy and not put on, always play the card that will win the trick as cheaply as possible. To play the King and have declarer win the trick with the Ace makes it look to the leader as if declarer has the Queen. If the Jack is in dummy and you play the Queen third hand it marks the Ten as in the hand of declarer.

“The third hand must be extremely careful *never to finesse against his partner*. The typical finesse is to play the Queen when you hold both Queen and Ace. If the King is in dummy it is not a finesse, but a certainty, to make your Queen. If the King

is not in dummy it does not matter which card you play when partner has the King, but if declarer has it you are simply throwing your Queen away, perhaps letting declarer make an unguarded King.”

The **Foster Echo** (invented by guess who?) was once standard against NT contracts.

“The Foster Echo is an unblocking play, intended at the same time to show number.

“Whenever you make no attempt to win the trick, your partner leading, always play your *second best* to the first round, regardless of number or value.

“There are two conditions under which you may make no attempt to win partner’s trick:

- 1) He may lead a card which is better than any you have, or just as good.
- 2) Dummy may put on a card that you cannot beat

“Suppose you hold J92 and your partner leads the King. Play your 9.

If he goes on with the Queen or Ace give up the Jack and keep the two until the last.

“This will insure you against blocking your partner’s suit, as he must hold more than you do.

“It is most important in many cases to distinguish between two and three card holdings.

“Suppose the leader sees you drop the two, or any card that he knows must be the lowest that you have. He at once reads you for only one more of his suit.

“A glance at dummy, and he can count declarer’s holding.”

The Echo has considerable merit, even though it may seem counter-intuitive.

You might want to give it a try.

## Solution to July Crossword

<sup>1</sup> G	E	<sup>2</sup> N	D	<sup>3</sup> A	R	<sup>4</sup> M	E		<sup>5</sup> A	<sup>6</sup> S	T	<sup>7</sup> R	A	<sup>8</sup> Y
O		I		U		U				A		E		O
<sup>9</sup> V	O	L	A	T	I	L	E		<sup>10</sup> P	U	L	S	A	R
E				O		L		<sup>11</sup> U		T		E		K
<sup>12</sup> R	E	<sup>13</sup> C	E	P	T	I	O	N	R	O	O	M		
N		U		S		G		A		I		B		<sup>14</sup> T
<sup>15</sup> A	L	L	E	Y		<sup>16</sup> A	F	T	E	R	G	L	O	W
N		T				T		T				A		I
<sup>17</sup> C	H	I	P	<sup>18</sup> O	L	A	T	A		<sup>19</sup> P	A	N	I	C
E		V		I		W		I		O		C		K
		<sup>20</sup> A	L	L	I	N	O	N	E	P	I	E	C	E
<sup>21</sup> P		T		D		Y		A		S				N
<sup>22</sup> A	P	I	A	R	Y		<sup>23</sup> A	B	I	T	M	<sup>24</sup> U	C	H
R		O		U				L		A		F		A
<sup>25</sup> R	E	N	A	M	E		<sup>26</sup> H	E	I	R	L	O	O	M

**Winner: Bob Brown (GBC)**

# A ridiculous hand!

*Alisdair Adam*

Playing on Bridge Club Live, Alisdair was impressed by his partner's efforts on this deal. (*It has been rotated to make South declarer.*)

	♠KQT2	EW Vul
	♥7	Dealer W
	♦AQ7	
	♣KQT76	
♠8754		♠AJ963
♥AQ		♥KJ9
♦K43		♦J86
♣A432		♣85
		♠-
		♥T865432
		♦T952
		♣J9

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♣ <sup>1</sup>	Dbl	1♠	4♥
End			

<sup>1</sup>1♣ EW were playing a 5-card Major system where 1♣ can be short.

Alisdair's double was not the popular action for North. Most tables played in spade contracts by EW, a few Norths found themselves playing in clubs or no-trump. The double persuaded South to be bold, and she was unique in declaring the heart game.

West led partner's suit. The ♠K was covered with the Ace and ruffed.

Declarer finessed the ♦Q, and discarded a diamond on the ♠Q. She led ♠T, covered with the Jack and ruffed. The ♣J was taken by the Ace. West led his last spade, and South ruffed.

A club to the King scored but East ruffed the ♣Q with the ♥9, overruffed with the Ten. Declarer crossed to the ♦A to play the ♣T.

East was reluctant to waste a high trump, so he discarded a diamond and the ♣T scored. Declarer discarded her last diamond to reach this position, with the lead in dummy:

	♠-	EW Vul
	♥7	Dealer W
	♦7	
	♣7	
♠-		♠6
♥AQ		♥KJ
♦K		♦-
♣-		♣-
		♠-
		♥8654
		♦-
		♣-

Declarer had made 8 tricks and lost only one. She led a trump to the Jack and Queen, and West did his best by playing the ♦K. East again refused to ruff, so the remaining heart honours crashed together and declarer made her contract!

This scored 'only' 87%. South could not compete with the pair who made 3♥ doubled, nor with those who garnered big penalties from over-ambitious spade contracts.

The defenders must have felt pretty silly but the winning defence is not obvious till late in the hand.

East should have done some counting. The only high cards that West has in the non-trump suits are the ♣A and the ♦K. Any sort of opening bid requires him to have the ♥A.

# Player Profiles

## Ian Patrick

### Background

Ian was born in Hamilton and has lived all his life in Lanarkshire.

He attended Hamilton Academy and the University of Glasgow where he gained a BSc Hons in Mathematics and later gained a Master in Education from the University of Stirling.

He taught Maths in Motherwell for 4 years before moving to Bell College in Hamilton as a Senior Lecturer in Computing and then became Director of Academic Quality. After Bell College merged with the University of Paisley to become the University of the West of Scotland (UWS) he took on the role of Campus Director for the Hamilton Campus and then Director of College Partnerships. He retired in 2014.

He is married with two children, both of whom are Chartered Accountants, and three grandchildren.

### Introduction to Bridge.

Ian was introduced to Bridge by a neighbour and played some casual Bridge at University where he met Robert (Bob) McKinnon. After they both graduated in 1976 they joined Wishaw Bridge Club and while they now both also play with other partners, the partnership is still going strong after 45 years. As well as being a member of Wishaw, he was also a member of the NEL club in East Kilbride but for the last 20 years Ian has played most of his club Bridge in Glasgow where at various times he has been a member of all of the 3 main Bridge clubs.

### Finest Bridge Moments.

Ian has played in national competitions for approximately the last 40 years with a few successes. Hands that he remembers are ones that he would rather forget and he

believes that at his level, success comes from avoiding mistakes rather than making brilliant plays!

Apart from winning a couple of national competitions his Bridge highlight was in 2008 when he attended the ACBL National Fall Congress in Boston. The standard was incredibly high but, playing with Robert, managing to qualify for the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of 3 events was an achievement. A return to the 2014 Fall Congress in Providence was considerably less successful!!

### Bridge Administration

Up until very recently Ian has had no role in Bridge Administration. However, given his experience of chairing the Student Disciplinary Committee at UWS for 6 years he was nominated by the West District to serve on the SBU Disciplinary Panel and subsequently was asked to carry out a review of the SBU Disciplinary Procedures.

Ian has considerable experience of governance in the Further Education Sector. He joined the Board of John Wheatley College in Glasgow in 2011 and, following its merger with 2 other Glasgow Colleges in 2013, was appointed as a member of the Board of the newly formed Glasgow Kelvin College. Over the years he has carried out a number of roles on both Boards and in 2018 was appointed as Chair of the Board of Management of Glasgow Kelvin College, a position which he still currently holds. It was this experience of governance which led to his nomination as a Trustee of the SBU, which will become a SCIO if the application to OSCR is successful.

Ian believes firmly in the value of effective governance in supporting the Executive of an organisation and looks forward to contributing to the work of the soon to be formed Board of SBU.

Going forward Ian believes that the Board should give serious consideration to

appointing a Chief Executive Officer to be responsible for all operational aspects of the work of the SBU.

### **Other interests**

Travel (COVID has unfortunately currently put a stop to that)

Supporting Motherwell FC (a stressful pastime)

Running (well, doing the 5K parkrun as often as possible, but increasingly slowly!)

Food (both cooking and eating out)

## **Sarah Gunn**

### **Background**

I was born in Tripoli, Libya – my father was in the British Army, stationed there.

I studied History of Art at Edinburgh University but went on to train as a Chartered Accountant in London. We have lived in London, Cheshire and in Edinburgh (for 24 years). For the last 26 years I have been employed in the Third Sector and have been Trustee and Chair of a Scottish charity; in both circumstances being called upon to develop the financial, strategic and management structures.

Over the last few years I have become passionate (my husband would say “obsessed”) about both playing and improving my bridge. I have helped with the lessons at the New Melville Club for the past 3 years and was part of the team setting up the nationwide SBU Summer Academy this year to support bridge students /novice players wanting more experience playing in a non-competitive environment – we had 190 students registered.

I’m really keen to support the development of bridge in Scotland, in whatever way I can.

### **Introduction to Bridge**

I started playing bridge when I was about 8 years old – making up a four with my grandparents and my mother. On one

memorable holiday when my grandfather made me cry because I’d played the wrong card, my mother had to interject that “I was only young”; to which he replied “but how else will she learn?”!!

Needless to say there was a long gap in playing from teenage years to about 40 yrs old, when my husband decided that he wanted to learn and I read his lesson sheets and realised how little I knew....

### **Bridge hero**

I apologise to all the eminent Scottish International players but I’m afraid it has to be Andrew Robson. I find his methods of teaching fit my style and what’s more I can remember his top tips.

### **Finest Bridge moments**

I’ve enjoyed the online tournaments. Some good moments but equally some awful ones....

### **Opinions on Bridge Administration**

I’m lucky to be a member of two very well-run clubs in Edinburgh – the New Melville and the Carlton, so have no negative comments on Bridge in Scotland. I do think the increase in online bridge has provided some wonderful opportunities for those players in small communities to get to play more with partners from all over the country/world.

### **Other interests**

I enjoy gardening and golf. We have a house in France which we are hoping to spend more time in (Brexit/Covid dependent). I am also Honorary Treasurer of a couple of small volunteer organisations in Scotland

### **Favourites**

**Film** Love Actually

**Music** Beautiful South

**Book** Where the Crawdads sing

**Food** My daughter’s vegetarian recipes

**Colour** Blue

## Obituary

### Ella Vlandy

1914 - 2021

Ella was born in Edinburgh just before the outbreak of World War 1. Her parents moved to North Berwick when she was 5 years old.

She excelled at sports. In 1932 she attended Britain's first Physical Education teacher training centre for women, gaining a first class diploma. Her first job was at St Columba's School in Kilmacollm. Subsequently she took a job in the Dunfermline College of Hygiene and Physical Education (later the Dundee Training College) where she worked for most of her life.

She was selected for the Scottish hockey team in 1936 and made 8 appearances before the outbreak of the Second World War, and a further 8 when internationals returned in peacetime.

She also represented Scotland at tennis, and she excelled at lacrosse, curling and golf – she loved all forms of sport.

Ella's home was in North Berwick. She was a valued member of Marmion Bridge Club, and always enjoyed her bridge. She played till she was 100 years old.

Her obituary in *The Scotsman* concludes: "The epitome of good solid traditional values, she was admired for her humour, wit, kindness and good manners. Always gregarious, amiable and fun-loving, she forged friendships that spanned the generations."

On reaching her centenary she shared her secret for such a long life: "Just be cheeky!"

## Obituary

### Gibby Reid

Gibby came to bridge when his wife Sally decided to take an evening class to learn the game. He was soon hooked.

He used his considerable organisational skills to keep the game alive in the North of Scotland. He loved to organise bridge events and holidays and he and Sally took part in and enjoyed many congresses, travelling far and wide. He was a member of Aberdeen Bridge Club helping to save the club from closure during the 1980s. He was also an active member of the Phoenix bridge club.

Gibby and Sally taught adult beginners and improvers at Aberdeen Bridge Club, leaving a wide range of resources for future teachers to use. They also taught children, introducing the game to thousands of youngsters from primary 6 upwards visiting many schools in the process.

His memory lives on with a North District trophy for bronze teams and the annual Norvite Simultaneous tournament held each January. Gibby would spend many months planning for this event, choosing awesome hands from worldwide bridge magazines and articles.

Gibby and Sally were a devoted couple with a strong faith in God. They had a daughter and three sons and many grandchildren and great grandchildren who live worldwide in Greece, Canada, the United States and Aberdeen. They were the "Father and Mother" of bridge in the North of Scotland. Everyone who knew, loved, and admired them will have very special memories of them both. When Sally died three years ago Gibby was rather lost without her.

# BAMSA Report

## University showcases research tackling loneliness to MSP

A local Member of the Scottish Parliament has heard how experts at the University of Stirling are tackling the issue of social isolation and loneliness through technology. Researchers working on two projects using digital technology to connect people and combat feelings of isolation, met with MSP Alexander Stewart on Friday 17 September to showcase their work.

In a visit to the Faculty of Social Sciences, Mr Stewart, who represents Mid Scotland and Fife, lives in Bridge of Allan and is the Scottish Conservative Shadow Minister for Equalities and Older People, heard how a digital version of the card game bridge had brought people together during the pandemic and helped older people to develop digital skills.

Led by Professor of Sociology Samantha Punch – who is an international bridge player – the research project Bridge: A MindSport for All (BAMSA) explored how online bridge provided a crucial means of support, fun and social connection during lockdown and beyond.

Professor Punch said: “The visit was an excellent opportunity to share the health and wellbeing benefits of bridge with Mr Stewart. At the start of the pandemic, bridge players had to move online, creating an opportunity for people to experience social connection with family and friends through bridge, at a time when in-person meetings weren’t possible.

“Through lockdown, the bridge community supported many players to use a computer for the first time and improve their digital skills. We also know of schools that introduced the game to pupils and

experienced an improvement in children’s concentration, technological and communication skills.”

Mr Stewart was also shown the success of the Technology and Social Connectedness (T&SCon) research project, which is hosted on the Scottish Government website and provides guidance for organisations on the role of technology in keeping people socially connected.

Alexander Stewart MSP said

“I pay tribute to the University of Stirling for their pioneering research programme.

“Older people have been adversely affected during the pandemic and I was delighted to attend and see first hand the exceptional work which is being carried out to tackle loneliness and social isolation.

“The University is leading the way in tackling these challenges and I know that their research has already received much acclaim.

They can be rightly proud of their achievements to date and I look forward to hearing of any future developments in their research programme.

”Professor Judith Phillips, Deputy Principal (Research), said: “I would like to extend my thanks to Mr Stewart for taking the time to come to campus and meet with our researchers.

At Stirling, our experts are leading the way in tackling global challenges, including social isolation and loneliness – two growing worldwide issues only exacerbated by the pandemic. By working closely with policymakers and practitioners, we can help translate the latest research into meaningful solutions to real world problems.”

# The SBU Standard System File (20)

## Chapter 5. *The Competitive Auction*

### 5.1 Overcalls

Overcalls have three main functions:

- a) To buy the contract when it is our hand
- b) To obstruct opponents' auction when it is their hand
- c) To direct a good lead

Overcalls are based on Playing Strength, not HCP. Suit quality is paramount.

**Overcalls at the 1-level** have 4+ playing tricks with a good 5+card suit.

Wide-ranging strength, strong hands will bid again, rebidding a 6+card suit; bidding a second suit; or making a delayed takeout double.

**Overcalls at the 2-level** (not a jump) 5+ playing tricks, often 6 cards.

**Jump Overcalls are Weak** like weak2 openers at the 2-level;

like pre-emptive openers at higher levels

Overcalls in the sandwich position (both opponents bidding), and interventions in opponents' forcing auctions are primarily lead-directing.

### Responding to Overcalls

*"Support with support"*

A single raise is typically 3-card support with limited scattered high card values.

(may be 4 cards in a balanced hand)

Jump raises promise 4+card support with distributional values, few high cards

A cuebid of opponent's suit shows a 3+card strong raise

A jump cue is a Mixed raise: 4-card support and a few high cards

A jump in a new suit is Fit: a good 5+card suit with 3+card support

*"Let opponents play the misfits"*

A change of suit is natural and forcing: with a weak misfit just pass.

(you may consider a rescue later if they double)

Bids in NT are natural, with stoppers in opponents' suits, stronger than a normal response to an opening bid.

### 5.2 Overcalls in NT

**A 1NT overcall** is 15+-18HCP, with a stopper in opponent's suit.

Need not be balanced if it is the best way to get your strength over.

(A weak 1NT either passes or, with a doubleton in their suit, makes a takeout dbl.)

**Responses are** System on – Stayman and transfers – as over a 1NT opener.

Stronger balanced hands start with a double.

A subsequent 1NT(2NT) rebid shows 19-21.

A subsequent jump in NT is even stronger.

In these sequences further bidding is natural.



# Basic Bidding Quiz 20

## Overcalls

RHO opens the bidding with 1♥,  
What action will you take, if any?

- a) ♠ KQJ85  
♥ 82  
♦ JT54  
♣ 72
- b) ♠ KQT932  
♥ 7  
♦ JT74  
♣ 94
- c) ♠ AKQ76  
♥ 2  
♦ AK62  
♣ K98
- d) ♠ KQJ54  
♥ 6  
♦ A5  
♣ AJT76
- e) ♠ KJT5  
♥ 3  
♦ KQ65  
♣ KT43
- f) ♠ AKJT  
♥ T9543  
♦ A3  
♣ 98
- g) ♠ AJ65  
♥ Q98  
♦ AJ3  
♣ KQ5
- h) ♠ KQ86  
♥ 76  
♦ KQJ54  
♣ A4

## Answers

Overcalls are based on playing strength rather than high card points. Remember that there are many ways to compete!

- a) 1♠. You would not open the bidding with this hand, but an overcall in the boss suit may give opponents problems and attract a good lead.
- b) 2♠. Extra length and distribution are best described by the weak jump. Do not worry about vulnerability – describe your hand!
- c) Dbl. Overcalls are wide-ranging but there is a top limit. Here you plan to bid 2♠ next time to show your extra high card strength
- d) 2♥. A Michaels cuebid shows spades and a minor, at least 5-5. It needs good playing strength. With weaker clubs just overcall 1♠
- e) Dbl. Perfect distribution for a takeout double. Ideally you should have 4 cards in any unbid Majors. With only 3 spades you need extra HCP.
- f) 1♠. We do not normally overcall on a 4-card suit but may do so *at the 1-level* with a *strong* 4-card Major and length in RHO's suit. (He can't overruff hearts!)
- g) 1NT. Not the greatest heart stopper, but the best description of your values and distribution.
- h) Dbl. Better than 2♦, which buries the spade suit. If partner responds 2♣ you can convert to 2♦. (In this particular situation a change of suit does not show extras.)

# Refining the System

## 17 Fourth Suit Forcing

This is quite rare. In most auctions one partner has raised the other's suit or rebid their own suit or bid no-trump to limit their hand.

When opener bids a second suit his hand is limited only by his failure to make a game-forcing rebid. Opposite an unlimited hand responder may be unsure how to proceed.

Say the auction begins:  $1\heartsuit-1\spadesuit-2\diamondsuit$  and you hold one of these hands:

- |                        |                       |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| a) $\spadesuit KQ762$  | b) $\spadesuit A743$  |
| $\heartsuit Q7$        | $\heartsuit A74$      |
| $\diamondsuit AQ7$     | $\diamondsuit K6$     |
| $\clubsuit J63$        | $\clubsuit AT93$      |
| c) $\spadesuit AJ9654$ | d) $\spadesuit AQT94$ |
| $\heartsuit K$         | $\heartsuit Q4$       |
| $\diamondsuit Q86$     | $\diamondsuit K6$     |
| $\clubsuit A76$        | $\clubsuit AQ65$      |

- a) you want to be in game, but which game?
- b) you want to show delayed heart support but cannot show slam interest by bidding any number of hearts.
- c) you cannot be sure the spade game is best, rebidding  $3\spadesuit$  is nonforcing.
- d) Slam is possible, but where to play?

Bidding  $3\clubsuit$ , the Fourth Suit, asks opener to describe his hand further. Some players say that bidding the fourth suit is asking for a stopper for no-trump, but that is just one of many possibilities.

Say the auction begins:  $1\heartsuit-1\spadesuit-2\diamondsuit-3\clubsuit$

- |                     |                      |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| a) $\spadesuit 4$   | b) $\spadesuit 6$    |
| $\heartsuit AKT632$ | $\heartsuit AK952$   |
| $\diamondsuit KJ53$ | $\diamondsuit AQ973$ |
| $\clubsuit Q2$      | $\clubsuit 87$       |

- |                     |                     |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| c) $\spadesuit 2$   | d) $\spadesuit KJ4$ |
| $\heartsuit AQ865$  | $\heartsuit KJT54$  |
| $\diamondsuit KT94$ | $\diamondsuit AJT5$ |
| $\clubsuit KJ3$     | $\clubsuit 5$       |

- a) opener rebids  $3\heartsuit$  to show the 6-4 distribution
- b)  $3\diamondsuit$  shows 5-5+ in the red suits
- c)  $3NT$  shows  $1=5=4=3$  with club stoppers
- d)  $3\spadesuit$  shows 3-card spade support

Putting the hands together:

- a) responder happily raises to  $4\heartsuit$ .
- b) responder sets trump by bidding  $3\heartsuit$ : with a weaker hand he would bid  $3\heartsuit$  or  $4\heartsuit$  last time, so this shows slam interest.
- c) responder passes  $3NT$ . If partner has no spade support this will be as good a spot as any.
- d) spade support is good news. Responder can cuebid  $4\clubsuit$  to show slam interest or might just launch Blackwood.

Fourth Suit auctions are complex, to be avoided whenever there is a more descriptive bid available. Using the Fourth Suit announces that you have a good hand that you cannot conveniently describe: either you cannot tell which game is best; or you have slam interest and need to establish a forcing auction.

When partner rolls out the fourth suit – do not panic! Look for the bid that best describes your hand. The awkward situation is when you are  $5=4=2=2$ . Now you have to pick the least bad lie: NT may be best with a stuffy doubleton in the fourth suit; or you may support partner with a doubleton honour; or rebid the stronger of your suits with no cards in the unbid suits.

# Improve your Play

## Playing Safe

Very occasionally a contract looks too easy. This is the time to be a pessimist, to consider what might go wrong.

1	♠964 ♥AQ ♦Q53 ♣KQT87	N W     E S	♠AKQ ♥63 ♦AJ42 ♣J652
---	-------------------------------	-------------------	-------------------------------

You opened 1NT and partner simply raised to 3NT.

North leads the ♦T. What is your plan?

2	♠AJ765 ♥974 ♦Q53 ♣A3	N W     E S	♠KT43 ♥K62 ♦AKJ642 ♣5
---	-------------------------------	-------------------	--------------------------------

East opened 1♦ and West became declarer in 4♠.

North leads the ♣K. How will you play?

### Solutions:

1 You count 5 Sure Tricks and can easily establish 4 more by knocking out the ♣A. If North has led from ♦KT9 you might make 2 extra diamond tricks by running the lead to your Queen, then finessing the Jack. But if South has the ♦K things can go badly wrong if you finesse. He might switch to a heart through your doubleton and if North turns up with the ♥K your goose is cooked. Opponents will cash at least 4 hearts to go with the ♦K and ♣A.

The safe line is to rise with the ♦A at trick 1. That retains control of all the suits and allows you to knock out the ♣A in complete safety.

You should adopt the safe line at Teams or rubber bridge. But at Pairs the safety play risks a bottom score when either finesse works....

1	♠T32 ♥K74 ♦T987 ♣943	N W     E S	♠AKQ ♥63 ♦AJ42 ♣J652
	♠964 ♥AQ ♦Q53 ♣KQT87		♠J875 ♥JT9852 ♦K6 ♣A

2 You might make all 13 tricks on this lead. Draw trump, discard three hearts on the long diamonds and crossruff. What can go wrong?

The normal way to play trump is to cash the Ace and King. But if spades break 3-1 someone may make a trick with the ♠Q. If that someone is North he may seize the chance to switch to hearts, and on a bad day you might lose three heart tricks.

The safe line is to cash the ♠A and finesse the Ten on the second round. If South wins the Queen he can do you no harm.

2	♠Q92 ♥Q8 ♦T9 ♣KQ974	N W     E S	♠KT43 ♥K62 ♦AKJ642 ♣5
	♠AJ765 ♥974 ♦Q53 ♣A3		♠8 ♥AJT53 ♦K6 ♣JT862

# Improvers' Bidding Challenge (24)

July 2021

*My thanks to all the panellists for their continuing support of this feature.*

## Problem 1 Teams None Vul

	N	E	S	W
♠A54	-	-	1♦	1♠
♥KQ2	?			
♦J82				
♣KT83				

*Without the intervention we respond 3NT with this hand. Does the overall make a difference? Not to Maureen.*

**RENNIE** (also **MCLEOD**): **3NT** - I could bid my clubs but I think we are going to end up in NT anyway and why reveal our hands to the opposition? I would prefer another stop in spades but at least I can hold them up to break their communication.

*A good point: 3NT would be a much worse bid with ♠A5 doubleton. Peter is not sure that there will be enough tricks.*

**EDMOND**: **2NT**. I don't like to double without 4 hearts, 2NT risks missing a game and 3NT is not good if partner has opened light – I like the ♣T but I don't like my 4333 distribution.

*Our NT bidders suggest alternatives. Two panellists pick this one:*

**TUDOR** (also **MCKAY**): **2♣**. I don't rush to bid NT as partner may have some spade holding such as Qx, and then it would be best if she played the hand for the opening lead.

*Nobody chose double, though I might have done! Partner will expect four hearts, but we can't always guarantee the perfect hand.*

*The most popular choice was the cuebid of opponent's suit. Russell believes this asks for a spade stopper:*

**FRAME**: **2♠**: I am looking for a game here but need more information from partner before deciding - this bid is specifically asking him for a half-stop in Spades (Qx or better) which should ensure that, if 3NT is the correct choice, it is played from the right side.

*For Derek the cuebid is simply keeping the ball in play:*

**SANDERS**: **2♠**: 'Do something sensible, partner'.

**HAMILTON**: **2♠**. This cuebid is forcing and normally shows a good hand with support for partner (definitely shows support if partner opened a Major). I think this is better than an immediate 3NT as there are lots of hands where 5♣/5♦ play better than 3NT. I can't double with only three Hearts.

*Steve considers that a jump is necessary to force to game, though many players give the jump cue a different meaning.*

**MALE**: **3♠**. A difficult choice of bids, a simple 2♣, 3NT with only 1 spade stop? Or ask partner for a spade stopper and right side the contract? With 13 HCP I want to be in game'

Problem 1	Votes	Marks
2♠	3	10
2♣	2	9
3NT	2	6
2NT	1	5
3♣	1	4

*Partner held T 95 AQ954 A9742. A routine spade lead means you need to take a good view in diamonds if you bid 3NT. 5 of either minor is rather easier to play.*

## Problem 2 Teams EW Vul

	N	E	S	W
♠KJT763			1♦	P
♥3	1♠	P	2♣	P
♦Q3	?			
♣J643				

*Four panellists have had enough of this auction.*

**MCKAY** (also **SANDERS**): **PASS**. We should get a plus score this way – it is teams and game looks very unlikely.

**RENNIE** (similarly **FRAME**): **PASS** - I would like to repeat my Spades because I think they are lovely but with so few HCP I don't want to encourage partner after his minimum bid of 2♣.

*The Acol system is built on the concept of the Limit Bid. Wherever possible we simplify the auction by choosing a bid that describes our values within a narrow range. Raising partner, rebidding a suit, and many NT bids are Limit Bids. But introducing a new suit is **not** limited. Here partner may be quite strong, but not strong enough for a game-forcing jump rebid of 3♣. What would he bid with Qx xx AKxxx KQxx? On this sort of auction it is a good idea to give partner another chance if possible. What is the best move?*

**MALE**: (Similarly **EDMOND**) 2♠. The choice is to pass 2♣, (not good enough to bid 3♣), to repeat this OK spade suit, or to give false preference to 2♦.

*Danny has tactical considerations.*

**HAMILTON**: 3♣. Keeps bidding open as there is some chance of game, also makes it harder for opponents to come in and bid Hearts

*And Jim is quite optimistic.*

**TUDOR**: 3♣. Invitational. The club fit plus the Qx in partner's diamond suit

potentially improves my hand if partner has a partial fit for spades.

Problem 2	Votes	Marks
Pass	4	10
2♣	3	9
3♣	1	8
3♠	1	7
4♠	0	4

*Partner held 5 K72 AJ976 AKQT, a nice hand but not worth a game-forcing 3♣. Over 2♠ he will probably bid 2NT, which you can remove to 3♣. A good time to be pessimistic.*

## Problem 3 Teams All Vul

	N	E	S	W
♠KJ53		P	P	P
♥AKJ9754	1♥	P	1NT	P
♦A4	?			
♣-				

*This one was less controversial. The majority simply blasts game:*

**EDMOND** (similarly **MCKAY** and **TUDOR**): 4♥. I have around 8 playing tricks and don't see how partner can have more than two. So a meagre (to some) 4♥.

*Some worry about missing slam:*

**FRAME**: (similarly **MALE**): 4♥: I'm tempted to venture 4♣ (a self-agreeing splinter) or 2♠ (a reverse into partner's "impossible" suit) but either of these choices may well be misinterpreted by my long-suffering partner so I'll settle for what should be a safe game rather than strive for what may turn out to be a comfortable slam if he holds the right cards.

**MCLEOD**: 4♥. No point investigating spades when partner can't have more than three of them. Hearts is where you want to play. But at what level? If partner has the right cards, 6♥ could be a laydown. If they have the wrong cards

(♣K/Q etc), even Game might not make. Even if you have some kind of Blackwood option here, what decisive information have you gained when partner replies that they have 1 Ace? 4♥ is going to be the best contract most of the time, so let's play the percentages and trust partner to make a move with 2 Aces.

*Derek would not have started from here.*

**SANDERS: 4♥.** Should have opened 2♣ in the first place to get across the strength of our hand.

*The hand does meet the criteria for a Strong Two but there is no danger that 1♥ will be passed out. With such a distributional hand there is a risk that a 2♣ opener will goad opponents into serious pre-emption. How will you feel when the auction comes back to you at five of a minor?*

*Danny thought he should look for more information. The reverse into a suit partner cannot have is initially a long suit game try; it may turn into a slam try if partner co-operates.*

**HAMILTON: 2♠.** Tempting to splinter with 4♣ but that won't help us find out about the ♠A. After 2♣ we can bid 4♥ or jump to 4♣ next round and partner might be able to evaluate their hand better (we are always playing in Hearts, partner can't have four spades with their 1NT response).

*Maureen was alone in settling for a game invitation. Perhaps she, like me, has painful memories of the times when partner had the wrong cards.*

**RENNIE: 3♥.** I have enough to reverse and bid my Spades but Partner's bid of 1NT has denied a 4-card spade holding so instead I invite game.

Problem 3	Votes	Marks
4♥	7	10
2♠	1	9
3♥	1	6
3♠	0	4
6♥	0	2
2♥	0	2

*Partner held A98 T8 QJ6 QT932, enough to make 4♥ a comfortable contract, not enough for slam.*

#### Problem 4 Teams All Vul

	N	E	S	W
♠KT543	1♠	P	4♠	P
♥AK864	?			
♦A2				
♣K				

*To move or not to move? The answer seems to depend on what you expect from partner's bid.*

**MALE: PASS.** Partner's 4♠ bid is 5 spades and very little else.

*5-card majorites are encouraged to raise to game on any hand that can guarantee a 10-card major suit fit. But in SBU standard, where 1♠ may be bid with only 4 cards, we describe the game raise as 'distributional': under strength in high cards, but with lots of ruffing values.*

**EDMOND (similarly SANDERS): PASS.** Trusting partner's sign off (perhaps a weak freak). I shall be upset if he has both missing Aces.

*There are two questions to ask before looking for slam.*

*1 Can partner have a perfect minimum?*

*Axxxxx xx xx xxx looks good enough.*

*2 If partner has no Aces are we safe at the 5-level?*

*Partner might have QJxxx xxx QJxx x.*

*So it all boils down to temperament!  
Which hurts more: missing a good slam  
or getting too high at the 5-level?*

*A small majority move on, mostly via  
Blackwood.*

**MCLEOD:** 4NT. I know partner's hand is probably lacking in HCPs, but I might not need more than 6. Unlike the previous hand, partner's response to 4NT will tell me a lot here. 1 Ace is enough to have legitimate hope that there will only be 1 loser, no matter what suit they hold it in. Does this cover all the bases? No. But this route will tell me whether slam is with the odds or not. You don't have the opportunity to find out what you want to know by cue bidding here.

**TUDOR** (supported by **FRAME, HAMILTON** and **RENNIE**): 4NT. The raise to 4♠ is based on distribution with few points, so I'm not that confident in pushing on. But passing would be just a little too cowardly.

*Tim finds an alternative approach:*

**MCKAY:** 5♣. Cuebid. Partner is not strong but if she has the ♦K and an Ace we want to be in slam. Having said that we will be worried that partner has 3 small hearts.

Problem 4	Votes	Marks
4NT	5	10
5♣	1	9
Pass	3	7
6♠	0	2

*Partner held AQ9863 T53 K T76, which makes this a rather fine slam. Drawing trump will not detain us long, and dummy's third heart can be discarded on the ♦A.*

## July Top Scores

*Congratulations to all the entrants - almost everybody scored 30 or more!  
So the line has been drawn at 34, apologies to all who missed the list.*

<b>4Star Master</b>		
Kath Russell	Powmill	35
<b>2Star Master</b>		
Janet Unsworth	Carlton	37
Walter Freedman	Maccabi	36
Bill Crighton	Banchory	35
<b>1Star Master</b>		
Louis Glekin	Maccabi	37
<b>Master</b>		
David King	Berwick	38
Louis Moore	Berwick	38
Anne Murdoch	Kilwinning	38
Brian Rattray	Oban	34
<b>District Master</b>		
Alistair Smillie	Moray	36
Alastair Kerr	New Melville	35
Quentin Stephens	Aberdeen	35
Joan Cargill	Montrose	34
<b>Local Master</b>		
May Armour	Kyle	37
Nicola Corbyn	Berwick	35
Angela Ford	Maccabi	35
Brenda Leith	Perth	35
Jack Silverstone	GBC	34
<b>Club Master</b>		
Anne Cairns	Buchanan	38
Jim Neil	Stirling&Union	37
Miles Harrison	Stirling&Union	36
Jonathan File	Dundee	35
Maureen Taggart	Johnstone	35
James Campbell	Ardeer	34
Davan Cutler	Ormiston	34
Ivor Glynn	New Melville	34

# Alan Goodman's Lockdown Tips

## 1 Signalling in No-Trump

♠54  
 ♥63  
 ♦75  
 ♣84

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠J732  
 ♥Q72  
 ♦A4  
 ♣9732

♠K  
 ♥K  
 ♦K  
 ♣K

You are defending a NT contract.  
Which card do you play when partner leads:

- (a) ♠K?
- (b) ♥K?
- (c) ♦K?
- (d) ♣K?

## 2 Where's the Jack?

K63

	N	
W		E
	S	

AQ87

T9

542

You play the Ace, then small to the King.  
East follows small to both rounds, West plays the Ten and the Nine.  
When you play from dummy on the third round East again plays small.  
Do you rise with the Queen or finesse the Eight?

## 3 A Common Combination

♠AKT94  
 ♥-  
 ♦-  
 ♣AT953

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠76  
 ♥-  
 ♦-  
 ♣K6

How do you play these suits to maximise your chances of making 4 tricks?

## 4 The 4-3 Trump Fit

♠853  
 ♥J94  
 ♦J863  
 ♣AQ6

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠AKQJ  
 ♥-  
 ♦A752  
 ♣KJ753

You wind up in 4♠ in a 4-3 fit  
The lead is ♥K.  
You can see 10 tricks (4 trumps, 5 clubs and the ♦A) but are there any dangers?  
How do you plan to make this contract?

***Solutions On Next Page***



# Lockdown Tips Solutions

## 1 Signalling in No-Trump

♠54  
 ♥63  
 ♦75  
 ♣84

♠K	N W     E S	♠J732
♥K		♥Q72
♦K		♦A4
♣K		♣9732

You are defending a NT contract.

Which card do you play when partner leads:

- (a) ♠K?
- (b) ♥K?
- (c) ♦K?
- (d) ♣K?

Most players will probably have the understanding that:

A King asks for Count

An Ace asks for Attitude

(Many will have an understanding that a Queen also asks for Attitude.)

Against NT contracts it is usual to agree that King leads ask for an **UNBLOCK** of an honour, failing which you give Count. This is critical in helping partner decide whether to continue the suit.

- (a) Play ♠J (the unblock).  
Partner, holding ♠AKQT9, now knows what to do. If you play ♠7 partner may think declarer has ♠Jxxx and switch.
- (b) Play ♥Q (the unblock).  
With ♥AKJT partner knows what to do.
- (c) Play ♦A and return the suit. Happy Days!
- (d) Play ♣7 (a count signal, denying an honour). Please don't play ♣3 – partner probably won't know whether you have an even or odd number of cards.

## 2 Where's the Jack?

	K63	
T9	N W     E S	542
	AQ87	

You play the Ace, then small to the King. East follows small to both rounds, West plays the Ten and the Nine. When you play from dummy on the third round East again plays small.

Do you rise with the Queen or finesse the Eight?

If the suit is divided West T9 and East J542 you need to finesse.

If the suit is divided West JT9 and East 542 you need to play the Queen.

What should you do is determined by what will work most often.

If West has JT9, he can play any two of the three cards on the first two rounds of the suit. In other words, there are three combinations (JT, J9 and T9) that could have been chosen.

If he has T9, JT, J9 doubleton, he has no choice and must play the cards he was dealt.

**IF YOU ALWAYS FINESSE, YOU WILL WIN THREE TIMES FOR EVERY ONCE YOU LOSE**

This is called the **Principle of Restricted Choice**.

As an aside, if East is a player who will always show count in the suit and plays 2, 4 then 5 in that order (showing an odd number), you may decide to go against the odds and drop West's Jack.

You need to know your opponent well to play against such heavily weighted odds!

### 3 A Common Combination

♠AKT94										
♥-										
♦-										
♣AT953										
<table style="border: 1px solid gray; width: 100px; height: 60px; margin: auto; text-align: center; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>			N		W		E		S	
	N									
W		E								
	S									
♠76										
♥-										
♦-										
♣K6										

How do you play these suits to maximise your chances of making 4 tricks?

In the spade suit the best chance is to take two finesses: lead low to the Ten and later finesse the 9.

This is slightly better than playing ♠AK and hoping that the suit splits 3-3 or one opponent holds ♠Qx or ♠Jx.

(It loses out to QJx on your right but gains against the more probable QJxx on your left.)

In clubs you should cash the King and lead towards the dummy. If West follows low rise with the Ace.

You make four tricks whenever the suit breaks 3-3 or either opponent has a doubleton honour.

The difference is that you cannot take two finesses on this layout. If you finesse on the second round you lose out to Qx or Jx since West will later make a trick with Q/Jxxx . The doubleton Qx or Jx is more probable than two low cards.

### 4 The 4-3 Trump Fit

♠853										
♥J94										
♦J863										
♣AQ6										
<table style="border: 1px solid gray; width: 100px; height: 60px; margin: auto; text-align: center; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>			N		W		E		S	
	N									
W		E								
	S									
♠AKQJ										
♥-										
♦A752										
♣KJ753										

You wind up in 4♠ in a 4-3 fit

The lead is ♥K.

You can see 10 tricks (4 trumps, 5 clubs and the ♦A) but are there any dangers?

How do you plan to make this contract?

This is a classic case of working out how can you enjoy your 5 club tricks and also draw trumps.

The chance of trumps breaking 3-3 is around 35% and breaking 4-2 is around 48% (you won't be able to cope with a 5-0 break).

If you ruff the opening lead you will be reduced to 3 trumps in each hand.

Unless the trumps break 3-3 you will be defeated by the hand holding 4 trumps because they will force you in hearts.

The answer is quite simple.

Let the opposition lead 3 rounds of hearts while you discard 3 diamonds from hand. You now can trump a 4th round of hearts in dummy whilst retaining 4 trumps in your hand. Any other lead allows you to win and draw trumps before enjoying your club suit.

# In Memoriam

## David Kaye

It is a familiar scene, the end of a session at Aviemore. Those who imagine they have done well are huddled round the noticeboards, the rest head for the bar. The imposing figure of Andrew Barnes emerges from the Ballroom with the vital piece of paper in his hand. There is a rush forward as he pins it on the noticeboard. The competition was the Pairs final; the names at the top were Ian Macaulay and David Kaye. This was David's first big win and he had only been playing for a few years – a Bronze Player in today's rankings. When he recalled the event he said that all he could hear was people asking: "Who is this David Kaye?"

David was a tournament chess player before he took up Bridge in his late 40s. He went to classes run by Douglas Piper, and he joined the Carlton Bridge Club in Edinburgh. David had many good results at national events including winning the Mixed Teams at Aviemore, runner-up in the National Mixed Pairs, winning the Consolation Teams at Peebles, the pairs at Strathpeffer and his biggest win: the Swiss Teams at the 2018 Peebles Congress. In addition, there were numerous wins in Carlton and East District events. He was very proud to have achieved the rank of Senior Life Master – a rare achievement for someone who started playing in middle age. He was captain of the East District Waverley team, where he played with Irene. He led them to the dizzy heights of the First division twice. Always seeking to develop his and others' game, David started classes for the team and encouraged other members to lead lessons. He also served on the Carlton and East District Committees.

David's strength as a player came from natural ability combined with constant

analysis of his game. He would spend hours analysing the bidding and play with his partners. In 2013 he and Mike decided to change their bidding system. Having played a weak no trump for over 10 years, they changed to a strong no trump, 2 over 1 system and enjoyed long debates about the detail of the new system. Two particular issues were still being debated 8 years later: what should an opening 2♦ show; and whether to play puppet over 1NT as well as 2NT. The day David died they were walking up Ben Lawers discussing bridge – in particular a slam bid the previous evening. David had made the contract but was wondering if he could have found a better line that catered for bad distribution.

David was everyone's favourite partner and we were lucky to spend so much time in his company. He was always cheerful and gracious if you made a mistake. If we had a bad set, he would point to a board where we did well. He was unfailingly polite to the opposition and always had a positive word if things went wrong for them. He was always encouraging new and improving players and was happy to partner them.

He had the knack of turning seemingly ordinary situations into very amusing stories which made him a great companion. This is very evident in the over 60 humorous articles he wrote for Scottish Bridge News and we are working to publish a collection of the best columns.

David was a keen hill walker. He took his walking as seriously as his bridge. He had completed two rounds of the Munroes, and rounds of the Corbetts and Donalds. He also organised monthly walks for a group of friends. This was typical of David – he liked to have company and he always wanted to share the good things of life. He loved walking football – a relatively new pastime – and he was a serious golfer, playing regularly at Prestonfield Golf Club and in competitions elsewhere.

David died while walking on Ben Lawers on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> July he was 74 years old.

He was a true and loving family man and leaves behind a wife Maureen, two children, Jacqueline and Gordon, and two grandchildren, Harry and Danny, who we know will treasure his memory. For all his strengths (and he had many) we will remember him most for his great sense of humour and his extremely positive and kind nature. He will be sorely missed by all those in the bridge world who knew him. David was a lovely person and a great bridge partner. We have been privileged to know him, and to play with him.

*By Mike Baron and Irene Sime,  
his regular partners and friends.*

## Club Corner

I have recently formed a Bridge Masters Union. No-one above the rank of Master is eligible to join. Members swear allegiance to the Masters Code – *we are never knowingly underbid*. Group Meetings begin with the ceremonial burning of the Pass card. Yet, although we pull out non-green cards with gay abandon, there is one card we never use – Redouble! Imagine my surprise when the following hand arose at the Edinburgh Chapter of the Union.

As the bidding may be beyond the comprehension of the learned, I have incorporated the thoughts of the culprits.

	♠AKT8732	All Vul
	♥AT42	Dealer W
	♦2	
	♣A	
♠QJ654		♠9
♥53		♥Q6
♦AQT95		♦KJ7
♣K		♣QJT8542
	♠4	
	♥KJ987	
	♦J843	
	♣976	

**West:** Thank goodness – an obvious bid.  
I'll bid spades and show my diamonds later: **1♠**

**North:** Ooh er?! I have just agreed with partner that we will play Michaels. Never mind – I'll keep bidding spades until he gets the message. **2♠**

**East** (Confused) “*What does that mean?*”

**South** (Confident) “*Partner is at least 5-5 in hearts and a minor*”

**East:** North must have diamonds. Partner and I probably have a big club fit. **3♣**

**South:** I don't have many points, but partner and I obviously have a double fit. **3♥**

**West:** We have the majority of the points, and partner must have some spades. **3♠**

**North:** Oh, well, in for a penny... **4♣**

**East** (Very confused) “*What does that mean?*”

**South:** (Less confident) Partner has never been known to cuebid, so, “*Er, he must have a long spade suit.*”

**East:** “*As well as his hearts and a minor?*”

**South** (Embarrassed) “*No – instead.*”

**East:** I give up **Pass**

**South:** Me too **Pass**

**West:** These guys obviously don't know what they are doing. **Dble**

**North:** Oh yes I do. **Redble**

**East:** (Deranged) “*What's he got now?*”

**South:** “*Still spades*” **Passed Out**

North duly lost two spades and a diamond to bring home his redoubled contract. I was sitting South. North was so overjoyed at this quite unprecedented coup that I didn't have the heart to mention that 6♥ looked pretty good. North has enough entries to ruff out the losing spades.

# Psycho

David Kaye

Do you remember the old Hitchcock film “Psycho”? It starred Anthony Perkins as a homicidal motel owner with a penchant for stabbing ladies in the shower, and opening 3-card suits with a 5-count – or am I getting my psyches and my psychos confused again?

Are you the sort of chap who regards a psychic bid as the last refuge of a cad and a bouncer, or do you regard the occasional “psyche” as a legitimate weapon in your armoury? As a relatively inexperienced player I decided to wheel out a psychic bid down at the “Masters Club” and see what happened. The results were even more spectacular than I imagined.

	♠T87	EW Vul
	♥8	Dealer N
	♦875	
	♣AK6542	
♠KQ2		♠A965
♥KQJ53		♥T976
♦KJ3		♦AT96
♣J9		♣T
	♠J43	
	♥A42	
	♦Q42	
	♣Q873	

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	Pass	Pass	1♥(!)
Dbf	1NT	2♦	Pass
3NT	End		

Sitting South I satisfied all the criteria for making a psychic opening, according to book theory:

- 1 Not vulnerable against vulnerable
- 2 Able to tolerate any reply from partner (flat distribution)
- 3 Lead directional – I have the ♥A.

- 4 I have never psyched with this partner before – he will be just as confused as the opposition
- 5 Playing stronger opponents who are big enough and ugly enough to look after themselves

As you can see, East/West were knocked out of a solid heart game. To add insult to injury, poor West had to find 4 discards while my partner was gleefully cashing his 6 clubs. Reckoning that North must have a heart void, as I had indicated 4 hearts in the bidding, West discarded hearts from both hands and prepared to collect 7 tricks in diamonds and spades. A heart from North now allowed me to cash 3 heart tricks for 5 down, vulnerable.

Needless to say, West was not best pleased by this turn of events.

Should West have spotted the psyche earlier? Well, certainly in the play: when North turns up with ♣AK South is marked with a maximum 9 count and at most 4 hearts. Clearly something is amiss! Indeed I would argue that even during the bidding, when North shows 6-9 points and East makes a free bid at the 2-level, West’s 16-count should lead him to suspect the opening bid. Even so, what can he do?

Perhaps in this position partnerships should agree that an overcall of 2♥ is a genuine suit. I would be interested to know how the learned patrons of the Afton (bridge players boozier) would treat this situation as East/West.

In any case, psychic bids have been around for a long time and are perfectly legal, so you should expect to meet them sooner or later. In fact wasn’t there an old sitcom on the subject many years ago starring Hattie Jacques and Eric Psyches?

# Play Challenge

*Jim Patrick*

1 NS Vul Dealer South

♠86
♥AJ4
♦AQ3
♣T9876

♠A9
♥KT976
♦K754
♣J2

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			1♥
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♦
Pass	4♥	End	

Contract: 4♥ Lead: ♠2

Having bid up like Meckstroth and Rodwell, can you play like them? .  
East plays the ♠T at Trick 1.

2 NS Vul Dealer South

♠AJ97654
♥J
♦A
♣T976

♠T
♥A974
♦QJ3
♣AKJ54

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
-	-	Pass	1♣
Pass	2♣	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♣	Pass	4♥
Pass	4♠	Pass	5♣
Pass	5♦	Pass	6♣
End			

Contract: 6♣ Lead: ♦4

Not a bad contract despite partner's bidding  
How do you play it?

3 NS Vul Dealer South

♠AQ84
♥J97
♦A6
♣J942

♠76
♥AK8
♦J92
♣AKQT6

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			1♣
Dbl	Redbl	1♦	2♦
Pass	3♦	Pass	3♥
Pass	3♣	Pass	3NT
Pass	4NT	Pass	6NT
End			

Contract: Lead: ♦K

The bidding is, of course, silly, but if my erstwhile team-mates will not tell me how they got there I must invent. Probably truth was stranger than fiction.  
How do you play?

4 NS Vul Dealer South

♠T7
♥J76
♦K96
♣KQ532

♠A8
♥AKT2
♦T32
♣QJ8

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
-	-	-	1NT
Pass	3NT	End	

Contract: 3NT Lead: ♣T

East follows to the opening lead.  
How do you guarantee your contract?

**Solutions on Next Page**

# Play Challenge Solutions

*Jim Patrick*

1 NS Vul Dealer South

	♠86	
	♥AJ4	
	♦AQ3	
	♣T9876	
♠K752	N	♠QJT43
♥852	W	♥Q3
♦J62	E	♦T98
♣AQ5	S	♣K43
	♠A9	
	♥KT976	
	♦K754	
	♣J2	

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
-	-	-	1♥
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♦
Pass	4♥	End	

Contract: 4♥ Lead: ♠2

When East follows with the ♠T it seems likely that West has led from Kxxx.

Your best chance seems to be a 3=3 diamond break. If you immediately misguess trumps you are off. Even if you find the trump Queen, you still need diamonds 3=3 or someone with four diamonds and three trumps. (You might gain against a 4-1 trump break but see below about the auction.) If instead you play out the top trumps and they break you just need diamonds 3=3. If the Queen is doubleton, you can also play an opponent for three trumps and four diamonds.

Consider the bidding, or lack of it. If either opponent had 5 clubs, he would surely have a bid - West with ♠Kxxx and ♣HHxxx or East with ♠QJTxx and ♣HHxxx. This suggests the possibility of setting up a club for a diamond discard, usually by playing West for the trump Queen for entry reasons. Is this better than bashing out the Ace and King of trumps?

Comparing the 2 lines:

A Playing trumps: B Setting up clubs.

B gains when East is 5=xx=4=2 but loses against 5=xx=2=4.

B gains when East is 5=xxx=2=3 but loses more often against 5=Qxx=2=3.

All others are equal except that A makes against 5=Qx=3=3 as well.

2 NS Vul Dealer South

	♠AJ97654	
	♥J	
	♦A	
	♣T976	
♠Q3	N	♠K82
♥Q32	W	♥KT865
♦KT742	E	♦9865
♣Q32	S	♣8
	♠T	
	♥A974	
	♦QJ3	
	♣AKJ54	

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
-	-	-	1♣
Pass	2♠	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♣	Pass	4♥
Pass	4♠	Pass	5♣
Pass	5♦	Pass	6♣
End			

Contract: 6♣ Lead: ♦4

Clearly you need to get the spades going. For that to work you need to create dummy entries.

Win the ♦A. Play the ♠A and ruff a spade with the ♣J. If this holds lead a small club to create the required entries. With spades 3=2 and clubs 3=1 you will surely prevail.

If West has a singleton spade he may err by overruffing the ♣J at Trick 3. That gives you 2 trump entries to dummy to establish spades, and a further entry by ruffing a red suit to cash your winners.

3 NS Vul Dealer South

	♠AQ84										
	♥J97										
	♦A6										
	♣J942										
♠KJT93	<table style="margin: auto; text-align: center;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠52
	N										
W		E									
	S										
♥QT65		♥432									
♦KQT6		♦8754									
♣-		♣8753									
	♠76										
	♥AK8										
	♦J92										
	♣AKQT6										

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
-	-	-	1♣
Dbf	Redbl	1♦	2♦
Pass	3♦	Pass	3♥
Pass	3♠	Pass	3NT
Pass	4NT	Pass	6NT
End			

Contract: 6NT Lead: ♦K

A hand from long ago. Foolishly, I did not bid 1♦ over the Redouble and left my partner to struggle in 1♠X for 800. (If you are short in the *highest* suit shown by partner's double and the opponents have redoubled it is sensible to give partner a hand in choosing where the massacre should take place. If you are short in the *lowest* suit and have no clear preference between the other suits, let partner speak first.)

In the other room our teammates inexplicably reached 6NT, West's only contribution to the auction being a slow pass to the final contract. Declarer won the ♦K lead, playing for East to hold the ♦T and a heart-spade squeeze on West. (If West does not take the diamond to rectify the count, there is a throw-in.)

Given the information that West has a club shortage and is likely to have all of the points, it is not too difficult to imagine West

controlling all three suits and being in difficulties on the run of the clubs. West will have to have 5 spades (or specifically ♠KJT9) and the ♦QT.

Firstly, you have to duck the diamond to rectify the count. Then run the clubs, watching West squirm.

4 NS Vul Dealer South

	♠T7										
	♥J76										
	♦K96										
	♣KQ532										
♠J953	<table style="margin: auto; text-align: center;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠KQ642
	N										
W		E									
	S										
♥Q54		♥983									
♦J2		♦AQT7									
♣T987		♣4									
	♠A8										
	♥AKT2										
	♦8543										
	♣AJ6										

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
-	-	-	1NT
Pass	3NT	End	

Contract: 3NT Lead: ♣T

Having escaped the spade lead you should make certain of your contract by setting up a heart trick before you cash clubs. You can afford to play Ace, King and another heart.

You have a certain diamond stop: if West wins the heart and plays a diamond honour you can cover; if he plays a low diamond you can duck.

Check what happens if you cash clubs first and then lose a heart trick to West. Best not to squeeze yourself.



# July 2021 Bidding Challenge

*Harry Smith*

*Firstly, a warm welcome to our guest panellist, Bill Ross, winner of the July Bidding Challenge. We have a panel of 20 on this occasion, and correctly, no-one has predicted a unanimous panel on any of the problems. Indeed, on the seven bidding problems there were between 4 and 6 answers on each.*

## Problem 1 Teams NS Vul

	S	W	N	E
♠KQJ8	-	1♣	1♥	1♠
♥8	?			
♦AT54				
♣KJT3				

*What do you expect from partner for an overcall at this vulnerability? Pre-emption at unfavourable must be carefully measured, so partner has either a good suit or a good hand. However, many of the panel have chosen to believe the opposition and seem intent on letting them get away with bidding on tram tickets. Let's start with these underbidders:*

**ADAMSON** (similarly **ASH**): **1NT**. We may well be near game points, but it is not easy to see where the tricks would come from in 3NT. I think this is enough. Pass may well be right, looking to enjoy defending.

*Possibly only until you come to score up.*

**SHORT** (similarly **ROSS**): **1NT**. Only a point or two heavy. It will be interesting to see how the auction goes. I may be able to double soon. Pass is a possible alternative, but I fear a pass from a psyching West.

**MARSHALL**: **1NT**. Easy if playing pairs, but not so at teams? If West has psyched, well done him or her.

**PATERSON**: **1NT**. I think Double would show diamonds with heart tolerance, while

Pass would allow West to pass a psyche and so warn East. I have a King extra at the vulnerability but hate the single heart.

*All who chose 1NT seemed happy to defend, indeed some warming up their double card. At this vulnerability, this isn't winning bridge. Getting the values right:*

**VALENTINE**: **2NT**. I have two key priorities to communicate to partner, the strength of my hand and the fact that I have a spade stop. 1NT would be a significant underbid, and 3NT would be a significant overbid.

**SYMONS**: **2NT**. It could be right to defend, but I don't want to miss a vulnerable game, and this shows my values.

*The problem is that so many now play this as showing good heart support. If your fictional pick-up partner does, you may have a lot of explaining to do. Even more optimistic:*

**DRAGIC**: **3NT**. The question here is 2NT or 3NT. Singleton heart is a negative, but I have 2 Tens, double stops in their suit and must trust partner at this vulnerability.

*This is a bit much, but I have more sympathy with this slight overbid than with the wimpy underbid. At least Miro is believing his partner not the opposition. The majority play a waiting game:*

**SIME**: **PASS**. If this is on BBO, they won't see me sharpening my axe.

*In agreement with his partner:*

**MURDOCH** (similarly **MCGOWAN**): **PASS**. Opener must take some action and I may attempt to penalise some of them. If he bids 1NT and this is passed round to me I will double for a spade lead.

**BAYER**: **PASS**. Looking for a penalty. Yes, it might not be enough for missing game, but 9 tricks seem a long way away opposite many overcalls.

*More who prefer a non-vulnerable penalty to a vulnerable game. At least Arend sees the risk. More reasonably:*

**WILKINSON: PASS.** I think I can listen to the bids round the table and consider my hand again later.

**BENNETT: PASS.** I presume 1♠ is forcing. *Good point – worth checking.* Double is out, any NT is naïve thus, very out of character, I would pass.

**WHYTE: PASS.** I don't know whether it is better to defend this hand or to try for a game. 3NT is likely to be the most suitable game for us, but by no means assured. And of course, the 1♠ bid could be a psyche - too many points in this pack!

*And then similar to the 1NT pessimists who believe the opposition rather than partner:*

**MCGINLEY: PASS.** The best chance of going plus. I estimate points are roughly 20-20 but we've got a big misfit in hearts.

*Only 2 panellists have found the bid which in my view describes the hand best, as long as it has no specific system meaning:*

**SHIELDS: DBL.** I've got the values and shape to bid an invitational 2NT, but many people play that as 4-card support for partner's overcall. Double at least suggests a diamond suit and when I bid 2NT next round I will have described my hand well for partner to decide our final spot.

**FREIMANIS: DBL.** Aiming to make a natural 2NT bid later on. However, I do not think it can harm to start off with a double and see how the auction progresses

Problem 1	Votes	Marks
Pass	9	10
Dbl	2	9
1NT	6	6
2NT	2	5
3NT	1	4

## Problem 2 Teams N/S Vul

	S	W	N	E
♠ AQJ72	-	-	P	1NT <sup>1</sup>
♥ K5	Dbl <sup>2</sup>	2♣ <sup>3</sup>	P	2♦
♦ --	?			
♣ AQJ987				

<sup>1</sup> 15-17

<sup>2</sup> Systemically penalties

<sup>3</sup> Transfer to diamonds

*We have 6 different answers from the panel. Let's start with the bid that was made at the table:*

**SYMONS: DBL.** Luckily our agreement is take-out. If partner bids hearts, I'll convert to spades, and he will realise I have the black suits.

**SHORT: DBL.** Take-out. Partner will only leave this in with very good diamond intermediates as they are under the suit and I'll remove partner's 2♥ to 2♠, showing the black suits.

*Partner held 4/QT82/KQ82/T653. The 100 from taking the contract one down was poor consolation for the 12 tricks available in clubs. The man who doubled at the table has changed his mind on both his bids:*

**BENNETT: 2NT.** Not too keen on the first double. A lot of possibilities, 2♠, 3♣ or 3♦, even 2NT which must be a big hand with two places to play. If that is what it means, then 2NT.

*Roy is getting no support for his revised action. No other panellist even considered it. It's a good question what 2NT means. I think it is more likely to be a monster with no major, looking for one trick from partner, for example Axx/Axx/Ax/AKQxx. Another panellist on his own:*

**MCGINLEY: 4♦.** Trusting that partner takes this as a strong Leaping-Michaels type of hand, as I didn't rebid 3♣ or bid some number of clubs on the first round.

*Once again, no other panellist has even considered this option, but it has merit –*

*what else could 4♦ mean? Three panellists decided to ignore the club suit:*

**SHIELDS: 2♠.** There's no perfect answer so I'll pretend I only have five clubs and maximise our chances of finding the spade game when that is right.

**PATERSON: 2♠.** The most likely making game to reach is 4♠. I am worried partner will take 3♦ as majors.

**ADAMSON: 2♠.** 3♣ will be met by 3NT by partner - I'll get my spades in now.

*The majority vote amongst the panellists was to ignore the spade suit, initially at least.*

**DRAGIC (similarly BAYER, ROSS): 3♣.** Will follow up with 4♠ as I don't think the bidding will end here.

*All three taking a gamble. The other 3♣ bidders all took issue with the original double, and I am in 100% agreement with them. Had that been the question, I would have given it 2 points if I was in a generous mood at the time.*

**WILKINSON: 3♣.** My intention to make sound bids this month has been undermined by my suggesting to partner we defend 1NT doubled with this hand. However, developments seem favourable as I can now show a good hand with clubs; it is probable I can get my spades in, but even if this bid gets passed out it's better than having to defend 1NT doubled.

**ASH: 3♣.** I don't play Double of a strong NT as penalties but even if I did, I certainly would not double on a big two suiter. 2NT on the first<sup>a</sup> round would be ideal, converting 3♦ to 3♣ to show clubs and spades. Now I will just try to make sure I get a plus score even though we could easily be missing 4♠.

**SIME: 3♣.** The problem illustrates why the double of 1NT was absurd. We might not have beaten 1NT when a black suit slam was cold. Better would have been 2NT

showing a game forcing two-suiter. Some play that 2NT can be weaker with the minors. Correction of a minor to spades will tell partner what you have.

**MARSHALL: 3♣.** I would have had more sympathy for the double had they been vulnerable and we not. Will there be more bidding? Possibly, if West has shape, so I hope to get my spades in.

**MURDOCH: 3♣.** Strongly prefer a 2NT overall (strong unbalanced and forcing till suit agreed or game bid) over 1NT. Although doubling 2♦ would be take-out it has a flaw - an agonised partner may pass with 4 moderate trumps. 3♦ probably shows both majors. I prefer 3♣ intending to follow with 3♠ which is truer than bidding 2♠ then following with 4♣ over 3♦.

*John dismisses 3♦, but is he right? Let's hear from those who chose that. Neither Bill nor Victor tries to justify his bid, merely stressing the flaw in the earlier double:*

**WHYTE: 3♦.** Heavens, what a crass bid the double is. To 1NT you lead a black suit, declarer wins with his King, cashes five diamond tricks, and his ♥A for seven tricks, or endplays you in your original suit for you to give him a doubled overtrick. Whereas you can have 11 or even possibly 12 tricks in your black suit fit.

**SILVERSTONE: 3♦.** Much as I love penalty doubles this one looks like a mislick - I am expert on these. Now I must bid 3♦.

*Liz also complained about the double, but did explain her choice:*

**MCGOWAN: 3♦.** Partner will interpret this as a strong hand with no diamond stopper. If he bids 3NT I shall try 4♣ to show the 2-suiter. He will more likely bid hearts, and I can convert to spades and hope partner understands.

**VALENTINE: 3♦.** I don't want to double for takeout, as if it gets passed, I don't have a great hand for defence. I don't want to bid

3♣ or 2♣ as I am worried these will be passed. This leaves the forcing call of 3♦.

**FREIMANIS: 3♦.** Expecting partner to produce a 3♥ bid over which I will make a risky 4♣ and hope that partner gets the message of my two-suited and very strong hand. Could have bid 3♣ directly over 2♠ which might allow partner to read the bid as intended.

*A well thought out plan of action.*

*With great reluctance I will follow the rules and gives the bid with the highest number of votes full marks. To my mind several of the minority actions show a much greater degree of forward planning and have been rewarded accordingly.*

Problem 2	Votes	Marks
3♣	8	10
3♦	5	9
4♣	1	5
2NT	1	4
2♠	3	3
Dbl	2	1

**Problem 3** Teams None Vul

	S	W	N	E
♠9	1♦	P	1♥	1♠
♥Q964	?			
♦AKQ4				
♣AKQT				

*What does this hand need to make slam playable? Just ♥AK. Add ♠A and the Grand must be possible. So why not:*

**DRAGIC: 4NT.** Keycard for hearts. No point in splintering first - it just gives LHO the option to show support at the 4 level and there aren't many hands where we make slam and partner would be able to cooperate over 3♠.

**MCGOWAN: 4NT.** Keycard for hearts. Why not? 3♠ is just talking to myself.

*Liz and Miro are treading a lonely path. They will certainly get to slam when it is*

*good but will have to explain to teammates when partner's response was on ♥Jxxx, a low spade honour and minor suit Jacks.*

**MCGINLEY: DBL.** This will be taken as 3-card support at this stage. If partner rebids 2♥, then I'll use Keycard. If he rebids 1NT instead, then any soft spade values are in the bin, but I'll still follow up with a jump cuebid of 3♠, and partner has to reflect why I didn't do that on the round before.

*Convuluted, and really getting nowhere. Four panellists take the slow route:*

**WHYTE: 2♠.** This hand is too strong for 3♠, and leaves partner no room to show his values.

**WILKINSON: 2♠.** I realise that other bids are possible but may lead to getting to the 5-level when we are off 3 tricks. For example, if I bid 3♠ (splinter) partner may not have much to say except bid 4♥ and I would still want to bid 5♥.

**VALENTINE: 2♠.** It feels obvious to bid 3♠, but this forces the auction too high. I am unsure over 3♠ whether partner would know to bid 3NT with ♥AK. If partner bids 4♥, I will Keycard. If partner bids 3♥, I'll bid 3♠.

**SHIELDS (similarly MARSHALL): 2♠.** while 3♠ shows shortage and slam interest, it puts the ball in partner's court and after the inevitable 4♥ from partner I'd need to continue and that could be a disaster Bidding 2♠ now and then trying for slam makes it a lot less likely that partner will sign off twice with two of the three missing key cards, so if partner does sign off then I will respect it and avoid going beyond game.

*Four well-reasoned answers, and all have considered and rejected the 3♠ splinter. Can the majority put up a good case?*

**ASH (representing the rest): 3♠.** This shows a big hand, heart support and a spade shortage. Have I missed something?

*Yes – what to do next!*

**SIME: 3♠.** A refugee from the Bronze Challenge. Did you remember the lesson on splinters?

*Indeed, but the following chapter is on planning ahead. I recommend it! All the panellists who bid 3♠ gave one-line explanations. They thought it routine. This might explain why in this year's Men's Teams, less than half the field managed to reach the routine 6♥. The 3♠ bidders win points; the 2♠ bidders win the argument.*

Problem 3	Votes	Marks
3♠	12	10
2♠	5	9
4NT	2	5
Dbl	1	3

**Problem 4** Teams None Vul

♠A83 ♥AKQ ♦97 ♣T6542	<b>S</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>
	-	1♦	P	1♥
	P	2♥	Dbl	P
	?			

*Despite your holding in their trump suit, a clear majority of the panel is in favour of taking out partner's take-out double. There were only two dissenting voices:*

**SYMONS: PASS.** This is difficult. Partner could easily have an opening hand with some length in diamonds, or he could be quite weak to protect. I do have 4 defensive tricks, so I'll risk defending.

**ASH: PASS.** I have 4 tricks and partner has a good(ish) hand with diamonds. Partner is aware that East could have a good hand so his double should be something like Kxxx/xx/AQxx/Axxx.

*Surely a bit optimistic? It would mean LHO has at most 5 points in the 9 or 10 cards he holds in the 2 suits he bid. This seems to me one way of punishing partner. Another way was found by four panellists:*

**SILVERSTONE: 3NT.** Partner shows a strong hand with diamonds and heart shortage. The alternative is to defend and lead trump, trump, trump but 3NT feels safer.

*That indeed is one possible hand, but as Anne pointed out he could simply be protecting with both black suits, and a short heart holding making an earlier double unattractive.*

**BAYER: 3NT.** Yes, we might be off the first 6 diamond tricks, but partner typically has moderate diamond length on this auction.

**DRAGIC: 3NT.** Optimistic but I have a 5th club and partner has diamonds behind LHO.

*Possibly – see above.*

**WHYTE: 3NT.** Partner has a sound double but no support for hearts, preventing him from intervening in the first round. He might not have many points in diamonds.

*Indeed, he did not, and declarer had no difficulty in taking the last 7 tricks after they had cashed 6 diamonds. With two exceptions, the rest of the panel bid their long suit. One upvalued his hand:*

**SIME: 4♣.** I encourage partners to pre-balance, so I won't hang mine by passing or overbidding. West probably opened with good diamonds. Those who pass for penalty and lead trump might not like that suit in dummy.

*A good prediction, but is the hand and that suit worth 4♣? If it is, surely Gints has a better idea?*

**FREIMANIS: 3♦.** Asking for a stop. At teams passing is too risky. Opponents are likely to have a 9-card fit to make partner's double viable. We could easily have a 10-card club fit which would worsen our defensive chances even further. I expect partner to have around about 10 HCP and with partner having length in clubs, it will

both be a source of tricks in 3NT and a fallback contract if he has no diamond stop.

*Let's hear the views of the majority:*

**ADAMSON: 3♣.** This is not a constructive situation and passing does not appeal – we have a 9-card club fit which suggests the TNT is all wrong for defending 2♥.

**MARSHALL** (similarly **BENNETT): 3♣.** If partner's spades were any good, I would have heard from him first time round, even if he did have spades and diamonds, and felt unable to double initially.

**PATERSON: 3♣.** Partner has 4 spades and 4+ clubs. He may have diamond values but could easily have QJxx/x/xxx/KQxxx. Of course, there are hands where pass could work well, but it also might be disastrous.

**ROSS: 3♣.** Tempted to leave the double in as it would only need 2 tricks from partner for a plus score but I'm "feart".

**MCGINLEY: 3♣.** Am taking partner for a thin pre-protective double with 4/4+ in the black suits. If they take the push to 3♥, then I'll double.

**WILKINSON: 3♣.** Tempting to bid 3NT.

**SHIELDS** (similarly **SHORT): 3♣.** This should be a Lebensohl position showing some values. I worry that partner is full value with say a 4144 shape, in which case this bid is not enough. With me holding so many high cards in hearts, the opposition are going to have their high cards in our suit and that will make 3NT hard work – which makes me more comfortable with this underbid.

*Several panellists have mentioned 2NT, but only one chose it:*

**MCGOWAN: 2NT.** Partner has entered a live auction after passing, may have up to opening values with a singleton heart, or less with a void heart. I am not passing 2♥ doubled in case they have a 10-card fit. I think 2NT should be 2 places to play.

*Not if your partner is Brian or Patrick. At the table I made the foul bid of 3NT and got what I deserved. You want partner to feel he can balance safely, so the doublers and 3NTers are well over the top. If you are going to be aggressive in looking for the game, Gints's suggestion of 3♦ clearly has merit, but the arguments of the majority convince me.*

Problem 4	Votes	Marks
3♣	11	10
3♦	1	8
2NT	1	6
4♣	1	4
3NT	4	2
Pass	2	2

**Problem 5** Teams EW Vul

	S	W	N	E
♠AK86	-	P	P	1♦
♥J73	Dbl	1♠	Dbl <sup>1</sup>	2♦
♦962	P	P	Dbl	P
♣AK7	?			

<sup>1</sup>Dbl = values, takeout

*Let's start with those who haven't read or don't believe the problem:*

**WILKINSON: 2♠.** Time to bid my spade suit, as I don't really believe in this take out stuff.

*An agnostic! I don't like the method either but for the duration of this hand, you're saddled with it.*

**SHORT: 2♠.** Partner should have 4 spades to double here, though I don't know who he/she is. If they don't know this, it may be hard to stop the bidding below about the 5-level.

**SIME: 2♠** The only way to find a 4/4 spade fit. I prefer that the double of 1♠ shows 4+ spades. That used to be the norm to expose a psyche.

*One of those who chose 2♠ had read the problem but found a sound reason for this bid.*

**PATERSON: 2♠.** I do not like the meaning of partner's first double, but his second must be takeout with 3+ spades, so 2♠ is natural and will probably play better than a 7-card red suit fit as the short hand will take the diamond force.

*One should really be able to award points not just for the bid made, but for the thoughts leading to it. Sadly, I can't, so Tony, Brian and Iain can thank Jack for any marks they get on this one.*

*Three others chose to move forward:*

**MURDOCH: 3♣.** He has asked me to bid a suit. This is the best I can do.

**BAYER: 2♥.** Yes, we probably have 25 hcp, but which game are we supposed to make?

**MCGINLEY: 2♥.** Looks like a part-score battle, but no 8-card fit for our side.

*My choice at the table would have been one of these two options, and the analysis is right. You do have a combined 25-count, but no game is on. Both contracts will make but the best result is achieved by the passers. Do they have a good argument?*

**FREIMANIS (similarly ASH, ROSS, SHIELDS, WHYTE, SYMONS): PASS.** With likely four tricks off the top, I'm expecting this to go down. Even if they somehow do make the contract, it should not cause a game swing.

**SILVERSTONE: PASS.** Feels like I am missing something. Partner has doubled vulnerable opponents for penalties, and I am not ashamed. Trump lead automatic.

**BENNETT: PASS.** His hearts can't be great, or he would bid them. The only sensible action is to pass.

**VALENTINE: PASS.** If partner wanted to force, he could do so. If partner wanted to play in a partial he knows what suits I have.

I'm quite happy to defend with my collection at these colours.

**DRAGIC: PASS.** We have game values with no fit. I have a defensive hand and they are unfavourable. I expect at least 500

**ADAMSON: PASS.** Partner knows I don't have 4 hearts (I would have bid 2♥). He could have bid 3♣. I see no reason to pull.

*They have won not only the points but also the argument.*

Problem 5	Votes	Marks
Pass	13	10
2♥	2	4
3♣	1	4
2♠	4	3
3♦	0	3

**Problem 6** Teams None Vul

♠K	S	W	N	E
♥AKT32	-	-	-	P
♦QJ64	1♥	P	2♦	P
♣QJ6	?			

*On any single hand one bidding system might work better than others. Without doubt, this would be a trivial problem if we were playing 2-over-1, as most of the panel pointed out. However, we have to work with the system we have agreed with partner.*

*To the problem: the underbidders have it. They are in a minority overall but have managed to garner more votes for a feeble 3♦ than any of the other options, each of which does express the value of the hand better, so once more 10 marks go to what is not the best option. Can those who chose this horrendous underbid justify themselves?*

**ASH: 3♦.** A splinter bid of 3♠ is tempting but if partner can't bid 3NT we may well be in the wrong contract. I will pray partner is optimistic and makes another bid.

**SIME: 3♦.** I realise that, in Acol-land, 3♦ might end the auction. If it does, I hope that game is not better than a finesse.

**SYMONS (similarly MCGOWAN): 3♦.** An underbid. But don't want to rule out 3NT.

**SILVERSTONE: 3♦.** Sometimes good to have a little extra especially not vulnerable.

**MARSHALL: 3♦.** Might as well bid my shape if I can't quite bid my values.

*Well at least all of them confess to it being an underbid. Brian is more courageous at the table.*

**SHORT: 3♦.** The practical bid. At the table I might have bid 2NT.

*And the man who found this underbid at the table has not reformed but at least comes up with the same alternative as Brian:*

**BENNETT: 3♦.** You look a bit good for 3♦. I suppose you could try 2NT but that could be daft. I'll underbid with 3♦.

*What about this option?*

**PATERSON: 2NT.** Playing normal methods there is no good rebid. Given the soft values, NT is a more likely game than diamonds.

**SHIELDS: 2NT.** Showing 15+ and semi-balanced. It's a small lie but the alternatives (3♣, 3♦) feel more dangerous. The ♠K will be a stopper most of the time opposite even J32, and nobody has bid spades yet.

*There may be a spade flaw in this choice, but at least partner will have some idea of your values. What else? Patrick suggested 3♣ as an option:*

**FREIMANIS: 3♣.** Going with a bit of a lie here to see if partner can produce a 3NT bid with some values in spades. Alternatively, will steer towards a 5♦/6♦ contract.

**WHYTE: 3♣.** I am too strong to bid 2♥ and 4♦, although fairly accurate in describing my strength, takes me beyond 3NT.

**ADAMSON: 3♣.** Too strong for 3♦, not strong enough for 4♦. Wrong holding for 3♣.

*Forward going showing your values and with an easy retreat to your partner's suit. Some thought it was strong enough for 4♦:*

**MURDOCH (similarly DRAGIC): 4♦.** natural and forcing; will pass 4♥ by responder. If the ♠K is worthless I bid 3♦.

*Now partner knows both about your values and your support, though John clearly sees the possible flaw. Finally, the most popular choice amongst those who believe in showing partner the real value of their hand:*

**VALENTINE: 3♣.** In these situations, I think it's important to prioritise level over strain. Splintering agreeing diamonds should simplify any potential slam auction.  
**BAYER: 3♣.** Not ideal with the singleton honour but probably better than anything else.

**MCGINLEY (also ROSS, WILKINSON): 3♣.** Conveys most of what you want to show: 4-card support, singleton spade and fewer than 7 losers.

*This seems the most convincing answer, but any of the other three options is better than 3♦. Partner had a juicy 3343 17-count, but even with the double fit, slam opposite the 3541 or similar measly 12-count partner had shown, seemed a long way away.*

Problem 6	Votes	Marks
3♦	8	10
3♣	5	9
3♣	3	8
2NT	2	8
4♦	2	7



**Problem 7** Teams EW Vul

♠K987632	S	W	N	E
♥T9		P	1♣	P
♦K9	1♠	P	2NT <sup>1</sup>	P
♣A5	?			

<sup>1</sup>2NT = 18-19.

*Let's start with the pessimists:*

**ROSS: 4♠.** If we've missed a slam will buy partner a pint.

*Get your wallet out Bill – I'd prefer a red wine please!*

**ASH: 4♠.** It would be good to have some methods here as my hand is strong enough to suggest that 3NT might play better and even 6♣ can make opposite (say) Ax, Axx, AJx, KQxxx. Without such sophistication I will 'punt' what I think is the likeliest game.

**SHIELDS: 4♠.** For lack of known system here I choose the safe game; I'd prefer to be playing transfers over this 2NT, so that I can bid 3♥ - 3♠ - 4♠ as a slam try with no shortage. If 3♠ was known to be forcing, I'd bid 3♠ then 4♠ as a slam try.

*Both Mike and Patrick are using lack of system agreement as an excuse for making a wild underbid. Mike even seems worried about game making. This hand MUST at least look at slam! Patrick asked if 3♠ was forcing:*

**ADAMSON: 3♠.** Forcing. Keeping slam options open.

**MARSHALL: 3♠.** I take it the whole world plays that as 100% forcing!

**MCGOWAN: 3♠.** The real problem will probably come next time.

**MCGINLEY: 3♠.** Forcing, so for those using Checkback, this shows a 6+card suit. Partner with 3-card support can cuebid, while he should look at the quality of doubleton support and decide whether to cuebid on way to 4♠.

*No doubt whatsoever in the minds of any of them! Iain thinks about it, but even if 3♠ isn't forcing, he is not going for the 4♠ cop-out:*

**SIME: 3♠.** I am assuming that 3♠ is forcing and is therefore stronger than 4♠. If 3♠ is not forcing, I will take whichever route (Checkback / New Minor Forcing) leads to a forcing 3♠.

*One panellist isn't holding back:*

**FREIMANIS: 5♠.** The hand is just about right to make an invite to slam as it requires very little to make it a good contract. Expecting partner to evaluate the hand appropriately.

*Needing to fill both the trump suit and the heart suit, I feel more investigation is needed.*

**BAYER (similarly DRAGIC): 3♦.** No idea whether this is new minor forcing or not, but either way I should find out whether partner has three spades. If so, I will try for slam; otherwise, I will settle for bidding 4♠ next.

*The majority, half of the panel, go for what seems the safe route of checkback. What Liz said about her 3♠ bid is even more appropriate here. Have they thought about what to do next?*

**WILKINSON: 3♠.** Starting a game forcing checkback sequence. I agreed to play this before the match started.

**SYMONS: 3♠.** Checkback. Would be nice to know if partner has 3-card spades before I make a slam try.

**SILVERSTONE: 3♠.** Asking for description.

**SHORT: 3♠.** I'll be able to sniff out the story now. Any organised pair will have a method here with a weak 3♠ bid and a strong one.

**MURDOCH: 3♠.** Small slam possible, grand slam not impossible. 3♠ is NF.

*John regards 3♣ as clearly NF as did Miro and Jack, and, as Brian points out, agreement is needed. However, I would have thought that opposite 18-19, any hand with a spade suit long enough to be insisted on would have a play for game, so while a direct 3♠ and going to spades via checkback may be ways of showing different strength levels, both should surely still be FG. I can't see much point in having a bid in your armoury to excuse you from having made an initial response on a yarborough with a long suit. Not much advice so far on how to move forward. Help is on the way:*

**VALENTINE: 3♣.** Presumably a form of checkback to clarify partner's spade holding. If partner bids 3♣, I'll bid RKC. If partner ends up showing 2-card spades, I'll make a try by cue bidding. Partner doesn't need much for slam to be good and ♣Ax could be gold dust.

**PATERSON: 3♣.** I could cuebid 4♣ after 3♣ from partner or 4♣ as a slam try over other responses. Over 2NT, 4♣ as RKCB in spades would be ideal, but without specific agreement I would not risk it. Note that opposite an ideal hand 7♠ would be good, but opposite a misfit 5♠ could go off.

**BENNETT: 3♣.** A 6-3 or even a 6-2 might play well so let's find out with 3♣.

*Roy did apologise immediately after the hand for his terrible 4♣ bid but did comment that it wasn't clear what was the best option. A few months of thought have gone into this clearly!*

Problem 7	Votes	Marks
3♣	9	10
3♠	5	9
3♦	2	8
5♣	1	5
4♣	3	2

## Problem 8 Teams EW Vul

	S	W	N	E
♠3	-	-	-	1♠
♥A76542	3♥	3NT	P	4♠
♦T962	P	P	P	
♣53				

What do you lead?

*Everyone chose either a diamond or a club, and the panel was almost equally split. In diamonds which card was selected was more a matter of agreement, so I have only considered the issue of which suit. Let's see if either view can be justified:*

**ADAMSON: ♦.** Looking to build a defensive trick. Second choice ♣ – that is more likely than a diamond to be their second suit, so helping them, and very unlikely to get me a ruff.

**VALENTINE: ♣.** Between this and ♥A. I'm too reticent to lead the ♥A and set up discards from the strength on my left. Trying to find a source of tricks from partner, and this looks like the best bet, and you never know, it could be a very lucky day and you get a club ruff!

**WHYTE: ♦.** Partner has some good cards, otherwise why are they not in a higher contract. If partner has a singleton heart he should double for a heart lead, so it has to be a diamond or a club. A club lead gives the chance of him having sufficient cashable high cards, and the very remote possibility of a ruff in South's hand. I see no possible merit in a trump lead. I am a drowning man clutching at straws.

**MARSHALL: ♣.** I think leading doubletons is the most common cause of hopeless contracts making, but here it seems the only hope to set up tricks.

**DRAGIC: ♦.** If a heart ruff is needed, then we might still have time to get there but if dummy's hearts are needed for the contract then we won't recover from the ♥A lead.

**PATERSON:** ♣. Complete guess as to which minor. Maybe if I try for a club ruff declarer will not play me for short spades.

**SHIELDS:** ♦. My values won't beat this game and even ♥A and a heart ruff leaves me with no entry and is unlikely to be enough, as this will set up one or two heart tricks for declarer. I must set up some tricks in partner's hand. Declarer might still get a discard on a heart winner in dummy and given my lengths in the minors a diamond discard is more likely to be useful to him than a club discard. That steers me to leading a diamond here.

**MCGINLEY:** ♣. Declarer is something like 6133, so I think we need my Ace + 3 minor tricks (or 2 and a ruff). If dummy has a minor suit of Kxx then leading a club works if partner has AQx(x)(x), while leading a diamond works if partner has AQ tight or AQJ tight.

**BAYER:** ♦. With unusually strong conviction for a lead problem. ♠A seems out given LHO has strength and RHO likely has shortness in hearts. Not a trump as we might need to setup tricks quickly. LHO is more likely to have long clubs than long diamonds for his 3NT bid.

**ASH:** ♣. This will obviously work well when partner has AQ sitting over the King and the ruff is our 4th<sup>th</sup> trick or even if we need to set up a 2nd round club trick before he gets a discard on ♥K, which is bound to be in dummy. Of course, it could be a disastrous lead but so could anything else.

**SIME:** ♦. Declarer may have a singleton heart and be about to lead it towards dummy's KQx. I need to establish side suit winners before declarer can pitch losers. He is less likely to be able to pitch all his clubs.

*Interesting to see the different thought processes, but overall, I still find it hard to come down one way or other.*

Problem 8	Votes	Marks
♦	11	10
♣	9	9
♥A	0	3
Other	0	1

*This proved to be a hard set of problems, with a large variety of opinions being expressed. I expect there will be cries of 'Fix!' with my regular partner, Roy, winning, and one of my former regular partners, Finlay, coming a close second.*

*Roy did have one advantage, as some of the hands were played by us as a partnership. However, from his comments it is clear he did not remember them, and while I lambasted his choices at the table on questions 2, 6 and 7, I was no less merciful on my own choices in problems 3 & 4. He at least had the consolation of getting 10 points on question 6 despite my comments and going on to win overall.*

*Thank you to all the panel for their helpful responses.*

# Panel Answers

# July 2021

Problem		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
Top Scoring Choice		Pass	3♣	3♠	3♣	Pass	3♦	3♣	♦	Total
1	<b>Roy Bennett</b>	Pass	2NT	3♠	3♣	Pass	3♦	3♣	♦	74
2	<b>Finlay Marshall</b>	1NT	3♣	2♠	3♣	Pass	3♦	3♣	♣	73
3	<b>Ronan Valentine</b>	2NT	3♦	2♠	3♣	Pass	3♠	3♣	♣	71
4=	<b>John Murdoch</b>	Pass	3♣	3♠	3♣	3♣	4♦	3♣	♣	70
	<b>Victor Silverstone</b>	Pass	3♦	3♠	3NT	Pass	3♦	3♣	♣	70
	<b>Tony Wilkinson</b>	Pass	3♣	2♠	3♣	2♠	3♠	3♣	♣	70
7	<b>Liz McGowan</b>	Pass	3♦	4NT	2NT	Pass	3♦	3♠	♦	69
8	<b>Bill Whyte</b>	Pass	3♦	2♠	3NT	Pass	3♣	3♣	♦	68
9	<b>Bill Ross</b>	1NT	3♣	3♠	3♣	Pass	3♠	4♠	♦	57
10=	<b>Alex Adamson</b>	1NT	2♠	3♠	3♣	Pass	3♣	3♠	♦	66
	<b>Gints Freimanis</b>	Dbl	3♦	3♠	3♦	Pass	3♣	5♠	♦	66
	<b>Iain Sime</b>	Pass	3♣	3♠	4♣	2♠	3♦	3♠	♦	66
13	<b>Arend Bayer</b>	Pass	3♣	3♠	3NT	2♥	3♠	3♦	♦	63
14	<b>Patrick Shields</b>	Dbl	2♠	2♠	3♣	Pass	2NT	4♠	♦	61
15=	<b>Mike Ash</b>	1NT	3♣	3♠	Pass	Pass	3♦	4♠	♣	59
	<b>Mike McGinley</b>	Pass	4♣	Dbl	3♣	2♥	3♠	3♠	♣	59
	<b>Jack Paterson</b>	1NT	2♠	3♠	3♣	2♠	2NT	3♣	♣	59
	<b>Brian Short</b>	1NT	Dbl	3♠	3♣	2♠	3♦	3♣	♣	59
19	<b>Anne Symons</b>	2NT	Dbl	3♠	Pass	Pass	3♦	3♣	♦	58
	<b>Miro Dragic</b>	3NT	3♣	4NT	3NT	Pass	4♦	3♦	♦	57

## Subscriber Results

Not an easy set on which to score well. Congratulations to our winner, **Linton Horsfall** of the **Carlton**, whose score of 71 beats most of the panel.

Other good scores:	Bill Ross (Aberdeen)	67
	Robert Clow (GBC)	65
	Bob Brown (GBC)	64
	David Welsh (Storling & Union)	62
	Anna Hamilton (Buchanan)	58
	Ken Tait (Marmion)	56

# Master Point Promotions

July 1 – September 30, 2021

## Grand Master

W Jim Forsyth  
W Grant Harrower  
W Andrew Symons

## Senior Life Master

W Kevin Strathern

## National Master

A Fiona Paton  
C Ronan Valentine  
E David Hamilton  
W Diana Fairlie

## Scottish Master

A Isobel Hollingsworth  
C Hamish Galloway  
C Peter Thommeny  
E David Anderson  
E Heather Braid  
E Tadeusz Janowski  
H Corinne Ross  
W John Larkin

## Regional Master

C Marc Shearer  
E Julia Campbell  
E Tom Robertson  
E Rose Simpson  
H Ian Thomson

## 4 Star Master

E Jane Carnegie  
W Colin Hamilton  
W Kath Russell

## 3 Star Master

C Alice Cowieson  
N Sandy Watson  
W Lydia Freedman  
W Wan Ying Hill

## 2 Star Master

C Howard Greenwell  
E Amanda Aberdour  
E Peter Boni  
E Steven Henderson  
E Anne Monaghan  
E Janet Unsworth  
W Anne Hood  
W Tony Nolan  
W Moira Stobo

## 1 Star Master

C Scott Gallacher  
E Ian Barnes  
E John Bielski  
E Rosa Bisset  
E Ishbel Clark  
E David Dodds  
E Lorraine Robb  
E Pat Walkingshaw  
E Sheena West  
W Paul Rideout  
W Mike Woodcock

## Master

C Sheila Blair  
C Margaret Sinclair  
E Christy Boorman  
E Ann Bunker  
E David Dunn  
E Liz Kelly  
E Suzie Laughland  
E Jane Mackie  
E Gertrud Mallon  
E Ken McKenna  
E Fiona McLaren  
E Barbara Pirie  
N Martin Hunter  
W Caroline Findlay  
W Kirsty Hassell  
W Paul Thomson

## District Master

E Sylvia Cooke  
E Michael Gray  
E Judith Harcus  
E Brian Hughes  
E Isobel Jones  
E Robert Jones  
E Ronald Kite  
E Pat Lawson  
E Maureen Robertson  
E Grainne Scott  
E Jerry Smith  
E Jon Vipond  
E Sarah Wild  
N Brian Hamilton  
N Neil Lovie  
W Tony Goldberg  
W Norton Grossman  
W Rosemary Hassan

## Local Master

C Portia File  
C Edan Gardner  
C Janet Hill  
E Cat Bryson  
E Peter Collings  
E Don Gray  
E Jacqui Jardine  
E Rosemary Macfie  
E Shaun Middleton  
E Janice Milloy  
E Basil Morrison  
E Alison Pippet  
E Andrew Ritchie  
E Colin Robertson  
E Stephanie Robertson  
E Findlay Taylor  
E Stephen Wilson  
E Christina Woodrow  
E Debbie Wright  
H Nick Goodchild  
H Patricia Goodchild  
H Roy Laing

H Isabel Robertson  
H Ken Walker  
I Marian Duff  
I Peter Wilkinson  
N Beaty McCann  
N Joe McCann  
W Margaret Crawford

**Club Master**

A Anne Fraser  
C Anita Dixon  
C Ena Holland  
C Judy McLellan

E Olivia Bailey  
E Paul Beaumont  
E Linda Blencowe  
E Stuart Breckons  
E Euan Cameron  
E Gillean Hoehnke  
E Elaine Kilgour  
E Alasdair Mackie  
E Janet Mcleod  
E Jane Muirhead  
E Christopher Osborne  
E Sandra Simpson  
H Jennifer Gordon

H Martyn Halsall  
I Dawn Beckett  
I Peter Beckett  
I Carol Grunder  
I Shona Hambleton  
I Michael Kennedy  
I William Russell  
I Cherry Scott  
I Erica Zinet  
N Evelyn Paterson  
N John Short  
W Allison Earlam  
W Bron Gorny

**For information about your master points, visit ... <https://www.mempad.co.uk>**