

# Scottish Bridge News

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Issue 125



*Janet Unsworth in profile, see page 20*

# Scottish Bridge News

## Editorial

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It may look as if things are returning to 'normal' now that other events have overtaken the pandemic as the main threat to world security. But the pandemic is not over. We may control it with improved hand hygiene and increased awareness of our responsibilities, but we must remain alert as we return to face-to-face bridge.

In this edition we have a report on a disappointing Camrose series. The Junior Camrose events were held in February, and Danny Hamilton reports on the Peggy Bayer. We also cover the Final of the Winter Fours and the second Transnational Senior Online Teams organised by the Polish Bridge Federation.

There is another entertaining article by Ronan Valentine on his experiences as a junior, and an instructive contribution from Iain Sime. There must be more potential contributors out there? Please!

There has been some confusion about Bidding Challenges. The Bronze Bidding Challenge is now a completely separate item, 4 problems issued at the beginning of each month with the article and scores published at the end of the month. The original Bidding Panel, with 8 problems including an opening lead, continues in its traditional form every two months in the Ezine. Clear as mud?

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# Camrose 2022

This was Scotland's 'Home' year, so we had two teams labelled 'Scotland' and 'SBU'. BGB had hoped to play face-to-face but Omicron forced us back onto RealBridge.

The first weekend was not a happy one for Scotland who seemed to get on the wrong side of several slam boards.

## Match 2, Board 5: Scotland v England

	♠KQ5	NS Vul
	♥QT96	Dealer: N
	♦T952	
	♣93	
♠AJ9632		♠T
♥KJ4		♥A72
♦6		♦AJ83
♣QJT		♣AK752
	♠874	
	♥853	
	♦KQ74	
	♣864	

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
<i>Erichsen</i>		<i>Liggins</i>	
-	Pass	1♣	Pass
1♥*	Pass	2♦	Pass
4♣	Pass	4♥	Pass
4♠	Pass	5♣	Pass
6♣	End		

\*1♥ transfer response showing spades

Glyn Liggins reversed into diamonds, and Espen Erichsen fancied his hand. South led a heart. Declarer won the Ace and played ♠A, spade ruff, two rounds of clubs ending in dummy and another spade ruff. The 3-3 break meant he could draw the last trump and claim 12 tricks.

No-one else bid the excellent small slam – if spades break 4-2 there are 12 tricks on a dummy reversal. The Irish East opened 1NT(!) and the Scottish East did not fancy a reverse with a singleton in partner's suit.

And then there was the SBU auction...

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
<i>Bouverie</i>		<i>Marshall</i>	
-	Pass	1♣	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♦	Pass
3♣	Pass	3♥	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♣	Pass
4NT	Pass	5♣	Pass
7♣	End		

Archie, playing his first Camrose, put partner into an ambitious Grand Slam. Finlay, a seasoned veteran, did not panic. He ruffed out the spades and took a diamond ruff in dummy before drawing trump and claiming all the tricks. And so SBU gained 14 imps while Scotland lost 11.

Because the matches were online John Matheson was able to make a welcome return to Camrose in the SBU team. He rather enjoyed this board

## Match 3, Board 25: SBU v N Ireland

	♠T2	EW Vul
	♥J982	Dealer: N
	♦75432	
	♣Q7	
♠543		♠A87
♥Q5		♥KT73
♦AKQ6		♦T
♣AK83		♣J9542
	♠KQJ96	
	♥A64	
	♦J98	
	♣T6	

John opened 1♠ as South and was rather surprised to find himself playing there. West cashed his 5 top winners, East discarding two clubs and John stoically following suit. He could see 5 tricks, and two down might not be a bad result at the vulnerability. West played a third club, ruffed in dummy while John discarded a heart. Six tricks. He played the ♦7. John knew it was a winner, but East had not been paying attention and failed to ruff. After

discarding his second heart loser John claimed 7 tricks for +80, the only plus score his way. Archie and Finlay were one of only 2 pairs to reach game as EW, so the SBU gained 12 imps.

After the first weekend the scores were:

Camrose 2022: 1 <sup>st</sup> Weekend		
1	England	68.51
2	Ireland	55.57
3	Wales	51.37
4	SBU	49.17
5	Northern Ireland	44.92
6	Scotland	29.46

Our teams were:

**Scotland:** Alex Adamson & Derek Sanders; Paul Barton & Jun Nakamaru-Pinder; Steve Levinson & Barnet Shenkin. Npc Anne Perkins

**SBU:** Archie Bouverie & Finlay Marshall; Cathy Ferguson & Bob McKinnon; John Matheson & Liz McGowan. Npc Angus MacDonald.

For the second weekend the selectors replaced Barton / Nakamaru-Pinder with Stephen Peterkin & Sam Punch.

Do you automatically lead a trump against a freely bid Grand Slam?

### Match 1, Board 5: Scotland v SBU

	♠AQT863	EW Vul
	♥A	Dealer: S
	♦AK8	
	♣AK3	
♠J952		♠4
♥JT8		♥Q95432
♦J7		♦953
♣QT87		♣952
	♠K7	
	♥K76	
	♦QT642	
	♣J64	

No NS pair had the methods to reach 7♠, a contract that can cope with all 4-1 breaks

except ♠Jxxx in West. 7NT is also a fair spot. Andrew Black (England) made 13 tricks in 6NT. He cashed two top spades, uncovering the bad break, but could then squeeze West in the black suits.

Most stopped safely in 6♠, where the Northern Irish North made 13 tricks by finessing the ♠T for no obvious reason. But Scotland and Ireland both bid 7♠. Ireland were lucky to get the trump lead that solved all problems. Scotland were less fortunate. East led a heart and declarer was not inspired to finesse in trump. And so Ireland gained 13 imps, Scotland lost 17.

Scotland did better on the next 'Grand'.

### Match 3, Board 3: Scotland v Wales

	♠2	EW Vul
	♥87642	Dealer: S
	♦T94	
	♣KT84	
♠AKJ543		♠T97
♥K		♥AQJ9
♦A7653		♦KJ
♣7		♣AJ52
	♠Q86	
	♥T53	
	♦Q82	
	♣Q963	

Almost everybody reached 6♠ after auctions of varying length. The auction identified the 9-card trump fit missing the Queen of trump. The Welsh methods had a hiccup:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
<i>Pottage</i>		<i>Ratcliff</i>	
-	-	-	Pass
1♠	Pass	2NT <sup>1</sup>	Pass
3♠	Pass	3NT <sup>2</sup>	Pass
4♣	Pass	4♦	Pass
4NT	Pass	5♥	Pass
6♦	Pass	7♠	End

The 2NT response showed either a 12+HCP 4-card raise; or a 3-card 16+ raise. The 3♠ rebid confirmed at least a 5-card suit, and 3NT showed extras. After a couple of cue-

bids West used Keycard. He presumably hoped that partner had a fourth spade when he made a Grand Slam try, asking for third round diamond control.

The late Patrick Jourdain of Wales had a theory that a Grand Slam with this trump holding was with the odds. If North did not lead the traditional trump he was marked with the Queen, so the contract would fail only when North had Qxx(x). But Stephen Peterkin knew better than to help out by leading his singleton trump and declarer duly went down one: 17 imps to Scotland.

There was one excellent Grand Slam;

### Match 2, Board 21: SBU v England

	♠QT9832	NS Vul
	♥43	Dealer: N
	♦87	
	♣Q75	
♠J		♠A74
♥J9		♥AKQ82
♦AKQT42		♦J3
♣AJ32		♣T96
	♠K65	
	♥T765	
	♦965	
	♣K84	

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
<i>Paske</i>		<i>McIntosh</i>	
-	Pass	1NT	Pass
2NT	Pass	3♣	Pass
3♠*	Dbl	4♥	Pass
4NT	Pass	5♥	Pass
5NT	Pass	7♦	End

England reached the top spot after a stretched strong NT opener. West transferred to diamonds, then showed his spade shortage. When East showed two Aces West made a Grand Slam try, accepted by Andrew McIntosh – did he really know partner held that vital ♥J?

The SBU were rather unlucky to lose 11 imps on the board when they stopped in 6♦.

Two pairs missed slam altogether. Northern Ireland failed to cope with a bold weak 2♣ opener from the Welsh North. Scotland never got to grips with the deal after East showed a weak no-trump and they also lost 11 imps.

Scores for the second weekend:

Camrose 2022: 2 <sup>nd</sup> Weekend		
1	Ireland	75.17
2	England	67.45
3	SBU	41.46
4	Wales	40.76
5	Scotland	39.86
6	Northern Ireland	35.30

The two Scottish teams and Ireland each improved by one place on their first weekend performance, but the overall positions were unchanged

Camrose 2022		
1	England	135.96
2	Ireland	130.74
3	Wales	92.13
4	SBU	90.63
5	Northern Ireland	80.22
6	Scotland	69.32

Scotland's 21<sup>st</sup> century performance in the Camrose contrasts sadly with the glory years of the 1960s and 70s as reported in January.

Let's Do Better!

# Peggy Bayer 2022

*Danny Hamilton*

This year I had the honour of being non-playing captain for the Scottish U21 team at the annual home internationals. It was supposed to be in Ireland, instead it was online. With Wales not fielding a team we were looking to finish second out of four, against Ireland, Northern Ireland and the strong England team.

There was early success in our first match against Northern Ireland:

Board 8	♠J ♥AKJ8642 ♦732 ♣T5	None Vul Dealer W									
♠AQT8643 ♥73 ♦A ♣K43	<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		♠K72 ♥95 ♦T9654 ♣J82
	N										
W		E									
	S										
	♠95 ♥QT ♦KQJ8 ♣AQ976										

<b>WEST</b>	<b>NORTH</b>	<b>EAST</b>	<b>SOUTH</b>
	<i>Kevin Ren</i>		
3♠	4♥	End	

Our North was about to open 3♥ when West opened 3♠. (The N Ireland team love pre-emptive openings, with no strength restrictions. Even their 2♣ opening is weak.) With 3♥ no longer available, Kevin made the practical call of 4♥. You've got to do something with all those hearts. 4♥ was passed out and dummy proved most helpful. Kevin made 4♥+1.

On the other table our West, Harry Stuart, opened a full-blooded 4♠. This is risky, as you have strength outside spades, but he found almost the perfect dummy – weak enough that the opposition have game, but with some trump support meaning you won't go many down. He took 7 Spades, 1

diamond and a club. 4♠-1 combined with 4♥+1 was a good start for Team Scotland.

In the Ireland-England match both sides got to 4♠. When Ireland declared it also went one off. The English declarer, Charlotte Bedford, did one better. She lost the first two Hearts, then won the trump switch and ran all of her trumps, putting South under pressure. When South chose to keep ♦KQ and ♣A Charlotte read the position and led a low club. South won and had to return a diamond, which declarer won and took the last trick with her 3 of Clubs. (It takes some confidence as declarer to play out every last trump, then give up the lead, confident you'll regain it!)

Scotland beat Northern Ireland 20-0, and England only managed 19-1 against Ireland, so we were briefly top of the table.

In our second match we were severely tested against hot favourites England. We did not pass this test.

Board 14	♠2 ♥KQT432 ♦AK6 ♣A83	None Vul Dealer E									
♠QT873 ♥– ♦J742 ♣KQT4	<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		♠AK95 ♥A96 ♦T853 ♣J6
	N										
W		E									
	S										
	♠J64 ♥J875 ♦Q9 ♣9752										

When the English EW got to 4♠X the pressure was on North. Looking at all four hands it's easy to see that the defence have four cashing tricks, but it's not so easy to take them. Our North (Kevin Ren) led the ♥K, which still leaves a chance to beat the contract. Declarer won the heart lead, drew trump and played on clubs. North grabbed his ♣A and it's crunch time. Afterwards, Kevin said he should have played his partner for the ♦Q as the only chance, but

he cashed a top diamond so that was 4♠X=. On the other table England played 4♥ as NS. This also has four losers, and with nowhere for them to go it was 4♥-1, still leading to a loss of 11 IMPs.

The 11 IMP loss didn't matter much in the match overall, as we lost 77-13. The cut off for a 20-0 loss in a 16-board match is 60 IMPs, and by being just over that we scored exactly 0 VPs for our efforts.

I've often said the VP scale should be more lenient for Junior Bridge (you could, for example, use the 24-board scale for a 16-board match) as there are many more swings, and the team that wins doesn't really mind if they win 20-0 or 17-3 say, but it's better for the morale of the losing team.

We had now found our level, and the match against Ireland was a close one. Board 20 looked like trouble for North-South, with two strong but misfitting hands. The Irish NS bid and made a comfortable 3NT, which looked like a good result.

Board 20	♠QJT83	All Vul
	♥T	Dealer W
	♦Q	
	♣AKJ532	
♠A972		♠654
♥96		♥Q84
♦K85		♦76432
♣QT98		♣64
	♠K	
	♥AKJ7532	
	♦AJT9	
	♣7	

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	<i>Chloe Farrell</i>		<i>David Tobias</i>
Pass	1♣	Pass	1♥
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♦ <sup>1</sup>
Pass	2♣	Pass	4NT
Pass	5♣	Pass	5♥
Pass	5♠	Pass	6♥
End			

Our North's sequence shows this sort of 6-5 hand. South had a problem. He went for 4NT, presumably Blackwood, though I don't know in what suit (it wasn't alerted and I haven't asked him). North showed one keycard and South *signed off* in 5♥. Who knows what's happening now? Anyway 6♥ is a playable spot. With the trumps and clubs behaving nicely it can make but could also get very awkward.

Not wanting to lead away from any honours, West started with a trump. East did well to withhold the Queen, letting the ♥T win in dummy. Declarer is home now by drawing trumps and giving up a spade – if West declines to win his Ace he can give up a diamond instead. Of course David did not know this. He tried a spade from dummy (East might just duck the Ace). When West won and returned a diamond it was all over. Declarer drew trumps and claimed 12 tricks.

A rather fortuitous 13 IMP gain. However, we still took only 3 VPs out the match, leaving us in 3<sup>rd</sup> place having played the other three teams once each so far.

We started the second Round Robin with a second comfortable win against Northern Ireland. The we got another chance to try not to lose 20-0 to England.

I'd suggested the team be bold, but I fear we took it too far. This board was typical:

Board 22	♠72	EW Vul
	♥AK9	Dealer E
	♦9743	
	♣Q972	
♠QJ6543		♠KT98
♥J6		♥Q874
♦KJ		♦T52
♣KJ3		♣54
	♠A	
	♥T532	
	♦AQ86	
	♣AT86	

<b>WEST</b> <i>Harry Stuart</i>	<b>NORTH</b>	<b>EAST</b> <i>Aidan Woodley</i>	<b>SOUTH</b>
		Pass	1♦
1♠	2♦	3♠	Pass
4♠	Dbl	End	

Possibly some confusion over the strength of the 3♠ bid, or just youthful enthusiasm, landed us in a contract with a lot of losers. North had our number and doubled for two off. At the other table the English NS had a more controlled auction to stop in 2♠ just making. Ireland and Northern Ireland both managed 3♠-1 on the board, about par as North-South are making 3♣ or 3♦.

However, despite this setback the match went relatively well for us, and we 'only' lost 7-66. Losing by 59 IMPs meant we picked up a morale boosting 0.07 VPs.

The next match against Ireland was I think our best of the event. This was a good board:

Board 12	♠QT87 ♥KT2 ♦KJ4 ♣K92	NS Vul Dealer W									
♠J532 ♥Q9 ♦QT86 ♣873	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <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		♠A96 ♥J63 ♦A932 ♣AT5 ♠K4 ♥A8754 ♦75 ♣QJ64
	N										
W		E									
	S										

After a weak 1NT opening our North-South pair (Kevin Ren and James Day) settled in 2♥. Every other table tried 4♥. There is an unavoidable loser in each suit so staying low gained us 6 IMPs, contributing to a narrow 32-29 IMP win.

At this point we were still narrowly third behind Ireland (and England), with hopes of coming second. But that was not to be, and

a stonking loss to England in the penultimate round sealed the final positions. In our final match against Ireland we were playing for pride. I think by now we had the right balance of over- and underbidding, and since I'd told the team there was always a slam on the last board they had no trouble with this one:

Board 32	♠K432 ♥QJ43 ♦87 ♣632	EW Vul Dealer W									
♠AJ765 ♥A7 ♦QJ ♣AJ95	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <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		♠QT ♥K865 ♦A6 ♣KQT74 ♠98 ♥T92 ♦KT95432 ♣8
	N										
W		E									
	S										

<b>WEST</b> <i>Harry Stuart</i>	<b>NORTH</b>	<b>EAST</b> <i>Aidan Woodley</i>	<b>SOUTH</b>
1♠	Pass	2♣	3♦
5♣	Pass	6♣	End

The 2-over-1 response showed 10+HCP. South stuck in 3♦ but Harry judged well to jump straight to 5♣. (We don't mess around with game contracts.) Aidan topped him up to slam and in the play there were no problems. Although it looks like both the diamond and spade finesses fail, in fact you can always establish a long spade to throw a losing diamond.

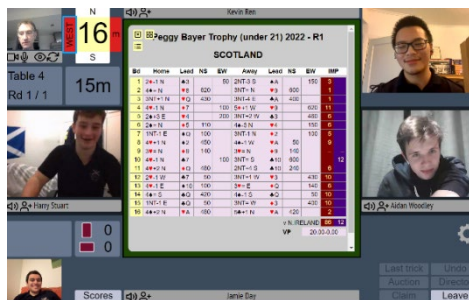
The Irish East-West also bid 6♣, so the board was a tie, and we narrowly lost this match to confirm our 3<sup>rd</sup> place finish in the final standings.

Peggy Bayer 2022		
1	England	166.71
2	Ireland	113.19
3	Scotland	73.82
4	Northern Ireland	6.28



Overall it was a smoothly run event, and as far as I know every player was on time with no connection problems. Of course we would have rather done it in person, but RealBridge gave a chance to meet all the teams virtually at least.

I think many of this team will be competing for places again next year, and given their relative inexperience and rapid improvement I look forward to seeing what they are capable of in the future.



## Junior Camrose

Scotland won this event two years ago, and finished runners-up last year. But Juniors grow older, and only Ronan Valentine of the successful teams was available this time.

All five countries were represented, and to make up an even number England had two teams. England has a well-developed Junior Training scheme, and a far larger pool of talent than the other nations, and their teams dominated the event. Each team plays every other team in two separate Round Robins.

Scotland's first Round Robin was a see-saw affair. A big win over Wales, then an unfortunate loss to Ireland. A tight virtual draw with England, then a complete wipe out against the EBU team to drop to fifth place. Finally a big win over Northern Ireland restored some pride.

In the second Round Robin they did better against Ireland, but worse against Northern Ireland in the final match.

The team will have learned a lot from the experience, and with a bit of work can return next year hoping to improve on their quite creditable third place.

Junior Camrose 2022		
1	England	160.87
2	EBU	152.4
3	Scotland	99.51
4	Northern Ireland	73.83
5	Wales	63.12
5	Ireland	50.27

# Winter 4s

24 teams entered this year. England had organised some events of its own, but they did send a Junior team. Other Sassenachs were replaced by teams from Poland, Spain and South Africa, as well as some Scandinavians who played with Scots.

Our home team, SHORT, (Brian Short, Alan Goodman, Alex and Paul Gipson) reached the Final undefeated. In the semi-final Barnet SHENKIN lost out to the Polish international team SELIGMAN (Martin Seligman, Jacek Pszczola, Wlodzimierz Starkowski, Michal Kwiecen).

Poles like to bid slams, but in the first half their luck was out.

Board 7	♠J ♥- ♦AKQ985 ♣AJT986	All Vul Dealer: S									
♠A963 ♥QJ95 ♦J32 ♣Q7	<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		♠KT8 ♥KT8642 ♦7 ♣542 ♠Q7542 ♥A73 ♦T64 ♣K3
	N										
W		E									
	S										

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
<i>Alex</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Paul</i>	<i>Seligman</i>
-	-	-	Pass
Pass	1♦	1♥	1♠
3♦*	5♣	Pass	6♦
End			

\* a mixed raise: 4 trump, 7-9 HCP

Paul realised that dummy must have a heart control and found the spade lead. Alex won the Ace and returned a spade for declarer to ruff. When Paul showed out on the second trump declarer expected him to have more clubs than his partner. He drew the last trump and went with the odds, running the ♣J and losing to the doubleton Queen.

Brian and Alan stopped in 5♦. West led a heart and Brian tackled clubs normally, leading low to the King and making all 13 tricks. He may have been surprised to gain 12 imps rather than lose 13.

Board 16	♠KQT532 ♥7 ♦AQ T2 ♣T2	EW Vul Dlr W									
♠76 ♥KJT42 ♦J73 ♣KJ43	<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		♠- ♥A93 ♦K98654 ♣AQ85 ♠AJ984 ♥Q865 ♦- ♣762
	N										
W		E									
	S										

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
<i>Alex</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Paul</i>	<i>Seligman</i>
Pass	1♠	2♦	4♦
Pass	4NT	Pass	6♦
Pass	6♠	Dbl	End

North thought he could afford to check on Aces, but the 6♦ response, showing one keycard plus a void, told him he was wrong. Paul rubbed it in with a double. After the same start to the auction Brian stopped safely in 4♠ to gain 11 imps.

At half-time SHORT led by 47-23, but the Poles clawed back 21 imps on boards 17-24. Then came Board 26 (rotated to make South declarer).

Board 26	♠K8 ♥QT54 ♦6 ♣AKQJ62	NS Vul Dealer: W									
♠AJ7652 ♥93 ♦AQJ ♣98	<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		♠3 ♥AJ762 ♦974 ♣T543 ♠QT94 ♥K8 ♦KT8532 ♣7
	N										
W		E									
	S										

The Poles reached a pretty horrible spot.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
<i>Brian</i>	<i>Seligman</i>	<i>Alan</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>
1♠	2♣	Pass	2♦
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♦
End			

Brian led the ♥9. Alan won the Ace and returned a heart. Declarer ducked a diamond and the defenders crossruffed for a bit, making 5 trump and 2 aces for a nice 300.

The Gipsons found a more rewarding spot:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
<i>Kwiecen</i>	<i>Paul</i>	<i>Starkowski</i>	<i>Alex</i>
1♠	2♣	Pass	2♦
Pass	2♥	Pass	2NT
Pass	3NT	End	

West led a spade. Dummy's ♠8 scored, and the ♠K was taken with the ♠A. East signalled for a heart, and ducked partner's ♥9 to the King. Declarer cashed ♠Q and claimed 9 tricks.

Perhaps the auction should warn West off such a disastrous lead: either of dummy's suits leaves declarer with too much to do. But the home team were happy to accept 14 imps, now leading by 66-49. A game swing out and some flattish boards and the score with 2 boards remaining was 69-61.

Board 31	♠AK	NS Vul
	♥652	Dealer: S
	♦KQ54	
	♣KQT6	
♠T82		♠76543
♥QJT3		♥4
♦T		♦873
♣AJ754		♣9832
	♠QJ9	
	♥AK987	
	♦AJ962	
	♣-	

The Gipson brothers were able to display their sophisticated methods.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	<i>Paul</i>		<i>Alex</i>
	-	-	1♥
Pass	2♣ <sup>1</sup>	Pass	3♠ <sup>2</sup>
Pass	3♥ <sup>3</sup>	Pass	4♦ <sup>4</sup>
Pass	4NT <sup>5</sup>	Pass	5♥ <sup>6</sup>
Pass	5♠ <sup>7</sup>	Pass	5NT <sup>8</sup>
Pass	7♦		

<sup>1</sup> 2♣	GF relay, might be natural
<sup>2</sup> 3♦	5-5 in ♥ + ♦, 15+HCP
<sup>3</sup> 3♥	relay asking about distribution
<sup>4</sup> 4♦	3=5=5=0
<sup>5</sup> 4NT	RKC for diamonds
<sup>6</sup> 5♥	2 Keycards, no ♦Q
<sup>7</sup> 5♠	Asking for Kings
<sup>8</sup> 5NT	♥K

Paul knew his partner must have a Major suit Queen to make up 15 HCP. The Grand Slam is an easy make if hearts break 3-2, or, when they break 4-1, trump are 2-2 or the hand with 4 hearts also has 3 trump. As the cards lay Alex had to go down.

The Polish auction did not win many style points.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	<i>Pszczola</i>		<i>Seligman</i>
	-	-	1♥
Pass	2♣ <sup>1</sup>	Pass	2♦
Pass	2♥	Pass	3♦
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♣
Pass	4♦	Pass	4♠
Pass	5♣ <sup>2</sup>	Pass	5♦
Pass	5♥	End	

<sup>1</sup> 2♣	GF relay
<sup>2</sup> 5♣	1 or 4 keycards

Only 2 bids were alerted! The Poles never managed to set diamonds as trump and must have been delighted to find the bad heart break. They gained an undeserved 13 imps and won the match by 5.

Bridge can be a cruel game.

## Leading in the Polish Senior Transnational Teams.

This was the second time the Polish Bridge Federation had organised this event: teams from all over Europe and North America compete online over a 3-week period in late January-early February

Scotland had 2 representative teams: event. Scotland White were 4 pairs of Senior internationalists; and Scotland Blue were 5 pairs seeking experience at this level.

Here are some lead problems they faced.

Early in our bridge careers we are advised to lead 4<sup>th</sup> highest of our longest and strongest suit against NT contracts. As we progress we come to realise that this is not always best. (Many years ago the late Tom Culbertson declared 7NT after a not uncommon bidding misunderstanding with the late John MacLaren. The lady on lead held ♠Axxx. Overawed by her exalted opponents she led her 4th highest spade. Contract made.)

We must listen to the bidding before choosing a lead, and the fourth highest card is not always the most effective.

Unless otherwise stated, opponents play a 5-card major system with a strong NT.

### Problem 1

♠J64 ♥J75 ♦AT82 ♣652	W N E S	All Vul Dealer: W
-------------------------------	------------	----------------------

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Pass	1♣	Pass	1♦
Pass	1♠	Pass	1NT
Pass	3NT	End	

(North's 1♣ might be short, but when he rebids 1♠ he promises an unbalanced hand with real clubs.)

### Problem 2

♠Q74 ♥76 ♦T432 ♣A654	W N E S	NS Vul Dir: S
-------------------------------	------------	------------------

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
-	-	-	1NT
Pass	2♣	Dbl	2♦
3♣	3NT	End	

(1NT was 15-17. Partner's double of their Stayman enquiry was Lead-directing and 2♦ denies a 4+card Major.)

### Problem 3

♠K42 ♥Q975 ♦65 ♣Q642	W N E S	None Vul Dealer: S
-------------------------------	------------	-----------------------

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			1♥
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♥	Pass	2NT
End			

### Problem 4

♠AK5 ♥K73 ♦KT942 ♣42	W N E S	NS Vul Dir S
-------------------------------	------------	-----------------

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
-	-	-	1NT
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♦
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT
End			

A 15-17 NT with simple Stayman responses.

# Virtual Leads in Poland

## Lead Problem 1: Match 1 Board 13

	♠AQ93		All Vul									
	♥AK		Dealer: E									
	♦963											
	♣AQ93											
♠J64 ♥J75 ♦AT82 ♣652	<table style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠KT8 ♥Q9432 ♦Q74 ♣T8	
	N											
W		E										
	S											
	♠762											
	♥T86											
	♦KJ5											
	♣KJ74											

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Pass	1♣	Pass	1♦
Pass	1♠	Pass	1NT
Pass	3NT	End	

Everybody reached 3NT on this deal. Both Scots declared from the North hand; the 4th highest heart gave declarer no chance.

Against Scotland White South responded 1NT to the 1♣ opener and North raised to game. Harry Smith's fourth highest diamond worked nicely when partner had the Queen and two spade entries.

Scotland Blue had to contend with the auction shown. The diamond into declarer's suit does not appeal, so how about trying to find partner's Major? Our hero decided to lead through dummy's second suit, choosing the ♠J, covered by the Queen and King. East switched to a heart. Declarer played a diamond to the Jack. West continued to make life hard for partner by ducking. When East won the second spade he cleared hearts and the game made

Since South would likely respond 1♥ with four of them, even with longer diamonds, and North does not have hearts you might opt for the ♥5, which should work even when partner has good spades

Take 12 imps if you led a red suit.

## Lead Problem 2: Match 2 Board 5

	♠AT85		NS Vul									
	♥T432		Dlr S									
	♦KJ87											
	♣K											
♠Q74 ♥76 ♦T432 ♣A654	<table style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠K92 ♥K985 ♦- ♣QJT732	
	N											
W		E										
	S											
	♠J63											
	♥AQJ											
	♦AQ965											
	♣98											

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
-	-	-	1NT
Pass	2♣	Dbl	2♦
3♣	3NT	End	

3NT was not everybody's choice on this deal. Most NS pairs played in diamonds, making ten tricks.

Scotland White lost 6 imps. The auction was similar to the one shown but North passed over 3♣. Declarer dropped the singleton ♣K and made 9 tricks.

The Canadian South's 1NT was supposed to be strong. Partner's double of 3♣ is lead-directing, she should have at least two honours, but North thinks his side has a club stopper. Who is right? You are going to lead a club, but which club? Can the ♣A ever cost? It will if South has ♣Qxx. Can it gain? It does here!

4th highest meant you had to watch declarer assemble 10 tricks with the aid of the heart finesse. But you gained an imp when your other pair also bid 3NT on a low club lead and made an extra overtrick when East discarded hearts.

Some Canadians play that after a lead-directing double of Stayman pass denies a club stopper, making a response shows one. Others do not. One to discuss with partner.

Take 13 imps if you led the ♣A.

### Lead Problem 3: Match 4 Board 12

	♠T9765	None Vul
	♥83	Dealer: S
	♦KT9	
	♣AT7	
♠K42		♠AJ83
♥Q975		♥A6
♦65		♦Q8432
♣Q642		♣83
	♠Q	
	♥KJT42	
	♦AJ7	
	♣KJ95	

### Lead Problem 4: Match 8 Board 6

	♣432	NS Vul
	♥Q864	Dlr S
	♦A53	
	♣K75	
♠AK5		♠QT876
♥K73		♥T52
♦KT942		♦J8
♣42		♣T83
	♠J9	
	♥AJ9	
	♦Q76	
	♣AQJ96	

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			1♥
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♥	Pass	2NT
End			

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
-	-	-	1NT
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♦
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT
End			

Declarer has shown 5 hearts and at least 4 clubs, bidding both your 4-card suits. That might not put you off if you had better intermediates, but you feel that a 4<sup>th</sup> highest lead can help only declarer here.

Against Scotland White the German West decided that his best shot was to lead through dummy's suit. And just in case South had a singleton honour, he chose an inspired ♠K. A second spade went to the Ten and Jack, South discarding a heart. East switched to ♥A and another. Declarer can rise with the ♥K and take some good views in the minors, but your lead deserves to succeed.

Your other pair have played 2♥ rather poorly, so you need to beat 2NT to flatten the board.

Lose 5 imps if you led anything but the ♠K.

Opponents will have little to spare on this auction, but even if they have stretched with a combined 24 count partner cannot have much.

Declarer has denied a 4+card Major, so has minor suit length, but that need not put you off leading a 5-card suit. The diamond lead will not cost when partner has the Queen, or when the Queen is in dummy, and you do have lots of entries. If partner has a singleton or doubleton honour this might be a good time to lead 4<sup>th</sup> highest even from your KT9 sequence.

An alternative shot is to play partner for long spades. If you lead the ♠A, asking for an attitude signal, there may be time to switch to diamonds when that is right.

As it happens you can beat the contract by switching to spades even after leading a diamond at trick 1.

Take 13 imps for not emulating our dozy West.

# Can You Swindle?

*Iain Sime*

♠AKQJ8652	N W       E S	♠T972 ♥KT ♦7432 ♣QJ3
-----------	---------------------	-------------------------------

Contract: 6♠.                      Lead: ♥6

You (West) open 2♣ (of course). When partner shows a smidgeon with spade support, you cannot resist temptation.

North leads the ♥6. Partner proudly tables a disappointing dummy.

You mutter “thank you partner.” NO you don’t! This is F2F at the Melville on a Monday afternoon. You confidently say “Thank You Partner” and work out if there is any way to avoid two diamond losers.

You will need a misdefence. How can you induce one?

**Swindle 1-** Win the ♥K and lead the ♣3. This gives South a horrible dilemma. Can you have the singleton ♣K? Is this not how you would play with that card?

If South plays the ♣A you are home. Loser on loser, then loser on winner. Cross to the ♠T (drawing trump) and run the ♣Q, throwing a small diamond. Later throw the other diamond loser under the winning ♣J.

Note that your chances of pulling this off are much better if you play the club at trick two. If you run the lead to your Ace and play a trump to dummy, West has a chance to signal. If he throws an encouraging club, South should realise he can duck.

What if South ducks the club anyway? Are you finished? Or have you another trick up your sleeve?

**Swindle 2-** Go for an elimination. You need to take care with entries.

Here is the full deal:

		♠—	All Vul
		♥Q9763	Dir: W
		♦Q5	
		♣K98752	
♠AKQJ8652	N W       E S	♠T972	♠T972
♥A4		♥KT	♥KT
♦AT6		♦7432	♦7432
♣—		♣QJ3	♣QJ3
		♠3	
		♥J852	
		♦KJ98	
		♣AT64	

Ruff the club high (you don’t want to risk an overruff!), spade to the seven, club ruff high, spade to dummy, ruff the last club and cash the red Aces, leaving:

		♠—	All Vul
		♥Q9	Dealer: W
		♦Q	
		♣K9	
♠QJ6	N W       E S	♠T2	♠T2
♥—		♥—	♥—
♦T6		♦743	♦743
♣—		♣—	♣—
		♠	
		♥8	
		♦KJ9	
		♣A	

In the course of this you deduce that South started with four diamonds to North’s doubleton. Now play a spade to dummy and lead a diamond. If South ducks North is endplayed with the ♦Q. He has to give a ruff and discard, allowing you to dispose of the diamond loser.

To beat the slam, East has to rise with the ♦K, eating his partner’s Queen. This manoeuvre is known as a Crocodile Coup.



A Crocodile Coo

# Adventures in Junior Bridge

*Ronan Valentine*

I am aware of at least two Star Trek movies which end with the following monologue from Captain James T. Kirk, "Space. The final frontier. These are the voyages of the Starship Enterprise. Its continuing mission, to explore strange new worlds, to seek out new life and new civilizations. To boldly go where no man has gone before."

Strangely, with a small reworking, this monologue is incredibly relevant to the 2014 European Junior Pairs Championships held in Burghausen, which is in the South East of Germany. "Burghausen. The final frontier. These are the voyages of the Scottish Juniors. Their continuing mission, to explore strange new bids, to seek out new defences and new card combinations. To boldly go where no Scottish bridge players have gone before."

Burghausen was a strange place. Situated on the German-Austrian border, which you can (and we did) walk across, the town is architecturally beautiful. The bridge venue was also a stunning, neo-classical Town Hall dating from the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Idyllic. Sadly, and not for the first time on a junior bridge adventure, the accommodation was not up to scratch. What follows is an excerpt from an email that I received prior to arriving to the competition: "The rooms are like a shoebox to put it nicely, and the dinner time clashes with the evening's play, so you'll have to warn Liam and Ronan to bring enough to budget for meals out every night."

Once my parents had re-mortgaged their property to allow me to afford meals out every night (accounting for my propensity to enjoy my meals) Liam and I were all but

ready to travel. However, there was one small issue that we faced.

Prior to departing for Germany, my mum and I had driven to St Andrews to collect some Scottish shirts for our adventures. What a privilege it is to represent your country. To feel the pride of being a national representative.

Arguably, that pride is reduced when you realise that the shirts that you have been given are a Men's Medium and a Women's Large. For readers who do not know me, I have not been either of these sizes since I was perhaps six months old. We were already at a disadvantage being armed with only Benjaminised Acrol in our toolbox, and now both Liam and I had to decide how to allocate these 'shirts' in an equitable way.

Whilst the Women's Large was intended for me, Liam and I concluded that it was smaller than a Men's Medium and that it was perhaps best to avoid a possible charge for indecent exposure (plunging necklines were not, and are still not, my friend). It was also a good example of partnership harmony, ensuring that both members of the partnership were equally uncomfortable.

We had a soft landing in our first European event and after the first 10 boards had concocted a score of 30.94%. Our score marginally improved across the morning, though the following board didn't help.

	♠987	None Vul
	♥Q83	Dlr N
	♦Q986	
	♣764	
♠AJT3		♠654
♥JT95		♥AK7
♦AK3		♦JT74
♣J8		♣932
	♠KQ2	
	♥642	
	♦52	
	♣AKQT5	



WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
<i>Adams</i>	<i>Valentine</i>	<i>Huvers</i>	<i>O.Brien</i>
	Pass	Pass	1NT
Db1	Pass	Pass	Redbl
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♠
Db1	End		

Liam's No-Trump was 11-14 and West's double was described as 'values'. This was quite an opaque description and despite pressing he would not describe it as penalty. As such, I concluded that our usual escape methods would be off.

We were, however, playing with screens and when redouble came back through, I was confident that the double had not been simply explained as 'values' to Liam. 4-3-3-3 hands were the death hand for the wriggle we played, and I now had to bid 2♦ to show diamonds and spades.

East-West dutifully doubled this, and we went for a telephone number against partial. I was also aggrieved when I realised that perhaps this could have been avoided with a proper and thorough explanation.

With my holier-than-thou attitude, I summoned a Director. He listened to my tale with interest, then asked a pertinent question which I had not considered: "What would your action have been had you been told the double was penalty?" Upon careful consideration, I disclosed that my action would not have changed, and in one fell swoop, my holier-than-thou façade was pierced by a tired Tournament Director.

After our bruising opening morning, we were due to get some respite at lunchtime. We could get some food, regroup, and then play better in the afternoon. Most of the players seemed to be heading to a restaurant adjacent to the venue, so our small Scottish posse followed the flock.

It was a refreshing change of fortune to have a restaurant so near the venue, that was filled with bridge players. This suggested

that it would be a positive experience. Having studied some German at school, I entered the restaurant and went to speak to a rather stern German waitress.

I had practised my line in my head. I had worked out exactly what I was going to say. Years of training built up to this. As I went to open my mouth, she barked at me in a clearly irritated tone and gesticulated at a table. This was my first encounter with German customer service.

We were sat for a short while when food arrived at the table. Food that we had not ordered. If my memory serves correctly, it was a salad which could best be described as 'somewhat edible'. Then there was the main. What a main course it was too, the famous 'German' (by the way of Austria, by way of Hungary) goulash.

It was rancid. It had zero redeeming qualities, and the misery was compounded by the feeling that we had no choice in our food. It was pre-determined by God himself. A cruel twist of fate.

One disgruntled Scottish customer, who was a vegetarian, was served a meat goulash despite making their food preferences known. The waitress dealt with this with her continuing style and panache. The plate was taken away and brought back concerningly quickly.

It was right to be concerned. It was abundantly clear that the kitchen staff had simply scraped the meat off the returned plate. Essentially leaving mashed potatoes and meat gravy, a classic vegetarian choice. I don't know if you've ever had to query, through a language barrier, about the ingredients of a gravy to an apathetic German waitress, but if you haven't, you've barely lived. On the upside, at least the meal appeared to be free.

As we returned to the bridge, we were promptly involved in another directorial

call. Whereas we were on the wrong side of the previous TD call, we were on the correct side of this one. We were playing a Polish pair and, naturally, we bamboozled them with our highly sophisticated weak NT.

They requested the ethereal presence of the Bodywarmer-clad directors and pleaded their case. The Director who arrived at the table had little time for our opponents' arguments. His counterarguments, in a distilled form, were 'read the convention card' and 'you're playing against Scottish and Irish players. Expect it and deal with it.' I appreciated this pragmatism on this occasion.

Pragmatism and dealing with the occasion were required to return to the "Theatre of Dreams", better known as the restaurant across the road. As a collective, we decided that if we were to pick our food, which we would surely be allowed to do, then maybe, just maybe, the restaurant would be bearable.

As the smoke cleared from the fanfare of our arrival, I explained to the waitress that we would be selecting our own food today. This didn't seem to be a problem which made for a great surprise as it was the same server as the previous today.

We poured over the menus and decided on the order of the day. I thought I would indulge in a more traditional 'German' dish and have some schnitzel. This time, the food can best be described as 'adequately edible'.

Having completed my TripAdvisor review, and with play due to restart, we got up to leave the restaurant. The ever-present server began gesticulating furiously at us, before shouting across the whole restaurant, "No, you pay!"

It seems that only one meal was free and the rest required a fee which can best be described as exorbitant when considering the quality and service. After this, we

decided not to deal with this restaurant again and took our chances with other establishments.

The pairs event was a damp squib for Liam and me. We improved on our 30% from round 1 but ended the qualifying with 44.25%. This, for a first outing, was not a shameful performance, but well off the 53% which would have qualified us for the final.

All the non-qualifiers from all the different series play the President's Cup. It is a four-session, Grand National type event where you need to avoid the obstacles if you can and hope for a clean run. We didn't expect to finish very high, but a metaphorical horse fell in front of us, felling us in the process on Board 15:

	♠65	NS Vul
	♥KT7	Dlr S
	♦T72	
	♣QJ652	
♠J984		♠AKQ2
♥A986		♥Q4
♦QJ4		♦A9853
♣AT		♣K3
	♠T73	
	♥J532	
	♦K6	
	♣9874	

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
<i>Junior 1</i>	<i>Valentine</i>	<i>Junior 2</i>	<i>O.Brien</i>
-	-	-	Pass
1NT	Pass	2♠!	End

The names of the guilty parties who were sitting in the East and West seats have been redacted to protect them and owing to the cloudiness of the author's memory. If the names are forgotten, the hand is emblazoned into my consciousness.

East-West were playing a weak NT. After an obliging pass from South, an even more obliging West opened 1NT. North dutifully passed having nothing, or even less, of note

to say. The East hand is interesting in terms of how it is best to proceed.

A simple approach might be to start with Stayman. If you hear a 2♠ response, you can now agree trumps using 3♥. If partner bids 2♦, then presumably you can bid a forcing 3♦ as 6♦ could be the correct spot. If partner bids 2♥ you will need to be sure as to whether 3♦ is forcing over 2♥ to bid that. Alternatively, you may bid 4NT over a 2♥ response.

Having planned out your potential auctions, you elect to bid Stayman. Partner responds that he has 4 spades and you invariably force to slam. You lose your two tricks, like most tables in the room.

However, you are not most tables in the room. You are in the elite group who have yet to acquaint themselves with Stayman. So, your options are limited. You could just bid game. Bid slam. Bid a quantitative 4NT. I see that box you're in and you'll need to step out of it. You elect to bid a non-forcing 2♠ because, well, it's better than slam going one off!

It was hard to refrain from comment when 2♠+3 was entered into the Bridgematic revealing 68% for East-West. In retrospect, I'm simply glad they didn't think about game or that would have been a near bottom.

Perhaps I should not be so harsh on these juniors: they were Irish and had not had a smooth journey to Burghausen. The Irish Bridge Union had wisely decided to send many pairs to the event to blood young juniors in a competitive field and aid their development.

On an unrelated note, west of Frankfurt, and 557km from Burghausen, there is a small town called Berghausen. The large Irish contingent flew to Frankfurt instead of Munich, headed for the wrong Burghausen. The Irish Bridge Union then had to fund

coaches for the 6-hour journey south to get to the actual event. It would be fair to say that this crippled the Irish junior budget for years and they have never sent so many juniors to an international event since.

After the four rounds of qualifying, we resembled an apple that has been dropped on the floor on numerous occasions: we were bruised. Our 42.70% was poorer than our qualifying result but probably reflective of our abilities at the time.

At the end of the tournament, there was a Junior Camp. This was an opportunity to play in enforced transnational partnerships and for Liam and I to learn from more experienced players and it was not one that we were going to pass up.

We both encountered an immediate issue in our first transnational partnerships. It seemed, to our shock and horror, that most of continental Europe do not play Benjaminised Acol. Nor were they prepared to adapt. Therefore, Liam and I were going to learn 5-card majors, by hook or by crook.

I don't recall many of the events in that camp, or many of my partners. I don't recall the mistakes that I made, of which there were plenty. However, I know that by the end of the camp I knew a lot more junior players, had made good friends with some and had learned the basics of 5-card majors, which Liam and I agreed to use from that moment on and we haven't looked back.

However, there are two memories that stand out from the camp. In one event, Liam and I both paired with a Latvian junior. Liam played with Gints Freimanis. A name that most readers will be quite familiar with since he has been living, studying and working in Scotland for many years now.

In my adventures with Latvian Juniors, I volunteered to play with Aleksis Zalitis and to play Polish Club. I remember two things about that game. First, that opening 1♣ and

rebidding 2♦ is a huge hand. Secondly, that 1♦ is a negative to a 1♣ opener. The only reason that stays in my mind is that I bid a positive 1♠ to steal an auction from Jake Milne who remonstrated that he would have found a double of 1NT, the final contract, should I have bid 1♦ first...

This was Liam's and my first European Championships, and it was a steep learning curve. However, it was arguably the most formative in terms of our development as bridge players and for developing our

partnership. A lot of the system work that we have done since was inspired by the Junior Camp in Burghausen.

We didn't have any moments of glory. We didn't have any real successes. We had a plethora of failures. These failures, however, gave us the fuel and the willpower to ensure that next time, and every time thereafter, if we played in such an event again, we would be more competitive

## Scottish Bridge Players Fantasy Football League

The second season is nearing the end. We have 16 teams. The top prize is again £100, runner up £20.

This year we also a prize for the winner of a Cup competition run over the final 4 weeks. So, the players out of the running for the league will still have something to play for.

The top half of the table at 31 March is:

1. Arthur Foxache (Jim Mason)	2,022
2. Bruntsfield Athletic (Fiona McQuaker)	1,943
3. Simeone (Iain Sime)	1,879
4. Artsnal (Willie Nelson)	1,809
5. C'mon You Lions (Marina Evans)	1,797
6. MEGAHEARTS (Mike Young)	1,776
7. Real Mad Riddance (Alisdair McLeod)	1,710
8. Mitzi del Bra XI (Alex Wilkinson)	1,637

Last year's Fantasy rookie winners (Marina and Fiona) are proving that their results were not a fluke. But we are all being left behind by Jim Mason who is within the top 0.5% of all players (there are over nine million of them). It's a long time since a Falkirk fan had much to cheer late in the season!

The standard of our league is quite high; our top six are within the top 10%. That isn't surprising, since many of the skills needed in bridge can be applied to budget management and team selection.

If you would like to join us for the 2022/23 season, please email [iain.sime63@gmail.com](mailto:iain.sime63@gmail.com)

The new season starts on 5 August. Entries will be accepted until the end of August, but you will need to join the online game before scoring any points.

Visit [fantasy.premierleague.com](http://fantasy.premierleague.com) to do that and for details of how to play.

It is FREE to play and be included in the league standings, but we do ask for £10 entry if you want to be a prize winner.

# Player Profile

## Janet Unsworth.

*Janet is our new General Manager. We wish her luck in developing her exciting and exacting role.*

### Background

I grew up in a village near Wigan in Lancashire and left school at 15 to work in a laboratory at Pilkington glass manufacturers. Doing the same tests on the same type of glass every day was very boring. As I had to earn money, I decided to get an interesting job. But all the jobs I thought might be interesting needed degrees. So, I had to get a degree. Fortunately, Pilkington's was a paternalistic employer who sponsored me to go to university to get a degree in physics. After graduation, I worked in what was then known as data processing at Pilkingtons before having a career in technology and consulting, then setting up my own business which I sold a few years ago. Since then I have had advisory and non-executive roles.

In 1989 I was lucky enough to get an assignment in New Zealand. It was two wonderful years working with the Navy, Army and Air Force, and I met my husband. He came to UK. We have 2 children who have dual nationality and now live in New Zealand and Australia.

### Introduction to bridge

My mother played whist, rummy and other card games. When I worked in the laboratory we played Solo – a sort of single person bridge – I loved card games. It was many years later when Alison Littleboy persuaded me to go to classes at the Carlton before I got into bridge. Clare Gray was a great teacher and I've never looked back.

### Finest Bridge moments

This year's Peebles Congress was the first bridge event I have managed. It was always going to be difficult after 2 years of very little face-to-face bridge and with the fear of Covid hanging over it. It was quite a bit smaller than previous Peebles Congresses, but it was great. The feedback we got from people who attended was incredibly positive. I was lucky enough to work with a fantastic team of Frances McKeon, Horst Kopleck, Hazel Brown, Christine Walker and Andrew Barnes.

### Opinions on Bridge Administration

Bridge administration in Scotland is going through a major change with the establishment of the SCIO and formal recognition as a charity. We've got great opportunities to work out how we want bridge to develop in Scotland.

Online bridge has been fantastic in helping many people deal with the pandemic. It has enabled people who were housebound, and even those in hospital, to play and has generated new leagues and structures. Whilst most of us want to get back to face-to-face bridge there are benefits from online bridge which should be retained as we return to the more social face-to-face bridge in clubs.

### Other interests

I love travelling, going to new places, meeting new people. Going to New Zealand was always great for the family, not just because New Zealand is wonderful – which it is. It is on the other side of the world, you can go east or west and have amazing stop-offs. We've done Japan, Fiji, the USA and other places as a family. Now I am very keen to start travelling again and looking forward to seeing my children after years of closed borders.

# Play Challenge

*Jim Patrick*

1 All Vul Dealer South

♠ Q53
♥ 72
♦ Q532
♣ KJ64

♠ AK6
♥ AJ8
♦ AT984
♣ A2

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Pass	-	-	2NT
	3NT	End	

Contract: 3NT Lead: ♠4

How do you guarantee this contract?

2 NS Vul Dealer South

♠ 64
♥ 975
♦ 875
♣ AQ632

♠ A9
♥ AQJT864
♦ AT2
♣ 4

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
2♣	4♥	4♠	2♥
			5♥

Contract: 5♥ Lead: ♠3

You must justify this undisciplined excursion to the 5-level. You were probably getting 500 from 4♠ so you had better make 5♥.

3 None Vul Dealer West

♠ J4
♥ KQ75
♦ 6
♣ T97643

♠ AQ3
♥ -
♦ AQJ98732
♣ K5

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♥	Pass	3♥	5♦
End			

Contract: 5♦ Lead: ♥A

This lead is just the luck the enterprising player needs. How do you continue?

4 All Vul Dealer South

♠ 64
♥ 874
♦ K75
♣ AT754

♠ AKJ98
♥ A6
♦ AQ9
♣ KJ9

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♣
3NT	Pass	4NT	3♣
5♣	End		Pass

Contract: 5♣ Lead: ♥2

The ♥2 goes to the four, Queen and six.

You run the ♣J successfully, but West shows out on the ♠K

Carry on.

*Solutions on Next Page*

# Play Challenge Solutions

Jim Patrick

1 All Vul Dealer South

	♠ Q53	
	♥ 72	
	♦ Q532	
	♣ KJ64	
♠ J9742		♠ T8
♥ Q963		♥ KT54
♦ 6		♦ KJ7
♣ T73		♣ Q985
	♠ AK6	
	♥ AJ8	
	♦ AT984	
	♣ A2	

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Pass	3NT	End	2NT

Contract: 3NT Lead: ♠4

You have seven Sure Tricks, so you need to get diamonds going. The worry is that East may switch to hearts, getting defensive tricks going before you have organised nine of your own. Provided West is on lead you have a double heart stopper.

Win the first trick in dummy and lead the ♦Q. Say West wins and plays a heart. Win the Ace, cross to the K and play another diamond – even if West wins again your ♥Jx protects that suit,

When East covers the ♦Q you can safely clear diamonds.

2 NS Vul Dealer South

	♠ 64	
	♥ 975	
	♦ 875	
	♣ AQ632	
♠ KJT32		♠ Q875
♥ K32		♥ -
♦ Q3		♦ KJ964
♣ KJ9		♣ T875
	♠ A9	
	♥ AQJT864	
	♦ AT2	
	♣ 4	

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
2♠	3♥	4♠	2♥
End			5♥

Contract: 5♥ Lead: ♠3

You need the club finesse to dispose of the spade loser. Is there anything better than the heart finesse for your 11th trick? Yes, you just want the clubs 4-3, a better bet.

Take the club finesse and discard your spade on the Ace. Ruff a club, and if they are 4-3 you are home. (Provided you ruffed it with a high trump.)

Play a small trump and you must have 2 dummy entries to set up and cash the club while drawing trumps. This line works even if the trumps are 3-0. If the clubs are 5-2, you still have the not insignificant chance of the singleton King of trumps either onside or offside with 5 clubs.

3 None Vul Dealer West

	♠ J4		
	♥ KQ75		
	♦ 6		
	♣ T97643		
♠ K876		♠ T952	
♥ AT92		♥ J8643	
♦ T4		♦ K5	
♣ AJ2		♣ Q8	
	♠ AQ3		
	♥ -		
	♦ AQJ98732		
	♣ K5		

<b>WEST</b>	<b>NORTH</b>	<b>EAST</b>	<b>SOUTH</b>
1♥	Pass	3♥	5♦
End			

Contract: 5♦ Lead: ♥A

After ruffing the lead you would really like to get to dummy!

Easy: play the ♠Q. If West has the King what can he do?

If he ducks you play the ♠A and ruff a spade, then discard your clubs on the hearts.

If he takes and cashes the ♣A you have a dummy entry for the trump finesse – you need East to have the singleton or doubleton ♦K.

4 All Vul Dealer South

	♠ 64		
	♥ 874		
	♦ K75		
	♣ AT754		
♠ Q7532		♠ T	
♥ KJ92		♥ QT53	
♦ J42		♦ T863	
♣ 2		♣ Q863	
	♠ AKJ98		
	♥ A6		
	♦ AQ9		
	♣ KJ9		

<b>WEST</b>	<b>NORTH</b>	<b>EAST</b>	<b>SOUTH</b>
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♣
3NT	Pass	4NT	3♣
5♣	End		Pass

Contract: 5♣ Lead: ♥2

The ♥2 goes to the four, Queen and six. East returns the ♥3 to your Ace

You run the ♣J successfully, but when you continue with the ♣K West shows out

Cross to the ♦K and ruff the last heart. Now cash the diamond winners before trying to return to draw trumps. If you don't, East ruffs the second spade and puts you back in hand with a diamond getting a trump promotion. If East can ruff the third diamond and exit a spade he is 3-4-2-4. You can safely return to draw the last trump by ruffing a spade.



# January 2022 Bidding Challenge- Iain Sime

*Welcome to the Bidding Challenge. The Editor gave me a choice of systems. Two of our regulars have vociferously argued for different methods. I have gone with 15/17, 5-card majors etc. only because that was the system being used when most of the hands were played. My apologies to all who would have preferred Acol.*

*All the hands arose in 2022 either online or at sorely missed Face to Face.*

## Problem 1 Teams: All VUL, Dir W

♠6	W	N	E	S
♥KQ9	1♦	P	1♠	P
♦AKQJ74	3♦	P	3♥	P
♣J96	?			

*Most of our panel are going to have egg on their faces after this hand. Still in with a chance of a plus score:*

**SHORT: 4♦.** I'll not say "what else?" but I've no other option really. I've shown extras already with 3♦, so don't need to do more. I'm not certain what 3♥ shows. In my book it could be a heart feature or a suit. And if 5/5, responder can bid 4♥ over 4♦ and I can pass. I could try 3NT hoping partner has ♣Qx, but that's a random punt.

**ASH: 4♦.** Sets the trumps and gives partner a chance to show interest. 4♣, as a general force, is a possibility but it is murky, and I am not sure I will learn a great deal anyway.

*You would learn which trump you should have set. Will you reconsider? When the hand arose, there was no relieve for the rest of our panel.*

**FREIMANIS: 4♥.** Partner should assume that I do not have 4 hearts due to my failure to bid 2♥ (a point echoed by **MARSHALL, PATERSON, SYMONS** and **SHIELDS**). Partner's 3♥ is likely bid with no significant values in clubs. Hence, it probably is a choice of games between 4♥ and 5♦.

*That's a choice of games to go down in.*

**MURDOCH: 4♥.** Showing your hand. Responder may well be 5/5 in the majors; if he is 5/4 he doesn't guard clubs. 3NT isn't so much a choice as a gamble.

**ROSS: 4♥.** Can't see the ♣J holding the fort.

**VALENTINE: 4♥.** 3♠ would be wrong, four of a minor would be misleading and there's no guarantee I'm not off five cashing tricks in 3NT. So, I'm left with 4♥.

**PIPER: 4♥.** Should be good 3-card support and single/void spade.

*When 4♥ was chosen, East backed himself in the Moysian (4/3 fit), rather than convert to 4♠. Moysian contracts succeed more often when it is the short trump taking the force. This one needed trump to split 3/3.*

*A 36% game is better than a 0% one:*

**GORDON: 3NT.** Does not guarantee more than xxx or Qx in clubs. With xxx in both hands, someone has to bid 3NT.

**SHENKIN: 3NT.** Play partner to have the ♣Q, or xxx, or the opponents' clubs to break.

**SMITH: 3NT.** The practical bid. I've been in failing contracts before, but this needs so little to make that it must be the odds-on bid.

*What odds? There were nine runners... but two of them were stuck in the starting stalls. Partner had no reason to overrule 3NT with ♠KQJTxx, ♥ATxx, ♦x, xx.*

Problem 1	Votes	Marks
4♥	11	10
4♦	2	7
3NT	4	6
4♣	0	5
Pass	0	1

**Problem 2 Teams: All VUL, Dir W**

	W	N	E	S
♠A8				
♥AK65	1NT	2♥*	Dbl**	P
♦A9652	?			
♣Q3				

\*2♥ = hearts and a minor

\*\*Dbl = takeout

*Partner has ♠KQ62, ♥Q9, ♦Q83, ♣9754. A combined 26 points, but no game was possible. We have some votes for staying in a part score.*

**MURDOCH: 3♦.** We might have a 9-card fit and so might they. If the definition of takeout includes balanced invitational hands I would pass.

*The definition of a takeout double is that it includes hands that are unable to do anything else which is sensible. Partner is still expected to take it out.*

**SHORT: 3♦.** Good question, but it depends on agreements. I play that double here shows invitational values, so if playing with myself, as it were, I'd probably try 3NT. But my strange partner made a take-out double, so I guess I'll take it out. South is obviously happy with hearts though weak, and partner may even have a

void heart. Pass is not ridiculous, but I'd be miles better defensively with ♥QJT<sub>x</sub> and, say, ♣AQ<sub>x</sub>. North knows he has not got the ♥AK, but has bid vulnerable, so will have side values. I regard pass as very risky.

**GORDON: 3♦.** Passing is just gambling and is a candidate only at match points needing a top. North knows the ♥AK are missing – I would pass with ♥QJ108.

*Good points against passing for penalties. However, most of the panel think that our maximum is worth something more ambitious than 3♦.*

**SHIELDS: 3♥.** This is awkward because my hand is really too good to open 1NT. If I was sure partner would lead diamonds I'd pass happily, but with a 4=1=4=4 shape partner might lead a black suit and that could be so helpful to declarer. Indeed, a trump lead is often indicated on these auctions, and I don't want that. My plan is to bid 3NT over partner's likely 3♠ and hope that indicates that an alternative to 3NT exists.

*If you are not willing to defend 2♥ doubled, Patrick's plan seems more flexible than the following:*

**SMITH: 3NT.** The practical bid - I've been in failing contracts before, but this needs so little to make that it must be the odds-on bid. I think I've said this before, but what else?

**PATERSON: 3NT.** We have the points for game, so I am reluctant to defend a likely 8-card fit at the 2 level.

**ASH: 3NT.** A bit of a 'punt' but the methods have created a situation whereby you have to guess to go 'low' by bidding 3♦ or go 'high' by bidding

game. I prefer double to show at least invitational values and at least xx in their suit. We may miss a part-score in the other major when we have a 4-4 fit but it makes this hand an easy Pass.

*Easy on this hand, but at other times we land in a 4/3 fit with a bad trump break. The flaw with 3NT was the same one as on Hand 1. Unsurprisingly, North again had a golf decision – (which club is best?). The winners on the actual hand were:*

**FREIMANIS: PASS.** Could have a game on but feels that this should likely get us 500 / 800 should partner have enough values for a making game contract, albeit the diamond length is a bit concerning for defence.

**MARSHALL: PASS:** They don't seem to want to run to clubs. So I am prepared to defend when there is a misfit.

**ROSS: PASS.** I hope partner can provide at least 2 tricks.

**McKAY: PASS.** Surely partner has a couple of Kings.

*Just one King, but an unexpected trump bonus. Tim is typically confident, Douglas, untypically, less so:*

**PIPER: PASS.** Knowing full well it'll make.

**VALENTINE: PASS.** Double should show values and my hand would suggest that it's hearts and clubs. I have four fairly sure tricks and if partner has the ♠K it's a guaranteed 200, likely 500 minimum. Aiming for 3NT can punish partner for a thin double and risk turning a good positive into a negative.

*Which is what happened.*

Problem 2	Votes	Marks
Pass	8	10
3NT	5	6
3♥	1	6
3♦	3	6
4♦	0	5
2NT	0	3

### Problem 3. Teams: None VUL, Dir W

♠Q8	W	N	E	S
♥K543	1♣	1♦	Dbl	Pass
♦A4	?			
♣AKQ95				

*There was some speculation about what partner's double showed. Let's clear that up:*

**SYMONS: 4♥.** Partner has shown equal length in the majors.

**SHIELDS: 2♦.** Partner's double should show both majors, so we have a fit.

*That is how most play it these days. For many 4/5 is allowed, but with only one major, just bid it. In the past, a possible 3/3 in the majors was popular. Fits could be established only if opponents were polite enough to stay quiet. Such opponents have become an endangered species.*

**VALENTINE: 4♥.** A known 4-4 fit, useful Qx in partner's other major, a source of tricks and the ♦A. 4♥ is likely to be the correct spot and other bids just muddy the waters.

*This was hand 1 in the "middle" Camrose Trial played on RealBridge. Our opponent bid 4♥, which seemed to me to be a practical shot. East's hearts were a flimsy J982; but AKxx in spades covered the diamond loser, and ten tricks were made comfortably. Almost half of the trialists missed game by doing this:*

**ROSS: 2♥.** I think that describes my hand.

*The majority of our panel are heading in the winning direction. (For once).*

**ASH: 2♦.** Establishing a game force and asking partner to describe his hand. Will he show a diamond stop ahead of his hearts? Probably, but even then 3NT may be best spot. If he bids 2♠, I shall bid 2NT - if partner has Jxx No-trumps will play better from my side.

**MURDOCH: 2♦.** Responder will often be 4/4 in the majors, but this is not certain. What is certain is that he does not have just one four card major, so if he bids 2♠, he also has four hearts.

**MARSHALL: 2♦.** Take the strain off partner and make the forcing bid – then you can introduce the heart suit without worrying that you are either too strong or too weak.

**SHORT: 2♦.** Forcing to suit agreement. If partner bids 2♥, I will probably just bid game.

*Harry is on his own, but would survive:*

**SMITH: 2NT.** 18-19 balanced which is what I have. This does not deny a 4-card major, and, if there is a heart fit, he has checkback available.

*He does, but he will think you have diamonds well stopped and no interest in playing in a major. Partner had a prototype double- ♠AKT9, ♥J982, ♦832, ♣J4. Enough to raise 2NT, and the critical ♣J.*

Problem 3	Votes	Marks
2♦	10	10
4♥	5	8
2NT	1	6
2♥	1	4
3♥	0	4

#### Problem 4 MPPairs NS VUL, Dir East

	W	N	E	S
♠842	-		1♣	P
♥AKQJ972	1♥	P	2♦	P
♦T7	3♥	P	3NT	P
♣K	?			

*We move away from online bridge to the re-opening of the New Melville in October. It was great to have real cards and meet other players. This hand was played in a hybrid tournament with 25 tables (nine F2F, 16 online). Only 5 pairs reached slam opposite ♠AJ5, ♥-, ♦AQ63, ♣AQJ532. Both main suits behaved, so there were 13 (15 actually) tricks in hearts and no trump. Some of our panel also missed the slam:*

**MARSHALL: PASS:** I don't expect partner to have bid 3NT with a void in hearts, but if he has, there is always the ♣K as an entry, and the hearts are solid enough.

**ROSS: PASS.** Just hope partner has a heart.

*Nope, but perhaps a more sympathetic heart when he sees the ♣K. That sympathy may dissipate as the overtricks pile up.*

*Some were relying upon partner to do the lifting. They will have to judge for themselves whether partner would oblige:*

**SHORT: 4♥.** I need to remove 3NT in case partner has a heart void. Partner will know that I have a very good, probably 7-card suit so should explore further if very control rich. Note that I cannot be weak, with something like ♥KQJ10xxx, as I would bid 4♥ over 2♦ with this, which says "My hand is only good in hearts partner!"

**VALENTINE: 4NT.** Quantitative. Four Hearts is not forcing and so no good. Four of a minor gives partner the wrong idea. So, I'm left with 4NT. General slam try which should allow partner to judge well.

**SHIELDS: 5♥.** We are clearly in the slam zone here but partner could have ♠QJx, ♥x, ♥AKQJx, ♣AQxx, so I cannot just bid the slam. The 5♥ bid must scream good hearts and ask partner for controls outside. I didn't cue bid with 4♠ over 3N so my weakness in spades is known. Could go off in 5♥, but I have to try for slam.

**GORDON: 5♥.** A command to bid six with a spade control. If partner bids 5♠, I will bid 7NT.

*Then you will beat the following:*

**PATERSON: 6NT.** Practical Pairs bid. We may have two top losers or 13 top tricks, but how to find out when 4NT would probably be taken as natural?

**MCKAY: 6NT.** To protect partner's spade holding.

**SYMONS: 6NT.** This could be a disaster if partner can't get to my hand, but his spade holding must be protected.

**ASH: 6NT.** As 2♥ would have been forcing, 3♥ confirmed a solid suit, so partner must have something like ♠KJx, ♥x, ♦AKxx, ♣AQJxx. In that case I need to protect his spade holding. Of course, he might have ♠QJx, ♥x, ♦AKxx, ♣AQJxx and I will look very stupid (not for the first time!) if they cash the first two tricks.

*As one of my partners used to say, "you must know some bids between*

*3NT and 6NT which will help us reach the right contract." I like the following:*

**FREIMANIS: 4♣.** Expecting this to be a club control agreeing hearts as otherwise I might bid 3♣/4♣ over 2♦.

**SMITH: 4♣.** Even at MPs it is worth risking the bonus of playing in NT to look for slam. We need to find out how good his controls are. If he cannot show a diamond control, I will stop in the next level of hearts; if he does cue bid 4♦, I will bid 4♥ highlighting the spade suit as my problem.

Problem 4	Votes	Marks
6NT	5	10
4♣	3	8
5♥	2	8
4♥	2	6
4NT	1	6
Pass	4	4
6♥	0	4

**Problem 5 Teams All VUL, Dir N**

♠Q4	<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>
♥4		1♣*	Dbl	Pass
♦A9752	?			
♣AQ852				

1♣ = 3+, not 15/17 balanced.

*Still Face to Face in the nail-biting final set of the delayed 2020 Scottish Cup Final. The quality of bridge was high, but less so on this hand. More than half of our panel went after blood.*

**GORDON: PASS.** Close, but game in 5♦ or 3NT may not be guaranteed. Dummy will not have many entries. Partner will likely lead a trump expecting me to have something like ♣KJT9x. That should be ok since you can then head for heart ruffs.

**SMITH: PASS.** We have no certainty that game is on, and with entries to dummy likely to be severely limited, being under declarer's club suit should not be a major problem. I am hopeful of at least 500, which is reasonable even if we have game on.

**SYMONS: PASS.** May not get rich from this, but shortage in both majors persuades me.

**PATERSON: PASS.** There is no assurance of a decent game. Far harder if the opponents were not vulnerable.

**SHIELDS: PASS.** Starting with a Pass, I am happy if they stick, but if they run I will have a cue bid available to create a forcing situation and investigate.

**FREIMANIS: PASS.** Could and likely do have a game on and this might not achieve game's worth of points. However, partner could have slightly less values with relatively short clubs, so expecting this to be a highly likely 500 / 800 for us.

*Partner again had a prototype minimum- ♠AKxx, ♥Q9xx, ♦QJxx, ♣x. If North also passed, 1400 was possible, although "only" 1100 was likely in practice. If they escaped into 1♥ doubled, you could still take 800.*

*Half of our panel found five different ways to let North off the hook.*

**PEDEN: 2♣.** Game Forcing.

*In most pairs' methods it is forcing only to suit agreement. For example, continuing 2♥-3♥ can be passed.*

**MARSHALL: 2♦.** Maybe 1♣ doubled would go off, but partner will lead a club, not a good lead. If 1♣ has been bid on a short suit, the redouble will come in, and we should be able to

double anything they bid. But not necessarily successfully.

*2♦ was chosen at the table I watched. Plus 150 was not a success.*

**SHORT: 2NT.** Natural, I guess about 11-12, double club stop, probable source of tricks in diamonds and I can rely on partner to have some major suit cards. I'm too good for 3♦, and if he has a weak but shape suitable double, I give him room to pass. With some partners I would bid 3NT, (those that I know will have a sound vulnerable double who may timidly pass 2NT.)

**MCKAY: 2NT.** Showing 10-12??

*True, but might partner expect a more balanced hand? 11+12 = another way to 150.*

**VALENTINE: 3♦.** I want to get my values and length across. Passing or any NT seems incorrect.

**MURDOCH: 3♦.** They probably have a 4/4 heart fit that they will find if I pass.

*They might. We will never find out.*

**ROSS: 3NT.** I can't think of anything else.

*Everyone else could; but not all with as successful an outcome. 3NT made at the other table and won 10 imps.*

Problem 5	Votes	Marks
Pass	8	10
2♣	2	8
3NT	1	8
3♦	2	6
2NT	2	6
2♦	2	4
5♦	0	4

**Problem 6 Teams All VUL, Dir N**

♠Q943	W	N	E	S
♥A4	-	1♠	2♥	2♠
♦J8653	P	P	Dbl	P
♣74	? *			

(\*2NT would be 2 places to play.)

*We have so far shown nothing. Most of our panel continue to show nothing. Some have misgivings:*

**PIPER:** 3♦. Close to 4♦, but not quite.

**SHORT:** 3♦. My ♠Q is wastepaper in diamonds and may not even be a stop in NT (*the 9 makes it one*). I also will probably have only one entry to hand in NT so multiple minor suit finesses will be unavailable. Could be missing 3NT, but on balance a conservative 3♦ seems best. If held at gunpoint to do more, I would bid 4♦ rather than 3NT, as partner will be shape-suitable rather than very strong, with both opponents bidding.

*Trust the opponents at your peril. Nowadays the thieves open with nine counts and respond with three counts. This time they have an Ace extra!*

**ROSS (and MCKAY):** 3♦. I don't particularly like it but can't think of anything else.

**SHIELDS:** 3♦. We have one useful card for partner in hearts, which might already be expected, but if we have a diamond fit we have more to offer.

*There was another, more flexible, way to continue to show nothing:*

**SMITH:** 2NT. If we have this toy, we might as well use it. If we don't have a diamond fit then I still have acceptable support for his hearts.

**VALENTINE (FREIMANIS, PATERSON, MURDOCH similarly):** 2NT. Two places

to play, and I'll pull 3♣ to 3♦. I've almost certainly denied 3 hearts, so this should show 5+ diamonds and 2 hearts, allowing partner to judge.

*And there was another, less flexible, way to continue to show nothing:*

**SYMONS:** 3♥. Definitely not defending this time. 3♦ is another possibility.

*Partner had no cause to move over any of the above with ♠2, ♥KJT643, ♦AQT, ♣AK3. If you did choose to defend, +500 would win 8 imps off the majority. But you lose a few imps against those who show something:*

**GORDON:** 3NT. It's a sandwich – partner only needs ♠x ♥KQxxxx ♦Kx ♣AQxx to make 3NT a good contract. That hand is a minimum, although a 'selected' one.

*The third best game, but it can be made. Heading for the second-best game:*

**ASH:** 4♦. Partner should be something like 15(43) with extra values. 4♥ is tempting as Ax is fair trump support, having not raised last round, but with the long trump hand having to ruff spade leads that could be a disaster. If partner is unsuitable or very minimum, we will probably escape a penalty double, so hopefully the worst scenario is -200.

*The easiest way to gain 10 imps against the majority was:*

**SHENKIN:** 4♥. An alternative is 3♠ then 4♦.

*John Matheson and I had a useful gadget in 2P2P (two places to play) situations over 2♠/4♠. A direct heart bid showed some values. Through 2NT then hearts over a minor was weaker.*

Problem 6	Votes	Marks
3♦	7	10
2NT	6	9
4♥	1	8
3NT	1	7
4♦	1	7
3♥	1	6
Pass	0	5
3♠	0	5

### Problem 7 Teams NS VUL, Dir N

♠K62	W	N	E	S
♥AQT43	-	2♦*	P	P
♦AJT8	?			
♣A				

\*2♦ = weak two

*We have a novelty. Harry is among the underbidders:*

**SMITH: 2NT.** A bit heavy for 2NT, but I assume we are playing a normal 2NT Puppet-style system, so can find our heart fit. A close second choice is double.

**SHORT: 2NT.** Should be about 16-18 balanced and I'm allowed to be maximum sometimes. 2NT is clearly the practical bid, and we will even find our 5-3 Heart fit, assuming we play puppet, as we surely do. Singleton club? My partners will tell you that I scoff at "never bid NT with a singleton" lobbyists. Would you rather have ♣A or ♣xx?

**SHIELDS: 2NT.** They are vulnerable and surely going down, so bidding is only worthwhile if we have a decent chance at game. Double is often dangerous with a side shortage; here the opposition won't bounce partner, making a bid of 4♣ or 5♣ unlikely - but over whatever partner does I have to bid 3♥ and what will partner do then?

Bidding 2NT shows the values I have and a diamond stop - and is more likely to get a major suit lead than a club lead.

*I regard the lower end of a balancing 2NT as 14 points. That makes a control heavy 18 count with a likely source of tricks too much. If partner had a heart fewer, the above would have been stranded in 2NT. We have the values for this:*

**MURDOCH: DBL.** Double then bidding 3♥ would be normal but passing would probably be plus.

**FREIMANIS: DBL.** The hand is probably too strong for 2♥. Double keeps spades in the picture as well.

**SYMONS: DBL.** My problem will come on the next round. 3NT over 3♣; raise hearts, 2NT over 2♠, and 4♠ over 3♠.

*Is something missing? Filling in Anne's gap...*

**ASH: DBL.** It is normal to double first on strong hands, even with a 5-card major. Over the expected lebensohl 2NT (a weak hand with clubs) I bid 3♥, showing this kind of hand.

*Partner had ♠Axx, ♥987xx, ♦x, ♣Qxxx. The doublers would therefore have found hearts, making 11/12 tricks.*

**PEDEN: DBL.** Then No-trump if partner doesn't bid hearts.

*So 3NT over 2NT lebensohl? That shouldn't make, even after a diamond lead. Derrick is fortunate that partner would bid hearts. Keeping the West hand hidden would make the defence to 3NT more difficult against the bashers. Is Tim the new Harry?*

**MCKAY: 3NT.** A practical shot, not without risk.



**SHENKIN: 3NT.** Partner could not bid over 2♦. Pass now would collect some hundreds.

*That's a couple of mentions for defending. Some chose to do that...*

**GORDON: PASS.** No game is assured, and they are going off in hundreds.

**PATERSON: PASS.** Rather strong for 2♥, and 2NT is weird, so given that opponents are vulnerable I pass.

*Not the daftest way to lose a few imps in this set.*

Problem 7	Votes	Marks
Dbl	9	10
3NT	2	6
2NT	4	6
Pass	2	6
2♥	0	3
3♥	0	3

#### Problem 8 Teams None VUL, Dir E

♠Q754	W	N	E	S
♥AT	-	-	Pass	1♠
♦K765	Pass	2♣	Pass	4♠
♣Q74	End			

What do you lead?

*Leading trumps against 4 of a major concedes the initiative. Usually a bad idea against our assumed expert declarer. I especially dislike leading trumps by default because everything else is dangerous. That helps the expert declarer place the cards. Can I be persuaded that a trump is right here?*

**ASH: ♠4.** Any of the suits might be right. Partner will likely only have one helpful card and it is difficult to deduce where it might be. This lead may cost a trump trick, but I have started reducing his ruffing opportunities if there is a shortage in dummy.

**PATERSON: ♠4.** Probably a different suit is better, but which? Note: if partner has a trump declarer will almost certainly play him for the ♠Q.

**MARSHALL: ♠4.** The lead least likely to give a trick away - unless partner shows out, I expect to make the Queen. By the time I am next on lead, I should be able to exit safely in trumps and, with luck, make 4 tricks.

**SHIELDS: ♠5.** On this auction a trump is often effective. Since every other suit I lead might cost a trick, having the ♠Q does not put me off. It is often right to force declarer when I hold 4 trumps, but I need a lot from partner in diamonds for that to work.

*I will admit that there are some positive arguments in favour of the trump lead. Patrick mentions diamonds to force dummy. Who followed that path?*

**VALENTINE: ♦5.** The other possibility is the ♥A but getting a ruff may help declarer to pick up trumps or establish tricks for him if it's wrong. So I make an aggressive lead to try and set up tricks for my side.

**SHENKIN: ♦5.** You likely have a second chance to lead the ♥A and try for a ruff so no rush.

*They both looked at the ♥A. Who led that?*

**MCKAY: ♥A.** At least it lets you see dummy and all the other suits are probably more risky.

**FREIMANIS: ♥A.** With a good trump holding the doubleton Ace is less likely to cause major damage. This gives an opportunity to find the right switch on time without guessing, should there be one.

**SHORT ♥A.** My logic is that I probably have spades “stopped” so may get in with a small spade left. If partner has the ♥K I already have my ruff. If not, partner will need an Ace on this lead. Is this more likely than anything else? Well, you tell me, but at least there are 3 winning cards available to partner after this lead. And a “safe” spade lead? A textbook example of when NOT to get infected with the Scottish “safe trump lead” disease. You’ll just get stuffed in about trick 4 to have to give up another trick.

*Which leaves:*

**SYMONS: ♣4.** Toughest problem, which won't go away as I get in again. Anything could be right.

**Ross: ♣4.** I like leading away from a Queen.

*Probably because in Bill's experience it has often worked. The late Patrick Jourdain regularly led from Queens. He wouldn't have persevered if it was a loser. And a club was safest here, from a Scotland Ladies match against Denmark.*

*Partner could only contribute the side suit Jacks. Red suit leads conceded the contract; a spade wasn't immediately fatal. But the expert declarer is now in the driving seat.*

<b>Problem 8</b>	<b>Votes</b>	<b>Marks</b>
♠4/5	8	10
♥A	4	8
♣4	3	7
♦5	2	6

*Many thanks to all the panel for their efforts. Well done especially to Gints, not only for the best score, but also for his pertinent and well thought out comments*

# Panel Answers

# March 2022

Problem	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
<b>Top Score</b>	4♥	Pass	2♦	6NT	Pass	3♠	Dbl	♠4/5	
<b>Gints Freimanis</b>	4♥	Pass	2♦	4♣	Pass	2NT	Dbl	♥A	75
<b>Jack Paterson</b>	4♥	3NT	2♦	6NT	Pass	2NT	Pass	♠4	71
<b>Anne Symons</b>	4♥	Pass	4♥	6NT	Pass	3♥	Dbl	♣4	71
<b>Mike Ash</b>	4♦	3NT	2♦	6NT	Pass	4♦	Dbl	♠4	70
<b>Patrick Shields</b>	4♥	3♥	2♦	5♥	Pass	3♦	2NT	♠5	70
<b>Finlay Marshall</b>	4♥	Pass	2♦	Pass	2♦	3♦	Dbl	♠4	68
<b>Tim McKay</b>	4♥	Pass	4♥	6NT	2NT	3♦	3NT	♥A	68
<b>Derrick Peden</b>	4♥	3NT	2♦	Pass	2♣	3♦	Dbl	♠4	68
<b>Douglas Piper</b>	4♥	Pass	4♥	4♥	2♦	3♦	Dbl	♠4	68
<b>John Murdoch</b>	4♥	3♦	2♦	4♣	3♦	2NT	Dbl	♥A	67
<b>Nigel Guthrie</b>	3NT	Pass	4♥	Pass	2♣	2NT	Dbl	♠4	65
<b>Ronan Valentine</b>	4♥	Pass	4♥	4NT	3♦	2NT	Dbl	♦5	65
<b>Irving Gordon</b>	3NT	3♦	2♦	5♥	Pass	3NT	Pass	♠4	63
<b>Barnet Shenkin</b>	3NT	3NT	2♦	6NT	Pass	4♥	3NT	♦5	62
<b>Bill Ross</b>	4♥	Pass	2♥	Pass	3NT	3♦	2NT	♣4	59
<b>Brian Short</b>	4♦	3♦	2♦	4♥	2NT	3♦	2NT	♥A	59
<b>Harry Smith</b>	3NT	3NT	2NT	4♣	Pass	2NT	2NT	♣4	58

## Competitors' Results

Congratulations to **Robert Clow** of GBC on his fine score of **72** on a really tough set  
Other good scores were ....

Danny Hamilton (Buchanan)	69
Paul Kerr (Troon)	69
Charles Fogelman (GBC)	68
Robin MacPherson (New Melville)	65
Rob Myers (Direct Member)	65
Russell Frame (GBC)	64
Anna Hamilton (Buchanan)	62
Paul Maiolani (GBC)	62
Bob Brown (GBC)	61
Ian Crorie (Direct Member)	61
David Welsh (Stirling & Union)	61
Bob Anderson (Forfar)	60
Janice Thomson (Prestwick Riggs)	60
Water Ewing (Perth)	60

# SBNews Bidding Panel

May 2022

You are always South, presented with these pesky problems.

You are playing with a regular partner, but the problems are not really system-related.

If you really want to know, assume 5-card Majors, 15-17 No-trump, 2/1 forcing to game.

Please send your answers by email to the editor: [liz.mcgowan@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:liz.mcgowan@blueyonder.co.uk) quoting your SBU MP number.

**Closing Date:** 25th May 2022

**Problem 1** Teams None Vul

♠64 ♥T4 ♦AT872 ♣A763	S	W	N	E
	-	-	1♥	P
	1NT	P	2♠	P
	?			

**Problem 5** Teams NS Vul

♠J8 ♥86432 ♦AKJ63 ♣9	S	W	N	E
	-	-	P	1♣
	?			

**Problem 2** Teams NS Vul

♠6 ♥A76 ♦KQ764 ♣8765	S	W	N	E
	-	P	1♠	2♣
	2♦	P	2♥	P
	?			

**Problem 6** Teams EW Vul

♠A83 ♥AQJT6 ♦AQT73 ♣-	S	W	N	E
	-	P	P	1♣*
	?			

\*1♣ can be as few as 2 in a weak NT hand

**Problem 3** Teams All Vul

♠Q ♥A82 ♦KJ98543 ♣K6	S	W	N	E
	-	P	P	P
	?			

**Problem 7** Teams All Vul

♠AKQ3 ♥A7 ♦Q82 ♣8432	S	W	N	E
	-	-	1♥	P
	1♠	P	2♣	P
	2♦*	Dbl	3♣	P
	?			

\*4<sup>th</sup> suit forcing to game

**Problem 4** Teams EW Vul

♠KQ97542 ♥- ♦6 ♣AQJ93	S	W	N	E
	-	-	-	1♥
	?			

**Problem 8** Teams All Vul

♠K87 ♥KQT2 ♦QJ765 ♣4	S	W	N	E
	-	-	-	*1NT
	P	2NT	P	3NT
	End			

\*1NT = 15-17;

What is your lead?