

# Improvers' Bidding Challenge

## 15 – January 2019

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*We have input from a panel of 8 bridge teachers for our latest challenge. The questions for Challenge 16 appear elsewhere in this magazine and will also be posted on the SBU website – if you are a Bronze category player, please have a go and submit an entry. Let's see what our panel of teachers has to say:*

### Problem 1 Teams All Vul

	N	E	S	W
♠ Q	-	Pass	1♠	Pass
♥ KJT7653	?			
♦ 4				
♣ Q862				

*The majority of the panel decided to upgrade to a 2-over-1 response:*

**Pigott** (similarly several others): 2♥: 1N is a dustbin response with the intention of signing off in the long suit - although the hand is aceless, the 7-card suit headed by KJT is a good one and the SQ is working so I think 2H is better.

*Danny & Steve both opted for the “dustbin” response:*

**Male** (similarly **Hamilton**): 1N: Followed by pass if partner bids 2C but I would bid 2H over 2D and pass a 2S rebid.

Problem 1	Votes	Marks
2♥	6	10
1N	2	7
3♥	0	6
4♥	0	5
4♠	0	1

*At the table, partner held ♠AT753, ♥AQ, ♦JT83, ♣A5 so, although the Heart game was an easy make, 11 tricks were the limit.*

### Problem 2 Teams Love All

	N	E	S	W
♠ AKJ973	-	-	-	1♥
♥ A9	?			
♦ QT6				
♣ Q8				

*The panel were split 3 ways on this problem with Db1 and 1♠ the favourites – firstly, the doublers showing their strength:*

**Gallacher** (similarly **Hamilton & Pigott**):

Db1: I have very good Spade suit, 16hcps and partner has still to bid so double and show my suit on the next round.

*Liz, Steve & Derek decided that a simple overcall was sufficient for now:*

**McGowan** (similarly **Male & Sanders**):

1♠: The loose Queens are not a good feature so I am not worth a double followed by 2S - I expect to compete with a double next time round.

*Joyce & Jim opted for a strong jump overcall but with differing second choices if our system defined the jump as weak:*

**Benson**: 2♠: If playing strong jump overcalls - otherwise, I would bid 1S hoping partner would not pass with any reasonable support.

**Tudor**: 2♠: Does anyone else still play ‘classic’ jump overcalls - if playing weak jump overcalls, I would start with a double.

Problem 2	Votes	Marks
Dbl	3	10
1♠	3	9
2♠	2	8
4N	0	4
3♠	0	3
1N	0	2
2♥	0	1

*Partner's hand was ♠T62, ♥J82, ♦AK87, ♣KT7 and, with fortunate opposition holdings in Spades and Diamonds, even the unbiddable Spade slam rolled in on a combined 27-count!*

### Problem 3 Teams NS Vul

	N	E	S	W
♠ J8654	-	1♦	Dbl	3♦*
♥ JT963	?			
♦ -				
♣ QJ7				

\*pre-emptive

*This was the most conclusive answer from the panel with only a single dissenter:*

**Hamilton** (similarly most others): 4♦:

Looking for partner to pick a major game - optimistic but shouldn't be too bad, the only danger being getting too high if partner has a good hand.

*Only Liz chose to use a double to ask for partner's major but did hint at the slight risk involved:*

**McGowan**: Dbl: Responsive, please bid your better Major partner - if partner passes this will not go well but it will teach him to bid next time I ask him to!!!

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

*Partner held ♠KT73, ♥AQ7, ♦74, ♣AT82 so, with the CK onside, 10 or 11 tricks were available in either major, depending on the line taken in Spades.*

### Problem 4 Teams EW Vul

	N	E	S	W
♠ A752	-	-	Pass	Pass
♥ A982	1♦	Dbl	1♥	1♠
♦ AK864	?			
♣ -				

*This appeared to be the most challenging problem of the set with 4 different answers from the panel and a further 8 from entrants!:*

**Benson** (similarly **Hamilton**, **McGowan** & **Tudor**): 4♣: As long as partner understands that this is a cue bid and a probe for a slam - if not playing cue bids, I would try 4H.

*Mike & Derek preferred to settle for game although Derek did make the point that partner could still bid on:*

**Gallacher** (similarly **Sanders**): 4♥: Partner has made a free bid of 1H and with both opps showing spades, I will play my partner to have at most 1 - I have a good 5 card suit and a void so I will upgrade my hand and bid game.

*Maurice preferred to start with a Spade cue bid:*

**Pigott: 2♠:** It's tempting to splinter with 4C but this uses up too much bidding space as partner will almost certainly sign off in 4H without a 1st-round control - after my cue-bid, partner is likely to simply bid 3H or pass if the opponents raise in spades so I can then make a second encouraging noise by cue-bidding Clubs which should send the message that a slam may be on.

*Steve, however, thought that an invitational bid was sufficient:*

**Male: 3♥:** Despite the possible bad break, I want to encourage partner to bid game at teams.

Problem 4	Votes	Marks
4♣	4	10
2♠	1	10
4♥	2	9
3♠	0	7
4N	0	6
4♠	0	6
Dbl	0	5
3♥	1	4
2♥	0	3
3♦	0	2
1N	0	2
5♦	0	1

*This hand came from the final of the Rayne Trophy and partner's holding was ♠4, ♥KT764, ♦QJ73, ♣T98. 13 tricks are possible in either red suit with opponents holding a singleton HJ opposite Qxx but, in practice, even a small slam requires accurate timing!!*

*Congratulations to the following top scorers in the various categories, particularly Les, Richard and Vivien (a Novice) on their near-perfect scores on a difficult set of questions:*

<b>3* Master</b>	Nancy Duncan	Montrose	31
<b>2* Master</b>	Gerald Della-Porta	New Melville	35
	Bill Crighton	Banchory	34
<b>1* Master</b>	Les McConachie	St Andrews	39
	Iain Grant	New Melville	33
<b>Master</b>	Frederick Adams	Buchanan	37
	Sheila Templeton	Kilwinning	35
<b>District Master</b>	Norma Kerr	Carlton	36
	Alex Kirk	Bearsden Improvers	32
<b>Local Master</b>	Richard Coleman	Aberdeen	39
	Bruce Morrison	Ness	36
	Ken Brown	Pentland	35
	Rosemary Jamieson	Carlton	35
	Jean Cousins	Buchanan	34
	Gordon Stone	Nairn	34
	Ken Latham	Carlton	32
<b>Club Master</b>	May Armour	Prestwick	37
	Robin Macpherson	New Melville	35
<b>Novice</b>	Vivien Reid	St Andrew	39
	Helen Adamson	Kirkcaldy	32