

## Improvers' Bidding Challenge 12 – July 2018

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*We have input from a panel of 11 bridge teachers for our latest challenge. The questions for Challenge 13 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 Love All

	N	E	S	W
♠ 3	-	-	P	P
♥ K853	1♦	P	1♠	P
♦ AQJT9	?			
♣ A93				

*The panel were divided on whether to rebid diamonds or to stretch to 1N, hearts being out of the question as it is a reverse (showing 16+HCP):*

**Merriman** (similarly **Benson, Edmond, & Pigott**): 2♦: Only 5 diamonds but misfit with partner and not really strong enough to reverse - if partner has hearts and values then they will go on.

*Beryl, Joan & Jim did consider an alternative before opting for the same rebid:*

**Tudor** (similarly **Campbell**): 2♦: Tempting to stretch to 1NT but the singleton in partner's suit is not a good feature.

**Lees**: 2♦: I toyed with a rebid of 2C but prefer to rebid my very good 5-card suit - I want to hear what partner has to say next: if

it's 2S, I'm passing, but I may get lucky and might hear a 2H rebid - now what?

**Hamilton** (similarly **Male, McGowan & Sanders**): 1N: 1 HCP light but the diamond suit makes up for that - I can't reverse (especially with only one card in partner's suit) and a fake bid of 2C might make it hard to find a heart fit.

Problem 1	Votes	Marks
2♦	7	10
1N	4	8
2♣	0	6
Pass	0	5
2♥	0	2
3N	0	1

*At the table, S held ♠QT8654, ♥A976, ♦82, ♣K and the heart game could be made as a result of the 3-2 trump break but, in practice, was difficult to find unless you upgraded your hand to a 1N rebid!*

### Problem 2 Pairs EW Vul

	N	E	S	W
♠ 763	-	-	1♠	P
♥ AJT5	?			
♦ A98				
♣ AK5				

*The vast majority of the panel opted for a "phony" minor suit response although were a little divided on which to select:*

**McGowan** (several similarly): 6♥: Can't describe the hand very well, so let's hear partner's rebid - I can force another bid out of him via Fourth Suit or by bidding a new suit at the 3-level and then I can decide the best game or whether to go slamming.

**Tudor** (similarly **Merriman**): 2♦: I prefer to lie about a minor than a major. I bid my weaker minor tactically to deter a lead in that suit.

*Derek was the sole dissenter who wanted to show his strength immediately:*

**Sanders**: 3♥: Nothing good but at least I get the strength of the hand across as there are a lot of slam suitable hands - a great example of why we should teach a 5 card spade suit.

Problem 2	Votes	Marks
2♣	8	10
2♦	2	9
3♣	0	8
3N	0	7
3♥	1	6
2♥	0	4
4N	0	2
2N	0	1

*Partner actually held ♠AKJT9, ♥3, ♦KJ72, ♣Q97 – with the SQ offside, the spade slam was makeable with the aid of a successful diamond finesse!*

**Problem 3** Teams EW Vul

	N	E	S	W
♠ AKQ4	-	-	-	P
♥ AK75	?			
♦ J				
♣ AQJ4				

*This was the closest question to unanimity amongst the panel:*

**Lees** (similarly many others): 2♣: 4414 hands are always tricky and this one is deadly but I want to push for game - if I hear 2D, I'm gritting my teeth and rebidding

2NT, hoping that partner has a major suit and will use Stayman to find a fit!

*There were a couple of dissenters, however:*

**Male**: 1♣: Reluctant to open 2C as no source of tricks and I don't want to take up too much room - after any response from partner in a major, I would splinter as there maybe even be a grand on here.

**Edmond**: 1♥: If partner cannot respond, then there is probably no game on!

Problem 3	Votes	Marks
2♣	9	10
1♣	1	5
1♥	1	4
3N	0	3

*Partner held ♠82, ♥Q643, ♦K7, ♣KT973 and all roads should lead to a making slam with hearts breaking kindly and AD onside.*

**Problem 4** Teams Love All

	N	E	S	W
♠ AT85	-	-	-	P
♥ AKQJ5	1♥	2♦	Dbl	3♦
♦ -	?			
♣ A954				

*This was the most contentious hand of the set with 5 different choices from the panel and a further 5 from contestants:*

**Pigott** (**Campbell**, **Lees**, **Male** & **Sanders** similarly): 4♦: This conveys extra strength and I want to know partner's best suit - although the hearts are almost good enough to stand up on their own, partner's double suggests that one of the black suits may be a better spot.

*Liz found another way of finding out more about partner's hand:*

**McGowan:** Dbl: Responsive, asking partner to bid as he isn't guaranteed to have 4 spades but there are lots of hands he might hold where slam is good - 4D is premature as it leaves him no room to describe his hand.

*Jim, however, wanted to be in slam:*

**Tudor:** 5N: Pick a slam - the bidding suggests that partner has few wasted values in diamonds, so here's hoping.....

*Danny also committed to slam but was more certain which was the correct one:*

**Hamilton:** 6♠: Our hand is huge and partner only needs KQxxx in spades for a grand slam - struggling to find a way to bid this constructively.

*Joyce, Peter & David settled for game meantime, leaving it to partner to progress:*

**Benson (similarly Edmond & Merriman):** 4♠: I would like to assume partner has 4 spades for the double - if they have a strongish hand they can still investigate a slam but, if not, I am happy to play in game.

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

*Partner's hand was ♠QJ976, ♥T83, ♦A983, ♣T but, even with SK offside, slam was available in both major suits.*

*Congratulations to the following top scorers in the various categories, particularly Derek & Martin on their perfect scores on a particularly difficult set of questions:*

<b>2*</b>	Will Iles	Stewartry	38
<b>Master</b>			
	Anne Kerr	Dundee	37
<b>1*</b>	Derek Pendrey	Hamilton	40
<b>Master</b>			
	Alan Young	Arbroath	33
<b>Master</b>	Martin Robertson	New St Andrew	40
	Janet Unsworth	Carlton	38
<b>District Master</b>	Edward Clutton	New Melville	35
	Jean Hamilton	New Melville	33
<b>Local Master</b>	Ken Latham	Carlton	38
	Roger McDonald	Lerwick	36
	Hamish Wallace	Carlton	36
<b>Club Master</b>	Nicola Corbyn	Berwick	33
	Keith Smith	New Melville	30
<b>Novice</b>	May Armour	Prestwick	36
	Alistair Smillie	Moray	36