

# Improvers' Bidding Challenge

## 11 – April 2018

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*We have input from a panel of 9 bridge teachers for our latest challenge. The questions for Challenge 12 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 Pairs Love All

	N	E	S	W
♠ AK4	-	P	1♠	2♠*
♥ T85	?			
♦ 9853				
♣ K97				

\*5/5+ in hearts & a minor

*The panel were divided on whether to support spades with a 3-card suit or to simply make a "flexible" double:*

**Tudor** (similarly **Hamilton, McGowan, Merriman & Sanders**): 3♠: Showing points for an uninterrupted raise and while I'd much prefer 4-card support, this 3-level raise has the advantage of making it difficult for our opponents.

*There was however a difference of opinion on the meaning of a double here:*

**Pigott**: Double: What a nasty hand, my choices being double (penalty orientated) or do I show spade support by bidding 3S with only 3 and no ruffing values - I don't like passing as it will be too hard to catch up later but nothing is ideal.

**Male** (similarly **Lees & Edmond**): Double: I hate it with a 4333 but it is a 10 count, so partner has a 10(ish) count too and he might have some shape - it is pairs after all.

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

*At the table, S had opened with a useful ♠QT98732, ♥A, ♦AJ4, ♣QJ so all roads would lead to the comfortable spade game.*

### Problem 2 Pairs Game All

	N	E	S	W
♠ -	-	-	-	P
♥ JT2	2♣*	P	2♥**	P
♦ AKQT85	3♦	P	3♥	P
♣ AKQ9	4♣	P	4♦	P
	?			

\*game forcing: \*\*positive

*Both the panel and contestants were widely split in their opinions here, the panel with 6 different offerings and contestants with a further 3, making 9 variations in all!*

**Sanders** (similarly **Edmond**): 6♥: Partner has now bid hearts twice so looks to have a good 6 or 7 card suit but they didn't make an immediate jump to 3H so can't have AKQ.

**Pigott** (similarly **Male**): 4♠: I'm torn between showing my heart support or cueing the spade control but prefer the latter.

**Hamilton**: 6♦: Perhaps 6H or 7D is better but this is hard with a scratch partner – in particular, does 3H show 4 cards or 5?

**Merriman:** 4N: Blackwood or RKCB - however, if the 2H response promises 2 of the top 3 honours, then I think 3H would have been better than 3D!

**McGowan** (similarly **Tudor**): 5♥: As 2H is a positive, presumably with a good suit, I just need to know about suit quality so this is asking partner to bid 6 with a 1-loser suit - I can't use GSF in case partner has only 2 honours.

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

*Partner actually held ♠762, ♥AK8754, ♦94, ♣52 so, while a spade lead, forcing dummy to ruff, would hold declarer to 12 tricks in hearts, a grand slam was available in diamonds!*

### Problem 3 Pairs All Vul

	N	E	S	W
♠ KQJT7	-	-	1♦	P
♥ Q	1♠	P	1N	P
♦ K86542	?			
♣ 3				

*Again, there was a major disparity of answers from contestants with 11 different answers for this problem but, although there was a clear majority from the panel, there were still 3 alternatives selected here:*

**Pigott** (similarly others): 4♦: Great shape, all but two of my points being in the right places and a wonderful fit in partner's suit but I lack controls. All I really want to know is how many aces partner has so I set the trump suit and await suitable cue bid sequence after which one of us will probably use RKCB.

**Male:** 2♣: Wow, a possible double fit but I'll start with a quiet checkback - I'd really prefer 2D (game-forcing checkback) but I guess that's not allowed.

**Tudor:** 3♦: Forcing – I hope!

**Edmond:** 3N: Tempting to try 5D but surely, if 5D makes, then so should this.

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

*As advertised, partner was strong & balanced with ♠A65, ♥AJ8, ♦AQJ9, ♣T86 and, although spade & diamond slams both made, 3N went off on a club lead.*

### Problem 4 Teams Love All

	N	E	S	W
♠ AQ54	-	-	1N	P
♥ KQJ6	2♣*	P	2♠	P
♦ 63	?			
♣ 542				

\*Stayman

*The least contentious hand of the set with all but one of the panel opting for game:*

**Lees** (most others similarly): 4♠: Fit in spades plus a good second suit - not giving opponents any more information to help with the lead.

*Liz, however, was more cautious:*

**McGowan**: 3♠: Would bid 4S vulnerable, but there is less need to stretch for nonvul games - I only have 7 losers but a weak NT often has 8.

Problem 4	Votes	Marks
4♠	8	10
3N	0	9
3♠	1	6
2N	0	5

*The vast majority of contestants agreed with the panel and opted for the spade game.*

*Congratulations to the following top scorers in the various categories, particularly Hugh, Rosemary & Cecilia (a Novice) on their highly commended scores:*

<b>1* Master</b>	Grahame Henderson	Peebles	35
	Les McConachie	St Andrews	35
	Ronnie Simpson	Buchanan	35
<b>Master</b>	David King	Berwick	37
	John Scrimgeour	Aberdeen	34
<b>District Master</b>	Elizabeth Von Breitenbuch	Peebles	37
	Yvonne Elrick	Colinton Castle	36
	Robin Crouch	Buchanan	35
<b>Local Master</b>	Grace McVey	Doon	37
	Ian Guthrie	Berwick	35
	Hazel Freedman	GBC	34
<b>Club Master</b>	Hugh Anderson	Perth	39
	Rosemary Jamieson	Carlton	38
	Ken Brown	Pentland	37
	Peter Yacoubian	Kirkintilloch	37
<b>Novice</b>	Cecilia McRitchie	St Andrew	38