

LE BRIDGEUR PRESENTS

# BRIDGE RAMA+

THE MAGAZINE THAT IMPROVES YOUR GAME!

ISSUE 74

JUNE 2026

PAGE 18

GOING THROUGH  
THE CARD  
PAINTING  
A PICTURE

PAGE 19

THE ROBSON TOUCH  
SEEING RED

## DEFENCE AGENCY

BY MATTHIAS  
HUBERSCHWILLER



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### MORE NATURAL PLAY

- ◆ More standard, less neutral opening leads
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- ◆ Faster simulations, fewer mistakes
- ◆ Carding and leads rules remain unchanged



Try GIBBO, for a stronger and more natural robot experience.



## EDITORIAL

BY MARK HORTON

THIS MONTH  
N°744 BRIDGE WITH  
LARRY COHEN

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AGENCYLET'S BID,  
PARTNER! P.2627 ABTA PROVIDES  
THE ANSWERSGODS AND  
GENERALSAT THE END OF THE MONTH PLAYERS  
IN ASIA AND EUROPE CONTEST TWO  
MAJOR EVENTS.

The 5<sup>th</sup> Asia Cup will take place in Goa, India, while the European National Championships will be staged in Riga, Latvia.

Spectators will be able to follow the action online, and watching the experts in action is undoubtedly one of the best ways to improve. The days when some of the teams competing in major championship events were comparative "minnows" have long since passed and everyone poses a threat.

With so many stars in action you will be spoilt for choice and doubtless everyone will have a favorite player or partnership they want to follow (Bridgerama readers can see Léo and Jérôme Rombaut in action!) but many eyes will be on Michal Klukowski, widely considered to be the best player in the world.

During the FFB Top 16 Final, he found himself looking at ♠A7 ♥AJ1065 ♦J87 ♣842. He duplicated Thomas Bessis's initial pass and saw Cedric Lorenzini open 1NT, which was raised to 3NT. Appreciating that in all probability the only realistic chance of defeating the contact was for his partner to lead a Heart (and that even then it might not be enough), he produced an inspirational double! The spotlight was now on his partner, Jacek Kalita, who held ♠95432 ♥Q92 ♦65 ♣Q65. His length in Spades meant it was unlikely that partner had a significant holding in that suit. Backing his judgement, he led the ♥Q and when dummy produced ♠Q106 ♥K84 ♦1093 ♣AJ73, the defenders finished with six tricks. In the other room, there was no double and West's Spade lead saw declarer take eleven tricks. I suspect you will see many inspiring pieces of bidding, play and defence during both events.

For all the information go to:

[www.bfi.net.in/tournament/asia-cup-2026/](http://www.bfi.net.in/tournament/asia-cup-2026/) and [www.eurobridge.org](http://www.eurobridge.org)

# LEARN! BIDDING BASICS

Larry Cohen continues his all-encompassing series on Doubles.

## The power ("big") double

In the first two months of this series, our RHO opened the bidding and we doubled with 12–17 points. To do so, we had to have at least three cards in each of the unbid suits. This month, we will remove that "three of each" requirement.

How so? It won't be cheap. We will need 18 or more total points. When we double with 18 or more points, anything goes as far as our distribution. We no longer need support for the other three suits. We could even have a void in one of the other suits! We could have our own seven-card suit! We could have a big balanced hand. Or, we still might just happen to have support for the other three suits.

How will partner know?

With our "12-17" total points, our plan was to double and leave it up to partner. If partner didn't show any values (let's say partner just took out our double without jumping), then we were done. We showed that we had 12-17 by simply passing for the rest of the auction. When partner took out to a suit without jumping, he was limited to 0-8 (more on this down the road), so we had no need to bid again with only 12-17. No game would be missed.

When we have 18 or more, we let partner know by taking a second call. We double and plan to bid again.

For example, let's say RHO opens 1♣ and we have any of the following hands:

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
♠ AKJ87	♠ A	♠ KJ2	♠ AQJ2
♥ -	♥ AJ2	♥ AKJ	♥ AKQ2
♦ AK32	♦ AJ98732	♦ A1076	♦ Q1032
♣ K632	♣ A2	♣ K102	♣ 2

With **1**, we will double and then bid Spades (no doubt partner will bid Hearts, but when we double and bid again, we are not promising support for all suits).

With **2**, we will double and then bid Diamonds.

With **3**, we will double and then bid No-Trump (we won't jump in No-Trump; just by doubling and then bidding No-Trump we are showing more than a 1NT overcall). With **4**, we will double and raise partner.

Each of these examples is too strong for a simple overcall. An overcall is limited to about 17HCP.

To help cement this concept, let's revisit a few hand types from previous months. RHO opens 1♦ and we have:

<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
♠ A2	♠ AKQ32
♥ Q102	♥ A1032
♦ A1042	♦ 2
♣ K432	♣ J32

On **5**, you should pass (yes, with a full opening bid).

What would you do if you doubled and partner took out the double to 1♠, with say, ♠Q875 ♥K43 ♦876 ♣J76? You would have to pass and would be in a silly contract. And if you think you would "correct" 1♠ to 1NT, you would be showing more than a 1NT overcall and partner would raise to 2NT, invitational, or 3NT. What a mess!

On **6**, if you double and partner takes it out to Clubs, you have lost your chance to show your five-card Spade suit. You would have to pass 2♣, and partner might have: ♠J87 ♥K4 ♦J85 ♣Q8765. You would be in the inferior 2 Clubs contract as opposed to the higher-scoring Spade contract. Furthermore, who is to say partner doesn't have: ♠J87 ♥K54 ♦765 ♣Q875? And if you think you will "correct" 2♣ to 2♠, you would be showing 18 or more HCP, and partner would raise you.

Bottom line: Doubling and voluntarily bidding again shows 18-plus. If you don't have enough to bid a second time, make sure you can support all three suits.

What about over a preempt? Same concept. Doubling and bidding again shows a big hand.

Suppose RHO opens 2♥ and you hold:

<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>
♠ AKJ76	♠ AQ10	♠ KQ102
♥ 654	♥ KJ2	♥ 2
♦ AK102	♦ KQ5	♦ AQJ2
♣ A	♣ AJ32	♣ AK43

With **7**, you are too strong to simply overcall 2♠ (limited to about 17). Double and plan to bid Spades later.

With **8**, you are too strong for a 2NT overcall (which shows roughly a good 15-18, balanced with Hearts stopped). Double and plan to bid No-Trump next (but

# BRIDGE WITH LARRY COHEN

www.larryco.com



don't jump in No-Trump). Doubling and then bidding No-Trump shows about 19-21 balanced with their suit stopped. On **2**, you plan to double and raise any suit partner bids.

Is it forcing when you double and bid again? No. The range is roughly 18-21, maybe 22. If partner of the doubler is really broke, he can pass after you double and then bid. So, if you have even more, you must do more. For example, let's say you double their 1♥ opening with each hand below and partner takes out the double to 1♠.

<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>
♠ AKQ	♠ AK10
♥ AK2	♥ 32
♦ AQ107	♦ AKQ2
♣ J32	♣ AK84

With **10**, jump to 2NT (double and then 1NT is up to about 20, maybe a bad 21; doubling and then jumping in No-Trump is a decent 21 to about 23 and invitational). With **11**, cue-bid 2♥. This is forcing and says nothing about Hearts (partner will likely bid No-Trump with Hearts stopped).

## QUIZ

What is your call after RHO opens 1♣ and you hold:

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
♠ KQ10	♠ AK10	♠ AQ876	♠ KJ8762
♥ AQ102	♥ AQ102	♥ 1042	♥ A
♦ KJ	♦ KJ	♦ AK54	♦ AQ2
♣ Q1087	♣ Q1087	♣ 3	♣ AJ2

What is your call after RHO opens 2♠ and you hold:

<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
♠ 87	♠ K82
♥ AKQ10	♥ K2
♦ AKJ2	♦ KQ108
♣ Q87	♣ AQ76

What is your call after RHO opens 3♥ and you hold:

<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>
♠ AK10876	♠ AKQJ10
♥ 2	♥ 32
♦ A65	♦ AKQ10
♣ K65	♣ 54

## Answers

- 1** INT You have a hand that would have opened INT and you have their suit stopped: overcall INT.
- 2** Double Too strong for INT. Double and then bid No-Trump.
- 3** 1♠ A simple overcall. Not strong enough to double and then bid again.
- 4** Double Too strong for a 1♠ overcall. Double and then bid Spades.
- 5** Double You have both 18-plus and support for all three unbid suits.
- 6** 2NT This shows the high end of a 1NT opening with their suit stopped.
- 7** 3♠ Not strong enough to double and then bid Spades.
- 8** Double Too strong for a simple overcall of 3♠.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Larry Cohen, a World and 26-time National Champion, was one of the world's leading players when he semiretired from tournament play to focus on teaching and writing. Many of his books and CDs have won awards from the ABTA and the IPBA. His best-seller on the LAW of Total tricks was one of the most influential books on competitive bidding theory. For two decades, he has been a monthly columnist in *The Bulletin* as well as many other bridge publications. His bridge seminars, especially bridge cruises, are a global hit – he has established himself as one of the top bridge teachers in the world. His website ([www.larryco.com](http://www.larryco.com)) contains hundreds of free articles with bridge instruction on a vast array of topics.

# THE PROBLEMS

[SELECTED BY THE BRIDGERAMA TEAM]

## BIDDING

### Bidding Basics

**1.** ♠ AJ1076  
♥ A7  
♦ AKJ986  
♣ -

W	N	E	S
			1♥
	?		

A) Dble  
B) 2♦  
C) 2♥

**2.** ♠ K64  
♥ AK109  
♦ -  
♣ AKJ854

W	N	E	S
			1♦
	?		

A) 1♥  
B) 2♣  
C) Dble

**3.** ♠ -  
♥ AJ986  
♦ 1076  
♣ AK1095

W	N	E	S
			2♣
	?		

A) Dble  
B) 4♣  
C) 3♥

**4.** ♠ K  
♥ -  
♦ AQ9764  
♣ AJ8732

W	N	E	S
			1♥
	?		

A) 2NT  
B) 2♦  
C) Dble

**5.** ♠ A2  
♥ AJ85  
♦ A93  
♣ KQ105

W	N	E	S
			1♦
	?		

A) 1NT  
B) Dble  
C) 1♥

**6.** ♠ AKQ1086543  
♥ J10  
♦ -  
♣ A6

W	N	E	S
			1♥
	?		

A) Dble  
B) 1♠  
C) 4♣

**7.** ♠ AK43  
♥ J3  
♦ AK98  
♣ KQ6

W	N	E	S
			1♥
	?		

A) 1♠  
B) Dble  
C) 1NT

**8.** ♠ AQ9  
♥ J872  
♦ K84  
♣ KJ8

W	N	E	S
			1♥
	?		

A) Dble  
B) 1NT  
C) Pass

**Bidding is not everything there is in life!**

## DECLARER PLAY

### Problem 1

♠ J103  
♥ Q1052  
♦ AKJ2  
♣ 103

N	
W	E
S	

♠ AQ8652  
♥ A  
♦ 4  
♣ AKJ87

Contract: 6 Spades.  
Lead: West leads the ♦10.

What's your plan?

- a) Win and play three rounds of Clubs ruffing in dummy.
- b) Win and run the ♠J.
- c) Win and play a Spade to the Ace.

### Problem 2

♠ 732  
♥ 98754  
♦ K75  
♣ 72

N	
W	E
S	

♠ AQ5  
♥ AKQJ1062  
♦ -  
♣ AK4

Contract: 6 Hearts (West overcalled 3♦).  
Lead: West leads the ♣10.

Do you:

- a) Win, draw the outstanding trump and take the Spade finesse?
- b) Win, draw the outstanding trump, cash the ♠A, play two rounds of Clubs ruffing and then play a Spade to the Queen?
- c) Win, play a trump to dummy, ruff a Diamond high, ruff a Club, ruff a Diamond high, cross to dummy with a trump and pitch a Spade on the ♦K.

### Problem 3

♠ Q952  
♥ 102  
♦ AJ1063  
♣ AK

N	
W	E
S	

♠ AKJ8  
♥ AK9653  
♦ 4  
♣ 84

Contract: 6 Spades.  
West leads the ♣Q.

What is your plan?

- a) Win, cash the ♠AK and play three rounds of Hearts.
- b) Win, cash the ♠K and then play three rounds of Hearts.
- c) Win, cash the ♠K and the A♥ and exit with a low Heart.



# BRIDGE WITH LARRY COHEN

## PRACTICAL EXERCICES

# THE SOLUTIONS

## BIDDING

### Bidding Basics

- 1.** A Michaels cue-bid with 2♥ is a possibility, but it does not identify your minor suit and you may find it difficult to convey the strength of your hand. Overcalling 2♦, intending to bid Spades on the next round is a possibility, but starting with a double gets our vote.

Dble =5  
2♦ =4  
2♥ =3
- 2.** Overcalling on a four-card suit is not recommended. Overcalling 2♣ is a possibility but an immediate double is the best way to start.

Dble =5  
2♣ =3  
1♥ =1
- 3.** Overcalling at the three-level with a broken five-card suit is dangerous. A Leaping Michaels jump to 4♣ promising Clubs and Hearts is a possibility, but partner will expect more in the way of high cards. Doubling is the economical way to get involved.

Dble =5  
4♣ =3  
3♥ =2
- 4.** It would be unwise to double holding a singleton Spade. Overcalling 2♦ does not get your distribution across. 2NT gets both your suits into the picture immediately.

2NT =5  
2♦ =3  
Dble =1
- 5.** There is no reason to overcall on a four card suit and you are too strong for INT. Starting with a double, intending to rebid in No-Trumps, will convey your strength and the balanced nature of your hand.

Dble =5  
INT =3  
1♥ =1
- 6.** With virtually ten tricks, it would be conservative to overcall 4♠. Overcalling at the one-level is an option but understates the potential of your hand. Starting with a double and then jumping to game is the way to go.

Dble =5  
1♠ =3  
4♠ =2
- 7.** You are too strong for INT and an overcall in a four-card suit. As usual, starting with a double is best.

Dble =5  
1♠ =2  
INT =1
- 8.** You are not strong enough to overcall INT. Doubling with a balanced hand is not guaranteed to work, especially lacking four Spades. The sensible move is to Pass and see what happens.

Pass =5  
Dble =2  
INT =1

## DECLARER PLAY

### Problem 1

Win and run the ♠J, b).

	♠ J103 ♥ Q1052 ♦ AKJ2 ♣ 103	
♠ - ♥ 9743 ♦ 109875 ♣ Q964	N W      E S	♠ K974 ♥ KJ86 ♦ Q63 ♣ 52
	♠ AQ8652 ♥ A ♦ 4 ♣ AKJ87	

Tackling the trump suit before playing Clubs is the best approach. When West discards on the first round you play the ♠10 for the King and Ace. Now you must find the play of the ♣J! If West wins, the ♣10 is the entry for a trump finesse, while ducking allows you to cash a top Club and ruff a Club. East's overruff will be the only trick for the defense.

### Problem 2

Win, play a trump to dummy, ruff a Diamond high, ruff a Club, ruff a Diamond high, cross to dummy with a trump and pitch a Spade on the ♦K, c).

	♠ 732 ♥ 98754 ♦ K75 ♣ 72	
♠ K106 ♥ - ♦ AJ108643 ♣ 1095	N W      E S	♠ J984 ♥ 3 ♦ Q92 ♣ QJ863
	♠ AQ5 ♥ AKQJ1062 ♦ - ♣ AK4	

The idea of playing to endplay West on the third round of Diamonds ensures that you will make the contract regardless of the position of the King of Spades.

### Problem 3

Win, cash the ♠K and the A♥ and exit with a low Heart, c).

	♠ Q952 ♥ 102 ♦ AJ1063 ♣ AK	
♠ 4 ♥ QJ87 ♦ 972 ♣ QJ1073	N W      E S	♠ 10763 ♥ 4 ♦ KQ85 ♣ 9652
	♠ AKJ8 ♥ AK9653 ♦ 4 ♣ 84	

Declarer must guard against the possibility that the major suits are breaking badly. West will win the second Heart and switch to a Diamond, but declarer takes dummy's ♦A, plays the ♠9 to the Jack, ruffs a Heart with dummy's ♠Q and draws trumps via the marked finesse.

# AGENDA

## Scarborough Summer Congress.

Scarborough, England.  
Oliver Cowan,  
ocbridgecomps@gmail.com  
July 16→19.

16

JULY

## Baltic Bridge Congress.

Sopot, Poland.  
www.bridge.gda.pl  
July 24→30.

24

JULY

## Festival de bridge d'Aix-les-Bains.

Aix-les-Bains, France.  
www.cdsbridge.com/  
evenements/2026/08/01/  
festival-aix-les-bains-2427154  
August 1→3.

1

AUGUST



## Eastbourne Summer Meeting.

Eastbourne, England.  
www.ebu.co.uk  
August 6→9.

6

AUGUST

## World Bridge Tour Masters.

Copenhagen, Denmark.  
www.worldbridgetour.org  
October 19→23.

19

OCTOBER



# Keeping Control

On May 8 Scotland's *The Herald*, the longest running national newspaper in the world (according to Wikipedia), featured bridge on its front page, referencing an article by Professor Samantha Punch which suggested that the 100-year-old card game could save us from over-reliance on AI.

While AI can now excel at the play of the hand (in 2022 it defeated Bénédicte Cronier, Thomas Bessis, Brad Moss, Nevena Senior, Sabine Auken, Roy Welland, Anna Gulevich and Mikael Rimstedt), it still lags behind in the fields of bidding and defense. Professor Punch points out the importance of that distinction, because at the very moment AI is becoming more capable of thinking for us, we are at risk of doing less thinking ourselves. Bridge reminds us of what it means to think actively, collaboratively and under pressure. It challenges us, frustrates us and ultimately rewards us with a deeper understanding of both the game and ourselves.

The article was part of a campaign promoting the Scottish Youth Bridge Camp taking place 19-21 June at the University of Stirling ([www.scottishbridge.org](http://www.scottishbridge.org)).

## GO EAST YOUNG MAN



© EBU

The trophy awarded to the winners of the English Bridge Union's flagship event, the Spring Foursomes, was originally presented to the winners of Terence Reese's TBA Open Teams Championship. Subsequently it was given to the winners of the Men's teams at the EBU Spring Congress. Following the introduction of the Spring

Foursomes in 1962, it was presented to the winners of the southern heat. Such was the popularity of the event that from 1978 it was played at two venues (in 1990 and 1991 at three). Sponsorship saw the event renamed the Woolwich Spring Foursomes and then the Schapiro Spring 4's. Run on double elimination lines, a team must be defeated twice before being eliminated.

In its long history the event has never been won by a team from North America, but this year the **Schnelwar** team (*Joe Grue, Zach Grossack, Susan Schnelwar, Adam Kaplan & Vincent Demuy*) set the record straight, defeating the holders – Ireland's **Barton** (*Grainne Barton npc, Conor Boland, John Carroll, Nick Fitzgibbon, Tom Hanlon, Adam Mesbur & Mark Moran*).

## EYES ON THE PRIZE

In 2023 Bucharest's Contra Bridge Club joined forces with the Romanian Bridge Federation to launch the Contra Cup, which has now celebrated its fourth edition. It attracts stars from across Europe and this year you could rub shoulders with the likes of Zia, Andrea Manno, Alfredo Versace, Oren Toledano and Ami Zamir.

This year, team **Zip**, the Serbian and Croatia alliance of Goran Radisic, Dimitraki Zipovski, Ion Popa, Kiril Marinovsky & Vedran Zoric defeated the powerful Polish team **SPS Construction** (*Grzegorz Glasek, Grzegorz Narkiewicz, Krzysztof Buras, Michal Nowosadzki & Piotr Marcinowski*) to lift the Cup along with the €10,000 prize.





## THIS SPORTING LIFE

American star John McAllister has launched a new series, *Bridge with Ballers*, designed to introduce famous athletes to bridge. In the first episode, he talks bridge with UVA basketball legend Sean Singletary.

John uses BBO's Bridge Master beginner level with anyone who tells him they're curious about the game. He suggests that if you have a **bridge-curious friend** – the smart kid with card sense, the coworker who keeps asking about it, the relative who'd be hooked if they ever sat down –, send them the link. If you have a **bridge-playing friend**, send it to them too.

He suggests a line you can paste:

*"Saw this and thought of you – a friend of mine just launched a web series teaching bridge to elite athletes. First episode is UVA's Sean Singletary. ~35 min, worth a watch even if you've never touched a deck."*

UVA Legend Sean Singletary Plays Bridge: Spades' Cooler, Older Cousin

# THE LEARNING CURVE

Terence Reese introduced the popular 'over my shoulder' style of presenting in his books *Play Bridge with Reese* and *Play These Hands with Me*. In the computer age, this instructive technique can be presented visually. Utilizing the power of Bridge Base Online, Gavin Wolpert presents practice sessions with his partner Raj

Shourie (they recently won the USBF trials to earn a spot in the 2027 Bermuda Bowl).

In the latest episode they take on Zach Grossack John McLaughlin:

[www.facebook.com/watch/live/?ref=watch\\_permalink&v=2050197472577111](http://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?ref=watch_permalink&v=2050197472577111)



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Clever Plays  
IN THE  
Trump Suit

DAVID BIRD

CLEVER PLAYS  
IN THE  
TRUMP SUIT

David Bird

An intermediate-level discussion of declarer play, this book focuses on the power of the trump suit. Its subjects include trump timing – should you draw all the defenders' trumps straight away, some of their trumps, or perhaps perform some other vital task first? – and situations where you need to unblock in the trump suit or to put a defender on lead with a trump. The reader will learn how to make maximum use of the entries provided by the trump suit, and how to perform a trump safety play or a trump avoidance play. Two other important topics are how to make your contract against a bad trump break and how you can survive a forcing attack on the long-trump holding. Later chapters explain how to play contracts with fewer than eight trumps at your disposal, and also how to conjure extra tricks from the trump suit. Every couple of chapters or so, there is a 9-problem quiz section.

## REVIEW

*"Read this book in small doses and when you've finished, read it again. Your diligence will be rewarded, and you will appreciate once again the beauty of this game."*

—Belleville Intelligencer.

*"Another thorough work from David Bird."*

—The Bridge World.

*"A must-read book for anyone who wants to improve as declarer. Rating A."*

—ACBL Bulletin.

*"An excellent book... as always with David Bird, the writing is clear and the style is light and enjoyable. All in all, a valuable addition to your library."*

—The Ontario Kibitzer.

*David Bird (Southampton, UK) is the world's most prolific bridge writer, with more than 150 bridge books to his name. Known for the clarity of his writing and explanations, he has won the American Bridge Teachers' Association Book of the Year Award a record nine times. His celebrated humorous fiction series, featuring the cantankerous Abbot, has run for over 45 years.*

Find it at <https://ebooksbridge.com/>



# FIND THE LEAD



BY GODEFROY DE TESSIÈRES



## AGAINST 1 NO-TRUMP

COUNT YOUR POINTS

<p><b>1.</b></p> <p>♠ 965 ♥ Q764 ♦ K1082 ♣ J3</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>W</th> <th>N</th> <th>E</th> <th>S</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1NT</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	W	N	E	S				1NT	<p>♠9: The general advice is to lead passively against 1 No-Trump. There will most likely be time later to establish a four-card suit. The 9 of Spades ("Top of nothing") is therefore the best choice. The second best lead is a Diamond. With the 10-8 you have a better chance of establishing a trick than in Hearts.</p>	<p>♠9 10 ♦2 8 ♥4 5</p>								
W	N	E	S																
			1NT																
<p><b>2.</b></p> <p>♠ Q10432 ♥ J1092 ♦ K2 ♣ A2</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>W</th> <th>N</th> <th>E</th> <th>S</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1NT</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	W	N	E	S				1NT	<p>♠3: Leading from a five-card suit remains the top priority. If playing matchpoint pairs, and therefore more interested in leading passively, you could think of leading the Jack of Hearts.</p>	<p>♠3 10 ♥J 5</p>								
W	N	E	S																
			1NT																
<p><b>3.</b></p> <p>♠ Q64 ♥ Q632 ♦ Q752 ♣ 82</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>W</th> <th>N</th> <th>E</th> <th>S</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1NT</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	W	N	E	S				1NT	<p>♥2: With two equivalent four-card suits, we prefer the major because it is less likely that we touch a five-card suit of the opponents.</p>	<p>♥2 10 ♦2 7</p>								
W	N	E	S																
			1NT																
<p><b>4.</b></p> <p>♠ 73 ♥ K94 ♦ Q1064 ♣ Q1064</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>W</th> <th>N</th> <th>E</th> <th>S</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1♣</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♦</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♠</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1NT</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	W	N	E	S				1♣	Pass	1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass	1NT	<p>♣4: Your partner, who clearly has a good hand, did not overcall 1♠, so he does not have five cards there. Leading a Spade is therefore a bad idea and a Diamond has no future because it is dummy's suit. There is a clear preference for leading a Club, the only suit where the opponents may not have length.</p>	<p>♣4 10 ♦4 3 ♠7 2</p>
W	N	E	S																
			1♣																
Pass	1♦	Pass	1♥																
Pass	1♠	Pass	1NT																
<p><b>5.</b></p> <p>♠ Q74 ♥ J109 ♦ 73 ♣ K8742</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>W</th> <th>N</th> <th>E</th> <th>S</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>1♦</td> <td>Pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	W	N	E	S				1NT		1♦	Pass		<p>♥J: After this auction, South usually has Club length, because he has no major and no support in Diamonds. It is unlikely that you can establish the Clubs, especially with such a weak hand. It is therefore better to lead passively, from your short sequence in Hearts.</p>	<p>♥J 10 ♣4 5</p>				
W	N	E	S																
			1NT																
	1♦	Pass																	
<p><b>6.</b></p> <p>♠ 762 ♥ K2 ♦ KQ53 ♣ A973</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>W</th> <th>N</th> <th>E</th> <th>S</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>1♥</td> <td>Pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	W	N	E	S				1NT		1♥	Pass		<p>♠7: Declarer has the minors, which limits the appeal of leading either of them. Spades have the advantage of being passive and that they might be East's suit.</p>	<p>♠7 10 ♦3 5 ♣3 2</p>				
W	N	E	S																
			1NT																
	1♥	Pass																	

# One hand, seven questions

This month, you'll have a single hand and will have to answer a series of questions on a variety of themes, ending with a dummy play.

**You hold as South:**

♠ AK76  
♥ KQJ8  
♦ -  
♣ AJ843

1

**How do you open that hand?**

2

**Your left-hand opponent (West) 1♦ and his partner (East) responds 1♥. What do you say?**

3

**You open 1♣ and your partner responds 1♠. What do you bid now?**

4

**Your partner opens 1NT and when you bid 2♣, Stayman, he responds 2♥. What is your second bid?**

5

**Your partner opens 1♦. What do you respond?**

6

**Your right-hand opponent (East) opens 5♦. What is your call?**

7

**You play 7 Hearts by North after the following auction:**

W	N	E	S
	1NT	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♥	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♣	Pass	5♦
Pass	5♠	Pass	7♥

	♠ QJ4 ♥ A1072 ♦ AJ832 ♣ K	
	N W                      E S	
	♠ AK76 ♥ KQJ8 ♦ - ♣ AJ843	

**East leads the Spade 10. What is your plan?**

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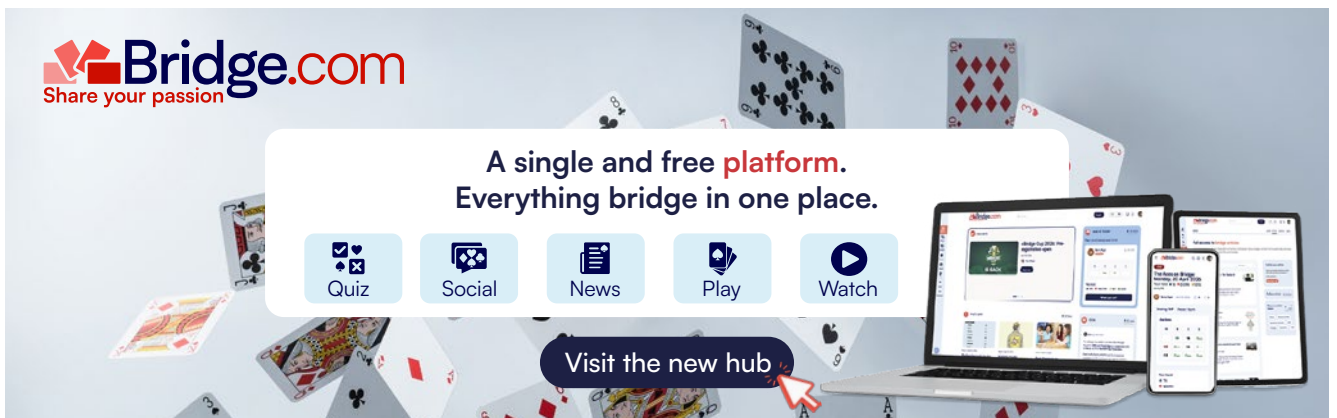


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## THE SOLUTIONS

**1** 1♣. Although it does not have many losers, this three-suited hand does not have what is required for a strong 2♣-opening. Open 1♣ and plan to make a (jump) reverse after partner's response.

**2** Double. Here, you have an easy answer: with 18HCP and all three non-bid suits, we have more than required for a takeout double.

**3** 3♥. After our 1♣ opening, partner responds 1♠. What is the correct rebid to show the fit and our strength? The first option, the one that was certainly chosen by most of you, is to make a Splinter at 4♦. But this hand, which has a void, is very powerful and therefore a bit too strong for this bid. To describe it most accurately, it is advisable to choose what we call a Superforcing bid: a double jump to a new (reverse) suit, showing the third suit, confirming the fit in partner's suit and thus implying shortness in the fourth suit and a hand that is too strong for a Splinter. Here, 3♥ shows Hearts and Diamond shortness. This would be my choice, but I am not shocked by a 4♦ bid.

**4** 3♠. Good news: we found our fit. Hasty players might bid 3♥, without much thought, but you must be careful – this is a simple invitation to game. To show the fit and your slam ambitions, you need to bid 3♠ (after Stayman, 3 in the other major shows slam interest. You would bid 3♥ opposite a 2♠ response to show interest in the Spade slam). You can already plan what you will do next: Exclusion Blackwood in Diamonds to explore the possibility of playing the grand slam. In other words, jump to 5♦ if partner responds 3NT or 4♣. If he responds 4♦, Exclusion Blackwood is no longer possible but if he does not have a Club control, the idea of the grand slam fades away.

**5** 2♣. Facing partner's 1♦ opening, you must do something that might be counterintuitive for some: bid neither major. With such a strong hand, the rule is to bid the longest suit first. If we do not bid the Clubs immediately, it becomes impossible to find a 5-3 Club fit, which might allow us to play a nice slam. On the contrary, this response will not prevent us from finding a major-suit fit later.

**6** Double. This 5♦ opening deprives us of most of the bidding space. The reasonable option is to double for takeout because despite our very powerful 5-4-4-0, we

lack at least one useful card to impose a slam on our partner. If he passes, we still have a lot of play to beat the contract. If he bids a suit on the five-level, this does not promise any points but distribution. You then need to think if you want to try a slam or not.

**7** Note North's 1NT opening with a singleton King. This choice is questionable and not accepted by some players but very frequent among advanced and high-level players with hands that offer no good rebid after a one-of-a-suit opening. In 7 Hearts, you will need to organise your game plan so as to ruff the losers of one of your side suits (Clubs or Diamonds) all while avoiding being shortened if trumps break badly (4-1). To choose your base hand, look at your entries and count your tricks. You already have eleven tricks: four Spades, four Hearts, one Diamond and two Clubs. This means that two ruffs in one of the hands are enough to get to thirteen and you don't need to establish a trick from length. Like one of our best French players, Stéphane Garcia, who bid this grand slam with his daughter Savéria in an international mixed event, win in hand and immediately ruff a Diamond, cross back to hand with the King of Clubs and ruff another Diamond. You can now cash the two remaining trumps in dummy to test the trump break. If they were 3-2, play it safe and get back to hand with a Club ruff to avoid a possible ruff in Spades. If they were 4-1, you need to get to hand with a Spade. When the deal was played, many players used the South hand as the base hand and tried to ruff two Clubs, without success.

### The full deal

	♠ QJ4 ♥ A1072 ♦ AJ832 ♣ K	
♠ 8532 ♥ 3 ♦ K76 ♣ Q9752	N W                      E S	♠ 109 ♥ 9654 ♦ Q10954 ♣ 106
	♠ AK76 ♥ KQJ8 ♦ - ♣ AJ843	



# WHOSE FAULT IS IT?

BY ALAIN LÉVY



North-South have reached a very poor contract. As so often, each of the two players considers that his partner is responsible for the accident. And you, what do you think?

**This month we will be looking at: transfer responses over interference.**

→ Easy.      ↗ Average.      ↑ Difficult.

## Introduction

The aim of this article is to encourage you to adopt the principle of transfer responses after interference, a French method known as Cachalot. For once, neither partner will be to blame – only the absence of this excellent tool from your bidding arsenal.

## Problem 1 →

♠ A10764			
♥ 984			
♦ A95			
♣ AQ			
	N		
	W		E
		S	
♠ K832			
♥ K75			
♦ K3			
♣ KJ96			

E/W Vul.

The standard sequence

W	N	E	S
			1♣
	1♥	1♠	Pass
Pass		4♠	

When playing Cachalot

W	N	E	S
			1♣
	1♥	Dble	Pass
Pass		4♠	

The full deal

	♠ A10764	
	♥ 984	
	♦ A95	
	♣ AQ	
♠ Q5		N
♥ AQ1062		W
♦ Q1082		E
♣ 87		S
	♠ K832	
	♥ K75	
	♦ K3	
	♣ KJ96	
		♠ J9
		♥ J3
		♦ J764
		♣ 105432

The pair playing standard bid 4 Spades, played by North. They were severely punished when the defense started with three Heart tricks and then scored an outrageous uppercut on the fourth round of the suit. Result: One down.

In the other room, the players who play Cachalot after intervention reached the same contract of 4 Spades but played from the South hand. They made twelve tricks and hoped that their opponents would not reach the small slam.

### These are the basics of transfers after intervention:

After an intervention of 1♦ or 1♥, the responder shows his majors with a transfer.

W	N	E	S
			1♣
	1♦		?

- Double: replaces the 1♥ bid. This is the equivalent of a Texas transfer: the call immediately below the suit that you want to show.
- 1♥: Transfer to Spades.

W	N	E	S
			1♣
	1♥		?

- Double: replaces the 1♠ bid.

The first advantage, highlighted by the deal we just looked at, is to right-side the contract: it is preferable for the player who intervened to be on lead. If opener holds four Spades, he bids the same as opposite a natural 1♠ bid. 2♠ is a simple raise in the range of 12-14HCP.

### Some developments after the Double

In several situations, playing transfers after an intervention also allows you to show three-card support in partner's major and thus possibly find a 5-3 fit. The concept is simple. With exactly three cards in responder's major and a limited hand, opener shows his support at the one-level.

SOUTH	W	N	E	S
♠ AQ52				1♣
♥ KQ4	1♦	Dble	Pass	1♥
♦ 108				
♣ K1087				

That way, it is possible to find a 5-3 fit in Hearts without, of course, missing a possible 4-4 fit in Spades (see problem 3).

Here is an example:

♠ J9852	♥ A987	♦ 108	♣ J4
♠ Q107	♥ 4	♦ AK542	♣ KQ93

The standard sequence

W	N	E	S
			1♦
1♥	1♠	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♦		

When playing Cachalot

W	N	E	S
			1♦
1♥	Dble	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♠		

Here, the 5-3 fit is identified immediately, which allows you play the good 2 Spades contract rather than a bad 2 Diamonds.

### Bidding developments

W	N	E	S
			1♦
1♥	Dble	Pass	1♠
Pass	?		

With five Spades, responder raises, depending on his strength: 2♠ (6-9HCP), 3♠ (10-11HCP), 4♠ (12-14HCP) and 2♥ (14+HCP), but the cue-bid is not only used for that type of hands.

With only four Spades, he can bid an artificial 1NT or 2♥. All other bids are natural and non-forcing.

## Problem 2

♠ AQ5	♥ 5	♦ K84	♣ AK10872
♠ K10764	♥ Q874	♦ J2	♣ Q6

E/W Vul.

The standard sequence

W	N	E	S
	1♣	1♥	1♠
Pass	3♣		

When playing Cachalot

W	N	E	S
	1♣	1♥	Dble
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♠
Pass	4♠		

The players using transfers after intervention had no trouble reaching

4 Spades and made twelve tricks.

Those who play "standard" stopped in 3 Clubs after an auction that can hardly be criticized.

### Note

Playing Cachalot would lose a good part of its advantages if it led to the contract being played from the wrong hand. In the sequence:

W	N	E	S
	1♣	1♦	Dble
Pass	1♥	Pass	?

It is not certain that there is an eight-card fit in Hearts, and it is necessary not only to find a possible 4-4 fit in Spades, but to be able to play Spades from the right hand. With four Spades, it is therefore not advisable to respond 1♠ over 1♥. For that reason, we reverse the bids of 1♠ (which becomes a relay that denies both five Hearts and four Spades) and 1NT (which shows four Spades with or without five Hearts). Over 1NT, opener gives priority to showing four-card Spade support and specifies the range of his hand: 2♠ (12-14HCP, often balanced), 3♠ (16-18DH, unbalanced), 4♠ (19-21DH, unbalanced) and 2♦ (18-19HCP, balanced).

Here is an example:

## Problem 3

♠ KJ94	♥ K107	♦ 5	♣ AK1082
♠ AQ63	♥ AQJ32	♦ 1087	♣ 9

E/W Vul.

The standard sequence

W	N	E	S
	1♣	1♦	1♥
Pass	1♠	Pass	4♠

When playing Cachalot

W	N	E	S
	1♣	1♦	Dble
Pass	1♥	Pass	1NT
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♣
Pass	4♦	Pass	4♥
Pass	4NT	Pass	5♠
Pass	6♠		

Here, North's hand is worth 17DH points (high cards + distribution). His jump to 3♠ is fully justified and steers the auction toward slam.

### Remarques

1. Playing Cachalot, the Diamond shortness is shown by inference. North has shown four Spades, three Hearts and an unbalanced hand; he is therefore 4-3-1-5 or 4-3-0-6. Under these conditions, South does not have to worry about a Diamond control and could therefore bid 4♥ over 3♠ rather than 4♣.
2. The natural 1♠ bid after an overcall of 1♦ or 1♥ no longer exists. It is used to replace the negative double: a positive hand, no four-card major and no natural bid. It is used with all unbalanced hands of 8+HCP. This is another positive aspect of playing this convention. Don't hesitate. Start playing Cachalot to significantly improve your competitive bidding at low levels.



# THE EXAMPLE OF THE CHAMPIONS

BY NICOLAS LHUISSIER



## Reportage

### American Team Championship.

After drinking a vial of polyjuice potion (ah, you have to know Harry Potter!), you are magically transformed into Adam Kaplan, a very friendly young American champion. You need to bring this game home. Given that this is a Teams match that is scored in IMPs, we know that overtricks do not matter at all.

W	N	E	S
	R. LEE		A. KAPLAN
			2♣(*)
Pass	2♦	Pass	2NT
Pass	3♥	Pass	3NT

(\*) Game forcing.

	♠ J10432 ♥ 75 ♦ A104 ♣ Q64	
	N W E S	
	♠ AK ♥ AKQ4 ♦ KJ3 ♣ A753	

Contract: 3 No-Trump by South.  
West leads the Jack of Hearts.

### How many tricks can you already count at this point?

You have two Spade tricks, three Hearts, two Diamonds and one Club: you only need one more.

### How can you set it up?

- You can finesse against the Queen of Diamonds in either direction.
- You can play a Club towards the Queen, hoping that the King is onside or hope for the suit to break 3-3.
- Finally, you can try to set up dummy's long Spades.

### How many entries to dummy do you need to establish the Spades?

After unblocking the Ace-King of Spades, you need a first entry to kick out the Queen of Spades and then a second one to get back to the high Spades: two entries in total.

### What possible entries do you see?

The Diamond Ace and maybe the Queen of Clubs or the 10 of Diamonds.

### After winning the lead with the Ace of Hearts and unblocking the Ace-King of Spades, what do you play?

The Club suit seems more attractive because you have more Clubs than the defense. Diamonds seem less promising because you unfortunately have only six cards. This is, however, an illusion:

in fact, you have an unstoppable way of establishing a ninth trick.

### What is it?

Like Adam, you need to play the Diamond Jack from hand at trick four, without cashing the King first, and immediately finesse against the Queen to your left.

### How does this line of play ensure that you make your contract?

- If the finesse is successful you are home.
- And if East wins your Jack with the Queen and plays back a Heart, you are sure that you have two dummy entries for setting up the Spades with the Ace of Diamonds and the now high ten of Diamonds.

### How do you finish the play?

Win East's return with the King of Hearts and play the Diamond King to dummy's Ace. Then play the Spade Jack to dislodge the Queen. Then, nothing will stop you from getting to dummy a second time with the 10 of Diamonds to enjoy your high Spades.

		♠ J10432 ♥ 75 ♦ A104 ♣ Q64	
♠ Q97 ♥ J1098 ♦ 9652 ♣ J8	N W E S	♠ 865 ♥ 632 ♦ Q87 ♣ K1092	
		♠ AK ♥ AKQ4 ♦ KJ3 ♣ A753	

### Post-mortem

Adam's opponent in the other room was not so careful and went down in the same contract: a net gain of 10 IMPs for Adam's team.

## Variations on a hand

What is your bid as West?

♠ AJ753  
♥ AK3  
♦ 8  
♣ KQ94

- | W  | N    | E   | S    |
|----|------|-----|------|
| 1♠ | Pass | 1NT | Pass |
| 2♣ | Pass | 3♣  | Pass |
| ?  |      |     |      |
- | W  | N  | E  | S  |
|----|----|----|----|
| 1♠ | 2♦ | 2♥ | 3♦ |
| ?  |    |    |    |
- | W  | N    | E   | S    |
|----|------|-----|------|
|    |      | 1♦  | Pass |
| 1♠ | Pass | 1NT | Pass |
| ?  |      |     |      |
- | W  | N    | E    | S  |
|----|------|------|----|
|    |      |      | 1♥ |
| 1♠ | Pass | Pass | 2♦ |
| ?  |      |      |    |

- | W   | N    | E   | S    |
|-----|------|-----|------|
| 1♠  | Pass | 2♦  | Pass |
| 3♣  | Pass | 3♥  | Pass |
| 3NT | Pass | 4NT | Pass |
| ?   |      |     |      |
- | W   | N    | E   | S    |
|-----|------|-----|------|
| 1♠  | Pass | 2♣  | Pass |
| 3♣  | Pass | 3♣  | Pass |
| 4♣  | Pass | 4♦  | Pass |
| 4NT | Pass | 5♣  | Pass |
| 5♦  | Pass | 5NT | Pass |
| ?   |      |     |      |



## → Solutions

**1. 3♥:** The best is to describe your hand by showing your Hearts because you don't know yet which game you want to play. If East has a good stopper in diamonds, playing 3 No-Trump is a real option. If not, the most likely is to play 5 Clubs.

**2. 4♦:** To show your good Heart support and your 19 total points, the cue-bid is perfect. Be careful, in this situation, a 3♥ bid would not be forcing.

**3. 2♣:** Simply start with a checkback to find out if East has three Spades. If he does not, you can still bid a forcing 3♣ to find a possible Club slam in a 4-4 fit.

**4. Double:** Don't give up. It is true that you can worry in this situation because

North certainly holds some Spades behind you, but you should not let the possible danger stop you. Statistically, the best call is a takeout Double, especially in view of the discovery of a Club fit. And 17HCP and a singleton in the opponents' suit are reasons to celebrate!

**5. Pass:** Partner bids a fourth-suit forcing 3♥ and when he hears about your Heart stopper, ventures a quantitative 4NT. Alas, you have already shown a strong two-suiter, promising at least 16HCP. With 17HCP, you have a near-minimum, even more so because your long suit (Spades) is very poor and you have no support for East's long suit (Diamonds). Decline the invitation.

**6. 7♠ (or 7♣):** 5♣ shows three keycards, the two missing Aces and the King of

trumps (Spades). Your 5♦ bid asks for the trump Queen. East's 5NT response shows:

- I have the Queen of trumps (else he would have bid 5♠).
- I have no King (or else he would have bid it at the six-level).
- On the other hand, I have some interesting things I have not told you about yet (otherwise, he would bid 6♠).

With all that, the grand slam becomes an excellent bet because you already have five Spade tricks, two Hearts, one Diamond and four Clubs. All you need is East to hold five Clubs or the Queen of Hearts or a doubleton Heart for the grand slam to be very good. And if he has none of that and only the Queen of Diamonds, the contract will depend on the position of the King of Diamonds.

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# GOING THROUGH THE CARD

BY SALLY BROCK



Multiple world champion Sally Brock examines classic problems from match pointed events.

## PAINTING A PICTURE

**Sally:** I thought there were lots of points of interest on Board 7. What did you do South?

Both Vul. Dealer South

	♠ AK10 ♥ 65 ♦ KJ8732 ♣ Q5	
♠ 854 ♥ KJ972 ♦ Q1096 ♣ 8	N W                      E S	♠ J762 ♥ Q83 ♦ A5 ♣ J762
	♠ Q93 ♥ A104 ♦ 4 ♣ AK10943	

**South:** Oh, I liked this hand. I thought we bid it well. The bidding was:

W	N	E	S
			1♣
Pass	1♦	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♠	Pass	2NT
Pass	3NT		

Partner had to manufacture a Spade suit to get me to bid 3NT with a Heart stopper. West led a Heart and I ducked two rounds. It looked as if I had ten tricks,

but when I tested the Clubs and found they were 4-1, I just had to hope that East held the Ace of Diamonds (or that Hearts were 4-4). When that proved to be the case, I had nine tricks: five Clubs, one Heart and three Spades.

**Sally:** Well done. That was well bid. Your bidding was better than ours:

W	N	E	S
			1♣
1♥	2♦	2♥	3♣
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠
Pass	5♣		

I should have bid 3NT over 3♠, but I thought one Heart stopper would probably not be enough, and I quite fancied 4♠ on the 4-3 fit.

**South:** So, you went one down when Clubs did not break.

**Sally:** No. West led the ♥7 to East's Queen, which I ducked, and East continued with another Heart, which I won. I played a Diamond to the Jack and Ace, and East played a third Heart, ruffed in dummy. I cashed the ♣Q, ruffed a Diamond and played another top trump, West showing out. I now needed to play a trump reduction. I played a Spade to the Ace and ruffed a

Diamond, leaving myself with the same number of trumps as East. Now the ♠Q and ♠K left me in dummy at trick 12, with my K-10 of trumps lying over East's J-7.

**South:** Wow! That was good. I'm not sure I would have thought of that.

**Sally:** How about you, East?

**East:** I was actually on the ball on this one. I could see that we probably had one Heart and the ♦A and that I needed to protect my trump trick. The only way he was likely to pick up my trumps was via a trump reduction, so I needed to take the entries out of dummy. When declarer ducked the ♥Q, I switched to a Spade (hoping that declarer would now be afraid of a Spade ruff). Declarer won in hand and played a Diamond to the Jack and Ace. I now played another Spade. Declarer won in dummy, played a Heart to his Ace and ruffed a Heart. He could now have succeeded in a similar way to you, Sally, starting by ruffing a Diamond, but he was worried about losing a Spade ruff. So, he cashed the ♣Q, ruffed a Diamond and tried to draw trumps. Now he was one down.

**Sally:** That was extremely well defended. Good defence is to try to paint a picture that misrepresents your actual hand.



BY ANDREW ROBSON

# SEEING RED

When was the last time you picked up a hand of one color? A long time ago, I bet. You could work out the chances on the back of an envelope. Your first card will be red with a probability of 1/2 (red or black); your second card will be red (given your first is red) with a probability of 25/51 (25 red cards left from the remainder of the pack of 51 cards); your third card will be red (given your first two are red) with a probability of 24/50... your 13th card will be red (given the other 12 are red) with a probability of 14/40. Multiply those fractions and you get... a very unlikely scenario!

	♠ Q965 ♥ AK ♦ K7 ♣ AQ1085	
♠ J1043 ♥ J42 ♦ 65 ♣ 9642	N W                  E S	♠ AK872 ♥ Q953 ♦ - ♣ KJ73
	♠ - ♥ 10876 ♦ AQJ1098432 ♣ -	

	W	N	E	S
			1♠	5♦ <sup>(1)</sup>
	Pass	6♦ <sup>(2)</sup>	Dble <sup>(3)</sup>	Pass
	Pass	Rdbl <sup>(4)</sup>		

- (1) Anything could be right. One South (in the Dutch event) even passed, hoping to be able to judge how high to bid later.
- (2) Partner's bid is preemptive but slam looks a favorite given the probable short Spades opposite.
- (3) Ostensibly for take-out but usually converted into penalties at such a high-level.
- (4) The odds favor such redoubles when you think you will go down no more than one. If the slam goes one down, the redouble costs an extra 200 points; if the slam makes exactly, the redouble gains 290 points; if the slam makes plus one, the redouble gains 490 points

West led the Jack of Spades, but nothing made a difference. Declarer ruffed, cashed one high trump from hand, crossed to dummy's top Hearts, cashed the Ace of Clubs discarding his third Heart, ruffed a Spade, ruffed his fourth Heart with the King of trumps, ruffed a black card back to his hand, drew West's last trump, and claimed.

Redoubled small slam plus one, scoring more points (2230) than bidding and making Seven Diamonds (2140).

## Spurning the singleton

I must say, I would have been tempted to lead the singleton Diamond on this deal from a European tournament. West has the Ace of Spades to win the first trump, try to find an entry to his partner's hand, then score a Diamond ruff. The Diamond lead would have defeated the Spade game – although not quite in that way; East would win the first Spade and now the second Diamond would enable both the Ace and King of Spades to score separately.

	♠ 6532 ♥ Q ♦ AK53 ♣ AQ107	
♠ A8 ♥ J986 ♦ J ♣ KJ9653	N W                  E S	♠ KQ ♥ A743 ♦ Q1074 ♣ 842
	♠ J10974 ♥ K1052 ♦ 9862 ♣ -	

	W	N	E	S
		1♦	Pass	1♠ <sup>(1)</sup>
	2♣	3♠	Pass	4♠ <sup>(2)</sup>

- (1) Points Schmoits.
- (2) See (1). That void Club looks HUMONGOUS (although it wasn't!).

The Irish West chose to lead a Heart, East winning the Ace, and leading a second Heart (although a hard-to-find Diamond switch would have enabled the defence to win three Spade tricks as above). Declarer tried the 10 of Hearts, ruffing West's Jack and needed a 2-2 Spade split to have a chance. At trick three, declarer led a Spade from dummy. East's Queen held the trick, at which point the only winning defence is to lead his King of trumps to West's Ace, enabling West to get off play with a red card. Difficult to envisage. Instead, East persisted with a third Heart.

Declarer seized his chance. He rose with the King of Hearts, ruffed a fourth Heart then, playing West for a 2-4-1-6 shape (highly likely given his 2♣ overcall), cashed one top Diamond (key play – to remove West's safe exit card in the suit) before leading a second Spade.

West won his Ace of Spades, but his last six cards were Clubs. Declarer successfully finessed dummy's Queen on the forced exit in the suit, shedding one Diamond, then cashed the Ace of Clubs shedding another. Ten tricks and game made, with a minority of high-card points.

To watch Andrew's daily instructional videos, including his *Strong and Fives* channel, go to [andrewrobsonbridgecast.com](http://andrewrobsonbridgecast.com)



# BIDDING QUIZ

BY GODEFROY DE TESSIÈRES



Godefroy de Tessières invites you to test your bidding skills on several examples with the same theme. The difficulty increases gradually, but don't assume that level 1 will be easy or that level 3 will be 'inaccessible'! Study each sequence and choose the most accurate bid.

## Level 1

**1**

W	N	E	S
			1NT
?			

♠ A J 7 6  
♥ K Q J 7 2  
♦ 2  
♣ J 6 2

**2**

W	N	E	S
			1NT
?			

♠ A J 7 3  
♥ 6  
♦ K Q 9 6 5 3  
♣ 6 3

**3**

W	N	E	S
			1NT
?			

♠ K Q 2  
♥ K Q 9 2  
♦ Q 6 5  
♣ A J 2

**4**

W	N	E	S
			1NT 2♣ Pass
?			

♠ K 6 5 3  
♥ K 2  
♦ A 8 6  
♣ 10 9 4 2

## Level 2

**5**

W	N	E	S
			1NT Dble Pass
?			

♠ Q 6  
♥ A 8 7 4 2  
♦ 9 7 3 2  
♣ Q 2

**6**

W	N	E	S
			1NT 2♣ Pass
?			

♠ A J 2  
♥ 5 3 2  
♦ 7 5 2  
♣ K 9 8 6

**7**

W	N	E	S
			1NT
?			

♠ K 2  
♥ 2  
♦ Q 9 7 4  
♣ A Q J 9 6 2

**8**

W	N	E	S
			1NT 2♠ Pass
?			

♠ K 9 3 2  
♥ 9 7 6 4 2  
♦ 2  
♣ K 5 2

## Level 3

**9**

W	N	E	S
			1NT
?			

♠ Q J 10 9 5  
♥ A 10 9 3 2  
♦ 4  
♣ 7 5

**10**

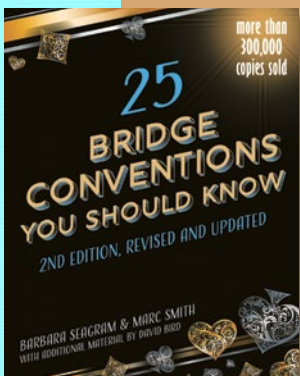
W	N	E	S
			1NT 2♣ Pass
?			

♠ A 4  
♥ K Q 4  
♦ 9 8 7 5  
♣ 9 7 3 2

**11**

W	N	E	S
			1NT Dble Pass
?			

♠ K 10 4  
♥ A Q 9  
♦ J 10 8 7  
♣ J 3 2



BARBARA SEAGRAM & MARC SMITH

## 25 BRIDGE CONVENTIONS YOU SHOULD KNOW

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## → SOLUTIONS

### Level 1

- 1** 2♣ = 10  
2♥ = 5  
Pass = 2
- With 12HCP and a singleton, it is mandatory to take action. 2♣, Landy, describes a two-suiter in the majors, at least 5-4. This is perfect because it allows us to find a fit in either major.
- 2** Double = 10  
2♦ = 5
- With this excellent shape, it is necessary to intervene and the Double, showing four cards in a major and five cards in a minor as in Multi Landy, is much more descriptive than a natural 2♦ overcall.
- 3** Pass = 10
- The principle is simple: you never overcall against 1NT with a balanced hand. Even though we have 17HCP, the only possibility is to pass and hope to beat 1 No-Trump.
- 4** 4♠ = 10  
3♠ = 6  
2♠ = 2
- This excellent hand with two Kings in partner's suits, an outside Ace, four trumps and the possibility of ruffing Hearts is well worth a jump to game.

### Level 3

- 9** 2♣ = 10  
2♠ = 5  
Pass = 3
- It may seem reckless to overcall with only 7HCP, but this 5-5 with concentrated honors and good intermediates is actually extremely powerful. Making a part-score contract is very likely (even game is possible) while there is no reason to think that we will beat 1 No-Trump. It is therefore necessary to bid 2♣, Landy, without hesitation.
- 10** 2♦ = 10  
2♥ = 5
- With three big honors in partner's suits, our hand is stronger than it looks. We should ask partner to bid his longer suit. If he bids Spades, we will remain cautious because of the absence of a fit, but opposite a bid in Hearts we could at least invite to game.
- 11** Pass = 10  
2♣ = 6
- With 11HCP scattered in all suits, we can bet that South has nearly zero points and declarer will have a lot of trouble developing tricks. We can expect defending 1 No-Trump to be more profitable than making a part-score in a minor.

### Level 2

- 5** 2♣ = 10  
Pass = 6  
2♥ = 4  
2♦ = 3
- East has a two-suiter with at least five cards in a minor and four cards in a major. However, hoping for a Heart fit is illusory: given that neither South nor North has bid Spades, that must be East's major. It is therefore better to bid 2♣ to find out about his minor rather than to bid 2♦ to ask him about his major. Passing and hoping to beat 1 No-Trump is a little bit too optimistic with only 8HCP.
- 6** 2♦ = 10  
2♠ = 5  
2♥ = 4
- Yes, your Spades are better than your Hearts. But when you have the same length in both majors, you need to let partner choose his longer major.
- 7** 3♣ = 10  
Pass = 4
- This powerful hand deserves an overcall, with the double advantage of trying to reach a making contract while disrupting the opponents' bidding. With 2♣ being Landy, the natural bid to show Clubs is 3♣.
- 8** 4♠ = 10  
3♠ = 7  
Pass = 4
- We have three or four tricks (the two Kings and some ruffs) for partner, which should be enough to make a game contract possible. Moreover, the Law of Total Tricks also suggests this bid because partner shows either six cards (that would make ten trumps) or a 5-4 (leading to nine trumps and probably two singletons).



# THE RIGHT PATH

BY JÉRÉMIE TIGNEL



## THIS MONTH...

**IN A TEAMS MATCH, YOU ARE SITTING SOUTH, IN SECOND SEAT AND AT UNFAVOURABLE VULNERABILITY. EAST OPENS A WEAK 2♠ AND YOU HOLD THE FOLLOWING HAND:**

- ♠ Q43
- ♥ AQJ2
- ♦ Q54
- ♣ KJ6

### Do you take any action, and if yes, what do you do?

You hold 15HCP but there is no obvious action: you are not strong enough for 2NT and you don't have the ideal shape for a double. On the other hand, **passing is dangerous** because your side might miss game when your partner has 10 to 12 points and no obvious call to make in the pass-out seat. Given these uncertainties, each of the three options mentioned deserves a reasonable score:

- Double: **10** points (your poor shape is compensated by a non-minimum hand).
- 2NT: **8** points (these 15 points are really hideous).
- Pass: **7** points (in case of doubt, there is a bonus for taking action).

You double, West passes and your partner bids 2NT.

### How do we call this 2NT bid and what does it mean?\*

In France, the 2NT bid in response to a takeout Double of a weak two opening is called "**2NT mini cue-bid**" (if you knew that this is some kind of conventional bid:

(\* Many of you are probably used to the Lebensohl convention in this situation, but today you will be introduced to what the French play.

5 points) and is used with two types of hand:

- Either an invitational hand with 8-10HCP (5 points).
- Or a game-forcing hand with four Hearts (5 points).

### What do you bid over 2NT?

Again, you have no obvious bid available because your only four-card suit is Hearts but you cannot bid them because 3♥ would promise five cards in the suit. (Contrary to Lebensohl, the mini cue-bid is not asking you to bid 3♣). You note, however, that your side will have difficulty making a game contract if your partner only has an invitational hand because your hand has not improved since the first round of the bidding. This justifies the following scores:

- 3♣: **10** points (your "better minor": the longer one or Clubs in case of equal length)
- 3♥: **4** points (the bid promises five Hearts).
- 3♠: **7** points reckless with 15 bad points; not to mention that it does not facilitate the discovery of a possible Heart fit).
- 3NT: **7** points (same reasons, same punishment).

Your partner bids 3NT over your 3♣.

### What does this 3NT bid mean and how do you react?

2NT showed any invitational hand or a game-forcing hand with four Hearts. Your non-forcing 3♣ bid did not show any additional strength, so the 3NT bid indicates that North has a game-forcing hand (5 points) with, of course, a Spade stopper (5 points) and, most importantly, four Hearts (5 points), otherwise he would have bid 3NT directly over your takeout Double. You therefore bid 4♥ (10 points) over 3NT, even though passing (8 points) despite your Heart fit could be the right decision because you have an additional

stop in Spades and a very flat hand with no ruffing values.

You thus play 4 Hearts on a small Spade lead after the following auction:

W	N	E	S
		2♠	Dble
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♣
Pass	3NT	Pass	4♥

North puts down this dummy:

	♠ K5 ♥ 7643 ♦ AKJ1072 ♣ 8	
	N W                  E S	
	♠ Q43 ♥ AQJ2 ♦ Q54 ♣ KJ6	

### What could North have bid instead of 3NT?

North never mentioned his beautiful long Diamonds. He could have shown them by bidding 4♦ (10 points) over 3♣ instead of 3NT: this jump promises a game-forcing hand with long Diamonds and implies four Hearts because of the 2NT bid. But North preferred to show his Spade stopper rather than the Diamond length. It does not matter on this deal because you would have bid 4 Hearts just the same.

### What favorable assumption do you need about the trump suit?

You can see how to take ten tricks in the form of six Diamonds, one Spade and three trumps. But you cannot afford to lose four tricks before that. With two black Aces outside, this means you must not lose more than one trump (10 points). In other words, the King of Hearts must either be well placed, or be doubleton or third with West.

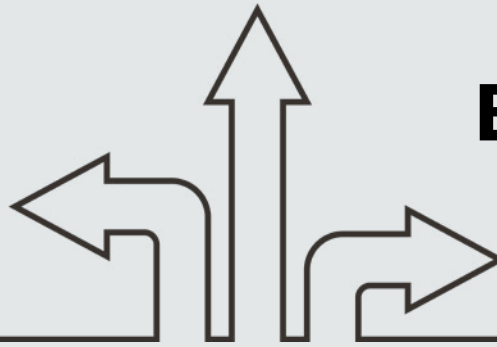
### What is the danger if West holds three trumps to the King?

In that case, it seems that you only have three losers: the two Aces and the King of trumps. Let's imagine, however, that you win trick one in hand with the Queen of Spades and continue with Ace-Queen of Hearts. West wins the Queen, cashes the Ace of Clubs and then plays a second

# BRIDGE THREE WAYS



BY MARK HORTON



Spade. East wins with the Ace and plays a third Spade: West, who now holds the 10, 9 or 8 of Hearts, will score a second trump trick because you cannot overruff in dummy. In other words, if West holds three trumps to the King, you may fall victim to a trump promotion (10 points) when the layout is like this:

	♠ K5 ♥ 7643 ♦ AKJ1072 ♣ 8	
♠ 62 ♥ K105 ♦ 83 ♣ AQ7532	N W                  E S	♠ AJ10987 ♥ 98 ♦ 96 ♣ 1094
	♠ Q43 ♥ AQJ2 ♦ Q54 ♣ KJ6	

### What actions can you take to avoid this Spade ruff?

You need to find a way to cut the communications (and morale) of the defense. You have two options:

- After winning trick one with the Queen of Spades, you immediately return a Spade at trick two: East, who is on lead for the last time, can play a Spade to give his partner the ruff but you can simply discard dummy's Club loser (because West had no time to cash his Ace).
- You play the King of Spades from dummy at trick one. If East wins with the Ace, he will no longer be able to play a third round of Spades. If he ducks, you continue with a Spade and we are back to the previous situation.

Give yourself 10 points if you found one of these two countermeasures that consist of returning a Spade at trick two. Add 10 bonus points if you thought of both.

## YOUR SCORE

**100 points:** When are you free to play a tournament with me?

**90 points:** If your sympathy is like your game level, you must be a courted player.

**80 points:** Very decent.

**70 points:** Not so bad.

**Less:** You will certainly do better next time.

## Misplay this Hand with Me

Based on his best-selling trilogy of books, *Misplay These hands with me*, *Misdefend These Hands with me* and *Misbid These Hands with Me*, Mark Horton shows you how to avoid misplaying, misdefending and misbidding hands.

### Communication Cord

During a fiercely contested match, I pick up this promising hand: Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ KQJ10965  
♥ 98  
♦ A62  
♣ A

When East opens 1NT (14-16), I decide to double, expecting to collect at least 500. When West redoubles East alerts and after my partner's Pass bids 2♣. Upon enquiry it transpires this was forced. I am content to Pass, knowing that my partner will do something. When West passes (promising at least five Clubs), my partner doubles for penalties and East passes. I daresay we can defeat 2 Clubs but it might not compensate for a vulnerable game and my jump to 4♠ concludes this auction:

	W	N	E	S
			1NT	Dble
	Rdbl	Pass	2♣	Pass
	Pass	Dble	Pass	4♠

West leads the ♥J.

	♠ 832 ♥ A74 ♦ Q73 ♣ KQ103	
	N W                  E S	
	♠ KQJ10965 ♥ 98 ♦ A62 ♣ A	

With 2 Clubs doubled likely to be at best only two down, I appear to have done the right thing. I win with dummy's ♥A, play a Club to the Ace and the ♠K. I am leaning forward to claim an overtrick but West discards a Club, stopping me in my tracks. East withholds the ♠A on this trick and the next one. Winning the third Spade, East plays two rounds of Hearts and with no way to reach dummy I must go down.

This was the layout:  
Dealer East. N/S Vul.

	♠ 832 ♥ A74 ♦ Q73 ♣ KQ103	
♠ - ♥ J1062 ♦ 1085 ♣ 987542	N W                  E S	♠ A74 ♥ KQ53 ♦ KJ94 ♣ J6
	♠ KQJ10965 ♥ 98 ♦ A62 ♣ A	

### Post Mortem

As a matter of technique, declarer should duck the opening lead. If West continues with a low Heart the prettiest of the many ways to make the contract is for declarer to duck for a second time! East wins and will probably exit with a Heart, but declarer discards the ♣A and the ♣KQ take care of the losing Diamonds.



# LET'S BID, PARTNER!

BY PETE HOLLANDS

Find East's hands on page 25 and the comments on page 26.

## WEST'S HANDS

1. ♠ AQ43  
♥ KQ965  
♦ AKJ  
♣ 4  
Dealer North. All Vul.  
South opens 1♠.

2. ♠ AK102  
♥ AKQ102  
♦ 8  
♣ KQ2  
Dealer South. None Vul.  
South opens 1♠.

3. ♠ 953  
♥ K6  
♦ J652  
♣ QJ107  
Dealer South. All Vul. North opens 2♥ (Hearts and a minor).

4. ♠ A2  
♥ AJ85  
♦ A93  
♣ KQ105  
Dealer North. All Vul. South opens 1♦ and North responds 1♠.

5. ♠ J92  
♥ 6  
♦ K108765  
♣ KJ4  
Dealer North. E/W Vul.  
North opens 1♥ and South bids 2NT to show a raise.

6. ♠ AQ2  
♥ A109  
♦ KJ10  
♣ AK109  
Dealer North. N/S Vul. South opens 1♠ and North raises to 2♠.

# DEFENCE AGENCY

BY MATTHIAS HUBERSCHWILLER



CLASSIFIED  
BRIDGERAMA+ DEPARTMENT

	♠ 82 ♥ A843 ♦ AKQ7 ♣ AQ2	
	N W                  E S	♠ Q54 ♥ Q96 ♦ J985 ♣ K86

W	N	E	S
	1♦	Pass	1NT
Pass	3NT		

Lead: ♠7. You win the Queen and continue the suit. Declarer wins the third round with the Ace and plays a Club to dummy's Queen (partner following with the 10).

What is your plan for the continuation?

	♠ 10832 ♥ KQ74 ♦ AQJ2 ♣ 6	
	N W                  E S	♠ KQ9765 ♥ A95 ♦ 6 ♣ A107

W	N	E	S
	1♦	1♠	3NT

Lead: ♠4.

What is your plan for the defense?

	♠ AK1054 ♥ 86 ♦ 863 ♣ 643	
♠ J87 ♥ Q94 ♦ 75 ♣ KQJ107	N W                  E S	

W	N	E	S
			1♣
Pass	1♠	Pass	2NT
Pass	3♦	Pass	3♥
Pass	3NT		

Lead: ♣K. Declarer wins the second round (East discards a small Diamond) and plays a Spade.

What is your reaction?



## LET'S BID, PARTNER!

BY PETE HOLLANDS

Find West's hands page 24 and the comments on page 26.

### EAST'S HANDS

1. ♠ -  
♥ J103  
♦ 10963  
♣ Q109653  
Dealer North. All Vul.  
South opens 1♠.

2. ♠ 8  
♥ J854  
♦ AQ10974  
♣ 74  
Dealer South. None Vul.  
South opens 1♠.

3. ♠ AKJ876  
♥ A4  
♦ KQ  
♣ A85  
Dealer South. All Vul. North opens 2♥ (Hearts and a minor).

4. ♠ 973  
♥ Q1062  
♦ 87  
♣ A987  
Dealer North. All Vul. South opens 1♦ and North responds 1♠.

5. ♠ AKQ1086543  
♥ J10  
♦ -  
♣ A6  
Dealer North. E/W Vul.  
North opens 1♥ and South bids 2NT to show a raise.

6. ♠ 75  
♥ Q76  
♦ Q9753  
♣ 753  
Dealer North. N/S Vul. South opens 1♠ and North raises to 2♠.

# DURING YOUR BRIDGE CAREER, YOU SPEND HALF OF YOUR TIME DEFENDING. MAKE USE OF THIS OPPORTUNITY TO PERFECT YOUR SKILLS IN THAT AREA!

South is setting up his Clubs. Partner's 10 must be a singleton or from a doubleton. If you win the Queen with the King, South will win your return and play Ace of Clubs and a Club, taking four tricks in the suit. But if you let the Queen win the trick, you take away the vital Club entry to South's hand and you must hope he does not have another one.

Well done if you found this defense. It is often more difficult to duck an honor to block access to declarer's hand rather than dummy, because you do not see his cards.

	♠ 82 ♥ A843 ♦ AKQ7 ♣ AQ2	
♠ KJ976 ♥ K1072 ♦ 102 ♣ 107	N W                  E S	♠ Q54 ♥ Q96 ♦ J985 ♣ K86
	♠ A103 ♥ J5 ♦ 643 ♣ J9543	

If you play the Queen, South will win with the Ace and you won't be able to establish your Spades because you can't play the suit without giving declarer a third spade stopper. Knowing that South has Ace-Jack doubleton, you can do better: play small at trick one. South wins with the Jack and plays a Heart to the King. You win with the Ace and return a small Spade. South must win with the Ace and your Spades are high. Note: if South starts with five rounds of Diamonds, you keep the stiff Ace of Clubs, the doubleton Ace of Hearts and KQxx in Spades, thus leaving declarer without a ninth trick.

	♠ 10832 ♥ KQ74 ♦ AQJ2 ♣ 6	
♠ 4 ♥ J832 ♦ 1084 ♣ Q8432	N W                  E S	♠ KQ9765 ♥ A95 ♦ 6 ♣ A107
	♠ AJ ♥ 106 ♦ K9753 ♣ KJ95	

If you do not see the problem and mechanically play a small Spade (you might tell me that this is normal in second position!), declarer will call for the 10 from dummy. Forced to win with the Queen, East will not be able to prevent declarer from scoring four Spade tricks whether he switches to a Heart or a Diamond. How can you thwart declarer's plan? Insert the Jack of Spades! If South ducks, you are in hand and can cash your Clubs for one down. If he wins in dummy, he will no longer be able to exploit his Spades and will go two down.

	♠ AK1054 ♥ 86 ♦ 863 ♣ 643	
♠ J87 ♥ Q94 ♦ 75 ♣ KQJ107	N W                  E S	♠ Q93 ♥ J1073 ♦ QJ1042 ♣ 9
	♠ 62 ♥ AK52 ♦ AK9 ♣ A852	



# LET'S BID, PARTNER!

BY PETE HOLLANDS



# POWER DOUBLES

**1. WEST EAST**  
 Dealer East. All Vul. South opens 1♠.  
 ♠ AQ43 ♠ -  
 ♥ KQ965 ♥ J103  
 ♦ AKJ ♦ 10963  
 ♣ 4 ♣ Q109653

W	N	E	S
		Pass	1♠
Dble	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♥	Pass	3♥	Pass
4♥			

When West doubles, East's response does not promise much, but when West shows at least five Hearts and extra strength, East has just enough to raise allowing West to bid game.

**2. WEST EAST**  
 Dealer South. None Vul.  
 South opens 1♠.  
 ♠ AK102 ♠ 8  
 ♥ AKQ102 ♥ J854  
 ♦ 8 ♦ AQ10974  
 ♣ KQ2 ♣ 74

W	N	E	S
			1♠
Dble	Pass	3♦	Pass
3♥	Pass	3♠	Pass
3NT	Pass	4♥	Pass
4NT	Pass	5♣	Pass
6♥			

After West doubles, East jumps to show values and a good suit. That is followed by a cue-bid, subsequently confirmed as

showing support for Hearts. West makes sure two keycards are not missing before bidding the slam.

**3. WEST EAST**  
 Dealer South. All Vul.  
 North opens 2♥ (Hearts and a minor).  
 ♠ 953 ♠ AKJ876  
 ♥ K6 ♥ A4  
 ♦ J652 ♦ KQ  
 ♣ QJ107 ♣ A85

W	N	E	S
			Pass
Pass	2♥	Dble	Pass
2NT	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♠			

When East doubles, West uses the Lebensohl convention, asking partner to bid 3♣. East indicates a powerful hand by bidding 3♠ and West has enough to raise to game.

**4. WEST EAST**  
 Dealer North. All Vul.  
 South opens 1♦ and North responds 1♠.  
 ♠ A2 ♠ 973  
 ♥ AJ85 ♥ Q1062  
 ♦ A93 ♦ 87  
 ♣ KQ105 ♣ A987

W	N	E	S
			1♦
	Pass	Pass	1♠
Dble	1♠	Pass	Pass
1NT	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♥	Pass	4♥	

When West shows a balanced 18+, East looks for a Heart fit and then raises to game.

**5. WEST EAST**  
 Dealer North. E/W Vul. North opens 1♥ and South bids 2NT to show a raise.  
 ♠ J92 ♠ AKQ1086543  
 ♥ 6 ♥ J10  
 ♦ K108765 ♦ -  
 ♣ KJ4 ♣ A6

W	N	E	S
		1♥	Dble
			2NT
3♦	Pass	4♠	Pass
5♣	Pass	5♦	Pass
5♥	Pass	6♠	

When East jumps to 4♠, West shows a control in Clubs followed by one in Hearts, which is enough for East to bid the laydown slam.

**6. WEST EAST**  
 Dealer North. N/S Vul.  
 South opens 1♠ and North raises to 2♠.  
 ♠ AQ2 ♠ 75  
 ♥ A109 ♥ Q76  
 ♦ KJ10 ♦ Q9753  
 ♣ AK109 ♣ 753

W	N	E	S
		Pass	Pass
			1♠
Dble	2♠	Pass	Pass
2NT			

When West bids 2NT, East does not have enough to advance to game.



BY PATTY TUCKER

Two questions from the European Bridge League's Online Mixed Teams Championship.

## Miraculous Escape

Dealer East. None Vul.

♠ J	N	♠ A9
♥ J876432	W	♥ KQ105
♦ A7	E	♦ Q4
♣ A83	S	♣ QJ1092

W	N	E	S
		1NT	Pass
4♣(*)	Pass	4♥	Pass
5♥	Pass	6♥	

(\*) Transfer for Hearts.

South leads the ♦10.

Is there any way in which you might arrive at 12 tricks?

The best hope for making my contract is to ask for an "undo" and back up the bidding to 5♥. If the opponents do not agree with

that suggestion, I see two possible lines:

- The first is to play for South to have led away from the ♦K and play low at trick one. Unlikely.
- The second requires the Clubs to be split 4-1 with a singleton ♣K. The player who holds the ♣K must also hold both missing Hearts.

The percentages of the second line are remote, but that is the one I would take.

The American Bridge Teachers Association is a networking organization of bridge teachers, authors, and anyone interested in the future of bridge. Its aim is to help those who teach bridge to do it better, more effectively, more knowledgeably and more professionally throughout Canada, the United States and Mexico. Send your bridge related question to [markhorton007@hotmail.com](mailto:markhorton007@hotmail.com) – it might appear in this column!

## Dubious Venture

Dealer North. N/S Vul.

♠ J65	N	♠ AK74
♥ AQ10932	W	♥ KJ7
♦ 986	E	♦ AK102
♣ A	S	♣ Q2

W	N	E	S
	Pass	2NT	Pass
3♦	Pass	3♥	Pass
5NT	Pass	7♥	

South leads the ♠2. Can you bring home this dubious contract?

I may require a squeeze. Say I cash the ♠AK but the Queen does not fall. If North holds four Diamonds and both the ♠Q

and the ♠K, running the trumps will exert pressure, but in this ending:

♠ J	N	♠ -
♥ 10	W	♥ -
♦ 986	E	♦ AK102
♣ -	S	♣ Q

When I cash the last Heart, North can discard the ♠K(!) and I will be a trick short. So, if the Queen does not fall, I need to make four Diamond tricks.

If the ♠Q falls in North when I cash the ♠AK, making the ♠J a winner, I will be up to twelve tricks, but I can't be certain that a squeeze will work and which squeeze will work. In this position:

♠ J	N	♠ 74
♥ Q10	W	♥ -
♦ 986	E	♦ AK10
♣ -	S	♣ Q

When I cash the ♥Q, I am at a crossroads. I have to decide whether to squeeze South in Spades and Diamonds (discarding the ♦10 and then the ♣Q), or North in Diamonds and Clubs (discarding a Spade), but the only winning line may also be to take a double finesse in Diamonds if South guards the black suits.



SEND YOUR QUESTIONS TO:  
[BRIDGERAMA@LEBRIDGEUR.COM](mailto:BRIDGERAMA@LEBRIDGEUR.COM)

Would you have chosen the same option as *Vanessa Rées* with her hand in South?

S	W	N	E
?	1♥	PASS	PASS

What's your decision?

X
  2♣
  3♣
  2♥
  3NT
  5♣

A♠ J♠ A♥ 9♥ 9♦ A♣ K♣ Q♣ J♣ 10♣ 8♣ 7♣ 6♣



**Vanessa Rées**  
World Mixed Champion

Do you think you can do it?

Play the deal

