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# BRIDGE TODAY



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Editor: Matthew Granovetter

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*The Magazine for People Who Love to Play Bridge*

## Yokohama Quiz II

More tough problems from this year's NEC tournament in Yokohama.

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## The Red Pencil

by Matthew Granovetter

~~Help-Suit Game Tries~~



Four decades or so ago I was sitting in Vic and Jacqui Mitchell's living room, enjoying a third slice of banana cream pie, when the subject of major-suit game tries arose.

"What does it mean exactly when it goes 1♠-2♠-3♦?" I ask.

"It's a game try," says Jacqui.

"Oh, but what does it show?"

"It doesn't show nuttin," says Vic in his Brooklyn accent.\*

"But I thought it asked for help in the suit bid," says I.

"It could or it could just be a game try," says Jacqui.

"Well, how is responder supposed to know if it is or not?"

"Responder assumes it's natural," says Jacqui.

"But it doesn't have to be?"

"Could be nuttin," says Victor.

"You mean it could be natural, a help-suit game try or nuttin?" I ask.

"You want to tell the opponents everything about your hand when you're bidding to game, good luck to you," says Vic.

After that occasion, I gave up help-suit game tries. That was 40 years ago or so, though I am not surprised that people are still playing these things today. Most of the reasons not to play this convention are based on all the good things you can do with natural bids when you don't play help-suit tries. Here is a list:

1. You can bid a natural suit and reach 3NT instead of four of the major.

2. You can bid a natural suit followed by another suit, describing your hand for a possible slam.

3. You can bid a suit as a tactical bid to help stop the lead in that suit.

4. You can make a game-try squeak that means nuttin and tell the opponents nuttin!

Here are some examples....

\*The word "nothing" is pronounced "nuttin" in Brooklyn.

1. You can bid a natural suit and reach 3NT instead of four of the major.

Opener	Responder
♠ A Q 10 x x	♠ K x x
♥ K x	♥ Q J x x
♦ Q J 10 9	♦ x x x
♣ A x	♣ Q J x
1 ♠	2 ♠
3 ♦	3 NT
pass	

Responder, with stoppers in hearts and clubs, and "soft" values, rebids 3NT over 3♦ and opener is charmed to pass.

Opener	Responder
♠ A K Q 10 x x	♠ x x x
♥ x x	♥ Q J x x
♦ x x	♦ K J x x
♣ A K J	♣ Q x
1 ♠	2 ♠
3 ♣	3 NT
pass	

This time opener has only a three-card club suit, but has found out exactly what he needs to know by bidding naturally. Wouldn't you rather play 3NT than 4♠?

Opener	Responder	Opener	Responder
♠ K J x x	♠ A Q x x	♠ x x x	♠ A x x
♥ A K Q x x	♥ J x x	♥ A K Q x x	♥ J x x
♦ x x	♦ x x x	♦ A K	♦ x x x
♣ A x	♣ x x x	♣ x x x	♣ A x x
1 ♥	2 ♥	1 ♥	2 ♥
2 ♠	3 ♠	3 ♦	3 NT
4 ♠	pass	pass	

Good news: You got a top score at the duplicate for +450. Others were plus 420 in 4♥.

By now you get the drift.

2. You can bid a natural suit followed by another suit, describing your hand for a possible slam.

Opener	Responder
♠ A K Q x x	♠ J x x
♥ x	♥ x x x
♦ A x x	♦ K Q J x x
♣ A J x x	♣ Q x
1 ♠	2 ♠
3 ♣	3 ♦
4 ♦	6 ♦
pass	

West's 4♦, his third suit bid, shows shortness in the fourth suit. Responder's hand could not be much better. He jumps to 6♦ with the super trumps. Yes, a club lead may defeat the slam if the king is offside, but hearts might be led and then the slam is laydown.

Opener	Responder	Opener	Responder
♠ A K Q x x	♠ J x x	♠ A x	♠ J x x
♥ —	♥ J x x	♥ A K Q x x	♥ J x x
♦ A K x x	♦ Q x	♦ A K x x	♦ Q J x x
♣ A x x x	♣ K x x x x	♣ x x	♣ A x x
1 ♠	2 ♠	1 ♥	2 ♥
3 ♦	3 ♠	3 ♦	4 ♣
4 ♣	5 ♣	4 ♠	6 ♦
6 ♣	pass	pass	

Responder bids 3♠ over 3♦ and opener completes the picture with 4♣. Though this might be a three-card suit, responder has to say to himself that he could hardly have a better hand at this point, and raises to 5♣. Opener bids six with his monstrous hand.

Responder cuebids 4♣ over 3♦, and then when he hears 4♠, he realizes he has enough for slam. And why not suggest diamonds with his Q-J-x-x? There are 11 top tricks, and either black suit can be used to ruff a trick in opener's hand for the twelfth.

Opener	Responder
♠ x	♠ A x x
♥ A K Q x x x	♥ x x x
♦ A K x x x	♦ Q x x
♣ x	♣ x x x x
1 ♥	2 ♥
3 ♦	3 ♥
4 ♦	4 ♠
6 ♥	pass

Opener bids and rebids diamonds and responder appreciates his two keycards. Opener is delighted now to bid the slam.

3. You can bid a suit as a tactical bid to help stop the lead in that suit.

Opener	Responder
♠ A Q J x x x	♠ K x x
♥ A Q	♥ x x x
♦ x x x	♦ J x x
♣ A Q	♣ K x x x
1 ♠	2 ♠
3 ♦	3 ♠
3 NT	pass

Opener bids 3♦ to stop the diamond lead. Is this fair pool? Of course it is! Responder has no idea that 3♦ is not natural, but to be completely ethical to the opponents, he may explain to them that 3♦ is presumed to be natural, but could be bid with anything. Nevertheless, since 3♦ *could* be natural, it will discourage the opening leader from choosing diamonds when he has a choice.

Opener	Responder
♠ A x	♠ x x x x
♥ A K x x x x x	♥ Q J x
♦ Q J x x	♦ K x x
♣ —	♣ x x x
1 ♥	2 ♥
3 ♣	3 ♥
4 ♥ (double)	pass
(redbl)	

I pulled this one off against two of the best players in the country. I made one overtrick for a score of 1190. The opening leader held: ♠ J x x ♥ x x x ♦ A x x ♣ A Q J 10. He doubled and led a trump, expecting big things.

4. You can make a game-try squeak that means nuttin and tell the opponents nuttin!

Opener	Responder
♠ A Q J x x	♠ K x x
♥ A x	♥ x x x
♦ J 10 9 x	♦ K x x
♣ A x	♣ Q J x x
1 ♠	2 ♠
3 ♦	4 ♠
pass	

At my table the opening lead was a heart. The leader held:

♠ x x x ♥ J 10 x ♦ x x ♣ x x x x x.

I won, drew trumps, ending in dummy, took the club finesse and played on diamonds, losing one heart and two diamonds. At the other table opener made a help-suit game try of 3♦ (same bid but different meaning!). There the opening leader chose a diamond to lead. (The opening leader was tipped off by the help-suit game try.) The defenders took two diamonds and ruff, and later a heart trick.

Opener	Responder
♠ A 10 x	♠ J x x
♥ A K x x x	♥ Q x x
♦ A x x x	♦ x x x
♣ J	♣ K Q x x
1 ♥	2 ♥
3 ♦	4 ♥
pass	

Gulp. What an awful contract. Lucky for me the opening leader led a spade. I won

the queen with my ace, cashed the ♥A-K and led a club. Spades were 4-3, so there was no spade ruff, and I pitched two diamonds on the ♣K-Q. Making four.

At the other table, West also bid 3♦, but it was a "help-suit game try." The opening leader also led a spade and they made four. Nevertheless we won 10imps. This is because at the other table responder rejected the game try, bidding 3♥ over 3♦, because he had that horrible three-small holding in diamonds.

See you next month.

Hand Study Dept

## Strong Hand Opposite Weak Hand

by Pamela Granovetter



This hand comes from the finals of the women's and open championships in the 2003 World Bridge Championships held in Monte Carlo:

Board 64			
West dealer	North		
E-W vul	♠ 7 6 2		
	♥ J 9 8 5		
	♦ 2		
	♣ Q 10 7 6 4		
West		East	
♠ J 10 9 4		♠ K Q 8 5	
♥ 6 3		♥ K 7 4 2	
♦ K 10 7 5		♦ J 9	
♣ A K 5		♣ 9 8 2	
	South		
	♠ A 3		
	♥ A Q 10		
	♦ A Q 8 6 4 3		
	♣ J 3		

At the first table, West passed with a hand that could be considered an opening bid even by sound-opening-bid players. The rich spot cards and two-and-a-half quick tricks, plus a ruffing value in a small doubleton suit make the hand tempting to open despite holding only 11 highcard points. After passing, East-West had no chance to enter the auction or to obtain a penalty against Molson-Sokolow's poor three-diamond contract. Wenfei led the ♣A-K and shifted to a heart. Declarer put up dummy's jack, covered with the king, and won with the ace. After the heart shift, declarer could escape for down two, -100 (if East fails to cover, declarer plays a second round of hearts). Even atimps, where overtricks and undertricks in undoubled contracts carry little weight, one hates to "dump" 50 points for no reason. Where did the defense go wrong?

Four tables, four different auctions, and all of them instructive:

Women's Championship (China vs. USA):

West	North	East	South
Wenfei	Molson	Hongli	Sokolow
pass	pass	pass	1 ♦
pass	1 ♥	pass	3 ♦
(all pass)			

A suit-preference signal would have saved the day. On the first club, East follows with the deuce (obvious shift does not apply here — East must play low with length), and on the second high club, East gives a suit-preference signal, in this case by following with the 9, the higher spot, for a spade shift.

West dealer	North		
E-W vul	♠ 7 6 2		
	♥ J 9 8 5		
	♦ 2		
	♣ Q 10 7 6 4		
West		East	
♠ J 10 9 4		♠ K Q 8 5	
♥ 6 3		♥ K 7 4 2	
♦ K 10 7 5		♦ J 9	
♣ A K 5		♣ 9 8 2	
	South		
	♠ A 3		
	♥ A Q 10		
	♦ A Q 8 6 4 3		
	♣ J 3		

West	North	East	South
Levin	Zhang	Picus	Gu
1 ♦	pass	1 ♥	pass
1 ♠	pass	2 ♠	3 ♦
(all pass)			

At the second table, Jill Levin opened the West hand with a Precision diamond, which promises no diamond length at all. After East-West found their spade fit, South came in with a 3♦ bid and this was passed out. Although East-West slopped no tricks (so they gained 2 imps on the board for +150 when their teammates were minus only 100), one wonders why this contract was not doubled! Couldn't East have doubled for penalty?

What would a double by East in pass-out seat have meant? East limited her hand to 6-9 highcard points when she rebid only two spades. Therefore, a double in pass-out seat should say, "I am at the top of my bid. Let's penalize them or compete further." If West's opening bid was something like: ♠ J 10 9 4 ♥ A 6 ♦ 10 7 6 ♣ A K 5 3, she would rebid 3♠, and that would make +140. With her actual hand, she would be charmed to defend, and that would produce a juicy +500 number for the Americans!

This type of sequence fits into the category of "value bidding," where you make a bid to describe your highcard strength. In Standard American, East's high-card strength was maximum for the bidding, so she owed her partner another call. In Precision, it's not quite as clear, because East can more easily pass the 1♠ rebid (though you hate to let the opponents in at a low level when you have a known eight-card spade fit).

Open Championship (Italy vs. USA):

West	North	East	South
Rodwell	Fantoni	Meckstroth	Nunes
1 ♦	pass	1 ♥	2 ♦
pass (1)	pass	2 ♠ (2)	pass
3 ♠	(all pass)		

- (1) denies 3-card heart support
- (2) four hearts and four spades, non-forcing

At the third table, where again the 1♦ opening bid was Precision, South chose to overcall at his first opportunity (which turned out to be a better plan than Gu's wait-and-see tactic). When this was passed around to Meckstroth, he had not yet been able to limit his hand, so a double in pass-out seat presumably shows a stronger hand. He contented himself with a 2♠ bid (non-forcing in their methods), showing 4-4 in the majors and less highcard strength than a double.

The interesting point here was Rodwell's decision to raise. Meckwell's thin-game bidding has been their bread-and-butter for years, but just as one hates to blunder away extra undertricks, one also hates to lose partscore swings (e.g., going -100 instead of +110) for no good reason. Using basic hand-evaluation rules, Rodwell's raise to 3♠ might have been a bit too hungry because:

West dealer North  
 E-W vul ♠ 7 6 2  
 ♥ J 9 8 5  
 ♦ 2  
 ♣ Q 10 7 6 4

West  
 ♠ J 10 9 4  
 ♥ 6 3  
 ♦ K 10 7 5  
 ♣ A K 5

East  
 ♠ K Q 8 5  
 ♥ K 7 4 2  
 ♦ J 9  
 ♣ 9 8 2

South  
 ♠ A 3  
 ♥ A Q 10  
 ♦ A Q 8 6 4 3  
 ♣ J 3

West	North	East	South
Rodwell	Fantoni	Meckstroth	Nunes
1 ♦	pass	1 ♥	2 ♦
pass (1)	pass	2 ♠ (2)	pass
3 ♠	(all pass)		

- (1) denies 3-card heart support
- (2) four hearts and four spades, non-forcing

(a) there are known to be skimpy highcard values and only eight trumps; (b) he has no honor-suit help in partner's heart suit; (c) the ♦K carries full weight (the ace rates to be onside) but it's better to hold cards in partner's long suits than in his short suits when a hand is marginal; and (d) if partner needs a major-suit card to be right to score a game, it rates to be off on the bidding. I can't help but wonder if West was not 100% sure that 2♠ was not forcing.

In the final analysis, playing "support doubles" as most other pairs play it, East would usually double 2♦ to compete, even with a minimum, and West might decide to convert for penalties.

West	North	East	South
Versace	Hamman	Lauria	Soloway
1 ♦	pass	1 ♥	1 NT
pass	pass	double	2 ♦
double	(all pass)		

At the last table, the auction started with a natural 1♦ by West and Soloway, in fourth chair, overcalled a natural 1NT and got caught speeding. No tricks were dumped on defense and he went -300. But should he have been caught? A two-club contract is ironclad (probably doubled) and even 3♣ is difficult to beat! Who do you think was at fault — Hamman for passing 1NT, Soloway for bidding over the double, or Hamman for passing 2♦ doubled?

Karen McCallum has been known to say, "Don't put down a bad dummy!" and North's dummy was definitely bad. If Hamman couldn't bid 2♣ naturally over 1NT (can you?), perhaps he should have redoubled 2♦. Even 2♥ is a better contract than 2♦, and it's doubtful that East-West would have doubled that (after all, up until now the Italians were doubling 1NT or 2♦ — not "game if you make it" — it's another thing to double the opponents into "game if you make it"!). Two hearts is a touch-and-go contract that would probably have been made thanks to the strong heart spots and friendly club distribution.

By the way, it's a good idea to discuss with your partner when systems are "on" after notrump overcalls and when they aren't. Personally, I play that systems are "on" only when notrump was bid in the balancing seat, e.g., (1x)-pass-(pass)-1NT. In this case we play "front of card" even if the opening bidder takes another call.



## Bridge Yesterday

by Pietro Campanile

### *The Psychic Boomerang*



We may not often think about how much styles and habits change as the years roll by. Take fashion for instance. If you look at a movie scene of a crowd shot 50 years ago, you will notice that almost every single man is wearing a hat. Nowadays you would be lucky to find one in a hundred. Surprisingly enough, bridge is no exception and perusing the records of events played 60 or more years ago one sees a huge difference in the auctions as opposed to today's. Bidding was less partnership oriented and more of a one-man show. Sequences like

1♥-3♥; 6♥, when successful, would be taken as examples of great judgment and psychic bidding was considered a normal expert gadget to fool the opposition. The latter became so popular in the 1930's that when Hal and Dorothy Sims, two of the leading experts of the time, wrote a manual on Contract Bridge, they dedicated more than 30 pages to the subject. Here is how Dorothy Sims runs through the mental checks the would-be psychic bidder needs to be aware of:

"A hand may often need a certain amount of preparation: Firstly to be sure that you are in the right contract and secondly, that the correct hand is declarer. For instance I recently held:

♠ QJ54 ♥ 765 ♦ AK4 ♣ AK3

"Not wishing to open 1♠ on Q-J-x-x and not willing to chance 1NT without a heart stopper, I opened 1♥ (!!!) reserving the option, should partner support me, to then announce notrumps. Partner replied 1♠. Three spades was my next bid. Three notrump from him. Knowing that a fine player must have at least one honor in my suit to bid 3NT (!!!), I scented something fishy. You see, my double raise in spades stated clearly that according to my judgment the hand must be played there, so partner must have some reason for deliberately rejecting my advice. So I passed. We got a top board as this was partner's holding:"

♠ 32 ♥ K4 ♦ QJ76532 ♣ J4

Given the incredible bidding and the even more amazing inferences on the lines of "It takes one to know one," it is easy to see how much times have changed! Dorothy's advice would be today considered much more suited to a game like poker with its bluff and counter-bluff nuances and would surely appall a modern bridge player.

In fact, the popularity of psychic bidding declined as bidding systems became more accurate, and by the late 50's there were only a few top experts who would indulge in it. Most of those were British: players like Adam Meredith, Skid Simon, Harrison Gray and, later, Boris Shapiro, Jeremy Flint and John Collings were known for the occasional psych, which sometimes would work and more often would lead to catastrophic results.

Let us go back to the 1965 European Championships, a time where psychic bidding had almost completely disappeared as expert practice. In the match between England and Germany there was a rather interesting result on this board:

West dealer	North		East
E-W vul	♠ Q 5 2		♠ J 8 7 4
	♥ 8 3		♥ A J 6 5 4
	♦ Q 10 9 4 3		♦ J 5
	♣ 10 7 3		♣ J 9
West		South	
♠ A K 9 3		♠ 10 6	
♥ K Q 10 2		♥ 9 7	
♦ A K 8 7 2		♦ 6	
♣ —		♣ A K Q 8 6 5 4 2	

The German West opened 2♣, not my favorite call with his hand as it makes life too difficult to describe the shape. North passed and Chodziesner in East replied 2♥. Collings (South) decided to stir the waters by bidding 4♠! His plan may have been to retreat to 5♣ after he got doubled and hope to get the opponents to double him again in what looked to be a very cheap save, given the favorable vulnerability.

Alas, Deneke (West) realized that he could now count on partner to take care of his two small spades and continued with 5NT, asking East to specify if he held a top honor in hearts. Cansino (North) was not a shy bidder himself, and since he thought he had no defense against 7♥ (I am sure that he would never dream of considering the ♠Q as a potential defensive trick!), he bid 7♠, which became the final contract — well, 7♠ doubled actually.

Here is a recap of the bidding:

West	North	East	South
Deneke	Casino	Chodziesner	Collings
2 ♣	pass	2 ♥	4 ♠
5 NT	7 ♠	pass	pass
double	(all pass)		

So it was that John Collings found himself playing in 7♠ with a trump holding of Q-x-x facing ♠10-x! The British declarer guessed to rise with the ♠Q when West tried to slip past him a deceptive ♠9 and added a diamond ruff and the ♦Q to gather three tricks and finish only 10 down! Seven spades doubled -10 was 1900 at the old scoring table for a loss of 14 imps when at the other table the Germans found a rather better spot to sacrifice in: 7♣x, which went five off.

After the match the psych caused an enormous backlash in England, and Collings was widely censored for his recklessness and his disregard of team spirit, yet I must admit that I would apportion some of the blame also to Cansino for his strange 7♠ bid. The idea of high level sacrificing is not only to find a cheaper spot but also to give the opponents a guess. Six spades is a much better bid and might have reaped ample dividends if the Germans had gone on to 7♥. As it happened it would also have given Collings the chance to retreat to 7♣ and save himself acute embarrassment.

As Dorothy Sims put it in the final lines of her chapter on psychic bidding:

“One partner can make a dangerous bid; but it generally takes cooperation to turn it into an utter disaster.”

## Yokohama Quiz II

by Barry Rigal

Here is part two of the Yokohama Quiz, we started in the last issue of Bridge Today. All the hands are from the NEC tournament held in February of this year. Good luck!

### 1. QF II

South dealer	North
N-S vul	♠ J 8 7
	♥ 4 2
	♦ Q 8 4
	♣ K 9 8 5 4
♦ J	
	South (you)
	♠ Q 9 6 5
	♥ A K 8 3
	♦ A K 6
	♣ A J

### 3. Defense

West dealer	North									
None vul	♠ 10 9 6 5 3									
	♥ A									
	♦ A K 8 5									
	♣ K 8 7									
	<table border="1" 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	
	N									
W		E								
	S									
	East (you)									
	♠ Q J 4 2									
	♥ 8 5									
	♦ J 10 6									
	♣ A Q 6 3									

Another declarer play problem; Plan the play in 3NT after the lead of the ♦J.

West	North	East	South
2 ♥	double	pass	3 ♠
pass	4 ♠	(all pass)	

### 2. QF II

East dealer	North
N-S vul	♠ A K 7
	♥ 9
	♦ Q 8 5 2
	♣ A 9 6 3 2
♣ K	
	South (you)
	♠ Q 9 8 6 3 2
	♥ 8 7
	♦ A 4
	♣ 8 7 5

Partner leads the ♦4 (third from even, low from odd) to dummy's ace. Declarer leads a low spade to the ace, partner pitching an encouraging heart, and now passes the ♣10 to you, partner following with the 2, showing an odd number.

What would you do next?

Say at trick four you return the ♦10. Declarer wins in dummy, as partner produces the ♦3, and plays the ♠10. What is your plan?

West	North	East	South
—	—	3 ♥	pass
4 ♥	double	pass	4 ♠
(all pass)			

Plan the play of 4♠ on the lead of the ♣K.

4. This is the last board of the first quarter of the finals.

After West has shown a weak 2♦ bid, you reach a delicate slam, and are favored with the lead of the ♥2 — lowest from two or four, regardless of the size of the holding.

♥ 2	North ♠ K 10 5 4 2 ♥ A K 6 4 ♦ A 2 ♣ A J  South (you) ♠ 7 3 ♥ J 5 ♦ K Q 5 ♣ K Q 10 6 5 2
-----	--

How will you play it?

5. A bidding problem next. You hold:

South  
 ♠ K J 4 3  
 ♥ K 4 2  
 ♦ 10 9 7 2  
 ♣ 7 6

South	West	North	East
pass	2 ♣ (1)	pass	2 ♦
pass	pass	double	pass
2 ♠	pass	3 ♦	pass
3 NT	pass	4 ♥	pass
?			

(1) Strong or a weak two in diamonds

Do you agree with the 3NT call? What would you do now?

6. Back to defense

East dealer	North
E-W vul	♠ A 7
	♥ K Q J 8
	♦ A Q 7
	♣ A 9 4 3

West (you)  
 ♠ K J 6 3  
 ♥ A  
 ♦ K 10 9 8  
 ♣ K 10 6 2



West	North	East	South
—	—	pass	pass
1 ♦	double	pass	1 ♥
pass	2 ♦	pass	2 ♥
pass	4 ♥	(all pass)	

You elect to lead the ♦10 — I might have led the ♥A myself — what about you?

Declarer takes some time at trick one. Then he wins ♦Q, partner encouraging, and leads ♥K to your ace. What do you play next?

A low diamond looks right. At the table West led ♦K and, to his surprise, was allowed to hold the trick. He exited with a third diamond, as declarer won in dummy (partner producing the ♦J), and drew two more rounds of trump, partner following 6, 5, 7, a sequence with some suit-preference overtones. You pitch your 13<sup>th</sup> diamond and then a low spade. Now a low club from the board goes to partner's 5, declarer's 8, and your ten. Over to you.

### 7. Finals IV

South (you)  
 ♠ 2  
 ♥ J 9 8 5 4  
 ♦ A J 4  
 ♣ J 8 7 3

South	West	North	East
—	—	1 ♦	pass
1 ♥	pass	1 ♠	pass
1 NT	pass	pass	double
?			

You hear partner open 1♦ (typically diamonds or a weak notrump with any minor-suit length) and after 1♥-1♠ (simply showing four spades nothing about minor-suit pattern) you bid 1NT. This is passed round to RHO, who doubles. If you ask LHO he will shrug in an expressive fashion — and if you are lucky he'll tell you "That's Bridge!" It is up to you.

At the table you guess to bid 2♣ and get to play there.

North  
 ♠ K J 9 7  
 ♥ K 6  
 ♦ K 10 7  
 ♣ K 10 6 5

South (you)  
 ♠ 2  
 ♥ J 9 8 5 4  
 ♦ A J 4  
 ♣ J 8 7 3

Against 2♣ the defenders lead a diamond, and you try a heart to the king and ace. East leads back a heart. You cover with the ♥9, losing to the 10, win the diamond switch and now have to play trumps. The ball is in your court.

### 8. One Day Pairs

East dealer	North
E-W vul	♠ K 9 6 3
	♥ A Q 5
	♦ 8 3
	♣ J 9 7 5
	♣ A
	South (you)
	♠ A Q 5 2
	♥ J 9 7 6 3 2
	♦ K 2
	♣ 6

West	North	East	South
—	—	pass	1 ♥
2 ♦	3 ♦	pass	3 ♥
4 ♣	double	4 ♦	4 ♥
(all pass)			

West leads the ♣A and continues the suit by leading a low one. Dummy's 9 forces the 10, so you ruff and play a heart to West's king and dummy's ace. What next?

Say you ruff a club, cash the ♠A, and play a spade to the king (discovering West has a singleton). What to do next?

ANSWERS

We left off last month at the quarter-final stage of the event.

1. Life, as we have already seen, is not always about virtue being rewarded. This deal illustrated the point.

South dealer	North		
N-S vul	♠ J 8 7		
	♥ 4 2		
	♦ Q 8 4		
	♣ K 9 8 5 4		
West		East	
♠ K 4 2		♠ A 10 3	
♥ Q 10 9 5		♥ J 7 6	
♦ <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 0 2px;">J</span> 10 9 3		♦ 7 5 2	
♣ 7 6		♣ Q 10 3 2	
	South		
	♠ Q 9 6 5		
	♥ A K 8 3		
	♦ A K 6		
	♣ A J		

Both tables in the VuGraph match between Poland/Russia and Shy Ant played 3NT on a diamond lead. Gromov won this in dummy and finessed in clubs, hoping to find the ♠10 with West. After cashing the ♣A at trick three, he led a spade to the 7. That led to down one.

At another table, Nakamura won in hand and played ♣A, ♣J overtaking, and needed 3-3 clubs or a significant doubleton club honor – a rather better play than Gromov’s. So much for the percentages – Nakamura simply ended up losing an undertrick and 3 imps.

Is Nakamura’s play the best line — not according to Helgemo, who was dummy at another table, watching his declarer succeed by winning the diamond lead in hand and playing a spade to the jack. Helgemo suggests the right line is a low spade to the 8 at trick two. If it loses, you can switch to clubs, playing as Nakamura did — you still have the entry to dummy. If the spade finesse wins, you repeat it later for two tricks in spades, hearts and clubs, and three diamonds, for nine winners.

Elsewhere Paul Hackett duplicated Nakamura’s line – but he had no time to play on spades, since the defenders had led hearts not diamonds. Barel for Israel followed Helgemo’s suggestion, Jacobs tried Nakamura’s line. In OzOne vs. Beijing, Nagy of Australia made 3NT from the North seat on a club lead, while Ju went down from North on a diamond lead by duplicating the Helgemo line.

2. The quarter-finals (two sets of 20 boards) saw the demise of the two home teams (Yamada and D-MaTK) at the hands of the Hackett team and Poland/Russia. The two-time defenders, Israel, went out to Netherlands, largely because of the following deal, while OzOne were able to survive the loss on this deal with a huge come-back in the second half to beat China SMEG....

East dealer	North		
N-S vul	♠ A K 7		
	♥ 9		
	♦ Q 8 5 2		
	♣ A 9 6 3 2		
West		East	
♠ J 4		♠ 10 5	
♥ K J 4		♥ A Q 10 6 5 3 2	
♦ K 10 9 7 6		♦ J 3	
♣ <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 0 2px;">K</span> Q J		♣ 10 4	
	South		
	♠ Q 9 8 6 3 2		
	♥ 8 7		
	♦ A 4		
	♣ 8 7 5		

Open and Closed Rooms

West	North	East	South
Marston	Shi	Prescott	Ju
Wang	Nagy	Cheng	Richman
—	—	3 ♥	pass
4 ♥	double	pass	4 ♠
(all pass)			

With the ♦K onside and trumps 2-2, four spades looks easy, since you have a home for your club loser on the ♦Q, but how should you play the hand on West's natural lead of the ♣K?

Both declarers fell from grace here. For OzOne Richman took the club, cashed a top spade and played a heart, and when a trump came back he was dead. He tried a second club, but West could win and return a heart, and now there was no entry to dummy for the good clubs.

For China, Ju won the club and played a heart, and East won to play back a club (a diamond was necessary now). Marston accurately switched back to hearts but declarer ruffed and led a club and the two-two trump break meant he was home.

In total, three of the eight tables let East play 4♥ down a trick.

At the other five tables all the Souths received a top club lead against 4♠. Only Leon Jacobs for Netherlands made 4♠ legitimately, by the simple maneuver of ducking the first trick.

The point is that after you duck the club, the defenders can't continue clubs; otherwise the diamond loser goes away. And on a heart shift and diamond through declarer sets up a diamond discard for the losing club. If you take the first trick, you may avoid going down 200 when the suit is four-one, but there is essentially no lie of the cards that might legitimately succeed. The swing to Netherlands here was 11 imps (Campanile had passed out 4♥ as North and beaten it a trick so there were 17 imps at stake for Jacobs on his play here, in a match decided by single figures).

3. At the end of the first half of the semi-finals Hackett led Netherlands by 17 imps while Poland/Russia led OzOne-Bridge by 37 imps. This board brought comfort to both trailing teams....

West dealer	North		
None vul	♠ 10 9 6 5 3		
	♥ A		
	♦ A K 8 5		
	♣ K 8 7		
West		East	
♠ —		♠ Q J 4 2	
♥ K J 10 7 4 3		♥ 8 5	
♦ Q 7 4 3		♦ J 10 6	
♣ 5 4 2		♣ A Q 6 3	
	South		
	♠ A K 8 7		
	♥ Q 9 6 2		
	♦ 9 2		
	♣ J 10 9		

West	North	East	South
2 ♥	double	pass	3 ♠
pass	4 ♠	(all pass)	

All four tables bid to 4♠. For Hackett, Justin Hackett led the ♦3. Bertens (South) rose with the ace and played a spade to the ace, then the ♣J to the queen. Jason Hackett (East) now made a critical error by returning the ♠Q (any card other than a high spade would have worked). Bertens won, played a diamond to the king, ruffed a diamond, crossed to dummy's ♥A, and led the fourth diamond scoring his ♠8 (it would do East no good to ruff high in front of him). He then ruffed a heart and exited with a trump, and had to score two of the remaining tricks. A great +420.

The play went the same way in the Closed Room to the first three tricks but at trick four Schollaardt returned the ♦10 instead of a top spade after winning the ♣Q. Helgemo (South) won in dummy and played a spade, and Schollaardt did very well to duck (if he splits declarer can come to ten tricks; see below). Helgemo won cheaply in hand, played a heart to the ace, the ♣K to the ace, won the diamond return, ruffed a diamond, ruffed a heart, came to hand with the ♣10, and led a fourth heart, ruffed and overruffed. The trump return now left Helgemo with a heart loser; -50, 10 imps to the Dutchmen.

In the other match, in the Open Room, Balicki (West) led the ♣5, ducked to the queen, and Zmudzinski (East) played ace and a club to the king. Nagy played a spade to the ace, a heart to the ace, and a second spade. Zmudzinski erred by splitting his honors in a similar position to the one in which we saw Schollaardt find the winning duck against Helgemo. Now we see why the duck was so crucial. Nagy won the ♠K, played the ♦A-K, ruffed a diamond, ruffed a heart, and led the last diamond. Now Zmudzinski could ruff or not, as dummy was down to all trumps. Plus 420 and a 10 imp swing to Oz-One since game went down in the other room.

The imps for Netherlands turned out to be crucial since they won by only a game-swing. Poland/Russia also lost their half-time lead but came back to win by a reasonable margin.



4. The final saw a match of repeating patterns. After an early lead for Poland-Russia, Netherlands three times took a big lead, only for the Polish/Russian alliance to claw back into it three times. This was the high-point of the Dutch lead:

	North		
	♠ K 10 5 4 2		
	♥ A K 6 4		
	♦ A 2		
	♣ A J		
West		East	
♠ J 6		♠ A Q 9 8	
♥ Q 9 2		♥ 10 8 7 3	
♦ J 9 7 6 4 3		♦ 10 8	
♣ 9 7		♣ 8 4 3	
	South		
	♠ 7 3		
	♥ J 5		
	♦ K Q 5		
	♣ K Q 10 6 5 2		

South	West	North	East
<i>Bertens</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Bakkeren</i>	<i>Dubin</i>
1 ♣	pass	1 ♠	pass
2 ♣	pass	2 ♥	pass
2 NT	pass	4 ♣	pass
4 ♦	pass	4 ♠ (1)	pass
4 NT (2)	pass	6 ♣	(all pass)

- (1) Keycard Blackwood
- (2) one keycard

Both tables reached slam; Bertens showed clubs and cooperated once, then was driven to slam. At the other table, Zmudzinski (South) showed clubs and a minimum, then a diamond card, and was also at the six-level immediately.

When Jacobs led a heart Zmudzinski's first reaction was to ask the director what to do! When no help was forthcoming he settled for the legitimate percentage rather than playing for a defensive error. He rose with the ♥A and played on spades in due course; down one.

At the first table a heart was also led. Bertens without a flicker played low from dummy and was home. No doubt there was a minute percentage chance that the defenders would not have cashed the ♠A if the ♥Q was wrong. But the decisive factor in his decision was that East and South were behind screens on the same side, and East twitched when Bertens explained the 4♠ call as key-card. Once declarer assumed that he must have been contemplating a double, and that therefore the ♠A was likely to be offside, running the heart was a cost-nothing play. It was 43-17 at the end of the first set.

5. This board helped to level the match (there was an imp in it at the end of both the second and third quarters):

South dealer	North		East
Both vul	♠ A Q 5		♠ 9 8 7 6
	♥ A Q J 8 6		♥ 10 9 5
	♦ 3		♦ Q J
	♣ A K 10 8		♣ J 5 4 3
West		South	
♠ 10 2		♠ K J 4 3	
♥ 7 3		♥ K 4 2	
♦ A K 8 6 5 4		♦ 10 9 7 2	
♣ Q 9 2		♣ 7 6	

Closed Room

South	West	North	East
Schollaardt	Zmud'ski	Jacobs	Balicki
pass	pass	1 ♣	pass
1 ♦	pass	1 ♥ (1)	pass
2 ♣ (2)	pass	2 ♦ (1)	pas
2 ♠	pass	2 NT (1)	pass
3 ♦ (3)	pass	4 ♥	(all pass)

- (1) Relay
- (2) 5-7
- (3) diamonds

This hand indicates the strength and weakness of the full-relay approach; the key here is the doubleton club in South. Jacobs could not find out enough at a convenient level so closed his eyes and hoped he would not buy the perfect hand opposite. Afterwards Schollaardt said the system needed to be modified here since there were only ace-asking bids after full shape was known. With South having shown a semi-positive there are clearly better schemes available. Maybe Matthew Granovetter can say how

Ultimate Club would have done?\*

Open Room

South	West	North	East
Dubinín	Bertens	Gromov	Bakkeren
pass	2 ♣ (1)	pass	2 ♦
pass	pass	double	pass
2 ♠	pass	3 ♦	pass
3 NT	pass	4 ♥	pass
5 ♥	pass	6 ♥	(all pass)

(1) Strong or a weak two in diamonds

By contrast Bertens had a 2♣ opening – diamonds or strong – and that made his opponents' life harder in a way. But Gromov (North) did excellently to suggest a good hand, then to remove 3NT to 4♥. Dubinín could now envision short diamonds opposite; his 5♥ call focused on diamonds and Gromov bid on, of course. Well done; now all Gromov had to do was to make it.

There are several practical lines, with clubs and hearts both breaking, I'm not sure what is best – but everything works. By drawing two rounds of trumps with the ace and king Gromov committed himself to ruffing a club low in dummy and hoping West was not 2-3-6-2.

\*This hand is clearly not a good hand for opener to hear about responder's hand, since opener has a singleton and must describe his hand. Then the player with the balanced hand can evaluate his cards. For example, in Standard it should go: 1♥-2♥, 3♣-3♥, 3♠-4♠. Responder's last bid appreciates his perfect minimum facing opener's 3-5-1-4 shape. Opener now uses KCB to reach 6♥.

6. This board turned out to be a small swing for Netherlands when Bakkeren managed to find a way to bring home an unlikely game, after West had given him a chance.

East dealer      North  
 E-W vul      ♠ A 7  
                   ♥ K Q J 8  
                   ♦ A Q 7  
                   ♣ A 9 4 3

West  
 ♠ K J 6 3  
 ♥ A  
 ♦ K 10 9 8  
 ♣ K 10 6 2

East  
 ♠ 10 9 8 4  
 ♥ 7 6 5  
 ♦ J 6 4  
 ♣ J 7 5

South  
 ♠ Q 5 2  
 ♥ 10 9 4 3 2  
 ♦ 5 3 2  
 ♣ Q 8

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Schollaardt	Zmudzinski	Jacobs	Balicki
—	—	pass	pass
1 NT	(all pass)		

One-four-four-four shapes within one's notrump range may be tough to handle, but hands with four spades are so easy to bid that to see someone open 1NT at unfavorable vulnerability (even with a singleton ace) turns the stomach. Justice was not quite served when Zmudzinski (North) could not double for penalties, but the contract went

down 300 on the obvious top heart lead. The defenders allowed declarer to come to two diamonds, a spade and a heart, but ended him to lead clubs from his hand.

That figured to be a great result for Netherlands, right? One notrump, down three, is a good save against 3NT? Well one can hardly blame the Dutch for bidding to 4♥:

West	North	East	South
Dubinín	Bertens	Gromov	Bakkeren
—	—	pass	pass
1 ♦	double	pass	1 ♥
pass	2 ♦	pass	2 ♥
pass	4 ♥	(all pass)	

Only repeated diamond leads and perhaps the unblock of the ♦K would beat that.

Dubinín (West) duly led a diamond, the ♦10. Declarer took a long while, but eventually moved fast. The ♦Q held, and Dubinín was in with ♥A to lead ♦K, ducked. Yes, a low diamond by West would have avoided this. Back came a third diamond, then two top trumps from dummy and a club to the seven, eight and ten. What now? Dubinín's low club did not work; declarer won in hand and ran the hearts to squeeze West; contract made for a hard-earned 3 imps. In retrospect we can all see that the ♣K was unlikely to cost here, since if East had started life with ♣Q-7, he would surely have risen with the ♣Q to shift to a spade and take his partner off any endplay.

7. The fourth set featured several lead changes and could have been decided on at least four or five hands. This one was the winners' favorite; it featured good views by both pairs.

North dealer	North		
E-W vul	♠ K J 9 7		
	♥ K 6		
	♦ K 10 7		
	♣ K 10 6 5		
West		East	
♠ 8 5 4 3		♠ A Q 10 6	
♥ Q 10 3 2		♥ A 7	
♦ 3 2		♦ Q 9 8 6 5	
♣ A 9 4		♣ Q 2	
	South		
	♠ 2		
	♥ J 9 8 5 4		
	♦ A J 4		
	♣ J 8 7 3		

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bakkeren</i>	<i>Dubinin</i>	<i>Bertens</i>	<i>Gromov</i>
—	1 NT	pass	2 ♦
pass	2 ♥	double	pass
2 ♠	(all pass)		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Schollaardt</i>	<i>Zmud'ski</i>	<i>Jacobs</i>
—	1 ♦ (1)	pass	1 ♥
pass	1 ♠	pass	1 NT
pass	pass	double	2 ♣
(all pass)			

(1) Precision

Both E-W pairs took adventurous views in the auction. Against 2♠ Dubinin (North) led the ♥K. Declarer won and ducked a diamond, took North's ♠9 shift with the queen and ducked another diamond, and back came a heart from South. Bakkeren took the ♥Q, crossed to ♠A as North split his honors – declarer would have put in the ♠10 had he not done so – ruffed a diamond, ruffed a heart, then ruffed a winning diamond with ♠8. Dubinin could overruff and exit with a trump, collecting a club at the end, but declarer had eight tricks,

Against 2♣, West led a diamond. Declarer led a heart to the king. East won and returned a heart to West's 10. West switched back to diamonds. Declarer guessed trumps by leading to the ♣K and continuing the suit — East's heart play at trick two looked as if he was searching for a trump promotion, therefore this was a logical play. He lost two clubs, two hearts, and one spade, for 6 imps, a critical element of an eventual 5 imp victory in the match.

Congratulations to both teams for a superb match! There was still one more day of play and the last hand of this article....

8. This hand, a candidate for best played hand of the year, came from the first session of the Asuka Cup, the two-session pair game that caps off the NEC Cup Bridge festival each year. John's partner was Miho Sekizawa. Their opponents were Israel's Michael Barel and Yaniv Zack.

East dealer North  
 E-W vul ♠ K 9 6 3  
 ♥ A Q 5  
 ♦ 8 3  
 ♣ J 9 7 5

West	East
♠ J	♠ 10 8 7 4
♥ K	♥ 10 8 4
♦ A Q 10 9 7 6	♦ J 5 4
♣ A K 8 4 2	♣ Q 10 3

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

West	North	East	South
Sekizawa	Barel	Armstrong	Zack
—	—	pass	1 ♥
2 ♦	3 ♦	pass	3 ♥
4 ♣	double	4 ♦	4 ♥

(all pass)

Zack was deliberately walking the dog here — and had already done well when dummy came down — 5♦ is cold for E-W. Sekizawa led the ♣A and continued the suit by leading a low one. Zack ruffed, played a heart to the king and ace, ruffed a club, ♠A, spade to the king (discovering the potential loser there), and then led the ♣J from dummy. This was the ending:

♠ —	♠ 9 6	♠ 10 8
♥ —	♥ Q 5	♥ 10 8
♦ A Q 10 9 6	♦ 8 3	♦ J 5 4
♣ K 8	♣ J	♣ —

  

	♠ Q 5	
	♥ J 9 7	
	♦ K 2	
	♣ —	

  

	N	
W		E
	S	

What was Armstrong (East) to do? If he pitched (his actual choice), Zack would throw a spade and give Sekizawa a choice of losing options. If she breaks diamonds, the ♦K scores. And if she leads back a club (her actual choice), Zack ruffs high in dummy, pitching a diamond from hand, and finesses the ♥9.

Armstrong wondered subsequently how the defense would have gone if he had ruffed in. That would have been no better: Zack can overruff, draw the last trump, and play a diamond to the king, not caring if it won or lost. If it won, he was home. If it lost, the defense could cash another diamond but whoever won that trick would have a problem. If West won, she would have to give declarer a ruff-and-sluff; if East won, he would have his choice of a ruff-and-sluff or leading a spade. Either way Zack would have his tenth and game-going trick. Well done!

## Building a Better Mousetrap

by Matthew Granovetter

### Rebids after 1♦-2♣

The auction 1♦-2♣ is a problem auction for five-card major bidders. Defining opener and responder's rebids have led to various structures.

The problems include:

- (1) how to find a 4-4 major fit
- (2) how responder can find out if opener really has diamonds
- (3) how to investigate stoppers for notrump
- (4) how to investigate slam

First question: Is 2♣ is a game force?

Many say yes, and use a 3♣ jump directly as a game invitation with six clubs and no four-card major. This doesn't solve what to do with a four-card major and say, 10-11 points, but very few methods do solve this.

Here is a somewhat comprehensive structure you may wish to adopt, a combination of methods composed in the past and now pasted together by your editor. . . .

Opener	Responder
--------	-----------

1♦	2♣
----	----

?

2♦ = 5+ diamonds, forcing, usually without club support; may have a four-card major

2♥ = a strong raise in clubs or an 18-19 point balanced hand

2♠ = exactly 4-4-4-1 or 4-4-5-0 with short clubs

2NT = 12-14, balanced, with or without a four-card major, with or without stoppers in both majors

3♣ = a weak raise in clubs, without a four-card major (may include five diamonds)

3♦ = natural, good six-card diamond suit and slam try

3♥ or 3♠ = splinters in support of clubs without a four-card major

After 2♦, responder has special bids:

Opener	Responder
--------	-----------

1♦	2♣
----	----

2♦	?
----	---

2♥ = natural four-card suit or a heart stopper and no spade stopper

2♠ = natural four-card suit or a spade stopper and no heart stopper

2NT = natural, no four-card major, forcing (12-15 or 18+)

3♣ = not forcing or forcing, depending on your system preference

3♦ = natural and forcing to game or 4♦ if you can't find stoppers for 3NT

3♥ or 3♠ = splinter in support of diamonds

3NT = 16-17 points balanced

Over 2♥ or 2♠ by responder, opener may wish to know which it is, natural suit or stopper, so he bids 2♠ or 2NT to ask; then responder bids one step to say it was

natural and two steps or higher to say it was a stopper. Here's an example auction:

Opener	Responder
1 ♦	2 ♣
2 ♦	2 ♥
?	

2♠ or 2NT asks responder which it is. Responder bids one step to say he has four hearts, and anything else is natural, saying he had a heart stopper but no spade stopper. Opener's choice of 2♠ or 2NT depends on his hand. If opener has spades well stopped and doesn't want to declare notrump from his side, he'll bid 2♠ to ask. If opener wants to declare the notrump, he'll bid 2NT to ask.

Opener	Responder
1 ♦	2 ♣
2 ♦	2 ♠
?	

Here opener can ask responder what that 2♠ bid was by bidding 2NT. Responder will bid 3♣ (one step) to show four spades, and anything else will say that the 2♠ bid was a spade stopper without a heart stopper.

Opener	Responder
1 ♦	2 ♣
2 ♥	?

2♥ = a strong raise in clubs or an 18-19 point balanced hand

After this sequence, 2♠ by responder asks opener to clarify. Opener rebids 2NT with 18-19 or anything else with club support and extra values. Responder may choose to bid 2NT over 2♥ if he wants to grab the notrump declaration. Opener would then raise to 3NT with 18-19, otherwise make a natural bid in support of clubs.

Let's look at a few example hands:

Opener	Responder
♠ A K x x	♠ Q x x x
♥ Q x x	♥ K x
♦ A x x x	♦ x x
♣ x x	♣ A K Q x x
1 ♦	2 ♣
2 NT (12-14)	3 ♠
4 ♠	pass

This auction is natural. Opener's 2NT showed 12-14 and responder bid out his shape.

Opener	Responder
♠ K x x	♠ A J x
♥ x x	♥ x x x
♦ A K Q x x	♦ J x
♣ J x x	♣ A K x x x
1 ♦	2 ♣
2 ♦ (5+ diamonds)	2 ♠ (natural or stopper)
3 ♣	3 ♥ (fishing)
3 ♠	3 NT
pass	

This one is a tough one, because of the lack of a heart stopper. Opener rebid 2♦ to show his five-card suit. He could have alternatively raised to 3♣ to show a weak club raise, but chose 2♦ because of his suit quality. The 2♠ bid was a stopper but could have been natural. Opener chose not to ask, because he did not want to declare the notrump with xx in hearts. Now responder bid 3♥, which was fishing for a half heart stopper. Opener showed his spade stopper and reluctance to bid notrump. Responder now had a tough decision and decided to try 3NT, hoping the hearts broke 4-4 and there would be nine tricks. Hearts were 4-4, right?

Opener	Responder
♠ A x	♠ K x x x
♥ x x	♥ A x
♦ K Q x x x	♦ A x
♣ A J x x	♣ K Q x x x
1 ♦	2 ♣
2 ♥ (18-19 or clubs)	2 ♠ (which?)
3 ♣	3 ♦
3 ♠	4 ♥
4 NT (KCB)	5 ♣ (3 keycards)
5 ♦	5 ♠ (♣Q + ♠K)
7 ♣	pass

Here opener elected to bid 2♥, which shows either 18-19 balanced or a strong club raise (he judged his hand as a strong club raise). Responder bid 2♠ to ask which it was and opener bid 3♣. Responder was now very interested in slam. He cuebid 3♦ and heard partner bid 3♠. Responder now bid 4♥, showing hearts controlled and logically asking his partner to take over. Opener bid Keycard Blackwood and found three keycards with the 5♣ bid. Opener asked for the ♣Q and heard 5♠ (♣Q and ♠K). This looked like enough for a grand slam, since opener envisioned pitching heart losers, if necessary, on his diamond suit.

Opener	Responder
♠ K x x	♠ J x
♥ x x x	♥ A x x x
♦ K Q J x	♦ A
♣ A x x	♣ K Q x x x x
1 ♦	2 ♣
2 NT (12-14)	3 ♥
3 NT	pass

Opener had a choice between bidding 2NT or 3♣ (weak raise). He chose 2NT because of his flat shape. Had he bid 3♣ instead, responder would still have bid 3♥, but as a heart stopper, not a suit, and opener would still have bid 3NT.

Opener	Responder
♠ Q x	♠ x x
♥ K x x x	♥ A Q x
♦ K J x x x	♦ A x x
♣ A x	♣ K Q x x x
1 ♦	2 ♣
2 ♦ (5+ diamonds)	2 ♥ (natural or stopper)
2 ♠ (which?)	3 ♦ (stopper + support)
?	

Here 2♦ showed five diamonds, and 2♥ showed a suit or a stopper without a spade stopper. Opener asked with 2♠ and responder did not bid the first step (which would have shown a heart suit), but instead supported diamonds, showing a heart stopper and weak spades. Opener might now try 3♠ here as a half-stopper or simply bid 4♦, leaving it up to responder whether to go on. Probably they will reach 5♦, needing some luck.

Opener	Responder
♠ K x x x	♠ Q x x
♥ A J x x	♥ x
♦ K Q x x	♦ A J x x
♣ x	♣ A K Q x x
1 ♦	2 ♣
2 ♠ (4441 or 4450)	3 ♦
3 NT	?

Here opener's artificial 2♠ rebid shows 4-4-4-1 or 4-4-5-0 with short clubs and responder supports diamonds. Opener has a minimum hand and therefore rebids 3NT. Responder has extra values but poor cards for partner, wastage in clubs, and will probably pass. Change responder's hand to this:



Opener	Responder
♠ K x x x	♠ A Q J
♥ A J x x	♥ x
♦ K Q x x	♦ A J x x
♣ x	♣ A x x x x
1 ♦	2 ♣
2 ♠	3 ♦
3 NT	?

The same 16 HCPs, but a better fitting hand for diamonds facing a singleton club and known four spades to the king. Now responder should continue.

This structure is not perfect. Opener must rebid 2NT on lots of hands he may not want to declare with. But the good news is that the hand behind the opening bidder did not find an overcall over 1♦. So he is not likely to hold a hand with a good five-card major-suit lead. The other good news is that this structure clears up lots of difficult-to-bid hands, albeit with a little artificiality. Good luck.

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### Major Results — Spring Nationals (St. Louis, MO)

#### Open Pairs

1. Roy Welland and Giorgio Duboin
2. Richard Freeman and Zia

#### Mixed Pairs

1. Mildred Breed and Richard Zeckhauser
2. Jane and Bob Teel

#### Vanderbilt Teams

1. Christal Henner Welland, Antonio Sementa, Roy Welland, Bjorn Fellenius, Adam Zmudzinski, Cezary Balicki
2. Lou Ann O'Rourke, Marc Jacobus, Giorgio Duboin, Norberto Bocchi, Geoff Hampson, Eric Greco
- 3/4. James Cayne, Michael Seamon, Alfredo Versace, Lorenzo Lauria, Fulvio Fantoni, Claudio Nunes
- 3/4. Piotr Tuszynski, Apolinary Kowalski, Farid Assemi, Ed Wojewoda, Srikanth Kodayam, Nick Bykov

#### IMP Pairs

1. Boye Brogeland, Ishmael Delmonte
2. Jonathan Weinstein, Robert Heitzman Jr.

#### Women's Pairs

1. Kamla Chawla, Irina Ladyzhensky
2. Valerie Westheimer, Migry Zur Campanile

#### Open Swiss

1. Kalin Karaivanov, Marin Marinov, David Maidman, Ruman Nenov Trendafilov
2. Brian Glubok, Agustin Madala, Peter Fredin, Mike Moss

#### Women's Swiss

1. Lynn Baker, Karen McCallum, Irina Levitina, Kerri Sanborn, Lynn Deas, Beth Palmer
2. Carole Minor, Cynthia Balderson, Peggy Kaplan, Melody Bi

See the May issue for reports  
on this tournament!



The Wizards of Aus

by Ron Klinger

*Some adventures and mis-adventures in Australia*

The following hand appears in the excellent book, "The Mistakes You Make at Bridge" by Terence Reese and Roger Trézel. It is now out of print, but a new edition is due this year.

West ♠ A K J ♥ J 9 5 3 ♦ 7 ♣ A K 8 6 5	East ♠ 5 3 ♥ A 10 7 6 4 ♦ 6 4 2 ♣ 7 4 3
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This is what the authors say: "Those writers on the game who talk always in terms of 'points' may tell you that you need six points to respond at the level of one and should pass when you hold less. This is quite wrong. When partner has opened a minor suit you need have no qualms about responding on the sort of hand East holds. West opens 1♣ and North passes. It would be wrong to pass on the grounds that you held 'only' four points . . . Bid simply 1♥, intending to pass thereafter unless partner makes a forcing bid . . . On the present occasion, West would jump to 4♥, a very reasonable contract on the two hands.

"Of course, it will happen sometimes that West will rebid, say, 2NT, and be disappointed in your hand. Against that, by keeping the bidding open with 1♥ you would make it far more difficult for the opponents to arrive at their best contract."

On this deal from the final of a Spring National Open Teams one East followed the Reese-Trézel advice. The other paid no heed to his team's detriment.

East dealer Both vul	North ♠ 10 ♥ K Q 10 7 5 4 ♦ A Q ♣ A J 8 5	East ♠ A Q 8 5 ♥ A ♦ J 7 6 2 ♣ K Q 10 2
West ♠ K J 7 4 3 ♥ 8 6 ♦ 10 8 5 ♣ 9 7 6	South ♠ 9 6 2 ♥ J 9 3 2 ♦ K 9 4 3 ♣ 4 3	

West Fruewirth — pass* 2 ♠	North Marston — 1 ♥ 4 ♥	East Del'Monte 1 ♣ double (all pass)	South Thomson pass 2 ♥
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\*One of The Mistakes You Make at Bridge

There is no defense to 4♥. There is no record of the play, but there must have been a revoke as North-South scored 680. At the other table:

East dealer North  
 Both vul ♠ 10  
 ♥ K Q 10 7 5 4  
 ♦ A Q  
 ♣ A J 8 5

West  
 ♠ K J 7 4 3  
 ♥ 8 6  
 ♦ 10 8 5  
 ♣ 9 7 6

East  
 ♠ A Q 8 5  
 ♥ A  
 ♦ J 7 6 2  
 ♣ K Q 10 2

South  
 ♠ 9 6 2  
 ♥ J 9 3 2  
 ♦ K 9 4 3  
 ♣ 4 3

West	North	East	South
<i>Gue</i>	<i>Richman</i>	<i>Bagchi</i>	<i>Nagy</i>
—	—	1 ♣	pass
1 ♠	double	3 ♦*	pass
4 ♠	(all pass)		

\*good spade raise

Opening lead: ♥K

With only four losers on top 4♠ is a great sacrifice against 4♥. It becomes even better when the blockage in diamonds allows 4♠ to make.

After winning trick one, declarer played ♠A and a spade to the jack. Next came a club to the king, followed by a spade to the king. On the next club North rose with the ♣A and played the ♥Q, ruffed.

Convinced that North held the guarded ♣J, Gue played a diamond from dummy to North's ♦Q. Back came the ♥10, which declarer ruffed. He then played the ♣9 to dummy's ♣10 and pitched a diamond on the ♣Q. That was worth +620, a double game swing, for a total of +1300 and +16 imps.

Speaking of bidding spades over hearts, consider this hand, from Italy's victory in the 2000 World Open Teams Olympiad. Alfredo Versace found a great bid in the final:

North dealer North  
 None vul ♠ Q 6 5  
 ♥ K Q J 9 5 4  
 ♦ J 9  
 ♣ K Q

West (Versace)  
 ♠ K 8 7 4 3 2  
 ♥ —  
 ♦ A 4  
 ♣ 10 7 6 4 3

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

South  
 ♠ A 10  
 ♥ 10 8 7 3 2  
 ♦ 10 6 5 2  
 ♣ J 9

West	North	East	South
—	1 ♥	pass	4 ♥
4 ♠	(all pass)		

The lack of spade length argues against a takeout double by East and the diamonds lack the quality needed for a 2-level overcall. The rationale for Versace's very courageous 4♠ was:

- (a) The void in the enemy suit (usually a good sign for competing), and
- (b) The good shape (6-5 pattern) with moderate strength. As South's was a weak action and West was also weak, it was very likely that East would have some useful values. Indeed they were sufficient to allow 4♠ to make, thanks to the ♠A onside and the 2-2 split in clubs.

At the other table East overcalled 2♦, but the bidding ended with 3♠ by West. In the Women's final, both Wests did bid 4♠, but that was aided by East's 2♦ overcall.

Ishmael Del'Monte produced a Versace-type bid on this deal from the final of our Spring National Open Teams:

North dealer	North		
None vul	♠ 10 9 8		
	♥ K 8 5 4		
	♦ A 9 4		
	♣ J 10 2		
West		East	
♠ A Q 7 5 3 2		♠ K J 4	
♥ —		♥ 7 6 3 2	
♦ J 8 7 5 2		♦ Q 10 6	
♣ A Q		♣ 8 6 4	
	South		
	♠ 6		
	♥ A Q J 10 9		
	♦ K 3		
	♣ K 9 7 5 3		

West	North	East	South
Del'Monte	Thomson	Fruewirth	Marston
—	pass	pass	1 ♥
1 ♠	2 ♣*	pass	4 ♥
4 ♠!	pass	pass	double
(all pass)			

\*Heart raise, 8-10 points

Opening lead: ♥5

East's second-round pass is questionable. It does not seem outrageous for East to show support with 2♠. That does not promise any wealth these days. Notice the similarities between Del'Monte's cards and Versace's: freakish 6-5 pattern and void in the enemy suit.

Declarer ruffed the heart lead, drew two rounds of trumps and played a diamond to the ten and king. South returned the ♣3 and Del'Monte rose with the ♣A, drew the last trump and played another diamond for ten tricks, +590.

West	North	East	South
Bagchi	Nagy	Gue	Richman
—	pass	pass	1 ♦ (hearts)
1 ♠	3 ♥	3 ♠	4 ♥
4 ♠	(all pass)		

Opening lead: ♥4

Declarer ruffed and drew trumps. He then set about the diamonds for ten tricks and +420. Given the shapely nature of the South hand, would a sacrifice in 5♥ be far-fetched? It might well escape undoubled and is not such a bad contract single dummy. Give East the ♣Q and 5♥ might make.

Of course, bidding on to the five level is not always a success. On this next deal from the same event 5♥ was bid at one table when discretion would have been the better part of valor....

South dealer	North		
N-S vul	♠ 9 3		
	♥ A J 4		
	♦ A Q J 5		
	♣ K 9 7 2		
West		East	
♠ A J 4		♠ K Q 10 7 6	
♥ 3		♥ Q 10 6	
♦ 9 8 6 3		♦ 10 4 2	
♣ A J 10 4 3		♣ 8 5	
	South		
	♠ 8 5 2		
	♥ K 9 8 7 5 2		
	♦ K 7		
	♣ Q 6		

South	West	North	East
Marston	Del'Monte	Thomson	Fruewirth
2 ♦ (1)	pass	2 ♠ (2)	pass
3 ♥	double (3)	4 ♥	4 ♠
5 ♥	double	(all pass)	

- (1) Weak two in hearts or spades
- (2) Pass if you have spades, bid on with hearts
- (3) Takeout double

After the ♠A lead, it is easy for the defense to collect two spades, the ♣A and a trump trick later. That was two down for -500.

As a general principle, a pre-empter describes the hand held and leaves further decisions to partner. Here South should pass 4♠ and let partner decide whether to bid on or double. No doubt South thought North would be very short in spades, but North would be aware of that, too. North would double 4♠ for an easy two down and three down is possible.

At the other table:

South	West	North	East
Richman	Bagchi	Nagy	Gue
2 ♥	pass	2 NT	pass
3 ♥	pass	4 ♥	(all pass)

Opening lead: ♦6

There was no reason for East-West to enter the bidding here and West's diamond lead, although unfortunate, was normal. Declarer won with the king, cashed the ♥A and ♥K and then played three rounds of diamonds, pitching two spades. East ruffed the fourth diamond, but now the defense could collect only one spade, one heart and one club. That gave North-South +620 and +15 imps.

The 5♥ save was more successful on Board 50 of the final:

West dealer	North		
N-S vul	♠ 9 7 2		
	♥ A 6		
	♦ A Q 8 7 3		
	♣ A Q 7		
West		East	
♠ J 10 8 6		♠ Q	
♥ Q 10 9 7 5 3		♥ K J 8 4 2	
♦ J 9		♦ K 2	
♣ 5		♣ J 10 9 6 3	
	South		
	♠ A K 5 4 3		
	♥ —		
	♦ 10 6 5 4		
	♣ K 8 4 2		

West	North	East	South
Thomson	Del'Monte	Marston	Fruewirth
pass	1 NT	2 ♥	3 ♠
4 ♥	4 ♠	pass	pass
5 ♥	double	(all pass)	

At the other table:

West	North	East	South
Richman	Bagchi	Nagy	Gue
2 ♥	2 NT	4 ♥	4 ♠
5 ♥	pass	pass	double
(all pass)			

North-South can make just ten tricks in spades, with the spades 4-1 and the ♦K off-side and did well not to push on to 5♠. The sacrifice was -300 at both tables.

Heard in the street: "Winning decisions are a matter of fine judgment. Losing decisions are bad luck."

A couple hands ago, I wrote that as a general principle, a pre-empter describes the hand held and leaves further decisions to partner. The same applies to a player who

has made a normal two-suited bid such as the Unusual 2NT or a Michaels Cue-Bid. Originally both of these overcalls were played as weak. These days some top pairs play them as weak or very strong. Some go as far as having no limits on the bids as long as the shape is right.

Be that as it may, if you use the Unusual 2NT and your hand is the weak variety you should not take a second bid unless partner forces you to speak or invites game or you have exceptional shape (such as a 6-6 pattern). That applies whether 2NT is an opening bid or an overcall. On this deal from the final of the Spring National Open Teams one North breached discipline and the price was heavy.

North dealer	North		
Both vul	♠ 7 5		
	♥ 10		
	♦ J 8 6 5 4		
	♣ A Q 9 7 6		
West		East	
♠ A K 9 8 2		♠ Q J 4	
♥ A K 8 6		♥ J 5 3 2	
♦ K 9 7		♦ A	
♣ 2		♣ J 10 8 4 3	
	South		
	♠ 10 6 3		
	♥ Q 9 7 4		
	♦ Q 10 3 2		
	♣ K 5		

West	North	East	South
Nagy	Marston	Richman	Thomson
—	2 NT*	pass	4 ♦
double	pass	4 ♥	(all pass)

\*Minors

Despite the bad trump break, declarer had no trouble making the contract. At the other table:

North dealer North  
 Both vul ♠ 7 5  
 ♥ 10  
 ♦ J 8 6 5 4  
 ♣ A Q 9 7 6

West East  
 ♠ A K 9 8 2 ♠ Q J 4  
 ♥ A K 8 6 ♥ J 5 3 2  
 ♦ K 9 7 ♦ A  
 ♣ 2 ♣ J 10 8 4 3

South  
 ♠ 10 6 3  
 ♥ Q 9 7 4  
 ♦ Q 10 3 2  
 ♣ K 5

West	North	East	South
R'dorff	Derofe	Kanetkar	Fruewirth
—	2 NT*	pass	4 ♦
double	pass	4 ♥	pass
pass	5 ♣	double	5 ♦
double	(all pass)		

\*Minors

Opening lead: ♦7

East won and switched to the ♥J, ducked, followed by another heart. Declarer finished four down for -1100 and 9 imps away. No doubt North will not produce such a 5♣ bid again. To bid 5♣ in this situation would suggest 5-7 in the minors (and with such a pattern, you are better off to jump to 5♣ at once).

Editor's Note: Even to open 2NT vulnerable with the North hand is already frightening to me. Of course, I have yet to take the plunge on a trip down under, but we hope to one day soon and experience some of the "wizardry of Aus" for ourselves. We hope readers enjoy the stories that Ron Klinger pens from Australia and a glimpse into somewhat of a different world of bridge. . . .

## Renewals and Gifts

We hope you enjoyed this issue. To renew your subscription or buy a new gift subscription for a friend, please contact us at [info@bridgetoday.com](mailto:info@bridgetoday.com).

Enjoy your bridge!

## When it's not Your Day

by Matthew Granovetter

This hand is an April Fool's story, and completely true — perhaps it was an April fool's joke on me, though it was played last November at the Hawaii Fall Nationals.

The scene was the Blue Ribbon Pairs, first semi-final round, and I was partnered by Renee Mancuso, of Los Angeles. Renee is a good friend of ours for many years, and though this was the first time we actually played together, we had a good idea of each other's game. When you play a pair game, knowing your partner's style is extremely important, because every trick counts. Well, that's what I would normally say — in this case, however, every trick did not count!

I was in the East chair, vul vs. not with: ♠ J 7 3 ♥ Q 7 3 ♦ 8 2 ♣ A J 6 5 3. Alan Sontag, on my right, opened the bidding 1♦. I passed and Paul Soloway, on my left, responded 1♠. Renee, at unfavorable, jumped into the auction with 3♥. Sontag passed.

Renee is not shy, but still we were vul vs. not, so I gave her 4♥. Soloway shrugged his shoulders and bid 4♠, all pass.

	♠ Q 2										
	♥ 10 4										
	♦ A 9 6 5 3										
	♣ K Q 10 7										
♥ 5	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: auto;"> <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		♠ J 7 3
	N										
W		E									
	S										
		♥ Q 7 3									
		♦ 8 2									
		♣ A J 6 5 3									
West	North	East	South								
—	1 ♦	pass	1 ♠								
3 ♥	pass	4 ♥	4 ♠								
(all pass)											

In about one second flat (Renee is no slow-poke) my partner led the ♥5. My queen won the trick as Soloway followed with the deuce. What would you return?

	♠ Q 2
	♥ 10 4
	♦ A 9 6 5 3
	♣ K Q 10 7
♠ 10 9	♠ J 7 3
♥ A K J 9 8 6 5	♥ Q 7 3
♦ J 10 7 4	♦ 8 2
♣ —	♣ A J 6 5 3
	♠ A K 8 6 5 4
	♥ 2
	♦ K Q
	♣ 9 8 4 2

I figured partner must hold a void for this lead, and it was probably in clubs. Not wanting to ruin my ♣A-J tenace over the K-Q, I led a low club for her to ruff. This was

a very satisfying play, as I now caressed my club honors, waiting for the moment when I would duck a club to the queen, and eventually score my two club tricks to set the contract. But it was not our day. Renee led a heart at trick three. Soloway ruffed, drew trumps, cashed the ♦K-Q and led a club to the queen. That ♦A was used to discard a club, and he made four. We scored horribly on the board, for many N-S pairs did not reach game (look at the ugly opening bid by Sontag). It was frustrating! One of us underleads the A-K-J and the other underleads the A-J and we still can't beat it. To top things off, we failed to qualify by one matchpoint. (Don't send in sympathy cards, folks. I'm just sounding off.)