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The Red Pencil

by Matthew Granovetter

Most top partnerships play some method of showing a singleton in a major suit after partner has opened 1NT. Some play a jump to 3♥ or 3♠ shows this, with three cards in the other major. Some do it other ways.

Some top partnerships (but fewer) play some method of locating a 4-3 Major fit with a weak doubleton on the side.

Get ready to put a red pencil through both of these toys.

I recently recalled something interesting about the late Sam Stayman, whom I partnered for a number of years in my youth. He and I played Stayman, of course, but he did not like to play that it promised a 4-card major! At one point in his career, before I came on the scene, he was playing a 2♦ response to 1NT to ask for major-suit stoppers, a bid used to discover 4-3 fits in the major, or alternative minor-suit contracts. When I started playing with him, he had given up this bid because of the more practical use of 2♦ as a Jacoby transfer bid. However, when Sam had a three-card major with a singleton in the other major, he would still use Stayman.

The initial problem with using Stayman with only three cards in a major is that opener might bid the other major, and now if you bid 3NT, partner might bid a second major, which you don't want to hear. Sam got around this by rebidding a minor first to allow opener to get his second suit off his chest. For example:

Opener	Responder
♠ A J 4 3	♠ K 9 2
♥ Q 9 7 3	♥ 4
♦ K Q 3	♦ A 6 5 2
♣ A 7	♣ K Q 6 5 4
1 NT	2 ♣
2 ♥	3 ♣
3 ♠	3 NT
pass	

Responder can't bid 3NT over 2♥, because opener will correct to 4♠. That's why Sam would bid 3♣ first.

Responder may want to play in 4♠ if opener does not hold four cards in the other major. For example:

Opener	Responder
♠ A J 4 3	♠ K 9 2
♥ Q 9 3	♥ 4
♦ K Q 3	♦ A 6 5 2
♣ A 7 2	♣ K Q 6 5 4
1 NT	2 ♣
2 ♠	3 ♣
3 ♦	3 ♠
4 ♣	4 ♠
pass	

Here opener expresses the view that he has good diamond cards (by bidding 3♦) but a flaw in hearts. Responder shows his fragment in spades and opener shows his club support before landing in 4♠.

It occurred to me (after all these years)

that if you use a bid to show both majors right away over 2♣, which many pairs do for other reasons, you can now use Stayman without a four-card major with simpler follow-ups. Let me show you what I mean.

Many play a variation like this:

1 NT 2 ♣
?

2 NT = both majors minimum

3 ♣ = both majors maximum

Over this responder transfers to the major he wants to play and proceeds accordingly, passing, raising, or making a slam try. Partnerships use this method to avoid confusion when responder uses Stayman and rebids a minor suit:

1 NT 2 ♣
2 ♥ 3 ♦
3 ♠

This 3♠ bid is confusing unless you play that 2♥ has denied four spades. Otherwise, is 3♠ spades? Or is it interest in diamonds? Therefore, you use the 2NT or 3♣ rebids by opener to show both majors and the rebid of 2♥ or 2♠ shows specifically only that major.

In addition, as we all know, sometimes opener has a five-card major. Even though we frown on opening 1NT with a five-card major, it does solve the problem of what to rebid when you hold a 5-3-3-2 hand with five hearts and partner responds 1♠. Instead, open 1NT and get the point-range off your chest in one bid. Then over 2♣, you can jump to 3♥ to show five. Therefore, wouldn't it be nice if responder could use Stayman with a hand like this:

♠ 4 3
♥ K 7 3
♦ A J 7 6 5
♣ A 6 5

He may want to play in 4♥ opposite four hearts in opener's hand and certainly wants to opposite five of them. Now he can do it risk free! Opener is no longer permitted to correct the contract over responder's jump to 3NT:

Opener	Responder
♠ A K 6 5	♠ 4 3
♥ Q 8 6 5	♥ K 7 3
♦ K 2	♦ A J 7 6 5
♣ K Q 9	♣ A 6 5
1 NT	2 ♣
2 ♥	3 NT
pass	

This auction no longer exists for the opener, since he would bid 3♣ over 2♣, showing both majors and a maximum.

When opener bids 2♥ now, he shows only hearts, and responder may investigate further or sign off in game. Responder's sign off in 3NT does not show four cards in the other major, though he might have them. And (another advantage) the opening leader is still in the dark about what will come down in dummy:

1 NT	2 ♣
2 ♥	3 NT
1 NT	2 ♣
2 ♠	3 NT

In both of these cases, responder may or may not hold four cards in the missing major. Opener has said he owns only one four-card major.

Let's look at a few more examples:

Opener	Responder
♠ Q J 9 8	♠ K 7 2
♥ A 4	♥ 8 7
♦ K Q J 3	♦ A 8 7 6
♣ K 7 6	♣ A 5 4 2
1 NT	2 ♣
2 ♠	?

Responder is interested in a possible 4-3 fit in spades. He can bid 3♥ here to express that idea, since 3♥ is an impossible bid (opener has denied hearts and responder would have transferred with five hearts or else responder has four spades and five hearts and it doesn't matter).

Opener	Responder
♠ A J 9 8	♠ K 7 2
♥ J 9	♥ 6
♦ K Q J 3	♦ A 8 7 6 2
♣ K J 6	♣ A 5 4 2
1 NT	2 ♣
2 ♠	3 ♦

Here responder bids 3♦ to show his five-card minor and opener will raise. Responder will then offer 4♠ as a contract and opener should accept.

Opener	Responder
♠ A J 9 8	♠ K 7 2
♥ K Q 7	♥ 6
♦ K Q J 3	♦ A 8 7 6 2
♣ 7 6	♣ A 5 4 2
1 NT	2 ♣
2 ♠	3 ♦
3 ♥	3 NT

Here opener shows stuffings in hearts (he has denied four of them) and responder retreats to 3NT. It's really a close call for

responder, who may still prefer to show his fragment in spades and invite a 4♠ game.

Opener	Responder
♠ K Q 7 6	♠ A J 3
♥ A K 10 2	♥ Q J 4
♦ K 4	♦ Q J 10 7 2
♣ Q 4 3	♣ 5 2
1 NT	2 ♣
3 ♣	?

Here responder bid 2♣ in case opener showed a five-card major. But he still wants to play a 4-3 on many layouts. Responder can now transfer to a major and rebid 3NT giving opener a choice of games. This does not bring the minor-suit strengths into the picture, but at least gives opener some choice. Perhaps responder can transfer to 3♥ and then bid 3♠, offering a choice of either Moysian fit! Change opener's hand to strong clubs and weak diamonds:

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

You still might prefer to play in 4♥. Imagine a club lead against 3NT. You need to pick up spades for one loser. In 4♥, however, you have time to develop diamond tricks and might make 10 or 11 tricks (for a top at matchpoints). There's a lot to explore here, and you might want to keep it simple with natural follow-ups, but the use of Stayman without necessarily a four-card major (which you must alert when partner bids 2♣) is a tool that not only helps you put a red pencil through other treatments but something you might have fun with, using the bid to reach some very interesting contracts.

Over My Shoulder

A Hand to Remember
by Andrzej Wilkosz

This hand was given to us some years ago by world champion Andrzej Wilkosz with his own commentary. We, the editors, have rewritten it in Terence Reese's "Over My Shoulder" style.

An invitation to the "Sunday Times" tournament in London (1971) provides an opportunity to play against first-class opposition. When I sit down against the American pair Jordan-Robinson, I hold in third position with everyone vulnerable:

♠ Q 10 5 2
♥ K 6
♦ K J 6 3
♣ J 5 2

My partner opens 1♥ in first seat and I respond 1♠. Partner rebids 2♣. A change of suit generally shows a good distributional playing hand, or extra values, so I am going to do more than give a simple preference to 2♥. I, therefore, bid 2NT. Partner gives me 3NT, and now Robinson, sitting on my right, comes alive with a double. The bidding ends there:

West	North	East	South
—	1 ♥	pass	1 ♠
pass	2 ♣	pass	2 NT
pass	3 NT	double	(all pass)

West leads the seven of hearts and partner puts down:

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

Partner has full values for his bidding, and despite the double, the game at first glance appears to have some play. I cover with the ♥8, Robinson takes the ace, and he returns the ♠8 without much thought. Now the position doesn't look as good. West appears to have the ♠K-J-9-x(x) and Robinson's double indicates that the distribution in the heart suit is unfavorable as well. Covering the ♠8 could prove fatal should East regain the lead: three spade tricks could then be lost if the spade suit divides 4 with West and 3 with East. I, therefore, follow with a low spade and win with the ace in dummy.

It feels natural to cross to hand and try the club finesse, but I do not wish to unblock their heart trick for them, nor do I wish to open up the diamonds this early in

the play. In addition, a club to the queen gains only when West holds the king-doubleton.

♠ 3
 ♥ J 9 5 3
 ♦ A 4
 ♣ A Q 6 4

♠ Q 10 5
 ♥ K
 ♦ K J 6 3
 ♣ J 5 2

Against that, if East has the king-doubleton, a low club off dummy will set up the same three tricks. I have no reason to suppose that playing a club to the queen is any better than a club to the jack, so I shall try the latter, leaving my red-suit holdings undisturbed. The jack of clubs loses to the king, however, and back comes the ♥2 to my king.

With only six sure tricks, I am going to need some luck in the club suit. I play off dummy's high clubs, noting with relief the 3-3 break. I now know that Robinson began with no honor in clubs or (probably) spades, and with only four hearts. It is time to analyze why he has risked the penalty double with such a poor hand; mightn't he have done better to keep the poor heart split to himself?

Reviewing the auction...

West	North	East	South
—	1 ♥	pass	1 ♠
pass	2 ♣	pass	2 NT
pass	3 NT	double	(all pass)

... it occurs to me that West was most likely to lead the unbid suit, diamonds. If Robinson held the queen of diamonds, he would have had no objection to this lead. If however, he has a poor diamond holding, he

might have reasoned that a heart lead was the only lead to give nothing away. That is the most logical explanation for the double, and I am going to proceed on this premise.

♠ 3
 ♥ J 9 5
 ♦ A 4
 ♣ ⑥

♠ Q 10 5
 ♥ —
 ♦ K J 6 3
 ♣ —

I cash the 13th club, and East pitches the ♥10. I am momentarily tempted to pitch a diamond and set up hearts, but a quick count of my losers scotches that idea:

I would lose two hearts, the king of clubs, and presumably two spade tricks. Therefore, I discard a low spade, as does West. I am going to play for an endplay against West, so I cash the ♦A, on which Jordan (West) follows with the promising nine, and play a diamond to the king, on which Jordan contributes the queen. Risking going down two if East can win the third round of diamonds, I get out with my low diamond, and am gratified to see West produce the ten. He is forced to give me a trick with the queen of spades, after which I can cash the ♦J for the game-going trick, concluding an exciting battle.

The full hand was:

North dealer	North (Lebioda)		
All vul	♠ A 3		
	♥ J 9 8 5 3		
	♦ A 4		
	♣ A Q 6 4		
West (Jordan)		East (Robinson)	
♠ K J 9 6 4		♠ 8 7	
♥ 7 2		♥ A Q 10 4	
♦ Q 10 9		♦ 8 7 5 2	
♣ K 8 3		♣ 10 9 7	
	Declarer (Wilkosz)		
	♠ Q 10 5 2		
	♥ K 6		
	♦ K J 6 3		
	♣ J 5 2		

Postmortem

It would not have helped West to pitch a diamond on the 13th club, because declarer can play the ace of diamonds and then duck a diamond all around for the same endplay.

Was Robinson's double misguided? With length in diamonds and hearts well guarded, East shouldn't really mind a diamond lead. It may give up one trick, but set up several for the defense. On the other hand, East was somewhat unlucky not to find the ♥K in dummy, in which case his double would have paid off handsomely.

West	North	East	South
—	1 ♥	pass	1 ♠
pass	2 ♣	pass	2 NT
pass	3 NT	double	(all pass)

Defense Dept.

South dealer	North		
All vul	♠ K 10 3 2		
	♥ 8 7 5 2		
	♦ 2		
	♣ J 5 4 2		
		East (you)	
		♠ 4	
		♥ A Q 9 6 3	
		♦ 10 8 7 4 3	
		♣ Q 10	



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

Opening lead: ♦ 5

You play the ♦10, losing to the ace. Declarer cashes the ♠A and ♠Q. You throw a heart. Declarer plays the ♦K and ♦Q,

throwing two hearts from dummy as partner follows. On the ♦J lead from South, partner ruffs and is overruffed with the ♠10. Next comes the ♣J, you cover and the king loses to partner's ace. He returns a low heart to your ace. You play back a low heart and declarer ruffs. The ♣7 is led to your 10.

♠ K
♥ —
♦ —
♣ 5 4



East (you)
♠ —
♥ Q 9
♦ 8
♣ —

What is your next play?
(Solution on next page.)

Solution to Defense Dept (from previous page)

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

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

Opening lead: ♦ 5

When this hand was played on BBO, South won the diamond with the ace and played the ♠A-Q. South's plan, if spades broke, was to draw the last trump and lead a club to the king. If it won, he has 10 tricks. If it lost, after two rounds of hearts, declarer would ruff, pitch two hearts away on diamonds, and try to set up clubs with another club lead.

But South got some bad news on the second trump when East threw a heart. South proceeded to cash diamonds, throwing hearts from dummy. West ruffed the fourth diamond and dummy overruffed. Now declarer played the ♣J, queen, king, ace. West cannot play his last spade, or declarer knocks out the ♣10 and claims, so he led a low heart to East's ace. East returned a heart. Declarer ruffed and played a club. East won the club in this position:

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

East can defeat the contract: He must play his fifth diamond. South ruffs in hand, but now West can dispose of his third club.

In real life, East played another heart, so declarer was able to ruff (while West follows), cash a club, and make the ♠K for his 10th trick.

The key to the endposition for East was to give the ruff-sluff in the suit that partner is void in, so he can also sluff. In short, giving a ruff-sluff was a losing play but giving a ruff-sluff-sluff (!) was a winner.

Building a Better Mousetrap

Make Your Own Relays

by Alan Truscott

Alan passed away last month (see his obituary on the upper left side of the Bridgetoday.com homepage). This piece was written for the book, *For Experts Only*, and is republished here in a slightly new and expanded version.

Make Your Own Relays - Part I

Most players think relays are impossibly esoteric and not for them. But that is a half-truth: Most good players use some simple relay structures without knowing it. A relay system is simply a collection of relay structures following an organized pattern.

Suppose you bid four notrump, Roman Key Card Blackwood. That is a relay saying nothing about your hand. Your partner responds five clubs, zero or three key-cards, and you bid five diamonds. That is another relay, and your partner is expected to tell you whether he has the queen of trumps. If he has it, he will give you a positive answer and tell you something about side-suit kings.

That is the basis of the relay idea: The controlling hand asks a question, receives an answer, and makes the next available bid to ask a further question.

If a lot is known about one hand, it makes sense for the other hand to take charge and acquire more detailed information. An obvious example arises for those who use Two-Way Stayman. The bidding starts:

Opener	Responder
1 NT	2 ♦
2 NT	

Two diamonds was a relay in the first place, and many now use three clubs as a relay to find the rest of the pattern. You can agree that a major-suit bid shows a three-card suit with 4-4 in the minors, and that three diamonds shows 3-3-4-3 and three notrump 3-3-3-4. When one hand is largely known, it makes no sense for the other to give information: It should receive it in response to questions.

Nearly all readers of *Bridge Today* use weak two-bids in the major suits. And they use a relay response of two notrump, without calling it that, to ask for more information. They play feature rebids, or Ogust, or perhaps show singletons.

And they have not the slightest idea what to do next.

This is a situation that cries out for relay treatment. You have a lot of information about the opener's hand, he knows nothing about yours, and you will often need more information for slam purposes.

A year ago it occurred to me that I need-

ed such a relay structure and I constructed one.

So here is the challenge: Invent your own relay structure for this purpose, starting with the two notrump response, and then compare it with mine.

Here are the ground rules:

1. The weak two-bid, in hearts or spades, is assumed to have a six-card suit with at least one top honor.

2. If possible, the relay bidder would like to know the following by the time three notrump (or at worst four hearts) is reached:

a. Is the weak-two bid minimum or maximum?

b. Does it have a singleton? And if so where?

c. If it is balanced, does it have two of the top three honors, allowing three notrump to be reached with, for example, K-x opposite A-Q-x-x-x-x?

d. In the unlikely event that opener has a void, where is it?

3. The structure should be simple to remember, and follow a similar track whether the opening is in hearts or spades.

4. Remember that the minimum action by responder is always the relay with one important exception: Three notrump is never a relay.

A few readers with no spirit of theoretical adventure may be unwilling to accept the challenge. They should turn immediately to Part II, where I will reveal my structure and suggest how the bidding should continue.

Make Your Own Relays - Part II

Now that you have made your creative effort (shame on you if you did not try), compare your structure with mine:

1. A maximum is defined as having 9-11 (perhaps a super 8-count) and at least two controls (ace = two, king = one). With a maximum bid:

a. 3♦ with a singleton in a minor. Then a 3♥ relay asks which: 3♠ = a diamond singleton, 3NT = a club singleton. (A *general principle* in most relay methods is: Remainders are shown numerically; 1-3 in the minors comes before 3-1 because 13 is a small number than 31.)

b. 3♥ with a balanced hand, presumably 6-3-2-2. Then a 3♠ relay asks for suit quality. Three notrump shows a strong suit, with two top honors, allowing for a final contract if responder has a doubleton top honor; four clubs shows a weak suit, with one top honor and two controls; four diamonds, same, with three controls, etc.

c. 3♠ with a singleton in the unbid major.

d. Three notrump shows a solid suit (as in standard bidding). Then a 4♣ relay asks about remainders: 4♦ = balanced; 4♥ = singleton in the other major; 4♠ = singleton diamond, etc. (numeric). The next relay, or a direct 4♦ after 3NT, asks for the trump jack.

3. 4♣ with a void in the other major, and numeric: 4♦ = void diamond, 4♥ = void club.

2. With a minimum bid 3♣. After a 3♦ relay, nearly all rebids follow the same

track. The exception is 3NT, which shows a minor singleton. Then 4♣ asks which singleton, shown numerically: 4♦ = singleton diamond. This is the one weakness in the structure: With a minimum, you have to go past 3NT to locate a minor singleton.

3. What comes next in these auctions usually follows a pattern that can be, and is, used in similar relay structures. Unless otherwise defined, the next relay, usually 4♣, asks for controls. The response depends on the earlier auction: 4♦ = two controls when maximum, zero with a minimum. And so on. A singleton king is not counted as a control.

4. Further relays permit the controlling hand to locate high cards, on denial cue-bid lines. Assuming opener has a singleton, he looks for high cards in this order: ace or king of the anchor suit; ace, king or queen of the high-ranking fragment; ace, king or queen of the low-ranking fragment; queen of the anchor suit.

The responses are by steps. At any point, the first step denies the first possible high card; the second step promises the first and denies the second, and so on.

Suppose the two hands are:

West	East
♠ A Q 10 6 5 2	♠ K J 8 3
♥ 8 7 2	♥ A 5
♦ 4	♦ 9 8
♣ K 7 2	♣ A Q 10 7 2
2 ♠	2 NT
3 ♦ (a)	3 ♥
3 ♠ (b)	4 ♣
4 ♥ (c)	4 ♠ (d)
5 ♣ (e)	6 ♠ (f)

- (a) Maximum, minor singleton.
- (b) It's diamonds. If it turns out to be in clubs East quits in 4♠.
- (c) Three controls (second step).
- (d) Still a relay, asking West to scan important honors. (Some would play that 4♠ is to play, since it's opener's suit and, therefore, 4NT is the relay.)
- (e) 4NT would deny the ♠A and ♠K. 5♣ shows one of those cards, but denies a top heart (the high-ranking fragment).
- (f) 5♦, another relay, would locate the ♣K and the ♠Q, with a response of 5NT, bypassing two steps. But it is not needed, since East knows that West holds the ♠A and ♣K.

Does your old method get you safely to six spades? Or the new one you have just constructed?

In Conclusion

You can use this approach in many situations in which one hand is well-defined. One example occurs when a Jacoby 2NT response locates a singleton in opener's hand. Another when Flannery finds a three-card minor. In each case, use a three-level relay to ask for a maximum or minimum and continue in the same way.

Those Dangerous American Internationalists

**A look at 12 great hands
from the USA players in the upcoming Bermuda Bowl**

The Bermuda Bowl will take place in Estoril, Portugal, October 22 to November 5, 2005. The USA sends two teams to this event. The next two issues of *Bridge Today* will feature some of the action, which also includes the Venice Cup (Women's KO), Seniors Bowl and Transnational Open Teams. We also plan to send out daily reports and hands in the *Bridge Today Daily* email columns. In the meantime, here are some favorites from the 12 USA Bermuda Bowl players. We'll first look at the USAI team.

Jeff Meckstroth
by Pamela Granovetter

In October of 1981, I was living in New York City, and traveled each day to Rye, New York, to watch the Bermuda Bowl. Matthew (whom I was dating) was the coach of the Pakistan team, which had made it to the final, surprising everyone. The team was spearheaded by the now famous Zia, who at that time was fresh on the American scene.

Pakistan got off to a good start, when some of their "Paki" bridge adventures were successful, and it seemed possible that they might be "the Cinderella team" all the way. Jeff Meckstroth, a fellow Ohioan who had seemed to me to be a young whippersnapper when I first met him in my Cleveland days (not that I was much more than a kid myself), was also new on the international scene and, together with Eric Rodwell, he was taking the bridge world by storm. It was Jeff who turned the match around in the Americans' favor when he stunned the Vugraph audience on this deal:



"a young whippersnapper"

Jeff
Meckstroth



"an element of confusion"

Eric
Rodwell

Board 12	North
N-S vul	♠ A K
West dealer	♥ A Q
	♦ J 9
	♣ A K 10 9 6 4 2
West	East
♠ J 9 8 5 2	♠ 10 3
♥ 8 5 4	♥ 9 7 3
♦ K 4	♦ Q 8 7 6 3 2
♣ J 5 3	♣ Q 8
	South
	♠ Q 7 6 4
	♥ K J 10 6 2
	♦ A 10 5
	♣ 7

West	North	East	South
<i>Meckstroth</i>	<i>Munir</i>	<i>Rodwell</i>	<i>Fazli</i>
pass	2 ♣	pass	2 ♥
pass	3 ♣	pass	3 ♥
pass	4 ♥	pass	4 NT
pass	5 ♠	pass	6 ♦
pass	7 ♥	pass	pass
7 ♠	pass	pass	double
(all pass)			

Munir and Fazli were coasting along, bidding and making their contracts, so when they bid 7♥, Meckstroth must have thought “enough already.” He decided to take fate into his own hands with a bid of 7♠ on the West hand, and the entire Vu-graph audience let out a scream.

Munir passed it around to partner, showing first-round spade control, inviting a bid of 7NT. But Fazli had no help in partner’s suit, clubs, and wisely took the money in 7♠ doubled. In those days, the scoring for doubled non-vul sets was still 100, 300, 500, 700, 900, etc., so a favorable sacrifice was really tempting.

Munir cashed two top clubs and switched to ♥A and ♥Q. Fazli overtook with the king and cashed another heart, on which Munir threw the ♦9. Fazli then cashed the ♦A and led another diamond for partner to ruff, but it was with the ♠K. This lost a trick for the defense, because South could no longer get a club ruff with a small

trump; had the ♠A-K been cashed first, South could ruff a third round of clubs with the ♠7. So Meckstroth took four tricks, for down nine (adds up to -1700). Notice this would be 2300 in today’s scoring.

At the other table, Russ Arnold and John Solodar bid and made 7♥ against Masood and Zia, for plus 2210, so the USA team gained 510, 11imps. Had the defense defeated 7♠ doubled by 10 tricks, it still would have been somewhat of a triumph for Meckstroth, who would have been minus 1900 for a gain of 7imps. Meckstroth and Rodwell went on to win their first Bermuda Bowl, and they never looked back.

Eric Rodwell
by Matthew Granovetter

If you think Jeff Meckstroth’s 7♠ bid is inspirational, you are right. His partner sort of copied him on this one, from a Vanderbilt semifinal. Rodwell picked up this hand on the last board of the match:

♠ K 10 9 6
♥ 3 2
♦ J 9 8 6 5
♣ Q 3

At favorable, he was in fourth chair and saw his LHO open 1♥, partner pass, and RHO jump to 2NT, Jacoby, a game force in hearts. What would your call be?

Rodwell bid 3♠. This was the full deal:

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

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

West led a spade and declarer made six. North thought South's 4♥ bid showed a minimum (the meaning if East had passed 2NT). South thought he was showing a sixth heart. Meanwhile, 3♠ doubled would have gone down six or seven, 1400 or 1700. Makes you want to discuss your defense to overcalls of your Jacoby 2NT, doesn't it?

By the way, stopping the opponents from bidding a slam, by adding an element of confusion into their auction, saved the match for Rodwell's team.

Bob Hamman
by Bob Hamman

Here's one of my favorite hands. It's from a Bermuda Bowl final in Stockholm, where we beat the Italians in a hair-raising finish. I was playing with Bobby Wolff.

East dealer	North (Wolff)
N-S vul	♠ A 8
	♥ A 9 2
	♦ K 8 5 3
	♣ A J 8 3
♠ J	
	South (Hamman)
	♠ K 9
	♥ K 8 6 5
	♦ 6
	♣ 10 9 7 6 5 2

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

Opening lead: ♠J

West, Benito Garozzo, led the ♠J against my 4♥ contract. I won in hand and led a heart to the 9. Giorgio Belladonna, East, won the trick with the queen and returned a spade to the ace. I cashed the ♥A, Garozzo following with the 10. Then I led a heart toward the K-8 as Belladonna followed low. Would you finesse the 8 or play the king?

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

I still had to give up a club, so I couldn't afford for the trumps to break 4-2. With that in mind, I went up with the ♥K, but Garozzo showed out. At this point, what would you do?

East dealer North (Wolff)
 N-S vul ♠ A 8
 ♥ A 9 2
 ♦ K 8 5 3
 ♣ A J 8 3

West (Garozzo)
 ♠ J 10 7 4
 ♥ 10 7
 ♦ 10 9 7 4 2
 ♣ Q 4

East (Belladonna)
 ♠ Q 6 5 3 2
 ♥ Q J 4 3
 ♦ A Q J
 ♣ K

South (Hamman)
 ♠ K 9
 ♥ K 8 6 5
 ♦ 6
 ♣ 10 9 7 6 5 2

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

One idea at this point is to leave the table and head for the airport. You can

cash the ♣A and concede down five first, of course.

Or you could take Yogi Berra's advice: "It ain't over til it's over."

I led the ♣10 next, giving West a chance to make a mistake. Garozzo didn't know I had a side six-card club suit, and he covered with the queen. Garozzo has made a lot of great plays against me over the years, but this wasn't one of them. When the king appeared from Belladonna, I ran the clubs, losing a total of two trump tricks and one diamond. Plus 620. It was a satisfying moment.

"It ain't over til it's over."

Bob Hamman



Paul Soloway
 by David Bird and Nikos Sarantakos*

Put yourself in the West hot seat and see if you would have done better than the great Jeff Meckstroth:

Paul Soloway



1983 US Trials North
 South dealer ♠ J 10 9 4 3
 N-S vul ♥ J 2
 ♦ 7 6 4
 ♣ A 10 7

West
 ♠ 8 6 5
 ♥ A 9 8 7 5
 ♦ Q J 10
 ♣ Q 2



South	West	North	East
Soloway	Meckstroth	Goldman	Rodwell
1 NT	pass	2 ♥	pass
3 ♠	pass	4 ♠	(all pass)

Opening lead: ♦Q

Paul Soloway broke the transfer and Bobby Goldman boldly raised to the spade game. Meckstroth led an obvious ♦Q, drawing the ♦4, ♦8 (upside-down count and attitude), and ♦3. What next?

*adapted from "Bridge Hands to Make You Laugh or Cry"

It was unattractive to switch to hearts or clubs and Meckstroth did what most players would have done: he played another diamond.

1983 US Trials	North	
South dealer	♠ J 10 9 4 3	
N-S vul	♥ J 2	
	♦ 7 6 4	
	♣ A 10 7	
West		East
♠ 8 6 5		♠ 2
♥ A 9 8 7 5		♥ K Q 6 3
♦ Q J 10		♦ 8 5 2
♣ Q 2		♣ K 8 5 4 3
	South	
	♠ A K Q 7	
	♥ 10 4	
	♦ A K 9 3	
	♣ J 9 6	

South	West	North	East
Soloway	Meckstroth	Goldman	Rodwell
1 NT	pass	2 ♥	pass
3 ♠	pass	4 ♠	(all pass)

Opening lead: ♦ Q

Soloway could now win, draw trumps and play two more diamond winners, discarding one of dummy's hearts. He subsequently played the club suit for one loser,

conceding one trick in each side suit.

To beat the game, Meckstroth needed to switch to hearts at trick two. Was there any way to find this switch? Most defenders give an attitude signal on a queen lead, in which case East's ♦ 2* would strongly imply that he did not hold a diamond honor. He might hold ♦ A-K-2 and be fearful of overtaking in case West had led from ♦ Q-x but such a lead was unlikely in the extreme. Nor was it plausible that East held ♦ K-2, since he would play the king on the first round. It therefore seems that three small diamonds was a likely holding for East, albeit that it was unusual for declarer to duck in such circumstances.

Once West reads the diamond position, the danger of a heart being discarded from dummy on the long diamond is apparent. Also, South can be placed with most of his points in spades and diamonds, which increases the prospect of East holding the ♥ K.

*The authors now discuss the hand using standard signals. But playing upside-down, as Meckwell do, the defense is more difficult, since the ♦ 8 could be from K-9-8. In the meantime, this deal exemplifies the danger of playing against Paul Soloway, and his teammates, Jeff and Eric, are happy they don't have to play against him either! — editor

Nick Nickell
by Matthew Granovetter

Put yourself in Nick Nickell's shoes on this deal from the Spingold final in New York last year. You hold:

♠ A Q 4
♥ —
♦ A K Q 8 7 6 5 2
♣ 6 2

Partner opens 1 ♠ and you jump shift to 3 ♦. Partner rebids 3 NT. Let's say you rebid 4 ♦, since you don't want to give up on slam, and partner cuebids 4 ♥. What is your next call?

Here was the full deal:

North dealer North (Freeman)
 All vul ♠ J 6 5 3 2
 ♥ A Q 8 6
 ♦ J 9
 ♣ K J

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

East
 ♠ 10 9 8
 ♥ 4 2
 ♦ 10 4 3
 ♣ A Q 10 8 3

South (Nickell)
 ♠ A Q 4
 ♥ —
 ♦ A K Q 8 7 6 5 2
 ♣ 6 2

West	North	East	South
—	1 ♠	pass	3 ♦
pass	3 NT	pass	4 ♦
pass	4 ♥	pass	5 ♣
pass	5 ♦	pass	6 ♦

(all pass)

Opening lead: ♥J

Nick cuebid his two little and then bid a slam. This had the desired effect. West led the ♥J and two clubs disappeared on the ♥A-Q. Making six!

At the other table, North passed in first seat and South opened 5♦. West also led a heart, but declarer scored only 620. That was 13 imps for Nick. When we told Nick we were writing up this hand, he sent us an email: "Please don't give away my secrets!"



"Please don't give away my secrets!"

Nick Nickell

Dick Freeman
 by Nick Nickell

On this hand from a Grand National Teams final in 1983, Dick Freeman envisioned the entire hand "single-dummy" better than three top experts looking at all four hands!

West dealer North
 E-W vul ♠ K 10 2
 ♥ A K 5 4
 ♦ J 10 4 3
 ♣ A 7

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

South (Dick Freeman)
 ♠ Q 9 5 3
 ♥ 10 6 3 2
 ♦ K 6 5 2
 ♣ 6

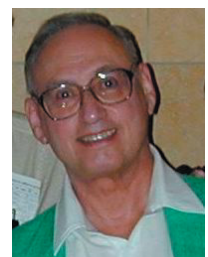
West	North	East	South
1 ♣	double	1 ♥	1 ♠
2 ♣	pass	pass	2 ♦
pass	pass	3 ♣	pass
pass	3 ♦	(all pass)	

Opening lead: ♥7

I was told later that Edgar Kaplan, announcing on VuGraph, said: "It appears that there are five sure losers unless you can endplay East, which careful defense can avoid." Before you read further, can you figure out how Dick made his contract?

"This is a cute hand."

Dick Freeman



West dealer North
 E-W vul ♠ K 10 2
 ♥ A K 5 4
 ♦ J 10 4 3
 ♣ A 7

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

South (Dick Freeman)
 ♠ Q 9 5 3
 ♥ 10 6 3 2
 ♦ K 6 5 2
 ♣ 6

♠ —
 ♥ A 5 4
 ♦ 10 4
 ♣ —

♠ (A)
 ♥ —
 ♦ —
 ♣ K J 9 4

W	N	E
S		

♠ —
 ♥ Q J 9
 ♦ Q
 ♣ Q

♠ Q
 ♥ 10 6 3
 ♦ 6
 ♣ —

Dick won the ♥A and played the ♦J to the ace. West shifted to a club. Dick won the ace, played a diamond to the king and a spade to the 10. He ruffed a club and led a spade to the king. The position was this:

North
 ♠ (2)
 ♥ A 5 4
 ♦ 10 4
 ♣ —

West East
 ♠ A J ♠ —
 ♥ — ♥ Q J 9
 ♦ — ♦ Q
 ♣ K J 9 4 ♣ Q 10

W	N	E
S		

South (Dick Freeman)
 ♠ Q 9
 ♥ 10 6 3
 ♦ 6
 ♣ —

Dick led a spade from dummy to West's jack, East throwing a club. West led the ♠A. If East overruffs dummy, he gets endplayed. However, East can beat the hand by not overruffing, if he throws the ♥9 (and not his last club, otherwise a trump will endplay him).

But Dick did not ruff the ♠A. He pitched a heart from dummy instead. West then had to lead a club, which allowed Dick to ruff in hand and pitch the second losing heart from dummy.

Dick played this hand quite quickly, while the VuGraph announcers said it couldn't be made all the way until the end. At trick five, when the ♠10 held, Dick looked at me and said, "This is a cute hand."

Now let's look at the six American players on the USAII team....

Russ Ekeblad
 by Pamela Granovetter

Suppose you held in second seat vul against not:

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

Your RHO opens 1♥. What is your plan with this hand?

The full deal was:

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

West	North	East	South
Rosenberg	Rubin	Zia	Ekeblad
—	—	1 ♥	1 ♠
2 ♠	pass	3 ♦	4 ♣
4 ♦	pass	4 ♥	4 ♠
double	(all pass)		

Study Russ Ekeblad's method of describing the South hand, from the final of the USA Team Trials. He overcalled 1♠, then bid his clubs, then bid his spades. When he was doubled, his partner, Ron Rubin, understood that Russ held at least 6-5 or 7-5 shape, so Ronnie did not make the mistake of correcting to 5♣. The result was down one after the heart lead.

At the other table, the player with the South cards overcalled 4♠. When it went 5♥, of course, and the auction came back to him, he passed. He didn't really have any clue what to do! The ability to bid slowly and carefully is a mark of a winner and Ekeblad brings this trait into the upcoming Bermuda Bowl.

Ronnie Rubin
by Alan Truscott

Editors: Ronnie Rubin kept his cool on this hand after a bidding accident and made a Vienna Coup to turn the tide in the famous Lancia Match. Here is Alan Truscott's description of the hand and match:

New Yorkers' Stretch Drive Overcomes the Lancia Team by Alan Truscott
(The New York Times, Tuesday, May 20, 1975)

A tremendous stretch drive by a brilliant young New York foursome playing at the New York Hilton here Sunday night against the Lancia touring team brought them not only a notable victory but also five Lancia cars.

The winners were Peter Weichsel, Alan Sontag, Matt Granovetter and Ron Rubin, all of New York, who thus maintained their

unbeaten record this year in major events in the metropolitan area.

Among the losers were three players who very rarely lose: Giorgio Belladonna, Benito Garozzo and Pietro Forquet, who have won bunches of world titles for Italy. The fourth was Omar Sharif, a great performer at the card-table as well as on the screen, and a lesser-known Italian, Antonia Vivaldi, served as alternate.

2d Match on Coast

The Lancia team plays its second match today in Los Angeles against equally formidable opposition, and continues on to Chicago and Miami.

The tourists may have thought that they were headed for an easy victory when they began the second day of play Sunday with a lead of 28 international match points. But the afternoon session of 10 deals reduced

the margin to 11 points, and the 500 or so spectators who gathered to watch the final session of 20 deals on Vu-graph were able to look forward to a fight.

On the third deal, Rubin was able to find the killing lead against a game that Sontag made in the Open Room after a less-revealing auction. This was nullified by some part-score profits for Lancia, but the score was exactly even after the sixth deal, when Forquet and Sharif saved too expensively against a game that their teammates had failed to reach.

Two of the next three deals combined to give Lancia a 21-point lead. Rubin and Granovetter missed an easy slam after a misunderstanding, and failed to reach an easy game. With seven deals remaining, the Lancia lead was 22 points, and the New York supporters were resigned to defeat. However, the players were not so resigned, and in the final seven deals they outscored their famous opponents 47 to 0, to win by 25.

On Vu-graph, Weichsel and Sontag had a virtually flawless session, while their famous opponents, Garozzo and Belladonna, were slightly below their brilliant best. The key hand was the diagramed deal, where Rubin and Granovetter reached an optimistic slam.



"Rubin's bids as South were all relays"

Ron Rubin


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

West	North	East	South
<i>Forquet</i>	<i>Granovetter</i>	<i>Sharif</i>	<i>Rubin</i>
—	1 NT	pass	2 ♣
pass	2 ♥	pass	2 ♠
pass	2 NT	pass	3 ♣
pass	3 ♦	double	pass
pass	redouble	pass	3 ♥
pass	3 NT	pass	4 ♣
pass	4 ♠	pass	6 ♣
(all pass)			

Rubin's bids as South were all relays, asking North to describe his hand in specific fashion. He described his 2-4-3-4 distribution, but the opposing double introduced a slight element of confusion, and Rubin eventually bid six clubs in the belief that his partner held a slightly more suitable hand for slam purposes.

Diamond Is Selected

A heart lead would have given South no chance, but West selected a diamond.

	North (Granovetter) ♠ J 8 ♥ A 6 4 2 ♦ K J 9 ♣ A Q J 10		♠ — ♥ 6 ♦ K J ♣ —
West (Forquet)	East (Sharif)		♠ — ♥ K ♦ Q 4 ♣ —
♠ Q 10 9 4 3 ♥ 10 9 8 ♦ 7 6 5 ♣ 9 4	♠ A 7 6 ♥ K J 5 3 ♦ Q 10 4 3 2 ♣ 7	♠ — ♥ Q ♦ 8 ♣ 8	
	South (Rubin)		
	♠ K 5 2 ♥ Q 7 ♦ A 8 ♣ K 8 6 5 3 2		

Dummy's nine was covered by the ten and taken by the ace. South drew trumps, ending in the dummy, and led the spade jack. East now made a subtle error by winning with the ace, after which the contract could not be defeated.

A spade was returned and Rubin ruffed a spade in the dummy, cashed the heart ace, a key play, and overtook dummy's remaining trump honor with the king. After two more rounds of trumps the position was:

On the last trump, dummy's heart was thrown, and East was squeezed. However he discarded, South had his 12th trick and the slam. The New York team gained 12 points.

If East had ducked the spade lead, West would have had the opportunity to gain the lead in that suit and play a diamond to break the squeeze.

If the slam had been defeated, Lancia would have gained 13 points and the match would have been an exact tie — which might in theory have earned each of the New York experts half a car, with one left over.

Geoff Hampson
by Rich Colker

	North ♠ Q 8 5 ♥ K Q 8 6 ♦ A Q 9 5 ♣ 10 8		West North East South — — pass 1 ♣ 1 ♠ double pass 1 NT pass 3 NT (all pass)
East dealer			
N-S vul			
♥9	South (you)		Opening lead: ♥9
	♠ 9 3 2 ♥ A 5 2 ♦ K 7 2 ♣ K J 9 2		Never mind how you bid it — how do you play it?

This hand is from the 1998 Cavendish Pairs tournament.

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

West	North	East	South
—	—	pass	1 ♣
1 ♠	double	pass	1 NT
pass	3 NT	(all pass)	

Opening lead: ♥9

I thought Geoff Hampson made a nice play to disguise his intentions on this deal. On the ♥9 lead Hampson took the king and played the ♣8 to the king and ace, and now West did not see the danger of the club suit. When he pressed with hearts (instead of switching to spades) declarer could win the ♥Q, give up a club trick and claim nine tricks when he could eventually set up the ♠Q.

Editor's Note: This play illustrates the danger of Geoff Hampson as your opponent! Notice though that the club play also wins when East holds the ♣A and West the ♣Q. It loses in theory when East holds the ♣Q and West the ♣A, unless West ducks the king!



Eric Greco Geoff Hampson

Eric Greco
by Larry Cohen & Alan Truscott
(IBPA Annual Awards 2003 — The ITES Award for Best Defense)

Anyone who spotted Warren E. Buffett of Berkshire Hathaway at the Summer North American Bridge Championships in Long Beach, California, last month might have been excused for thinking that he was the wealthiest person present. However, that would have been wrong, for one of his teammates in the Master Mixed Teams was Bill Gates of Microsoft.

A week later, Buffett, back at his Omaha, Nebraska home, entertained a group led by another financial wizard, Peter Lynch, and played a friendly match. Lynch and his wife, Carolyn, then continued to the 'Nebraska' regional tournament, played just outside the state, across the Missouri River, in Iowa. Their team was uniformly successful, winning three knockout events and the Swiss teams.

Cornhusker Defense

In a knockout event, Eric Greco, West, produced a stellar defense....

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

At the other table, Greco's teammate South opened a 14-16 notrump, and dummy transferred to clubs and then showed spades. South bid three notrump and received a fourth-best ♦8 lead. Dummy's jack won, and the ♣Q went to West's king. West cashed the high diamonds, and declarer claimed 10 tricks for plus 630.

Contrast this with what happened at Greco's table. South opened 1♦ and again the dummy showed clubs and spades with South arriving in 3NT. Greco led a high diamond and got the discouraging 2 from partner, Geoff Hampson. Even looking at all four hands, it's difficult to see a way to beat

the game, but Eric found it. He played the ♦7 at trick two, won by declarer's 9.

Declarer crossed in spades (East showing an even number) and led the ♣Q for a finesse. Greco ducked in tempo. Declarer, afraid to lay down the ♣A (if East has king-third, he can't be let in for a diamond through), continued with dummy's ♣J, passed around to Greco's now bare king.

Greco continued the good work by shifting to the ♠Q. Not only did this pin the jack, but it also severed declarer from dummy's clubs. The ♣A was now blocking the suit. Declarer countered by ducking the spade! Had Greco woodenly continued spades, declarer could have won in dummy and thrown the ♣A to make the contract. But, having done everything right so far, Greco wasn't going to fall from grace at that point. He accurately shifted to hearts, the final nail in declarer's coffin.

Declarer now had to fail by three tricks, down 300! Declarer, seemingly with nine top tricks, was held to two clubs, two hearts, one spade and one diamond trick. Making the right play in all four suits (at the right time), Greco earned 14 imps for his team with his superb defense.

Brad Moss
by Chip Martel

Here are two enterprising bids by Brad Moss from my quarterfinal match against his team in this summer's Spingold.

You hold in first seat:

♠ Q x ♥ Q x ♦ A Q ♣ A K x x x x x

What is your opening bid?

You hold in third seat:

♠ A x x
♥ K x x
♦ K 9 x x
♣ 10 x x



Partner opens 1♣, standard five-card majors system, and RHO overcalls 1♠. What is your call?

In the third quarter of the match, Brad Moss opened 2NT with the South cards:

	North		
	♠ J x x x		
	♥ J x		
	♦ K x x		
	♣ Q 10 x x		
West (Chip)		East	
♠ A x x x		♠ K 10 x	
♥ A x x x		♥ K 10 x x x	
♦ J 10 9 x x		♦ x x x	
♣ —		♣ x x	
	South (Brad)		
	♠ Q x		
	♥ Q x		
	♦ A Q		
	♣ A K x x x x x		

South	West	North	East
2 NT	pass	3 NT	(all pass)

The 2NT bid was alerted by North, because it was N-S's agreement that it could be made on a long minor, short in high-cards. I led the ♦J. Making four. We might score 4♥!

In the fourth quarter he found another winning bid:

	North (Brad)		
	♠ A x x		
	♥ K x x		
	♦ K 9 x x		
	♣ 10 x x		
West		East	
♠ Q x x x x x		♠ J	
♥ A x x		♥ Q J 9 x x x	
♦ Q J x x		♦ A 10 x	
♣ —		♣ J x x	
	South		
	♠ K 10 x		
	♥ 10		
	♦ x x		
	♣ A K Q x x x x		

South	West	North	East
1 ♣	1 ♠	3 ♠	pass
3 NT	(all pass)		

The 3♠ bid was an order to partner to bid 3NT. It didn't matter what West led, there were nine tricks and only four losers. Again, East-West were close to 4♥!

Fred Gitelman by Fred Gitelman

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

West	North	East	South
3 ♠	3 NT	4 ♠	5 NT
pass	6 ♣	pass	6 ♦
(all pass)			

Opening lead: ♣8

How would you play it?

Bridge Today asked me for a favorite hand. Here is an interesting one I played recently in the Houston USA team trials, from the last set of the final:

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

West	North	East	South
3 ♠	3 NT	4 ♠	5 NT
pass	6 ♣	pass	6 ♦
(all pass)			

Opening lead: ♣8

I managed to steer us into a 5-2 diamond fit. I won the club lead in dummy, called for the ♦K and ♦9, letting it ride. So far so good. The ♦8 looked like a true card, so I decided to play the preemptor for 7-3-2-1 shape rather than 7-2-3-1. I cashed the ♠A and threw the ♣A — always fun to do that. Then I ran clubs. If East doesn't ruff, I can throw all five hearts away! So he ruffed, I overruffed, drew the ♦Q and played a heart to the queen. Hearts were 3-3, so that was 12 tricks. We tied the board when they played 6♣ at the other table (a lot easier but not nearly as exciting).

"I cashed the ♠A and threw the ♣A"



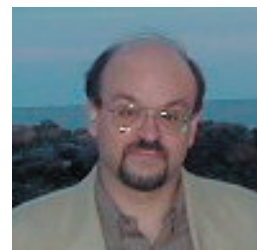
Fred Gitelman

Good luck to both American teams. Bridgetoday.com subscribers, check your emails of Bridge Today Daily the last week of October for a day-by-day account of the world championships.

PS. If you subscribe to Bridge Today Magazine but not the Daily email column, you can upgrade your account by emailing us at pam@bridgetoday.com. We'll let you know the cost based on your current magazine subscription.

Your deal, Mr. Bond

by Pietro Campanile



Looking through the long and varied history of 20th century literature, one often comes across scenes featuring card games, but they mostly deal with poker and other gambling variations, which seem to inspire the writers' imagination far more than bridge. There is one outstanding exception, though, where a bridge game is actually one of the most memorable scenes of a book: It is the encounter between James Bond, aka agent 007, and Hugo Drax in "Moonraker," the novel published in 1955 by Ian Fleming.

Fleming's career as a newspaper correspondent and stockbroker and his passions for golf, fishing, bridge, and collecting books are a world apart from the life of 007. But, as writers usually do, he tended to insert in his novels scenes where he could profit from his own personal experience, and that is why we are treated to 007 displaying some unexpected talent in our game.

In *Moonraker*, Bond is asked as a personal favor to M, his legendary chief, to assist in exposing a member of an exclusive gentlemen's club, suspected of cheating at cards. The alleged villain is none other than Hugo Drax, head of Britain's Moonraker rocket program. Bond willingly agrees to the scheme, and the two plan an elaborate trap, starting at Blades, M's club, where Drax often plays bridge. Once there Bond meets Drax and immediately dislikes his arrogant manners. Moreover, after watching him play bridge, he figures out that he is cheat-

ing by seeing the reflection of the cards in his polished silver cigarette case while dealing. Intending to serve him back some of his own medicine, Bond brings upon a challenge between himself and M against Drax and his partner Meyer at very high stakes.

During the game that follows the stakes are climbing fast while Bond helps himself to many glasses of champagne to impersonate convincingly the part of the happy-go-lucky drunkard and lull Drax into a false sense of security. At the critical moment Bond signals to M that it is time to punish Drax, and while M distracts him, Bond with surprising sleight of hand substitutes the pack of cards he is about to deal for another one, which he had prepared earlier. Drax cannot have been too displeased with the hand he got dealt:

♠ A K Q J
♥ A K Q J
♦ A K
♣ K J 9

He "goads" Bond into raising the stakes again and again and must have been quite bemused by the bidding:

South	West	North	East
Bond	Meyer	M	Drax
7 ♣!	pass	pass	double
redouble	(all pass)		

Unfortunately for Drax, this was the deadly layout prepared by 007:

♠ 10 9 8 7 ♥ 6 5 4 3 ♦ — ♣ 7 6 5 3 2	♠ A K Q J ♥ A K Q J ♦ A K ♣ K J 9	<table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S	♠ — ♥ — ♦ Q 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 ♣ A Q 10 8 4
N						
W E						
S						

South	West	North	East
Bond	Meyer	M	Drax
7 ♣!	pass	pass	double
redouble	(all pass)		

Meyer leads the ♦J, ruffed in dummy, and an astonished Drax can only watch helplessly while Bond finesses the clubs and sets up his diamonds with another ruff in dummy, making his contract with ease. Despite realizing he has been set up, Drax cannot avoid paying up the huge sum he lost with so many illustrious guests looking on.

As the story moves along, Bond meets up with Drax's personal assistant, Gala Brand, and the two of them discover that there is much more to the Moonraker project. The final showdown is one of Fleming's best creations, but it will be no surprise to disclose that Bond will escape unscathed and triumphant from the clash with Drax's frightening "Ueber-Mensch." Surprisingly enough, the bridge scene, of crucial importance in getting the plot going, was excised from the movie script. So Roger Moore, cast as 007 in Moonraker, did not get the chance to show off his bridge skills.

Back to the bridge. The hand used by Bond was not invented for the occasion but was instead a variation of what had actu-

ally been known for almost two centuries as "the Duke of Cumberland hand," a classic of Whist folklore, shown here below:

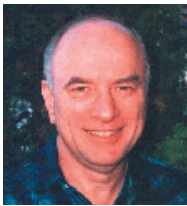
♠ A K Q ♥ A K Q J ♦ A K ♣ K J 9 7	<table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S	♠ — ♥ — ♦ 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 ♣ A Q 10 8	♠ J 10 9 8 7 6 ♥ 10 9 8 7 6 ♦ Q J ♣ —
N						
W E						
S						
♠ 5 4 3 2 ♥ 5 4 3 2 ♦ — ♣ 6 5 4 3 2						

Its first mention can be found in a famous book published by Edmund Hoyle in 1742, "Short Treatise on the Game of Whist." According to common lore, the hand was named after Ernest Augustus, Duke of Cumberland, fifth son of George III, who allegedly lost 20,000 Pounds (an absolutely enormous sum by today's standards) betting on it at the casino in Bath, England. In Whist, trumps are set beforehand by turning a card and here clubs were chosen. After bets were raised again and again, the Duke led the ♣7 (a disastrous lead) and could do nothing to stop South from taking all the tricks.

Interestingly enough, there is another curious connection between cards and the previous holder of the title, William Augustus, later known with the charming attribute of "Butcher Cumberland," after he led the English army against the Scots at the battle of Culloden Moor in 1746. This was the last battle fought on British soil and one of the bloodiest, with the English army superior weaponry cutting down huge numbers of the courageous but hopelessly outclassed highlanders.

The story goes that on the day after the engagement, it was reported to the Duke, that a great number of the wounded rebels were still wandering around the field of battle. The Duke, on being informed of this circumstance, ordered that a party of military should be sent out to kill the unfortunate men wherever they could be found. Upon hearing such ruthless instructions, the officer in command of the troops that were supposed to execute them sought an immediate audience with the Duke and respectfully requested to have

them in writing. The Duke, irritated by the lack of confidence implied by the demand, hurriedly looked about the apartment for paper on which to write the desired order, but he could see none. While looking for the paper, however, he accidentally turned up a corner of the carpet with his foot, and brought to view a card that had been lying beneath it. He quickly picked it up and he wrote the fatal order with a pencil on the back of the card. This card was the nine of diamonds, which soon after came to be known as "The curse of Scotland."



The Wizards of Aus

Hands from Australian Tournaments

by Ron Klinger

Problem One North (dummy)
 South dealer ♠ K 10
 None vul ♥ K 6 5 4 2
 ♦ 10
 ♣ K J 10 8 7

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



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

- (1) 12-14
- (2) transfer

You try the lead of the ♦A against 4♥. Partner plays the 9, South the 4. Your signals are: An odd card is encouraging, but a low odd card is more encouraging than a high odd card. How do you continue?

Problem 2 North (dummy)
 North dealer ♠ 7 6 5 4
 E-W vul ♥ 10 8 7 3
 ♦ —
 ♣ J 10 7 6 5

West (you)
 ♠ K 2
 ♥ A J 9 4
 ♦ K 9 8 3 2
 ♣ 8 3



West	North	East	South
—	pass	1 ♦	1 ♠
double	3 ♠*	pass	4 ♠

(all pass)

*Preemptive

Opening lead: ♦3

Perhaps you would have bid 5♦ or doubled 4♠. But let's say you pass and lead a diamond. Declarer ruffs in dummy as partner follows low (standard signals). Declarer calls for a spade. Partner plays the 8, South the queen and you win the king. Now what?

1. Chris Sundstrom has returned to the bridge scene at the NSW Bridge Association after many years absence. An early success has put him and Paul Lavings in the 2005 NSW Open Team. Sundstrom found the killing defense on this deal from Stage 2 of the Interstate Teams Selection:

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

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

- (1) 12-14
- (2) transfer

Opening lead: ♦ A

Lavings contributed the 9 and Sundstrom considered the implications of that. Their signaling agreement was that an odd card is encouraging, but a low odd card is more encouraging than a high odd card. If the ♦ 9 was Lavings' only odd card, that would give declarer Q-7-5-4. It would not make sense for Lavings to encourage diamonds with K-9-2. It could, however, be right to continue diamonds if Lavings had ♦ K-9 doubleton.

Sundstrom judged that, with a singleton in dummy, East's diamond card was much more likely to be a suit-preference signal. The high card suggested the high suit and so he switched to ♠ A and another spade. Declarer crossed to the ♣ A and led the ♥ 7 to the king. When that held, South continued with a low heart and played low from hand. West won and the third spade was ruffed by East for one down. Datum on the deal was N-S +50.

Percentage Chart					
(from the Bridgetoday.com Bridge Lab)					
Missing	Division	%	Missing	Division	%
8 cards	4-4	33%	5 cards	3-2	68%
	5-3	47%		4-1	28%
	6-2	17%		5-0	4%
	7-1	3%		4 cards	2-2
8-0	0.16%	3-1	50%		
7 cards	4-3	62%	4-0		10%
	5-2	30%	3 cards	2-1	78%
	6-1	7%		3-0	22%
	7-0	1%		2 cards	1-1
6 cards	3-3	36%	2-0		48%
	4-2	48%			
	5-1	15%			
	6-0	1%			

2. On this deal from the ITS final, Sundstrom made a game the opponents might have defeated:

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

West	North	East	South
—	pass	1 ♦	1 ♠
double	3 ♠*	pass	4 ♠
(all pass)			

*Preemptive

Opening lead: ♦ 3

Sundstrom was hoping for a little more

in dummy, even though North's raise is primarily a shut-out bid. North's modest holding certainly could have included the ♠K, which would make 4♠ respectable.

Sundstrom ruffed the lead in dummy and played a spade to the queen and king. The crisis point of the deal had been reached. If West returns a spade, East can win and play a third spade. South is now restricted to nine tricks. Alternatively, two rounds of hearts forces the South hand and now declarer must lose three trump tricks, as East can play a third round of hearts when he wins the ♠A. In practice West played another diamond, ruffed in dummy, and another spade was led. South could now draw the missing trumps and he made two spades in hand, two ruffs in dummy, the ♦A and five club tricks. That was worth +420, with the datum being N-S +110.

A heart or spade return is easier on paper than at the table. West no doubt thought that South would have a five-card spade suit. Even so, declarer might be hoping to ruff three diamonds in dummy and the spade return would limit dummy to two ruffs at most.

The Danger of Kibitzing

*from The Official Encyclopedia of Bridge,
edited by Dorothy Francis*

A classic story, and one of the few completely true ones, involved the players at a well-known New York club and their one kibitzer. The five-level contract was doubled, and with the opponents on lead to the tenth trick, declarer spread his hand, claiming the balance, just making the contract. The opposition agreed, and the cards were just about to be thrown in, when

the kibitzer pointed out a defensive lead which would have defeated the contract at that point. Bitter harangue and confusion then ensued and the matter was at length referred to the card committee. The final decision was that declarer be credited with making the contract doubled, the defense be credited with defeating the contract one trick, and the kibitzer be ordered to pay the difference.



The Switch in Time Forum

From Alan Holmes: Due to a disagreement with my partner, the following three questions have arisen:

West dealer	North										
N-S vul	♠ Q 8 5										
	♥ A J 10 6										
	♦ 9 7 6 4										
	♣ 4 2										
		East (you)									
♠ K	<table style="border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center; width: 40px; height: 40px;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ 9 4 3
	N										
W		E									
	S										
		♥ Q 8 4 2									
		♦ J 8 5 2									
		♣ K 3									

West	North	East	South
1 ♠	pass	2 ♠	3 ♣
(all pass)			

Opening lead: ♠K

As East, what do you play to the first trick (not playing Obvious Shift Principle)?

If you do play the Obvious Shift Principle, does it apply here?

If it applies, what card do you play to the first trick?

Editor: Nice problem! East should play the ♠9 to tell partner not to switch to diamonds. I would recommend this play even without prior discussion and hope partner doesn't read it as a count card. Partner with the ♥K, may figure out to shift to hearts.

This hand demonstrates the beauty of Obvious Shift carding, especially in a setting where you have raised partner and, therefore, a high card is not misleading.

Here is the full hand.

West dealer	♠ Q 8 5										
N-S vul	♥ A J 10 6										
	♦ 9 7 6 4										
	♣ 4 2										
♠ A K 7 6 2		East	♠ 9 4 3								
♥ K 9 7	<table style="border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center; width: 40px; height: 40px;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♥ Q 8 4 2
	N										
W		E									
	S										
♦ K 3		♦ J 8 5 2									
♣ 10 9 6		♣ K 3									
	♠ J 10										
	♥ 5 3										
	♦ A Q 10										
	♣ A Q J 8 7 5										

Alan: I was West. If I see the ♠9 from partner, I believe the correct play is to shift to the ♥K, which could cause declarer to go wrong, playing me for both heart honors — especially if partner can play me for three hearts.

Editor: Nice idea! The ♥K is a great shift, much better than the ♥7. This beautiful play is useful for hands where there's no entry to dummy. Even if declarer guesses to win the ♥A, he may not guess to finesse clubs and draw trump. He might play on diamonds or he might play the ♥J to the queen; East would shift to diamonds and declarer must guess to play the ♦A and ♦10 to make the contract — not likely.

Story of the Month

by Eddie Kantar

This is my favorite story of the month — it comes from Jonathan (Jon) Shuster. Playing in a Sectional Swiss his team was tied for first going into the last round. On the following hand sitting South with both sides vulnerable, he picked up:
 ♠ A K J x ♥ K 9 x x ♦ A K x ♣ K x and heard his RHO, East, open 3♣. Jonathan doubled, his partner responded 3♦, and Jon closed the bidding with 3NT.

The opening lead is the ♣3 and this dummy tables:

♣ 3	Dummy
	♠ Q x x
	♥ Q x x
	♦ J x x x
	♣ 10 x x
	Jon
	♠ A K J x
	♥ K 9 x x
	♦ A K x
	♣ K x

A low club was played from dummy and East's nine was taken by the king. Four spades were cashed, a club discarded from dummy. East followed twice and discarded two diamonds. Next came the ♦A-K and a diamond to West's queen, East following to the first diamond and then pitching two hearts.

Jon had seven tricks and West got out with the ♥J....

	Dummy
	♠ —
	♥ Q x x
	♦ J
	♣ 10
♥ J	
	Jon
	♠ —
	♥ K 9 x x
	♦ —
	♣ x

Knowing the ♥A must be with West (otherwise the East hand has all winners), Jon could have taken the heart exit with the queen and the ♦J in dummy would have been his trick 9. But since it was clear that West didn't have another club, why not win the ♥K in the closed hand and lead up to the ♥Q for a possibly valued overtrick? Indeed, why not? Jon did just that. When he led a low heart toward the queen, however, West stepped up with the ace and suddenly discovered a second club stuck in back of his ♥A. West led his club, East claimed and Jon had a good story!

Jon writes: "Eddie, there was no room for East to have seven clubs originally. (He was known to hold two spades, two hearts and three diamonds and had no room for seven clubs.) The club was stuck behind a heart in LHO's hand! Those refreshments can be haunting!"

The lesson is that counting is important even when all the evidence appears clear-cut. Jon's team still won the match. *Ciao.*