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BRIDGE TODAY



Editor: Matthew Granovetter

The Magazine for People Who Love to Play Bridge

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The Red Pencil

by Matthew Granovetter

~~Limit Raise Cuebids~~



You open the bidding in a major. Next hand overcalls. What does a jump in the major show?

West	North	East	South
1 ♠	2 ♦	3 ♠	

Most play it preemptive. With a limit raise or better they bid 3♦. Ugh.

West	North	East	South
1 ♠	2 ♦	3 ♦	dbl/pass/3♥

Fourth hand can double for the lead, or not double to say he has nothing in diamonds, again helping partner with the lead. Fourth hand may even be able to slip in a 3♥ bid here. Double ugh.

Now suppose 1♠-2♦-3♠ was your limit raise. Fourth hand can do nothing to pass any information to his partner.

You might ask, "Oh, come on, how often does this matter?" It comes up a lot! Here's my most happy memory with limit-raise cuebids (by my opponents). It occurred in the New York Lancia Match in 1975. Omar Sharif, the victim of this convention, writes about what happened, in his book, Omar Sharif Talks Bridge.*

"Early in the match a common convention misfired for us because it gave the opponents a chance to make a lead-directing double. This was the lay-out:

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

West	North	East	South
Rubin	Forquet	Granovetter	Sharif
pass	pass	pass	1 ♥
2 ♦	3 ♦	double	4 ♥
(all pass)			

"Forquet's 3♦ indicated a sound game-try in hearts (a direct bid of 3♥ would have been preemptive). It is common enough treatment but here it gave Matt Granovetter the chance to double for a diamond lead.

"On another day West might have held ♦A-10-7-6-3-2 and a diamond lead would have helped us. On this occasion a diamond lead was deadly. I won East's ♦Q with the ace and played the ace of trumps, dropping the king from West. The jack of trumps went to East's queen and he returned his remaining diamond to the 9 and 10. A third round of diamonds was ruffed in the dummy and overruffed by East. A further trick had to be lost to the ♣A and

*co-authored with David Bird, Finesse Publications

that was one down.

“This was the bidding at the other table:

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

West	North	East	South
Garozzo	Weichsel	Belladonna	Sontag
pass	pass	pass	1 ♥
pass	3 ♥	pass	4 ♥
(all pass)			

“Garozzo led a spade (who can blame him?) and that was a game swing away.”

Notice that Sharif is still bitter about this, mentioning that if West had the ♦A instead of the king, the double might have backfired. Do you think he’s right? I don’t. Give West the ♦A instead of the king and a diamond lead is still the killer, but on a spade lead the contract makes.

OK, you say, that cuebid is bad news, but what about our preemptive raises? Must we give them up?

Do you think they are so good? You should be very happy to give them up! I will demonstrate a typical scenario with preemptive jump raises, wherein the preemptive

tor pushes his opponents into a vulnerable game they would never reach on their own steam.

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

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

Here I switched the ♠A for the deuce and North makes the politically correct jump raise to 3♥, preemptive, pushing East into a corner. East takes a stab at 3NT and South leads the ♥J to dummy’s king. A diamond is led to the queen and ace. Now South is suddenly in a sweat and very sorry he is playing preemptive jump raises. Is his partner’s entry in clubs? Then a club shift is best. Or does East hold the ♣K and ♠Q-J for his bid and North holds the ♠A? In that case, South must shift to spades immediately.

So East makes 3NT if South shifts to spades and goes down if South shifts to clubs. I like the odds. I’d rather pass over 2♦ with the North hand and let them play a peaceful 3♦ partscore, wouldn’t you?

Have a good month!

Nail Biter

by Pamela Granovetter

The Spingold Final (second quarter)



Chicago, Summer Nationals — After the first quarter of the 2006 Spingold, the Nickell team led the Cayne team 25-22. The second quarter was a bit of a ping-pong match, with many swings hinging on tough bidding decisions.

Nickell won an overtrick imp on board 17. Then:

Board 18 • East dealer • North-South vul

You hold as North:

♠ A K Q J 9 3 2 ♥ A ♦ 4 ♣ K 10 8 3

West	North	East	South
—	—	pass	pass
2 ♥	?		

Nick Nickell cue-bid 3♥ with these cards whereas Lorenzo Lauria doubled. The cue-bid fared much better:

West	North	East	South
—	—	pass	pass
2 ♥	3 ♥	pass	3 NT
pass	4 ♠	pass	6 ♠
(all pass)			

The two hands were:

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

South
 ♠ 5
 ♦ J 10 8 6
 ♥ K Q 8 5
 ♣ A 7 6 4

The slam was a good one, needing the ace of diamonds outside, or a club-diamond squeeze (give East five diamonds and three clubs). The ace of diamonds was not only outside, but it was led, so declarer had an easy claim.

After Lauria's double, the auction continued:

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

Do you think Lauria did justice to the North hand? Neither do I. That was 13 imps to Nickell.

The very next board was another slam-zone hand. This time put yourself in Dick Freeman's seat:

Board 19 • South dealer • East-West vul

You hold as South:

♠ J 10 6 ♥ A 4 3 ♦ A J 9 5 4 ♣ 9 8

South	West	North	East
pass	pass	1 ♠	pass
2 ♣*	pass	2 ♥	pass
2 ♠	pass	4 ♦**	pass
4 ♥	pass	5 ♣	pass
5 ♦	pass	5 ♠	pass
?			

* Drury

** splinter

Do you check out or give partner six?

Freeman carried on to slam, which wasn't so wonderful when Nickell's hand was:

♠ A K Q 8 5 ♥ K Q 10 7 ♦ — ♣ K 10 5 2

Nickell was favored with a heart lead, but the ace of clubs was wrong and the slam had no play. Perhaps Freeman thought that he had limited his hand with his 2♠ rebid and that Nickell, therefore, held a bit more for his two slam tries, say the ace of clubs instead of the king. On the other hand, with that card, Nickell might have bid slam himself after Freeman, too, made two slam advances.

At the other table South showed diamond strength so North was not turned on by his hand. Versace-Lauria rested in 4♠ and recouped 11 imps.

Nickell won back 3 imps in a partscore auction, then, after the two teams exchanged overtrick imps, North had another tough call to make:

Board 24 • South dealer • All vul

You hold as North:

♠ A J ♥ A K 6 ♦ 7 ♣ Q J 10 9 8 6 3

South	West	North	East
pass	1 ♥*	2 ♣	2 ♥
double	pass	?	

*four-card majors

What would you bid as North after partner's responsive double?

It seems to me that 3NT is a better gamble than 5♣ because 5♣ requires three key cards from partner, while 3NT can make opposite as little as a club honor and a diamond stopper. Lauria, however, chose to leap to 5♣ (-100) and lost 6 imps when Nickell and Freeman had to contend with a 1♣ opening bid and stopped in 3♣ (+130). The whole hand was:

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

The 5♣ contract had no play, but 3NT has chances. In order to defeat 3NT, East must make the right lead and this must be followed up with careful defense: East leads a heart and when West wins his first club trick, he shifts to a low spade. If North ducks, East wins the spade and shifts back to hearts.

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



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

A diamond lead won't work. Declarer wins and plays a club. If West shifts to a spade, declarer plays the jack and East is in. Both the spades and diamonds are blocked so the defense cannot take more than four tricks (try it!). If East (mis)guesses to lead a spade, 3NT is a cinch to make.

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

Board 24 • West dealer • None vul

You hold as South:

♠ 6 ♥ A Q 10 8 4 ♦ A 3 2 ♣ Q 7 6 5

West	North	East	South
1 ♠*	pass	1 NT (nf)	?

* four-card majors, limited to 17 HCP

The question that you might ask yourself here is: Where are the spades? It's quite likely that partner has some good spades sitting over the opening bidder. If you believe this, you might consider doubling 1NT because they might be on a misfit. Versace did so, and the bidding continued:

West	North	East	South
1 ♠	pass	1NT	double
2 ♣	double	pass	?

Versace passed (never bidding his hearts!) and chalked up +300 against Hamman-Soloway's 4-3 club fit.

It was difficult for East-West to find their diamond fit. In the other room:

West	North	East	South
Cayne	Nickell	Seamon	Freeman
1 ♠	pass	1 NT	2 ♥
double	pass	3 ♦	pass
pass	3 ♥	4 ♦	(all pass)

Freeman's overcall of 2♥ with the South cards was greeted with a takeout double by Cayne (West). East-West now easily found their diamond fit. Even though they bid up to the four level, over North's 3♥ bid, that was only down one, -50. I think this was a cool way to win 6 imps!

Five imps bounced back to Nickell from a choice of plays in a partscore, and then came two pushes, one of which was disheartening for Nick Nickell. Put yourself in his seat:

♠ K Q 3 ♥ 7 6 2 ♦ K J 6 4 2 ♣ K Q

After 1♣ by LHO, pass, pass to you, what would you call?

What if LHO opened 2♣ (natural 11-15), pass, pass?

Nickell balanced with 1♦, a 100% normal bid, but the opponents now zoomed into a game they should have always reached by themselves (at the other table, Hamman-Soloway reached it easily). The East-West hands were:

<p>♠ A 10 9 8 2 ♥ 8 ♦ 10 9 8 5 3 ♣ 9 6</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	<p>♠ K Q 3 ♥ 7 6 2 ♦ K J 6 4 2 ♣ K Q</p> <p>♠ J 4 ♥ A K Q J 5 ♦ — ♣ A J 10 5 4 3</p>
--	--	--

West Cayne	North Nickell	East Seamon	South Freeman
—	—	1 ♣	pass
pass	1 ♦	4 ♥	pass
5 ♣	(all pass)		

At the other table Soloway responded to a natural 2♣ opening bid by Hamman, so they reached game on their own accord.

On Board 28, Lauria, vulnerable against not, heard his RHO open 1♠ in first seat and he chose to overcall 1NT with:
♠ K J 6 4 ♥ 6 ♦ A K 5 3 ♣ A 9 5 3

This propelled his side to a poor 5♣ contract which duly failed:

West dealer ♠ K J 6 4
N-S vul ♥ 6
 ♦ A K 5 3
 ♣ A 9 5 3

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

West Soloway	North Lauria	East Hamman	South Versace
1 ♠	1 NT	pass	2 ♦ (transfer)
pass	2 ♥	pass	2 ♠
pass	2 NT	pass	3 ♣
pass	5 ♣	(all pass)	

Opening lead: ♦7

Versace was simply a trick short. At the other table:

West Cayne	North Nickell	East Seamon	South Freeman
pass	1 ♦	pass	1 ♥
1 ♠	pass	pass	1 NT
pass	2 NT	(all pass)	

Interestingly, this time clubs weren't mentioned at all. Stopping in a partscore was worth 6 imps to Nickell.

On the next board, Versace found a better opening lead than Freeman to beat a vulnerable game, and that was worth 13 imps for his side. You can try it:

You hold as West:

♠ J 4 3 ♥ 7 3 ♦ A 10 9 8 6 3 ♣ 7 6

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

What is your lead?

Would it make any difference if the auction was shorter:

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

This was the full deal (below):

(Hand rotated.)

	Dummy	
	♠ 10 6 5	
	♥ A Q 10	
	♦ Q	
	♣ A Q 5 4 3 2	
Freeman/Versace		East
♠ J 4 3		♠ A 2
♥ 7 3		♥ J 9 6 5
♦ A 10 9 8 6 3		♦ J 4 2
♣ 7 6		♣ K 10 9 8
	South	
	♠ K Q 9 8 7	
	♥ K 8 4 2	
	♦ K 7 5	
	♣ J	

Freeman led the ♦A, Versace led the ♣7. After the ♦A, declarer had no problems. He was able to pull trump with two trump leads from dummy, while ruffing his diamond loser along the way, losing one spade, one heart and one diamond.

Against the ♣7 lead, however, declarer had a problem, because he had to dislodge the ♦A and then another club came back. So when East won the ♠A later, he was able to give his partner a trump promotion with a third round of clubs. The ♠J was the setting trick!

The quarter finished with three dull pushes, and the Nickell team had won the quarter 35-31. At half-time the score stood at 60-53 Nickell, still anybody's game. (To be continued.)



Kantar's Korner

by Eddie Kantar

One of the best intended titles for a bridge book that I have come across is "Almost Bridge." Here are two examples for the book.

(1) Grant Baze, San Francisco expert, is frequently involved in strange happenings. Consider this incident from many years ago: Playing money bridge, vul. vs. not, Grant picked up this rather innocuous looking hand: ♠ K J 8 2 ♥ 2 ♦ 9 5 3 ♣ Q 10 5 4 3.

Imagine his surprise when his RHO, Ward Corbin, dealt and opened 6♥! Grant passed as did third hand, but Grant's partner, Ivan Scope, did not. He doubled.

Everyone passed and it was Grant's lead. Before checking out the whole hand, what would you have led? (Answer at conclusion.)

South	West	North	East
6♥	pass	pass	double
(all pass)			

(2) Playing OKbridge with a player who will one day be a very good player against a pair that finished last in the duplicate, I raised partner's 1NT opening bid to 2NT via Stayman and he carried on to game.

North (moi)
 ♠ J 9 2
 ♥ K 9 4
 ♦ 10 2
 ♣ A 10 9 5 3

South (partner)
 ♠ 10 5
 ♥ A Q 8 7
 ♦ A K 7 4
 ♣ K 4 2

A low spade was led to East's queen and back came a heart to the 10 and dummy's king. Strange. At the time I was trying to work out the spade position.

At trick three, partner, knowing East to be a weak player who would cover the ♣10 when he shouldn't, tried that card. It went low, king, jack. When partner led a second club, West discarded a heart and the club was ducked to East's 8. So much for knowing an opponent's tendencies.

This time East returned the ♦8, ducked to the jack. Back came a low diamond to the ten, queen and ace. (Are you beginning to wonder where the spades are? Maybe they are all on the floor!) My partner now cashed three rounds of hearts (they were 3-3 all along), West discarding a diamond and a spade, East, a spade. (At least they weren't all on the floor.)

I will take you out of your misery and show you the four-card ending my partner reached, needing three of the last four tricks.

♠ J 9 ♥ — ♦ — ♣ A 9	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <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		♠ K ♥ — ♦ 8 ♣ Q 6
	N										
W		E									
	S										
♠ A 8 7 ♥ — ♦ 6 ♣ —	♠ 10 ♥ — ♦ K 7 ♣ 4										

If partner plays the ♦K, the 8 falls, the 7 is high, so three tricks are assured. In addition, East would have to make a discard on the last diamond. Considering his affinity for spades, he might discard a club (remember, this is “almost bridge”) and then my partner makes an overtrick — better than losing the first five spade tricks. But no, my partner led a spade. West rose with the ♠A, felling the king, and instead of exiting a spade, allowing partner to take the setting

trick in clubs, he returned a diamond. Happy ending. Had West ducked the spade, East takes the king and can defeat the contract by returning a club. What are the odds that East would have done that? It’s 100 to 1 East would have returned a diamond. In other words, given this ending in an “almost bridge” game, my partner couldn’t go down. The full hand was:

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

Back to Grant’s opening lead headache:

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

South	West	North	East
6 ♥	pass	pass	double
(all pass)			

Grant pondered a long time over his lead wondering whether or not his partner had doubled because he had a void and was hoping to alert Grant to that possibility. Grant finally decided to lead a low spade. Declarer played low from dummy, won the trick with the 10 and drew a few rounds of trumps. Actually he drew *nine* rounds of trumps! After that deluge, he finessed the ♠Q and made his slam with nine hearts and three spades.

Grant had 11 cards he could have led to defeat the slam (only the two small spades were losers). Credit Corbin for going all out to make his slam by ducking the lead in dummy at trick one. By the way, even though this hand happened eons ago, it is recommended that you not bring up this hand in Grant’s presence. *Ciao*.



Diary of the World Mixed Pairs

by Matthew Granovetter

Part IV — Going Down to Go Up



Verona, Italy — It was the final round of the World Mixed Pairs. Karen McCallum and I were in second position. Could we hang on? Could we actually win the gold?

We started round one against Larry Cohen and Kerri Sanborn. Rather than nervous, I was feeling a little too relaxed, having just had a short mid-afternoon nap. Yawning, I picked up these cards:
 ♠ 7 5 4 ♥ K J 9 8 6 4 3 ♦ 2 ♣ A 8

All vul, my partner opened 2♦, and it went pass to me. The 2♦ bid was not “McCallum” — the weaker variety — because we were vulnerable. Nevertheless, my partner’s vulnerable weak two-bids are nothing to write home about. Luckily, we were playing new suits as non-forcing, so I bid 2♥. Kerri, who happens to be one of Karen’s favorite partners, doubled this on my left. My partner surprisingly raised to 3♥ and Cohen on my right jumped to 4♠. Would you bid again or defend?

Kerri	Karen	Larry	Matthew
—	2 ♦	pass	2 ♥
double	3 ♥	4 ♠	?

I had a singleton diamond, good for defense, especially since I could lead it, but I figured partner would be cautious about raising to 3♥ without strong support. My three little spades made me think partner was short there, so I bid 5♥. This was passed around to Larry, who doubled. . . .

Karen
 ♠ 10 9 3
 ♥ A Q 2
 ♦ 10 9 8 7 5 3
 ♣ 9

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

Larry
 ♠ A K Q 2
 ♥ 10 7
 ♦ J 4
 ♣ J 7 6 4 3

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

Kerri	Karen	Larry	Matthew
—	2 ♦	pass	2 ♥
double	3 ♥	4 ♠	5 ♥
pass	pass	double	(all pass)

Partner had nothing *but* heart support! This was OK. I lost three spades and a diamond, for down two, minus 500. They were cold for 620 in spades, and 650 if we didn’t get our club ruff, and 680 if my hand leads a diamond.

But we scored only 48%. Many pairs went one down in 4♠ after the diamond lead when declarer refused to draw trump.

	Karen ♠ 10 9 3 ♥ A Q 2 ♦ 10 9 8 7 5 3 ♣ 9	Cohen dealer None vul	Dummy ♠ A 9 5 ♥ A 7 6 5 ♦ Q J ♣ A 6 5 4		
Kerri ♠ J 8 6 ♥ 5 ♦ A K Q 6 ♣ K Q 10 5 2		Larry ♠ A K Q 2 ♥ 10 7 ♦ J 4 ♣ J 7 6 4 3	Declarer ♠ K Q 2 ♥ J 8 4 3 ♦ K 8 7 ♣ K 7 2		
	Matthew ♠ 7 5 4 ♥ K J 9 8 6 4 3 ♦ 2 ♣ A 8				
		Kerri — pass pass	Karen — 2 ♦ 4 ♥	Larry 1 ♦ pass (all pass)	Matthew double 2 ♥

Afraid that trumps were 4-2, these declarers led a club first and now my hand could win, lead a heart to the ace and ruff a low diamond return. Then the ♣8 return for partner to ruff set the contract! To make 4♠ after the diamond lead, you have to play wide open, drawing trump, hoping for a 3-3 split. You then make 680 for a 92% score.

It's a fascinating matchpoint problem, much easier atimps to decide. The ♦2 does look like a singleton, so it doesn't seem right to concede down one on this hand, does it? By the way, East-Wests who went minus 100 scored 23%. We scored 48% for our -500, just about average — yet hardly an average hand!

My historical trouble with first-round declarer play hands* continued to hurt me, when I had to declare board 2, and I was just not fully there. . . .

*For 40 years or so, I've had trouble declaring a hand on the first round of a session, because I'm not mentally ready. At one point early in my career, my partner suggested we play a couple hands or at least bid a couple hands before the start of each session, sort of like in other sports where you throw the ball around to warm up.

My double was not a thing of beauty, but I thought it was one of those now or never situations. Kerri led the ♣Q. What do you think? Any ideas?

My simple (half-asleep?) idea was to play for the doubleton ♥K-Q. I won the lead in dummy and cashed the ♥A. But Larry followed with the 10 and Kerri with the 2. No luck. I gave up and continued hearts. Larry won the queen as Kerri followed with the 9. He then cashed the king, then the ♦A and a diamond. That was book and there was no way to avoid a club loser — down one (28% score).

I heard some talk at the other side of the screen. Suddenly I heard: You could make the hand.

Do you see how? Here's the entire hand:

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

Kerri	Karen	Larry	Matthew
—	—	1 ♦	double
pass	2 ♦	pass	2 ♥
pass	4 ♥	(all pass)	

The ♣Q lead is the clue. Larry has opened light and may, therefore, have a singleton club. Win the ace in dummy and attack diamonds, driving out the ace. Larry will return a diamond. Now try the ♥A to see if an honor drops. It doesn't, so now strip the hand. Lead a spade to hand, cash the ♦K and cash two more spades. You can then try a club toward your K-7. If it's ruffed, you don't lose a club trick. After stripping the clubs (in case they are 4-2), you can lead a trump. Larry is endplayed. He can cash the last trump but must give you a ruff-sluff at the end for your contract. That would be worth 85% of the match-points!

OK, its' not the worst hand I ever played, other good players went down on the hand, but boy did I feel bad! I was shaken — how could I miss this? Where was I?! I had to regroup. I closed my eyes and tried to concentrate — I took out my pocket-book of psalms I carry around with me but I didn't

have time to recite even one line, because who now sits down at our table next but my friend, Zia, partnered by Jill Myers. Great, just what I didn't need.

I pick up as dealer, favorable:
 ♠ A K 7 ♥ 6 5 ♦ K 10 9 7 5 3 ♣ 9 4

This is my idea of a weak two, but we are playing McCallum five-card suit weak two's and I am forced to open 1♦. OK, it only hurt for a second. My partner responds 1♥ and I rebid 2♦. She next bids 2♠, so I retreat to 3♦. She is obviously looking for 3NT, but my 9-4 of clubs is hardly a stopper, is it? This ends the auction, but we have missed a game!

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

West	North	East	South
Zia	MG	Jill	KM
—	1 ♦	pass	1 ♥
pass	2 ♦	pass	2 ♠
pass	3 ♦	(all pass)	

How would you bid it? Should South bid 3NT with two suits unstopped? Meanwhile even 5♦ was on. Not only that, but after three rounds of clubs, I ruffed, drew trump and ran my trumps playing for a squeeze. It was there (East was guarding both majors) but then I misclaimed at the end.

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

I laid my hand down, and said that dummy's ♥10 was good at one point, before East had released her last heart honor, so I made four instead of five, and we scored 3%. Yes, three percent. Not to worry, if I had made five, we score a whopping 12%. I took my book of psalms and put it on my lap — I needed help from Above. We got it on board 26:

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

able to recite my daily quota of psalms as dummy.

In the short run, praying does not always help at bridge, as witness the next board, the first against Mark Lair and his partner.* I picked up, first seat, no one vul:
 ♠ A J ♥ J 7 2 ♦ A 7 6 5 2 ♣ 10 5 2

West	North	East	South
Zia	MG	Jill	KM
—	—	pass	1 ♥
1 ♠	2 ♦	pass	3 NT
(all pass)			

This was a 2♦ opening according to the system, but I could not bring myself to do it. The hand would play so nicely in any of partner's long suits, so I judged to pass and partner opened a 14-16 1NT in third chair. I raised to 3NT, figuring my fifth diamond was worth something extra. West led a heart. East won the ♥A and continued with the ♥3 to the king. How would you play it?

Zia led the ♠6. This would have been right if spades were 3-3, but they weren't. Karen won, knocked out the ♦A and they cashed out. We scored +630 and 78%.

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

A short digression on psalm reading and bridge: One of the daily requirements of my religious life is to recite psalms (a portion of the 150 psalms collection is allotted to each day of the month, so that by the end of each month you complete the book). During a bridge tournament it's difficult to find time to do this. Here in Verona I was

*Mark Lair is also very religious. Perhaps he was praying harder than me.

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

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

four clubs. But she would have to finesse the spades before cashing a club honor, in order to unblock the suit. Put the ♠Q in the West hand and you can see how easy this is. But when the ♠J lost to the queen, we were in trouble. Two hearts were cashed, as declarer threw diamonds. West shifted to the ♦K — gulp. If declarer ducks this, she can save a trick, but she won, cashed the ♠A and gave up a club. Two more diamonds were cashed for down three, -150, and a score of 2%. Down two would have been 4%. Down one 20%. The successful N-S pairs were in 1NT from the North side, scoring 120. But switch the ♠Q over to the West hand and we would have top score. Three percent, two percent, this wasn't the way to win.... Perhaps I *should* have opened 2♦, which makes four after a spade lead.

Opening lead: ♥5

Karen saw nine tricks if she could score three spades, one heart, one diamond and

The next board was slightly above average for us and we were not having a good start. After the first three rounds we were averaging about 35%.

Try the next hand on defense in the West chair (board rotated):

North dealer	North (KM)		
E-W vul	♠ Q 10 ♥ J 9 6 ♦ K 9 6 ♣ K Q 9 8 3		
West (you)			
♠ 9 7			
♥ K 10 4 3			
♦ A 7 5			
♣ J 7 5 4			



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

Karen's light opening of 1♣ started a competitive auction to 3♠. Would you have left in the double of 3♥ with the North hand, going for the magic 200 number?

West led the ♦A and switched accurately to a low heart. Her partner won the ♥A, ♥Q and led a third heart to her king. What next?

North dealer North (KM)
 E-W vul ♠ Q 10
 ♥ J 9 6
 ♦ K 9 6
 ♣ K Q 9 8 3

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

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

South (MG)
 ♠ A J 8 6 5 2
 ♥ 7 5 2
 ♦ J
 ♣ A 10 6

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

Opening lead: ♦ A

After cashing the ♦ A and three heart tricks, West does best to lead the thirteenth heart. What can I do as declarer? If I ruff in dummy, East throws his club and I can't finesse the ♠ K twice. If I ruff in my hand, again East discards the ♣ 2. Now I can't get to dummy to finesse at all! Fortunately for us, West did not find this play and I made my contract for a 49% score.

Back to 3♥ doubled, anyone? I would have led the ♦ J. It would have been messy for declarer, don't you think?

We scored only 42% on the second board of this round, missing a good but difficult-to-reach game, and we were now averaging 38%. This would be good for the booby prize, so we had to get moving. . . .

On board 5, our East opponent, at favorable, had this problem in the auction:

♠ — ♥ J 9 5 2 ♦ J 10 ♣ K Q 9 8 7 3 2

West	North	East	South
—	pass	pass	1 ♠
double	2 ♠	?	

She elected to bid 3♣. The auction continued, pass, 3NT by her partner. She continued with 4♥. It now went all pass and dummy hit with:

♠ A 7 6 3 ♥ A K 10 ♦ K 8 6 3 ♣ A J

Four hearts, made six when the ♥ Q was doubleton onside, but 12 tricks were there in clubs or notrump. Some of the field was in 6♣ and some in 3NT making six, so we scored 70% for minus 480.

On board 6, I picked up in fourth chair, favorable:

♠ J 7 2 ♥ A 9 8 ♦ K 4 3 ♣ A K 10 2

It went 1♠, pass, pass to me. I bid 1NT, no stopper but a point heavy. Nothing is perfect. When my partner raised to 2NT, I continued to 3NT, hoping my LHO would not run the first five spades. The ♥ 6 was led and I opened my eyes. . . .

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

♥ 6

♠ J 7 2
 ♥ A 9 8
 ♦ K 4 3
 ♣ A K 10 2

That was good news. No spade lead, and now I saw why. I won the lead in hand with the 8 and attacked diamonds, leading the 3 to the queen. My plan was to lead diamonds twice from hand, because West appeared to hold 5-4 in the majors and perhaps short diamonds. The full hand was:

KM
 ♠ A 10 9 3
 ♥ Q 10 5
 ♦ Q J 9 6
 ♣ 8 6

LHO
 ♠ K Q 8 6 5
 ♥ K J 7 6
 ♦ A 8
 ♣ Q 9

RHO
 ♠ 4
 ♥ 4 3 2
 ♦ 10 7 5 2
 ♣ J 7 5 4 3

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

When the ♦Q won, I tried a low spade to the jack. My LHO won and was stuck. She returned a spade to dummy's 9. Now a club to the king and another low diamond brought the ace from West. So I had three spade tricks, two hearts, three diamonds and two clubs, for 10 tricks, +430, and 86%. That was more like it. Our average for the session after 10 boards zoomed to 46%. We needed to keep it up, however. . . .

On board 7, East held, fourth seat, all vul:
 ♠ J 7 3 2 ♥ A K J 8 ♦ J 4 ♣ A 9 7

South	West	North	East
1 ♦	5 ♣	pass	?

Would you bid or pass?

West had the right cards:
 ♠ K Q 6 ♥ 9 6 ♦ — ♣ K Q J 8 6 5 4 3

Our East passed, so we scored 55% for minus 620. If East had raised to six, we'd have scored 14%.

Try an opening lead problem as South, none vul:

♠ 10 7 5 2 ♥ A 7 4 ♦ K 5 4 3 ♣ K 4

South	West	North	East
—	1 NT (12-14)	2 ♥	5 ♣

(all pass)

What is your lead?

The full hand was:

West dealer	North (MG)
None vul	♠ K Q 8
	♥ Q J 10 8 5 3 2
	♦ 9
	♣ Q 6

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

South (KM)
 ♠ 10 7 5 2
 ♥ A 7 4
 ♦ K 5 4 3
 ♣ K 4

South	West	North	East
—	1 NT*	2 ♥	5 ♣

(all pass)

*12-14

Karen led a diamond, thinking it was good to attack and that East probably was void in hearts for her bid. Both women were right. Five clubs made five. And a diamond lead, though it didn't do much for us (declarer finessed), had the merit of avoiding the heart lead, which would give an over-trick. Still, we scored 40% (but making six would be 21%). I thought it was a very good lead at the time and congratulated her. In the meantime, we needed to put on some steam. Our average after 12 boards was a smidgeon over 46%.

On board 9, the third-chair seat-of-sin weak two-bid struck, but not the opponents — it struck us.

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

West	North	East	South
—	pass	pass	2 ♠
3 ♦	pass	3 NT	(all pass)

Opening lead: ♠7

Karen's 2♠ bid would have been classified as "McCallum" in first or second seat, but here it was rather standard in third seat favorable. Well, perhaps it shouldn't be standard. They quickly got to 3NT and Karen led a natural spade.

Declarer won in hand and led the ♦K. I did my best by playing low (hoping that it would not now go ♦5, ♦Q, ♦4, ♦A! East continued with the ♦Q to my ace and I returned a heart to dummy's ace. This might be a poor play if dummy still had the 2 or 4 of diamonds to reach the East hand for a second heart trick. But declarer had played the 2 and 4 under the king and queen, so the best declarer could do now is score nine tricks (one spade, one heart, six diamonds and one club).

I was glad I had held off my ♦A on the first round of diamonds! Had declarer kept the 2 or 4 of diamonds in dummy, we could still hold the contract with a club shift, but I doubt I'd have found it.

Holding 3NT to three, however, didn't quite achieve the great score we were looking for. We received 40%, albeit better than the 22% we'd get for 3NT making four. Now if only South had passed (not possible these days), West would have opened 1♦ and probably ended in 3NT from his side. I would have led a club and we'd have been plus 200. Oh, well.

We had one more board to play this round, and our score at the midway point of the session was just under 46%. There were 13 boards left and we needed some small miracles to get back into the running. That was the bad news.

The good news was this: I am a *Chassid* of the Lubavitcher Rebbe MH"™M, and the Rebbe teaches that you must *go down to go up*. In life, this means that in the day-to-day attempt for a person to improve his character traits, a person will fall a lot (take a step backwards or perhaps a few steps back, figuratively speaking). Then after falling, a person will get up and see his mistakes and move further forward than he would have moved if he had not fallen. Sort of like learning to ride a bike.

In bridge, this means that you might get some bad boards, see that you're not going in the right direction, pull yourself together and try harder. Then suddenly you zoom forward with a surge you would never have had if you had not had those bad results. You'll see what I mean in the next issue, in the exciting and incredible conclusion.

Building a Better Mousetrap

by Pamela Granovetter

Improving Pre-accepts in the Majors

Here's a recent disaster I had during an Internet set game:

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

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

Opening lead: ♣8

Result: -100

I think that to be practical, I should have bid 4♠ over South's 4♥. I don't mind playing from my side with two red-suit tenace positions, and I had not discussed this auc-

tion with my partner so perhaps only one cuebid with my weak trumps was enough.

Once I bid 5♥ we were too high, but, for the record, I think South has done enough and should sign off in 5♠.

This hand is worth a little system discussion:

1. Do you think the South hand is worth a 4♣ pre-accept? Perhaps a 4♣ preaccept should look like this:

♠ A Q 9 6 ♥ A Q 8 ♦ 10 6 ♣ A K Q 2

In other words, no wasted quacks in the short suit.

This example hand, by the way, would also be consistent with the rest of South's actual bidding.

2. This leads us to the "building a better mousetrap" section: It's far better to have two quantitative preaccepts. A jump in the transfer suit is the milder accept — perhaps with a hand like South had, where you want to be in game but the hand isn't a "pure" slam try.

3. The stronger preaccept can be shown by bidding the "next step" past the transfer suit (which works over 1NT as well):

Opener Responder
 1 NT 2 ♦
 3 ♥ = milder pre-accept for hearts

1 NT 2 ♥
 3 ♠ = milder pre-accept for spades

2 NT 3 ♦
 4 ♥ = milder pre-accept for hearts

2 NT 3 ♥
 4 ♠ = milder pre-accept for spades

1 NT 2 ♦
 2 ♠ = big pre-accept for hearts

1 NT 2 ♥
 2 NT = big pre-accept for spades

2 NT 3 ♦
 3 ♠ = big pre-accept for hearts

2 NT 3 ♥
 3 NT = big pre-accept for spades

Over this, responder can retransfer by bidding two (or three) *notrump* for hearts, or three (or four) *hearts* for spades. This leaves the minor suits free for length-showing cuebids. The new minor by responder should show either a four-card suit, or the ace or king with at least three cards in the suit (rather than shortness, so that opener can evaluate his fitting honor cards). The partnership might then locate a 4-4 minor suit, which may play better than the major-suit fit. For example:

Opener	Responder
♠ A J 9 2	♠ Q 10 7 5 4
♥ A K 2	♥ 7 4 3
♦ A 9	♦ 7
♣ K Q 7 2	♣ A J 9 8
2 NT	3 ♥
3 NT (big pre-accept)	4 ♣ (natural or honor third)
5 ♣ (agrees clubs)	5 ♦ (cuebid)
5 ♥ (cuebid)	6 ♣
pass	

Without four clubs, but a sixth spade, responder would bid 6♠ over 5♥.

4. Finally, once in a while the hand plays better from responder's side. An interesting innovation is to play "retransfers" — but to responder!

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

- (1) I have a "big" preaccept but want you to play it!
- (2) control
- (3) grand slam interest

The 2006 European Open Teams Championship in Warsaw

by Pietro Campanile



The coaches predicted it, the press expected it, the players had already resigned themselves to it, and yet the seventh consecutive Italian victory in the European Open Teams, also because of its apparent “inevitability,” is an enormous achievement. It is quite amazing that a team, any team, is able to stamp so firmly its imprint on the highly competitive European bridge scene that it sweeps the field again and again, effortlessly winning the most coveted continental trophy two or three matches before the end. The uncontested dominance of the Italians in this event has reached the point that there has even been talk among the powers that be about changing its format, currently an all-play-all round robin, in order to give back some semblance of uncertainty to its final outcome.

In Warsaw the Italian juggernaut, in its usual line-up of Bocchi-Duboin, Fantoni-Nunes and Lauria-Versace, soon ran away from the field, building up a lead which stabilized around the 50-60 VP mark. In the end they won with 661 VPs, 68 VPs ahead of second place at the incredible average of over 20 VPs per match (with 25 VPs the most you could win in each match)!

Here are the final standings with the top six teams qualifying for next year’s Bermuda Bowl in Shanghai:

1) Italy	661
2) Ireland	594
3) Norway	590
4) Sweden	582
5) Netherlands	581
6) Poland	579
7) Iceland	572
8) France	555

Let us now start our wild ride across a few interesting hands played in the event.*

Bulgarian and French fans must have been sorely disappointed with their teams’ final result as they both failed to achieve their objective of a top-six finish to land qualification to the next Bermuda Bowl. In the direct clash there was a very interesting battle of wits between two of their stars: Vladimir Marashev and Marcel Bompis.

*Most of them were first published in the *Daily Bulletin* under the pen of authors from many different countries.

North dealer North
 N-S vul ♠ A J 10 8 6 3
 ♥ 5
 ♦ A J 9 2
 ♣ A 10

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

In the Closed Room, Mouiel and Levy got to 4♠, which made easily. The Bulgarian pair in the Open Room investigated the deal much more thoroughly:

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Bompis	Petkov	Sainte Marie	Marashev
—	1 ♠	3 ♦	4 ♣
pass	4 ♦	pass	4 ♥
pass	4 ♠	pass	4 NT (RKB)
pas	5 ♦ (0/3)	pass	6 ♣
(all pass)			

Bompis in West started off with the ♦3, taken by dummy’s ace. Without the diamond preempt, declarer would attempt to set up the spades by conceding a trick in the suit before exhausting dummy’s entries, in order to cater to a variety of distributions in addition to the 75% given to him by the double finesse in spades. Here, however, declarer had no choice but to immediately pull trumps in three rounds and then resort to the double finesse in spades to succeed.

When Marashev played the ♠5 from hand towards dummy’s long spades. Bompis followed with the ♠K and after declarer correctly ducked (if the play of the ♠K is from ♠K-x, the slam is unmakeable anyway as dummy’s spades cannot be set up), the Frenchman continued with the ♠4.

Declarer now was at a crossroads: If Bompis’ original spade holding was ♠K-Q-4, he should now play the ♠10 as indeed he had meant to do at the start when he had planned on the double finesse. However there was also the chance that the French champion, realizing declarer’s problem, might be trying to test his mettle and give him a losing option by rising with ♠K from ♠K-x-x.

What would you do now?

After a lengthy pause, Marashev decided to trust in Bompis’ resourcefulness and played the ♠A, finding with some relief the ♠Q dropping offside.

Here is the complete hand:

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



This is truly a beautiful example of a defender who succeeds in creating a losing option for declarer where none exists and of a declarer who successfully evades the trap, landing his contract. Bravo to both!

Bulgaria was involved in another technically interesting deal, this time against middle-ranked Finland....

East dealer	♠ A Q 9 7 4										
None vul	♥ A K 9 6										
	♦ J 5 4										
	♣ 6										
♠ 6		♠ 10 8 2									
♥ Q 10 7 3 2	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W</td><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td><td style="padding: 2px;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;"> </td><td style="padding: 2px;"> </td><td style="padding: 2px;"> </td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;"> </td><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td><td style="padding: 2px;"> </td></tr> </table>	W	N	E					S		♥ 8 4
W	N	E									
	S										
♦ K 8 6		♦ 10									
♣ Q 9 8 5		♣ A K J 10 4 3 2									
	♠ K J 5 3										
	♥ J 5										
	♦ A Q 9 7 3 2										
	♣ 7										

West	North	East	South
Nyberg	Aronov	Koistinen	Stefanov
—	—	3 NT (1)	pass
5 ♣ (2)	double	pass	5 ♦
(all pass)			

- (1) Preempt in either minor
- (2) Pass or correct

Opening lead: ♠6

The auction made it virtually impossible for the Bulgarians to reach the optimal spade contract. At first glance 5♦ appears

to be unmakeable after the singleton spade lead, since sooner or later declarer will be forced to concede a diamond trick to West's ♦K, and that will enable the defense to obtain a spade ruff for the setting trick.

The unusual lead, however, had fully alerted Stefanov to the dangers of an impending ruff, and the Bulgarian found an elegant solution to thwart it.

He took the ♠6 with dummy's ♠A and, after leading to the ♦A, he continued with a heart to the ace-king and the ♥9, pitching the club in his hand: a very neat and timely application of the "Scissors Coup," which consists of conceding a trick in a suit where there are no losers in order to discard another loser in a side suit, and, by doing so, sever communications between the defenders.

Surprisingly enough, a similar auction led to exactly the same 5♦ at the other table: the Finnish declarer did not fail his teammates and found the same play to score his contract for an unlikely flat board.



The Italians celebrate their seventh victory.

The Italians aside, the best performing team in the first part of the championships were the Hungarians, who were firmly ensconced in second and third places thanks to a very solid stream of results before succumbing to a swift decline in the rankings in the second half of the event. Their match against Sweden, another top contender, was considered by most pundits to be among the best played of the entire event. Here is a choice morsel from their encounter:

North dealer North
 N-S vul ♠ Q 5
 ♥ Q 10 7 3
 ♦ J 10 5
 ♣ A 10 9 7

♥ A

South
 ♠ K J 9 8 6 3 2
 ♥ 8
 ♦ A 6
 ♣ K Q 8

West	North	East	South
Bertheau	Macskasy	Nystrom	Szalay
—	pass	pass	1 ♣ (16+)
1 ♥	1 NT	2 ♦	4 ♠

(all pass)

West leads the ♥A and switches to the ♦8, covered by the ♦J and the ♦Q.

How would you plan the play to give yourself the best chances of making the contract?

The danger in the hand is the possibility of a trump promotion if the defenders' spades for instance are 3-1 with the singleton ace in East. The pedestrian solution would be to take the ♦A and simply play a spade to the ♠Q, which works if spades are conveniently placed for declarer. A more careful declarer will duck the ♦Q, since diamonds can hardly be 7-1 after East passed initially, then take the diamond continuation, go to dummy with a club and play a small spade, to cater for ♠A singleton in East.

The Hungarian Gyorgy Szalay chose a more flamboyant route: He won the ♦A immediately, then went to dummy with the ♣A and played the ♥Q pitching his second diamond from hand, another example of the "Scissors Coup!"

However, Bertheau in West rose to the challenge and found an equally effective counter. Let's look at the complete hand to better appreciate it:

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

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

To recap: ♥A lead, ♦8 switch to the ♦J, the ♦Q and the ♦A. Club to the ♣A and ♥Q discarding a diamond. This is the position we have reached:

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

	N W E S	
♠ K J 9 8 6 3 2		♠ 10 7
♥ —		♥ 6
♦ —		♦ K 9 4 3 2
♣ K Q		♣ J

Bertheau knew from the auction and the line Szalay had chosen that declarer had a likely 7-1-2-3 shape, since with eight spades he would not have been worried about a trump promotion, and that placed his partner with a doubleton spade and a doubleton club. Seizing on the only chance to defeat the contract, after taking the ♥K, he switched to a low club!

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

When declarer played a low spade from his hand, Bertheau jumped in with the ♠A and played a third club to give his partner a ruff and defeat the contract!

Sweden thus gained 7 imps on the deal when at the other table East opened 3♦ and the Swedish South overcalled 3♠, which became the final contract for a score of +170 when it made with an overtrick.

Having introduced some of the top flyers of the event, it is time to show-piece the accurate card play displayed by the Italians. Against Israel, Italy managed to overcome no less than three negative slam swings to pull out of the hat an amazing 19-11 victory. The next board shows another fascinating battle of wits, this time between Alfredo Versace and the Israeli David Birman.

South dealer	♠ K 8 6 2											
Both vul	♥ A J 9 8											
	♦ 8 6 4											
	♣ K 4											
<p>♠ A Q 9 4 ♥ Q 10 ♦ K 10 9 5 ♣ 10 7 3</p>	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <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		<p>♠ 10 5 ♥ 7 5 4 3 ♦ J 3 ♣ Q J 9 8 5</p>	
	N											
W		E										
	S											
	♠ J 7 3											
	♥ K 6 2											
	♦ A Q 7 2											
	♣ A 6 2											

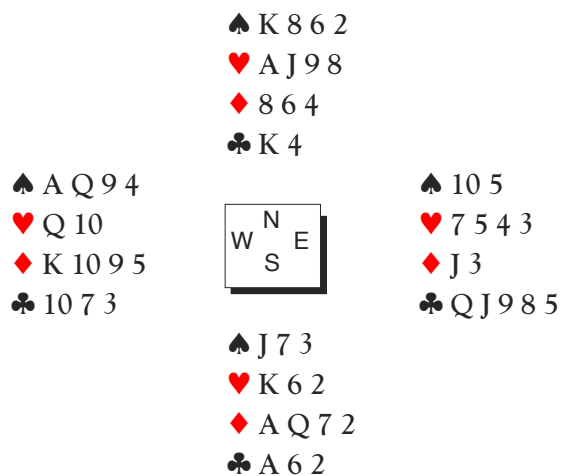
South	West	North	East
Versace	Birman	Lauria	Fohrer
1♦	pass	1♥	pass
1NT	pass	2NT	pass
3NT	(all pass)		

Birman correctly decided to go for a passive lead and struck gold when he selected the ♣7, unknowingly hitting his partner's long suit. Versace ducked Fohrer's ♣J and

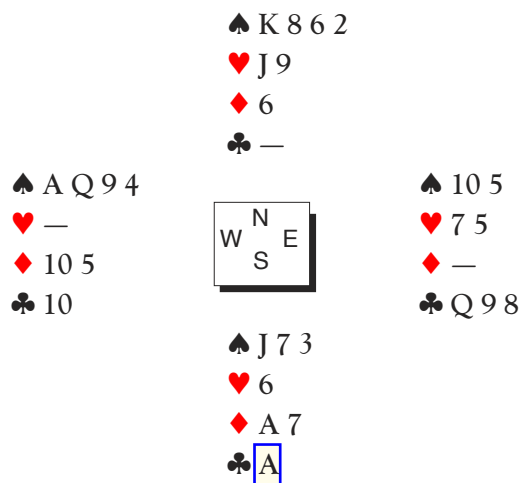
the Israeli, devoid of entries, decided to return a diamond. Perhaps the ♦J would have been more effective, but fearing to give away too much, Fohrer opted for a more obscure ♦3. Versace played low again, Birman's ♦9 taking the trick, and took perforce in dummy Birman's club return.

Trying to keep the situation fluid, Versace continued with a diamond from dummy, carefully selecting the ♦8 to avoid a blockage when he next would play the suit in case he found a residual honor-10 or honor-9 anywhere. The ♦8 was covered by the ♦J, the ♦Q and Birman's ♦K.

Well aware of the danger of being end-played, Birman kept the ♣10 as a future exit card and found the very good play of the ♥Q, knowing from Fohrer's failure to insist on clubs that the ♥K had to be with declarer and that his ♥Q was, therefore, worthless anyway.



After some thought Versace took the ♥Q in dummy with the ♥A and came back to hand with the ♥K, reaching this position:

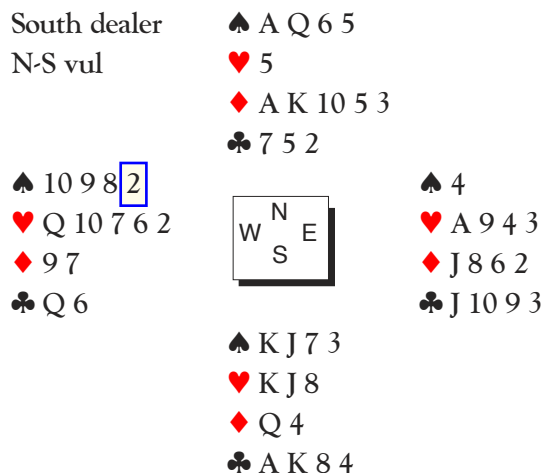


It was time for the Italian declarer to draw the necessary inferences from the play: Despite having found his weakest suit, East had for some reason changed tack and switched to diamonds, when he could see a stiff ♣K in dummy. The ♣7 lead and that defensive switch seemed to indicate that East had no entries to his long suit and, therefore, knew that it could never be set up profitably. Such a view pointed to West holding only three clubs and placed East with ♣Q-J-x-x-x. Furthermore, this also strongly hinted that West had to hold the near totality of the remaining defensive assets. Such inspired card reading meant that Versace could essentially play the end-

ing double-dummy: He cashed the ♣A to take out Birman's exit card in the suit and played a small spade. Birman ducked and the ♠K won the trick. Next came the two good hearts and the best Birman could do now to avoid being endplayed and forced to concede the last two diamonds, was to jettison the ♠A and the ♠Q, in the hope that partner held the ♠J. A brilliant effort but one doomed to failure when the ♠J turned up to be with declarer.

Bravo to both declarer and defender who succeeded in making the most of their chances on this difficult board.

In the board immediately after, Birman struck back:



South	West	North	East
Birman	Lauria	Fohrer	Versace
1 NT	pass	2 ♣ (1)	pass
2 ♦ (2)	pass	3 ♥ (3)	pass
4 ♠	pass	4 NT	pass
5 ♥	pass	6 ♠	(all pass)

- (1) Puppet Stayman
- (2) One four-card major
- (3) Strong hand with four spades

Lauria led the ♠2 and declarer won in dummy with the ♠A to play the ♥5.

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

Versace ducked in tempo and Birman inserted the "normal" ♥J, losing to Lauria's ♥Q. Lauria returned a second trump to dummy's ♠Q. This revealed the bad trump split and it seemed to leave declarer with the sole chances of diamonds 3-3 or the ♦J doubleton, while at the same time making such a friendly distribution unlikely.

Birman did not despair and soon devised a line that gave him an extra chance even if diamonds were jack-fourth. He ruffed two hearts in dummy, using the two top clubs as entries back to hand, and then returned to hand with a diamond to the queen, reaching this position:

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

in order to demonstrate the play. Yes, West did hold the J-7 and anyone could have made the slam, but it was still an elegant effort by Birman and one whose spectacular realization was only thwarted by a below percentage layout in the diamond suit.

Declarer now cashed a spade, discarding a club from dummy, East doing the same. However, when the last trump was played and a diamond pitched from dummy, East found himself with no recourse: Throwing another club would set up declarer's ♣8-4, while a diamond would promote dummy's ♦10.

The biggest surprise of the Championships was without a doubt the second place achieved by the Irish team. The result was the triumph of a policy that had seen an ever increasing amount of investment by the Irish Bridge Federation into the development of the game and the sourcing of new talent, while at the same time inviting top class coaches like Eric Kokish to provide working seminars for their top pairs, both Open and Ladies.

It was a classic squeeze, or it would have been had the Great Shuffler not for once decided to make life simple for declarer and placed West with the ♦J-7 rather than the ♦9-7, which I listed above. I wrote the 9-7

The Irish had already claimed a top spot in International bridge ranking after reaching the quarter finals in the 2004 Olympiad, where they lost to the powerful Dutch team. Here we see one of their unsung young pairs in action: Tommy Garvey and John Carroll...

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

The Irish pair reached 6♥ from the South seat after a detailed strong club auction and, before leading, the Serbian West was told that dummy had shown the ♠K, the ♦K, as well as the top three heart honors. Hoping to catch the *Bulletin* headlines with a spectacular lead and to find the classic holding of ♠Q with partner with ♠K-J on the table, Duricic decided to table the ♠9!

Carroll must have been somewhat surprised when his singleton ♠10 took the first trick! He continued by pulling trumps in three rounds and then took the “marked” ruffing finesse in spades, discarding a diamond from hand.

Duricic won the trick with his ♠A, to declarer’s amazement no doubt, and obviously enjoying this “cloak and dagger” defense style he switched to the ♦J!

Declarer made the normal play of taking in dummy with the ♦K and must have been about to claim 12 tricks when the 5-2 split in spades surfaced on the third round of the suit, forcing him to regroup and think again. Hoping to get more information about West’s hand, Carroll cashed another spade reaching this position:

Declarer had now to make a key decision: Where was the ♣K? If it was with West, he could make the hand with an exotic trump squeeze by ruffing a spade and checking West’s pitch. If he discarded a club, declarer could play ♣A and club ruff, while discarding a diamond would promote dummy’s ♦9. If however the ♣K is with East, all that would be needed is a trivial club finesse. Faced with the choice between the spectacular and the mundane, Carroll did very well to resist the temptation of selecting the flashy line: He correctly surmised that had West held a well-placed ♣K, he would never have tempted fate with such an unorthodox lead, so he opted for the club finesse and brought in his slam.

For the final deal of this article it is only fitting to pay homage to one of the most talented players of the “new Blue Team:” Fulvio Fantoni, affectionately nicknamed “Deep Fantoni” for his amazing feats of declarer play, often executed in seemingly double-dummy fashion just as the computer program “Deep Finesse” does it. Here is a telling example from the match versus Norway of his ability to make easy work of complex hands, which would fox many a declarer.

East dealer	♠ A 10 9 6 4 2											
All vul	♥ K 10											
	♦ 7											
	♣ Q 9 6 4											
♠ Q J 8 7		<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; margin: auto;"> <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		♠ K 5
	N											
W		E										
	S											
♥ A 8 5			♥ J									
♦ 4			♦ K Q J 9 8 5 3 2									
♣ K 10 8 3 2			♣ J 5									
	♠ 3											
	♥ Q 9 7 6 4 3 2											
	♦ A 10 6											
	♣ A 7											

In the Open Room Versace bought the contract in 4♦ by East, after North-South had entered the auction showing their majors. The bidding in the Closed Room was a lot livelier:

West	North	East	South
<i>Saelensminde</i>	<i>Nunes</i>	<i>Brogeland</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>
—	—	1 ♦	1 ♥
1 ♠	pass	2 ♦	2 ♥
pass	3 ♥	4 ♦	4 ♥
double	(all pass)		

Fantoni took the diamond lead with his ♦A and ruffed a diamond. Back to hand with a club and another diamond ruff with the ♥K. The Italian declarer played a club from dummy and East took the trick with his ♣J and returned another diamond.

After a moment's thought, Fantoni ruffed the diamond with the ♥9, and after holding the trick he quickly tabled the ♥Q — four hearts doubled and made.

The line selected by the Italian champion seems deceptively easy and yet it takes into consideration a vital factor: the need to look for the only kind of layout that allows the contract to make and then playing for it. Here 4♥ is hopeless if West has started with any combination of three or more hearts including ♥A-J-8, so one should simply

discount that possibility. In the same vein, it is obvious that the diamond losers cannot be parked anywhere, so they have to be ruffed. The correct approach to the hand is, therefore, to ruff the diamonds and then play for East to hold the singleton jack or 8 of trump. Simple, isn't it?*

Finally a brief mention of an instructive tale of partnership bridge "crime and punishment," which surfaced halfway into the tournament with a brief communiqué in the *Daily Bulletin*. It was reported that one of the most representative players in the Swedish team had been given his marching orders by the Swedish captain and sent back home, when the team found him guilty of repeatedly disparaging his new partner, and of alluding in many public instances to his alleged bridge incompetence. This extraordinary step certainly speaks volumes about the high standards of behavior that the players who represent Sweden are expected to conform to. A lesson which we should heed very carefully, as all too often the ebullience of our own characters leads to behavior that is quite unbecoming of a player representing his country abroad.

*Editor's note: Perhaps too simple. It's true that if declarer leads a low heart instead of the queen, East wins the ♥J and plays another diamond. West with the ♥A-8 takes two more tricks. The play of the ♥Q works whenever East holds the singleton jack or 8, preventing him from gaining the lead a second time.

Having said that, maybe the declarer should have prevented East from ever gaining the lead. For example, he could have led the ♣Q from dummy instead of a low one. Better yet, he could ruff a spade to hand for the second diamond ruff, then ruff a third spade. No matter if East ruffs in. Declarer overruffs and leads his highest trump to West. In fact, this makes the contract when West started with the ♥A-J-8 and the ♣K, since West is later endplayed.



The Wizards of Aus

by Ron Klinger

There are times to bid and there are times to keep quiet. Elizabeth Havas, of Canberra, showed she knew the difference on this deal from Stage 2, Match 1, of the 2006 Australian Women's Team playoff:

Bd. 12

East dealer North
 N-S vul ♠ 8 7
 ♥ A K Q 8 5 3 2
 ♦ 6 2
 ♣ 3 2

West
Candice Feitelson
 ♠ K J 9 2
 ♥ —
 ♦ A J 8 4
 ♣ K 10 8 7 5

East
Elizabeth Havas
 ♠ A 5 4
 ♥ J 10 9 7 4
 ♦ K Q 10 7
 ♣ 9

South
 ♠ Q 10 6 3
 ♥ 6
 ♦ 9 5 3
 ♣ A Q J 6 4

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

The defense gave nothing away and, with the vile break in hearts, declarer could not muster more than four tricks. That was +1400 to East-West and +12 imps against the Women's datum of E-W 780. Other scores were North 4♥ doubled, -1100; North 3♥ doubled, -800, twice; North 3♥ undoubled, -200; and East 3NT +400.

This was a bad board for those who like to open light. If East starts with a 1♥ opening, North is not going to be so enthusiastic with that heart suit. The datum for the Open was E-W 560 via +1100 for 4♥ doubled, +800 for 3♥ doubled (twice), +500 for 2♥ doubled, +130 for 3♦ by East and +100 for 2♥ undoubled.

The other side of the coin was illustrated by this deal from Stage 1, Match 8:

Bd. 24

South dealer North
 None vul ♠ K Q
 ♥ 7 3 2
 ♦ 9 4 3 2
 ♣ K Q J 4

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

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

South
 ♠ A J 10 8
 ♥ Q 10
 ♦ K J 10 6 5
 ♣ 9 6

South	West	North	East
1 ♦ (1)	pass	2 ♦ (2)	3 ♥
pass	pass	4 ♦?	pass
5 ♦	double	(all pass)	

- (1) unbalanced with 4+ diamonds or 18-19 balanced
- (2) 10+ points with diamond support

Opening lead: ♥9

When the 3♥ bid came back to North it was clear that South did not have the 18-19 balanced hand. As South had heard North's inverted 2♦ raise, South could have bid over 3♥ with extra values or great shape. South's pass over 3♥ should have warned North against pushing further.

How many points do you need for 4♠? About 25-26. For 4♥? About 25-26. For 4♦? The same 25-26. Good advice is not to compete to the four level with part-score values. With eight losers, North could not expect to succeed beyond the three-level opposite a minimum opener.

When North did soldier on to 4♦, South expected a much stronger hand and signed off in 5♦, showing no slam interest. The

pain was excruciating. Not only did declarer have to lose two hearts, two diamonds and a club, but the third round of hearts promoted an extra trump trick for West. That was four down, - 800, and 12 imps to East-West with the datum being E-W 80.

The other Open scores were East 3♥ three times, +140, -50 and -100; South 3♦ twice and 4♦, each -100; and East 2♥ +110. The datum in the Women's was E-W 60. Two pairs there also perished in 5♦ doubled, one for -800 and one for -500. The other scores were 3♥ four times, +170, -50 (twice) and -100; 4♥ -100 and 4♥ doubled for -500.

Well, those were easy, right? Now for a tough one. How would you handle this holding:

♠ — ♥ 5 ♦ A Q 8 4 3 2 ♣ Q J 10 8 7 2

Both sides are vulnerable and the dealer on your right opens 1♠.

The Unusual 2NT is used for (normally) a weak hand with at least 5-5 in the minors. Should you use it also when you have a 6-6 pattern? If you do bid 2NT and partner replies 3♣ or 3♦, you would certainly want to take another bid, and jumping to the five-level would not be considered asinine.

If not a 2NT overcall, then you could try the very unusual 4NT, showing both minors and at least a 6-6 pattern. For that your suits should have respectable playing strength and this hand qualifies. The advantage of 4NT is that it preempts third hand, while 2NT has only moderate preemptive value. The other side of the coin, of course, is that 4NT carries significantly greater risk.

♠ — ♥ 5 ♦ A Q 8 4 3 2 ♣ Q J 10 8 7 2

West	North	East	South
1 ♠	?		

My partner, Bruce Neill, feels that a middle course might be sensible. If you do not want or need to use a 3NT overcall to show a stopper in opener's suit and a long, running minor (start with double, perhaps). Then 3NT could be used to show the very freakish shape. But you may not want to give up the natural 3NT overcall.

The problem surfaced on this deal from Stage 1, Match 7, of the playoffs for the 2006 Open and Women's Teams. I was North:

West dealer	North
Both vul	Klinger
	♠ —
	♥ 5
	♦ A Q 8 4 3 2
	♣ Q J 10 8 7 2

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

South
Bruce Neill
♠ A J 9 6
♥ J 10 8 7 4 2
♦ 10
♣ 9 3

West	North	East	South
1 ♠	4 NT	double	5 ♣
pass	pass	double	(all pass)

Opening lead: ♥K

The ♥K held trick one and Jedrychowski switched accurately to the ♣K (!) and a second club. Declarer still has to lose two diamond tricks and so that was three down for -800. Now you know why my partner does not like the 4NT overcall.

What should happen after West leads the ♥K? Jedrychowski certainly did well when left on lead. At another table, after the same bidding, West led the ♥K, holding, and continued with a second heart. This was ruffed in dummy, followed by ♦A, diamond ruff, heart ruff, diamond ruff. When declarer now led hearts, the defense could score only three more tricks, and that was two down for E-W +500.

A trump switch would be virtually automatic at trick two, but you can understand West's reluctance to shift to the ♣K from K-x. How dangerous would it be for East to overtake the ♥K with the ace and switch to ♣A and another club or even shift to a low club (perhaps West has the singleton king)?

In the Open three pairs played in 5♣ doubled for -800. Three pairs were -500, two in 5♣ doubled and one in 4♣ doubled. One was in 4♣ undoubled, one down for -100 and one E-W pair were -100 in 4♠ doubled. Datum: E-W 530.

In the Women's series, one E-W pair was in 4♠ undoubled for -100 and one N-S pair played 3♣ doubled, one down, for -200. The other six pairs played in 5♣ doubled for -800 three times, -500 twice and -200 once. Datum: E-W 500.

After due consideration, I think I would bid 4NT if dealt the hand again, but don't tell my partner, please.