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BRIDGE TODAY



Editor: Matthew Granovetter

The Magazine for People Who Love to Play Bridge

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"without really trying" — a quiz and a chance to do it! — page 15

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The Red Pencil

by Matthew Granovetter

~~lebensohl~~

I grew up in the Metropolitan area, where I met Kenny Lebensold. When lebensohl was invented, Kenny denied any authorship, and to this day it's not clear to me who invented it and why a variation of Kenny's name was used for the convention. Anyone who knew Kenny changed the capital "L" into a small "l" when writing the convention on the convention card.

Originally, lebensohl was used after a 1NT opening and the opponent overcalled two of a suit. Two notrump showed a willingness to compete at the three level in some unknown suit, while a suit bid at the three level was now treated as forcing.

Later, many partnerships toyed with the idea of using it in response to a takeout double of a weak two-bid. In this case:

West	North	East	South
2 ♠	double	pass	?

South bids 2NT to show a weak hand and three of a suit to show an invitational hand. In my early partnerships we added the wrinkle that 2NT followed by 3NT would offer a choice of games. We also played that a direct cuebid would deny four cards in the other major, while a slow cuebid (2NT, then cuebid) would show four cards in the other major.

Today, after 30 years experience with this convention, I advise you to put a red pencil through it!

I don't remember this convention ever helping. I do remember this convention getting in the way of several natural auctions that I would have liked to have. Let's start with the 1NT opening bid and the overcall.

West	North	East	South
1 NT	2 ♥/2 ♠	?	

First of all, if you are using negative doubles, you can put a lot of those lebensohl type hands into the double. If you're using penalty doubles (my preference), you can still bid three of a suit to compete. There is no great necessity to have a forcing bid in a minor suit. Since when did you want to play a minor-suit game after partner opened 1NT? Sure, opener may be without a stopper in the suit overcalled, but players tend to pass 1NT with solid suits rather than overcall. Chances are very strong that when an opponent overcalls 2♠, the notrump bidder or the responder has a stopper.

In addition, when you start making conventional bids to show and deny stoppers you give fourth hand the chance to double a cuebid or pass or raise his partner, or even bid a new suit, giving information to the overcaller for the crucial opening lead against 3NT.

It's surprising to me that players simply ignore the risk of allowing opponents (especially the opponent not on lead) into the auction. From a practical and winning

viewpoint, this must be considered a downside whenever you use a conventional bid. Let me give you a few illustrations. We'll assume strong notrump openings in all cases, though the theme applies opposite weak as well.

♠ A x
♥ A J x x
♦ x x
♣ J 10 x x x

West	North	East	South
1 NT	2 ♠	2 NT	3 ♦
pass	pass	?	

East bid 2NT lebensohl. His plan was to come back on the next round with a cuebid of 3♠. This would show a Stayman bid with a stopper in spades. He can still do it over South's 3♦ bid, but East-West are doomed. The full deal was:

West dealer	North
N-S vul	♠ K J 10 x x x
	♥ Q x
	♦ J x
	♣ Q x x

West	East
♠ Q x	♠ A x
♥ K x x	♥ A J x x
♦ A x x x	♦ x x
♣ A K x x	♣ J 10 x x x

South
♠ x x x
♥ 10 9 x x
♦ K Q 10 9 x
♣ x

North leads a diamond against 3NT. Now take the red pencil and cross out lebensohl. As East, you bid 3♠ over 2♠, simple old-fashioned Stayman. Partner bids 3NT, no major. North will probably lead a spade. If he does, West scores 10 tricks. If North decides not to lead a spade, because

of South's failure to double the 3♠ cuebid, North may try a heart, diamond or club, but chances are it won't be a diamond.

The following scenario came up on BBO.

Board 13	North
North dealer	♠ J 10 6 5 4 2
Both vul	♥ K 10 6 5
	♦ 8
	♣ Q 2

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

South
♠ —
♥ J 9 8 4 3
♦ Q 10 9 7 4
♣ A 8 6

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

- (1) diamonds and hearts
- (2) a negative double according to their system (though West really has a penalty double)
- (3) too late, North got to show his heart preference

Opening lead: ♥ 4
Result: down one

This illustrates the danger of slow investigative auctions, especially when partner is likely to play a 3NT contract.

A rather important contract and very useful bid that lebensohl ruins is the natural 2NT response. Many times when partner opens 1NT and the next hand overcalls, your best contract is 2NT. Suppose you hold the following hand:

♠ x x x
♥ Q x
♦ K J 10 x x
♣ J x x

South dealer North
E-W vul ♠ x x
♥ x x
♦ J x x x
♣ A J x x x

West North East South
1 NT 2♥ ?

West East
♠ A Q x x x x ♠ x x x
♥ Q J x ♥ K 10 x x x
♦ A x x ♦ Q 10
♣ x ♣ x x x

Chances are your best spot is 2NT, with the lead coming into partner. In fact, when this hand was dealt, the full deal was:

West dealer North
N-S vul ♠ Q J
♥ K J x x x x
♦ x
♣ A x x x

South
♠ K J
♥ A x x
♦ K x x x
♣ K Q x x

West East
♠ A x x x ♠ x x x
♥ A x x ♥ Q x
♦ A Q x x ♦ K J 10 x x
♣ Q x ♣ J x x

South West North East
1 NT 2♣* 2 NT (all pass)

*Cappelletti one suiter

Opening lead: ♥Q

South
♠ K 10 9 x
♥ x x
♦ x x x
♣ K x x x

West got off to a clever lead — too clever. Declarer won the third round and ran five clubs. West was squeezed/endplayed and declarer made 120. Meanwhile, East-West were cold for a vulnerable 4♠.*

Two notrump made easily after the heart lead. At other tables declarers were down one in 3♦ contracts. But as you can see, even if 3♦ makes, at matchpoints it's not as good as plus 120.

If North had bid 2NT as lebensohl, South would have bid 3♣ and West would have a nice takeout double. But over 2NT natural, can you blame West for selling out? She simply had no safe call.

We non-lebensohl people play 2NT as a competitive bid, not inviting 3NT, though on occasion partner can bid 3NT with an exceptional hand.

The trouble with using 2NT as a conventional bid is worse when notrump has yet to be mentioned. Let's move to lebensohl auctions after a weak two-bid is doubled. Surely you've run across this situation:

Here's another hand where a natural 2NT worked extremely well. It's from the Swiss Teams at the Dallas Nationals:

*It's a lucky 4♠, with trumps 2-2, but a 3♠ contract is certainly reasonable. Declarer can reach dummy in hearts for the spade finesse.

♠ K Q 10
♥ Q x x
♦ J x x
♣ x x x x

West	North	East	South
—	2 ♠	double	pass
?			

Using lebensohl, you have a “terrific” choice. You can bid 2NT transfer to clubs. Or you can bid 3♣ to invite 3NT. Lovely.

What you want to do is bid 2NT, natural, but you can’t. Now you can!

Extending this idea further, I strongly advise you to drop almost every 2NT bid that you now play as artificial. The following nightmare brings home the point. West was a top tournament player.

♠ K x x
♥ K J 9
♦ J x x x
♣ Q x x

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

West bid 3♦. Why not 2NT? Because the cognoscenti plays 2NT as “pick a minor.” This was the full hand:

West dealer
N-S vul

North
♠ A J x
♥ x x
♦ 10 9 x
♣ A J x x x

West	East
♠ Q x x x	♠ x x x
♥ A Q 10 x x	♥ x x x
♦ x x	♦ A K Q x
♣ K 10	♣ x x x

South
♠ K x x
♥ K J 9
♦ J x x x
♣ Q x x

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

South bid 3♦ and East doubled. That was minus 500. Notice that if West leads a heart against 2NT, South makes nine tricks. Quite a difference!

In Conclusion

By not playing lebensohl after a weak two-bid is doubled, you lose the ability to differentiate between some weak hands and hands with invitational values (though if you have a stopper you can now bid 2NT to show this hand). The upside is that you have a natural 2NT bid at your disposal.

After they overcall your 1NT openings, I suggest you play penalty doubles, 2NT or 3 of a minor natural and not forcing, and a cuebid as Stayman. You still lose the ability to show or deny stoppers in the suit overcalled, but the more you bid naturally and directly (and thereby deny fourth hand the opportunity to get into the auction), the more you gain.

Raise Partner with Support

by Pamela Granovetter

Preview

East dealer	North		East (you)									
E-W vul	♠ J 9		♠ A K 10 7 5 3									
	♥ Q 6 5 2		♥ 10 9 4 3									
	♦ A K J 8 3		♦ —									
	♣ A 2		♣ K J 6									
		<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; margin: 0 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		
	N											
W		E										
	S											
		♠ 4										

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

- (1) five-card majors
- (2) forcing notrump

Opening lead: ♠4

Dummy plays the 9, you play the king and declarer follows with the deuce. What next?

Defense has come a long way over the years, and most hands are easy to defend thanks to obvious-shift carding, suit-preference signals, etc. Once in a while, however, you can run into a problem with no clear-cut solution. In order to minimize these situations, I go out of my way to raise partner with support, so at least one question-mark (responder's length in opener's suit) is eliminated. Take for example the preview hand, which came up during an Internet set game.

As East, you no doubt think that this contract should be an easy one to defeat. If you count your defensive tricks, you can count two spades, a club (if partner has the queen or if you can get partner in to lead one through), and, you hope, a heart trick from partner. The question is, how do you go about taking these four tricks?

If you cash a second high spade, will you set up declarer's queen for a club pitch? Perhaps partner has three spades and a weak hand, so he responded 1NT rather than raising you to two spades, and declarer has the ♠Q-2. If this is the case, a passive defensive is best; you will take your four tricks all in good time as long as you don't do something "busy."

Scenario #1

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

Scenario #2

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

Shifting to a club away from the king, or heroically returning a low spade for a club through will result in -130 when you had four tricks to take on defense all along.

On the other hand, if partner doesn't have three spades, then he has only one, and you had better do something heroic after all:

If you passively return a heart, the contract will make. The best play in this case is to play back the ♠3, suit preference, so partner can ruff it and play a club through. It's true that a club from your side works just as well, but partner might not have the queen. (This one, by the way, was the actual hand.)

If West can bid a forcing notrump with three-card spade support, then declarer did well to reveal the deuce. (See box in the left-hand column.)

Knowing Your Opponents' Leads

Knowing the style of your opponents' leads is important. The problem is that declarer can hardly stop and ask questions before following to trick one, because that will give the show away when he wants to falsecard. But against regular opponents or when playing in a long knockout match, presumably declarer will have some idea of his opponents' style and thereby know if he should hide or show a card lower than the one led.

Notice that MUD (playing middle-up-down with three small) leads in partner's suit do not work well; using MUD leads, if West leads the 4 and South follows with the 6 (or 8), East has no way of knowing if West has one, two, or three spades! Leading high from three small is also misleading to partner, unless you have supported his suit.

An aside for declarers: Even if your opponents do not lead MUD in partner's suit, it's probably best to follow to trick one with the 6 (or 8), because even if West would always raise with three-card spade support (rather than bid a forcing notrump), from East's point of view, West might have a doubleton spade rather than a singleton.

Which brings us to the big headache:

Scenario #3

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

Again West leads the ♠4, but this time he's got a doubleton. East can succeed by playing three rounds of spades, allowing West to ruff away South's ♠Q, or East can return a heart, as long as West wins the ace and exits with a club (if West ducks the heart, declarer pulls trumps and plays a spade — East wins and puts his partner in with a heart, but the club play is too late because declarer can ruff a heart to hand and pitch dummy's little club on the ♠Q).

In the headache scenario, East has no way of knowing what to do for sure, unless declarer is the type who never falsecards.

At least, though, the defender in the East seat can be spared the stress of guessing whether West has one spade or three, as long as his partner will always raise with three trumps and enough strength to raise. Threading the needle with a forcing notrump response (so that you can stop on a dime in 2♠) makes your defense more difficult if they compete and buy the contract, and it also shuts you out of the bidding in the sense that you will never be able to support partner (if not now, when?!). Notice that in the first scenario, not only must East be careful to defend passively with a heart shift, but East-West can take a lucky 10 tricks in spades. So if you do bid a forcing notrump with the first hand:

♠ 8 6 4 ♥ A J 7 ♦ 9 7 6 ♣ 10 8 7 4,

please remember to raise a 2♠ rebid to 3♠ (though this doesn't promise three cards in spades either).

Congratulations to the Cavendish Winners
(see Barry Rigal's feature on page 15)



Pairs: Huub Bertens and Ton Bakkeren



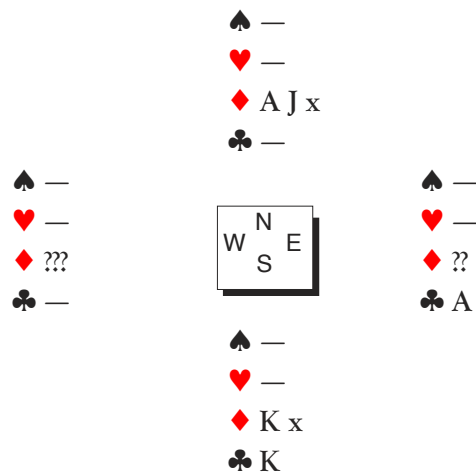
Teams: Wafik Abdou, Connie Goldberg, Pratap Rajadhyaksha and Stephen Landen

Mathematics

Cinderella II

by Irwin Boris

Many years ago, Jeff Rubens wrote a very nice article entitled Cinderella. The thrust of the article was to discuss a situation such as this:



During the course of play, you were able to determine that East started with five diamonds and that West started with three. East has pitched three small diamonds to retain the ♣A. You now cash the ♦K and both opponents follow with random low cards. You play another diamond and West follows. Each opponent now has one diamond left. What are the odds that East has the ♦Q? Is it 5 to 3 as it was originally, or is it now even money?

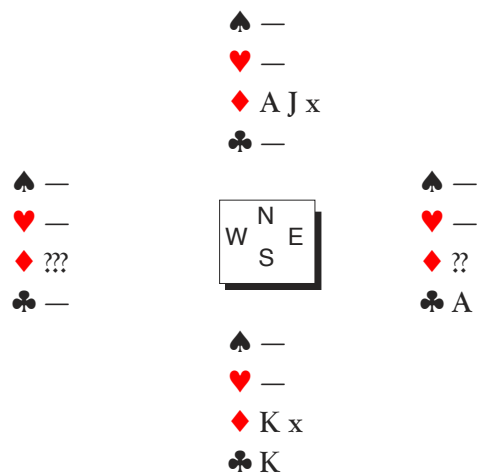
As long as the opponents play their small cards in random order, the odds have not changed one whit.

It is still 5 to 3. The fact that you have seen five of the six small diamonds gives you no real information. You knew all the time that East had five diamonds and that West had three.

Now let's look at some mathematics. Don't be put off, the calculations are very simple and you don't need a degree in rocket science to follow the argument. Let's look at two cases:

Case 1. West has the queen.

Now there are only two ways for West to play his cards. He plays one of his two small diamonds when you play the king. He certainly is not about to play the queen. East plays his diamonds in random order. He has five choices for his first pitch, four choices for his second, three for his third and two choices when you cash your ♦K. In all he has 5 times 4 times 3 times 2, or 120, different ways to play his cards. Since West has two choices on the play of the king and East has 120, their combined choices are 2 times 120, which equals 240. You saw one of those 240 combinations and the probability of this happening when West has the queen is one in 240 or .0041666666.



Case 2. Now let's assume East had the queen.

West had three choices in the way he played his first diamond and two choices when you cashed the king; a total of six ways he could have played his cards. East had four choices when he discarded his first diamond, three when he discarded his second, two when he discarded his third and only one choice when you played the ♦K. He never was going to discard the queen, so he really had only four cards to choose from. West had 3 times 2, or 6 choices, and East had 4 times 3 times 2, or 24 choices, for a total of 6 times 24, equaling 144 choices. Again you have seen one of those 144 combinations and the probability that the opponents would play their cards in exactly that way is one out of 144 or .006944444.

The sum of the two probabilities (.00694444 and .00416666) = .01111104. The probability that East has the queen is now:

$$.006944444 / .01111104 \text{ or } 62.5\%$$

This is the same as the original or "a priori" probability (5 to 3). So the fact that we saw six of the seven small diamonds brought us no new information.

This type of analysis lies at the heart of bridge probabilities. But be careful! It only works if the opponents play their small cards randomly. If they do not, then the probabilities are much different, but that is a matter for another day. This analysis also proves the old bridge adage that "you don't know anything about a suit until you know everything." One of the hardest things for most players to grasp is that when using the "theory of vacant spaces" (see bottom of column), you cannot factor in the fact that an opponent discarded a card, unless you know the full distribution of that suit. Partial knowledge tells you nothing. Here, the six cards we saw told us nothing. Exactly the same mode of analysis holds when counting vacant spaces.

Every good player will tell you that mastery of probability theory is not the road to expertise at bridge. Good bidding and taking one's tricks are the bread and butter of the game. Still, for a few of us, it is fun! And, more often than some would care to believe, probability theory can help you make the right play.

Irwin Boris lives in Minneapolis, Minnesota. He is a retired computer executive and occasional professor of statistics at a local business school. He laments the fact that bridge is not more popular with the younger set.

The Theory of Vacant Spaces

The theory of vacant spaces states that when the distribution of one or more suits is *completely* known, the probability that an opponent holds a particular card in any other suit is proportional to the number of vacant places remaining in his hand.

An example from Kelsey and Glaubert:

North
 ♠ A K 7 6 2
 ♥ K Q 5
 ♦ 7
 ♣ K 10 3 2

♠ 4

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

You are in seven spades. West leads a trump and East discards a small diamond. When you pull two more rounds of trump, East discards two more diamonds. All you really *know* is that West had three spades and that East had none. You are not en-

titled to count the three small diamonds you saw because you don't know the full distribution of the suit. It is as though you had never seen them. The odds of finding the ♣Q in East are 13 to 10 because it is as though East has 13 unknown cards or 13 vacant spaces where the ♣Q may have gone, and West has 10.

If you were to cash the hearts (as you should) and find that West has two and East has six, then the odds change. West would have eight vacant places (he is proven to hold five major-suit cards) and East seven (he is proven to hold six major-suit cards). Suddenly the odds favor finessing West for the ♣Q. The hearts and spades revealed in this scenario are "real" information, because the defenders had no choice in their plays — they had to follow suit if they could.

More Math by Chip Martel on the same theme

Proving things with mathematics can be fun but, from a practical point of view, bridge players would not do this math at the table. Instead they would (and should) always try and think of original holdings and ignore the cards played (if assuming random play). Here is another illustration on this theme (a two-card ending):

	♦ A Q	
	♣ —	
♦ ??		♦ ?
♣ —		♣ A
	♦ x	
	♣ K	

Assume that East was known to have started with the ♣A and three diamonds. He had to throw two diamonds and come down to a stiff diamond and the stiff ♣A. West was known to have started with two diamonds and has correctly pitched none.

It is 3-to-2 odds to play for the drop, and, using the author's analysis you see that if West had the ♦K, he would have only one way to play his cards, while East with three low diamonds has three ways to pitch first and then two ways to pitch second (so a total of six combinations).

If instead East has the ♦K, West has two ways to follow to the diamond lead, and East has two ways to pitch first and then one way to pitch, so a total of two. Combining we get two times two, or four total when East has the king.

Thus if we see any sequence of cards from East-West, it has a one-sixth chance of being from a holding where West has the king, and a one-fourth chance of being from a holding when East has the king. One-fourth divided by one-sixth gives the expected 3-to-2 odds we knew all along.

Around the world with 52 cards

by Migry Zur Campanile

When I heard that the venue for the 1997 European Championships would be the Italian town of Montecatini Terme, I was quite intrigued. I had never been to an old-fashioned, elegant Spa resort like Bath in England, Baden Baden in Germany or indeed Montecatini in Italy, and I started wondering what it was going to be like trying to mix bridge and the health treatments of the Spa. On a more personal note, I had just entered one of my non-smoking spells and I knew that it would inevitably lead to a very "tense" time. I was painfully aware of the fact that one of the acknowledged dangers of a prolonged competition is the amount of stress a player can build up and I was afraid that piling on top of it the stress from having stopped smoking would likely make me into a Migrynstein before the end of the event. So the prospect of being able to relieve such pressures and in a medically controlled environment of all places was a very welcome one.

Located less than an hour drive from Florence, Montecatini's long and illustrious history as a health center goes back a few hundred years and is based around the restorative properties of the local spring. In the summer its population grows from around 25,000 to 150,000 as visitors arrive from all over the world to experience its

mineral benefits. Various spa houses accommodate the eight different types of water that flow from the nearby hills, each one with trusted medicinal properties for the treatment of specific complaints such as liver trouble, gall bladder issues and so on.



The furious pace of the Championships barely left me the time to experience first hand the "miraculous" properties of the water. Whenever I left the playing area I would find myself discussing hands with my friends

happily smoking away in the adjoining corridors. The temptation to ask for a cigarette was overwhelming, so I decided to create an alternative for myself and started experimenting with rolling grass into cigarette papers and smoking them. Yes, you read right, grass as in the grass of your garden, not the other type related to marijuana and such. My idea was that smoking anything would be better than nothing, sort of a conscious placebo effect. Of course, they tasted disgusting but still I persisted for a few days, trying different mixes of grass and carefully selecting strands of various types taken from different areas of the nearby park. Their strange smell together with the "homemade" look elicited a lot of interest from my fellow players; some would hesitantly take me aside and warn to be more careful, some others would praise my "free

spirit” and devil-may-care attitude. All of them, however, would marvel at my “chutzpah” in smoking the “special” cigarettes in public. Was I not afraid of being caught? To be honest part of me was actually looking forward to having a testy Carabinieri, having to suffer through a few puffs of my horrible cigs in order to decide what to make of them!

Despite my nicotine deprivation woes, the bridge went quite well and we ended up fighting for the podium, finishing a creditable third, only one VP behind the French ladies.

Here is a hand from our match versus Denmark in the 13th round of the Championships.

Try it yourself first. You reach 6♥ with-
out the opponents bidding.

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

West leads the ♣9. Suppose you play low from dummy. Would you?

East plays the ♣K and you ruff.

You draw three rounds of trump, West discarding a club on the third round.

Next you lead the ♠K. West takes the ace and exits with a spade.

How do you continue?

Here is the full deal:

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

Migry	West	Ruti Levit	North	East
South	pass	2 ♦	pass	pass
2 ♣	pass	3 NT (1)	pass	pass
3 ♥	pass	4 ♦ (3)	pass	pass
4 ♣ (2)	pass	5 ♥	pass	pass
4 ♠ (4)	pass	(all pass)		
6 ♥	(all pass)			

- (1) I have a king.
- (2) Which one?
- (3) The ♦K
- (4) cuebid

Again, West led the ♣9 and I played small from dummy. East put up the ♣K, which I ruffed.

After drawing trumps in three rounds, it looks like the only legitimate chance apart from finding West with an extremely unlikely original club holding of J-9 doubleton, was to devise some sort of squeeze involving the minor suits.

The first thing I had to decide was to check the timing of the squeeze, to see if it could work on both players and, if not,

on which player it would have the better chance of success. I knew that East held the remaining top club, so it was time to check what was happening in spades and, if possible, turn the ♠J into an additional entry to improve my communications.

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

I led the ♠K and, after some thought, West took her ace and exited with another spade. Decision time: Which opponent was holding the diamond guard? If it was East, then I would have to cash the remaining spades and run all my trumps, leaving in dummy the ♦K-x and ♣Q and in hand the ♦A-x-x. If it was West who held the diamond guard, I would have to take the spade in dummy, play the ♣Q to force out the ♣A and thus transfer the club threat to West. Then I cash the last spade and run my trumps, leaving a similar end position but with the ♣10 in dummy this time. Which way to go? Was it a complete guess?

Well, the only tiny clue I had was that East had one more heart than West, and thus she was a little less likely to hold the diamond guard. It was an extremely thin inference but it was better than nothing. So I proceeded to set up the squeeze vs. West. I took the spade return in dummy and followed the plan I outlined earlier, reaching the following position with my last trump to be played:

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

other table the Danes succeeded in unearthing their diamond fit, so they had a lot less trouble in the play. It was a swift one down in six diamonds after the spade lead for a sizeable 14-imp swing, which helped us to a 19-11 victory.

Editor's Note: Migry's decision on this hand was in tune with the Vacant Spaces discussion in the articles on the preceding pages. There was one more space in the West hand for the third diamond. The odds were 11 to 10 that West had more diamonds than East. Interestingly, West had to duck the ♠K and ♠Q to defeat the slam!

On the last trump, West has no escape and the twelfth trick came rolling in. At the

2773

by Barry Rigal

Or, How I lost 2773 imps at the Cavendish to lose first place

My role at the Cavendish for the last 10 years has been as voyeur-in-chief. Rich Colker and I have split the Bulletin duties between us: I got the fun part of reporting the deals, Rich got to slave away over a hot computer all night, turning my scribbling into something that passed for accurate analysis.

This year, however, I decided to make the transition to player, something to do with my intention of bringing out a book that focuses on top-level players over the course of a 12-month cycle. I was lucky enough to be able to play with Bart Bramley, who is one of the main subjects of the book, and so I could get to experience the joys of the Cavendish at first hand.

Whether or not we were plain unlucky, or just did not take advantage of our opportunities, I do not know. But after the game we analyzed our performance (-884 cross imps with 22 tables in play corresponds to -40 real imps) and we decided that it would have been nearly impossible for us to win, even if we had played perfectly. In fact it would have been hard for us to crack the top five of the event. However, since confession is supposed to be good for the soul, here are some of the more interesting deals on which we or our opponents could have done somewhat better. If you get them all right, there is big cash prize out there with your name on it! (But don't write in for it, please.) If you get them all wrong like we

did, however, please let me know, as misery loves company. If you want to keep score, I suggest you write your answers down on a separate sheet of paper.

Problem 1

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

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

Opening lead: ♠A

Deciding how to handle the South cards is quite a problem after West opens 1♠, and East raises to 2♠. At the table South tried 3♥, then doubled West's 3♠ when it came back to him – a thoughtful approach that gave his partner the chance to pick 4♥. Contrast how badly every other North was placed who heard their partner double twice. Anyway, as South you ruff the opening top spade lead as East suggests four. What next?

Problem 2

You hold as West:

♠ A 3
♥ A 2
♦ A K Q 5
♣ A K Q 7 2

The unopposed auction goes:

West	East
2 ♣	2 ♦ (0 or 1 control)
3 ♣	3 NT*
4 ♦	4 ♥
4 ♠	5 ♦
5 ♥	5 ♠
?	

*3♦ would have been a second negative

You can infer that partner has four or more diamonds, the ♥K and ♠Q. Your choice is to jump to 7♦, try once more for the grand slam with 5NT, or sign off in 6♦.

Problem 3

North
♠ 3
♥ A K
♦ K J 10 8 7 5
♣ A Q J 4

♦ A

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

South	West	North	East
3 ♠	pass	4 ♠	(all pass)

Opening lead: ♦A

As South you declare 4♠ on a mundane auction, and are pleased to see the ♦A lead . . . or are you? East shows out, West gives him a ruff with the ♦6, and East — a bonafide world champion — goes into the tank before returning a heart. How do you play the trumps?

Problem 4

Two deals later, you face this awkward problem:

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

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

With nobody vulnerable partner opens 1♥, RHO overcalls 1NT, and you double. LHO takes forever to bid 2♠, which comes back to you. What now?

Problem 5

At favorable vul, you hold as West:

West
♠ 10 7 4 2
♥ A K
♦ K Q 8 5
♣ K 10 4

West	North	East	South
—	pass	3 ♥	3 ♠
?	4 ♠	pass	pass
?			

Pass on your left, 3♥ from partner, 3♠ on your right. Do you pass or bid 4♥, and if, whatever you do, you hear 4♠ on your left, what do you do when the auction comes back to you?

Whether you choose to double or not, (I did) on the lead of the ♥K dummy appears with a threatening:

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



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

Mercifully two top hearts stand up, partner following with the 7 (obvious shift overtones) and the 2, strong preference for clubs — or at any rate for a non-diamond play as declarer produces the ♥Q! Maybe your ideas of a second-in-hand preempt and partner's do not coincide, but that is neither here nor there. Over to you.

Problem 6

A blind lead — or is there no such thing? Opponents bid unopposed:

North	South
2 ♦	2 NT
3 ♦	3 ♠
3 NT	pass

No inferences are available as to whether an initial 2♠ would have been forcing — the partnership does not know! Pick a lead from:

♠ 9 6 ♥ K 8 6 5 ♦ Q J 10 ♣ Q J 4 2

Problem 7

After a poor performance in the auction you will have to do better in the play:

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

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

Opening lead: ♠Q

On an unopposed sequence (yes, it would have been easier to start 1♦-1♠-2♦-2♥-3♣-3♦, but that is the partnership style) you fear the worst on a top spade lead. But West, Marty Fleisher, cashes two top spades, having shown the ♠A-K-Q, then shifts to a diamond. You run six diamonds and East, Chip Martel, throws two discouraging clubs, a spade, and two hearts. West follows twice, then pitches a club, a spade, another club and the ♠10. You cash the ♥A, having reached this ending:

North
 ♠ —
 ♥ 8
 ♦ —
 ♣ J 10 4

South (you)
 ♠ J
 ♥ K J
 ♦ —
 ♣ K

West is down to the bare ♠Q, the ♣A and either the guarded ♥Q or the ♣Q and a heart. If you believe the opponents, he has the second hand. You simply take the heart finesse or guess to drop the ♥Q if you prefer. If you do not believe them, exit with a club and collect two heart tricks at the end; are you a skeptic or a believer?

Problem 8

Your partner with, you hope, justified confidence in you, has put you into a delicate slam.

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

♥ A

South (you)
 ♠ Q
 ♥ Q J 7 4
 ♦ K Q 8 5
 ♣ K J 7 5

South	West	North	East
1 ♣	1 ♥	double (1)	4 ♥
pass	pass	4 ♠	pass
4 NT (2)	pass	6 ♣	(all pass)

(1) 4 or 5 spades, not 6
 (2) minors

On the lead of the ♥A (king from ace-king) you ruff and East plays the 4. A trump to the king holds, and when you play a second trump West takes the ace, East pitching a low heart. West exits with a low heart. What is your plan now?

Problem 9

You hold as West:

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

West	North	East	South
—	—	1 ♦	1 ♠
pass	2 ♥	double	pass
2 NT	pass	3 ♣	pass
?			

With both sides vulnerable you hear partner open 1♦. RHO overcalls 1♠, you pass, LHO bids a non-forcing 2♥, and partner doubles, undiscussed. I'm going to legislate a 2NT call on you, like it or not — I'm not sure whether it should be this sort of pattern in the minors or a spade guard in a hand in the range 5-7, but you seem to have both. Partner now bids 3♣ and you are back in the hot seat.

Problem 10

You hold:

East (you)
 ♠ K 10
 ♥ K 4
 ♦ A J 8 7 2
 ♣ A K 8 2

West	North	East	South
1 ♥	pass	2 ♦	pass
2 ♠	pass	2 NT	pass
3 ♣	pass	?	

Partner is first up, and your auction starts as shown. Two spades did not show extras, and 2NT was 12-14 or 18+. Three clubs was bidding out the hand pattern — consistent with 4-5-1-3 or 4-5-0-4 shape, presumably non-minimum if holding the former. How far do you want to go here? Are you prepared to use Blackwood and drive to a Grand Slam, if you find the missing key-cards? Do you want to raise clubs at once, or do you want to bid 3♥ first and then support clubs?

Problem 11

The following competitive auction develops, with partner to speak first:

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

<i>You</i>		<i>Partner</i>	
West	North	East	South
—	—	1 ♦	1 ♠
2 ♠	double	3 ♦	pass
3 ♠	double	pass	pass
?			

Partnership style is for the 3♦ call to show a minimum with extra diamond length — whatever that might mean in context. Do you bite the bullet with 3NT, bid 4♦ and let partner work out if that is forcing, or jump to 5♦?

Problem 12

And finally... another opening lead problem:

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

West	North	East	South
—	—	1 ♦	2 ♣
pass	pass	double	pass
pass	pass		

Partner opens 1♦, RHO overcalls 2♣, and partner reopens with a double. You pass again; the auction has worked out well for you — what about the play? Name your opening lead....

Answers

Problem 1

This was the full deal:

West dealer	North
Both vul	♠ Q 5 4
	♥ J 6 5
	♦ Q 9 6
	♣ Q 8 4 3

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

South (you)

♠ —

♥ A Q 9 8 2

♦ A K 7 3

♣ J 9 7 6

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

Opening lead: ♠A

At the table declarer in 4♥ ruffed the spade lead and crossed to the ♦Q to take the heart finesse. The problem with this line was that by disclosing he had all the red-suit honors he had telegraphed the winning defense. West was not hard pressed to shift to a club and take the ruff for down one. Had declarer played ♥A and another heart — assuming that with spades 6-4 the club ruff was the main danger to the contract — he would then only have had to find the ♣10 to make his game. And the defenders might have done that for him at trick four! Setting 4♥ was worth +114 imps to the defenders. Making 4♥ would have earned East-West 177 imps.

Problem 2

At the table, where I had to decide whether to shoot out the grand slam or not, I decided to make the 5NT grand slam try, and when partner bid 6♦ I gave up. I expected that some of the field might not find slam at all with 5 facing 26. Alas for me, partner had:

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

West	East
2 ♣	2 ♦ (0 or 1 control)
3 ♣	3 NT
4 ♦	4 ♥
4 ♠	5 ♦
5 ♥	5 ♠
?	

Note those redundant heart queens and spade jacks, which made notrump playable. Even worse, more than half of the field played a grand slam — quite a few in 7NT or 7♣! And with clubs and diamonds both splitting we lost 140 imps on a deal where had the suits not split we would have gained 165 imps.

Problem 3

North
 ♠ 3
 ♥ A K
 ♦ K J 10 8 7 5
 ♣ A Q J 4

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

South	West	North	East
3 ♠	pass	4 ♠	(all pass)

Opening lead: ♦ A

In 4♠ South has to hold his trump losers to one after the second round of diamonds has been ruffed. The question is whether East has ace-doubleton or ace-third of trumps left, or whether he now has ace-jack third or jack-third of trumps. It looks as if the percentage action is to finesse in trumps after diamonds turn out to be 5-0. A complicating factor is that maybe East has to lead a trump if he does not have the ace, in case he can put his partner in for another diamond ruff — he does not know you have only two diamonds.

Maybe with ace-jack-fourth of trumps East does not have to plan his defense for five minutes? Anyway, declarer finessed in trumps and lost to the doubleton jack — that was 214 imps away instead of a flat board.

Problem 4

At the table the decision to double 2♠ looked reasonable, but worked out spectacularly badly. Partner had a shaded 1-5-4-3 opening bid, with 5♣ your way unbeatable, while 2♠ doubled can only be held to -470 if partner leads from his ace-fifth of hearts at trick one and gives you two ruffs.

West dealer	North
None vul	♠ K Q
	♥ K 7 4 3
	♦ A 5 4 2
	♣ A 6 5

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

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

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

It was not at all clear why declarer with a 6-4-2-1 three count had taken so long to run to 2♠, but it worked well to fool you into thinking he did not have a clear-cut bid. Conceding -670 lost only 176 imps but collecting +400 would have been worth a whopping 215 imps.

Problem 5

The full deal here was:

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

West	North	East	South
—	pass	3 ♥	3 ♠
?	4 ♠	pass	pass
?			

We left West trying to set 4♠ after two top hearts stood up. If West presses on with a top diamond, against partner's wishes, declarer will have to guess clubs well to make the hand, by leading the jack from hand, then finessing against West on the second round. Not impossible but not so easy to do (declarer has to draw trumps then play the ♣J out of his hand at once because of the entry position). West can stop declarer from getting a complete count of the hand by winning the diamond at his first chance, then leading a second club.

At the table I got imaginative, by leading the ♣K, trying to break up a squeeze. That was -990 and a loss of 221 imps. Had we broken the game, we had 250 imps coming to us — and even sacrificing in 5♥ would have left us comfortably plus on the deal.

Problem 6

The full story:

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

North	South
2 ♦	2 NT
3 ♦	3 ♠
3 NT	pass

Against 3NT, West has to decide between a heart and club. On my lead of the ♣Q my partner could hardly do anything else but win the ace and return the suit, and that was nine tricks for declarer, instead of the seven we would have collected on a heart lead. That cost us 125 instead of a gain of 137.

Problem 7

This was the full deal where I had to guess a four-card ending in 3NT:

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

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

Opening lead: ♠Q

I assumed the opponents would not signal honestly here, and exited with a club; Fleisher cashed out and I conceded down one for a loss of 166 imps instead of a gain of 47. I should have realized that the opponents *knew* they were not playing against Garozzo — there was no need to lie if they thought I would not pay attention or could not figure out what to do even if I had!

Problem 8

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

South	West	North	East
1 ♣	1 ♥	double (1)	4 ♥
pass	pass	4 ♠	pass
4 NT (2)	pass	6 ♣	(all pass)

- (1) 4 or 5 spades
- (2) Minors

At the table declarer ruffed the second heart, left the trump outstanding, and advanced the ♠A, then ran the ♠J. Not a success: Bart, my partner, ruffed for down one. Obviously if declarer draws the last trump before he takes the ruffing finesse and finds East with 10 major-suit cards and a singleton trump, he will need the diamond finesse to bring in that suit. Defeating 6♣ gained us 144 imps instead of losing 281 imps.

Problem 9

Where I had to decide whether to advance over 3♣, our combined hands were:

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

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

So no game comes close to making. I hoped that I might buy the same hand as I did but with the major suits switched and tried 3NT. Eric Rodwell knew enough not to double me; he just cashed his six solid hearts. Minus 200 was a loss of 122 imps instead of a gain of 53 imps from +130.

Problem 10

Another Grand Slam decision, and again a wimp-like bid by me. I tried 3♥ over 3♣, then when Bart bid 3NT I assumed I was facing a minimum, and settled for 6♣ in what I thought would be a 4-3 fit. Our combined assets were:

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

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

I was impressed that so many of the field

reached slam in the fourth suit (11 out of 22) but less impressed by our loss of 135 imps. Bidding the grand would have gained 144 imps.

Problem 11

Where I had to decide whether to play notrump or diamonds, and if the latter at what level, the full hand looked like this:

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

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

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

Barry	North	Bart	South
West	—	East	1 ♠
—	—	1 ♦	
2 ♠	double	3 ♦	pass
3 ♠	double	pass	pass
5 ♦	(all pass)		

I bid 5♦ and let Bart go down in peace and quiet. I should have bid 3NT, knowing Bart would pull on this unconfident auction with a singleton spade. On this occasion guessing the spades in 3NT would have been easy, after North's logorrhea. Going down in game cost us 160 imps instead of gaining 53 imps.

Problem 12

Where West had a lead problem against 2♣ doubled, the full deal was:

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

West	North	East	South
—	—	1 ♦	2 ♣
pass	pass	double	pass
pass	pass		

Maybe East's anti-lead-directing opening bid got what it deserved, but on a diamond lead declarer wrapped up eight tricks in 2♣ doubled (Well done, South, for not overcalling 1NT, and North for not running to 2♥ anyway). Plus 500 would only have been worth +34 imps, as the field all got into trouble here, but -180 was a loss of 208 imps.

As you can see, I have focused largely on my own mistakes here, although our opponents did enough wrong to let us in with a shout. Of the 12 boards listed here, we were on the wrong end of 10 of them. Let's assume we get all our wrong views correct. Then if I defend correctly, allowing declarer to get board 5 wrong, and had diamonds not split on deal 2, we would by my calculation have collected 2773 imps more than we did.

And since problem 5 was against the winners, their score would have come down enough to let us into first place. . . . Can I get my check now?

Scores

(1) ♥A and ♥ +114	other: -177
(2) grand slam +165	small slam -140
(3) ♠Q or ♠K 0	♠10 -214
(4) 3♣ +215	double -176
(5) ♦K or ♦Q +250	other -221
(6) heart lead +137	club lead -125
(7) ♥ finesse +47	other -166
(8) draw trump +281	first ruff out ♠ -144
(9) partscore +53	3NT -122
(10) grand slam +144	small slam -135
(11) 3NT +53	5♦ -160
(12) non-♦ lead +34	♦ lead -208

EVENT LEADERS

1	2131.15	15	33	Huub Bertens - Ton Bakkeren	Auction	\$196K	Player's pool	21.5K	
2	1629.50	15	20	Geoff Hampson - Eric Rodwell		124		14	
3	1623.20	15	30	Gary Cohler - Howard Weinstein		83		9	
4	1606.20	15	6	Antonio Sementa - Alfredo Versace		62		7	
5	1399.80	15	38	Curtis Cheek - Joe Grue		55		6	



The Wizards of Aus

Hands from Australian Tournaments

by Ron Klinger

On the first two boards in the second set of the Autumn National Open Teams last year, the contract was 4♠ at both tables. The contract failed on only one occasion, yet in each case there was a double figure swing. How could that be?

Bd. 17 North (Gill/Peake)
 North dealer ♠ 9 4
 None vul ♥ 9
 ♦ J 7 3
 ♣ A Q 8 7 6 5 3

West (Lazer/Richman)	East (Gumby/Gaspar)
♠ K Q J 6 5 2	♠ 8 3
♥ Q J 6	♥ A K 8 7 2
♦ K 8 6 2	♦ 10 4
♣ —	♣ K J 10 2

South (Bloom/Wiltshire)
 ♠ A 10 7
 ♥ 10 5 4 3
 ♦ A Q 9 5
 ♣ 9 4

At both of these tables the bidding and lead were the same:

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

Opening lead: ♥ 9

How should West plan the play?

The lead is very likely a singleton and so trumps figure to be 3-2. North is unlikely to have a 7-4-1-1 or 8-3-1-1 pattern. If North has three spades and South has the ♠A and ♦A, you are doomed. Your best hope is for the ♦A with South and North to have two trumps or ♠A-x-x. You should take care not to block the hearts, because you plan to pitch two diamonds on dummy's long hearts later. Therefore, duck the heart in dummy, win in hand and lead a top spade.

That is how Warren Lazer played. Martin Bloom (South) won the first trump and gave North a heart ruff. North returned a diamond to the ace and South played a third heart. When North discarded, declarer overtook in dummy, cashed another heart to pitch a diamond and then played the ♦K, ruffed a diamond, ruffed a club and drew trumps for +420.

At the other table Bob Richman took the heart lead with dummy's ace and led the ♠3, hoping for South to play second-hand-low. Not David Wiltshire. He rose with the ♠A and led the ♥4 for North to ruff. Peake tried to cash the ♣A, but Richman ruffed and played four rounds of spades. Wiltshire did not let go a heart, so Richman could do no more than overtake the ♥J with the king, cash the ♣K for one diamond discard

and lead a diamond. South rose with the ♦A and Richman still had another diamond to lose for one down. That was 10 imps to Lazer's team.

Bd. 18	North (Gill)		
East dealer	♠ 10		
N-S vul	♥ A J 9 7 4 2		
	♦ 10 8 6 4 3		
	♣ 7		
West (Lazer)		East (Gumby)	
♠ Q J 6 4 2		♠ K 7 5	
♥ 8		♥ K Q 6	
♦ K 2		♦ Q J 5	
♣ A K J 9 6		♣ Q 10 5 3	
	South (Bloom)		
	♠ A 9 8 3		
	♥ 10 5 3		
	♦ A 9 7		
	♣ 8 4 2		

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

Opening lead: ♣7

Lazer won with the ♣K and led the ♠J: ten – five – ace. Bloom cashed the ♦A: two – eight – five and continued with a second diamond, when a heart shift was needed. Lazer won, crossed to the ♠K and pitched the ♥8 on the ♦Q. He lost just two spades and a diamond for +420.

That was certainly a good result for East-West, but the wild happenings at the other table gave them a 10-imp loss:

West	North	East	South
Richman	Peake	Gaspar	Wiltshire
—	—	1 NT (12-14)	pass
2 ♥ (1)	2 ♠ (2)	3 ♠	4 ♥
4 ♠	pass	pass	double
redouble!	(all pass)		

(1) transfer to spades

(2) Michaels, 5+ hearts and a 5+ minor

Opening lead: ♥3

After Gaspar's gutsy 3♠ bid, Richman had an easy raise to game. South doubled, expecting a better hand from North for 2♠ at this vulnerability. Indeed, 4♥ doubled goes for 500. Richman knew he had the edge both on strength and shape, so he redoubled.

North took the ♥A and shifted to a diamond to the ace. The diamond return was won in dummy (West) and the ♠2 led: ten – king – ace. South played a third diamond, won by East, who put the ♠5 on the table. South played the ♠8, not a good move, although Gaspar would probably have found the winning play anyway after South's penalty double.

After that, declarer had no trouble picking up South's trumps to make 4♠ redoubled for +880. This time 10 imps to Richman.

Something to think about: If two heads are better than one, why don't partners do better at bridge?



The Switch in Time Forum

by the Granovetters

Questions and answers based on the "obvious shift principle" and other defensive methods, discussed in the book and Bridge Today Course: "A Switch in Time"

Preview

East dealer North (dummy)
N-S vul ♠ Q 5
♥ J 7 2
♦ A Q 9 7 6 3 2
♣ 3

East (you)
♠ K J
♥ K 10 8 5 3
♦ 5
♣ 9 8 7 5 2

♣ Q

W	N
S	E

West	North	East	South
—	—	pass	1 ♦
1 ♠	5 ♦	(all pass)	

Opening lead: ♣Q

The obvious shift suit is spades, the suit bid by partner. You can follow with a low club at trick one to show the ace or king of spades. Do you?

Too Much Honesty?

Using obvious-shift signals, there is a temptation to be overly informative to the opponents. This is more likely to happen than with other signaling methods, because in Switch in Time defense, every card is significant, and the cards are played carefully and (generally) honestly.

As an illustration of too much honesty, look at the following common scenario,

where dummy has three small in a side suit and declarer has K-J doubleton in hand:

<p>North</p> <p>♠ K Q J</p> <p>♥ J x x</p> <p>♦ x x x</p> <p>♣ A 10 9 x</p>	<p>East</p> <p>♠ x x x</p> <p>♥ 9 8 2</p> <p>♦ ????</p> <p>♣ Q x x</p>
<p>West</p> <p>♠ x x</p> <p>♥ A K 10 x</p> <p>♦ ????</p> <p>♣ x x x</p>	<p>South</p> <p>♠ A 10 9 x x</p> <p>♥ Q x x</p> <p>♦ K J</p> <p>♣ K J x</p>

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

Opening lead: ♥A

If East signals at trick one with the ♥2, because he can stand the shift to diamonds, declarer knows where the ace is. And if East signals that he does not want the shift, by playing the ♥8, he is helping declarer to guess the suit when East holds the queen without the ace.

The preview hand is from David Bird's excellent "Robin Hood's Bridge Memoirs," Batsford Bridge Books, 1997. In the book, East signals violently for a spade switch and gets it. But the whole hand is:

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

West	North	East	South
—	—	pass	1 ♦
1 ♠	5 ♦	(all pass)	

Opening lead: ♣Q

West shifted to the ♠10 at trick two, and declarer eyed this card suspiciously. There could be no reason for West to lead away from his king, and this, together with East's vehement signal, convinced declarer to play low from dummy. She won the jack with the ace, ruffed a club, led a trump to hand, ruffed a club, and threw East in with a spade. East was forced to lead away from the ♥K or give a ruff and sluff, and the contract made. Interestingly, even if declarer had played the ♠Q from dummy on West's 10, East would get endplayed, because he held the K-J doubleton.

It was both the signal for spades and the spade shift that hurt the defense. If West had switched to a diamond at trick two, declarer would probably have played a spade toward the Q-5 in dummy, hoping that the overcaller held the ♠K and that East held the ♥K.

In the book, the opening lead is the ♣A (ace from ace-king). From East's point of view, declarer might hold the ♣Q-J-x without the ♠A and a spade could disappear on a club, so East can hardly afford to falsecard by asking for a club continuation. No, East will play the ♣2, which in Switch-in-Time methods asks for a shift to the obvious switch suit — spades is the OS because it was bid by West.

In our presentation of the problem, we had West leading the ♣Q. Now if South holds the ♣A-K, it doesn't matter what East signals, because a spade is about to be pitched. But if the ♣Q is from A-K-Q,* East knows that South holds the ♠A for his opening bid and that the endplay is a real possibility. So East, in this case, might play a high club at trick one, asking partner not to switch to spades, in order to fool declarer.

West shifts to a safe trump and the contract fails when declarer tries a spade to the queen. What do you think? Signals are a two-edged sword and nothing is easy in this crazy game!

*We're not a big fan of the queen lead from A-K-Q because it often flags all the high cards in the other hand for declarer. This applies when you have opened the bidding or failed to open. But in the case here, West has overcalled and is relatively unlimited, so the ♣Q lead won't be telling South where the other high cards are.

Hand of the Month

Here's another interesting deal from the Cavendish Pairs. North-South were Curtis Cheek and Joe Grue. East-West were Chip Martel and Marty Fleisher.

South dealer	North (Cheek)		
Both vul	♠ Q J 9 8		
	♥ Q 8 6		
	♦ Q 8		
	♣ Q J 9 8		
West (Martel)		East (Fleisher)	
♠ K 4 3 2		♠ A 7 6 5	
♥ J 7 5 3 2		♥ —	
♦ 6 5 4		♦ 10 9 7	
♣ 6		♣ A K 10 5 3 2	
	South (Grue)		
	♠ 10		
	♥ A K 10 9 4		
	♦ A K J 3 2		
	♣ 7 4		

South	West	North	East
Grue	Martel	Cheek	Fleisher
1 ♥	pass	2 ♥	3 ♣
4 ♦	pass	4 ♥	double
pass	pass	pass	

Opening lead: ♣6

At the four level, Martel converted his partner's takeout double to penalty. Four spades would not have been as bad as it looks. East can score nine tricks in spades: He ruffs a heart in dummy, cashes the ♠A, and ♣A-K, then crossruffs clubs and hearts. Nice, but not as nice as defending 4♥ doubled, if East makes the right plays.

Four hearts doubled can be made against some defenses. For example, West leads a club to partner's king. East cashes the ♠A and ♣A, as West throws a diamond, then leads a spade. While this taps declarer, if he plays for 5-0 trumps he can score eight trumps and two diamonds for 10 tricks. He ruffs the second spade, cashes two diamonds and continues diamonds. Whenever West ruffs a diamond, declarer overruffs and ruffs a spade back to hand. If West pitches a spade on any diamond, so does declarer from dummy (which means one ruff less in dummy, but one diamond more).

Fleisher found the winning defense with Martel's help, to win 170 imps. After the club lead to the king, Fleisher cashed the ♠A and received an upside-down ♠4 to encourage club plays. This is in fashion with the old rubber bridge signal when the opening lead might be a singleton or doubleton. Third hand cashes a side ace and his partner plays a discouraging card to say "Please go back to the suit I led, pard."

Fleisher then cashed the ♣A and played another club. Declarer had to ruff the third club high and Martel got to pitch two diamonds away. Grue (South) gave it a good try, running the ♥9 (which would work if hearts were 4-1), but he now had to play on diamonds and Martel could ruff the second round for down one. Nice try, Grue, and well done, Fleisher and Martel!



Bulldogs and Poodles

by Pamela Granovetter



In his book, "Play these Hands with Brian Senior," the English internationalist Senior writes: "I have arranged to play with the country's top player.... You would think it would be a pleasure to play with such a strong partner and it is, up to a point. [But] there is an unusual psychological aspect to playing with him. The point is that I am used to being the senior partner.... Today, however, I am the junior partner...."

Unlike Brian Senior, I am not used to being the "senior partner," but I *am* used to being the "bossy" partner. For example, when I played at the Denver Nationals with Barry Rigal, Rigal subsequently wrote that he and I had drastically different opening-bid styles, and when we needed "to effect a compromise, one was achieved wherein I conceded that I would play everything Pam's way, and it worked a treat." Happily for me, over the years I have effected similar "compromises" with my husband.

I have a date to play with Bob Hamman in the World Mixed Pairs championship in Verona this month and it's the thrill of a lifetime. In my opinion, Hamman is not only the country's top player, he's the *world's* top player. His card-play technique is brilliant, of course, but what I like best about his game is his attitude and tenacity — he is never affected by bad results — and for that reason I have described him in past articles as a "bulldog." As the junior partner in this new partnership, not even I have the chutzpah to try something bossy with Hamman, so for once I am going to try to behave like a ... er ... poodle.

Here's a case in point. I like to play that if my partner and I have not embarked

on a cuebidding sequence after showing a clear fit, then cuebids mean, "I may not be sure where we're playing yet, but I like my hand!" An example of this might occur after partner makes an overcall. I don't play that new suits are forcing, so with a big hand I have to begin with a cuebid. This doesn't promise a fit for partner, so partner won't jump to game without a strong six-card suit of his own. What do I do with support for partner? I evaluate my cards and then make a single or jump raise, or I bid game, or I cuebid first and then support his suit to clarify that I have a fit and also a slam-positive hand.

Here's an illustration of a different way I use the cuebid. Playing with husband Matthew I picked up:

♠ 10 8 5 3 ♥ A 10 7 6 2 ♦ 5 ♣ K 10 2.

I passed, LHO passed, and Matthew opened 1♦. RHO overcalled 1♠, so I made a negative double. So far, so good. Then:

Pamela	Opp	Matthew	Opp
pass	pass	1 ♦	1 ♠
double	pass	2 ♠	pass
?			

What would you do?

I rebid 3♠, which I meant as, "I like my hand." After all, I had three controls (counting an ace as two and a king as one), a fifth heart, a singleton, and nothing wasted in their suit. How much better could I be? Matthew launched into Blackwood, to which I showed one plain ace, and then he bid 6♥. This was an easy-to-make slam because he had:

♠ K ♥ K Q 8 3 ♦ A K Q 9 3 2 ♣ A 6.

This type of bidding is obviously not normative. How do I know that? For one thing, after I made the 3♠ bid, an astonished kibitzer wrote a private message saying: "What was that 3♠ bid????!!!"

For another, I tried it out a couple of times with Bob. Unfortunately, I fell flat on my face both times:

Bd: 16 ♠ 7 6
 West dealer ♥ 5
 E-W vul ♦ 10 9 6 5 3
 ♣ A Q 10 5 4

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

Pamela	North	East	South
West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1 ♦	double
redouble	3 ♣	double	pass
4 ♣	pass	5 ♦	pass
pass	double	(all pass)	

Result: -800.

Now with Barry or Matthew, I would justify and pontificate and decry and insist, but when you play with a "senior partner," especially a bulldog, you just say, "Right-oh, Bob!" Then you make sure you have support next time you make a cuebid.

My tip is this: When you have the good fortune to play with a "senior partner," your behavior should be respectful and even deferential.

Bd: 22 ♠ 9 8 7 6 5 3 2
 East dealer ♥ 9 7 3
 E-W vul ♦ —
 ♣ 10 5 4

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

Pamela	North	East	South
West	North	East	South
—	—	1 ♣	pass
2 ♦*	3 ♠	pass	pass
4 ♠	pass	4 NT	pass
5NT	pass	7 NT	double
(all pass)			

*strong jump shift showing a one-suiter, or diamonds and clubs, or a balanced hand with lots of high-card points and five diamonds

Result: -500.

In both cases, Bob took my cuebids as showing support for his suit. After the game, he explained that cuebids show support for partner, and with suits of my own I should just bid (or rebid) them.

When the senior partner makes a statement, chances are he's right. In short, "know your place" — there's nothing as unseemly as when the lesser player speaks to the greater player as if they are equals. Allowances can be made when the partners are accustomed to discussing bridge together, but when you have a rare and golden opportunity to play bridge with a first-class partner, put your ego on hold and try to learn a thing or two.