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BRIDGE TODAY



Editor: Matthew Granovetter

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Tops and Bottoms

by Pamela Granovetter

I spend most of my spare bridge-reading time with my nose in "Adventures in Cardplay" by Geza Ottlik and Hugh Kelsey. I love the beauty of the entry-shifting squeezes or changing-hand-patterns plays described in that book. But, in real life, I know these hands will come up rarely if ever, and even after all my study, I know I might fail to recognize them at the table.

Bread-and-butter tops and bottoms come from much simpler stuff. Thinking ahead in the bidding and play doesn't require all that much expertise, so even a person who is no master of Geza Ottlik strategems can win lots of boards, and justifiably feel good about it. Try these three hands, all from one game, for example. You will see that common-sense bridge and careful play will see you through to many good scores!

Exhibit 1

Playing matchpoints, you pick up in first seat favorable:

♠ K 9 8 5 4
 ♥ 9 8 3
 ♦ Q
 ♣ K 10 9 7

You pass, second hand passes, and partner opens with 4♥. Since you are a passed hand, the range for this bid is wider than usual. What would you do after fourth hand doubles?

West	North	East	South
—	—	pass	pass
4♥	double	?	

At the table, East, who was Sandy Trent, redoubled, which I think is a great call. After all, they are unlikely to be able to make a game, so they should be doubled if they bid (particularly because 4♥ is likely to make, since your kings are now assumed to be well-placed). If partner has a reasonable hand or a good diamond holding, he will know to double them in 5♦ and you can double 4♠ or 5♣ yourself. If partner has an extremely weak four-bid, your side might still bid 5♥, which will be a cheap save thanks to your three-card trump support and singleton.

East's redouble is a cooperative double, bringing partner into play despite the fact that he opened with a preempt and despite the fact that East is a passed hand. If East had a trap pass, she would pass North's double, then double their final contract. So redouble-then-double is cooperative and pass-then-double is to play. This is a useful principle for other situations as well, for example after partner opens the bidding at the one level and next hand doubles. If you'd like to defend any of the three unbid suits, pass first, then double. If you have a more flexible hand, redouble and then double, allowing partner to cooperate with you vis-à-vis playing or defending.

This was the whole hand and complete auction:

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

West led the ♠Q. Declarer won in dummy and tried a heart to the king. West shifted to a club. Declarer was finished. He lost one spade, one heart, the ♦K, a spade ruff and the ♣K: minus 800.

Most of the field opened 1♥ or 3♥ with the West cards and landed in 4♥ for +420.

Notice that if Sandy passes North's double, it probably goes 5♦-pass-pass to Sandy. What would she do then? She'd be on a complete guess. A pass of 5♦ would lose 3 imps while a 5♥ bid would be a disaster.

West	North	East	South
—	—	pass	pass
4♥	double	redouble	5♦
double	(all pass)		

Exhibit #2

Playing against expert opponents, how would you play four spades with these cards:

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

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

Opening lead: ♥3

If you win the ace of hearts and play a diamond to the queen, it wins. What next?

The whole hand was:

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

Did you play the ace of clubs and ruff a club to get over to dummy for another diamond finesse? That's what declarer did in real life. He took a second diamond finesse, breathed a sigh of relief when it won (the West player was capable of ducking the first diamond smoothly) and played a trump to the jack and king. But now the hand began to unravel for declarer. East returned a diamond, ruffed by West and West exited with the ♥K, which declarer ruffed. The position was:

	<p>North (dummy)</p> <p>♠ 10 6 ♥ 10 9 4 ♦ — ♣ —</p>											
<p>West</p> <p>♠ — ♥ — ♦ — ♣ K J 6 5 4</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"> <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;"> </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> </p>	W	N	E					S		<p style="text-align: center;">East</p> <p>♠ A 4 ♥ Q J 8 ♦ — ♣ —</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">South</p> <p>♠ Q 9 ♥ — ♦ 6 3 ♣ Q</p>
W	N	E										
	S											

overruff plays.) Now declarer was kaput. If he plays a trump, East wins and exits with a high heart, and if he ruffs a heart to hand, then ruffs a diamond, East overruffs this time and plays his last heart, promoting the ♠4 for the setting trick.

Do you see the winning line? Declarer must avoid the temptation to ruff clubs in dummy! At trick three, he plays a high trump from his hand. East wins and returns a heart. Declarer ruffs and plays another trump. East can win and play a third heart, but declarer ruffs (with his last trump), enters dummy with a club ruff, pulls the last trump and finesses diamonds for an overtrick. In fact, East does better to clear trumps, holding declarer to 10 tricks.

Declarer could not afford to pull another trump, because East would win and play a third round and declarer would be stuck with a losing club. So he ruffed the club in dummy, and East discarded a heart! (See Barry Rigal's article for more refusing-to-

Kudos to West for finding the killing low heart lead, and to East for refusing to over-ruff!

Exhibit #3

South dealer North (dummy)
 E-W vul ♠ A 4
 ♥ K 6 2
 ♦ K 9 4
 ♣ J 10 8 7 2

South (you)
 ♠ K 9 3
 ♥ A 10 9 5 4
 ♦ A
 ♣ A 6 5 3

♠ —
 ♥ 6
 ♦ —
 ♣ J 10 8 7 2

♠ —
 ♥ Q 8 7
 ♦ —
 ♣ Q 9 4

♠ Q J
 ♥ —
 ♦ Q 10 8
 ♣ K

♠ 9
 ♥ 9 5
 ♦ —
 ♣ A 6 5



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

- (1) forcing
- (2) spades and a minor
- (3) shows extras

Opening lead: ♠10

Suppose you win the ♠K in hand and play the ace of hearts. Oh-oh, East shows out. Now what? This was the whole hand:

♠ A 4
 ♥ K 6 2
 ♦ K 9 6
 ♣ J 10 8 7 2

♠ 10 5
 ♥ Q J 8 7 3
 ♦ J 5 4
 ♣ Q 9 4

♠ K 9 3
 ♥ A 10 9 5 4
 ♦ A
 ♣ A 6 5 3

♠ Q J 8 7 6 2
 ♥ —
 ♦ Q 10 8 7 3 2
 ♣ K

In real life, declarer won the ♠K, played the ♥A, ♦A, and ♥10 to the jack and king. He cashed the ♠A, ♦K and ruffed a diamond, leaving:

Now declarer played a spade, but West was able to ruff in with the ♥7, play a club to the king and ace, win the ♣Q and exit with a club. So he made all three trump tricks plus the queen of clubs for down one.

Declarer played the hand well up to a point, but mistimed the ending. In the diagrammed position, he should play the ♣A and a club.* West wins and exits with a club to the jack, but now declarer can play a good club from dummy, throwing his spade, and West must give him the tenth trick (the ♥9). Declarer takes: two high spades, two high hearts, two high diamonds and a diamond ruff, two clubs, and the ♥9.

Notice any unusual but common theme in the last two hands? In both cases, dummy has ruffing values that should not be used, at least in a normative fashion. In the second hand, declarer must resist the temptation to ruff clubs in dummy, or down he goes. And in the third hand, declarer's downfall was trying to ruff his spade loser in dummy!

*If West began with three clubs to the king-queen, it won't help declarer to lead a low club, since West can exit in trumps and score two club tricks.

The 11th NEC Cup

by Pietro Campanile

The NEC Cup is one of the most prestigious invitational teams tournaments in the crowded constellation of the international bridge calendar. It is staged in Yokohama in the early-mid part of February and the Japanese Bridge League, generously sponsored by NEC, one of the largest computer manufacturers in the world, traditionally provides a lavish setting and thoroughly professional staffing, overseen by the tireless efforts of Tadayoshi Nakatani. This year's edition took place from the 6th through the 12th of February and saw the participation of a strong batch of foreign teams as well as an abundant local contingent of players, some strong some not so strong, to complete a total roster of 42 teams under the expert direction of the ever smiling Richard Grenside.

It was hard to pinpoint the pre-tournament favorites. The general-consensus short list was: the Italian Lavazza team (Bocchi-Duboin; Madala-Ferraro), the defend-

ers Israel, which included my wife Migry (Barel-Campanile, Israel and Doron Yadlin), USA Mahaffey (Kwiecien-Pszczola; Lair-Cohler; Shenkin-Mahaffey) and the Venice Cup women champions from France (Cronier-Willard; D'Ovidio – Gaviard). There were plenty of other good quality contenders to make up the field: two strong Australian teams, FISK (a multi-national selection including Cronier-Gupta and Sundelin-Carruthers), a British team led by Paul Hackett and many other competitive local teams whose performance would surprise more titled opponents.

The format of the tournament is based on an eight-round Swiss of 20 boards per match, with the top eight finishers clashing in direct knock-out matches over 40 boards, leading to semifinals and a 64-boards final.

The round-robin matches provided a rich and assorted collection of interesting deals to choose from.

A Tricky Rebid

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




Given the wide ranging distributional possibilities included in South's jump-shift rebid of 3♣ after 1♠-1NT, it is not at all easy to find the correct reply with the North hand. Holding ♣J-x-x-x and a ragged six-count, a raise to 4♣ seems way too much, which is why I prefer bidding one's time with 3♠, despite the risk of burying the club fit.

How should South continue over 3♠? The most flexible bid at this point is 3NT, to leave open all the possibilities, giving North a chance to bid 4♣, 4♠ or pass. The

other advantage of 3NT is that it guarantees a real club suit for the 3♣ bid, and after North supports it with 4♣, showing a worse hand than a direct 4♣ over 3♣, the pair can happily reach the safe ports of 4♠ or 5♣.

North dealer ♠ Q 3
 Both vul ♥ 5 2
 ♦ K 7 5 4 3
 ♣ J 9 4 3

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

♠ A K J 9 5
 ♥ A J 7
 ♦ 9
 ♣ A Q 8 5

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Cohler	Armstrong	Lair	Hackett
—	pass	pass	1 ♠
pass	1 NT	pass	2 ♣
(all pass)			

In the USA Mahaffey-Hackett second-round match, Paul Hackett opted for a strangely conservative 2♣ rebid and was left to play there, making up one of the three pairs out of 42 who did not reach game. Two clubs made five for +150.



“Tosh”
 Andrew McIntosh

Open Room

West	North	East	South
McIntosh	Kwiecien	Mizel	Pszczola
—	pass	pass	1 ♠
pass	1 NT	pass	3 ♣
pass	4 ♠	(all pass)	

At the other table, Kwiecien opted for a practical raise to 4♠ (a fast-arrival bid in their system), counting on his Q-x to pull full weight opposite partner’s good spades. This led to an interesting tussle between Pszczola (“Pepsi”) as declarer and Scottish internationalist Andrew McIntosh (“Tosh”) as defender. Tosh led the ♦J, which held, and switched to a trump. Pepsi won in dummy to play a club to the queen, ducked by West. Now declarer drew trumps and played ace and another club. Tosh won and got out with a diamond, and declarer had to lose two hearts for one down.

If Pepsi had used the ♠Q entry to ruff a diamond before drawing trumps and then played clubs from hand, the defense would have still prevailed. West takes the ♣K at the right time* to deprive declarer of a second club entry to dummy (to make sure that declarer cannot ruff out the ♦A and return to a club to cash diamonds). Four spades was made about half the time it was bid; three N-S pairs reached 6♣ and failed; 5♣ made twice and went down three times.

*To prevent declarer from reaching dummy twice in clubs, West must duck if declarer leads the ♣A and ♣Q. But West wins the king if declarer leads ♣A and a low club (or a low club first)! Interesting position: West must take his ♣K on South’s low club, not his honor! — editor

A Southern Belle

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

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



When she played the ♥8 from dummy, East discarded a club, but surprisingly so did West, who was known to have at least another spade, which was safe to discard. A careful declarer could not miss such a strange action, and, as often happens, those who are busy “weaving the tangled web” get caught up in it. Had West discarded his ♠7, declarer would likely have gone with the odds and finessed the ♣J, since East was known to hold four of the remaining seven clubs. Instead, Linda deduced that West’s action could only make sense if he was trying to create the impression that he could afford a club discard, and would not be so

Seven hearts was attempted a respectable 14 times out of 42, with mixed results: Eight declarers eventually lost to the ♣Q, while the remaining six made their grand slam. One of those was Linda Lewis in the USA/Mori vs. South America match in the fourth round of the qualifications. Here’s what happened at her table.

West led the ♠6 (third and fifth) to the 3, 8 and ace. Linda drew trumps in three rounds, Lambardi (East) discarding the ♠K-10, and then cashed the diamonds, discarding spades (Bianchedi, West, pitching a spade).

inclined to do that without the ♣Q, since that would appear to pinpoint to declarer its being in partner’s hand.

I guess it was a little like a game of bluff and counter-bluff. But backing her judgment, Linda led the ♣J and ran it for +2210, so she was the one to have the last laugh. Had West covered the ♣J, a play worthy of Grosvenor if one was found holding Q-10-x in the suit, Linda would have automatically finessed East for the ♣10, as otherwise, with ♣Q-10-x, West could be assured of a club trick anyway and would not have attempted to deceive her with his club pitch.

At the other table, Koneru led a trump and Frontaura ran all his tricks to find out more about the distribution of the club suit, and then played with the odds, going one off. Linda’s sharp play brought in 20 imps and contributed heavily to USA/Mori’s 68-57 win, 17-13 in victory points.



Linda Lewis

The fifth round saw the important clash between the two teams heading the field: Lavazza and Israel. The match was full of interesting boards and the Israelis had much the better of it, taking full advantage of the occasional slip-up by their highly rated Italian opponents.

The Italian Slip-up

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



Closed Room

South	West	North	East
<i>Campanile</i>	<i>Duboin</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>
pass	1 ♦	2 ♣	2 ♠
(all pass)			

Opening lead: ♣8

In the Closed Room Bocchi-Duboin had a surprising mix-up over whether 2♠ was or wasn't forcing. Bocchi thought it was, while Duboin obviously didn't. I guess they were both happy afterwards they didn't have Lauria at the other table to whom they would have to explain why they had



Barel (center) vs. Bocchi

stopped in 2♠ with a combined 27 count. Bocchi, however, went down one in 2♠, when he won the heart shift at trick two and finessed to the ♦Q. North won, cashed his ♣A, and returned a trump. Bocchi cashed the ♦A, throwing a heart, and then led a heart. North won and the defenders proceeded to crossruff.

Open Room

South	West	North	East
<i>Ferraro</i>	<i>Doron</i>	<i>Madala</i>	<i>Israel</i>
pass	1 ♦	pass	1 ♠
pass	2 ♣	double	2 ♥
pass	2 NT	pass	3 ♥
double	3 NT	pass	pass
double	(all pass)		

In the Open Room Madala chose quite sensibly not to overcall 2♣, but then North-South engaged in a frenzy of doubles which might have allegedly been meant to help out the defense. But, as it so often happens, they only managed to give declarer a pretty good idea of the lie of the cards. The final double by Ferraro was rather speculative and probably based on the consideration that the suits did not appear to be splitting kindly for declarer, without thinking how damaging that would be to the defensive communications themselves.

The auction had been clear enough to steer Madala away from a minor-suit lead and the Argentinean opted to lead the ♠9 (a heart lead would not have fared better). Doron won the spade lead in hand, cashed dummy's ♥A-K, getting the news in that suit, then the ♠A-Q, and led a diamond to the queen and king. Madala was now forced to put declarer back in his hand to cash his diamond winners, and Doron emerged with five diamonds to go with his five major-suit tricks: 3NT doubled plus one for a resounding +950; 14 imps to Israel,

West dealer ♠ A
 E-W vul ♥ A J 7 6 5
 ♦ A Q J 4
 ♣ K J 4

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

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



Open Room

West	North	East	South
Hans	Hayden	Nunn	Onstott
pass	1 ♥	pass	1 ♠
pass	3 ♦	pass	4 ♠
double	(all pass)		

Opening lead: ♦ 3

At the other table Onstott got the lead of the ♦ 3 from Hans, whose objective all along was to avoid the fate befallen to Kastle by trying to paint a false picture of his distribution for declarer. Onstott won with the ♦ K, played ♠ A and the ♣ K. Hans took

the ace and exited with the ♥ Q, continuing his “disinformation” job. Onstott won the ace, ruffed a heart and played two rounds of clubs, finishing in hand to lead the ♠ 10. Hans, however, had a diamond left to exit, so he could safely take the ♠ J and get out of hand, waiting for declarer to give him two more trump tricks. He was able to duck the nine or queen later: one down, -100 and 14 well deserved imps to Del Monte. Despite this board, Kastle went on to win the match and faced Israel in the semifinal, while the Japanese Open team would face Italy in the other semifinal.

While Israel was never really troubled by Kastle and cruised on to a berth in the final, Italy was soon having a hard time against the Japanese super-aggressive methods. The match went head to head most of the way and it was mostly due to the relative partnership inexperience of Madala-Ferraro that Japan managed to secure enough imps to defeat the Italians.

Here is a typical example described in inimitable fashion by Eric Kokish, the editor of the superb bulletins that accompany the event:

Kantar’s Double-Dummy Korner
 by Eddie Kantar

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

♠ K 8 7 6
 ♥ K 6 5
 ♦ 5 4
 ♣ Q 10 6 5

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

 ♠ J 4 3
 ♥ A J 4
 ♦ Q J 7 6
 ♣ A 4 3



You are South in 3NT. West leads the ♠ 6. Your mission is to make 3NT against any defense. You can do it! Solution on page 32.

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



Open Room

South	West	North	East
Ferraro	Imakura	Madala	Ino
1 ♣	1 ♠	pass	pass
double	pass	2 ♦	pass
2 ♠	pass	3 ♦	(all pass)

Closed Room

South	West	North	East
Chen	Duboin	Furuta	Bocchi
2 ♣	2 ♠	double*	pass
3 NT	(all pass)		

*0 or 1 control

“Ferraro may have used his quota of testosterone in the previous session; his pass of 3 ♦, needing virtually nothing but some appropriate minor-suit length, took partnership trust to a superhuman level. Theoretically, however, Ferraro was right . . . about 5 ♦ — Madala went down in 3 ♦ by throwing clubs from dummy on the second and

third rounds of spades, only to have Ino lead a heart through the king: -100. He [Ferraro] was not right about clubs, though, as he could make 5 ♣ from his side. Meanwhile, the vulnerable E-W could make 4 ♠ (Imakura was remarkably conservative himself), so Ferraro could dare to hope that going down in 3 ♦ wouldn’t turn out too badly.

“Those hopes were dashed when Chen took, as usual, a much more aggressive approach with the South cards and got away with it. Duboin, expecting Chen to hold the guarded ♠K, made the well-reasoned lead of the ♥A. Bocchi tried to discourage by following with the 4, an even card. Duboin had no reason to change his mind about spades, and continued with the ♥Q. Chen took the rest for +690 and Japan gained 13 imps, 76-62.


“In the other semifinal match, Kasle opened 2 ♣, rebid 3 ♣ in competition, and bid 5 ♣ when raised to 4 ♣, a nicely measured auction, which got the USA team a well deserved +600 and a three-imp loss! In the other room in fact, Campanile opened 1 ♣, reopened 1 ♠ with a double, and over West’s 2 ♥, reopened with 3NT. She made seven on a low spade lead, taking the last trick with the ♥5 after discarding the ♥2 and ♥K on diamonds! Now *that*, dear readers, is bidding. Could it be that she came across the vial of testosterone misplaced by Ferraro and Imakura?”



Migry Campanile

Testosterone or not, it cannot be a coincidence that for the third year running, the Israeli team of Michael Barel-Migry Campanile, Doron and Israel Yadlin had succeeded in reaching the final of the NEC Cup, something that has not been done before in this event.

One of the reasons for their success is the way both pairs use disarmingly simple natural methods to best effect. Let us look for example at Board 5 from the first session of the semifinal. First look at the Italy-Japan match:

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

Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Imakura</i>	<i>Madala</i>	<i>Ino</i>	<i>Ferraro</i>
—	pass	pass	1 NT
pass	2 ♣	pass	2 ♦
pass	3 ♦	pass	3 ♥
pass	3 ♠	double	pass
pass	redouble	pass	3 NT
(all pass)			

Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Duboin</i>	<i>Furuta</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Chen</i>
—	pass	pass	1 NT
pass	2 ♣	pass	2 ♦
pass	3 ♦	pass	3 NT
(all pass)			

As Kokish aptly puts it “If two pairs of this stature can bid these cards to 3NT after North expresses interest in alternative strains, there’s something rotten in the state of (fill in the blank). An ignoble push with N-S -100.” The funny thing is that at Ferraro’s table, Madala and Ino could not

have done more to warn the Italian about the glaring weakness in the spade suit and the ensuing 3NT bid on ♠J-x is puzzling to say the least, since with spade length Madala would simply have bid 3NT himself over 3♥. At the other table Furuta’s antennas must have sensed some danger and opted for a cloudy 3♦ bid over 2♦ but his extra sensorial powers were obviously not enough to overrule partner’s subsequent 3NT.

Now look at the Israel-USA match. In that match the Americans had a routine Stayman auction with Sutherlin (North for Kasle) rebidding an automatic, if uninspired, 3NT over 2♦. At the other table Migry Campanile and Michael Barel showed how the hand should be bid with natural methods:

West	North	East	South
<i>Onstott</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>Hayden</i>	<i>Campanile</i>
—	pass	pass	1 NT
pass	2 ♣	pass	2 ♦
pass	3 ♦	pass	3 ♥
pass	5 ♦	(all pass)	

This sequence shows that nothing is routine in bridge: After Migry failed to bid 3NT over 3♦, Barel could draw the necessary inferences and realize that it made no sense for him to do so. The 5♦ contract deserved to make, and it did, supplying Israel with a well deserved 12 imps and the Bulletin Editors’ Prize for “Best bid hand using natural methods.”

Israel’s opponents in this year’s final would be Japan-YOI (Dawei Chen-Kazuo Furuta, Yasuhiro Shimizu-Yoshiyuki Nakamura, Masayuki Ino-Tadashi Imakura), a team that included all the best Japanese players and is considered stronger than the Japan Open team, which had reached the quarter finals at the last Bridge Olympiad

in Istanbul. The strength of their claim was based on being the only team to have defeated Israel in the round-robin and disposed of the Italian Lavazza juggernaut in the semis.

The final saw the Israelis quickly build a fairly sizeable lead thanks to accurate play by both pairs. The result at the half-way point was 75-42. The third quarter saw another imp being added to the gap and it seemed that Japan would need to pull a small miracle to recover 34imps in 16 boards. Alas, small miracles do happen in the land of the Rising Sun, especially when the hands are distributional enough to reward aggressive actions. And aggressive is certainly what Japan YOI proved to be in the last quarter. On quite a few boards the Japanese gambles worked wonders and the seemingly insurmountable gap quickly shrank to a mere 9imps when the last board hit the table.

Would it make life easier if I told you that the card you select can be worth \$6,000 and mean the sole difference between finishing first or second?

Here is the whole hand:

South dealer ♠ 8 4 2
 N-S vul ♥ 8 7 4
 ♦ K Q
 ♣ A K Q 7 4

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

As you can see, the normal diamond lead (there's no point in leading the ♠Q spade into declarer's advertised strength with ♥A-10-x-x of trumps)* takes away East's entry to the winning spades and gives declarer the time to set up the fifth club in dummy to dispose of his spade losers... unless...

	North ♠ 8 4 2 ♥ 8 7 4 ♦ K Q ♣ A K Q 7 4	<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		East (you) ♠ K J 6 5 3 ♥ — ♦ A 9 3 2 ♣ J 10 8 2
	N											
W		E										
	S											
♦ 6												
South 1 ♥ 2 ♥ 3 ♠ 4 ♥	West pass pass pass (all pass)	North 2 ♣ 3 ♥ 4 ♣	East pass pass pass									

Opening lead: ♦6

You take your ♦A and you play back...?



The Final

*Las Vegas, 1971: "Always lead your singleton."
 — Benito Garozzo confides to young Matthew, future BT editor. I suppose, however, if Barel had followed the sage's advice of always leading your singleton, it would have ruined Migry's chance to shine. — editor

Trump Tricks

by Barry Rigal

When it comes to trumping or over-trumping, many players seem to have the attitude of shooting first and asking questions later; a trick is a trick is a trick. To my mind they have vastly over-simplified the issue: The player in third or fourth seat frequently does have a problem when deciding whether to trump in or overtrump.

The standard puzzling situations boil down to three basic sub-groups: promotion, deception and control.

Promotion

Terence Reese and Jean Besse were two of the people who first wrote about the possibility of promoting a trump for yourself or your side by not over-ruffing when you had the opportunity. The sort of layout we are all familiar with looks like this (spades trump in all illustrations):

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

When East leads a suit (clubs) that both South and West have no more cards in, and South trumps in with the jack, should West overtrump? It would be far easier if, instead, West held K-10-3. Then resisting the urge to over-trump would be easier, since West would be looking at the second natural trump trick.

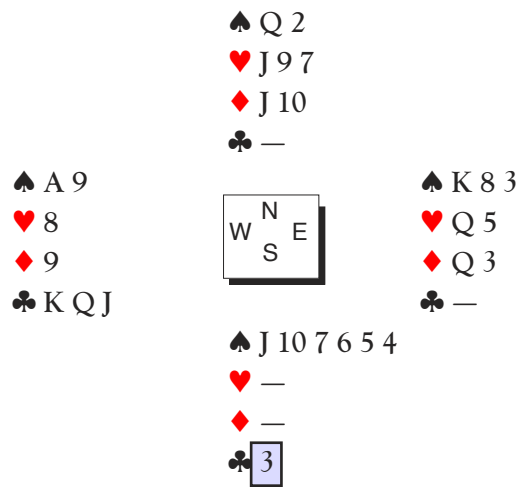
Sometimes the problem is even harder when the trump suit is divided along the following lines:

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

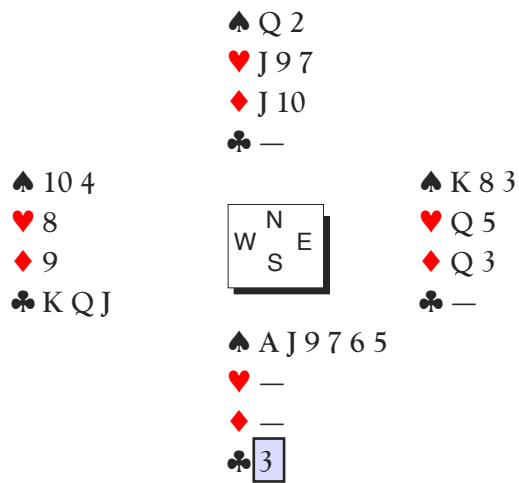
When East leads a club through South, West refuses to over-ruff the jack. Later he can win his king and put partner in again. At this point a second club through declarer will promote the 8 of trumps. On a different day this play might work even if West refuses to over-ruff from K-8 doubleton! Not overruffing can hardly cost, can it?

Even when you resist the temptation to overruff, you may still need to be careful. On the last board of the second stanza of the quarter-finals of the 2003 Senior Teams championship, which is held during the Fall Nationals, Fred Hamilton had registered the warning signs of bad breaks from the auction, so he took more than his usual

declarer ruffs a card in dummy with a high trump, in a suit in which you are also void.

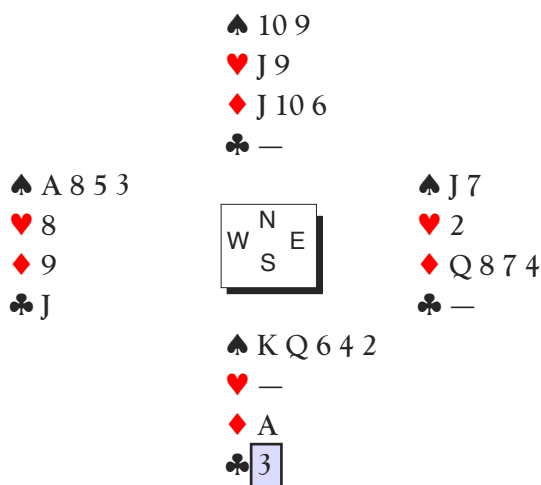


When declarer ruffs with the queen you virtually assure your side of three tricks by not overruffing with the king.



In this example your chances of two tricks improve if you do not overruff, since declarer may lead to his 9 next — and who could blame him?

An even more difficult position to read occurs when East has short trumps, and yet may still do better not to overruff dummy.



When declarer ruffs a loser in dummy, should East overruff? If he does so, West scores only his trump ace for two defensive trump tricks in total. If East discards, how-

ever, and later covers dummy's remaining spot, he produces three defensive winners. But on the other hand, if West has A-Q-3-2 of trump, the overruff would generate an extra trump trick, while failing to overruff costs a trick, and partner will be notably unsympathetic! Still, since even A-Q-5-2 of trumps would be worth three tricks on defense after the decision not to overruff, maybe not over-ruffing is the percentage play. You come out even most of the time, but may gain when partner's intermediates are strong.

Equally complex are the following positions. When East leads a master card in a side suit in which West and North are void, West does best to discard rather than ruff in, when the trump suit is divided in the following ways.

<p>♠ 9 2 ♥ A K Q 4 2 ♦ 9 6 ♣ —</p>	<p>♠ K 7 3 ♥ 8 5 ♦ — ♣ Q J 10 5</p>	<p>♠ J 5 ♥ J 10 7 6 ♦ 10 8 5 ♣ —</p>	<p>♠ K 7 3 ♥ 8 5 ♦ — ♣ Q J 10 5</p>												
<p>♠ Q 5 ♥ J 10 7 6 ♦ 10 8 2 ♣ —</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;"> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table> </div> <p>♠ A J 10 8 6 4 ♥ 9 3 ♦ — ♣ 8</p>	W	N	E	S			<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;"> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table> </div> <p>♠ A Q 10 8 6 4 ♥ 9 3 ♦ — ♣ 8</p>	W	N	E	S			
W	N	E													
S															
W	N	E													
S															

In either case, if West grabs the queen (or jack), that is the last trump trick for the defense. In the first case, discarding assures the defense of two tricks; in the second case declarer has to guess the trumps to hold his losers to one, and is relatively unlikely to do so.

Note that in both cases, if East leads a losing club and South covers it (for example, South holds the ♣K instead of the 8), West does best to ruff in with the 5, to force the overruff, leaving declarer an awkward guess on the next round. And, of course, that means it would probably be right for West to ruff low with K-5 also! As you can see, these layouts fall into the grey area between legitimate defense and deception.

And so does our next deal, which comes from a par contest of yesteryear.

West dealer ♠ K 5
N-S vul ♥ 7
 ♦ A 9 7 3 2
 ♣ A K 6 4 3

♠ 9 7
♥ 10 6 4 2
♦ J 8 6 5
♣ Q 10 2

W	N	E
S		

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

As West you lead the ♠9. Partner wins the ♠Q at trick one (denying the jack). He

cashes the ♠A and continues with the 8, declarer covering with the 10.

Since partner did not overcall on the first round, declarer must have at least four spades and six hearts, so all his minor-suit losers are covered by dummy's honors. Thus your extra defensive tricks can only come from trump tricks.

Since declarer's spades are either J-10-x-x or J-10-x-x-x, he has no more spade losers. Thus partner needs to hold a major trump honor. If it is the ace it doesn't matter what you do now, but suppose it is the king. Say you ruff the third spade with the ♥10 and play a diamond. Declarer will win in the dummy and take a trump finesse, then will cash the ace and your partner's king will

The full deal:

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

come tumbling down. If you refuse to ruff at all you, will suffer a similar fate. Declarer will cross to dummy, take a trump finesse and then cash the ace. Your ♥10 will be the only trump trick you take.

Now consider ruffing the spade low. If declarer overruffs in dummy (the normal play, though discarding would work better) he can no longer take the trump finesse. He will play the ace and queen of hearts at some point. East will win his king and play a fourth spade, and your 10 of trumps will become the setting trick.

Deception

Assume that West is about to get a cheap ruff or overruff in a suit where North must follow, and the trump suit is divided this way:

♠ K J ♥ A J 6 4 3 ♦ 7 4 ♣ —	♠ 10 8 6 5 2 ♥ Q 10 2 ♦ — ♣ 3	<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;"> </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		♠ 9 4 ♥ 9 5 ♦ 10 3 ♣ J 7 4
W	N	E										
	S											
	♠ A Q 7 3 ♥ K 8 7 ♦ — ♣ Q 10											

When West ruffs in with the jack, declarer will surely consider laying down the ace on gaining the lead, because the inconvenience of crossing to dummy twice to finesse against K-9-4 may prevent him from exploiting a side suit (in this case, hearts) to the full. But if West ruffs in with the king, and returns ♥A and a heart, declarer may feel obligated to play East for J-9-4 of trumps by using the entries to dummy to

pass the ten, giving West a second trump trick.

Similarly, consider this trump suit.

♠ 4 ♥ 10 8 7 5 ♦ — ♣ Q	♠ Q 8 7 2 ♥ A 6 ♦ — ♣ —	<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;"> </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		♠ K J 6 3 ♥ 4 ♦ 5 ♣ —
W	N	E										
	S											
	♠ A 10 9 5 ♥ J ♦ — ♣ 3											

West leads a card in a suit (clubs) in which North and East are void. If East overtrumps dummy's 8 with the jack, that will be his last trick in the suit. But if he overruffs with the king, and returns a heart, declarer will win the ♥J and may feel he needs to pass the ♠10 immediately.

Conversely, if the trump suit is divided:

<p>♠ J 9 ♥ 9 8 7 3 ♦ 9 2 ♣ —</p>	<p>♠ 10 8 6 5 4 ♥ — ♦ J 4 ♣ 7</p>	<table border="1" style="margin: auto; text-align: center; width: 60px; height: 60px;"> <tr><td> </td><td>N</td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>S</td><td>E</td></tr> </table>		N		W	S	E	<p>♠ K 7 ♥ 10 ♦ 10 6 3 ♣ 5 3</p>
	N								
W	S	E							
<p>♠ A Q 3 2 ♥ — ♦ Q 5 ♣ J 6</p>									

When East leads a club, and West ruffs with the ♠J and returns a diamond, will declarer really win in dummy and lead a spade to the queen? Declarer may be persuaded to lay down the trump ace next, playing West for K-J doubleton.

Here are two more positions where the defenders maximize their chances by not over-ruffing; in each case dummy has ruffed with the ten, and you, as East, increase your chances of getting an extra trump trick by not winning the trick....

<p>♠ A 4 2 ♥ J 6 5 ♦ — ♣ Q J</p>	<p>♠ K J 10 8 7 5 ♥ 8 7 ♦ — ♣ —</p>	<table border="1" style="margin: auto; text-align: center; width: 60px; height: 60px;"> <tr><td> </td><td>N</td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>S</td><td>E</td></tr> </table>		N		W	S	E	<p>♠ Q 9 ♥ Q 10 9 4 2 ♦ 4 ♣ —</p>	<p>♠ 7 4 ♥ K ♦ 9 5 ♣ K</p>	<table border="1" style="margin: auto; text-align: center; width: 60px; height: 60px;"> <tr><td> </td><td>N</td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>S</td><td>E</td></tr> </table>		N		W	S	E	<p>♠ 10 5 ♥ 6 5 4 ♦ 8 ♣ —</p>	<p>♠ Q 9 8 2 ♥ 3 ♦ 7 ♣ —</p>
	N																		
W	S	E																	
	N																		
W	S	E																	
<p>♠ 6 3 ♥ A K 3 ♦ — ♣ 10 6 2</p>				<p>♠ A K J 6 3 ♥ — ♦ — ♣ 3</p>															

In the first example declarer may take the finesse of the 9 on the first or second round if you refrain from the overruff, and in the second case declarer may try to drop your partner's doubleton queen.

An even more unusual opportunity presented itself to a French expert pair thirty years ago....

<p>♠ K ♥ 9 7 6 5 3 2 ♦ 7 4 ♣ K J 6 2</p>	<p>♠ 7 6 4 ♥ A Q J 10 ♦ J 9 8 3 ♣ 8 5</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: 10px auto;"> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">W</td> <td style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">N</td> <td style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">E</td> <td style="width: 25%;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> </div> <p>♠ A Q J 10 8 5 3 2 ♥ — ♦ 5 2 ♣ A 10 4</p>	W	N	E			S			<p>♠ 9 ♥ K 8 4 ♦ A K Q 10 6 ♣ Q 9 7 3</p>	
W	N	E									
	S										

Pierre Jais opened 1♦ in third seat, but South brushed this aside by bidding 4♠, and there the matter rested.

On Dominique Pilon's lead of the ♦7 the defense played three rounds of the suit, and declarer ruffed with the jack. Pilon's decision not to overruff looks quixotic — but he could see that the trick should come back — and it did with interest! Had he overruffed, declarer would have had enough trump entries to take the ruffing finesse in hearts and avoid a club loser altogether.

As it was though, declarer naturally played the ♣A and a second club, allowing Jais to lead a fourth diamond. Declarer ruffed with the queen, and now Pilon had his trump trick back plus the club winner to set the game.

Control

Issues of control may arise when declarer is in the process of being shortened. Overruffing may generate one extra trump trick, but discarding may make declarer lose control of the hand, and produce a greater return on investment. In situations like this the problem for a defender may be realizing, that while it is generally wrong to overruff with a useful trump, just how small can a useful trump be? Consider this hand from the 2004 Junior European championships.

<p>North dealer N-S vul</p> <p>♠ A 5 2 ♥ K Q J 10 9 8 ♦ 3 ♣ K 9 8</p>	<p>♠ Q J 8 7 ♥ 3 2 ♦ K Q 9 7 5 2 ♣ 4</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: 10px auto;"> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">W</td> <td style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">N</td> <td style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">E</td> <td style="width: 25%;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> </div> <p>♠ K 9 4 3 ♥ A 7 6 5 ♦ A ♣ A 6 5 3</p>	W	N	E			S			<p>♠ 10 6 ♥ 4 ♦ J 10 8 6 4 ♣ Q J 10 7 2</p>	
W	N	E									
	S										

The popular contract was 4♠ by South, which was usually defeated on the ♥K lead but, at most tables, the line of play selected by declarer was an inferior one. The best play is to win the heart lead with the ace and cash the ♦A before crossing to dummy with a low spade to the queen. Now a low diamond, carefully ruffed with the ♠9, which West will see there is no point in over-ruffing.

At one table, declarer continued with the ♠K, which West naturally, if questionably, took with his ace. Now when West continued hearts, it forced dummy to ruff the third round (reducing declarer to one trump in each hand). Declarer now led a second low diamond and ruffed with his last trump in hand, the 4. West also has only one spade left, the 5, but must decline to overruff, otherwise dummy is now high. The key is that by not overruffing West retains trump control, indirectly. Since there is no entry to dummy to draw the trumps, the diamonds will wither on the vine.

Along the same lines, both the original and revised versions of Terence Reese's masterpiece, *The Expert Game*, missed the following rather subtle point.

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

Say South plays in three hearts after East has opened the bidding with one spade. West leads the ♠10, and on the third round

South ruffs with the ♥7. If West overruffs he will have no further defense beyond the ace of trumps. Instead, his best bet is to discard a club. South plays off the ♣K-Q, and now if he leads the ♥J from the table it will be ducked by West, who takes the second round of trumps and plays a diamond. That locks South on the table and he will lose control.

On revisiting the deal, though, I discovered that declarer does have a winning resource though, even after the club discard. After the club unblock, instead of leading the ♥J, he comes to hand with dummy's low heart to his queen. If West wins and returns a diamond, declarer overtakes the ♥J, draws a third trump and runs clubs, giving up just one further trump trick to make nine tricks. If West ducks the ♥5 lead to the queen, declarer leads the ♣A, so far having four tricks in the bag, to reach this ending:

	♠ Q						
	♥ J						
	♦ A J 8 5 3						
	♣ —						
♠ —	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S	♠ A 5		
N							
W E							
S							
♥ A 8 6		♥ 9					
♦ Q 10 7 2		♦ K 9 4					
♣ —		♣ J					
		♠ —					
		♥ K 10 4					
		♦ 6					
		♣ A 10 6					

South to play, needing five tricks.

On the ♣A West cannot discard or else declarer can score the ♣A, a club ruff in dummy, the ♦A and two of his trumps in hand. So West ruffs the ♣A, and declarer complements West on his earlier defense — by discarding a diamond from dummy! Now *declarer* has regained trump control; he can win the diamond return and lead a trump, and from there on in he will lose just the ♥A.

If I had not read that section of the book, the following deal — which came up last year — would have proved far more difficult for me....

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

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

I was defending 4♥ in the West seat. My ♠10 lead was overtaken by partner, and two more top spades were led. South did his best when she ruffed low (the 7). If I over-ruff, declarer has the rest easily enough. So I discarded a club.

Declarer now unblocked the ♥K, crossed to the ♣K, then played out her winning hearts, discovering the 5-2 split. After three rounds of hearts she went back to clubs, letting me ruff. Now the ♦K locked her in dummy (ducking would have allowed her out for down one), and when she ruffed a diamond to hand I claimed the last two tricks with the long trump and ♦J for down two.

This theme of retaining control can come about in the most unlikely ways. Bob Hamman and Bobby Wolff were one of the dominant pairs of the last two decades, and this deal was perhaps the most impressive of their coups, one of the most surprising plays in modern bridge literature. The hand helped determine who won the USA team trials of 1985.

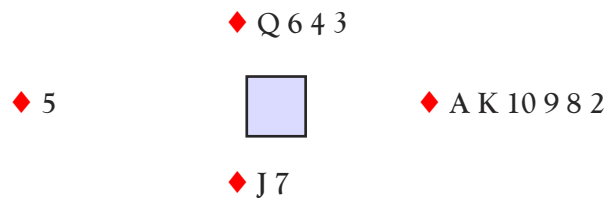
<p>South dealer All vul</p> <p>♠ K 10 7 6 ♥ Q J 3 ♦ 4 3 ♣ K Q 10 8</p>	<p>♠ Q 8 2 ♥ 10 9 8 7 4 2 ♦ J 8 5 ♣ 7</p>	<p>♠ A J 9 5 4 3 ♥ A K 5 ♦ 10 9 2 ♣ 2</p>	<p>♠ — ♥ 6 ♦ A K Q 7 6 ♣ A J 9 6 5 4 3</p>
--	---	---	--

At both tables South showed a minor two-suiter with better clubs, and both

reached 5♦ doubled after South had sacrificed over his opponents' 4♠ contract. A 5♣ contract would have been cheaper as the cards lie, but 5♦ appeared to need little more than a favorable split here and there.

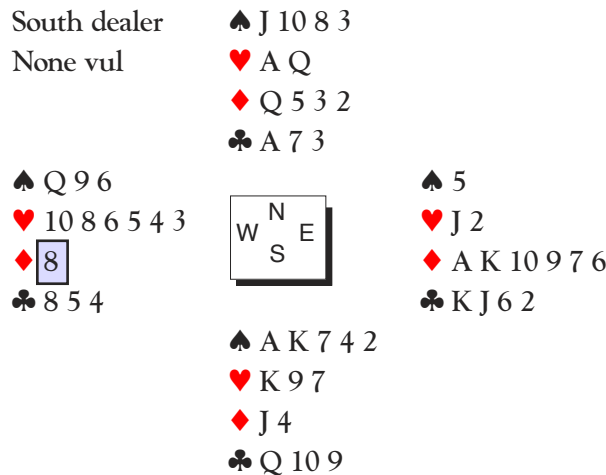
At the first table a trump was led. Declarer won the ♦J, led a club to the ace and ruffed a club. East overruffed, cashed the ♥K and tapped declarer to three trumps. Now declarer could escape for down one by cashing a high trump and giving up two clubs, but he ruffed another club. East overruffed again and tapped declarer again, this time to two trump. Declarer drew the last trump and gave up a club, for -500.

At the other table Wolff (West) made a better opening lead, a spade, to Hamman's jack. South trumped this and played the ♣A and a second club, ruffing with the ♦8. If Hamman overruffs this and plays another spade, declarer can ruff it, ruff another club with the ♦J, draw the last trumps, and concede a club, to escape for -500 as well.



You are West. You lead your singleton diamond, partner cashes the ace and king

and leads a third round, declarer discarding. If you ruff declarer's loser, you allow declarer a second discard subsequently on the queen. So do not ruff in with a natural trump trick — or something that will become a trump trick — unless you can see that the discard is irrelevant to declarer. Here is a full example of this idea.



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

* game-forcing spade raise

Opening lead: ♦ 8

East wins the ♦ K, cashes the ace and continues with the 6, declarer playing the 4 and jack and then discarding the ♣ 9.

If West ruffs and gets off lead with, say, a heart, declarer can win, draw trumps and discard his remaining club loser on

dummy's ♦ Q. If, on the other hand, West simply discards on the ♦ 6, dummy's ♦ Q will win the trick. But the trick comes back with interest: Declarer must lose a trump trick to West, and there will be no parking place for declarer's remaining club loser.

When you have a natural trump trick, you should consider not ruffing a loser with it and sacrificing the trump trick, unless you can see the defeat of the contract by so doing. The point is that here West would be ruffing a diamond loser — it would be a different matter if dummy had to follow with the ♦ Q on the third round of the suit when West ruffed, but that is not the case here.

On this particular deal the point has been made rather easier to spot by the fact that West can almost guarantee that his ruff will be with a natural trump trick. But if you gave West a less obvious trump trick (for example, suppose West has jack-third of trumps and his partner holds the singleton queen of trumps, with dummy holding ten-fourth), I think most defenders would ruff first and think later.

In Conclusion

Whenever you are about to overruff declarer, or ruff high in front of dummy, take at least one extra thought as to whether you may get at least a trick back by not doing so. And when declarer generously invites you to ruff in, or overruff, take at least two further thoughts!

Building Better Mousetraps

by Matthew Granovetter

baker's dozen add-ons to your system

(1) Two-Way Negative Double by a Passed Hand

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1 ♠	2 ♦
double			

Do you and partner open four-card majors sometimes in third chair? As a passed hand, you might be stuck for a good bid with an 11-point hand and three-card support. Drury works well but what if your opponent overcalls? What do you do? You don't want partner to play a 4-3 fit at the three level. Try a two-way negative double by a passed hand: either the other major or three-card support for partner. For example:

West

♠ A x x
♥ x x x
♦ J x
♣ A Q x x x

East

♠ K Q x x
♥ A J 10
♦ Q x x x
♣ x x

West

♠ A x x
♥ x x x
♦ J x
♣ A Q x x x

East

♠ K Q x x
♥ A J 10
♦ Q x
♣ x x x x

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1 ♠	2 ♦
double	pass	pass	

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1 ♠	2 ♦
double	pass	2 ♥	pass
2 ♠	pass	pass	

Here East converts the double.

Here East bids 2♥, hoping to play a 4-3 heart fit. West converts to 2♠.

(2) 2♦ for the Majors

When they open a Precision 2♣, showing clubs with a 10-15-point hand, they have taken away an important bid from your repertoire: Michaels for the majors. Sure, you can bid 3♣ for the majors, but you may be reaching too high, especially if you have a light 5-5. I suggest you bid 2♦ to show the majors over 2♣. This keeps you on a safer level. With a diamond overcall, you bid 3♣ (good hand with diamonds) or 3♦ (weak two-bid strength). This would have helped the American team in the final of the 2005 Bermuda Bowl....

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

South	West	North	East
<i>Nunes</i>	<i>Soloway</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Hamman</i>
2 ♣	pass	2 ♦	pass
2 ♠	pass	3 ♣	(all pass)

Had Soloway been able to slip in a 2♦ bid for the majors, he would have matched the 4♥ contract at the other table. There West bid 2♣ over 1♣ to show the majors.

(3) Void KCB after a Splinter

When you make a splinter, you sometimes have a void. To show the void, cuebid the splinter suit again. At this point partner treats it as Exclusion Keycard Blackwood. For example, you hold: ♠ A J x x x ♥ J x x ♦ — ♣ K Q J x x. Partner opens 1♠. You splinter to 4♦. If partner bids 4♠, you give up. If partner cuebids 4♥, you now bid 5♦. Partner shows you how many keycards he has, excluding the ♦A. His response is the same as if you had bid 4NT. If you play 1430 responses, here, his 5♥ bid would show 1 or 4, 5♠ would be 0 or 3, 5NT two without the ♠Q, 6♣ two with the ♠Q. Presumably he has at least one keycard for opening the bidding and cuebidding, so you should be able to decipher the responses. If partner shows 0 or 3, go for it with 7♠!

(4) 4♠ Blackwood Request

Whenever the trump suit is hearts, you can get partner to use Blackwood by bidding 4♠. This presumes you are not using 4♠ as a Keycard Ask, which some do when hearts are the agreed trumps. When would you want partner to Blackwood rather than using Blackwood yourself? When you have a lot of keycards but you don't have a source of tricks, so you don't want to take control of the auction. For example, you hold ♠ A x ♥ A K x x ♦ A x x ♣ K x x x. Partner opens 1♥ and you make a forcing raise. Partner, however, signs off in game. No surprise from your point of view. But now instead of taking over, try a 4♠ bid to ask him to take over. When you next bid 5♦ (assuming this shows 1 or 4 keycards), partner will know it's four, and will be in position to ask for a king as well. Partner might hold something like this hand: ♠ K Q x x ♥ Q x x x x ♦ x x ♣ A Q. After hearing you bid 4♠, he bids 4NT, followed by 5NT. You show the ♣K and he bids 7♥. Notice that this is better than if you had taken control by bidding 4NT. He would have shown one keycard, then you would have had to ask for the ♥Q, and even if you learned about the ♠K, you'd have no idea how high to bid.

(5) ZOOM KCB Replies

Can you do the same thing as described in mousetrap #4 if your trump suit is spades? The answer is yes, if you play ZOOM! This convention occurs only when spades is trumps and the last bid was 4♥ or 4♠. Now a bid at the five level shows the number of keycards you have before partner has asked for them!

Opener	Responder
♠ 10 9 x x x	♠ K Q J x
♥ K Q x	♥ A x x
♦ A	♦ x x x
♣ K x x x	♣ A Q x

Opener	Responder
1 ♠	2 NT (Jacoby)
3 ♦ (sing)	3 ♠ (tell me more)
4 ♠ (minimum)	?

Responder was hoping partner would move, but partner didn't, perhaps because his trumps were weak. Now responder moves forward by bidding at the five level to show extra values and his keycards. He bids 5♣ (0 or 3 keycards, obviously 3) and opener can continue from here.

(6) Splinters after Drury without jumping!

Most people have no great use for the following sequences:

Responder	Opener
pass	1 ♠
2 ♣ (Drury)	2 ♠
3 ♦	

Responder	Opener
pass	1 ♠
2 ♣ (Drury)	3 ♣

Try them as mini-splinters. They invite game and show shortness in the suit bid. This applies only after Drury by either hand, by bidding a suit above two-of-the trump suit.

On the first auction, responder might hold: ♠ A x x x ♥ K Q x ♦ x ♣ J x x x x. Opposite ♠ K x x x x ♥ A x ♦ J x x ♣ A x x, game is very good.

On the second auction, opener might hold ♠ K Q x x x ♥ K J x ♦ A x x x ♣ x. Opposite ♠ A x x ♥ Q x x x ♦ K x ♣ J x x x, game is again very good.

(7) Changing suits to the next level shows extras!

Oh, come on now, you say. This is from 1950. Yes, but it's coming back in fashion and rightfully so. The corollary is that when you rebid 1NT, you are allowed to hold a singleton in responder's suit.

You	Responder
1 ♦	1 ♠
1 NT (may hold a singleton spade)	

You	Responder
1 ♦	1 ♠
2 ♣ (extras because you changed suits to the next level)	

In case one, you rebid 1NT to show your minimum range. The fact that you might hold a singleton spade is not an issue. Responder can now bid 2♥ to show both majors, not forcing, or bid check-back Stayman, or whatever you like to play.

Opener	Responder
1 ♦	1 ♠
1 NT	

Opener may hold something like this:
 ♠ x ♥ K Q x ♦ A Q x x x ♣ Q x x x.
 After rebidding 1NT, he can pass a 2♥ rebid by responder, while if he had bid 2♣ over 1♠, he would not have been able to pass 2♥, because 2♥ is fourth-suit forcing.

Opener	Responder
1 ♦	1 ♠
2 ♣	

In this auction, where opener rebids 2♣, opener promises extra values in strength (15+) or distribution (5-5). Responder is now better placed to explore game, knowing that opener does not have a minimum.

(9) Stuffing Game Tries

Everybody is doing it! After 1♠-2♠ or 1♥-2♥ by you and partner, rebid the first step to say you have a game try and do not wish to reveal your hand to the opponents. Now responder can bid game or reject game or, with an in-between hand, bid his "stuffings."

♠ J x x
 ♥ 10 x
 ♦ J 10 x x
 ♣ K Q x x

Opener	Responder
1 ♠	2 ♠
2 NT	3 ♣ (my stuffings)

When opener holds:
 ♠ A 10 x x x ♥ A K x ♦ x ♣ A x x x,
 opener is pleased to reach game. But reverse opener's minors and he would like to stop in 3♠.

(8) The Jump Raise Utility

When opener jump raises responder to the three level, he can have various hand patterns. When responder has slam interest, he would like to know what the pattern is. To find out use this utility.

Opener	Responder
1 ♦	1 ♠
3 ♠	3 NT

Opener	Responder
1 ♣	1 ♥
3 ♥	3 ♠

In either case, responder bids the next step to ask opener to describe his jump raise. Opener bids in steps:

- (1) My bid was based on a singleton. Responder may now bid the next step to ask where the singleton is and opener bids one step to show the higher singleton and two steps to show the lower (you can reverse this if you like).
- (2) My bid was based on a balanced strong hand (18-19), but my trumps are weak or average.
- (3) My bid was based on a balanced strong hand (18-19), and my trumps are super!
- (4) The trump suit. My bid was based on a 5-4-2-2 notrump strength.



Stuffing Game Tries

(10) New minor game force after Major-Suit Raises

This goes along with number 9. You can now bid three of a minor forcing to game, and give and receive clear pictures of your hands.

Opener	Responder
1 ♠	2 ♠
3 ♦ (game force)	3 ♠ (now forcing!)
4 ♥	

Opener has this shape: 5-3-4-1 and responder is able to evaluate his cards for slam.

(11) The "They took my raise away" double

You open 1♥, the next hand bids 2♥ Michaels. Partner doubles. Instead of using this bid to mean a strong hand, you may do better to play the double as a raise to 2♥. It's a risk-free way to describe that 6-9 point hand with support. The idea applies after 1♠-2♠ as well, and can even be used after the unusual 2NT is bid against you.

West	North	East	South
1 ♥	2 NT	double	

Play the double to mean: I would have raised you, pard, to 2♥, but he preempted my bid.

For example:

Opener	Responder
♠ A K J x x	♠ Q x x
♥ K J x	♥ A x
♦ A K x x	♦ Q J x
♣ x	♣ x x x x x

Responder can actually bid a slam now! Reverse opener's hearts and clubs and it would not nearly mesh so well.

(12) Four suit transfers over 2NT

It's always been difficult to devise a way to describe a long minor and a slam try over 2NT openings, and declare the contract from the strong side (the 2NT opener's side). Here is a very simple approach that does not hurt your system.

Jump to 4♣ to show diamonds.
Jump to 4♠ to show clubs.

That's it. Easy. With a rare Gerber hand, use Super Gerber (5♣) to ask for aces.

Over these bids 4NT by opener says "I reject." Anything else is a cuebid agreeing the minor. Opener should bid 4♦ over 4♣, however, whenever he likes diamonds, to make sure he declares.

Opener	Responder
♠ A Q x	♠ x x x
♥ K Q x	♥ x
♦ K Q x	♦ A J x x x x
♣ K Q x x	♣ A x x

Opener	Responder
2 NT	4 ♣ (diamonds)
4 ♦ (OK)	4 ♥ (cuebid)
4 NT	5 ♥ (two keycards)
6 ♦	pass

(13) The "I Don't Have Spades" 1♠ Response

Played by Italian champs Lauria and Versace, this convention switches somewhat the negative double and the 1♠ response after a 1♥ overcall.

West	North	East	South
1♣/1♦	1♥	?	

East doubles to show four or five spades. Responder bids 1♠ to show some values (6+) without four spades and without the ability to raise partner's minor (such as a negative double type hand without spades).

East

♠	x x
♥	J 10 x
♦	A J x x x
♣	K x x

West	North	East	South
1♣	1♥	1♠	

This is practically an unbiddable hand without this tool. To add to this, you play the cuebid of 2♥ to show six or more spades (but not forcing beyond 2♠), and you play the hand from the stronger side.

Next Month: Balance Transfers

Solution to Kantar's Double-Dummy Korner (from page 11)

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

Contract: 3NT
Opening lead: ♠6

South ducks the first spade and East has to return a club or a diamond to prevent South from making a ninth trick outright.

1. If East returns a club and the opponents continue clubs, South wins the third club, discarding a heart from the table, and runs five diamonds. On the fifth diamond, South throws a heart in this forced position:

Neither defender can pitch a spade safely. If both pitch clubs, South plays ♥A and a heart, forcing a spade return from either player. If one defender pitches a heart and the other a club, ♥A and a heart endplays the player with two hearts and two spades.

2. If East shifts to a diamond at trick two, a club is ducked, and if a second diamond played, a second club ducked. Whoever wins must play a third club, since hearts and spades are frozen suits. After winning the ♣A, declarer plays diamonds to reach the same ending. *Ciao.*