

May 2006

BRIDGE TODAY



Editor: Matthew Granovetter

The Magazine for People Who Love to Play Bridge

Vanderbilt Final

Chip Martel in the catbird seat tells how the Chang team won the final of this year's Vanderbilt Teams — Page 17

Also:

2	Rules for Competitive Bidding by Matthew Granovetter	25	Major Results: Dallas Spring Nationals
5	Room at the Top by Barry Rigal	26	Building a Better Mousetrap The New Jacoby 2NT
8	Dallas Quiz by Pamela Granovetter	29	The Wizards of Aus by Ron Klinger
		31	Hand(s) of the Month by David Berkowitz

To subscribe to *Bridge Today*, [click here!](#)

NOTICE: Please share this issue of *Bridge Today eMagazine* with you partner. You know he needs it! :) Better still, give him a subscription of his own. He will thank you each month and he will become a better player. Just [click here](#). You'll be glad you did. Subscriptions are \$33 per year for 12 monthly issues or packaged with a Bridgetoday.com \$59 membership. Thank you! — Matthew and Pamela Granovetter

Rules for Competitive Bidding (part 1)

by Matthew Granovetter

I'm conducting a seminar on this topic at my local club this month, and I thought I'd share some of our discussion with *Bridge Today* readers. This month I'll review some winning rules of thumb concerning takeout doubles, overcalls, and preempts.

(1) The player who is short in the suit bid by the opponents is the one who stretches to take action. But don't overdo it!

♠ A x x x
♥ x
♦ K Q x x
♣ J x x x

West	North	East	South
1 ♥	?		

Pass. At the old Mayfair Club, players used to double 1♥ with this hand. Today there is more awareness that the double could help declarer play the trumps suit if he is missing the queen. The "with shortness, be aggressive" rule applies more when you are confident that your side will play the hand. For example, say partner opens the bidding and you hold:

♠ K J x x
♥ K x
♦ x x
♣ x x x x x

West	North	East	South
1 ♥	2 ♦	?	

As East, you should make a negative double, because you are short in diamonds and partner may not be able to balance,

since he may hold three diamonds. In addition, you hold a key card in partner's suit, so a 2♥ rebid by him will be OK.

♠ K J x x
♥ x
♦ K x x
♣ x x x x x

West	North	East	South
1 ♥	2 ♦	?	

Here you pass, because you have length in diamonds (even three cards is considered length), and you would not care to hear a 2♥ bid by partner.

(2) As you saw in the previous example, honors in partner's suit are good, but not so good in *their* suit. Suppose you hold:

♠ A x x x
♥ Q J x
♦ K Q x
♣ J x x

West	North	East	South
1 ♦	?		

Pass. You have 13 points but too much of your strength is in diamonds.

♠ A J x x
♥ x x x
♦ K Q x
♣ Q J x

West North East South
1 ♥ ?

Double. You don't exactly love it, but all your high cards will be working for partner's suits.

(3) Overcalls at the one level can be light but not that light. Again, use the criteria from rules (1) and (2).

♠ A J x x x
♥ x x x
♦ K J x x
♣ x

West North East South
1 ♥ ?

Pass. You don't even have 10 points. Partner expects something for an overcall and you have a horrible heart holding, with your LHO on lead against a spade contract, ready to lead a heart through your partner's dummy.

♠ A J x x x
♥ x
♦ K J x x
♣ x x x

West North East South
1 ♥ ?

Bid 1♠. A clear-cut overcall. You should know why by now.

(4) When choosing between an overcall and a takeout double, tend toward the overcall if it's a major suit.

♠ A J x x x
♥ K x x x
♦ x
♣ A x x

West North East South
1 ♦ ?

Overcall 1♠, don't double. You like hearts, too, but you will lose the 5-3 spade fit if you double and partner bids 2♣. Better to start with a simple overcall, and hope to double the next time. This is a common formula — overcall and next time double for takeout. If you do the reverse, double and then bid a suit, it shows a much stronger hand.

♠ A K J x x
♥ K Q x x
♦ x
♣ A x x

West North East South
1 ♦ ?

Double and next time you can bid spades, showing a "moose."

(5) When it's close between a jump overcall (weak) or an overcall, choose the jump overcall (except when vul vs. not).

♠ A K J x x x
♥ x x x
♦ x
♣ Q x x

West North East South
1 ♦ ?

You should jump overcall to 2♠. This is far more effective than a 1♠ bid, describing a six-card suit and making life more miserable for East.

When you are vul vs. not the rule changes, and the jump overall should be played as a strong playing hand.

(6) When balancing, use all the same criteria but add an imaginary ace to your hand and do what you would have done in second seat.

♠ A J x x x
♥ x x x x
♦ x
♣ Q x x

West	North	East	South
1 ♦	pass	pass	?

You bid 1♠. Did you add that imaginary ace? You have 11 HCP. Partner, by the way, must now subtract an ace from his hand.

(7) When one of your opponents holds a weak hand facing an opening bid, you can make game on much less strength than normal. Even Goren would bring down the HCP requirement of 3NT to 23. For example:

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

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

You win the spade lead in hand and lead the ♦J. That's nine tricks. So the lesson is

to be aggressive when their opening bid is passed.

♠ x		♠ A Q x x									
♥ K J x x		♥ x x									
♦ A 10 x x		♦ x x x x									
♣ K J x x		♣ x x x									
	<table border="1" style="display: inline-table; vertical-align: middle;"> <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										
♠ K x x x x		♠ J x x									
♥ Q x x		♥ A x x x									
♦ K Q J		♦ x x									
♣ Q x		♣ A x x x									

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

Your side has 21 HCP, but you can make 11 tricks in hearts! East's 3♠ bid worked like a charm ... for you.

(8) Raise partner's preempt but if you are a passed hand, give partner more leeway.

		♠ x x x	
		♥ Q	
		♦ K x x x	
		♣ A x x x x	
West	North	East	South
3 ♦	double	?	

Jump to 5♦ before South gets a chance to bid. But with the same hand ...

West	North	East	South
—	—	pass	pass
3 ♦	double	?	

Beware. Partner may have less than usual in the "seat of sin." Just bid 4♦.

See you next month for more.

Room at the Top

by Barry Rigal

Recently, Catherine D'Ovidio took over the #1 ranking of France's bridge players, bypassing French superstar Paul Chemla. Here are some hands in which she and other high-ranked women players are featured.

My first hand shows how playing against top players is sometimes easier than playing against weaker players. At the top levels of the game, declarers may be prepared to invest a trick on the assumption that no defender will believe they have made such a play. This was board 42, from the 1997 Venice Cup quarter-finals:

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

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

Catherine Saul (now D'Ovidio) was playing a disciplined weak-two style, which persuaded Veronique Bessis to make a constructive rather than a preemptive try for game facing a 2♥ opening, and Catherine was never going to reject that invitation. She made ten tricks on a spade lead, but the way she did so was interesting. On a low spade lead by West, Catherine played *low* from dummy — perhaps the right play if East had A-K-9, but as the cards lay it might well have required some embarrassing explanations to her teammates.

Catherine, however, had reasoned correctly that East was never going to be able to read the position if she was looking at her actual holding, and East duly won the ace at trick one and switched hopefully to diamonds. That meant 10 tricks for North-South in due course, when our heroine later guessed clubs. East, a passed hand, showed up with the ♠A, ♦A and presumably the ♦Q, else West would have led from the ♦K-Q at trick one.

The following hand was played in a world championship at four tables.

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



Open Room

South	West	North	East
<i>Sprung</i>	<i>Pollack</i>	<i>Sokolow</i>	<i>Goldberg</i>
1 ♦	pass	1 ♠	4 ♥
5 ♦	pass	6 ♦	(all pass)

Closed Room

South	West	North	East
<i>Deas</i>	<i>Quinn</i>	<i>Palmer</i>	<i>Meyers</i>
1 ♣	pass	1 ♠	4 ♥
5 ♦	(all pass)		

These were the auctions in an all-American match. In the Open Room, 6♦ lost 100 when the defense led a heart and shifted to a trump. Declarer ruffed a heart and correctly played for the doubleton ♣Q, going two down when that failed.



Catherine D'Ovidio

In the Closed Room 5♦ after a heart lead gives East an awkward defensive problem. You may have to shift to a club before your ♠A is dislodged (when partner holds the ♣K). A trump might be right instead. On the trump shift, declarer can prevail in unlikely fashion by winning and leading a spade up at once, and the defense cannot lead a second trump, but the club finesse looks more tempting to declarer, since she does not know that the ♠A is in the hand without a second trump. In any event, Meyers returned a club, and declarer had an easy route to 400, knocking out the ♠A, then ruffing a heart and discarding a club on a high spade.

Both tables in another match made 5♦ on a heart lead and club shift. Both tables in a match between an American and French team got the heart lead as well. At one table Catherine D'Ovidio, as East, found the trump shift. Declarer played to ruff the heart at once and take the club finesse — and why not? The only problem with this line is that it fails.

At the fourth table Claire Tornay (East) found an interesting and technically superior variant when she returned a top heart at trick two, knowing her partner had an odd number of hearts from a third-and-fifth best lead. This disrupts dummy's late entry. Declarer ruffed and took the club finesse, for down one, but a flat board anyway.

Here is my third feature hand from a semifinals world championships as well....

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

South	West	North	East
Meyers	Arrigoni	Montin	Buratti
1 ♣	pass	1 ♦	pass
1 NT	pass	2 ♦ (gf)	pass
2 ♥	pass	4 ♥	(all pass)

South	West	North	East
Golin	Deas	Capriata	Palmer
1 ♦ (1)	1 ♠	double	2 ♥ (2)
pass	pass	double	2 ♠
3 ♥	3 ♠	4 ♦	pass
4 ♥	(all pass)		

(1) could be short

(2) spade raise (forgotten by West!)

Both tables in this match reached 4♥, Randi Montin-Jill Meyers without interference, Golin-Capriata on a highly informative auction (including a bidding accident from East-West) that should, in conjunction with the 3♠ call, maybe have tipped her off to West's heart shortage.

Meyers got the defense of three rounds of spades. She ruffed in hand and took the diamond finesse, then played a heart to the king; down one.

In the other room Golin ruffed the third spade and played a heart to the ace. Then, after much thought, she played a heart to the king. Also down one.

In the other three matches the deal produced a swing. Everyone reached 4♥, and one table in each match made it. In the English-Dutch match, both tables reached 4♥ by South after a check-back auction over 1NT. Both declarers received the defense of three rounds of spades. Heather Dhondy for England ruffed in hand and took a diamond finesse, then led the ♥A and a heart to the 9. Well done! Van Zwol took the diamond finesse and then led a heart to the king.

In a match between two American teams, with no opposition bidding in either case, Disa Eythorsdottir declared 4♥ as North after a Precision auction. The defense led two top spades and shifted to a club. Disa cashed the ♣A-K to pitch her spade, then took the diamond finesse and now felt she could afford the safety play in hearts. Right she was.

At the other table, Kay Schulle (North) declared 4♥. Valerie Westheimer (East) led the ♠A-K and shifted to the ♦3. This could have been a singleton diamond from declarer's viewpoint, so Schulle simply cashed the king and ace of hearts, playing for a 3-2 split. Down one.

In the Germany-France match Pony Nehmert for Germany declared 4♥ as South after opening 1♥. She received the defense of three rounds of spades, and ruffed this and (quite reasonably) took a first-round finesse of the ♥J. From there on she was never going to make the hand.

At the last table, Catherine D'Ovidio reached 4♥ as North and received the defense of the ♠A-K followed by a club shift. She took the diamond finesse and now safety-played the hearts to make the hand: ♥A and heart to the 9. Again, well done!

Dallas Quiz

Solutions start on the next page

Problem #1

It's the last board of a close match in the quarterfinals of the Vanderbilt, and you pick up at favorable:

♠ Q x x ♥ A x x ♦ K J 10 9 8 ♣ J x

West	North	East	South
2 ♥	pass	pass	?

Do you go quietly or do you balance?

Problem #2

Matchpoints • North dealer • North-South vul

You, North, hold:

♠ Q ♥ Q J 4 ♦ A 6 ♣ A K Q 9 8 5 3

West	North	East	South
—	1 ♣	1 ♠	pass
pass	2 ♠*	pass	3 ♠
double	pass	pass	4 ♥
pass	?		

*asks partner to bid 3NT with a spade stopper

This is an unusual auction! Your 2♠ bid did not promise hearts. Partner could have made a negative double to show hearts, or bid 2♥ or 3♥ over East's 1♠ bid. What do you think is going on? What is your call?

Problem #5

Swiss Teams • West dealer • None vul

You, South, hold:

♠ Q 9 6 ♥ 5 3 ♦ 8 7 3 2 ♣ K 9 5 2

West	North	East	South
pass	1 ♠	2 ♥	?

Do you raise to 2♠ playing 5-card major openings? Do you raise to 2♠ playing 4-card major openings and a strong club system?

Problem #3

Matchpoints • North dealer • North-South vul

You, East, hold:

♠ 8 6 3 ♥ A J 8 5 ♦ J 8 ♣ J 8 7 6

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

Your call.

In real life there was some table action as well. When North began to think over 2NT, South folded his cards, then his arms. North, in the meantime, took about two minutes to bid 3♥.

Problem #4

Matchpoints • West dealer • North-South vul

You, North, hold:

♠ 10 9 ♥ Q 9 6 4 ♦ A 10 8 6 ♣ K 4 3

West	North	East	South
1 ♠	pass	1 NT*	2 ♥
4 ♠	?		

*semi-forcing

What a headache! Do you bid, pass, or double?

Problem #6

Swiss Teams • West dealer • North-South vul

You, South, hold:

♠ J 6 2 ♥ K 10 7 4 3 ♦ 5 2 ♣ Q 5 2

West	North	East	South
1 ♦	1 ♠	2 ♠	?

You can double to show "a raise to two spades" if you want to. Do you?

Dallas Potpourri

by Pamela Granovetter

Part One To Bid or Not to Bid....

Here are six competitive bidding hands from last month's ACBL Nationals in Dallas where your decision to bid or not to bid is worth a bushel of matchpoints or imps. First take the quiz on page 8 and see how you would have done in real life.

Problem #1

It's the *last* board of a close match in the round of 16 of the Vanderbilt, and you pick up at favorable:

♠ Q x x ♥ A x x ♦ K J 10 9 8 ♣ J x

West	North	East	South
2 ♥	pass	pass	?

Do you go quietly or do you balance?

If you go quietly, you go +100 against their 2♥ contract and win the match. If you balance with 3♦ like Bob Hamman did, you go down three, -150. It turns out that your team was leading by 2 imps going into this board. If you pass, you push the board and win the match. If you bid, exit stage left. Poor Bob — the 3♦ bid hardly seems like an error (it's just a guess in my opinion). I'd show you the whole hand, but Bob might be reading this and I don't want to depress him further.

Problem #2

Matchpoints • North dealer • North-South vul

You, North, hold:

♠ Q ♥ Q J 4 ♦ A 6 ♣ A K Q 9 8 5 3

West	North	East	South
—	1 ♣	1 ♠	pass
pass	2 ♠*	pass	3 ♠
double	pass	pass	4 ♥
pass	?		

*asks partner to bid 3NT with a spade stopper

This is an unusual auction! Your 2♠ bid did not promise hearts. Partner could have made a negative double to show hearts, or bid 2♥ or 3♥ over East's 1♠ bid. What do you think is going on? What is your call?

Surely the opponents would have bid more fiercely at this vulnerability if they held lots of spades and, therefore, partner rates to hold spade length, heart length and a slam-positive hand (otherwise he would not cue-bid). With hearts and a weak hand, he would have made a negative double or passed and then bid three or four hearts over your 2♠ bid. Therefore, partner should hold major-suit length and some good cards for you. The whole hand was:

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

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

♠ A 10 8 4 2
 ♥ A 10 8 6 2
 ♦ 5
 ♣ 10 6

One idea is to cuebid 4♠ with the North hand, which should mean: "I have the big hand and long minor I promised, and also a spade control and heart length I did not promise!"

Another option is simply to bid 6♣ or 6♥, since either contract should be a good one.

West	North	East	South
—	1 ♣	1 ♠	pass
pass	2 ♠*	pass	3 ♠
double	pass	pass	4 ♥
pass	?		

*asks partner to bid 3NT with a spade stopper

Problem #3

Matchpoints • North dealer • North-South vul

You, East, hold:

♠ 8 6 3 ♥ A J 8 5 ♦ J 8 ♣ J 8 7 6

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

Your call.

In real life there was some table action as well. When North began to think over 2NT, South folded his cards, then his arms. North, in the meantime, took about two minutes to bid 3♥.

I'm not sure what the right call is without the table action, but it seems to me that in any case it may be best to defend despite the known nine-card club fit, which you will have to play at the four level. In addition, your cards are better for defense than offense, and since they are vulnerable, you

may gain more by passing than by bidding, even if your side makes 4♣. If you passed, you will be delighted when partner reopens with a double, showing defensive cards! Whether they play in 3♥ doubled or retreat to spades (doubled!), you have a great score by defending. The full hand was:

North dealer ♠ 10 4 2
 N-S vul ♥ K 10 9 7 4 3
 ♦ K 10 3
 ♣ Q

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

♠ A Q 9 7 5
 ♥ Q 6
 ♦ 9 7 2
 ♣ K 3 2

It looks like 4♣ is OK, but as so often happens when your strength is in the suit they just bid, partner will play you for the

North dealer ♠ 10 4 2
 N-S vul ♥ K 10 9 7 4 3
 ♦ K 10 3
 ♣ Q

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

♠ A Q 9 7 5
 ♥ Q 6
 ♦ 9 7 2
 ♣ K 3 2

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

wrong cards and bid again. This time, West bid 5♣, which had a play but went down when the diamond finesse lost. Defending their three-level contract (doubled) would have earned you a top.

If you believe the table action marks partner with a good hand, you might even chance a double of 3♥ yourself! By the way, taking advantage of partner's mannerisms at the table is not allowed, as we all know, but taking advantage of the opponents' mannerisms is certainly permissible at your own risk.

Problem #4

Matchpoints • West dealer • North-South vul
 You, North, hold:
 ♠ 10 9 ♥ Q 9 6 4 ♦ A 10 8 6 ♣ K 4 3

West	North	East	South
1 ♠	pass	1 NT*	2 ♥
4 ♠	?		

*semi-forcing

What a headache! Do you bid, pass, or double?

The whole hand was:

West dealer ♠ 10 9
 N-S vul ♥ Q 9 6 4
 ♦ A 10 8 6
 ♣ K 4 3

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

♠ Q
 ♥ A K 8 7 3 2
 ♦ 5 4
 ♣ J 10 7 5

I vote for a confident 5♥ bid. Look at the problem this gives West after 5♥ is passed around to him! If West passes out 5♥, you get a top score because East-West can make 4♠. At the table, North doubled 4♠, which was not a success.

It's true that 5♥ doubled for -500 is a poor score, but you have no way of knowing South is on a bare minimum and you must, therefore, take some action. Doubling the opponents with length in partner's suit is generally a losing strategy, so in my opinion North is stuck with the 5♥ bid.

Problem #5

Swiss Teams • West dealer • None vul

You, South, hold:

♠ Q 9 6 ♥ 5 3 ♦ 8 7 3 2 ♣ K 9 5 2

West	North	East	South
pass	1 ♠	2 ♥	?

Do you raise to 2♠ playing 5-card major openings? Do you raise to 2♠ playing 4-card major openings and a strong club system?

In my opinion, you should raise to 2♠ playing anything at all. With honor-third in partner's suit, a ruffing value, and a side-suit control, why not?

The whole hand was:

	North (Sabine)	
	♠ K 10 8 5 4 2	
	♥ K 10 9	
	♦ Q	
	♣ A Q 4	
West (Pamela)		East (Migry)
♠ J 7		♠ A 3
♥ 8 7		♥ A Q J 6 4 2
♦ A K 6 5 4		♦ J 10 9
♣ J 10 7 6		♣ 8 3
	South (Daniele)	
	♠ Q 9 6	
	♥ 5 3	
	♦ 8 7 3 2	
	♣ K 9 5 2	

I was West and Migry Zur Campanile was East. Our opponents were the leading German players, Sabine Auken (North) and Daniele Von Armin (South). Von Armin chose to pass 2♥. What would you do with my hand (West)?

Perhaps 3♦ is the best bid. As a passed hand, I have, more or less, denied great length in diamonds (I could have opened 2♦ or 3♦), so 3♦ here should show strength in diamonds and a little something in hearts. At the table, fearful of playing 3♦ opposite a singleton (partner might think I had a long suit that wasn't good enough to open), I bid 3♥ (a risky bid but I had to do something!) and it went all pass. Notice that after 3♦ by me, Migry might decide to shoot out 3NT, which makes four! But 3♥ was good enough to win a swing, because South certainly couldn't bid in passout seat. Our teammates were +140 and so were we. If you bid with the South cards, you saved your side from a 7-imp loss.

Problem #6

Swiss Teams • West dealer • North-South vul

You, South, hold:

♠ J 6 2 ♥ K 10 7 4 3 ♦ 5 2 ♣ Q 5 2

West	North	East	South
1 ♦	1 ♠	2 ♠	?

You can double to show "a raise to two spades" if you want to. Do you?

If you pass, the auction continues:

West	North	East	South
1 ♦	1 ♠	2 ♠	pass
3 ♣	pass	3 ♠	pass
4 ♦	pass	5 ♦	(all pass)

If you double 2♠, the auction continues:

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

The whole hand was:

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

♠ 7	<table style="font-size: 0.8em; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="padding: 0 5px;">W</td><td style="padding: 0 5px;">N</td><td style="padding: 0 5px;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 0 5px;">S</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>	W	N	E	S			♠ A 9 8 3
W	N	E						
S								
♥ Q J 6		♥ A 9 5						
♦ K J 10 9 3		♦ Q 8 6 4						
♣ A J 10 8		♣ K 9						

♠ J 6 2
 ♥ K 10 7 4 3
 ♦ 5 2
 ♣ Q 5 2

make the hand quickly by finessing the ♣Q and dropping it third, or slowly (and better) by ruffing out the spades and squeezing South (making the hand regardless of South's round-suit shape). In real life, I was West and North-South were again Auken and Von Armin.

Notice how costly that double of 2♠ turned out to be. For one thing, Migry now knew I had a singleton spade. In addition, my 3♣ bid in this situation showed extras, which I didn't have. So why did I bid 3♣? I was under pressure and with tremendous spot-card strength and a singleton in their suit, I upgraded my hand. Without the double of 2♠, 3♣ would have been an "ordinary" bid, showing nothing special, but as it was, Migry "knew" I had extras and, therefore, that we had a good shot at 12 tricks. Finally, and most costly of all, that little double placed the cards for me as declarer. Our team went on to win the event.

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

Against 6♦, North leads the ♠K and now the contract is cold. Declarer wins and plays a diamond to the king and ace. Since South advertised a raise to 2♠, declarer places her with the ♥K and ♣Q, and can

Part Two

Matchpoints • South dealer • All vul

The Good, the Bad and the Ugly

Here are some stories and hands that I really enjoyed in Dallas. Hope you do, too!

The Good

"All the Way to Dallas"

Facing my old friends, Lou and Gloria Levy of Los Angeles, I had to defend Lou's 3NT contract in a National matchpoint event. I was sitting in the East seat.

North (dummy) ♠ K J 8 2 ♥ 10 3 2 ♦ K J 10 8 ♣ 5 3	<table style="font-size: 0.8em; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="padding: 0 5px;">W</td><td style="padding: 0 5px;">N</td><td style="padding: 0 5px;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 0 5px;">S</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>	W	N	E	S			East (me) ♠ 9 7 ♥ A J 9 8 ♦ A 9 5 3 ♣ 8 6 4
W	N	E						
S								

♦ 7

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

Lou played low from dummy, I chose to play the ♦A, and Lou dropped the queen. What would you do next?

North (dummy)

♠ K J 8 2

♥ 10 3 2

♦ K J 10 8

♣ 5 3

East (me)

♠ 9 7

♥ A J 9 8

♦ A 9 5 3

♣ 8 6 4

♦ 7



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

Opening lead: ♦ 7

I can see three diamond tricks for Lou, and probably six or seven clubs. If Lou has the ♠A, it's possible I won't ever get my ♥A unless I cash it now. Would you?

On the other hand, I've been waiting my whole life to make a "surrounding play" where you play the ♥J and hope partner has king-third. I just couldn't resist so that's what I did. The whole hand was:

North (Gloria)

♠ K J 8 2

♥ 10 3 2

♦ K J 10 8

♣ 5 3

West

♠ 10 6 5 3

♥ K 6 4

♦ 7 6 4 2

♣ 10 2

East

♠ 9 7

♥ A J 9 8

♦ A 9 5 3

♣ 8 6 4

South (Lou)

♠ A Q 4

♥ Q 7 5

♦ Q

♣ A K Q J 9 7

I probably shouldn't tell anybody about this hand, because the ♥J is a dreadful

matchpoint play. However, when I gave the hand to Bob Hamman, he said, "Well you didn't come all the way to Dallas to #&!#&! hold them to five!"

The Bad

"If Only I Had Taken a Minute Longer..."

Here's a hand I (mis)played against a pair of Polish superstars in the finals of the Open Pairs, and saw the right play just a second too late. I had some consolation later in the bar when nobody I spoke to knew of anyone who had made this game, nor did anybody make it when I gave it as a problem. It's actually quite easy! Let's see how you do:

Matchpoints • East dealer • All vul

North (dummy)

♠ A 3

♥ Q 9 7

♦ A J 7 5 4 3

♣ 3 2

♣ A

South (you)

♠ K 9 8 5

♥ A K J 4 2

♦ K 2

♣ Q 7

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

West (Piotr Gawrys) cashes the ♣A-K, studies the hand, and shifts to the ♠10. At imps, this is a simple hand — play to ruff a spade in dummy and claim. But at matchpoints, you'd like to take 11 tricks if at all possible. Any ideas?

The full deal was:

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

I thought it was obvious to try to set up the diamonds, so I won the ♠K in hand and played the ♦K and a diamond. On the second diamond, Gawrys went into a rather theatrical “tank” and finally discarded a club. I won the ♦A, of course. What next?

This was the position, dummy to lead:

♠ A						
♥ Q 9 7						
♦ J 7 5 4						
♣ —						
<table border="1" style="margin: 0 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					
♠ 9 8 5						
♥ A K J 4 2						
♦ —						
♣ —						

Gawrys has been around the block and if it was necessary to ruff that diamond to hold me to 4, he’d have done it. Therefore, making an overtrick was no longer in the picture; I needed to figure out how to make 10 tricks! Having botched up my transportation, it was no longer so easy to ruff a spade in dummy. Yet there’s an elegant solution from this point; do you see it?

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

The answer is to ruff a diamond *low*. Gawrys already declined to ruff a diamond, so if he thinks it’s wrong, then it must be right! You can always prevail now, no matter what he does.

What I actually did was ... well, it’s better left unsaid because I guarantee I didn’t come all the way to Dallas to do it, and I finished down one.

The Ugly


“Lulled to Sleep”

My final story is a tip, in addition to a true confession. I was defending 4♠ and declarer was bawling out his partner for opening the bidding. I foolishly allowed the table talk to relax me, and didn’t give the defense much thought, “knowing” they were going down. Well, they didn’t and my tip is: Receiving information from their

table action is always a nice thing, but don't let it lull you to sleep! Even the worst contracts can be made against poor defense!

So confident that this hand was going down, I cashed a second diamond and switched to a low heart. I had just allowed declarer to make the hand!

Matchpoints • West dealer • North-South vul

	North (dummy) ♠ J 5 3 ♥ J 9 8 3 ♦ 7 6 ♣ A K Q 3	East (you) ♠ 10 7 2 ♥ A 6 4 2 ♦ A K 9 2 ♣ 8 2	
♦ 4			
West pass 2 ♦ (all pass)	North 1 ♣ pass	East double 3 ♦	South redouble 4 ♠

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

Partner leads the ♦4 and you win the king, declarer following with the 5 while lecturing his partner to have an opening bid next time she opens the bidding. What is your plan for the defense?

South went up with the ♥K, pulled two rounds of trump, and got out with a heart. Partner, endplayed, got out with a low club, but declarer rode it around to his ten, pulled trump and claimed.

The solution is to switch to the low heart at trick two, not trick three, thereby leaving open the communication in the diamond suit.

“I know an opening bid when I see one,” declared North.

Roy Welland
 Bjorn Fallenius
 Cezary Balicki
 Adam Zmudzinski
 Chip Martel
 Lew Stansby

Vanderbilt Final, 2006

by Chip Martel

Fred Chang
 Seymon Deutsch
 Gunnar Hallberg
 Jack Zhao
 Zhong Fu

April 8, 2006 — Dallas, Texas — The final of the Vanderbilt pitted my team, the original #3 seed Welland, versus the #44 seed Chang. This was less of an upset than it looks, because the Chang team, which included a top pair from China, deserved a seed more in the range of 20 or so. Both teams had scored well in the final session of their semi-final matches to come from behind to win.

In the final, Chang built a 35-imp half-time lead. Welland's only large gain of the second quarter came when I faced a typical kind of problem.

North dealer • Both vul
 West: ♠ 10 9 8 7 3 ♥ J 9 6 ♦ K 7 2 ♣ K J

you			
West	North	East	South
—	pass	1 ♥	1 ♠
2 ♥	double	3 ♥	4 ♦
pass	4 ♠	pass	pass
?			

Three hearts by partner was preemptive, but 4♠ is very unlikely to make. If you double, however, they might well run to 5♦ and might make that. What would you do?

I chose to double and they did run to 5♦ (which I also doubled). This was the full hand:

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

After a heart lead and club shift to my jack, declarer could have gotten out for down two. After finessing diamonds, he can score three trump tricks in hand, the ♣A, four spade tricks and a spade ruff in dummy. But he played to guard against 4-1 diamonds instead of 5-1 spades. He won the ♣A to finesse to the ♦Q. I cashed the ♣K, then led a heart. Declarer ruffed and played East for two spades and one diamond. He played ♠A and a spade. Lew ruffed, and cashed a second club for down three.

However, most of the other first-half swings went to Chang, as they played steady bridge.

The first swing of the third quarter

depended on this decision: Partner opens 2NT, 20-21 (not vul) and you hold the following hand.

♠ J 10 9 ♥ 9 2 ♦ Q J 10 2 ♣ 7 6 5 4

		you	
South	West	North	East
2 NT	pass	?	

What would you do?

Gunnar Hallberg raised to 3NT and found partner with a suitable hand.

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

Three notrump was still far from cold, but as the cards lay, 3NT made. After a club lead and continuation, declarer was able to knock-out the ♦A and finesse in either major. In the other room, our teammates played 1NT*, so Chang gained 6 imps.

*They started with a Polish style 1♣ opening by South, a negative 1♦ response by North, and a 1♥ overcall by East. Now 1NT by South showed 18-21, and it went all pass.

Things improved for our team the rest of the set, thanks to two slam swings:

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

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

Lew and I held the North-South cards (hand rotated). Two notrump was a forcing raise. Three hearts was artificial, showing extra values with club shortness, and 4♣ confirmed a void. Thus it was easy to Blackwood into slam, which was missed at the other table.

What would you open (if anything) in third seat, nobody vul, with:

♠ Q 8 ♥ A 10 7 3 2 ♦ J 7 6 4 3 2 ♣ —

I tried 3♦ and this made it difficult for the opponents.

South dealer North (Chip)
 None vul ♠ Q 8
 (hand rotated) ♥ A 10 7 3 2
 ♦ J 7 6 4 3 2
 ♣ —

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

East
 ♠ A K 10 9 7 3
 ♥ —
 ♦ K Q 10
 ♣ A Q 9 7

South (Lew)
 ♠ J 5 4 2
 ♥ Q 9 8 5
 ♦ A 9
 ♣ J 8 2

South	West	North	East
pass	pass	3♦	double
pass	4♥	pass	4♠
pass	5♣	(all pass)	

East's final pass was partly due to fear of a diamond ruff. Imagine that I held seven diamonds to the ace instead of six to the jack. With an easier run, our teammates got to 6♣.

What would you lead from this West hand, at favorable vulnerability:

♠ Q J 6 4 2 ♥ 10 8 ♦ Q 8 4 ♣ J 9 6

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

Lew reasonably led a heart and found this layout:

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

West (Lew)
 ♠ Q J 6 4 2
 ♥ 10 8
 ♦ Q 8 4
 ♣ J 9 6

East (Chip)
 ♠ A 8 5
 ♥ Q 9 7 5 3 2
 ♦ 6 2
 ♣ K 7

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

Declarer played a club to the 10 and jack, and we played spade to the ace and a spade. Declarer finessed in diamonds, ran them and eventually led a club to the king and ace to make five.

At the other table Cezary had to contend with a spade lead to the ace and a spade back. He finessed in diamonds, and ran them, then cashed the ♥A and exited in spades in this ending:

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

If West runs the spades, East is squeezed in hearts and clubs, and if West doesn't cash all his winners, he is endplayed (a heart or club gives the ninth trick). Well done by Cezary to lose 2 imps!

All this left us 10 imps down starting the fourth quarter.

We took the lead on the third board when our teammates guessed a 3NT better than our opponent (helped by playing it from the right side), but we lost the lead back on the next board:

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

South	West	North	East
1 ♥	pass	2 ♣	pass
2 ♦	pass	2 ♥ (1)	pass
2 ♠	pass	4 NT	pass
5 ♣ (2)	pass	7 ♥	(all pass)

- (1) forcing
- (2) 1 or 4 keycards

Opening lead: ♠10

Our teammates reasonably stopped in 6♥, so 30 imps swung on whether this made.

I led a spade, hoping to be safe, and also to protect my partner's trump holding. With clubs and diamonds friendly, a trump trick seemed our best bet (since the spade lead could be from 10-9-8-x-x, it is

a "normal" lead and doesn't reveal a likely bad trump split the way a minor-suit lead would). Sadly, partner lacked the ♥10, so it was easy after a spade (or diamond) lead.

What about a club lead? As I noted, declarer would likely be suspicious enough to win the club and play ♥A, heart to the queen, to check for a bad split. Once he finds 4-1 trumps, he should test clubs with the ♣K (discarding a spade) and club ruff, falling back on diamonds if the ♣Q doesn't fall. But it does, so he goes to the ♠K and finesses hearts, discarding a diamond on the last trump. Dummy is now high.

How about a trump lead (by far my last choice). Even then, it's likely he would make the grand slam either of two ways. (1) He wins the ♥8 and cashes the king (so he would now know not to ruff a spade). (2) He might ruff the third round of spades with the ♥Q (figuring trumps must be splitting). In this variation he has a trump coup: Win the ♥10, ♠K, ♠A, spade ruff with the ♥Q, heart to the ace, leaving:

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

Now play ♣A-K and ruff a club, ♦A-K, ♣J to throw the last diamond, then a coup.

Several boards later we lost our second grand slam swing when the pair from China got to 7♦ on these cards:

West dealer North (Fu)
 None vul ♠ Q 6 2
 ♥ A K J 9
 ♦ 10 7 2
 ♣ K 6 3

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

East
 ♠ K J 10 7 4 3
 ♥ 8 4 2
 ♦ Q 8
 ♣ Q 4

South (Zhao)
 ♠ A
 ♥ 5 3
 ♦ A K 9 5 4 3
 ♣ A J 7 2

West	North	East	South
pass	1 ♣	2 ♠	3 ♦
pass	3 ♥	pass	3 ♠
pass	3 NT	pass	4 ♣
pass	4 ♦	pass	4 ♠
pass	4 NT	pass	5 ♣
pass	5 ♥	pass	6 ♦
pass	7 ♦	(all pass)	

Opening lead: ♠5

This made easily for a 14-imp loss when Lew and I conservatively stopped in 5♦ (the best contract, actually, if the opponents are in seven, since it's possible that even six won't make).



Fu Zhong and Jie Zhao, tired by happy winners

The Inside Information by the editor

An explanation of the auction is called for. After the standard 5-card major 1♣ opening by Fu (North) and the weak jump overcall by East, Zhao (South) bid 3♦ followed by 4♣, natural. Fu returned to 4♦ and Zhao cuebid 4♠. Now Fu bid 4NT, Keycard Blackwood. The 5♣ bid showed 1 or 4 keycards and Fu bid 5♥ to ask for the trump queen, which Zhao denied with his 6♦ signoff. Now Fu started thinking.

Afterwards, Jack Zhao explained to me privately: "We just finished a tournament in China last week and flew here the last moment. We played every board of every match in the Vanderbilt. In the evening of each match we were *tired!* My partner had a blind spot, thinking that I had shown the queen of diamonds with my 6♦ bid. Otherwise, he said, I would have bid only 5♦. Well, I said to him, I cannot do that over 5♥! You see what I mean by *tired?*"

The VuGraph commentators thought that the ♦6 lead might defeat the grand slam, if Zhao played East for Q-J-8. But a spade was led. Zhao pulled trump and led a club to the king and a club back. The queen came up and he claimed. If the queen had not appeared, he might have refused the finesse. He can play the ♣A, then take the heart finesse, hoping for a heart-club squeeze against West. This would work.

Try this bidding problem as North:

♠ K 8 4
 ♥ K Q 7
 ♦ A 6 5 4 2
 ♣ 10 3

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

What is your call?

Two boards later our last real chance (board 26) came:

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

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

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

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

Opening lead: ♦Q

At the other table my teammate opened an offbeat 1NT with the East cards and got transferred into 4♠, which failed by a trick. The play started well for him, ♦Q lead by

South to the ace and a heart shift to the ace. Now declarer ruffed out the ♣A, returned to a diamond and cashed two clubs to throw hearts, but North was able to ruff the third club to defeat the contract.

At my table the auction was:

West	North	East	South
Hallberg	Chip	Chang	Lew
—	—	1 ♣	1 ♥
1 ♠	2 ♣	3 ♣	double
3 ♠	4 ♥	(all pass)	

Opening lead: ♠Q

Thus a lot of imps were at stake in 4♥, but the bad breaks should beat it. Lew got a spade lead and gave it a good try. He led a low club from hand to the 10 and jack, as West threw a diamond). Chang (East) continued with the ♣Q, Lew played low, and Hallberg (West) ruffed his partner's trick to lead a spade back, hoping to give his partner a ruff.

Now Lew had a chance! He won the ♠K, pitching a diamond, cashed the ♦A and ruffed a diamond. South was on lead:

East dealer	North (Chip)		♠ K 8 4	
Both vul	♠ 8		♥ K Q 7	
	♥ K Q 7		♦ A 6 5 4 2	
	♦ 6 5 4		♣ 10 3	
	♣ —			
West (Hallberg)		East (Chang)	♠ Q J 9 6 5 3 2	♠ 10 7
♠ J 9 6 5 3		♠ —	♥ 8 3 2	♥ A 10
♥ 8 3		♥ A 10	♦ 9 7 3	♦ K J 8
♦ —		♦ J	♣ —	♣ K Q J 8 5 2
♣ —		♣ Q 8 5 2		
			♠ A	
			♥ J 9 6 5 4	
			♦ Q 10	
			♣ A 9 7 6 4	
	South (Lew)			
	♠ —			
	♥ J 9 6 5			
	♦ —			
	♣ A 9 7			

After ruffing the ♣7 in dummy with the ♥7 (West does best to discard), declarer leads the ♠8 from dummy. If East discards, South can ruff low and make 10 tricks on a crossruff. Ruffing with the ♥10 prevents the crossruff since West's ♥8 eventually sets up. However, declarer counters by overruffing the ♥10 and leading a heart to East's ace. Now East is endplayed into leading the ♦K (setting up the diamonds) or leading into the ♣A-9.

Lew almost did it. He ruffed a club in dummy, ruffed the ♠8 in his hand low as East discarded, then ruffed another low club in dummy. Now he had to ruff a diamond with the ♥9 to make the hand, but he led the ♥K instead, hoping that West had started with 7-2-4-0 shape with the doubleton ♥10. East would win the ♥A and lead a club, but West would have no more trumps left. In real life, East won the ♥A and gave West a ruff with his remaining ♥8 to set the hand.

Making 4♥ would have been +11 imps, going down was lose 5. I could also have saved the day by bidding 3NT over 3♠, instead of 4♥. Three notrump can always be made.



Fred Chang

Try this opening lead problem as West:

West

♠ Q 7 4

♥ A K J 10 8 3

♦ 4 2

♣ 10 3

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

What is your choice?

We won a large swing when our teammates got to (and made) a vulnerable game missed by our opponents. Then came the last interesting play hand (board 30, rotated here)....

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

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

Opening lead: ♦ 4

As South, I thought that West considered doubling 3NT. Chang made a great (or lucky?) decision to lead a diamond (at the other table my teammate led a high heart reasonably, and now couldn't beat 3NT).

I won the ♦ J with the king and played two high clubs. The fall of the 10 gave me a problem: Should I overtake and be sure of four club tricks, or hope for 3-3 clubs, which gives me five club tricks and my game?

I finally decided clubs were unlikely to be 3-3 (wouldn't West have led a club from 10-x-x or J-10-x instead of a diamond?) In fact, the cards were such that East-West can always beat 3NT, but overtaking in clubs gave me some chances. On the third club East won the jack and West greedily pitched a spade hoping to run the hearts. On the heart return he overtook with the 10 to cash the king and get the bad news that hearts weren't running. Now 3NT was cold! This was the position:

	North		
	♠ 10 9		
	♥ —		
	♦ A 8 7		
	♣ 8 7		
West (Chang)		East	
♠ Q 7		♠ J 6 5 3	
♥ A 10 8 3		♥ —	
♦ 2		♦ Q 9 5	
♣ —		♣ —	
	South (Chip)		
	♠ A K 8		
	♥ Q 7		
	♦ 10 6		
	♣ —		



If West cashes his high heart, I have the ninth trick. On the actual diamond return, I ducked, to the queen, won the spade return and could go to the ♦ A to run clubs and squeeze East in the pointed suits. Either a low or high spade return is also fatal (though I might misguess if West played back the ♠ 7). On the ♠ Q return, I win, cross in diamonds to run clubs and have a rare "stepping stone squeeze" to make....

<p>♠ 7 ♥ A 10 8 3 ♦ — ♣ —</p>	<p>♠ 10 ♥ — ♦ 8 7 ♣ 8 7</p> <table border="1" style="margin: 0 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		<p>♠ J 6 5 ♥ — ♦ Q 9 ♣ —</p>	<p>♠ A 8 ♥ Q 7 ♦ 10 ♣ —</p>
W	N	E							
	S								

On the ♣8 from dummy, East throws a spade and I throw a heart. On the ♣7, East must throw a diamond. So I finesse in spades and lead a diamond to him.

We won an overtrick imp on the final board of the match to cut the margin to 16. There were some great hands, but too many went to the bad guys. Good play and good luck is a hard combo to beat. Congratulations to the Chang team!

Major Results: Dallas Spring Nationals

Vanderbilt Teams

1. Fred Chang, Flushing NY; Gunnar Hallberg, London England; Fu Zhong, Beijing People's Republic of China; Jie Zhao, Tianjin People's Republic of China; Seymon Deutsch, Laredo TX
2. Roy Welland - Bjorn Fallenius, New York NY; Chip Martel, Davis CA; Lew Stansby, Castro Valley CA; Adam Zmudzinski, Katowice Poland; Cezary Balicki, Wroclaw Poland
- 3/4. Rita Shugart, Pebble Beach CA; Boye Brogeland, Norway; Ishmael Delmonte, Double Bay NSW Australia; George Mittelman, Toronto ON; Tadashi Teramoto, Yokohama Japan
- 3/4. Robert Hollman, Santa Barbara CA; Bruce Ferguson, Boise ID; Ron Smith, San Francisco CA; Billy Cohen, Sherman Oaks CA; Joe Grue, New York NY; Curtis Cheek, Huntsville AL

Open Pairs

1. David Berkowitz - Larry Cohen, Boca Raton FL
2. Zia, New York NY; Fred Chang, Flushing NY

Silver Ribbon Pairs

1. Gaylor Kastle, Boca Raton FL; Lewis Finkel, Jupiter FL
2. William Esberg, Long Branch NJ; Marla Chaikin, Monmouth Beach NJ

Mixed Pairs

1. Tom Kniest, University City MO; Karen Walker, Champaign IL
2. Kitty Cooper - Steven Cooper, Albuquerque NM

Womens Pairs

1. Sylvia Moss - Judi Radin, New York NY
2. Cathy Strauch, San Diego CA; G. Margie Gwozdzinsky, New York NY

Imp Pairs

1. Fred Gitelman, Las Vegas NV; Geoff Hampson, Los Angeles CA
2. Michael Rosenberg, New Rochelle NY; Ralph Katz, Hinsdale IL

Open Swiss Teams

1. Jeff Meckstroth, Tampa FL; Eric Rodwell, Clearwater Bch FL; Paul Soloway, Mill Creek WA; Bob Hamman, Dallas TX; Robert Levin, Bronx NY; Steve Weinstein, Andes NY
2. Lou Ann O'Rourke, Scottsdale AZ; Marc Jacobus, Las Vegas NV; Giorgio Duboin, Torino Italy; Norberto Bocchi, Milano Italy; Peter Fredin, Malmo Sweden; Magnus Lindkvist, Hoor Sweden

Women's Swiss

1. Judi Radin - Sylvia Moss, New York NY; Shawn Quinn, Richmond TX; Mildred Breed, Austin TX; Migry Zur Campanile, Tel Aviv Israel; Pamela Granovetter, Cincinnati OH
2. Laurie Kranyak, Bay Village OH; Linda McGarry, Stuart FL; Linda Perlman, Lake Park FL; Kathleen Sulgrove, Twinsburg OH

Building a Better Mousetrap

by Matthew Granovetter

The New Jacoby 2NT

1M - 2NT = four-card support, usually a balanced hand but could have a splinter type hand that is too strong for a direct splinter. Traditionally, this is a game force, but as you'll see in the new structure, the bid could be used as a limit raise or better, freeing up whatever other bid you presently use for a limit raise.

Over the years, Jacoby 2NT has not evolved too much from its original form. One fault with it is that opener shows a singleton before real slam intentions are made. If responder has a minimum for his 2NT response and opener has a minimum, it gains nothing but tells the defenders declarer's distribution.

A few years ago, Marshall Miles introduced a modification in *Bridge Today*: Opener does not show his shortness over 2NT unless he holds extra values. While editing Chip Martel's article about the Vanderbilt in this issue (page 17), I read with interest his auction on a hand where he was able to show extra values and club shortness at the three level. I asked Chip to send me his notes on Jacoby 2NT. The following incorporates both Martel's and Miles' ideas. It's easily adaptable by anyone who already plays Jacoby 2NT.

To illustrate the convention, I'll use 1♠ as the example opening bid, but everything applies to 1♥-2NT as well. The structure is similar whether you hold a minimum or a maximum, which should make it relatively easy on the memory.

Opener	Responder
1 ♠	2 NT
?	

3 ♣ = minimums (but no void and no six-card suit with a singleton)

3 ♦ = extra values with a singleton somewhere; or any strength with a void

3 ♥ = extra values, no shortness

3 ♠ = 6-card suit + sing, any strength

3 NT = Keycard Blackwood

4 new suit = 5-5 with extra values

You can remember these rebids by the letters of the suit symbols:

3C = Crummy

3D = Distributional

3H = Ho-hum

3S = Six + Sing.

First of all, if you want to use 2NT as a limit raise, you can now stop in 3♠ when opener has a minimum. Responder simply bids 3♠ over this. Opener may continue on to game, but doesn't reveal his shape. For example, suppose the two hands are:

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

Opener	Responder
1 ♠	2 NT
3 ♥	3 ♠
?	

Opener	Responder
1 ♠	2 NT
3 ♣	3 ♠
4 ♠	pass

Opener has shown extra values and no shortness.

Opener	Responder
1 ♠	2 NT
3 ♣	3 ♦
3 ♥	3 ♠
?	

Opener does not want to tell his opponents about his singleton heart. If responder was stronger, say the ♦A instead of the ♦Q, he would jump to 4♠ over 3♣, and still the defenders would be in the dark about declarer's shape.

Opener has shown a minimum and then no shortness. In both cases 3♠ asks further description. Opener bids:

Opener	Responder
1 ♠	2 NT
3 ♣	3 ♦
?	

- 3 NT = No side suit (5332/6322/7222)
- 4 ♣ = four clubs (5-2-2-4)
- 4 ♦ = four diamonds (5-2-4-2)
- 4 ♥ = four other major (5-4-2-2)

With slam aspirations opposite a rock-bottom minimum, responder bids 3♦ to ask further. Opener rebids:

Over 3NT, 4♣ by responder asks how many trumps does opener hold? Opener replies in steps: 4♦ = 5, 4♥ = 6, 4♠ = 7

- 3 ♥ = no shortness (3♠ asks further)
- 3 ♠ = 5-5 somewhere (3NT asks where)
- 3 NT = singleton club
- 4 ♣ = singleton diamond
- 4 ♦ = singleton heart

Showing a second suit could be useful in your slam auctions. For example:

Singleton Rule

When opener shows shortness, he shows it artificially up the line: low, middle, high.

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

Look at the next two similar auctions:

Opener	Responder
1 ♠	2 NT
3 ♣ (min)	3 ♦
3 ♥ (bal)	3 ♠
4 ♣ (5-2-4-2)	

Locating the 4-4 diamond fit is crucial if you decide to bid a slam. Here you need diamonds 3-2 to make 12 tricks.

Opener	Responder
1 ♠	2 NT
3 ♦	3 ♥
?	

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

Opener's 3♦ shows a distributional hand with extras if a singleton, but not necessarily extras with a void.

Opener	Responder
1 ♠	2 NT
3 NT	4 ♦ (1 or 4)
4 ♠	

3 ♠ = I have a void, over 3NT I will bid it.

3NT = singleton club

4♣ = singleton diamond

4 ♦ = singleton heart

Good stop!

Differentiating between a singleton and void is another tool that the New Jacoby 2NT provides you with. Try bidding these cards now:

When Responder's Bid is Doubled

Martel-Stansby play that if fourth hand doubles an artificial bid by responder, opener does the following:

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

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

Pass = no control in diamonds (responder can redouble to insist that opener makes his systemic bid).

Opener	Responder
1 ♠	2 NT
3 ♦	3 ♥
3 ♠ (void somewhere)	3 NT
4 ♣ (club void)	4 ♦ (cuebid)
4 ♥ (cuebid)	4 NT
5 ♠	7 ♠

Bid = I am making my response and I have a control in diamonds

Opener shows a void in clubs and then two keycards plus the queen of trump. Responder can see there are no losers.

When Fourth Hand Overcalls

If there is an overcall over 2NT, opener passes (or with the right holding makes a penalty double) with two or more cards in the suit overcalled. A bid by opener is natural and promises a singleton in the overcaller's suit.

Low Level Keycard

Opener	Responder
1 ♠	2 NT
3♣/3♦/3♥	3 NT = keycard ask

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

The system allows either player to use Keycard Blackwood at a low level. Here responder bids it. Opener can do it directly over 2NT:

Suppose West passes. East can make a penalty double or bid 3NT to suggest that contract instead of 4♠. East would bid 3NT with something like this hand:

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



The Wizards of Aus

Hands from Australian Tournaments

by Ron Klinger

Sacrifice or Defend?

Partner has preempted at a high level and the opponents bid above that. You have the choice of bidding higher as a sacrifice or defending. How do you make that decision?

These are the guidelines that help me in this situation:

1. Never sacrifice at the five level or higher with a balanced hand (well, almost never).

2. Never sacrifice at the five level if the bidding suggests that the opponents might have slam available.

3. If partner has preempted, it is sensible to give partner's preempt a chance to work.

4. Never assume the opponents are error-free and are bound to succeed in their contract.

These rules also may be applied when the opponents preempt first.

Here are two examples from the Gold Coast Pairs last year. Try them as North, but keep in mind that Australians often take light initial action.

Board 1 North (you)
 East dealer ♠ 8 6 5 4
 None vul ♥ J 9 6
 ♦ K 8
 ♣ 8 5 4 3

West	North	East	South
—	—	1 ♦	4 ♥
5 ♦	?		

Board 7 North (you)
 South dealer ♠ A K
 Both vul ♥ J 10 3 2
 ♦ K 8 7 4 2
 ♣ 10 4

South	West	North	East
1 ♦	1 ♠	double	4 ♠
pass	pass	?	

Board 1 ♠ 8 6 5 4
 East dealer ♥ J 9 6
 None vul ♦ K 8
 ♣ 8 5 4 3

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

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

West	North	East	South
—	—	1 ♦	4 ♥
5 ♦	?		

North should pass 5♦ for all four of the reasons given. North has a balanced hand, the opponents might easily have a slam,

partner's preempt has in fact worked and the opponents were not sure to make their contract. West's choice of 5♦ was a bad one, but that's what happened at the table. If North passes, the opponents will be one down in 5♦, while they could make 5♣.

It is true that South's preempt is not what you would expect with two defensive tricks outside of hearts, but the preempt did its job and more! Now suppose South had these cards (without defense):

♠ x x x ♥ A K Q 10 9 7 5 4 ♦ x x ♣ —

You cannot beat 5♦, but you can't defeat 6♦ either, or 6♣. Furthermore, if East's diamonds happened to be A-Q-x-x-x-x, the opponents can make 7♣ or 7♦. Again, it does not pay North to take any action over 5♦ lest you push East-West into a cold slam.

When their contract is likely to fail, you still cannot be sure that your contract will succeed. Do not take a save when you have good defense. From the same event:

Board 7 ♠ A K
 South dealer ♥ J 10 3 2
 Both vul ♦ K 8 7 4 2
 ♣ 10 4

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

♠ Q
 ♥ 8 6 5
 ♦ Q 10 6 5 3
 ♣ A K 9 8

South	West	North	East
1 ♦	1 ♠	double	4 ♠
pass	pass	5 ♦ ?	double
(all pass)			

Opening lead: ♥Q

The defense collected two hearts, a heart ruff and the ♦A for two down, while all along 4♠ would be one down.

North has seven losers and would not expect North-South to make 11 tricks opposite a minimum opening (especially not if South regularly opens on the actual rubbish held). North also has defensive values with those top spades, more useful on defense than in 5♦. It would be reasonable for North to double 4♠, but if not, it is better to pass and defend than to bid 5♦.

East's double of 5♦ was a calculated risk, but he mustn't bid 5♠, since he has already put his opponents to a guess. Perhaps East should splinter in diamonds immediately to set up a force, or make a fit-showing jump of 3♥, but that would permit North to show his diamond support one level lower.

Hand(s) of the Month

We asked David Berkowitz for a hand from his victory in the National Open Pairs in Dallas, and he supplied us with two interesting deals, one from the first qualifying round and one from the final. Try them yourself first. In both cases, your system is Precision, with a strong club and a catch-all 1♦ opening.

Problem One

You are East at favorable vulnerability:

♠ K 7 4 ♥ K Q 6 3 ♦ A 10 9 2 ♣ Q 6

West	North	East	South
1♦ (1)	pass	1♥	2♣
double (2)	pass	?	

- (1) could be as few as two
- (2) support double, showing three cards in hearts

What is your call?

Problem Two

East dealer North (dummy)

N-S vul ♠ 10 8
 ♥ J 8
 ♦ K Q 9 5 3
 ♣ A J 10 6

South (You)

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

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

Opening lead: ♣9

Plan the play.

Solutions

Problem One

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

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

South
 ♠ J 9
 ♥ 10 9
 ♦ 8 5 4
 ♣ A K 8 7 5 4

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

- (1) could be as few as two
- (2) support double, showing three cards in hearts

The result: 800 to East-West.

Berkowitz: "I thought three clubs, four hearts or three notrump were all reasonable, but finally settled on pass. Eight hundred later, it still seems like a good idea!"

Yes, West could have held four diamonds and two clubs, but don't argue with success.

Problem Two

On this one, Berkowitz's view was more clear, but would you have found it?

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

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

Opening lead: ♣9

Berkowitz explained the auction: "I opened one club, Larry responded two diamonds, and since I thought for slam purposes hearts were vital, I bid two hearts rather than my weak spade suit. Larry bid three clubs, I bid three diamonds and he bid three hearts, so it looked like four hearts was best.

"LHO led the ♣9. I covered with the 10 and ruffed East's king.

"Four rounds of trumps and five diamonds ruined LHO. He came down to the ♠A and ♣Q-8, but I tossed him in for 680."

	North	
	♠ 10	
	♥ —	
	♦ —	
	♣ A J	
West		East
♠ A		♠ K 7
♥ —		♥ —
♦ —		♦ —
♣ Q 8		♣ 7
	South (Berkowitz)	
	♠ Q 9 6	
	♥ —	
	♦ —	
	♣ —	

The position here where the ♠10 is led from dummy appears to be a squeeze end-play on West, though it's a little more complicated, since declarer is missing the ♠K and ♠J as well. Three points of interest are:

- (1) If East had started with the ♣K-Q, declarer would lose the last three tricks. He obviously thought that East would not play the ♣K from the ♣K-Q at trick one.
- (2) West could discard the ♠A and come down to the ♠J or ♠4. Then on the lead of the ♠10, East would have to win the king, and he would be endplayed.
- (3) Another idea for West in this situation is to come down to the ♠A-J and the ♣Q singleton. Declarer then would have to guess to cash the ♣A rather than lead the ♠10 for the throw-in.