

THE BRIDGE WORLD

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EDITORIAL



More Might Help

One of the side effects of the explosion of cheating accusations and convictions is the inconsistency of the information provided to the bridge-playing public. This in turn has led to suspicion about procedures, lack of uniformity, and favoritism. More disclosure might alleviate these concerns.

For example, the details of the sentences pronounced after convictions are often omitted. Comparing some of the outcomes makes it appear that much-different punishments were handed down for equivalent offenses. There may be good reasons for concealing the background (e.g., one of the convicts provided useful information about other cases or had a previously-unrevealed record of past offenses). In any case, transparency demands that at least the types of considerations that may apply be made public.

It is also relevant for independent observers to be given a chance to decide whether differences in outcomes is a

by-product of the lack of overall structure in organized bridge. One suspects that this situation is further evidence of the value of having a pyramid-like structure where the subunits at each level have agreed to follow the policies of the group. Furthermore, the apparent reluctance to publicize procedures is more evidence of the confusion sowed by having multiple tails wagging the dog. That some details must not be publicized (those that would help potential crooks evade detection, for example) should be part of the disclosure.

Another way that uniformity of activities within organized bridge could show a gain is through increased sharing of ideas about how to prevent or to discourage cheating in the first place. What about physical arrangements? Which detection methods work best? Are current punishments appropriate? What obstacles have arisen, and how were they overcome (or not)? The more people and groups that share this intelligence, the better off all will be.

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TEST YOUR PLAY



Problem A

Rubber bridge
East dealer
Both sides vulnerable

NORTH
♠ 8 6 4 3 2
♥ A 8 3
♦ K 2
♣ K 5 4

SOUTH
♠ A J 10 9 7
♥ K 7
♦ 10 9 8
♣ A 6 3

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|-------|------|-------|-------------------|
| — | — | — | 1 ♥ (All Pass) |

West leads the heart jack.

Plan the play.

(Solutions on page 74.)

Problem B

Matchpoints
North dealer
Neither side vulnerable

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

SOUTH
♠ 7 2
♥ K Q 8
♦ K 10 6 4 3
♣ K J 6

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|-------|------|-------------|-------------------|
| — | — | 1 ♣ 3 NT | 3 ♥ (All Pass) |

Heart seven, deuce, nine, *king*.
Club king, five, three, deuce.
Club jack, nine, *queen*, heart five.

Plan the play.

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

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 TOURNAMENT REPORT
 

PEACHTREE SOLOWAY

BY OREN KRIEGEL, CHICAGO

Atlanta played host to the 2023 Fall Nationals. Overall tournament attendance relative to 2022 held steady, but participation in the premier knockout event, the Soloway, was up: 62 entrants compared to 53 the year before.

A two-day Swiss qualifier cut the field nearly in half, to 32 teams; this was followed by five rounds of day-long knockout matches. Seeding in the Soloway is based on a combination of each team's seeding points and placement in the qualifier. KNOTTENBELT and WADEMARK topped the Swiss, but third-place finisher LEBOWITZ became the top seed.

No major upsets occurred in the round of 32. Instead, the marquee matchup was #14 NICKELL vs. #19 FLEISHER (T. Bessis, Lorenzini; Fleisher, Martel; Sementa, Versace), a combination of opponents never seen until later in other knockouts; FLEISHER emerged victorious. That team continued with wins over #3 WADEMARK and #6 AMOILS to reach the semifinals, where it faced #7 STREET (Di Franco, Manno; L'Ecuyer, Street; Pachtmann, Zatorski). On the other side of the bracket, #8 GOODMAN (de Wijs, Muller; Donati, Percario; Goodman, Passell) got past LEBOWITZ and encountered #5 ZIMMERMANN (Brink, Drijver; Kalita, Klukowski; Nowosadzki, Zimmermann) in its semi-final match.

FLEISHER VS. STREET

Over the course of the first three quarters, FLEISHER maintained a moderate lead, helped by deals such as Board 11 from the first quarter:

South dealer
Neither side vulnerable

NORTH
 ♠ K Q 10 6 5
 ♥ —
 ♦ 9 6 5 2
 ♣ A K 8 6

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

SOUTH
 ♠ 7 3 2
 ♥ A Q 4
 ♦ A 8 4
 ♣ J 9 7 3

OPEN ROOM

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|--------|-----------|------------|--------|
| Street | Lorenzini | L'Ecuyer | Bessis |
| 1 ♣ | Pass | 1 ♠ | Pass |
| 1 NT | Double | Redouble | 4 ♥ |
| Pass | Pass | 5 ♣ | Pass |
| Pass | Double | (All Pass) | |

THE BRIDGE WORLD

CLOSED ROOM

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|---------|-------|---------|-----------|
| Versace | Manno | Sementa | Di Franco |
| 1 NT* | Pass | 2 ♥ | Pass |
| 2 ♠ | Pass | 3 ♣ | Pass |
| 3 ♦ | Pass | 3 NT | Pass |
| 4 ♠ | Pass | Pass | Pass |

*10-13 HCP

In the Open Room, after a slow start, the auction accelerated quickly, putting L'Ecuyer and Street in a difficult position. Would your partnership have been on firm ground about South's responsibilities over four hearts and the meaning of North's four spades at his third turn? If you are willing to give up defending against four hearts undoubled, perhaps opener should always bid four spades with three unless doubling for penalty. It would take a very-well-practiced partnership to be confident about such an uncommon auction.

In his inelegant contract, Street received the heart-eight lead to his queen. He played the ace-king of clubs, getting the bad news, then crossed to the diamond ace, threw a diamond on the heart ace, and led a spade. Lorenzini played the jack, won the next spade, and tapped dummy with a heart. The defender was then able to ruff the third spade and cash the club queen, resulting in down three: minus 500. Declarer's chances were almost nonexistent, and he lacked the entries to play both spades

and clubs toward dummy. Assuming, on the bidding, that West held club length and relative spade shortness, the actual spade holding seems to be the best realistic hope for a make. One option, going all out, was to lead the club jack at trick two and then play high spades from dummy. That path would have led to success as the cards lay.

In the Closed Room, Street's teammate Manno found himself in a painful situation of his own. On lead with the bulk of the defensive assets, he started with the spade ace and another spade. Versace drew trumps (Manno threw a heart) and ducked a diamond to Manno's jack. The club continuation resolved that suit: making four, plus 420 and 14 imps to FLEISHER. Di Franco had played his spades up the line, but if he had played middle-low-high, Manno might have tried the diamond king next, which almost certainly would have defeated the contract. Versace would have ducked, won the third round of the suit, thrown a club on the heart, and tried to navigate clubs. (The winning double-dummy line is to win and to run the club jack without cashing the heart ace, then to exit in diamonds, forcing the defense to play a rounded suit.)

FLEISHER led by 27 imps with 12 deals remaining, but then STREET went on a 47-0 run over seven deals, starting with a game swing on Board 49:

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South dealer; East-West vulnerable

| | | | |
|------------|--|------------|--|
| NORTH | | EAST | |
| ♠ K 8 5 | | ♦ 10 9 6 2 | |
| ♥ K Q | | ♥ 6 5 2 | |
| ♦ K 9 4 3 | | ♦ A 8 5 | |
| ♣ Q 8 6 4 | | ♣ 9 7 2 | |
| WEST | | SOUTH | |
| ♠ 4 3 | | ♠ A Q J 7 | |
| ♥ J 10 9 7 | | ♥ A 8 4 3 | |
| ♦ J 10 6 | | ♦ Q 7 2 | |
| ♣ A K J 10 | | ♣ 5 3 | |

OPEN ROOM

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|-----------|---------|----------|---------|
| Pachtmann | Versace | Zatorski | Sementa |
| 1 ♣* | Pass | 1 ♠† | Pass |
| 1 NT | Pass | 3 NT | Pass |
| Pass | Pass | | |

CLOSED ROOM

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|-----------|-------|--------|-----------|
| Lorenzini | Manno | Bessis | Di Franco |
| 1 ♦ | Pass | 2 ♣ | Pass |
| 2 NT | Pass | 3 NT | Pass |
| Pass | Pass | | |

*two-plus clubs

†no four-card major

In the Open Room, Versace led the club ace and shifted to the heart jack. Pachtmann won in dummy and led a diamond to the queen, then a club toward the queen. Versace won and continued hearts. Declarer cashed his winners, squeezing Versace without the count for an overtrick. Versace threw a diamond honor, while Sementa was stripped of all of his non-diamonds, so Pachtmann could establish a diamond trick: plus 430.

In the Closed Room, Manno started with the heart jack. Lorenzini won in dummy, led a diamond to the queen, and a diamond to the ten, king, and ace. Di Franco shifted to the club seven; Manno won with the ace and returned the jack, giving declarer a losing option. Lorenzini ducked, so Manno cashed his winners: down one; 10 imps to STREET.

Lorenzini's play ran counter to the dealing probabilities, because if clubs were four-three with the top honors divided, the defense could prevail by cashing its minor-suit winners in an effective order. Thus, declarer needed to find West with exactly ace-jack-doubleton (or, hardly conceivable, East with king-seven-doubleton).

The swing was greater on Board 50:

East dealer; both sides vulnerable

| | | | |
|---------------|--|------------|--|
| NORTH | | EAST | |
| ♠ A J 9 2 | | ♠ Q 7 3 | |
| ♥ A | | ♥ 9 8 7 6 | |
| ♦ A K 9 8 7 2 | | ♦ Q 5 3 | |
| ♣ 8 5 | | ♣ 6 4 2 | |
| WEST | | SOUTH | |
| ♠ 10 6 4 | | ♠ K 8 5 | |
| ♥ K J 5 4 | | ♥ Q 10 3 2 | |
| ♦ J 4 | | ♦ 10 6 | |
| ♣ A Q 10 9 | | ♣ K J 7 3 | |

OPEN ROOM

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|----------|---------|-----------|------------|
| Zatorski | Sementa | Pachtmann | Versace |
| — | — | — | Pass |
| Pass | 1 ♣ | 1 ♦ | Pass |
| 1 ♥ | Pass | 2 ♣ | Pass |
| 2 NT | Pass | 3 NT | (All Pass) |

CLOSED ROOM

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|--------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| Bessis | Di Franco | Lorenzini | Manno |
| — | — | — | Pass |
| Pass | 1 ♣ | 1 ♦ | Pass |
| 1 ♥ | Pass | 2 ♠ | Pass |
| 2 NT | Pass | 3 NT | (All Pass) |

Both Wests led the spade six. In the Closed Room, Zatorski played low from dummy and had no problem taking 10 tricks: plus 630. At the other table, Bessis played dummy's jack at trick one, which left him with some catching up to do. He won the trick, cashed the top two diamonds, and played a third round. East won and put a club

through. Di Franco took two clubs then endplayed dummy with the heart ace for down one: minus 100 and 12 imps to STREET.

Bessis had several chances to make the contract—play low from dummy at trick one, finesse in spades at trick two, and cash the heart ace before giving up a diamond—but he played for the club queen to be onside, a reasonable line. However, once Bessis adopted that line he could have improved his chances by leading the spade five to the nine at trick two. If the nine had won, one-loser diamonds would have seen declarer home; otherwise, he could have used the spade eight and the hoped-for club entry to

IMPROVE YOUR PLAY

Problem A

Imps; North dealer
Neither side vulnerable

NORTH
♠ Q 9 7 4
♥ 10 6 2
♦ K J 10
♣ A Q J

SOUTH
♠ A K 10 6 3 2
♥ K Q J
♦ 4 2
♣ 8 3

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|-------|------|-------|------|
| — | — | 1 ♣ | Pass |
| 1 ♠ | Pass | 2 ♠ | Pass |
| 4 ♠ | Pass | Pass | Pass |

West leads the spade five.

Plan the play.

Problem B

Imps; East dealer
Both sides vulnerable

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

SOUTH
♠ K J 10
♥ A Q
♦ K J 6 5 2
♣ Q J 9

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|-------|------|-------|------------|
| — | — | — | 1 ♥ |
| 1 NT | Pass | 3 NT | (All Pass) |

Heart seven, deuce, king, ?

Plan the play.

(Solutions on page 73.)

finesse twice in diamonds. Unless the opening bid was very light, if the black-suit queens were with East, the diamond quacks would be with West.

STREET won an imp for a higher-scoring game, 3 more on a partscore deal, and 6 for staying out of a bad game. These gains gave STREET a match lead that it never surrendered. After another 3-imp gain on a partscore deal, STREET collected a major swing on Board 54 (East dealer; North-South vulnerable) for making three notrump at one table and defeating it at the other:

NORTH
♠ K Q 9 5 2
♥ 9 7
♦ A 6 2
♣ 6 5 2

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

SOUTH
♠ A 4
♥ K Q 10 3
♦ K 4 3
♣ A 10 4 3

EAST
♠ J 10 7 3
♥ A 8 4
♦ J 10 9 7
♣ K Q

In both rooms, East opened the bidding in a minor; South bid one notrump and played in three notrump after a transfer sequence. Against Sementa, the opening bid was a short club, and Pachtman led the club nine. Sementa ducked Zatorski's queen (winning was no better), and the defender accurately shifted to diamonds for down one when spades didn't run. In the other room, Bessis had opened one diamond, and Lorenzini led one to the nine and king. Four rounds of spades put Bessis on lead, as Di Franco threw a heart and

a diamond and Lorenzini pitched the queen-eight of diamonds. The ending:

NORTH
♠ 5
♥ 9 7
♦ A 6
♣ 6 5 2

WEST
♠ —
♥ J 6 5 2
♦ —
♣ J 9 8 7

EAST
♠ —
♥ A 8 4
♦ J 10 7
♣ K Q

SOUTH
♠ —
♥ K Q 10
♦ 3
♣ A 10 4 3

East played a diamond to dummy's ace (club eight from West), and Di Franco cashed the last spade. Bessis discarded a heart, which let declarer play the suit for one loser. A diamond discard would have allowed declarer to lead a heart to the king, then to play the ace and another club. The only winning option was to throw a club, but that would have been fatal if declarer had held the rounded-suit jacks instead of the heart queen. Perhaps in the absence of a strong signal from Lorenzini, Bessis should have played partner for equal holdings in the rounded suits.

The 12-imp swing meant that STREET had turned a 27-imp deficit into a 20-imp lead with five deals to play. Technically, FLEISHER had an opportunity to close the gap, but winning swings would have required anti-percentage actions; the normal choices that the players made resulted in two flat deals. The final margin was 122-106. The comeback performance punched STREET's ticket to the final.

GOODMAN VS. ZIMMERMANN

In the other semifinal match, large swings abounded. ZIMMERMANN held a narrow 34-32 lead after the first quarter despite a debacle on Board 13:

North dealer
Both sides vulnerable

NORTH
♠ 8 3
♥ Q 4
♦ K Q 9 8 7
♣ K J 9 6

| | |
|------------------|--------------|
| WEST | EAST |
| ♠ K Q J 10 9 6 2 | ♠ 7 4 |
| ♥ A K J 8 3 | ♥ 7 6 5 2 |
| ♦ 5 | ♦ 4 2 |
| ♣ — | ♣ A 10 8 7 2 |
| SOUTH | |
| ♠ A 5 | |
| ♥ 10 9 | |
| ♦ A J 10 6 3 | |
| ♣ Q 5 4 3 | |

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|--------|---------|------------|---------|
| Z'mann | Passell | Nowosadzki | Goodman |
| — | — | 1 ♦ | Pass |
| 2 ♦* | 4 ♠ | Pass | Pass |
| Double | Pass | 5 ♦ | Pass |
| 6 ♦ | Double | Pass | Pass |
| 6 NT | Double | (All Pass) | |

*invitational-plus

Nowosadzki and Zimmermann were on different pages over four spades. Zimmermann thought his partnership was in a force, so Nowosadzki's pass-and-pull sequence was a slam-try; Nowosadzki thought his pass could have ended the auction. Passell had everything for his double of six diamonds—prepared for either suit Goodman might have led and with good chances of running up the score. Zimmermann projected a more-typical Lightner double

and ran to six notrump, which was a bloodbath. Declarer took only his six top tricks for minus 1700. His teammates scored 850 in five spades doubled, so running from one doomed slam to another proved more costly than it often is at imp scoring. ZIMMERMANN lost 13 imps, rather than the likely 6 imps it would have lost for minus 1100 in six diamonds doubled, and there was a (very-slight) chance of a 2-imp pickup if Goodman had eschewed a club lead.

ZIMMERMANN's lead swelled to 30 imps after the second quarter, in part because it came out on top on the freak deal of the set (Board 21):

IMPROVE YOUR DEFENSE

Rubber bridge
North dealer
Neither side vulnerable

NORTH (*dummy*)
♠ 7 5
♥ A
♦ A Q 10 7 6 4 2
♣ A 6 3

WEST (*you*)
♠ Q 10 8 6 4 3
♥ K 7
♦ 3
♣ Q 9 4 2

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|-------|------|-------|------|
| — | — | 1 ♦ | Pass |
| 1 ♥ | 2 ♠ | 3 ♦ | Pass |
| 3 NT | Pass | Pass | Pass |

Spade six, five, ace, nine.
Spade deuce, king, ?

Plan your defense.

(Solution on page 72.)

East dealer
East-West vulnerable

NORTH
 ♠ A 10 7 6
 ♥ 6
 ♦ 10 8 6 5 3
 ♣ J 8 5

WEST
 ♠ Q J 9 5 4 3
 ♥ K
 ♦ K
 ♣ K 7 4 3 2

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

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

OPEN ROOM

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|--------|--------|-----------|------------|
| Kalita | Muller | Klukowski | de Wijs |
| — | — | — | 1 ♦* |
| 4 ♥ | 4 ♠ | Pass | Pass |
| 5 ♥ | Pass | Pass | 5 ♠ |
| 6 ♦ | Pass | Pass | 6 ♠ |
| Pass | Pass | Double | (All Pass) |

CLOSED ROOM

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|---------|--------|---------|------------|
| Goodman | Z'mann | Passell | Nowosadzki |
| — | — | — | 1 ♣ |
| 1 ♥ | 2 ♥† | Pass | 3 ♠ |
| 4 ♥ | 4 ♠ | Pass | Pass |
| 5 ♥ | 5 ♠ | Pass | Pass |
| 6 ♦ | Pass | Pass | Double |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | |

*nebulous

†six-plus spades; invitational-plus

de Wijs, with a useful hand opposite a partner who had introduced spades at the four-level, was willing to try the six-level. Calmer proceedings in the other room allowed Nowosadzki and Zimmermann to describe their hands

and to judge accurately at the six-level. Six spades failed by two tricks, six diamonds by one: 12 imps to ZIMMERMANN for penalties totaling 600.

GOODMAN chipped away at the lead in the third quarter, which it won 22-10, but ZIMMERMANN pulled away in the final segment to win by 48. Board 48 took much of the wind out of GOODMAN's sails:

NORTH
 ♠ Q J 10
 ♥ A 5
 ♦ A Q J 10 3
 ♣ A 10 4

SOUTH
 ♠ A 8 7 5
 ♥ K Q 10 8 3
 ♦ 4
 ♣ K 5 2

You, South, open one heart in second seat and become declarer in six notrump after an uncontested auction. The play proceeds:

Diamond deuce, queen, *king*, four.

Spade six, *ace*, three, ten.

Heart three, four, *ace*, deuce.

Diamond *ace*, five, spade five, seven.

Diamond *jack*, six, spade seven, eight.

Diamond *ten*, club three, spade eight, nine.

Diamond *three*, spade deuce, club deuce, spade four.

Club four, six, *king*, nine.

Club five, jack, *ace*, seven.

Heart five, six, ?

Up or down?

Muller went up, but East held jack-nine-fourth of hearts; down two. Declarer's play looks right, as there was little distributional information that would have changed the odds. Unfor-

tunately for his team, the contract was played from the opposite side at the companion table; East led a low heart, and dummy's eight held. That simplified things considerably, and the contract succeeded: 17 imps to **ZIMMERMANN**.

It would be **ZIMMERMANN** vs. **STREET** in the final.

The Final

The 2023 Soloway final, **ZIMMERMANN** (Brink, Drijver; Kalita, Klukowski; Nowosadzki, Zimmermann) vs. **STREET** (Di Franco, Manno; L'Ecuyer, Street; Pachtmann, Zatorski), was an approximate rerun of the thrilling 2022 Spingold final, in which a somewhat different version of **ZIMMERMANN** prevailed over an identical **STREET** team by a single imp.

On the **ZIMMERMANN** side, Brink-Drijver was the only returning partnership. Kalita and Nowosadzki, previously a pairing on other teams, split up to play with Klukowski and Zimmermann, respectively. Brink-Drijver employed Dutch Doubleton, a short-club system; Kalita-Klukowski played a Polish Club base; and Nowosadzki-Zimmermann used mainstream methods. All three pairs used two diamonds to show a weak two-bid in either major and two of a major to announce a weak major-minor two-suiter. For **STREET**, Di Franco-Manno and Pachtmann-Zatorski used transfer responses to one club. L'Ecuyer-Street and Pachtmann-Zatorski used two-bids similar to the **ZIMMERMANN** pairs, while Di Franco-Manno showed 18-19 HCP in a balanced hand via a two-diamond opening.

First Quarter

To begin the match, **ZIMMERMANN** fielded Kalita-Klukowski and Nowosadzki-Zimmermann. Di Franco-Manno and L'Ecuyer-Street started for **STREET**.

A minor defensive slip on Board 1 gave **ZIMMERMANN** 1 imp; then, **STREET** won 7 imps when notrump ranges worked in its favor. This was Board 3 (South dealer; East-West vulnerable):

| | NORTH | EAST |
|-------|--|---|
| WEST | ♠ A 10 9 ♥ 10 4 3 ♦ A 7 6 ♣ A K 9 8 | ♠ K J 6 4 ♥ A K 5 ♦ 10 9 4 ♣ J 7 2 |
| SOUTH | ♠ Q 5 2 ♥ 9 7 6 2 ♦ 3 2 ♣ 10 6 5 4 | |

Both Norths opened one notrump in third seat. Klukowski passed as South, and Di Franco (East) started with a classic but ineffective spade lead, letting declarer escape for down one: minus 50. At the other table, Street tried a creative two-club response with the South cards and scrambled to two hearts. That wasn't a terrible result for his plan, but all declarer could take was four top winners plus a diamond ruff: 3 imps to **ZIMMERMANN**.

On the following deal, with both sides vulnerable, sitting in fourth seat Klukowski and Street held:

♠ Q 9 8 ♥ 9 ♦ K 7 6 5 4 ♣ Q J 7 4.

The auction began (one notrump) — two diamonds [one major] — (three diamonds [hearts]) — ? Klukowski bid four spades directly and played there unmolested; Street passed and backed in with four spades, which drew a double. Four hearts would have made on the nose, while four spades failed by a trick, so that was 3 imps to *ZIMMERMANN*, tying the match.

You are in second seat at your favorable vulnerability. LHO opens one notrump in third seat, which is passed to you. You hold:

♠ A J 8 7 ♥ Q J 6 2 ♦ 4 3 2 ♣ 4 3.

Would you balance? Nowosadzki did, reaching a successful spade partial. Di Franco sold out. Accurate but not double-dummy play by both sides resulted in down three and 4 imps to **STREET**.

After an overtrick imp to *ZIMMERMANN*, Board 7 presented a bidding problem (South dealer; both sides vulnerable):

| | |
|----------------|------------------|
| WEST | EAST |
| ♠ 9 7 | ♠ A K Q 10 8 4 3 |
| ♥ A K J 10 8 4 | ♥ — |
| ♦ 9 5 | ♦ A Q 10 4 |
| ♣ A 9 5 | ♣ J 2 |

OPEN ROOM

| Manno | Di Franco |
|-------------------|------------------|
| 1 ♥ | 2 ♠ ^a |
| 2 NT | 3 ♥ ^b |
| 3 ♠ ^c | 4 ♥ ^d |
| 4 ♠ | 5 ♦ |
| 5 NT ^e | 6 ♦ |
| 6 ♥ ^f | 7 ♠ |
| Pass | |

CLOSED ROOM

| Zimmermann | Nowosadzki |
|------------|------------|
| 1 ♥ | 1 ♠ |
| 2 ♥ | 3 ♦ |
| 4 ♥ | 4 ♠ |
| 5 ♣ | 6 ♠ |
| Pass | |

^agame-force with a solid suit . . .

^b. . . revealed to be spades

^crelay with at least one spade

^dshort hearts; stronger of two options

^ekey-card ask

^fqueen ask

In the Closed Room, Zimmermann limited his hand and emphasized hearts, which discouraged Nowosadzki, but the progressive move over four spades led to slam. In the Open Room, Manno took over after Di Franco drove to the five-level, but lack of key cards was not the concern. Either partner might have pulled in his horns. West might have countered with five hearts, knowing that his partner could have discovered his aces with a key-card ask. East might have signed off over six hearts—although six hearts was defined as a queen-ask, the logic of the auction might have overridden that message; West might merely have been authorizing his partner to bid seven with a similar hand and stronger diamonds.

After a club lead, both declarers discarded a club and a diamond on the high hearts, then led a diamond to the queen. That lost, but Nowosadzki's contract was still a favorite. Alas for declarer, not only were diamonds five-two but North could overruff dummy. **STREET** was lucky to lose only 3 imps.

A flat deal followed, then 4 imps in extra undertricks went to *ZIMMERMANN* when L'Ecuver-Street drove too high. This was Board 10:

East dealer
Both sides vulnerable

| NORTH | |
|---------------|--|
| ♠ A K 9 6 5 3 | |
| ♥ 9 7 5 2 | |
| ♦ J 5 | |
| ♣ 7 | |

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

| SOUTH | |
|--------------|--|
| ♠ 10 | |
| ♥ A Q 6 | |
| ♦ K 10 7 3 | |
| ♣ A Q 10 6 4 | |

OPEN ROOM

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|-----------|-------|--------|-----------|
| Klukowski | Manno | Kalita | Di Franco |
| — | — | — | Pass |
| 1 ♣* | Pass | 1 ♠ | Pass |
| 2 ♣† | Pass | 2 ♦§ | Pass |
| 2 NT | Pass | 3 ♠ | Pass |
| 3 NT | Pass | Pass | Pass |

CLOSED ROOM

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|--------|--------|----------|------------|
| Street | Z'mann | L'Ecuyer | Nowosadzki |
| — | — | — | Pass |
| 1 ♣ | Pass | 1 ♠ | Pass |
| 2 ♣ | Pass | 2 ♠ | Pass |
| 2 NT | Pass | 3 ♥ | Pass |
| 3 NT | Pass | Pass | Pass |

*several possibilities, including ...

†15-plus HCP, natural

§artificial game-force

At both tables, the play began with three rounds of hearts, won by West. (Di Franco played the king at trick one; Nowosadzki unblocked it under the ace at trick two.) West shifted to the spade queen, exposing East to a three-suit

squeeze as declarer cashed dummy's last heart. Again, the play was the same at both tables: each defender released a diamond, while declarer discarded a club. Street tried a club to the queen, which resulted in down two, but even if the club queen had won, nine tricks would have been a long way off.

Klukowski took a better shot, playing for the friendly diamond lie. The diamond jack was covered by the queen and king, ducked by West. Declarer accurately continued with the ten. Manno could have tested Klukowski by exiting in diamonds (finishing the diamonds would have turned the screw on East, neutralizing the spade threat or letting declarer guess clubs for one loser) but instead played a spade, letting declarer attempt a club finesse for an overtrick: making three, plus 600; 13 imps to ZIMMERMANN. If West had kept all of his diamonds, declarer could have succeeded with accurate card reading.

West considered shifting to a low spade instead of the queen, which might have been a better choice (and would have succeeded as the cards lay). The obvious upside of shifting to the queen was when declarer holds the singleton jack; but even then, shifting to the queen might have squeezed East among three suits. If declarer had held, e.g.:

♠ J ♥ A Q x ♦ K Q x x ♣ Q J 10 x x

and played low on the low-spade shift, that shift could cost the contract. With that hand, though, declarer might have bid differently or played on spades himself. If declarer held 1=3=3=6, the defense might have been able to deny a dummy entry if a low-spade shift goes to the jack; also, with that holding declarer might have pursued clubs initially.

On Board 11, *ZIMMERMANN* added 3 imps for plus 50 at both tables. The **STREET** pairs contracted for three spades and four hearts, each of which had four top losers, but the spade declarer lost a fifth trick when he took a losing view in trumps because of an opponent's takeout double. The *ZIMMERMANN* lead stood at 20 imps when Board 12 arrived:

East dealer
North-South vulnerable

NORTH
♠ K J 8 2
♥ A 8 7 4
♦ J 7 4
♣ 7 3

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

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

SOUTH
♠ Q 5
♥ K 5 3
♦ K Q 10 8 2
♣ A J 4

OPEN ROOM

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|--------|-----------|-----------|-------|
| Kalita | Di Franco | Klukowski | Manno |
| — | — | — | 1 ♣* |
| 1 NT | 3 ♣ | Double | Pass |

3 ♦ Pass 3 NT (All Pass)

CLOSED ROOM

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|----------|------------|--------|------------|
| L'Ecuyer | Nowosadzki | Street | Z'mann |
| — | — | — | Pass |
| 1 NT | Pass | 2 ♣ | Pass |
| 2 ♦ | Pass | 3 NT | (All Pass) |

*two-plus clubs

At both tables, the club-ten lead went to East's king. In the Open Room, Kalita ducked. A club continuation would have worked well, but Manno feared declarer's holding four clubs. He shifted to the heart deuce, finding his partner with just what he hoped for—a heart honor and (if the ten) an entry. Kalita drove out the diamond ace first, so Di Franco cleared the heart suit, letting Manno cash out for down one: minus 100. If declarer had happened to knock out Manno's entry first, the defender could have reverted to clubs and hoped that his partner could gain the lead and cash enough winners.

In the Closed Room, holding up in clubs looked futile, because East very likely would have opened with both missing aces, so L'Ecuyer won trick one. He played on diamonds, happy to see that West held the ace. After taking the second diamond, Nowosadzki could have played for South to hold ace-jack-doubleton of clubs, but he shifted to the spade nine. When declarer ducked in dummy, Zimmermann could have achieved down three by winning and putting a club through, but he did not want to set up three spade tricks for his opponent. The defense was still on track for down one, but on the run of the diamonds, Zimmermann released his remaining club, letting declarer set up the game-going trick in spades: 12 imps to **STREET**. East should have re-evaluated after learning that L'Ecuyer held five diamonds; for the opening bid, declarer had to hold the heart king or club queen-jack, so unless the defense could run clubs, the contract was cold.

ZIMMERMANN added an imp when Klukowski found a more-effective defense than Street. Then (Board 14):

West dealer
Neither side vulnerable

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

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

EAST
♠ 9 8
♥ A 8 5 3 2
♦ Q 5
♣ A Q J 10

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

Both Wests opened three spades. Street passed as North, and three spades made with an overtrick: plus 170. Klukowski doubled with the North cards, and South ended in three notrump. Things would have become interesting if Manno had doubled as East, but given the state of modern pre-empt, he had no guaranteed beat, and a profitable runout to diamonds might have been available. Declarer slid off three, minus 150, so *ZIMMERMANN* won 1 imp.

The quarter closed with a push when Manno and Zimmermann resolved a king-jack guess correctly to make a partscore. After 15 boards, *ZIMMERMANN* led by 10 imps, 33-23.

Second Quarter

STREET brought Pachtmann and Zatorski in for Di Franco and Manno; *ZIMMERMANN* stood pat. The second segment opened with three pushes in normal contracts; then, partnership agreements caused Kalita and Klukowski to

bid a light game on Board 19, while their counterparts, L'Ecuyer and Street, sold out to a partial. Both contracts failed by one trick, minus 50 and 100, sending 4 imps to **STREET**. After an overtrick imp to *ZIMMERMANN*, there was an amusing but low-stakes deal (Board 21; North dealer; North-South vulnerable):

| | |
|-------------|-----------|
| WEST | EAST |
| ♠ K Q | ♠ A J 9 3 |
| ♥ 10 9 6 2 | ♥ 7 5 |
| ♦ Q 2 | ♦ J 9 6 5 |
| ♣ K J 7 6 5 | ♣ Q 9 2 |

CLOSED ROOM

| | |
|------------|-----------------|
| Zimmermann | Nowosadzki |
| — | (1 ♣) 1 ♠ (2 ♦) |
| 2 ♠ | Pass |

Both partners were a card short of traditional length for their calls, but the vulnerability was right. The defense led and ducked a club, and declarer wound up with that trick plus five trumps after ruffing twice in dummy: down two, minus 100. At the other table, a more-anodyne auction produced a final contract of one notrump by South. The opening lead was a club, and declarer cashed seven top tricks: no swing.

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Next (Board 22):

East dealer

East-West vulnerable

NORTH
 ♠ 9 7 3
 ♥ Q J 4
 ♦ K 10 4
 ♣ 10 9 8 7

WEST
 ♠ 8 6
 ♥ A 7 6 2
 ♦ A J 8 5 3
 ♣ 4 2

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

SOUTH
 ♠ K J 10
 ♥ 10 5
 ♦ Q 9 7
 ♣ A K Q 5 3

OPEN ROOM

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|-----------|----------|--------|-----------|
| Klukowski | Zatorski | Kalita | Pachtmann |
| — | — | — | Pass |
| 1 NT | Pass | Pass | 2 ♣* |
| Double | 2 ♥ | 2 NT | Pass |
| 3 ♣ | Pass | Pass | Pass |

CLOSED ROOM

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|--------|--------|----------|------------|
| Street | Z'mann | L'Ecuver | Nowosadzki |
| — | — | — | Pass |
| 1 ♣ | 1 ♦ | 2 ♣ | Double |
| 2 NT | Pass | Pass | Pass |

*majors

In the Open Room, Zatorski kicked things off with the diamond ace and another diamond. With the spade queen onside, declarer chalked up nine tricks.

At the other table, Street won the opening diamond lead in the closed hand and played a heart to the queen and king. The defense cleared diamonds: down one, minus 100; 4 imps

to *ZIMMERMANN*. Declarer lacked the timing to play on hearts effectively; a better line would have been to play for the spade queen onside (not the ace, lest the defense score too many spade tricks). Declarer lacks the entries to do everything he would like, but since clubs were not four-zero, winning the diamond in either hand and working on spades would have succeeded.

ZIMMERMANN scored more heavily on Board 23:

East dealer
 Both sides vulnerable

NORTH
 ♠ A K 9 6 5 4 2
 ♥ 8
 ♦ 9 7
 ♣ 10 9 2

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

EAST
 ♠ Q J 8 7 3
 ♥ 9 6 4 3
 ♦ 10 5 4
 ♣ 3

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

OPEN ROOM

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|----------|--------|------------|-----------|
| Zatorski | Kalita | Pachtmann | Klukowski |
| — | — | — | Pass |
| 1 ♣ | 1 ♦ | 2 ♥* | Pass |
| 3 ♣ | Pass | 4 ♣ | Pass |
| 4 ♥ | Pass | 5 ♣ | Pass |
| Pass | Double | (All Pass) | |

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CLOSED ROOM

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|--------|----------|------------|--------|
| Z'mann | L'Ecuyer | Nowosadzki | Street |
| — | — | — | Pass |
| 1 ♣ | 1 ♦ | 3 ♥* | Pass |
| 3 NT | Pass | 4 ♥ | Pass |
| 4 ♠ | Pass | Pass | Pass |

*spades

A quirk of the different-level transfers was that Pachtmann and Zatorski got together in their best fit, while Nowosadzki and Zimmermann did not. The latter pair did well to position four spades in the South hand, which reduced the chance that declarer would need to rely on the club finesse. More importantly, Nowosadzki and Zimmermann avoided a double. Both contracts went down two; minus 500 and minus 200 put 7 imps in the *ZIMMERMANN* column; that team then led by 18.

On the last seven deals of the segment, the contract (though not always the declarer) was the same at both tables, and the swings were modest: 1- and 2-imp swings to **STREET** and a 2-imp gain for *ZIMMERMANN*. Still, there were points of interest.

Board 28 presented a contrast of modern opening-lead styles. With only the opponents vulnerable, your RHO deals and opens one notrump, which ends the auction. Holding:

♠ 8 7 2 ♥ J 10 5 ♦ A 4 2 ♣ A J 9 6,

what would you lead? Expert practice has long since moved on from a fourth-highest club. A heart has more constructive potential, but it might compromise the defensive position in the suit if partner holds the ace or king. A spade is a more-passive choice. Klukowski opted

for a spade, hitting his partner's ace-jack-nine in front of the remaining honors, which aided declarer, who made nine tricks. L'Ecuyer's heart lead was more neutral, and declarer took only seven tricks: 2 imps to **STREET**.

The quarter closed with a tricky game to declare (Board 30):

TEST YOUR
DEFENSE

Rubber bridge
South dealer
Both sides vulnerable

NORTH (*dummy*)
 ♠ A J 9 7
 ♥ Q
 ♦ K Q J 2
 ♣ A J 10 9

WEST (*you*)
 ♠ 8 6
 ♥ K 8 4 3 2
 ♦ 10 8 7 5
 ♣ K 8

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|--------|----------|------------|--------|
| Z'mann | L'Ecuyer | Nowosadzki | Street |
| 2 ♥ | Pass | 4 ♥ | Pass |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | Pass |

Spade eight, *ace*, five, three.
Diamond king, *ace*, *heart six*, five.
Club four, ?

Plan your defense.

(Solution on page 41.)

South dealer
Neither side vulnerable

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

WEST
 ♠ Q 9
 ♥ 9 5 4
 ♦ K 8
 ♣ J 8 7 6 5 4

EAST
 ♠ K 10 6 3
 ♥ Q 8
 ♦ A 10 9 7 4
 ♣ 10 3

SOUTH
 ♠ J 8 5 2
 ♥ A 7 6 3 2
 ♦ Q J 3 2
 ♣ —

OPEN ROOM

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|-----------|-----------|----------|------------|
| Pachtmann | Klukowski | Zatorski | Kalita |
| Pass | Pass | 1 ♣ | 1 ♦ |
| 2 ♣* | Pass | 2 ♦† | Pass |
| 2 ♥ | Pass | 4 ♥ | (All Pass) |

CLOSED ROOM

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|------------|--------|--------|------------|
| Nowosadzki | Street | Z'mann | L'Ecuyer |
| Pass | Pass | 1 ♣ | 1 ♦ |
| Double§ | Pass | 1 ♥ | Pass |
| 2 ♥ | Pass | 4 ♥ | (All Pass) |

*at least five-four in the majors

†pick a major

§hearts

In the Open Room, Klukowski led the diamond king, then shifted to the spade queen to dummy's ace. From that start, it appeared that East held at least nine pointed-suit cards. Pachtmann cashed one club (spade discard), ruffed a club low, and led a heart to the ten. If that had won, he might have played East for 4=1=5=3 or 4=1=6=2: top clubs for spade discards, diamond

toward the honors. But East won with the heart queen, took his pointed-suit winners, and gave West a ruff: down two, minus 100.

In the Closed Room, Zimmermann, North, received a spade lead to the nine and ace. He cashed his club winners, throwing three spades as L'Ecuyer ruffed the third round with the eight. L'Ecuyer persisted with a low spade, ruffed in dummy, and Zimmermann called for the diamond queen. Street won with the king. As the cards lay, a heart or club continuation would have guaranteed the defeat of the contract. Projecting all possible sequences of play is easier at the bar than at the table, and Street went for the practical assault on declarer's trump holding by playing a diamond. L'Ecuyer took the ace and played the spade ten; now it was Zimmermann's turn in the spotlight. If, as it appeared, East held the missing spade king, he needed to ruff with the ace, then to guess trumps. In practice, he ruffed with the seven, and Street overruffed for the setting trick. That was minus 50, but still 2 imps to *ZIMMERMANN*.

ZIMMERMANN won the low-scoring segment 14-7, bumping its lead up to 17 imps, 47-30.

Third Quarter

For *ZIMMERMANN*, Brink and Drijver came in for Nowosadzki and Zimmermann. Meanwhile, Di Franco-Manno returned, replacing L'Ecuyer-Street.

The second half of the match began with a borderline game (Board 31):

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East dealer
Neither side vulnerable

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

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

OPEN ROOM

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|-----------|----------|-------|------------|
| Di Franco | Brink | Manno | Drijver |
| — | — | — | 1 ♣ |
| Double | Redouble | 2 ♥ | Pass |
| 2 ♠ | Pass | Pass | Double |
| Pass | 3 ♣ | 3 ♦ | (All Pass) |

CLOSED ROOM

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|--------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| Kalita | Pachtmann | Klukowski | Zatorski |
| — | — | — | 1 ♣ |
| Double | 1 ♦* | Pass | 2 ♥ |
| 2 ♠ | Pass | Pass | 3 ♣ |
| 3 ♦ | Pass | 4 NT | Pass |
| 5 ♣ | Pass | 5 ♦ | (All Pass) |

*hearts

Against North's Open-Room part-score, Drijver led the club king to dummy's ace; declarer worked on spades, playing the ace and another, discarding his remaining club. Drijver won with the nine and continued with the club queen, ruffed. Manno ruffed a heart in dummy and a spade with the ten, which Drijver overruffed to play a second dia-

mond. That held declarer to 10 tricks: plus 130.

In the other room, Kalita ruffed the heart-king lead, played a diamond to the king, and lost a finesse to Pachtmann's spade king. The defense knocked out the club ace, and when the spade ace drew only low cards, Kalita needed to guess the distribution. Against the actual layout, the winning play was to cash the diamond ace and aim to establish dummy's hearts. Judging that East was more likely to hold 3=4=1=5, declarer ruffed a spade without cashing the diamond ace. Zatorski overruffed, and declarer was a trick short: minus 50; 5 imps to STREET.

The same team notched an overtrick imp; then, on Board 33, it was a STREET pair that bid more than its counterpart:

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West dealer

North-South vulnerable

NORTH
 ♠ A Q J 10 5
 ♥ 2
 ♦ K 9 8
 ♣ A J 8 7

WEST
 ♠ 7 6
 ♥ K J 10 9 3
 ♦ 7 6 3
 ♣ K 9 4

EAST
 ♠ K 8 4 3 2
 ♥ A Q 8
 ♦ 10 5
 ♣ Q 3 2

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

OPEN ROOM

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|-----------|-------|--------|---------|
| Di Franco | Brink | Manno | Drijver |
| — | 2 ♥ | 2 ♠ | 3 ♥ |
| Pass | Pass | Double | Pass |
| 5 ♦ | Pass | Pass | Pass |

CLOSED ROOM

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|--------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| Kalita | Pachtmann | Klukowski | Zatorski |
| — | Pass | 1 ♠ | Pass |
| 1 NT | Pass | 2 ♣ | (All Pass) |

The defensive barrage in the Open Room helped North-South find their best fit but propelled them to an uncomfortable level. Drijver took the heart-ten lead with the ace and shifted to the club deuce to the king and ace. Di Franco cashed dummy's spade ace and continued with the queen, ducked by Drijver as declarer pitched a heart. Di Franco then took the ace-king of diamonds and passed the spade jack; because neither spades nor diamonds broke favorably, Brink scored a ruff. The club queen was the setting trick: minus 100.

In the Closed Room, Zatorski (East) led the diamond ten. Declarer won with dummy's ace and gave up a heart. Pachtmann's jack held, and he continued diamonds. Klukowski won in dummy, ruffed a heart (ace from Zatorski), took the spade ace, and played the queen. Zatorski withheld the king, and Klukowski misguessed by ruffing. Declarer ruffed a third round of hearts and trumped a low spade with the six; Pachtmann overruffed with the nine and played the heart king, ruffed with the jack and overruffed. Zatorski exited in trumps, and the club ace was declarer's final trick: down one for a push.

From there, the deals turned flat, though not totally uninteresting. On Board 35, vulnerable against not, Drijver and Zatorski held as dealer:

♠ A K 6 5 ♥ 4 ♦ 9 7 4 2 ♣ A Q 6 3.

The auction unfolded:

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|-------|------|-------|------|
| 1 ♦ | 1 ♥ | 3 ♦* | 3 ♥ |
| Pass | 4 ♥ | Pass | Pass |
| ? | | | |

*mixed raise

Both players doubled, hardly a sure bet, and collected an extra 50 for down one and a push. "Another overbidder punished," as Ron Smith likes to say.

STREET missed an opportunity on Board 38:

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West dealer
Neither side vulnerable

NORTH
 ♠ Q 6 4
 ♥ 9 4
 ♦ A Q J 10 8 7 4
 ♣ 10

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

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

OPEN ROOM

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|-------|-------|---------|-----------|
| Brink | Manno | Drijver | Di Franco |
| — | Pass | 3 ♦ | Pass |
| 3 NT | Pass | Pass | Pass |

CLOSED ROOM

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|-----------|-----------|----------|--------|
| Pachtmann | Klukowski | Zatorski | Kalita |
| — | Pass | Pass | 1 ♠ |
| Double | 2 ♠ | 4 ♦ | Pass |
| 5 ♦ | Pass | Pass | Pass |

In the Closed Room, Zatorski judged his hand unsuitable for a preempt, and his pair reached the top spot. He had no trouble taking 11 tricks: plus 400. **STREET** had some chance of a double-digit pickup when, in the Open Room, Manno hit on the best lead for his side: a high heart (the queen, asking for an attitude signal). With the diamond finesse off and East holding the spade ace, declarer could have prevailed by holding up twice, but Brink took trick one. Di Franco came on lead with the diamond king at trick two, cashed the

heart jack, and played . . . a club: plus 430 and 1 imp to *ZIMMERMANN* instead of 10 the other way. Di Franco feared declarer's holding stronger hearts (say ace-ten-eight-low) and thought that South would not have won trick one with his actual holding.

Whether declarer should duck trick one is not clear. East is almost certain to signal honestly at trick one, so if West continues with a heart honor at trick two, South can win if East holds the third honor or duck again if not. (Given West's initial pass, losing the heart entry for a diamond finesse cannot cost, as West cannot hold both the spade ace and diamond king.) If West continues with a low heart to East's honor, declarer will need to guess how to proceed. Ducking is necessary on a layout such as the actual one; but if West holds five hearts, declarer should win and may be defeated if he does not. Success will depend on placing the unseen cards accurately. Given the uncertainty that follows holding up, plus the extra chance that winning will induce a defensive misstep, perhaps Brink's play was best.

On the succeeding deal (Board 39), Di Franco's defense was more effective:

CORRECTIONS

Corrections and augmentations appear on the Editorial Department web page. From our home page at www.bridgeworld.com visit the Magazine section.

South dealer
East-West vulnerable

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

WEST
 ♠ J 5 2
 ♥ K 9 6
 ♦ K 10 5
 ♣ K Q 9 6

EAST
 ♠ Q 9 7 6 4
 ♥ A Q 8 3
 ♦ 9
 ♣ 4 3 2

SOUTH
 ♠ A 10
 ♥ 5
 ♦ A Q 8 7 6 4 2
 ♣ A J 5

OPEN ROOM

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|---------|-----------|-------|-------|
| Drijver | Di Franco | Brink | Manno |
| 1 ♦ | Pass | 1 ♥ | 1 ♠ |
| 3 ♣* | Double | 3 ♦ | Pass |
| 3 NT | Pass | Pass | Pass |

CLOSED ROOM

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|----------|--------|-----------|------------|
| Zatorski | Kalita | Pachtmann | Klukowski |
| 1 ♦ | Pass | 1 ♥ | 1 ♠ |
| 3 ♦ | 3 ♥ | Pass | 3 ♠ |
| Double | Pass | 4 ♦ | (All Pass) |

*diamonds

In the Closed Room, Pachtmann did well to remove the double; three spades would have been a dogfight, but declarer likely would have prevailed. The opening lead was a spade, and Zatorski lost one heart, one diamond, and two clubs for down one.

In the other room, Di Franco led a spade. Drijver won with dummy's king, led a diamond to the queen (ducked), and played the ace and another diamond as Manno threw discouraging clubs. Di

Franco put the heart nine on the table, and the defense ran four tricks in the suit: down one for a push.

STREET landed a heavy blow on Board 40. Try it first as an opening-lead problem. You hold:

♠ 10 6 4 ♥ A 7 2 ♦ 9 8 2 ♣ A 10 9 5,

in third seat with both sides vulnerable. Your RHO opens two hearts (weak; hearts and a minor), which is boosted to four. *What would you lead?*

Klukowski led a spade, which looks best on percentage but was a big loser:

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

| | |
|------------|-------------|
| WEST | EAST |
| ♠ 10 6 4 | ♠ J 8 7 5 2 |
| ♥ A 7 2 | ♥ 8 3 |
| ♦ 9 8 2 | ♦ A Q J |
| ♣ A 10 9 5 | ♣ Q J 8 |

SOUTH
 ♠ —
 ♥ J 10 9 6 4
 ♦ K 10 7 6 5
 ♣ K 4 2

The club losers quickly went away, and declarer played on diamonds, ending with 11 tricks: plus 650. At the other table, North opened one spade in fourth seat and passed his partner's one-notrump response. That contract was made for plus 90; 11 imps to **STREET**, which led the segment 17-1 and had cut its deficit to a mere 2 imps, 49-47.

ZIMMERMANN hit back on Board 41:

East dealer
Neither side vulnerable

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

| WEST | | SOUTH | |
|--------------|--|-------------|--|
| ♠ J 10 6 5 3 | | ♠ 9 8 2 | |
| ♥ K J 6 | | ♥ Q 4 | |
| ♦ Q 4 2 | | ♦ 8 7 3 | |
| ♣ Q 3 | | ♣ K J 9 7 2 | |

OPEN ROOM

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|-------|---------|-----------|-------|
| Manno | Drijver | Di Franco | Brink |
| — | — | — | Pass |
| Pass | Pass | 1 ♥ | 1 ♠ |
| Pass | 3 ♠ | Double | Pass |
| 4 ♥ | Pass | Pass | Pass |

CLOSED ROOM

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|-----------|----------|--------|------------|
| Klukowski | Zatorski | Kalita | Pachtmann |
| — | — | — | Pass |
| Pass | Pass | 1 ♥ | 1 ♠ |
| Pass | 2 ♠ | Double | Pass |
| 3 ♣ | Pass | 4 ♠ | Pass |
| 4 NT | Pass | 6 ♣ | (All Pass) |

In the Open Room, Drijver's space-consuming jump made life difficult for Manno. Four clubs would have left a lot on the table, but five clubs on what might have been an eight-card fit could easily have been wrong. Four hearts was a sensible choice, but it was a big loser in practice. After the opening spade lead tapped the North hand and a heart to the queen lost to the king,

declarer had no hope and finished down two: minus 100.

In the other room, Zatorski's simple raise might have worked well if it had bought the contract cheaply—not out of the question—but it allowed Kalita-Klukowski to locate their best fit. Six clubs was a pushy but playable contract. Zatorski led a low diamond to dummy's ace. Klukowski led a heart to the queen and king, then won the diamond return and played ace-king of clubs. With the hearts three-three, that was that: making six, plus 920; 14 imps to **ZIMMERMANN**.

Things became worse for **STREET** on Board 42:

available at www.bridgeworld.com

BRIDGE, A LOVE STORY BY ZIA

Zia is one of a kind and so is his story. This compelling memoir shares Zia's passion for the game and unlocks his personal bridge vault to share the secrets to his remarkable and enduring success for over 50 years. Fast-paced, irreverent, humorous and instructive, this book is for bridge players of all levels, from beginner to super-expert. Join Zia as he travels the world playing mega-high-stakes games in exclusive clubs as well as under the spotlight at international tournaments. Who does Zia believe is the greatest player in the world? Why is bridge "sexy"? How did the rampant cheating scandals wreak havoc on the game? If you enjoyed Zia's best-seller "Bridge My Way" you won't be able to put this book down.

East dealer
North-South vulnerable

NORTH
♠ A K J 7 6
♥ K 8 7 6 4 2
♦ 10
♣ A

WEST
♠ 8
♥ Q J 5 3
♦ K 8 3
♣ K Q J 6 3

EAST
♠ 5
♥ A 10
♦ J 7 6 4 2
♣ 10 9 8 7 5

SOUTH
♠ Q 10 9 4 3 2
♥ 9
♦ A Q 9 5
♣ 4 2

tract: plus 1430. The heavy competition in the Closed Room gave Pachtmann and Zatorski a difficult time, resulting in down 200 and 17 imps to *ZIMMERMANN*; if North-South had played for penalty, the ensuing 800 would still have produced a 12-imp swing.

Those results put *ZIMMERMANN* ahead by 33 imps. The final swing deal of the quarter was Board 44 (South dealer; neither side vulnerable):

NORTH
♠ A 7 6 2
♥ 10 4
♦ Q 10 5 4
♣ Q 8 2

WEST
♠ 9 8 4
♥ K 8 5 2
♦ A 8 6
♣ 9 6 5

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

SOUTH
♠ Q 10 5
♥ A Q J 6 3
♦ K 3
♣ K J 7

OPEN ROOM

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|---------|-----------|------------------|------------|
| Drijver | Di Franco | Brink | Manno |
| — | — | — | Pass |
| 2 ♠ | Double | 4 ♣ ^a | 4 ♦ |
| 4 ♠ | Pass | 4 NT | Pass |
| 5 ♣ | Pass | 6 ♠ | (All Pass) |

CLOSED ROOM

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|-------------------|--------|------------------|-----------|
| Zatorski | Kalita | Pachtmann | Klukowski |
| — | — | — | Pass |
| 2 ♦ ^b | Double | 4 ♣ ^c | 4 NT |
| Pass ^d | 5 ♣ | 6 ♣ ^e | Pass |
| 6 ♦ ^f | 7 ♣ | Double | Pass |
| 7 ♠ | Pass | Pass | Double |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | |

^aspades and clubs (sic)

^bweak two in either major

^casks opener to transfer to his major; creates a force

^dpositive

^eundiscussed

^fcontrol-bid

Brink's inventive four-club call deterred his opponents from bidding the suit, garnering a free run to the top con-

Di Franco and Kalita opened one notrump as South. Klukowski passed as North, and Kalita made nine tricks after a spade lead to the king and a club shift: plus 150. Manno used Stayman, and his pair reached three notrump. Brink led the diamond six: four, nine, king. Di Franco led a heart to the ten, then a heart to the queen and king. Brink shifted to the club nine; his partner topped the queen with the ace and continued the suit. Di Franco won and finished hearts, throwing two spades and a diamond from dummy; Brink threw a spade and Drijver a spade, a club, and a diamond. Di Franco led a diamond to the queen, a ninth trick: plus 400; 6 imps to **STREET**.

After three quarters, **ZIMMERMANN** had scored 80 imps to **STREET**'s 53. Hardly an insurmountable lead, but the compact 31-imp punch **ZIMMERMANN** had landed gave it momentum.

Fourth Quarter

Both teams kept their lineups for the final quarter, but the pairs changed opponents. **STREET** won a small swing to open the segment (Board 46):

South dealer; North-South vulnerable

NORTH
 ♠ J 9 5 3 2
 ♥ A 7
 ♦ A 7 6
 ♣ K 7 3

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

EAST
 ♠ K 10 8
 ♥ 10 2
 ♦ 9 8 2
 ♣ Q 9 8 6 2

SOUTH
 ♠ Q 7 6
 ♥ K J 8 5 4 3
 ♦ K Q J
 ♣ 5

OPEN ROOM

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|-------|--------|-----------|------------|
| Manno | Kalita | Di Franco | Klukowski |
| 1 ♥ | Pass | 1 ♠ | Pass |
| 2 ♥ | Pass | 4 ♥ | (All Pass) |

CLOSED ROOM

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|------------------|----------|---------|------------|
| Brink | Zatorski | Drijver | Pachtmann |
| 1 ♥ | Pass | 1 ♠ | Pass |
| 2 ♥ | Pass | 2 NT* | Pass |
| 3 ♣ [†] | Double | 4 ♥ | (All Pass) |

*forcing

[†]shortness

In the Open Room, Kalita led a diamond. After a heart to the ace and a heart finesse, the defender continued diamonds, so declarer ended down one: minus 100. At the other table, Zatorski teed off with the spade ace and obtained a ruff, then cashed the club ace. Declarer took the heart finesse: down two: 3 imps to **STREET**.

Board 47 featured two awkward part-scores:

PLAYING SUIT COMBINATIONS

BY FRED GITELMAN

Declarer has sufficient entries and control to operate without constraint, and nothing is known about the distribution beyond the probabilities of the original deal.

Combination 233

NORTH (*dummy*)
 J 10 8 2

SOUTH (*declarer*)
 A

North-South need two tricks. (*Solution on page 37.*)

South dealer
Neither side vulnerable

NORTH
♠ A K 2
♥ A 6 2
♦ 10 8 7 6
♣ A 5 3

| | |
|---------------|-------------|
| WEST | EAST |
| ♠ 10 | ♠ J 8 7 5 4 |
| ♥ K 9 8 5 4 | ♥ 10 |
| ♦ A | ♦ Q 9 4 3 2 |
| ♣ K Q 9 8 7 4 | ♣ 10 2 |

SOUTH
♠ Q 9 6 3
♥ Q J 7 3
♦ K J 5
♣ J 6

OPEN ROOM

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|--------|-----------|-----------|-------|
| Kalita | Di Franco | Klukowski | Manno |
| Pass | 1 ♣ | Double | 1 ♥* |
| Pass | 2 ♣ | Pass | Pass |
| 2 ♥ | Pass | Pass | Pass |

CLOSED ROOM

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|----------|---------|-----------|-------|
| Zatorski | Drijver | Pachtmann | Brink |
| Pass | 1 ♣ | Double | 1 ♠ |
| Double | 2 ♥ | Pass | 3 ♣ |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | |

*spades

In the Closed Room, Drijver took the high road. Pachtmann led a high spade and shifted to a low club: low, jack, king. Drijver played a low heart; Pachtmann grabbed the ace and led another low club. Declarer eventually lost two more hearts for down one: minus 50.

In the Open Room, Di Franco took the low road. He led the club king (ducked) and continued with the queen to dummy's ace. Kalita ran dummy's diamond ten to the ace, and Di Franco

played the club nine; Manno threw the spade eight (odd count or discouraging with high suit preference), and declarer ruffed. Kalita crossed to the spade ace and led a diamond to the jack and a ruff. Di Franco needed to lead a club for an uppercut, but instead he tried a low heart. Declarer won and led a spade; whether or not Di Franco trumped, the defense could take only two further trump tricks: making two, plus 110; 2 imps to ZIMMERMANN. Prospects were dim unless Manno held a heart honor, so the winning play was indicated.

STREET had opportunities to gain at both tables on Board 48:

West dealer; North-South vulnerable

NORTH
♠ A J 10
♥ A 8 6 4
♦ J 9
♣ K J 9 7

| | |
|-------------|--------------|
| WEST | EAST |
| ♠ 9 6 5 3 2 | ♠ Q 8 7 |
| ♥ K Q 2 | ♥ 7 3 |
| ♦ Q 8 | ♦ A K 2 |
| ♣ A 3 2 | ♣ Q 10 8 6 5 |

SOUTH
♠ K 4
♥ J 10 9 5
♦ 10 7 6 5 4 3
♣ 4

OPEN ROOM

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|--------|-----------|-----------|-------|
| Kalita | Di Franco | Klukowski | Manno |
| — | Pass | 1 NT | Pass |
| 2 NT* | Pass | 3 ♣ | Pass |
| 3 ♦ | Pass | Pass | Pass |

TELL A FRIEND ABOUT
THE BRIDGE WORLD

CLOSED ROOM

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|----------|---------------------|-----------|----------|
| Zatorski | Drijver | Pachtmann | Brink |
| — | 1 NT [†] | Double | Redouble |
| 2 ♦ | Double [§] | Pass | 3 ♣ |
| Pass | 3 ♠ | Pass | 4 ♣ |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | |

^{*}one minor[†]9-12 HCP[§]takeout

In the Open Room, Di Franco led the heart king: ace, seven, ten. Kalita called for the diamond jack, and Manno took the king to continue with the heart three to the jack and queen. If Di Franco had been confident that Manno held a doubleton heart, his best play would have been a heart, guaranteeing a beat unless declarer held a club void with the spade king; but the defender played the spade six. When Manno covered dummy's ten, that was the end for the defense, as Kalita had the transportation to discard his losing club: plus 110.

Di Franco worried that his partner might have held the missing hearts—in which case dummy's eight-six would work a ruffing finesse against the nine—but if Manno began with nine-seven-five-three, would he have signaled with the potentially-valuable heart seven at trick one? From Manno's perspective, the spade six could have been from a holding such as Di Franco's, but a king-nine-six combina-

tion also was possible, especially if Di Franco held the missing heart length, as Manno reasonably could infer. If Di Franco always would have shifted to his lowest spade when holding the king, then withholding the spade queen could not cost—whatever his shape, declarer could have discarded no more than one spade. All in all, a tricky deal with many possible twists.

At the other table, the key decision came in the bidding: Pachtmann might have doubled four clubs. He had far from a sure defeat, and tipping off the trump position might have cost a trick (as it did here, it turned out). But the initial double had already flagged the location of most of the honors, and opportunities for swings against ZIMMERMANN's front four don't arise especially often. Of course, desperado tactics weren't called for yet, so I can't fault Pachtmann for lying low. Zatorski (South) led the heart jack to the queen and ace, and Pachtmann continued the suit. When declarer called for a low club, Pachtmann ducked, and Brink put up the queen. Brink played a club to the ace, then a spade; Pachtmann rose with the ace and took his club winners; declarer cashed out for down three. Minus 150 swung 1 imp to STREET, but STREET had left several imps on the table.

STREET added 4 imps on Board 49 (North dealer; East-West vulnerable):

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NORTH
 ♠ 3 2
 ♥ A Q J 8
 ♦ Q 8 7
 ♣ 10 9 3 2

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

SOUTH
 ♠ 10 6 5
 ♥ 9 6
 ♦ A K 10 9
 ♣ A 8 7 6

EAST
 ♠ K Q
 ♥ 10 7 5
 ♦ J 5 4 2
 ♣ K Q J 4

Notably in this age of ultralight opening bids, Brink passed as East in second seat; his side reached two spades, down one: minus 100. Manno opened one club with that hand, and Kalita-Klukowski competed to three diamonds. That contract failed by a trick on a club lead: minus 50; 4 imps to **STREET**.

STREET gained on Board 50:

South dealer
 Both sides vulnerable

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

WEST
 ♠ K 5 3
 ♥ 9 8 4 3
 ♦ A 5 4 2
 ♣ A 10

SOUTH
 ♠ A 6
 ♥ J 10
 ♦ 10 8 3
 ♣ K Q 9 8 3 2

EAST
 ♠ Q 10 4
 ♥ Q 2
 ♦ K J 9 6
 ♣ J 7 5 4

OPEN ROOM

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|-------|--------|-----------|-----------|
| Manno | Kalita | Di Franco | Klukowski |
| Pass | 1 ♣ | 2 ♦* | Pass |
| 2 ♠ | Pass | Pass | Pass |

CLOSED ROOM

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|-------|----------|---------|-----------|
| Brink | Zatorski | Drijver | Pachtmann |
| Pass | 1 ♣ | 2 ♦* | Pass |
| 2 ♥ | Pass | Pass | Pass |

*majors

The Souths diverged with their choice of suit; I think most experts would duplicate Brink's call. Against him, Zatorski's trump lead was ducked to the queen, and Pachtmann continued with a second round. Declarer played the club king to the ace, and the defense shifted to diamonds, tapping dummy. Brink drew trumps and cashed his winners: down two, minus 200.

There was a trump lead against Manno as well; declarer captured the ten with the ace and lost a heart finesse. Here, too, the defense needed to tap dummy to secure down two. Klukowski shifted to the diamond king, then played a club. Kalita won with the ace, cashed the diamond ace, and went back to clubs, expecting Klukowski not to hold the diamond jack—holding that card, he might have persisted with diamonds. Manno won with the club queen, cashed the heart ten, and played a trump. With the suit three-three, he maintained control and escaped for down one: minus 100; 3 imps to **STREET**.

Little by little, **STREET** had whittled the *ZIMMERMANN* lead down to 18 imps with 10 deals remaining. Board 51 was a flat game; **STREET** had a chance for another pickup on Board 52:

West dealer
East-West vulnerable

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

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

SOUTH
 ♠ K 6 4
 ♥ K 9 8 4 3
 ♦ 9
 ♣ Q 10 7 2

OPEN ROOM

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|--------|-----------|---------------------|--------|
| Kalita | Di Franco | Klukowski | Manno |
| — | Pass | Pass | 1 ♣ |
| 1 ♥ | 1 ♠* | Double [†] | 2 ♣ |
| Pass | 3 ♣ | 3 ♦ | Double |
| 3 ♠ | Pass | Pass | Pass |

CLOSED ROOM

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|----------|---------|-----------|--------|
| Zatorski | Drijver | Pachtmann | Brink |
| — | Pass | Pass | 1 ♣ |
| 1 ♥ | Pass | 1 ♠ | Pass |
| Pass | Double | 2 ♦ | Double |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | |

*values; fewer than four spades
 †spades

The Closed-Room auction followed familiar lines. Brink (East) led his singleton heart; Drijver won with the ace and, rather than give Brink a ruff at once, shifted to the spade eight. Pachtmann rose with the queen; Brink won and continued with the spade nine, which went to dummy's ten. Declarer played the ace and another diamond to

Drijver, who gave Brink a heart ruff and received a spade ruff. Brink still had two black-suit winners to come: down two, minus 300.

The Open-Room proceedings featured more-modern bidding, permitting East-West to find their club fit. Klukowski thought he had a promising hand for offense and competed, but his side was then in serious jeopardy. Di Franco had already shown values and held dubious diamond honors, so he passed. Manno did too; he held potential spade tricks, but his club honors were suspect, and he did not know whether his opponents had reached a real fit. Di Franco led the spade three to the five, nine, and king; declarer led a heart toward dummy's queen. Grabbing the heart ace and playing another spade would have garnered down four, but Di Franco did not know that his partner held four spades, so he ducked. Kalita played the diamond ace, ruffed a diamond, and played another heart (because Di Franco could not have won the trick, a club would have been better at double-dummy). Di Franco won and played another spade through; Manno won with the jack and played club king, spade ace, low club. Kalita won and played the heart king, but Manno ruffed and led the club ace for down three: minus 150, but 4 imps to ZIMMERMANN.

After a no-swing game came Board 54:

A BRIDGE WORLD
SUBSCRIPTION
makes a great gift

West dealer
Neither side vulnerable

NORTH
 ♠ 10 8
 ♥ A Q 9 3
 ♦ 10 5 3
 ♣ K 9 8 5

| | |
|---|--|
| WEST ♠ 9 7 6 3 ♥ 6 2 ♦ 8 4 2 ♣ A Q 10 2 | EAST ♠ K 2 ♥ 8 7 5 ♦ A K Q 9 7 6 ♣ 6 4 |
|---|--|

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

OPEN ROOM

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|-----------|-------|--------|-----------|
| Klukowski | Manno | Kalita | Di Franco |
| — | Pass | Pass | 1 ♦ |
| 1 ♠ | 2 ♣ | Double | 3 ♦ |
| Double | Pass | 3 ♠ | Pass |
| 4 ♥ | Pass | Pass | Pass |

CLOSED ROOM

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|-----------|-------|----------|---------|
| Pachtmann | Brink | Zatorski | Drijver |
| — | Pass | Pass | 1 ♦ |
| 1 ♠ | 2 ♦ | Double | 3 ♦ |
| 3 ♥ | Pass | Pass | Pass |

In the Open Room, Klukowski's aggressive approach caught a friendly-enough layout to make 10 tricks. East won the opening diamond lead and shifted to a trump, which Klukowski took in dummy. The spade ten was covered by the king and ace. Klukowski crossed to dummy in trumps and played two more spades, discarding a club. East could ruff, but the club ace was the defense's final trick: making four, plus 420. In the other room, the defense

began with two rounds of diamonds, and Pachtmann led a low spade out of his hand, another route to 10 tricks: plus 170 but 6 imps to *ZIMMERMANN*.

That swing increased the *ZIMMERMANN* lead to 28 imps with six comparisons remaining. Board 55 generated a swing, but not in the direction **STREET** wanted. Klukowski and Pachtmann held:

♠ 10 4 ♥ J 9 8 ♦ A J 10 8 6 ♣ Q 10 7,

and saw their partners open one notrump as dealer at favorable vulnerability. Klukowski responded three notrump; Pachtmann invited and reached two notrump. There were nine likely top tricks outside of spades, where opener held nine-seven-three. At single-dummy, a trailing team would be happy to see that combination, but spades divided four-four, and nine tricks rolled home: 6 imps to *ZIMMERMANN*.

Board 56 saw both tables reach a three-notrump contract that essentially required a successful finesse. It failed, and Klukowski went down 300. Still, his team gained 3 undertrick imps because Pachtmann played on another suit first—hoping to induce a defensive misstep and possibly obtaining information that might have justified taking an unusual line—which set up an eighth defensive winner.

Down 37 with four deals left, time was fast running out for **STREET**. Board 57 kept a flicker of hope alive when Di Franco-Manno stayed low while Brink-Drijver failed in game, but **STREET** needed to do better than 6 imps per deal, and Board 58 effectively iced the match:

North dealer
East-West vulnerable

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

| WEST | SOUTH |
|---------------|-----------|
| ♠ A K Q J 8 5 | ♠ 9 4 3 |
| ♥ 8 6 | ♥ A Q 9 3 |
| ♦ A 5 4 | ♦ 9 8 7 6 |
| ♣ 9 7 | ♣ 10 4 |

OPEN ROOM

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|-----------|-----------|--------|------------|
| Di Franco | Klukowski | Manno | Kalita |
| — | — | 1 ♣ | Pass |
| 1 ♦* | 1 ♠ | 4 ♦† | Pass |
| 4 ♥ | 4 ♠ | Double | (All Pass) |

CLOSED ROOM

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|---------|-----------|--------|----------|
| Drijver | Pachtmann | Brink | Zatorski |
| — | — | 1 ♣ | Pass |
| 1 ♦§ | 1 ♠ | Double | 2 ♠ |
| Double | 3 ♠ | Double | Pass |
| 4 ♥ | Pass | Pass | Pass |

*hearts

†heart raise; spade void

§several possibilities, including any 0-6 HCP

In the Open Room, North's descriptive raise helped Klukowski find the successful sacrifice, despite his unfavorable vulnerability. Knowing that a spade void lay on his left, he despaired of his chance of defeating four hearts. Saving rated to score no worse than a 1- or 2-imp loss, and it had more to gain if nine tricks were available or the

opponents guessed wrongly. (If Kalita produced no tricks, four spades could have proven costly, but in that case the opponents would have a slam unless East held a defensive trick that was worthless to Klukowski.) Here, Kalita produced two tricks for his partner; minus 200 meant 6 imps to *ZIMMERMANN* when East-West at the other table lacked the information to bid over four hearts.

STREET won 13 imps on the penultimate deal when Pachtmann and Zatorski defended a game better than Kalita and Klukowski, but it was too little too late. The final deal saw *ZIMMERMANN* win an overtrick imp. Although **STREET** took the quarter 30-28, *ZIMMERMANN* prevailed by 25 imps 108-83.

Summary

Congratulations to Sjoert Brink, Bas Drijver, Jacek Kalita, Michal Klukowski, Michal Nowosadzki, and Pierre Zimmermann for a deserved win in the 2023 Soloway, the latest title for the most successful squad in recent years. Condolences to the **STREET** players on a hard-fought loss, though not as much of a nail-biter as the last time these teams met in a major knockout final. This runner-up finish marks **STREET**'s third second place in five premier American knockouts—in addition to wins in lesser national events—a rare achievement in its own right. It would surprise no one to see this team holding one of the major cups before too long.

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NEW CRITICAL MOMENTS

BY DAVID J. WEISS, BREA, CA

These problems are based on deals from strong imp games, where the players supposedly use Bridge World Standard. As in real life, the prior play may have been brilliant or not so much.

1. West dealer

North-South vulnerable

NORTH (*dummy*)

♠ A 9 7
♥ J 10 3
♦ A Q 10
♣ 5 4 3 2

EAST (*you*)

♠ Q J 6
♥ K Q 9 2
♦ 9 6 5
♣ A J 8

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|-------|------|-------|------|
| — | Pass | Pass | 1 ♣ |
| 1 ♠ | 3 ♣ | 3 ♠ | Pass |
| 4 ♠ | Pass | Pass | Pass |

Heart eight, jack, *queen*, six.

Plan your defense.

2. South dealer

Both sides vulnerable

NORTH (*dummy*)

♠ K Q 10 5 2
♥ A J 8
♦ Q 4
♣ 10 8 5

WEST (*you*)

♠ 3
♥ K 7 5
♦ 10 9 7 6 3 2
♣ Q 6 4

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|-------|------|-------|------------|
| 1 NT | Pass | 2 ♥ | Pass |
| 2 ♠ | Pass | 3 NT | (All Pass) |

Diamond ten, queen, *king*, five.
Diamond jack, eight, ?

Plan your defense.

3. South dealer

North-South vulnerable

NORTH (*dummy*)

♠ J 10
♥ J 9 3
♦ A K Q J 5
♣ 10 5 2

WEST (*you*)

♠ K 5
♥ K 8 4
♦ 7 4 3
♣ K 8 7 6 3

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|-------|------|-------|------------|
| 1 ♠ | Pass | 2 ♦ | Pass |
| 2 NT | Pass | 3 NT | (All Pass) |

Club six, deuce, nine, *ace*.
Diamond eight, three, *jack*, ten.
Spade jack, deuce, four, ?

Plan your defense.

PATRONIZE
THE BOOKSHELF

4. East dealer

North-South vulnerable

NORTH (*dummy*)

♠ Q 7
 ♥ 10 8 5 3
 ♦ A J
 ♣ A K 9 3 2

EAST (*you*)

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

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|-------|------|-------|------|
| — | — | — | Pass |
| Pass | Pass | 1 ♣ | 1 ♦ |
| 1 ♥ | 2 ♦ | 3 ♥ | Pass |
| 4 ♥ | Pass | Pass | Pass |

Diamond four, *ace*, deuce, seven.*Spade queen*, four, eight, six.Spade seven, deuce, *ace*, five.*Spade king*, jack, diamond jack, three.

Heart six, nine, ten, ?

Plan your defense.**5. East dealer**

Both sides vulnerable

NORTH (*dummy*)

♠ Q 6 3
 ♥ J 9 7
 ♦ K Q 5 4
 ♣ J 4 2

WEST (*you*)

♠ 7
 ♥ Q 5
 ♦ 9 7 3 2
 ♣ Q 10 9 7 5 3

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|-------|------|-------|------|
| — | — | — | 1 ♠ |
| 2 ♥ | Pass | 3 ♥ | Pass |
| 4 ♥ | Pass | Pass | Pass |

Spade seven, three, *ace*, eight.

Club king, six, ?

Plan your defense.*[Solutions overleaf.]***DISTRIBUTION DESCRIPTIONS IN THE BRIDGE WORLD**

A group of four numbers separated by equal signs (=) denotes an exact suit distribution. For example: 5=4=3=1 denotes five spades, four hearts, three diamonds, and one club. A group of four numbers separated by hyphens (-) denotes any of the exact distributions matching that general pattern. For example: 4-3-3-3 represents: 4=3=3=3 or 3=4=3=3 or 3=3=4=3 or 3=3=3=4.

Similarly, a break described as three-one (or 3=1) denotes three cards on the left and one on the right; one=three (or 1=3) denotes one card on the left and three on the right; three-one represents three-one or one=three.

Solutions

1. Although it may look peculiar, you must play a diamond into dummy's ace-queen-ten. This can't cost a trick. Returning a major would be suicidal. Partner's heart was from a doubleton, not a singleton, as declarer failed to show five-five in the majors immediately. If declarer were six-five in the majors, he would not have ducked the first trick. The seemingly-safe alternative, cashing the club ace and continuing that suit, doesn't cost materially, but it facilitates declarer's ruffing three clubs in the closed hand. If South's pattern is 5=4=3=1, which is suggested by partner's preemptive raise, a dummy reversal is the only route to 10 tricks. If you play a diamond at trick two and later rise with the club ace to play a second diamond, declarer lacks the requisite transportation.

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

WEST
 ♠ 3 2
 ♥ 8 7
 ♦ J 7 3 2
 ♣ Q 10 9 7 6

EAST
 ♠ Q J 6
 ♥ K Q 9 2
 ♦ 9 6 5
 ♣ A J 8

SOUTH
 ♠ K 10 8 5 4
 ♥ A 6 5 4
 ♦ K 8 4
 ♣ K

2. Follow with the six. You know partner is out of diamonds, but you can't be certain of the best line of defense, which depends on the layout. Accordingly, you should signal neutrally, suggesting roughly equal hold-

ings in the candidate suits. If you play the deuce, partner will hope for you to have something like king-queen-fourth of clubs and may shift to a club, surrendering the contract. If you play the diamond six, partner will have a chance to find the necessary heart shift.

NORTH
 ♠ K Q 10 5 2
 ♥ A J 8
 ♦ Q 4
 ♣ 10 8 5

WEST
 ♠ 3
 ♥ K 7 5
 ♦ 10 9 7 6 3 2
 ♣ Q 6 4

EAST
 ♠ J 9 8 7 6
 ♥ Q 10 4 3
 ♦ K J
 ♣ J 9

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

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3. Win, cash the club king, and shift to a heart, preferably the king (to help partner). Don't underlead in clubs, because declarer has made a "newspaper play," winning with the ace from ace-queen. With queen-jack of clubs, partner would have signaled his enthusiasm for that suit with an encouraging Smith signal.

I view Smith as a necessity. BWS uses low in the suit declarer plays to encourage the opening-lead suit. When Smith first appeared, high was encouraging, so partners should ensure that they are on the same page.

WEST
♠ K 5
♥ K 8 4
♦ 7 4 3
♣ K 8 7 6 3

NORTH
♠ J 10
♥ J 9 3
♦ A K Q J 5
♣ 10 5 2

SOUTH
♠ A Q 9 8 4
♥ 10 6 2
♦ 9 8 6
♣ A Q

4. If you win this trick cheaply, you won't be able to defeat the contract. Declarer needs a three-two trump split and wants to play two rounds of the suit to stop the defender with the doubleton from ruffing something with a high trump. Then, declarer will run clubs. He will find a friendly trump division, but the rest of the plan is in jeopardy, because the club layout is not so friendly. The defense can thwart the plan only by playing three rounds of trumps immediately, then a diamond to tap out dummy's last trump to prevent declarer

from scoring the long club. It is safe to win with the heart ace and continue with the jack, because you need partner to have three trumps, and the nine apparently is the lowest of those.

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

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

5. A well-versed partnership would know the meaning of a defensive signal in this situation, but you can determine the correct play without an agreement. You should play the club queen to alert East to your ability to ruff a spade. (A suit-preference signal while giving the ruff may produce a second spade ruff.)

| | | |
|----------------|-----------|-------------|
| WEST | NORTH | EAST |
| ♠ 7 | ♠ Q 6 3 | ♠ A J 9 5 2 |
| ♥ Q 5 | ♥ J 9 7 | ♥ 6 2 |
| ♦ 9 7 3 2 | ♦ K Q 5 4 | ♦ A 10 6 |
| ♣ Q 10 9 7 5 3 | ♣ J 4 2 | ♣ A K 8 |

| | |
|----------------|--|
| SOUTH | |
| ♠ K 10 8 4 | |
| ♥ A K 10 8 4 3 | |
| ♦ J 8 | |
| ♣ 6 | |

AT THE TABLE

BY AUGUST BOEHM

Much high-level bridge is now played behind screens or on computers. These practices score many gains, but some things have been lost.

In a long-ago imp game for stakes, I defended against a six-notrump contract where Ira Rubin was the declarer. He needed to take four tricks in a suit where he held king-jack-ten-low opposite dummy's ace-nine-eight-low. A few preliminary plays had revealed nothing useful about the defenders' distributions. Ira sat and stewed for about a minute, all the while staring down my partner and me. Then, he looked at me and said, "I'm playing you for the queen." He did and made the contract; later, when I asked him why, he just smiled and turned away. Apparently, my partner or I must have radiated tension or its absence. Had one of us been gripping his cards too tightly, or showing indifference, or feigning lack of interest? Such subtle "reads" come from table presence, experience, and the courage to back one's judgment.

I recall Edgar Kaplan's discussion of a situation he faced against Johnny Crawford. With neither side vulnerable, there was a rapid-fire competitive auction: one heart — (four spades) — five hearts — (five spades) — pass — (pass) — ? When Crawford's five-spade bid was passed around, Edgar, the five-heart bidder, needed to consider his card values, the implications of partner's pass, the possible intentions of the opponents, and any physical indication from Crawford (perhaps from the speed

or intonation of the five-spade bid). When Edgar felt that he had picked up whether the five-spade bid was risky or solid, he assumed that it represented *the opposite* of the true situation—in other words, he relied on Crawford to project the opposite of what his hand was worth. Wheels within wheels within wheels. This is the sort of thing largely lost to the modern expert game, where the players so often do not interact directly with one or both opponents.

Table presence has always been a significant element of face-to-face bridge; degrees that players possess it vary. The possibility of picking up information from an opponent's behavior may influence a choice between employing a technical approach and relying on table-action psychology. For instance, assume you are South here, declarer in four spades after an uncontested one spade — two spades — four spades. West leads the heart queen, showing queen-jack.

NORTH
 ♠ Q 9 7 5
 ♥ 9 8 2
 ♦ Q 7 5
 ♣ K 7 4

SOUTH
 ♠ A K J 8 6 5
 ♥ A 6
 ♦ K J 4
 ♣ J 10

A technical approach would be to win trick one, draw trumps, and play on the red suits in the hope of gaining

information about clubs. A psychological approach would be to win trick one and lead the ten of clubs, counting on West—who knows little about the overall deal—often to play the ace when he holds it; if West does not play a club honor, let the ten ride.

Near the beginning of a long match, it may pay to underlead an ace on opening lead when there seems little chance of beating a partscore contract. If the lead costs an overtrick, the loss may well be more than offset if it leaves the impression that you are imaginative and unpredictable. A similar strategy is bluffing early in a poker game to create uncertainty or to project being a wild bettor (when that is contrary to fact).

An at-the-table action that I have used successfully without being burned is a psychic penalty double of a tentatively-bid game contract. This is especially attractive when the declarer seems to be nervous or feeling outclassed. The risk of a redouble is negligible, and the added pressure may cause declarer to play to poor advantage (or to form a wrong impression of the lie of the defenders' cards). In effect, the psychologist is doubling the player more than doubling the contract. In a long match where your team is favored, there is no need for such tactics; but at matchpoints or in a short (perhaps Swiss) match, it can be profitable to strike when an opportunity arises.

PLAYING SUIT COMBINATIONS SOLUTION

(*Problem on page 25.*)

NORTH (*dummy*)
J 10 8 2

SOUTH (*declarer*)
A

North-South need two tricks.

Assume that only low cards fall under the ace. To have a chance, you need a six-two or five-three split.

If the split is six-two, continuing with the jack picks up five nine-doubletons with either defender. Leading the eight to the second round does twice as well, winning against 10 royal-doubletons with either defender. Leading the eight does better overall by 10 six-two cases.

If the split is five-three, it is much better to continue with the jack followed by the ten. That line succeeds if either defender was dealt either nine-third (10 cases) or honor-nine-third (10 cases, for 20 total cases). In contrast, continuing with the eight on the second (or third) round gains only if either defender started with king-queen-low (five cases). Playing the suit from the top is better than continuing with the eight by 30 five-three cases, far more likely than the 10 six-two cases in which the eight at trick two is the winner.

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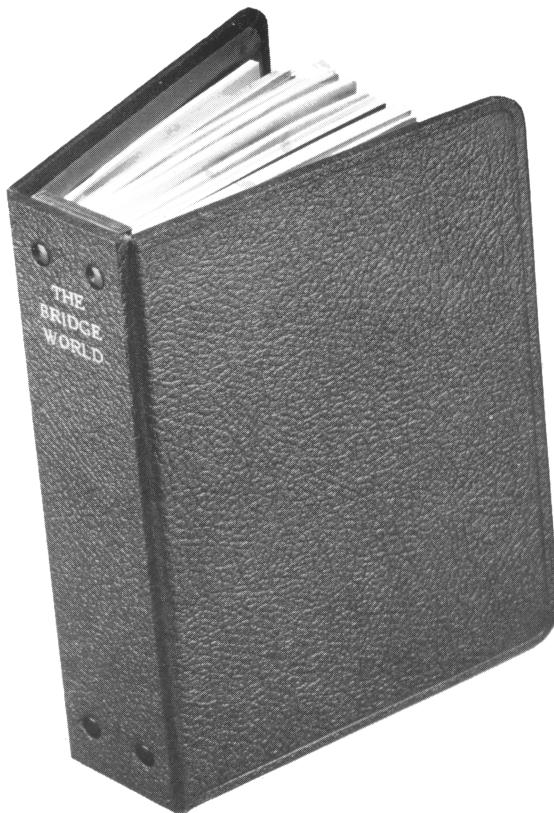
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ANOTHER LOOK

BY JOHN SWANSON, LANCASTER, CA

Looking through old *Bridge Worlds* is generally a pleasant activity, however, it was with a painful recollection that I came across this deal from the 1957 Intercollegiate Bridge Tournament (run as a par contest).

East dealer
Neither side vulnerable

| NORTH | WEST | EAST | SOUTH |
|---------------|----------|-----------|-------------|
| ♠ J 5 | ♠ K 10 4 | ♠ A 8 2 | ♠ Q 9 7 6 3 |
| ♥ J 10 | ♥ 8 6 2 | ♥ 7 5 3 | ♥ K |
| ♦ A 10 9 | ♦ 8 5 | ♦ 7 6 4 2 | ♦ K Q |
| ♣ K Q 9 6 5 3 | ♣ — | ♣ A J 4 | ♣ — |

Following the fashion of the day, I opened the South hand with one spade, and our unimpeded sequence continued two clubs — two notrump — three notrump — pass. I took the heart opening lead and erroneously led a club to dummy's queen—ouch! (The intended par play was for declarer to duck the club in dummy, relying on a three-two break or a singleton ace.) East correctly let the club queen hold, so that dummy would lack sufficient entries to bring in the long clubs.

I returned to the closed hand with a diamond to lead a second club. East took dummy's king with the ace and continued hearts. I won in hand, and this was the situation:

NORTH
♠ J 5
♥ —
♦ A 10
♣ 9 6 5 3

EAST
♠ A 8 2
♥ 7
♦ 7 6 4
♣ J

SOUTH
♠ Q 9 7 6 3
♥ K
♦ K Q
♣ —

I led a spade. Misreading the position, West rose with the king to play a diamond. Dummy's ace won, and I led the spade jack. When East ducked, I overtook with the queen and led a third spade—making three notrump after all, but no pars scored. Now, with another look over 65 years later, I notice that I made a second mistake. *Do you see it?*

I should have ducked the spade jack. If it had held the trick, I could have continued with a club, discarding my remaining diamond. Then, if East had started with ace-eight-four-deuce of spades, the contract would have succeeded (where the approach I took at the table would have failed).

TEST YOUR DEFENSE SOLUTION

(Problem on page 17.)

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

| WEST | SOUTH |
|-------------|----------------|
| ♠ 8 6 | ♠ 4 3 2 |
| ♥ K 8 4 3 2 | ♥ A J 10 9 7 6 |
| ♦ 10 8 7 5 | ♦ — |
| ♣ K 8 | ♣ 7 6 5 4 |

If East's five of spades was encouraging (as seems likely), South has at least four-three-deuce of spades. With the ace of hearts, four spades to an honor would be highly unusual for an opening two-heart bid, so South likely has 3=6=0=4. Apparently, he intends to play dummy's ace of clubs to ensure spade discards on the diamonds, but, nonetheless, the best chance for the defense is that you sacrifice your king.

Suppose you played low and the cards lay as shown in the diagram (not a big surprise). The play might continue club ace, diamond king-queen discarding spades, spade ruff, and a club to your king. Then, if you led a trump, declarer would win in dummy with the queen, ruff a diamond, and lead a club—you would find yourself endplayed with excess trumps. Alternatively, if, after winning with the king of clubs, you played a diamond, declarer would ruff and lead a club; you would ruff and lead a heart; declarer would win and lead another club, spelling doom for the defense.

In contrast, suppose you sacrifice the king of clubs under dummy's ace. The play will presumably continue diamond king-queen discarding spades, spade ruff, and a club to partner's queen. Here, partner can play a spade, and the defense will be in control. (Or, if declarer had ruffed a diamond instead of a spade, after winning with the club queen East could give a club ruff, or, more subtly, lead a trump.)

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BITS AND PIECES

There is no subject restriction on letters to the Editor for publication, although specialized material may be presented in another department. Letters should be signed, but names will be withheld on request.

Three-Way Push

TO THE EDITOR:

One of my favorite features of online bridge is that we homebodies can use boards previously played in high-level matches. On this deal, three Souths (myself at home, two others at the table during a Spingold match) reached four spades on an only-spades auction after East passed as dealer.

East dealer

Both sides vulnerable

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

WEST
♠ J
♥ Q 9 8
♦ K 9 7 6 5
♣ K 10 9 4

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

At my table, West led the diamond five. I won with dummy's ace and played a club to the queen and king as East showed odd count. I ruffed the diamond-nine continuation and played a spade to the jack and queen. After another diamond ruff, I knocked out the ace of spades, took East's club, and ran black-suit winners to squeeze West in this position:

| | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|
| NORTH ♠ — ♥ A 10 2 ♦ J ♣ — | WEST ♠ — ♥ Q 9 8 ♦ K ♣ — | EAST ♠ — ♥ K 7 5 3 ♦ — ♣ — |
| SOUTH ♠ 7 ♥ J 6 4 ♦ — ♣ — | | |

After West threw a heart on the seven of spades, I discarded dummy's jack of diamonds, led a heart to the ten and king, then guessed to play low on the forced heart return.

At one Spingold table, the first three tricks were the same, but East took the spade and played a club. Declarer used dummy's spade ten as an entry to ruff a third diamond and executed the same squeeze.

At the other Spingold table, declarer won with the diamond ace, ruffed a diamond, and played a spade to the jack, queen, and ace. East played a club: queen, king. Declarer took the club continuation, drew trumps ending in dummy, ruffed a diamond, and achieved the same winning position, with the same result.

At double-dummy, the early diamond ruff is necessary. It looks good at single dummy also; if the spade lie is friendly (probably a necessity) there will still be two entries to

dummy for club finesses; meanwhile, the diamond royals might tumble down.

Not knowing the layout, the early-diamond-ruffing declarer didn't follow up with further double-dummy play. He could have been defeated with an early third-diamond play and later a fourth round, killing the menace. An East in top form might have worked out that there was no need to attack clubs; declarer appeared to have six cards in the rounded suits, so no discards would have been forthcoming.

The double-dummy line for declarer is to pursue clubs after ruffing the first diamond, not wasting precious dummy entries on losing finesses. South must use those entries to ruff two diamonds but not take the second ruff before West's club king has been dislodged.

The single-dummy culprits were the Wests who helped declarer by leading a diamond after winning with the club king. A club return, which had to be safe, would have been good enough. Or, ducking the club smoothly would have caused declarer to expend a dummy entry to repeat the finesse.

DAVID J. WEISS
Brea, CA

* * *

Twisted Double Transfers

TO THE EDITOR:

Double transfers after a one-notrump opening are becoming increasingly popular. A certain amount of complexity is unavoidable, so selecting an implementation is largely a matter of efficiency. The Twisted variant, shown below, requires an adjustment in some Stayman sequences: With at least five-five in the majors, responder bids two clubs. If opener denies a four-card major, responder jumps to three hearts (at least five spades and four hearts); then, if opener

bids three notrump (denying a spade fit) responder can bid four hearts to play or four of a minor as a slam-try in hearts.

These meanings apply after one notrump — two diamonds|two hearts — two hearts|two spades — ?

two spades: five hearts; invitational strength

two notrump|three clubs: clubs|diamonds; game-force

three diamonds: six-plus cards in responder's major; either (a) invitational strength, or (b) a slam-try with no short suit [Opener's three of responder's major rejects a game invitation; three of the other major accepts it. Responder can pass, sign off in game, or make a slam-try.]

three hearts: six-plus cards in responder's major; slam-try with a side singleton (or, after a transfer to hearts, a spade void). [Opener's three spades asks about the short suit; then: responder's three notrump shows a singleton in the unbid major, four of a minor announces a singleton in the bid suit; (after a transfer to hearts) four hearts|four spades indicates a spade void and a mild|strong slam-try.]

three spades: five cards in responder's major; choice of games with an unbalanced hand [Opener bids three notrump with fewer than three cards in responder's major.]

three notrump: 5-3-3-2; choice of games

four of a minor: six-plus-card major; void in the bid suit; slam-try

four hearts: (after a transfer to spades) spade one-suiter; heart void; slam-try.

TUOMO VÄLIAHO
Helsinki

* * *

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KIT WOOLSEY, DIRECTOR

Problem A

Imps

Both sides vulnerable

You, South, hold:

♠ K 10 8 7 3 ♥ K 2 ♦ A J 3 ♣ 10 3 2

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|-------|------|-------|--------|
| — | 1 ♣ | 1 ♥ | Double |
| ?* | | | |

*BWS: redouble is strength-showing

What call do you make?

| Action | Score | Votes |
|----------|-------|-------|
| Redouble | 100 | 18 |
| 1 ♠ | 70 | 6 |
| 2 ♥ | 50 | 1 |
| Pass | 50 | 1 |
| else | 0 | 0 |

South has a promising hand. However, the enemy actions, especially the implication that East has four spades, reduce the attractiveness of showing that suit. Nonetheless, some panelists gave this the highest priority.

CARL HUDECEK: "One spade. Despite four spades on the right, I must describe the hand to prepare for what is likely to be a competitive auction."

PHILLIP ALDER: "One spade. Failing to redouble does not deny 10-plus HCP."

JOHN CARRUTHERS: "One spade. Players have been known to make a negative double with four low spades."

FINN KOLESNIK: "One spade. Could raise hearts on a doubleton, but why?"

VENKETESH RAMARATNAM: "One spade. Redouble would show values but bury the potential. Bidding may produce more of a guess next round. Game is odds off with both opponents bidding."

LARRY ROBBINS: "One spade. Sometimes, spades will be our best strain. I can back into hearts later. Redouble would make it awkward to introduce spades later."

It might not be too awkward. The auction isn't likely to be flying to the three-level, and you probably will be able to bid two spades. Indeed, a majority of panelists preferred to emphasize strength.

BART BRAMLEY: "Redouble. More important to show strength than to show spades with a weakish suit when RHO holds four. A later heart bid will imply a doubleton."

DAVID BERKOWITZ: "Redouble. This will let me pass comfortably later."

STEVE ROBINSON: "Redouble. Since East has shown four spades, we are more likely to belong in hearts than in spades. Opener may have four spades, and East-West will wind up in spades."

Bart and David prefer to have this redouble show values and exactly two hearts; Steve uses a similar treatment; other panelists mentioned its popularity. I like it. It doesn't make much sense to redouble with heart shortness; with a strong hand, likely there will be better routes available.

ZIA: "Redouble. Can follow with two hearts to give an imperfect description."

MARK COHEN: "Redouble. Showing strength. Unlikely that spades is our fit."

ROBERT WOLFF: “Redouble. A minimum.”

HOWARD WEINSTEIN: “Redouble. Pass and then double would be too aggressive. Pass and then pass would be too ‘pass-ive.’ One spade has several flaws. Redouble shows strength and the normal doubleton fit; it gives partner a chance to be involved.”

ZACH GROSSACK: “Redouble. Perfect description of the hand.”

ROZANNE AND BILL POLLACK: “Redouble. Showing strength might keep the opponents quiet, giving us time to sort things out. A spade bid next will be nonforcing but forward-going.”

FRED STEWART: “Redouble. If West’s one notrump or two of a minor is passed around to me, I’ll bid two hearts (showing a doubleton).”

ERIC KOKISH: “Redouble. When North has six hearts and we have a future, I may regret not showing spades to create a more-meaningful discussion.”

NIK DEMIREV: “Redouble. Planning to continue with a double if opener rebids one notrump. A not-unlikely six-four in the red suits with North may yield a game, e.g.:

♠ Q x ♥ A Q J x x x ♦ Q 10 x x ♣ x.

I am also optimistic about our defensive prospects. At any scoring, but especially vulnerable at imps, a minimal overcall tends to be based on at least a good suit and an entry, e.g.:

♠ x x ♥ A J 10 x x ♦ A x x ♣ 10 x x.”

JOHN DIAMOND: “Redouble. It’s more likely that partner has six hearts than three spades (especially as the auction suggests that he lacks extras). This is a chance to show a doubleton heart with values. BWS does not say this explicitly, but one should not redouble with a singleton.”

Right. The focus should be on hearts, and we want to encourage partner to rebid the suit with six.

Minority views:

BRIAN GLUBOK: “Two hearts. The right sort of hand for the two-trump raise: extra high cards, possible double fit (based on high diamonds).”

As we know, raising on a doubleton is an invitation for partner to over-compete. Sometimes, such a raise might be necessary, but that doesn’t apply here.

DANNY KLEINMAN: “Pass. Fit, fit, who has a fit? Perhaps nobody. If I were required to guess, I’d say that the deal belongs to us in two hearts, but I suspect that a better score may be available on defense. If the opponents stay out of trouble and land in two clubs, I will bid two hearts. I do not view delayed raises as showing weakness. Rather, I consider that they show better hands in high cards than direct raises and holdings well-suited for defense.”

I don’t see it. Even if there is no great fit, this could easily be North-South’s deal. Defending at a low level when our side has at least a decent seven-card fit in a higher-ranking suit is not the way to win imps.

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Problem B

Matchpoints

North-South vulnerable

You, South, hold:

♠ Q 6 2 ♥ Q ♦ Q J 9 5 3 ♣ K 7 5 2

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|-------|------|-------|------|
| Pass | Pass | 1 ♣ | 1 ♠ |
| ? | | | |

What call do you make?

| Action | Score | Votes |
|--------|-------|-------|
| 2 ♣ | 100 | 12 |
| 1 NT | 80 | 8 |
| 2 ♦ | 70 | 3 |
| 2 ♠ | 50 | 1 |
| 3 ♣ | 50 | 1 |
| Pass | 50 | 1 |
| else | 0 | 0 |

There are several things to show and possibly little time in which show them. Some panelists tried a value bid . . . of sorts.

JOHN CARRUTHERS: "One notrump. Ugly, but I want to show moderate values."

DAVID BERKOWITZ: "One notrump. I have a spade stop, 10 points, and a desire to keep the opponents out of hearts. The heart holding could be a useful trick-one asset."

ROZANNE AND BILL POLLACK: "One notrump. With all these quacks, two diamonds would be a bit too forward-going. Short a club for two clubs. For better or worse, one notrump may hinder the bad guys from competing in hearts."

BART BRAMLEY: "One notrump. Soft scattered values and a stopper. Probably better from my side on a heart lead. I expect to buy the contract but can raise clubs later if pressed; unlucky if clubs scores better."

Can we really expect to buy it? The opponents have at least an eight-card heart fit, maybe more. If partner has four hearts, that increases the chance that he has only two spades, and the op-

ponents would have an eight-card spade fit. East-West know that we are playing matchpoints, and they aren't vulnerable; they will be reluctant to sell out to one notrump.

PHILLIP ALDER: "One notrump. It's matchpoints, he cried plaintively."

VENKETESH RAMARATNAM: "One notrump. At matchpoints, prefer this with only four clubs and soft values. I will double two hearts or bid three clubs over the opponents' two spades."

FINN KOLESNIK: "One notrump. Points and stoppers—perfect. Two clubs doesn't make sense with only four. If the opponents raise spades, we can bid three clubs or a scrambling two notrump."

One notrump would be perfect if that heart weren't a singleton. Granted, the queen makes notrump more attractive, but it is still a singleton. It is quite likely that a minor-suit partscore will do better, and if one notrump is best, the opponents figure not to let us play it there. Searching for a suit contract:

ZIA: "Two clubs. Then two notrump. Will try to sniff out whether hearts are 4-4-4-1."

JEFF RUBENS: "Two clubs. Anticipating the possibility of next bidding two notrump over East-West's two of a major."

HOWARD WEINSTEIN: "Two clubs. If the opponents reach two hearts, I will bid two notrump, intending to show this minor-suit shape (and hoping partner isn't 4=4=2=3). One notrump is possible. Clubs and strength insufficient for a stronger raise. Two diamonds would risk losing clubs."

Is it totally clear that a follow-up two notrump is takeout? It should be, but partner might not be on the same wavelength.

FRED STEWART: "Two clubs. Too many hearts around for the auction to continue all pass. I suspect I will be bidding two notrump in short order. Two diamonds then a reopening might suggest only three clubs."

That is true if your next bid is two notrump, but it could be three clubs to show four-card club support.

DANNY KLEINMAN: "Two clubs. First find a safe harbor. Then cooperate with any move that partner may make towards game."

Two clubs might not be such a safe harbor if partner opened with a three-card club suit. And why shouldn't he have that?

BRIAN GLUBOK: "Two clubs. Should be unanimous. Oh! South could bid one notrump. I could live with that if the spades were stronger in a similar hand."

ROBERT WOLFF: "Two clubs. One notrump, 80."

MARK COHEN: "Two clubs. The only possible bid; certainly not one notrump."

JOHN DIAMOND: "Two clubs. Sloppy hand with four trumps and a singleton, a normal raise."

ERIC KOKISH: "Two clubs. The values are far too slow to bid notrump when the club support is so likely to improve North's hand. It's not the singleton heart that points me away from notrump."

CARL HUDECEK: "Two clubs. I have the values. What more should partner expect from me?"

It isn't what more partner will expect from you. It is what less partner will expect from you. The hand might be junky, but it does have 10 HCP, and those may be real points for notrump purposes. You could have a lot less for two clubs. Bidding what they really have:

LARRY ROBBINS: "Two diamonds. One notrump could be right, but I want to show both suits. If the opponents bid two hearts, having bid one notrump I couldn't show both minors. Passing would lead to a tough guess next round. As with Problem A, it's never terrible to bid your suit."

ZACH GROSSACK: "Two diamonds. Imperfect, but it seems best to show the strength

and the structure of the hand. I wish I had better diamonds, but I don't like two spades with only four clubs as a passed hand, and one notrump could often lead to the wrong contract (not to mention that I'd much prefer partner as declarer at notrump opposite my spades)."

Makes sense. It shows values, and three clubs next will show the minor-suit shape. You won't be playing in a four-three club fit with a better diamond fit. It is very unlikely that two diamonds will end the auction, but if it does it may be the best spot. If the opponents reach three of a major before you have had a chance to show club support, it probably will be right to sell out.

STEVE ROBINSON: "Two spades. This will make it difficult for the opponents to find their eight-plus-card heart fit. I don't worry about partner's having only three clubs. That's his problem."

Is this junky hand really worth an invitational raise? It doesn't look that way to me.

SAMI KEHELA: "Three clubs. What? North may have only three clubs? *Tant pis.* [Too bad.—Ed.]"

Yes, this could be very bad if partner has only three clubs, which isn't that unlikely considering that he probably has four hearts. Also, three clubs depicts a weaker hand with longer clubs. If partner has a good hand, you may miss a game.

NIK DEMIREV: "Pass. This may seem strange, but there is no good action available. One notrump likely will time things into the East-West heart fit. If it passes out, East-West will play in a non-fit (or in their lesser fit), and partner will hold a weak notrump. If North acts, I can continue constructively. If the opponents bid two spades, I can bid two notrump, showing preference for diamonds over clubs."

Strange is an understatement. You are committing to making any later decision on your own, since partner will have no idea what you hold. This hand has values, a spade stopper, club support, and a diamond suit, all of which may be important to show. While there is no optimal way to show all of these features, passing doesn't show any of them.

Problem C

Imps
North-South vulnerable
You, South, hold:

♠ J 10 9 4 3 ♥ J 10 9 6 4 ♦ 10 ♣ 7 3

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|-------|------|-------|------|
| — | Pass | 1 ♣ | Pass |
| ? | | | |

What call do you make?

| Action | Score | Votes |
|--------|-------|-------|
| 1 ♠ | 100 | 15 |
| Pass | 80 | 7 |
| 1 ♥ | 60 | 2 |
| 2 ♥ | 60 | 2 |
| else | 0 | 0 |

When you hold this near yarborough and both opponents are passing, you just "know" that partner will rebid two notrump if you respond. Some panelists avoided that scenario:

SAMI KEHELA: "Pass. A singular vote, no doubt, in more than one sense."

FRED STEWART: "Pass. I can't argue against one spade, but I'd expect to wind up too high if I bid it. I hope to have a chance to act later."

PHILLIP ALDER: "Pass. I expect this vote to be part of a small minority. Next time, ask for a second action after North rebids three clubs and see how many pass on round one."

ROBERT WOLFF: "Pass. Perhaps I am losing my nerve and therefore my optimism."

DANNY KLEINMAN: "Pass. Limit the hand, then hope that partner has a strong holding and West reopens to provide us another chance. An immediate response is too likely to drive us overboard."

JEFF RUBENS: "Pass. Part of the time that this is in principle wrong, it will work out all right because an opponent will guess wrongly. Bidding one spade or two hearts would add partner to the list of players who might guess wrongly."

Will West save you? He doesn't have an opening bid, and he heard his partner pass over one club. If West has any club length, he will be happy to pull out the "content" card from the bidding box, and partner could be playing in a very-silly contract, possibly going down in one club when cold for a major-suit game. Even if West does save you, you will still have the problem of guessing a major for the contract.

Others were looking for the better major:

FINN KOLESNIK: "One heart. Normally, we would bid one spade, but because we are so weak our main chance of game is if we have a nine-card major-suit fit. Partner might bid one spade."

CARL HUDECEK: "One heart. This is why various gadgets were invented. On a very good day, LHO will pass and partner will rebid one spade, which I will raise to two."

This could work if partner has four spades in an unbalanced hand, but North might rebid two notrump even if he has four spades, and the spade fit will be lost. That largely explains why a majority of panelists bid what was under their noses and hoped for the best.

DANIEL KORBEL: "One spade. I don't see passing one club with five-five in the majors. We could easily have a game."

JOHN DIAMOND: "One spade. Although I am looking for the best partscore, game is not out of the question."

BART BRAMLEY: "One spade. Clear to respond with two five-card majors. Game will be playable opposite most balanced 18-counts, which is what partner rates to hold. Consider king-queen-third of a major and three aces, and that's only 15 HCP."

No kidding. If partner has a four-card major, game might be quite decent; even if he doesn't, game could be okay.

MARK COHEN: "One spade. Then bid intelligently from there."

LARRY ROBBINS: "One spade. I will bid over two notrump (which rates to play terribly; usually, we will have some eight-card major-suit fit). Sure, we can land in three notrump down four, but a major-suit game is also possible."

STEVE ROBINSON: "One spade. I can later bid hearts if necessary and hope to reach a major-suit fit at a low level. Responding one spade makes it difficult for the opponents to enter the auction when it's their deal. I don't want to pass one club and play in a three-two fit when partner has a two-notrump rebid, although we will get too high if partner has a 2=2=4=5 two-notrump rebid."

We might survive partner's two notrump. If he has four hearts, he will raise our three hearts, and four hearts might make. Otherwise, he will normally take a three-spade preference even when he has only a doubleton spade. He won't need to worry about our playing him for three spades, because South will have shown at least five spades, so with three-card support North can always bid four spades. Only when partner has an off-shape two-notrump rebid with a singleton spade will he continue with three notrump. Therefore, there will be a good chance that we will be able to stop at three spades after a two-notrump rebid.

BRIAN GLUBOK: "One spade. Too much potential to pass."

JOHN CARRUTHERS: "One spade. No objection to one heart. Pass is not a consideration with 10 cards in the majors."

NIK DEMIREV: "One spade. A lot of 16-plus-HCP openings may end in one club while four of a major has a shot. One heart is possible, but it can easily go sideways. When partner has four cards in a major, our choice usually won't matter, but when he holds either a balanced hand with 18-19 HCP or 16-plus HCP with a strong major-suit fragment, we need to show our suit lengths correctly and settle for the right partscore. Even a no-wastage 18-HCP hand without a four-card fit, such as:

♠ A Q x ♦ Q x ♣ A x x x, will need a finesse and good breaks to make game."

ZIA: "One spade. Not close. It's obligatory, in too many ways to recount."

HOWARD WEINSTEIN: "One spade. Pass is out of the question. One spade enables finding hearts after a one-notrump or two-notrump rebid; a one-heart response might lose spades."

ROZANNE AND BILL POLLACK: "One spade. Responding could get partner over-excited, but holding five-five with the singleton presumably in the right place, we like the risk-to-reward ratio of bidding, as we have two potentially lucrative places to play."

DAVID BERKOWITZ: "One spade. Would rather declare in four of a major than in one club, but I may not get the chance."

ZACH GROSSACK: "One spade. Let me give you a hand:

♠ A K x x ♦ A x x ♣ A K J 10 x.
Shall I say more?"

That's right. Partner might have anything. There are too many ways that bidding one spade can win not to bid it.

ERIC KOKISH: "Two hearts. Getting both chunky suits into play compensates for the lack of high-card strength."

VENKETESH RAMARATNAM: "Two hearts. The hand is at least a king short for this bid, which shows both majors with less than invitational strength. The upside for bidding is that we could find a big fit and make a thin game or steal the pot if partner has a minimum and the opponents' are unable to get into the auction or to bid their game. The downside is going overboard on a misfit deal. At these colors and scoring, potential reward justifies taking risky action."

It isn't clear that two hearts will work out well opposite partner's expected powerhouse. North won't expect South to be this weak.

Problem D

Matchpoints

Neither side vulnerable

You, South, hold:

♠ K 5 3 2 ♥ 7 3 ♦ A K J 9 8 ♣ 10 3

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|-------|------|-------|------|
| — | — | — | 1 ♥ |
| ?* | | | |

*BWS: minimum equal-level conversions do not apply

What call do you make?

| Action | Score | Votes |
|--------|-------|-------|
| Double | 100 | 13 |
| 2 ♦ | 90 | 11 |
| Pass | 60 | 2 |
| else | 0 | 0 |

This hand is a poster child for minimum equal-level conversions. That makes it appropriate for the Master Solvers' Club, which often focuses on situations that are difficult for the system one happens to be using at the moment, in this case BWS. How well one copes with system-awkward hands can

make a big difference to one's score. Here, half the panel determined that the danger scenario for doubling without the protection of being able to convert without showing extras was the smallest risk.

LARRY ROBBINS: "Double. Close with two diamonds. Double immediately reveals the spade holding; two diamonds might lose the spade fit."

BART BRAMLEY: "Double. Good possibilities outnumber bad. No guts, no glory. Could be the best (or only) chance to get spades in play safely."

STEVE ROBINSON: "Double. I don't want to miss our possible spade fit."

FRED STEWART: "Double. Passing would be ludicrous, and two diamonds will bury the spade suit (unless I can show it at the two-level). I am in the no-hand-is-too-strong-to-overcall camp."

I am also in that camp, so my personal preference is for minimum equal-level conversions. However, doubling and then bidding two diamonds over a two-club advance would show a lot more strength than South has. Mostly, the doublers gambled that they could survive playing in clubs.

BRIAN GLUBOK: "Double. Matchpoint scoring with neither side vulnerable is a different form of the game."

JOHN DIAMOND: "Double. All white at matchpoints, I will take my chance with an unshapely double."

PHILLIP ALDER: "Double. And hope for the best. Recently, an opponent doubled with this exact shape and his partner advanced in diamonds. Maybe lightning does strike twice."

ZACH GROSSACK: "Double. Nonvulnerable at matchpoints, it's more important to compete in a potential spade fit than to try to be 'accurate' (And what does that mean? Pass?) Two diamonds could work, but it's not something I can stomach."

VENKETESH RAMARATNAM: "Double. Maximizes our chance of finding a spade fit and buying the contract in spades or notrump, which outweighs the downside of playing in an ugly club fit."

ZIA: "Double. I'd bid two diamonds as a passed hand or at imps."

CARL HUDECEK: "Double. I will sit for two clubs undoubled but not if the axe is flashed."

HOWARD WEINSTEIN: "Double. Sometimes, you don't have the perfect hand; double is right on strength and most flexible. Not vulnerable, I hope to survive in clubs (if undoubled) should that become the contract."

DAVID BERKOWITZ: "Double. Spades is the name of the game, and I don't have a bad dummy for notrump. If North tries two clubs, I will hope that he has five and pass (until doubled, that is.)"

Those who were unwilling to show a couple of aces more than they had or risk playing in a four-two fit settled for a mundane overcall.

NIK DEMIREV: "Two diamonds. A diamond lead is what we want, and we want to compete. Passing would be all right if the opponents bid two hearts, but much more often it won't go that way. If the ace were in spades, it would be a different story, but the actual hands screams for a diamond lead, and we might have a chance to bid two spades."

DANIEL KORBEL: "Two diamonds. At matchpoints, I'll take a chance."

DANNY KLEINMAN: "Two diamonds. I won't at all like being dummy in clubs."

JOHN CARRUTHERS: "Two diamonds. The suit quality and the hand quality dictate this."

JEFF RUBENS: "Two diamonds. Tie-breaker: Matchpoints sometimes highly rewards lead-direction that stops an overtrick."

FINN KOLESNIK: "Two diamonds. We live in diamonds, let's bid them. It doesn't seem as important to show spades immediately."

ROBERT WOLFF: "Two diamonds. Why not?"

ERIC KOKISH: "Two diamonds. With apologies. I could pretend it's just matchpoints that drags me down to this, although not to double, but that is true only to the extent of trying to stay even with the field."

ROZANNE AND BILL POLLACK: "Two diamonds. We rate to have another chance to bid spades, and we don't want to lose the lead-directing benefits of two diamonds."

The overall seems to be all there is in the current context, and it could work out all right: Diamonds is our best suit. Sometimes partner doesn't have four spades. Sometimes we will have a convenient chance to bring spades into the picture. Yet, a couple of panelists weren't even willing to try to reach the best contract:

SAMI KEHELA: "Pass. Adhering to the silly structure."

MARK COHEN: "Pass. Please enlighten me on the choice between passing and doubling."

Even if one doesn't like the structure, doing something must be better than doing nothing. As is so often the case, pass is a four-letter word.

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MY LIFE WITH BRIDGE BY MIKE LAWRENCE

This book is the culmination of Mike's years in and out of the world of bridge. It includes stories behind the scenes of the Aces, touches on the cheating scandals, his travels around the world, and some of Mike's signature hands and opinions on conventions as well.

Problem E

Imps
East-West vulnerable
You, South, hold:

♠ K Q 3 ♥ K 10 8 6 5 ♦ — ♣ A K J 6 4

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|---------|------|-------|------|
| 1 ♥ | Pass | 1 ♠ | 2 ♦ |
| Double* | 5 ♦ | Pass | Pass |
| ? | | | |

*BWS: three spades

What call do you make?

| Action | Score | Votes |
|--------|-------|-------|
| Double | 100 | 12 |
| 5 ♠ | 80 | 5 |
| Pass | 70 | 5 |
| 6 ♣ | 70 | 4 |
| else | 0 | 0 |

Pass, double or bid. The common high-level competitive-decision options. Some went quietly:

ZIA: "Pass. A shadow of my younger self? Or am I bowed down by the harsh blows of experience? Maybe both. Double will never find a club sacrifice even if right with partner holding a perfect:

♠ J x x x ♥ x ♦ x x ♣ Q x x x x x

Nor a make opposite:

♠ A x x x ♥ x ♦ x x ♣ Q x x x x x."

DANNY KLEINMAN: "Pass. I would have opened one club. To appease a partner who thought one heart was permissible, I'd have mixed the spade queen in with my clubs."

LARRY ROBBINS: "Pass. Ultraconservative, but the opponents are vulnerable against not, and West often will have 11 cards in two suits. If partner has weakish spades, or only a four-card suit, we could go for a large number. We rate to nick the contract a trick, and North could have sacrificed with a six-card spade suit."

Understandable. There may be a lot of shape out against us. Also, partner had a chance to act and didn't. If South doubles, North won't override at the five-level. Still, many panelists couldn't pass with this much strength.

PHILLIP ALDER: "Double. I cannot bring myself to pass."

MARK COHEN: "Double. I do have values, though my shape is not what partner will expect. North most likely will pass, except with extreme distribution. I do see that the opponents are bidding to make."

ROZANNE AND BILL POLLACK: "Double. We have lots of extras. With the bad guys presumably thinking they can make five diamonds, is six clubs now best? It patterns out, but it takes us to the stratosphere. We prefer to let partner make the final mistake. He could have good spades, a round-suit fit, or a bit of defense."

♠ A J x x x ♥ Q x ♦ x x ♣ Q x x x

or:

♠ J x x x ♥ x x ♦ Q J x ♣ Q x x x."

STEVE ROBINSON: "Double. I would like to bid five clubs, but that would not be allowed. I'll show a good hand and hope that partner does the right thing."

It doesn't work that way at this level. Double says only that you don't think the contract will succeed and that you would prefer to defend than to declare. Partner will pass unless he has some unexpected hand, and if he had that hand he wouldn't have passed the decision to you (since there is no force). If you want to compete after partner passes, you need to do it yourself.

DANIEL KORBEL: "Double. If they make it, they make it. Five spades would logically show this shape, but that's really a lot of bidding."

ZACH GROSSACK: "Double. It's what I call a shrug double. Partner's pass is nonforcing, but my hand is too strong to pass it out. I've been minus 750 before."

HOWARD WEINSTEIN: "Double. Lots of bidding going on. Maybe they will make, maybe we have a cheap save; I have enough extra strength and shape to let partner decide. Probably minus 750 and a 4-imp loss, missing our 10-plus-card club fit."

ERIC KOKISH: "Double. Protecting a probable game bonus is always a good excuse for turning minus 600 into minus 750. We are not forced here, and I would not double with a balanced hand at this vulnerability, so North should be thinking seriously about taking it out."

FRED STEWART: "Double. East-West may be stealing, or they may not be, but I can hardly take a flyer with a bid. Pass seems wimpy when I may be entitled to a number."

VENKETESH RAMARATNAM: "Double. West rates to have good hand with heart length and values (for the pass in an earlier round). If we trust the vulnerable opponents implicitly, there is a case to bid five spades, which should show this shape—that seems too unilateral. Double does more consulting."

BRIAN GLUBOK: "Double. Six clubs has a heroic quality to it, with two ways to win, but I'm just not feelin' it—it's not what partner is expecting to hear."

FINN KOLESNIK: "Double. We have extra strength and extra shape with the void. What else?"

Anything else. You are void of diamonds, which is great for offense, not defense. You have extra values, but there is no guarantee that any among them will take a trick. The sound of the auction is very important, as is the vulnerability. West isn't trying to bounce you into a phantom save, since he has no idea that your side has more than a seven-card fit. He isn't taking a premature save at this vulnerability. He is bidding five diamonds because he thinks

it has a good chance to make. He has plenty of distribution. Perhaps it is best to believe him.

JOHN CARRUTHERS: "Six clubs. Damn them. And possibly us."

SAMI KEHELA: "Six clubs. I interpret partner's pass as prepared to proceed."

I don't see it. From partner's point of view, your side might have nothing special, and he could have a minimal response. All his pass says is that he has nothing more to contribute to the auction.

CARL HUDECEK: "Six clubs. The double of two diamonds was ridiculous. I'm not doubling presumably-sane vulnerable opponents with a probable 12-card diamond fit."

NIK DEMIREV: "Six clubs. It may look crazy, but this situation smells bad. When I tried a reconstruction where everyone is bidding sensibly, it looked as if partner will have an ace (if not, we may not beat five diamonds) and some clubs. Perhaps overcaller is 1=4=6=2, advancer is 5=2=5=1, and partner has something resembling:

♠ A x x x ♥ x x ♦ x x ♣ x x x x x.

As little as this would be good enough to make six clubs."

It makes a lot of sense not to let the opponents play where they want to play when South holds this hand, but must South commit to the six-level? If North has five-plus spades, the partnership could easily belong in five spades, and North wouldn't have bid it with a mundane hand. Too bad five clubs would be insufficient, but perhaps we can do it legally . . .

DAVID BERKOWITZ: "Five spades. High-level call should show clubs. I hope that partner has his ouija board available. I trust the vulnerable opponents."

JOHN DIAMOND: "Five spades. I believe the vulnerable opponents and hope that

partner will work out my exact shape (since I didn't bid five hearts)."

ROBERT WOLFF: "Five spades. Definitely inconsistent, but I hope a winning move. The vulnerability gives away West's thinking; partner might correctly guess my distribution."

BART BRAMLEY: "Five spades. Scary, but pass or double would be even scarier. North's:

♠ J 10 9 x x **♥ —** **♦ x x x** **♣ Q x x x x**

could be a double-game swing. Bid more with a void. Partner can infer club length from the failure to bid five hearts, so we might reach clubs when it's right."

Exactly! Partner knows that we have exactly three spades. If we had a six-card heart suit, we would surely bid five hearts rather than five spades. With a singleton diamond, we would be defending rather than bidding on in the face of what might not be even an eight-card fit. It might be better to defend, but at least we can be sure of playing in the right strain.

Problem F

Imps

Both sides vulnerable

You, South, hold:

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

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|-------|------|-------|------|
| — | — | — | Pass |
| 1 ♥ | 1 ♠ | 3 ♣* | Pass |

*BWS: preemptive

What call do you make?

PATRONIZE
THE BOOKSHELF

| Action | Score | Votes |
|--------|-------|-------|
| 3 ♦ | 100 | 9 |
| Pass | 80 | 5 |
| 3 NT | 70 | 4 |
| 3 ♥ | 70 | 3 |
| 4 ♥ | 60 | 2 |
| 3 ♠ | 50 | 1 |
| 4 ♣ | 50 | 1 |
| 5 ♣ | 50 | 1 |
| else | 0 | 0 |

South has 21 HCP, with plenty of aces and kings. The hand is one card away from an opening two-club bid. Partner has shown a sign of life. Can it be right to stop short of game? Some say yes.

JEFF RUBENS: "Pass. A very-effective preempt, apparently."

DANIEL KORBEL: "Pass. This hand surely went downhill."

FRED STEWART: "Pass. In tempo. Bidding wouldn't occur to me. What three notrump? I have no tricks. North's very-best holding might be king-jack-sixth of clubs, likely a stiff heart, two or three spades. Where am I going?"

JOHN DIAMOND: "Pass. Too many things can go wrong in game."

SAMI KEHELA: "Pass. What is preemptive in this context? Is it:

♠ x x x **♥ x** **♦ J x** **♣ K J 10 x x x x ?**

Or is it:

♠ x x x **♥ x x** **♦ x** **♣ A K J x x x x ?**

I guess that is the real question. Just how weak can partner's hand be? He doesn't need much for our side to make game, since anything he has outside of the club suit will be very helpful. Is it worth betting that vulnerable game bonus on partner's having no help outside? The rest of the panel says no, but there are many possible approaches.

BRIAN GLUBOK: "Three diamonds. Anything might work, but if diamonds is our

best trump suit, right now is our last chance to find it. If partner prefers hearts with a doubleton, that's good for our hand too. If partner bids four clubs, I will need to raise to five and to hope that his clubs are as good as ace-king-(ten)-seventh."

ROBERT WOLFF: "Three diamonds. Three notrump, three hearts, three diamonds, and four clubs are all in the running."

ZIA: "Three diamonds. Did not pick up this hand to play in three clubs."

♠ X X X ♥ X X ♦ X X ♣ A J 9 X X X

could be enough for four hearts. I don't believe that there will be a passer on this fine panel."

ERIC KOKISH: "Three diamonds. Forcing, as I would not correct a playable contract out of fear. If the spade king is worthless, we probably have three losers in clubs, and four hearts may not be comfortable if we catch two-card support. Not easy to determine whether it's worth looking for hearts when clubs is such a good strain for us. It's easy to imagine three clubs as the last making contract, and I'm very close to passing. Whether North could have ace-king-jack-seventh of clubs is beyond the scope of this problem. Perhaps hoping for the spade queen and ace-jack-ten-nine-seventh of clubs is a better reason to bid over three clubs."

ROZANNE AND BILL POLLACK: "Three diamonds. A flexible punt, since three notrump, four hearts, and five of a minor are all possibilities. Maybe partner will now bid three of a major. We suspect losing two spades and a club in five clubs, but maybe North has extras—the spade queen, or some other sign of life, vulnerable."

DAVID BERKOWITZ: "Three diamonds. No law against finding partner with some diamonds, and I am not willing to commit to a different strain without consultation."

FINN KOLESNIK: "Three diamonds. This keeps us flexible. We aren't ready to commit to a strain, and this may uncover a diamond fit."

MARK COHEN: "Three diamonds. Too strong to pass. I'm looking for a two-card preference to hearts. Over three spades, I'll bid five clubs. Over four clubs, I'll pass."

HOWARD WEINSTEIN: "Three diamonds. What strength is a vulnerable three-level minor-suit preemptive? It should be somewhat constructive. I have no idea what we can make. At matchpoints, I would pass, but vulnerable at imps that feels too conservative. I will raise three hearts to four."

I can appreciate the value of bidding three diamonds. It allows partner to bid three hearts on a doubleton or three spades with some spade help, either of which would be nice to hear. What scares me about three diamonds is that partner will think that I am at least five-five in the red suits and will raise on three-card support, which isn't likely to turn out well.

ZACH GROSSACK: "Three hearts. Values seem too slow for three notrump. The money shot is reaching four hearts on a six-two fit or a six-one fit with lucky breaks."

CARL HUDECEK: "Three hearts. I doubt North is bidding freely over one spade with a singleton heart, but I will take a conservative route."

PHILLIP ALDER: "Three hearts. I was tempted to gamble four hearts, but I will give partner an out."

Wait a minute. We don't make three-level corrections when partner has shown a long suit. If we don't want to be in game, we pass. Three hearts would be forcing. It could work out well, putting us in four hearts opposite a doubleton. Whether or not four hearts will be the best game is not clear.

VENKETESH RAMARATNAM: "Three spades. At these colors and form of scoring, I will drive to game; only four hearts and five clubs are viable. If necessary, I will continue with four hearts as a choice of games."

That is why opener's three-level bids should be forcing. Three spades is needed to suggest that partner bid three notrump with an appropriate hand.

JOHN CARRUTHERS: "Three notrump. Not more than three off after a spade lead."

DANNY KLEINMAN: "Three notrump. When I open, I don't want my partners to try to shut me out without a fit for my suit."

LARRY ROBBINS: "Three notrump. Pass may well be right, but partner may have many holdings that make game cold, or at least give it a good play. If partner has one of the worst holdings, likely we will be minus 200. It would be unlikely for our counterparts to stop short of game. Four hearts might be right, and I could bid three diamonds to reach it, but partner usually will have only one heart on this auction."

This looks like the best gamble. If partner has either major-suit queen, three notrump will have a good chance to come home. Even without that, partner's clubs might be strong, or West might be nervous about leading a spade when he knows the lead will give away a trick. Sometimes, nine tricks are easier than 10 or 11.

BART BRAMLEY: "Four hearts. The club ace provides a play. Both three notrump and five clubs require more. Three diamonds would be nice if it were forcing, but it isn't; four diamonds doesn't show this hand. I'd have opened two clubs."

STEVE ROBINSON: "Four hearts. We belong in game, and I can't think of a better possible strain or how else to reach four hearts. If I bid three diamonds, partner would expect me to have at least five diamonds and would raise with three. Three diamonds does not show six hearts."

These four-heart bidders think that three of a red suit isn't forcing. I disagree. Reaching the right game must have a higher priority than correcting to what might, only might, be a better part-

score. It is the same reason that we treat a below-game new-suit response to an opening preempt as forcing.

NIK DEMIREV: "Five clubs. Probably, we will go down because of a spade lead and the possible forcing out of an important trump, but vulnerable at imps I must try for the game bonus. Maybe partner will have the spade queen to protect the club queen. If I offer a choice of games, partner will have no chance to figure it out with the likes of:

♠ x x ♥ J x ♦ x x ♣ K J 10 9 x x x.

There are times to involve partner, but this is not one of them."

Could be right, but a lot of the times that five clubs makes, some other game or games also will succeed. A spade lead through the king-doubleton will not be a happy start.

Problem G

Imps

Both sides vulnerable

You, South, hold:

♠ Q 3 ♥ 8 ♦ A K 10 9 7 2 ♣ K 6 5 4

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|-------|------|-------|------|
| — | — | 1 ♠ | Pass |
| 2 ♦ | Pass | 2 ♥ | Pass |
| ? | | | |

What call do you make?

| Action | Score | Votes |
|--------|-------|-------|
| 2 NT | 100 | 14 |
| 3 ♣ | 80 | 7 |
| 3 ♦ | 70 | 4 |
| 2 ♠ | 50 | 1 |
| else | 0 | 0 |

Absent an adequate major-suit fit, notrump is where the games are. A majority of the panel applied this principle to the current deal:

ROZANNE AND BILL POLLACK: “Two notrump. A bit too strong for three diamonds. We’ll overlook the ugly club spots and bid something practical.”

BART BRAMLEY: “Two notrump. I’m not desperate enough to prefer on a doubleton, which would tend to lock us into spades; we can still reach that strain. I’m leaving room for partner to bid out. Three clubs is possible, but I’d rather have stronger clubs.”

MARK COHEN: “Two notrump. Most descriptive. Three diamonds would box partner with $5=4=2=2$ and no club stopper. If North bids three spades, I will raise.”

FINN KOLESNIK: “Two notrump. No other reasonable bid. Partner can show shape.”

ERIC KOKISH: “Two notrump. Perfect. But in any case I would never bid two spades on a doubleton out of fear. I can see trying three diamonds but not three clubs. Though the game-force was based on the ten-nine of diamonds and promising majors, this is not a hand to sing too loudly (off key) about diamonds.”

DAVID BERKOWITZ: “Two notrump. Slow things down; get partner’s input without forcing the issue.”

JOHN DIAMOND: “Two notrump. These auctions go more smoothly when responder is able to keep the auction low by rebidding two notrump.”

VENKETESH RAMARATNAM: “Two notrump. Three clubs should show a shapely two-suiter with 10-plus cards in the minors. Three diamonds would bury clubs opposite $5=4=0=4$. Over two notrump, opener can show shape.”

PHILLIP ALDER: “Two notrump. Economical, giving partner extra space.”

FRED STEWART: “Two notrump. The player with the club stopper must bid the first notrump.”

DANIEL KORBEL: “Two notrump. Get anchored in notrump and see what partner does next.”

Two notrump looks routine. It announces a club stopper and leaves

partner room to show six spades, five hearts, three diamonds, or four clubs. With none of the above, he will bid three notrump (or, if strong enough, show slam interest). However, almost half the panel preferred a different action.

BRIAN GLUBOK: “Two spades. A partnership that reserves this sequence for hands with three spades will have a serious problem with, say:

♠ K J ♥ Q x x ♦ A K x x x ♣ x x x.”

No we won’t. We will bid three clubs, a fourth-suit bid that denies the ability to make a more-descriptive call. In particular, it denies an adequate club stopper to bid notrump. At least, that’s what it should mean. However, some panelists think otherwise.

HOWARD WEINSTEIN: “Three clubs. The competing issues are rightsiding three notrump versus potentially showing a spade preference. After bidding two notrump, I could show the spade preference over partner’s three of a different suit; after bidding three clubs, if North bids three notrump probably I will have rightsided the contract. After three clubs — three of a red suit — ?, three spades might be awkward for partner, so I will bid three notrump.”

LARRY ROBBINS: “Three clubs. I want to play in notrump from partner’s side. North can bid out his pattern, possibly supporting diamonds with two. Two notrump not only wrongsides the strain but also makes it more difficult to land in diamonds. If I rebid diamonds, partner will not know about the club stopper.”

CARL HUDECEK: “Three clubs. Notrump should play from partner’s side, and I am leaving open the chance to play in a spade game.”

Is rightsiding notrump that important? Sure, if partner has queen-low of clubs, you would like three notrump to be played from his side, but some-

times he doesn't have that. Sure, if West would lead a heart against three notrump, you would prefer that partner be declarer, but that hasn't happened yet. King-fourth of clubs is an adequate club stopper for notrump, particularly since partner won't raise notrump with a singleton club.

The problem with three clubs is that it might strap partner. What should he do with something like:

♠ A J x x x ♥ A K x x ♦ x x ♣ x x?

Bid three notrump with nothing in clubs? Pretend to hold six spades, five hearts, or three diamonds? It is healthier for responder to rebid two notrump, then be able to trust any bid partner makes not to be a lie.

JOHN CARRUTHERS: "Three clubs. Why not bid what I have?"

Because three clubs doesn't show what you have. It shows that you can't bid two notrump, i.e., that you don't have a club stopper.

ROBERT WOLFF: "Three clubs. Possibly best of a mediocre lot."

ZACH GROSSACK: "Three clubs. On a different day, I might try two notrump, but this feels better, as I would like to give partner room to try three diamonds. This way, I can preserve the possibility of six diamonds without giving partner an awkward problem by bidding three diamonds."

JEFF RUBENS: "Three clubs. Trying to keep spades and diamonds in as clear focus as possible."

That is an admirable goal, but two notrump achieves it much better. Two notrump doesn't commit the partnership to notrump.

NIK DEMIREV: "Three diamonds. In my own methods, I prefer two spades to *deny* as many as three. In BWS, I must choose

between two notrump to maintain maximum room and flexibility and three diamonds to assist in reaching six diamonds. Maybe we will miss three notrump, but that would usually be better from partner's side, as when he holds:

♠ A J x x x ♥ A J x x ♦ x x ♣ Q x.

Two notrump would suppress the strong diamonds. Four spades on a five-two fit may be the only makable game, and it would be unreachable after two notrump."

ZIA: "Three diamonds. Notrump will be better from partner's side. I will try to organize that."

DANNY KLEINMAN: "Three diamonds. Three clubs would suggest less of a discrepancy between suits. Two notrump would suggest a more-balanced hand. Two spades would suggest three-card support. Three diamonds looks just about right."

STEVE ROBINSON: "Three diamonds. This deal is very likely to belong in diamonds, especially if partner is 5=4=2=2. If we belong in three notrump, probably it will play better from partner's side. The only reason to bid three clubs is hoping that partner raises with 5=4=0=4, but he might bid three notrump with that shape."

For five diamonds to be better than three notrump, declarer would need to take three more tricks in diamonds than in notrump. That doesn't look at all likely if North is 5=4=2=2. Nine tricks are easier than 11; if partner is 5=4=0=4, he will bid three clubs over two notrump.

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Problem H

Imps

Neither side vulnerable

You, South, hold:

♠ A 4 2 ♥ K 8 6 4 ♦ 9 4 ♣ 8 6 4 2

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|-------|------|-------|------|
| — | 4 ♦* | Pass | 4 ♠ |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | |

*natural

What is your opening lead?

| Action | Score | Votes |
|--------|-------|-------|
| ♥ 6 | 100 | 11 |
| ♥ 4 | 100 | 4 |
| ♦ 9 | 80 | 6 |
| ♣ 4 | 70 | 2 |
| ♣ 2 | 70 | 1 |
| ♠ A | 60 | 2 |
| else | 0 | 0 |

The usual theme for leading against a long suit in declarer's hand is to establish side-suit tricks before losers can be discarded on dummy's winners. Here, though, some panelists took the opposite approach, attacking the entries to the potential winners by leading the threatening suit.

DAVID BERKOWITZ: "Diamond nine. I hope that declarer has a diamond or two. I intend to play a second diamond and thus to strand dummy's winners."

ERIC KOKISH: "Diamond nine. I hate to lead a random doubleton, but it might be necessary to kill the diamonds; North knows that. A trump versus the long-suit-killing defense is always awkward. Cashing our heart tricks presents a feasible third choice. Though a guess, this is a good problem."

VENKETESH RAMARATNAM: "Diamond nine. If we assume diamond tolerance with declarer is likely, a diamond lead and continuation could remove the entry to dummy to enjoy the suit after drawing trumps, so that declarer's slow losers will remain."

CARL HUDECEK: "Diamond nine. To kill dummy while I still have trump control. If partner happens to have the diamond ace, he can push a heart through."

FRED STEWART: "Diamond nine. Guessing one of the other suits seems speculative at best. The major dangers are that declarer gets immediate discards and the loss of a tempo, but the other choices have more to lose."

BART BRAMLEY: "Diamond nine. Trying to kill the diamonds. I hope a quick pitch won't be fatal. A heart is a close second. Neither black suit has any appeal."

The diamond lead could be very effective if declarer has a doubleton diamond. Not only might it kill dummy, but we might obtain a diamond ruff. However, if declarer has a singleton diamond, the lead might not be necessary, since we can lead a diamond when in with the ace of spades. The danger of giving declarer a quick discard is quite real, and if East is void of diamonds, a diamond lead could be a disaster.

If we are leading another side suit, which is better?

DANIEL KORBEL: "Club four. I have no idea. Any suit could be right."

JEFF RUBENS: "Club four. Not a diamond, fearing that dummy has eight and partner, with ace-low (or two low to declarer's singleton ace), will think (at trick two or later) that I led a singleton."

BRIAN GLUBOK: "Club deuce. Since I lack a diamond honor, that suit is possible. I used to prefer a low heart in situations such as this, but a book about simulations of leads suggested otherwise. I lead a low club so that partner won't read me for a doubleton."

It is usually safer to lead away from nothing than from an honor, but with dummy short of entries, that might not be the case here. A heart lead has the advantage of doing good things if it hits partner's strength.

ROBERT WOLFF: "Heart four. An uneducated guess but at least a positive try."

JOHN DIAMOND: "Heart four. An aggressive lead here will give us our best chance."

ZIA: "Heart four. I have a sneaky feeling that any suit might be right."

SAMI KEHOLA: "Heart six. Aware that a diamond could be the killer."

PHILLIP ALDER: "Heart six. Fandango, not fox-trot."

MARK COHEN: "Heart six. I lead where I have an honor."

STEVE ROBINSON: "Heart six. I usually make an attacking lead on this type of auction. I need less from North in hearts than in clubs."

LARRY ROBBINS: "Heart six. The ace of trumps would enable seeing a suit-preference signal. A low trump might win, as dummy could have a ruffing value (even with only one spade). However, it feels as if we must take our tricks, or at least set up a heart trick (or two), and I would need much more from partner in clubs than in hearts."

FINN KOLESNIK: "Heart six. It looks as if the opponents have a strong, long suit, so let's lead aggressively."

DANNY KLEINMAN: "Heart six. Let's get our tricks before declarer can draw trumps and run diamonds."

ROZANNE AND BILL POLLACK: "Heart six. A diamond lead could cut off dummy or be disastrous when declarer is void. A trump could stop a ruff. The trump ace gives us a chance to take a look, but will that help?"

We'll just try to take some tricks, and hearts is where they rate to be."

ZACH GROSSACK: "Heart six. Must set up tricks, so I'm playing partner for the queen of hearts. A club could be right, but declarer may have a little help in diamonds, and I don't want to lose a tempo."

NIK DEMIREV: "Heart six. Any lead might lose. A heart might yield two quick heart tricks, the spade ace, and another black-suit trick. The heart king could be better than the six in certain situations but very wrong if partner overtakes to return the suit."

There is one other possibility:

JOHN CARRUTHERS: "Spade ace. 'To find out what I should have led.'—Edwin B."

HOWARD WEINSTEIN: "Spade ace. Maybe this will prevent a ruff in dummy. It will also allow me to see dummy and keep the lead, though probably I still won't know what to do."

Leading a trump could be right, but it could be a calamity. The lost tempo could be fatal. Other leads might not blow a trick even when hitting a bad holding in the suit led. If a trump lead hits a bad holding, there will be no recovery.

*

Thanks to Rick Roeder, La Mesa, CA, for Problem E; and to Ercan Cem, Istanbul, for Problem H.

PROBLEM SUGGESTIONS

Do you have a problem that you would like to see discussed in the Master Solvers' Club or bid in Challenge the Champs? Reader contributions are always welcome and appreciated. Send to: editor@bridgeworld.com or to: The Bridge World, Editorial Dept, PO Box 849, Kerhonkson NY 12446 USA.

HOW THE EXPERTS VOTED ON THE APRIL PROBLEMS

| Problem: | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H |
|--|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|------|------|-----|
| Phillip Alder, <i>Hobe Sound, FL</i> | 1 ♠ | 1 NT | P | D | D | 3 ♥ | 2 NT | ♥ 6 |
| David Berkowitz, <i>Florida</i> | R | 1 NT | 1 ♠ | D | 5 ♠ | 3 ♦ | 2 NT | ♦ 9 |
| Bart Bramley, <i>Avon, CT</i> | R | 1 NT | 1 ♠ | D | 5 ♠ | 4 ♥ | 2 NT | ♦ 9 |
| John Carruthers, <i>Kingsville, ON</i> | 1 ♠ | 1 NT | 1 ♠ | 2 ♦ | 6 ♣ | 3 NT | 3 ♣ | ♠ A |
| Mark Cohen, <i>Glen Ridge, NJ</i> | R | 2 ♣ | 1 ♠ | P | D | 3 ♦ | 2 NT | ♥ 6 |
| Nik Demirev, <i>Illinois</i> | R | P | 1 ♠ | 2 ♦ | 6 ♣ | 5 ♣ | 3 ♦ | ♥ 6 |
| John Diamond, <i>Boca Raton, FL</i> | R | 2 ♣ | 1 ♠ | D | 5 ♠ | P | 2 NT | ♥ 4 |
| Brian Glubok, <i>New York City</i> | 2 ♥ | 2 ♣ | 1 ♠ | D | D | 3 ♦ | 2 ♠ | ♣ 2 |
| Zach Grossack, <i>Newton, MA</i> | R | 2 ♦ | 1 ♠ | D | D | 3 ♥ | 3 ♣ | ♥ 6 |
| Carl Hudecek, <i>Perrysburg, OH</i> | 1 ♠ | 2 ♣ | 1 ♥ | D | 6 ♣ | 3 ♥ | 3 ♣ | ♦ 9 |
| Sami Kehela, <i>Toronto</i> | R | 3 ♣ | P | P | 6 ♣ | P | 2 NT | ♥ 6 |
| Danny Kleinman, <i>Los Angeles</i> | P | 2 ♣ | P | 2 ♦ | P | 3 NT | 3 ♦ | ♥ 6 |
| Eric Kokish, <i>Peterborough, ON</i> | R | 2 ♣ | 2 ♥ | 2 ♦ | D | 3 ♦ | 2 NT | ♦ 9 |
| Finn Kolesnik, <i>Ventura, CA</i> | 1 ♠ | 1 NT | 1 ♥ | 2 ♦ | D | 3 ♦ | 2 NT | ♥ 6 |
| Daniel Korbel, <i>Waterloo, ON</i> | R | 2 ♣ | 1 ♠ | 2 ♦ | D | P | 2 NT | ♣ 4 |
| Rozanne and Bill Pollack, <i>NYC</i> | R | 1 NT | 1 ♠ | 2 ♦ | D | 3 ♦ | 2 NT | ♥ 6 |
| Larry Robbins, <i>Deerfield, IL</i> | 1 ♠ | 2 ♦ | 1 ♠ | D | P | 3 NT | 3 ♣ | ♥ 6 |
| Arthur Robinson, <i>Pennsylvania</i> | R | 1 NT | P | 2 ♦ | P | 4 ♣ | 2 NT | ♥ 4 |
| Steve Robinson, <i>Arlington, VA</i> | R | 2 ♠ | 1 ♠ | D | D | 4 ♥ | 3 ♦ | ♥ 6 |
| Jeff Rubens, <i>Brooklyn, NY</i> | R | 2 ♣ | P | 2 ♦ | P | P | 3 ♣ | ♣ 4 |
| Fred Stewart, <i>Bloomington, NY</i> | R | 2 ♣ | P | D | D | P | 2 NT | ♦ 9 |
| Venkatesh Ramaratnam, <i>India</i> | 1 ♠ | 1 NT | 2 ♥ | D | D | 3 ♠ | 2 NT | ♦ 9 |
| Howard Weinstein, <i>San Diego</i> | R | 2 ♣ | 1 ♠ | D | D | 3 ♦ | 3 ♣ | ♠ A |
| Robert Wolff, <i>Las Vegas</i> | R | 2 ♣ | P | 2 ♦ | 5 ♠ | 3 ♦ | 3 ♣ | ♥ 4 |
| Kit Woolsey, <i>Kensington, CA</i> | R | 2 ♦ | 1 ♠ | 2 ♦ | 5 ♠ | 3 NT | 2 NT | ♥ 6 |
| Zia, <i>New York City</i> | R | 2 ♣ | 1 ♠ | D | P | 3 ♦ | 3 ♦ | ♥ 4 |

MASTER SOLVERS' CLUB

MAY CONTEST

Contest deadline: March 31, 2025 at 11:59 p.m. (ET).

To submit your solutions: visit the MSC section of www.bridgeworld.com

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Top scores are listed in the Honor Roll. The highest finishers in the yearly contest will be invited to participate as guest panelists in monthly contests.

Bridge World Standard is used by North-South. The system's agreements can be found at www.bridgeworld.com. Footnotes announce applicable treatments.



HONOR ROLL

FOR THE MARCH CONTEST

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----|-------------------------------------|-----|
| Steve Huhman, Woodstock, GA | 780 | Nick Tipton, Lynnwood, WA | 710 |
| Kevin Castner, London, U.K. | 760 | Mridul Das, Dharapur, India | 700 |
| John Schuler, San Diego, CA | 760 | Sharon Erwin, Lynnwood, WA | 700 |
| Mark Chen, Charleston, SC | 750 | Jon Farber, Alexandria, VA | 700 |
| Bill March, Stockton, England | 740 | Jim Gingrich, Lansdale, PA | 700 |
| Joel Fuhrman, Kirkland, WA | 730 | Platt Hill, Saint Charles, IL | 700 |
| Arthur Loring, West Palm Beach, FL | 730 | V. S. Krishnamurti, Chennai, India | 700 |
| Venkatesh Ramaratnam, India | 730 | Rodney Lighton, Manchester, U.K. | 700 |
| Sridhar Vee, Bangalore, India | 730 | Floyd McWilliams, Sunnyvale, CA | 700 |
| Barry Bragin, Fort Pierce, FL | 720 | Christopher Monsour, Frederick, MD | 700 |
| Alan Braunstein, Brandon, FL | 720 | William Neumann, Columbia, MD | 700 |
| Carol Carpenter, Santa Barbara, CA | 720 | Vanni Nozzoli, Roma, Italy | 700 |
| Robert Clow, Glasgow, Scotland | 720 | Carol Schroeder, Redmond, WA | 700 |
| Kay Joyce, Pittsboro, NC | 720 | Steve White, Broomall, PA | 700 |
| Dawn Ligon, Reno, NV | 720 | Jack Brawner, Palm Harbor, FL | 690 |
| Jean-Luc Mothes, La Chapelle, France | 720 | Amy DeShaw, Seattle, WA | 690 |
| Vibhas Todi, Kolkata, India | 720 | Frederick Dischman, Kansas City, MO | 690 |
| Thomas Trachuk, Walnut Creek, CA | 720 | Chip Doyle, Pleasant Hill, CA | 690 |
| Robert Bjorge, Sacramento, CA | 710 | Louis Glasthal, Berwyn, PA | 690 |
| Robert Coyne, Colonia, NJ | 710 | Dave Grubbs, Seattle, WA | 690 |
| Vulkan Denizci, Samsun, Turkey | 710 | Cynthia Handley, Edmonds, WA | 690 |
| David Drennan, Godfrey, IL | 710 | Todd Holes, Glen Ellyn, IL | 690 |
| Herbert Lerner, Washington, DC | 710 | Jessica Lai, Oakland, CA | 690 |
| John Lindsey, Lutz, FL | 710 | Lawrence Lerner, New Providence, NJ | 690 |
| Sergiu Lupu, Rueil Malmaison, France | 710 | Soren Rasmussen, Denmark | 690 |
| Aviv Shahaf, Jericho, NY | 710 | Michael Schneider, Gauting, Germany | 690 |
| Razvan Spiridonescu, Brasov, Romania | 710 | Iain Sime, Edinburgh, Scotland | 690 |
| Alan Sze, North Point, Hong Kong | 710 | Vinci Wan, Hong Kong | 690 |

Problem A

Imps; North-South vulnerable
You, South, hold:

♠ K Q J 9 7 2 ♥ 5 ♦ A J 6 ♣ Q 7 4

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|-------|------|-------|------|
| — | — | Pass | Pass |
| 1 ♠ | 3 ♥ | Pass | Pass |
| ? | | | |

What call do you make?

Problem B

Matchpoints; both sides vulnerable
You, South, hold:

♠ 9 5 2 ♥ K 10 4 ♦ A Q 5 ♣ A 9 8 2

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|-------|------|-------|------|
| — | — | — | 1 ♥ |
| Pass | Pass | 1 ♠ | Pass |
| ? | | | |

What call do you make?

Problem C

Matchpoints; neither side vulnerable
You, South, hold:

♠ — ♥ A J 6 ♦ K J 9 8 5 3 ♣ A J 10 2

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|-------|------|-------|------|
| — | — | — | 1 ♣ |
| 1 ♦ | Pass | 1 ♠* | Pass |
| 2 ♦ | Pass | 3 ♦ | Pass |
| ? | | | |

*BWS: nonforcing

What call do you make?

Problem D

Matchpoints; both sides vulnerable
You, South, hold:

♠ K 10 2 ♥ J 8 3 ♦ K 8 3 2 ♣ K 9 2

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|-------|------|-------|------|
| — | — | 1 ♥ | 1 ♠ |
| ? | | | |

What call do you make?

Problem E

Imps; neither side vulnerable
You, South, hold:

♠ K 10 2 ♥ Q 10 8 7 3 ♦ Q 2 ♣ A Q 7

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|-------|------|-------|------|
| 1 ♥ | Pass | 1 ♠ | Pass |
| 1 NT | Pass | 2 ♣* | Pass |
| 2 ♦ | Pass | 2 ♠† | Pass |
| ? | | | |

*BWS: puppet to 2 ♦

†BWS: invitational

What call do you make?

Problem F

Imps; both sides vulnerable
You, South, hold:

♠ J 10 9 3 ♥ K 10 2 ♦ 6 4 2 ♣ 10 7 2

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|-------|------|-------|------|
| — | Pass | 1 ♠ | Pass |
| ? | | | |

What call do you make?

Problem G

Imps; North-South vulnerable
You, South, hold:

♠ K J 10 ♥ 7 6 ♦ 10 6 4 ♣ Q J 8 7 2

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|-------|------|-------|------|
| — | — | 1 ♦ | Pass |
| 1 NT | Pass | 2 ♣ | Pass |
| ? | | | |

What call do you make?

Problem H

Imps; neither side vulnerable
You, South, hold:

♠ 9 5 ♥ Q 9 8 2 ♦ 10 9 7 4 3 ♣ A 5

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|-------|------|-------|------|
| — | — | — | 3 ♠ |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | |

What is your opening lead?



FIFTY YEARS AGO

In the April 1975 *Bridge World*, Geza Ottlik's The Way It Is series opened a new branch of investigation: elopement. Both offense and defense were discussed in depth. This was one of the early examples:

| NORTH | | | |
|---------------|-----------|---------|--------|
| WEST | EAST | WEST | EAST |
| ♠ A | ♠ K 10 8 | ♠ 9 6 | ♠ K 10 |
| ♥ A 5 3 | ♥ K Q 4 | ♥ — | ♥ — |
| ♦ K J 9 4 | ♦ 10 7 6 | ♦ 8 | ♦ — |
| ♣ Q 9 6 5 2 | ♣ A J 8 4 | ♣ — | ♣ J |
| SOUTH | | SOUTH | |
| ♠ Q J 7 5 4 3 | | ♠ Q J 7 | |
| ♥ J 7 6 2 | | ♥ — | |
| ♦ Q 5 | | ♦ — | |
| ♣ K | | ♣ — | |

East opened one club; South overcalled one spade, and advancing by North led to a final contract of three spades. West led the ten of hearts, ducked to the queen. East cashed the ace of clubs and continued with a club to the ten and dummy's queen, as South pitched a heart. The play continued with a diamond to the queen and ace, a third round of clubs ruffed, and declarer was threatened with an overruff in clubs.

One way to avoid an overruff is to score all of one's low trumps. Here, the play could proceed king-jack of diamonds to throw a heart, heart ace and a heart ruff (not the nine of diamonds, because East could ruff with the king

of spades and lead a club), and a spade to dummy's ace to produce this ending:

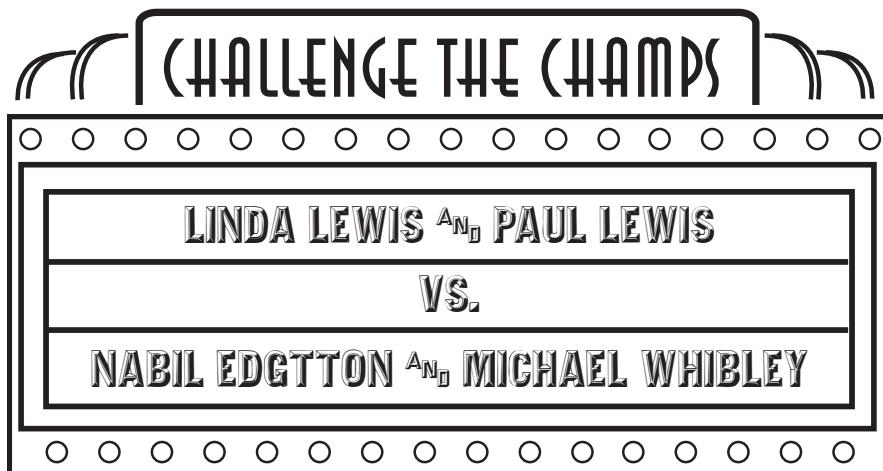
NORTH
♠ —
♥ —
♦ 9
♣ 9 6

EAST
♠ K 10
♥ —
♦ —
♣ J

SOUTH
♠ Q J 7
♥ —
♦ —
♣ —

Now the time is right to lead the nine of diamonds, threatening to elope with South's seven of spades. If East prevents the elopement, declarer can counter successfully because the overruff threat is gone.

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Prepared from material provided by Eric Kokish & Beverly Kraft

Challenge the Champs is a continuing bidding battle. Each month, two leading pairs compete, the Incumbents (they bid last month too) and the Newcomers (who will be back next month), bidding deals from actual play (taken from old tournament reports or submitted by readers). Awards assigned to final contracts are estimates of the matchpoint expectancy on a 12 top in a strong pairs contest. Thus, a normal result will usually receive close to 6, average; a gambling grand slam needing two finesses might receive 3 (you get a top, 12, about 25% of the time and a 0 otherwise, which averages to 3). Awards are rounded off to the nearest full matchpoint. An award embraces all lower equivalent contracts in the same strain; for example, if three spades is given a score but two spades is not, the score for three spades is awarded to all spade partscores.

The Incumbents are Linda and Paul Lewis, a longstanding top-level husband-and-wife partnership. They have already notched a win and a tie in earlier matches and seek to increase their qualifying total for the Challenge of the Twenties. They use largely standard methods but employ weak notrumps and open one club with 4=4=3=2 out of a notrump range.

The Newcomers are an Australia-New Zealand combination: Nabil Edgerton and Michael Whibley. Each enjoyed a series of successes in junior and open events, nationally and internationally (including high finishes in world championships).

They formed a partnership a few years ago and have done well, including a second-place finish in the 2022 World Open Pairs.

The Newcomers are highly-aggressive bidders who use mostly standard methods adorned with variations on a few of the special treatments popular in expert circles (including transfers in response to one club and in many competitive auctions).

Our thanks to Evan Marti, Houston, for Deal 6. Deals 8, 9 and 10 are from the 2010 Trial. All the other deals are from events at national tournaments.

1**Linda & Paul 0
Whibley & Edgton 0**

North dealer
Neither side vulnerable

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

| Linda | Paul |
|-------|------|
| — | 1 ♣ |
| 1 ♠ | 2 ♠ |
| 4 ♥ | 4 NT |
| 5 ♣ | 5 ♦ |
| 6 ♥ | 6 ♠ |
| Pass | |

| Whibley | Edgton |
|---------|--------|
| — | 1 ♣ |
| 1 ♥ | 2 ♠ |
| 4 ♥ | 5 ♣ |
| 6 ♠ | Pass |

Paul's rebid indicated a hand improved by the spade response: four trumps with a strong notrump, 4=2=2=5 with concentrated values, or three spades in an unbalanced hand. Linda's splinter suggested that opener's high-card values fit well, so East asked for key cards, then for the queen of spades. West showed the spade queen and a heart void.

Whibley's transfer response showed spades; Edgton's raise announced four-card support in a minimum-range hand. West took advantage of the opportunity to make a void-showing slam-try; this made all of East's high cards, which had been minimal even for a light opening, potentially useful, so he encouraged slam with a control-bid.

BWS Auction: 1 ♣(?) - 1 ♠ - 2 ♠ - 4 ♥ - 5 ♠(?) - 6 ♠ - Pass. East is too

strong to sign off when West shows short hearts and slam interest. Five spades suggests good spades and balanced controls in the minors. Picture West with 6=1=4=2 with three aces to see how little is needed for a fine slam.

Awards

| | |
|-----|----|
| 6 ♠ | 10 |
| 5 ♠ | 4 |
| 7 ♠ | 1 |

2

**Linda & Paul 10
Whibley & Edgton 10**

East dealer
North-South vulnerable

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

| Linda | Paul |
|-------|------|
| — | 1 NT |
| 3 NT | Pass |

| Whibley | Edgton |
|---------|--------|
| — | 1 ♦ |
| 2 ♦ | 2 ♥ |
| 2 ♠ | 2 NT |
| 3 NT | Pass |

The Incumbents' sequence often gains through concealing information, but here their contract is unlikely to succeed except perhaps after an initial spade lead.

After Whibley's invitational-plus raise, Edgton artificially showed a minimum-range hand (of any shape). West artificially forced to game, and East described his general hand-type—West had denied a four-plus-card major, hence was unlikely to be relatively short in clubs.

BWS Auction: 1 ♦ - 2 ♦ - 3 ♦ - 3 ♥ - 3 ♠ - 4 ♦(?) - Pass. The suggested auction is possible, but even natural bidders who open light are not likely to stop at three diamonds, and many would reach three notrump.

Awards

| | |
|-----------------|----|
| 3 ♦ | 10 |
| 4 ♦ | 7 |
| 5 ♦, 3 NT, 2 NT | 4 |

3

**Linda & Paul 14
Whibley & Edgton 14**

South dealer
East-West vulnerable

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

| Linda | Paul |
|-------|------|
| 1 ♥ | 2 NT |
| 3 ♣ | 3 ♦ |
| 3 ♥ | 5 ♦ |
| 5 NT | 7 ♥ |
| Pass | |

| Whibley | Edgton |
|---------|--------|
| 1 ♥ | 4 ♣ |
| 4 ♦ | 4 ♠ |
| 4 NT | 5 ♣ |
| 6 ♣ | 7 ♥ |
| Pass | |

Paul's response covered all game-forcing heart raises with four-plus-card support. Linda showed a minimum, then (after a relay) shortness in clubs. East continued with an exclusion key-card-ask.

Edgton's response indicated a strong heart raise with a diamond void; with an ace-value-plus extra, he intended to

continue after a signoff. Despite holding the ace of diamonds as one of his prime values, Whibley, with lots of diamonds to ruff in the opposite hand, took a ticket on the Last Train. East asked for key cards, then for the queen of hearts (where the reply showed the heart queen, no side-suit king, but some extra strength—West liked his spades, because East strongly rated to hold at least four cards in the suit).

BWS Auction: 1 ♥ - 4 ♦(?) - 4 NT(?) - 6 ♣(?) - 6 ♦(?) - 6 ♠(?) - 7 ♥(?) - Pass. Every experienced pair will have pet methods for showing voids with or without specific side kings. As shown, West locates the spade king and East's willingness to have West bid seven notrump, but the crucial spade length does not come to light.

Awards

| | |
|----------|----|
| 7 NT | 10 |
| 7 ♥, 7 ♠ | 6 |
| 6 NT | 3 |
| 6 ♥, 6 ♠ | 2 |

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4

Linda & Paul 20
Whibley & Edgton 20

West dealer
 Both sides vulnerable

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

Linda

| | |
|-----|------|
| 1 ♥ | 2 NT |
| 3 ♠ | 4 ♥ |
| 4 ♠ | 5 ♦ |
| 5 ♥ | Pass |

Whibley

| | |
|------|------|
| 1 ♥ | 2 NT |
| 3 ♦ | 3 ♥ |
| 3 NT | 4 ♦ |
| 4 ♠ | 5 ♦ |
| 6 ♥ | Pass |

Paul's response was as on Deal 3. Linda announced 17-19 HCP in a hand with no shortness, then asked for key cards, then signed off on the basis of East's negative reaction to the three-spade bid.

Edgton's response was an invitation-plus raise with at least a four-card fit. Whibley's rebid showed extra values in a hand with no short suit. After East also denied a short suit, West offered a serious slam-try. A control-bid (showing a first-round control) was followed by a key-card-ask. West expected to find a dummy with more strength.

BWS Auction: 1 ♥ - 2 NT(?) - 3 ♥ - 4 ♥ - Pass. East has a minimum game force. By making the strongest no-shortness rebid, West is in a position to respect East's evaluation of slam chances.

Awards

| | |
|------|----|
| 4 ♥ | 10 |
| 5 ♥ | 6 |
| 4 NT | 3 |
| 6 ♥ | 2 |
| 6 ♣ | 1 |

5

Linda & Paul 26
Whibley & Edgton 22

North deals and opens one diamond
 North-South vulnerable

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

Linda

| | | |
|-----|-------|------|
| — | (1 ♦) | 1 ♥ |
| 2 ♦ | | 2 ♠ |
| 3 ♣ | | 3 ♦ |
| 4 ♥ | | Pass |

Whibley

| | | |
|------|-------|-----|
| — | (1 ♦) | 1 ♥ |
| 2 ♦ | | 2 ♠ |
| 3 ♣ | | 4 ♥ |
| Pass | | |

Linda's cue-bid indicated an invitational-plus heart raise. Paul's aggressive natural continuation showed willingness to reach at least three hearts. Both partners made further game-tries, and the excellent fit made the optimistic views pay off.

After a similar sequence to that in the other room, Edgton deemed that the singleton diamond and sound hearts were enough to go the extra mile.

BWS Auction: (1 ♦) - 1 ♥ - 2 ♦ - 2 ♠ - 3 ♥ - Pass(?). East has a respectable intervention at favorable vulnerability, so, with short diamonds, the hand is worth a progressive move over two

diamonds whether or not West intends to raise hearts. On the third round, with a minimum in context and a terrible club holding, East might reasonably settle for three hearts.

Awards

| | |
|-----|----|
| 4 ♥ | 10 |
| 3 ♥ | 4 |

6

Linda & Paul 36
Whibley & Edgton 32

East dealer
East-West vulnerable

WEST
♠ —
♥ AK 9
♦ J 9 7 4 2
♣ K Q J 7 4

EAST
♠ A 9 2
♥ 10 7 6 5 3
♦ A
♣ A 9 8 3

| Linda | Paul |
|-------|------|
| — | 1 ♥ |
| 2 ♣ | 3 ♦ |
| 4 ♣ | 4 ♦ |
| 4 ♠ | 5 ♣ |
| 5 ♥ | 6 ♣ |
| Pass | |

| Whibley | Edgton |
|---------|--------|
| — | 1 ♥ |
| 2 ♣ | 2 ♦ |
| 2 ♥ | 2 ♠ |
| 2 NT | 3 ♣ |
| 3 ♦ | 3 ♠ |
| 4 ♥ | 4 ♠ |
| 6 ♣ | Pass |

Linda's natural response promised at least four clubs. Paul's splinter rebid promised the same. West asked for key cards, then about side-suit kings; when partner turned up with three aces and no kings, West control-bid the king of hearts in case East held the queen.

Whibley's response was an artificial game-force. Edgton artificially denied anything special to show at his second turn. In reply to three relays, East described 11-14 HCP and 3=5=1=4. Four hearts was a slam-try *in clubs*, and four spades was Last Train.

BWS Auction: 1 ♥ - 2 ♣(?) - 3 ♣ - 3 ♥ - 4 ♦(?) - 5 ♠(?) - 6 ♣ - Pass(?). With such minor-suit disparity and strong heart support, it makes sense for West to start with two clubs. Whether East should offer a splinter raise is a partnership matter. BWS uses three notrump as a mild slam-try that says nothing about specific controls, but the East hand is all about the side-suit controls.

Awards

| | |
|----------|----|
| 6 ♣ | 10 |
| 6 ♥ | 8 |
| 7 ♣, 5 ♥ | 4 |
| 5 ♣ | 2 |
| 7 ♥ | 1 |

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7**Linda & Paul 46
Whibley & Edgton 42**

South dealer
Both sides vulnerable

| WEST | EAST |
|-----------|------------------|
| ♠ A J | ♠ 8 |
| ♥ 10 7 3 | ♥ A 4 |
| ♦ A Q 8 6 | ♦ K J 3 |
| ♣ A J 8 3 | ♣ K Q 10 7 6 5 2 |

| Linda | Paul |
|-------|------|
| 1 ♦ | 2 ♣ |
| 3 ♣ | 3 ♥ |
| 3 ♠ | 4 ♣ |
| 4 ♦ | 4 ♠ |
| 5 ♣ | 5 ♦ |
| 5 NT | 7 NT |
| Pass | |

| Whibley | Edgton |
|---------|--------|
| 1 NT | 2 ♠ |
| 3 ♣ | 3 ♠ |
| 4 ♣ | 4 ♦ |
| 4 ♠ | 4 NT |
| 5 ♦ | 5 ♠ |
| 6 ♣ | 6 NT |
| Pass | |

Linda's opening and Paul's game-forcing response each promised at least four cards in the suit bid. After clubs were agreed, there followed two control-bids, a key-card-ask and reply, a side-suit-king-ask, announcement of the king of diamonds, and a general grand-slam-try.

Edgton's response was either clubs or a notrump invitation; Whibley announced a maximum. East showed clubs with short spades; West issued a serious slam-try. After two control-bids and a key-card-ask with reply, five spades was the weaker of two possible seven-tries. East knew that six notrump would be no worse than a finesse.

BWS Auction: 1 NT - 2 ♠ - 3 ♣(?) - 3 ♠ - 4 ♣ - 4 ♦(?) - 4 ♠ - 5 ♥ - 6 ♦(?) - 7 ♣ - Pass. A case can be made for East to check on aces over three clubs, then to show the diamond king. As it turns out, it's the unbidable diamond jack that provides the thirteenth trick.

Awards

| | |
|----------|----|
| 7 NT | 10 |
| 7 ♣ | 8 |
| 7 ♦ | 7 |
| 6 NT | 4 |
| 6 ♣, 6 ♦ | 3 |
| 5 NT | 1 |

**8 Linda & Paul 56
Whibley & Edgton 46**

West dealer
Neither side vulnerable

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

| Linda | Paul |
|-------|------|
| Pass | 1 ♣ |
| 1 ♥ | 2 ♥ |
| 3 ♦ | 3 ♥ |
| Pass | |

| Whibley | Edgton |
|---------|--------|
| Pass | 1 ♣ |
| 1 ♦ | 1 ♥ |
| 2 ♣ | 2 ♦ |
| 2 ♥ | 4 ♦ |
| 4 ♥ | Pass |

Paul's raise (probably not the people's choice) indicated more than a minimum, since partner was a passed hand. This stimulated Linda to try for game, and she showed where she needed help; unfortunately, this accidentally

concealed the fact that all of her high cards lay elsewhere.

Whibley's response showed hearts; Edgton indicated three-card support. West continued with a marionette to two diamonds; East's simple acceptance announced an unbalanced hand with at most 15 HCP. West invited game; and East, who could visualize *slam* opposite perfect cards, showed his void.

BWS Auction: Pass(?) - 1 ♣ - 1 ♥ - 2 ♣(?) - 2 ♦(?) - 3 ♥ - 4 ♥ - Pass. Opening the West hand would preclude stopping in two clubs, which might happen after an initial pass. If West did not have a natural, nonforcing two diamonds available, passing two clubs would be almost routine. As West can see some chances for game in several strains and might still finish in a club partscore, risking a further move has some appeal.

Awards

| | |
|-----------|----|
| 4 ♥ | 10 |
| 3 ♥ | 5 |
| 3 ♣, 3 NT | 4 |
| 4 ♣ | 3 |
| 5 ♣ | 2 |

9

Linda & Paul 61
Whibley & Edgton 56

North deals *and passes*; South bids two spades; North bids three spades
East-West vulnerable

WEST
♠ 9 3
♥ A 10 2
♦ J 9 7
♣ K Q 10 8 7

EAST
♠ J
♥ K 3
♦ A K Q 8 3 2
♣ A J 6 5

Linda

Paul

| | | |
|--------|-------|-------|
| — | 1 ♦ | (2 ♠) |
| Double | (3 ♠) | 4 ♠ |
| 5 ♣ | | Pass |

| Whibley | Edgton |
|----------------|---------------|
| — | 1 ♦ (2 ♠) |
| Double (3 ♠) | Double |
| 4 ♣ | 4 ♠ |
| 4 NT | 5 ♥ |
| 6 ♣ | Pass |

Linda risked an off-shape negative double as the least of evils. Paul showed power, but the system did not supply detailed meanings in this uncommon sequence (and the interference made scientific bidding difficult in any event).

Edgton's double widened the field of inquiry at the risk of leaving the excellent diamond suit not fully described. Four spades was the only available strong club raise. Whibley asked for key cards.

BWS Auction: 1 ♦ - (2 ♠) - Double - (3 ♠) - Double - 4 ♠ - 5 NT(?) - 6 ♣(?) - Pass. West's double likely would be popular in the MSC, as three diamonds and pass have less appeal. East does not have a forcing four clubs available over three spades. A compromise is to double, planning to convert a heart bid to clubs.

Awards

| | |
|----------|----|
| 6 ♦, 6 ♣ | 10 |
| 5 ♦, 5 ♣ | 4 |

TELL A FRIEND ABOUT
THE BRIDGE WORLD

10**Linda & Paul 65
Whibley & Edgton 66**

East dealer

Both sides vulnerable

WEST
 ♠ K 7
 ♥ K 4
 ♦ Q 7 2
 ♣ A 10 8 6 5 4

EAST
 ♠ A 6 4 3
 ♥ A 10 8 7 6 3
 ♦ A 10 6
 ♣ —

Linda**Paul**

—
 2 ♣
 4 ♥

1 ♥
 2 ♥
 Pass

Whibley**Edgton**

—
 2 ♣
 2 NT
 3 NT

1 ♥
 2 ♠
 3 ♦
 Pass

Linda's game-forcing response showed at least four clubs; Paul's rebid showed six hearts. The jump to game was the weakest available raise.

Whibley's response was an artificial game-force. The rest of the Newcomers' bidding was natural.

BWS Auction: 1 ♥ - 2 ♣ - 2 ♥(?) - 2 NT - 3 ♠(?) - 4 ♥ - Pass. Many Easts would rebid two spades. West's two notrump denies four spades, so three spades indicates six-plus hearts and at least 10 of East's cards.

Awards

| | |
|------|----|
| 4 ♥ | 10 |
| 3 NT | 6 |
| 3 ♥ | 4 |
| 2 NT | 3 |

FINAL SCORE
Linda & Paul 75
Whibley & Edgton 72

The "double comeback" at the end of the match has been a rare occurrence in this series of encounters. Michael and Nabil will return next month, bidding the hands on pages 75 and 76.

IMPROVE YOUR DEFENSE SOLUTION

(Problem on page 9.)

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

WEST
 ♠ Q 10 8 6 4 3
 ♥ K 7
 ♦ 3
 ♣ Q 9 4 2

EAST
 ♠ A 2
 ♥ 10 8 5 4 2
 ♦ K J 5
 ♣ K 8 5

SOUTH
 ♠ K J 9
 ♥ Q J 9 6 3
 ♦ 9 8
 ♣ J 10 7

If partner has only one diamond stopper, it seems certain that the defense will have no chance; therefore, assume that he has (at least) two diamond stoppers.

Given such a layout, a heart shift after he takes his first diamond trick will establish an entry to your spades; meanwhile, prospects for setting up enough tricks in clubs are uncertain.

Since the heart shift will succeed in the critical layouts, give the strongest suit-preference signal for hearts that you can afford—the spade ten.

IMPROVE YOUR PLAY SOLUTIONS

(Problems on page 7.)

Solution A

NORTH
 ♠ Q 9 7 4
 ♥ 10 6 2
 ♦ K J 10
 ♣ A Q J

WEST
 ♠ 8 5
 ♥ A 9 7
 ♦ 9 8 5 3
 ♣ 7 6 5 4

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

SOUTH
 ♠ A K 10 6 3 2
 ♥ K Q J
 ♦ 4 2
 ♣ 8 3

Contract: Four spades by South
 Opening lead: Spade five

Draw trumps and knock out the ace of hearts. When back on lead, if no minor has been played, guess one and finesse into East, ensuring the contract. If you were to lead a minor before hearts, the defense might win the trick, cross to West with the ace of hearts, and lead the other minor.

Solution B

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

EAST
 ♠ A 9
 ♥ K J 10 9 5
 ♦ A 10 8 4
 ♣ 6 4

SOUTH
 ♠ K J 10
 ♥ A Q
 ♦ K J 6 5 2
 ♣ Q J 9

Contract: Three notrump by South
 Opening lead: Heart seven

East is marked with two aces, so win trick one, play a club to dummy, and lead the nine of diamonds toward South's holding. If East ducks, win and drive out the ace of spades. If East takes the diamond and (say) clears hearts, unblock diamonds, cross to the South hand in clubs, and continue diamonds.

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TEST YOUR PLAY SOLUTIONS

(Problems on page 3.)

Solution A

NORTH
 ♠ 8 6 4 3 2
 ♥ A 8 3
 ♦ K 2
 ♣ K 5 4

WEST
 ♠ Q
 ♥ J 10 4
 ♦ J 7 6 5 4 3
 ♣ Q 10 8

EAST
 ♠ K 5
 ♥ Q 9 6 5 2
 ♦ A Q
 ♣ J 9 7 2

SOUTH
 ♠ A J 10 9 7
 ♥ K 7
 ♦ 10 9 8
 ♣ A 6 3

Contract: Four spades by South
 Opening lead: Heart jack

If the diamond ace is offside, you hope to endplay East with the second round of trumps. You will need to eliminate clubs before the throw-in, and you want to keep West off lead while you are doing it. Therefore, win trick one with the heart king and play a heart to dummy's eight. If this comes off, later on you will discard a club on the ace of hearts and eliminate clubs, then try to throw East in with a trump. If West inserts the ten or nine of hearts on the second trick, play dummy's ace and continue with the eight, hoping that East has the nine (or that he will play the queen in any case), which will allow you to discard a club under favorable conditions.

If East wins the third round of hearts and leads a fourth round, and West can

win that trick with a spade honor, discard a diamond from dummy and later finesse in spades. Otherwise, proceed with the elimination.

Solution B

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

WEST
 ♠ Q 10 9 6 5 4
 ♥ 7 6
 ♦ 9 7
 ♣ 9 7 5

EAST
 ♠ J 8
 ♥ A J 10 9 5 4 3
 ♦ Q J 5
 ♣ 2

SOUTH
 ♠ 7 2
 ♥ K Q 8
 ♦ K 10 6 4 3
 ♣ K J 6

Contract: Six notrump by South
 Opening lead: Heart seven

Your main hope is to find East with queen-jack at least tripleton of diamonds, so that he will come under pressure after you win the first trick and run winners to reach this ending:

NORTH
 ♠ K 6
 ♥ —
 ♦ A 8 2
 ♣ —

SOUTH
 ♠ —
 ♥ Q 8
 ♦ K 10 6
 ♣ —

Assume East started with seven hearts and at least three diamonds to the queen-jack. When you cash the king of spades, if he keeps the ace of hearts and three diamonds, discard the

eight of hearts and lead a diamond from dummy; if East plays a quack, win and throw him in with a heart.

Based on a deal from Andy Stark, New York City.

CHALLENGE THE CHAMPS

WEST HANDS FOR THE MAY BIDDING MATCH

(East hands are on page 76.)

Deal 1

North deals *and opens two spades*
Neither side vulnerable

♠ — ♥ KQ 10 9 3 ♦ KJ 6 ♣ A Q J 10 7

Deal 2

East dealer
North-South vulnerable

♠ K 3 2 ♥ A 6 4 ♦ A K 10 8 6 ♣ J 2

Deal 3

South dealer
East-West vulnerable

♠ 10 7 6 ♥ A 8 2 ♦ K J 4 ♣ Q 10 6 2

Deal 4

West dealer
Both sides vulnerable

♠ K J 3 ♥ A 8 5 ♦ A J 4 ♣ J 8 7 4

Deal 5

North dealer
North-South vulnerable

♠ — ♥ A K Q J 8 5 ♦ K 10 8 ♣ 7 5 4 3

Deal 6

East dealer
East-West vulnerable

♠ A K J 8 ♥ K 10 6 5 ♦ K J 7 ♣ 5 4

Deal 7

South dealer
Both sides vulnerable

♠ A 2 ♥ A J 9 ♦ A 7 6 3 ♣ Q J 9 7

Deal 8

West dealer
Neither side vulnerable

♠ A Q 10 4 2 ♥ Q 10 4 ♦ K J ♣ A 7 3

Deal 9

North deals *and opens one club*
East-West vulnerable

♠ Q 3 ♥ A Q 7 6 5 ♦ K 8 2 ♣ A 5 3

Deal 10

East dealer
Both sides vulnerable

♠ Q 10 6 2 ♥ Q 9 5 4 3 ♦ K 2 ♣ Q 10

CHALLENGE THE CHAMPS

EAST HANDS FOR THE MAY BIDDING MATCH

(*West hands are on page 75.*)

Deal 1

North deals and opens two spades
Neither side vulnerable

♠ A K 9 ♥ A J 8 5 ♦ A Q 9 5 3 ♣ 2

Deal 2

East dealer
North-South vulnerable

♠ A ♥ K Q J 7 ♦ J 9 7 3 ♣ A 9 6 5

Deal 3

South dealer
East-West vulnerable

♠ A K Q 8 3 ♥ 10 ♦ A 9 8 ♣ A J 7 4

Deal 4

West dealer
Both sides vulnerable

♠ A 10 8 5 4 2 ♥ 6 4 3 ♦ Q 10 8 2 ♣ —

Deal 5

North dealer
North-South vulnerable

♠ 10 7 5 ♥ 10 9 6 2 ♦ A 7 ♣ A K Q 6

Deal 6

East dealer
East-West vulnerable

♠ 9 ♥ A J 8 3 ♦ Q 10 4 ♣ A K 9 7 6

Deal 7

South dealer
Both sides vulnerable

♠ J 10 9 7 6 ♥ K 8 ♦ K ♣ A K 10 6 4

Deal 8

West dealer
Neither side vulnerable

♠ — ♥ 9 8 6 3 ♦ A 10 8 7 2 ♣ K Q 10 6

Deal 9

North deals and opens one club
East-West vulnerable

♠ K J 5 ♥ K J 9 2 ♦ A Q 9 6 4 ♣ 4

Deal 10

East dealer
Both sides vulnerable

♠ A J 3 ♥ A ♦ Q 6 ♣ A 9 7 6 5 4 3

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