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Crime and Punishment (and, just perhaps, Deterrence)

“Once upon a time and a very good time it was there was a moocow coming down along the road...”. The very good time for the bridge world was from 1976 until 1986, when Jaime Ortiz-Patiño, President of the World Bridge Federation, was the moocow coming down along the road. Jimmy was Swiss, not Irish, and ruled the WBF with an iron fist; he treated the WBF Appeals Committee and its Credentials Committee as his personal fiefdoms. Jimmy made it his personal goal, among other achievements, to clean up the game. To that end, he ensured that the Manoppo brothers never again played together in a WBF event after being revealed as cheats, that Terence Reese did not captain the Great Britain team in international play, and that Alan Cokin was not permitted to be on the premises of the World Championships in Miami in 1986. Before (and, in most jurisdictions, during) those years, the preferred *modus operandi* entailed taking an offending pair aside and advising them that they could no longer play together or they'd have to face the consequences. One prominent New York player was running out of partners when he was told not to play with his fourth different partner, even though none of them was ever publicly accused, let alone convicted.

Contrast those incidents with the events of the mid twenty-teens when Fisher-Schwartz, Fantoni-Nunes, Smirnov-Piekarek, Elinescu-Wladow, and Balicki-Zmudzinski were all publicly accused (by other players) and outed, with mixed results at hearings, trials, Credentials Committees and appeals (with one appeal going to a state court and another to the Court of Arbitration for Sport). Of those, only Piekarek-Smirnov ever admitted wrongdoing (even though a trifle mildly, considering their crimes).

Today we have two World-Champion players who've confessed to self-kibitzing, effectively solo cheating, and perhaps a host of others who are suspected, but not yet officially caught or revealed. The situation with online bridge had become so dire that online tournament organisers, Bid72 (of the Alt events), the Online Contract Bridge League, and Bridgehouse, formed a Credentials Advisory Team to notify them when a player “should not participate in their events due to suspicions of ethical misbehaviour.” The current CAT members are Sabine Auken, Boye Brogeland, David Gold, Joe Grue, Roger Lee and Brian Platnick, all players of impeccable honour and impressive credentials. Boye Brogeland is now known as “The Sheriff” for his leading part in unveiling the cheats in 2015 and Roger Lee is one of the principals in BBO's fight to rid the site of cheats.

In a disturbing, yet hopeful, interview in Daily Bulletin #3 of the Minor Alt I, Sept. 3, 2020 (see <https://www.netbridge.online/Minor-Alt-I/index.php/>),

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conducted by Christina Lund Madsen, David Gold reveals the extent of the problem and the goals of the CAT. Here are some of the highlights of that interview:



David Gold

- *How does the CAT identify the suspects?*

A player becomes of interest either by a rumour, tip, suspect hand(s), suspect result(s) or highlighted by one of our statisticians. At this point, we open a file on the player. Our aim is as much to prove they are innocent as anything else. Then, we do the work.

- *How do you determine which players have violated the codes of ethical conduct?*

Once we have done enough work to reach a conclusion we vote on the player. If we all vote, five of seven is enough (CAT used to consist of seven members and now has six. — CLM). I do not wish to reveal all our methods because it is important that we stay ahead of the cheats, but we have teams of analysts, we have statisticians. We do a lot of work – this is taken very seriously.

- *Are there different kinds of violations?*

Mostly we are dealing with players who have gained an advantage. Most commonly by self-kibitzing. However, in some cases there are pairs communicating with each other – perhaps by phone/Zoom or simply playing in the same room. We are able to tell whether it is self-kibitzing or a ‘colluding pair’ – colluding pairs do not declare so well since they cannot see opponents’ cards.

- *Can you give an example about a case without mentioning names?*

We have seen a case where we believe that one player actually operated both accounts sometimes. We believe this because player A is world class and player B is known to be weak, yet plays as well as player A. Both player A and B are double dummy. Of course, it could just be that they both self-kibitz but, when you see as many hands as we do, you start to get a good feel for what the actual scenario is.

- *What do you do after determining players are guilty of unethical behavior? Do you confront them, do you inform their partners and teammates?*

We simply advise ALT/OCBL/Bridgehouse if there is too much risk to the integrity of the event, should this person play. We aim to only inform the person but it can be hard for their teammates not to find out.

- *How many players did you so far advise the organizers not to invite?*

Twenty-nine, I think.

- *Have they followed your advice?*

Let’s just say that those three events are very clean now. I highly recommend them.

- *How do the players react to your assumption that they have been cheating?*

Most seem to quietly accept it. Some threaten us with legal action. Not much in between that.

- *Do you cooperate with other partners (NBOs, BBO, other investigative committees)?*

CAT advises ALT, OCBL and Bridgehouse. That is all I am at liberty to say.

- *How often have you acquitted potential suspects?*

A few, but so far, often where there is smoke there is fire, in truth.

- *How sure are you of the ones you believe are violators of ethical conduct and how can you be convinced enough to jeopardize fellow bridge players’ livelihood in some cases?*

I believe we have made no mistakes, but we are human and it is, of course, possible. I hope not.

- *How do you estimate the percentage of top players who cheated in the events you have investigated?*

One in five or so.

- *How do you see the future for players who have fallen for the temptation to cheat in online events?*

If they confess – rosy. If not – then the problem is that they will struggle to be accepted by the bridge community.

- *How many have confessed to their wrongdoings privately?*

Prefer not to say.

- *What has surprised you the most about online cheating?*

I am not at all surprised it occurred. However, some of the people who did it have shocked me to the core.

- *Did you have cases where you or the other members had to set aside personal feelings?*

Many – these people are all friends with at least one member of the committee. If it is too hard on anyone, they can take a back seat on that case. In practice we have all managed to stay as impartial as possible.

Speaking for myself I have looked like a fool once – defending a friend but I had to shut up eventually.

- *How do you estimate the current status of online cheating?*

Now, it is very rare for these three events. The ALT is the most exposed due to allowing kibitzers (to be clear I hope ALT keeps this – to me, the avid players being able to watch and enjoy is at least as important as the experience for the players taking part). Some people who are out of the social loop and do not realise that they will get caught have tried their luck – they found out that was a bad idea.

- *Have you been part of finding players close to you guilty of ethical violations and how has that been for you?*

Yes, I have. It has been hard, but the bottom line is the same. Come clean and we can go for a beer the same day. (End of interview.)

There are four disturbing aspects and one encouraging aspect of this interview.

Firstly, the numbers of players suspected of cheating – according to Gold, (a.) there are 29 players who the CAT has advised the organizers not to invite and (b.) that 20% of all players were suspect at the start of the Alts.

Secondly, these suspected cheats have suffered no consequences other than to be disinvented to play in these online events. As we see now, some have even engaged legal advice and are threatening to sue.

Thirdly, only five of seven original members were required for the CAT to act. Surely, the decision to recommend action should be a unanimous opinion before they suggest not inviting someone.

Finally, different players have different thresholds of belief in guilt. Just because a Credentials Advisory Team advises against inviting a certain player, should that advice be accepted willy-nilly? As an example of this, recently, all nine members of the ACBL's Anti-Cheating Commission believed that, on the evidence, a pair was cheating. They apprised the WBF's Credentials Committee of this and asked them not to authorize that pair to compete in the World Championships. The evidence submitted did not reach the WBF's Credentials Committee's threshold for action, so the pair was allowed to compete. The point is, that just because one group believes a case is clear does not mean that it actually is, and another group might well see it differently. We used to see this all the time when cases were brought before committees at bridge tournaments (in the good old days when the authorities allowed their TDs to be over-ruled by a committee).

The encouraging part of the interview is that Gold believes the events to be clean now. We wonder if

any of the 'official' bridge organizations (such as the WBF and its Zonal Organizations, like the EBL, and the National Bridge Organizations) or even other 'unofficial' ones, such as the Reynolds Knockouts run by TD Tom Reynolds on BBO, will take advantage of the CAT's expertise.

Since this interview was published, Brian Platnick has decided to leave the CAT. His post on Bridge Winners explains why...<http://bridgewinners.com/article/view/the-truth-about-cats-and-dogs/>

It is always refreshing and instructive to listen to or read Boye Brogeland's opinions on cheating, its prevention, and punishment for those who transgress.

A Roadmap



Boye Brogeland

When asked on Bridge Winners about a roadmap for the ACBL to clean up the game, here's what Brogeland had to say:

“My roadmap is simple when it comes to cheating: make an independent WACA (World Anti-Cheating Agency) or AACA (ACBL Anti-Cheating Agency), give it real teeth, and fix the problem. Part of fixing the problem is to find a way out of the legal maze which too many bridge organizations are trapped in.

I have seen the evidence and believe my eyes instead of what a bullshit lawyer is telling me. If CAS finds Fantunes guilty or not, or Fisher and Schwartz if they had chosen the same route as Fantunes, doesn't change my view of them being guilty of cheating at bridge. It might change yours and other lawyers' view on it – nothing surprises me anymore about bridge lawyers.” (End of Brogeland's statement.)

Magnus Olafsson of Iceland, a well-known TD, has written a proposed methodology to catch cheats. It appeared on Bridge Winners on September 12, 2020. <http://bridgewinners.com/article/view/dealing-with-online-cheating-a-proposed-methodology/>

Dealing With Online Cheating: A Proposed Methodology



Magnus Olafsson

Introduction

The bridge community is being overwhelmed with cases of allegations of online cheating, both “self-kibitzing” (the player can see all four hands) and “partner-kibitzing” (the player can only see partner’s hand). The amount of work, mainly voluntary, involved in observing, analyzing, prosecuting and defending such allegations is considerable.

It has become clear that it is vital to develop and define (and hopefully agree upon) the most appropriate methodology to deal with such allegations. A number of ideas have been tabled, such as the constructive methodology of “control actions” and “superpar” used by Kit Woolsey, and the data crunching and statistical analysis used by Nicolas Hammond (and others). Most likely, the eventually accepted optimal methodology will consist of a combination of tools.

In particular, we need to be able to deal with Boye Brogeland’s perhaps greatest concern, in his words: “to look at non-obvious actions and the success rate of these... when players and pairs choose non-logical actions, which in addition have a great success rate (the actions are deemed as non-logical because you would expect them to have a lot worse success rate than 50%), we should raise an eyebrow.”

In this article, I’m proposing a methodology based on answers to two simple questions – answers that can only be yes (Y) or no (N). This method is no magic tool; it doesn’t produce smoking guns. It’s simply an attempt to frame in the analysis: to put a structure on the allegations and assist us in deciding how valid the allegations are. But I believe it’s a practical method to deal with Boye’s concerns.

The Yes-No Questions

For every board under consideration, we ask two questions that should have only a clear yes (Y) or no (N) answer. First, we need to identify the optimal playing

decision (OPD) and then we ask: did the player make that play? Y or N? The OPD is based on the assumption that the player can see either all four hands or only two. Clearly, the OPD can be different for self-kibitzing and partner-kibitzing.

Second question: is the OPD the logical and natural play? Y or N? Example: the opponents in a pairs tournament bid INT-4NT; P; you’re on lead with AKQ2-xxx-xxx-xxx and you know partner has J3 in spades. Here the OPD is the two of spades. If the player makes that play, we have the answers YN: it was the successful decision but it wasn’t all that logical.

The answers to these two questions give us four possible outcomes: YY, YN, NN and NY. Each outcome has an important meaning:

YY: The player made the OPD and it’s the natural thing to do.

YN: The player made the OPD, but it’s not logical to do so.

NN: The player didn’t find the best play and what he did was illogical.

NY: The player didn’t find the optimal play, but what he did was logical.

Clearly, the YN category is the one that interests us most: that’s where you catch the cheaters.

(There are examples of the answer to the second question being unclear but these are relatively few and, here, the accused player should be given the benefit of the doubt.)

It is of considerable interest to have a fair picture of the frequency of each category in the general bridge playing population. But we need to realize that, first, the pattern will be different for self-kibitzing and partner-kibitzing, and, second, that the pattern will depend on the strength of the player. The beginner will have a lot of Ns in the second part, while the world-class player will have a lot of Ys.

In analyzing data generated by the play of both world-class players and beginners, I have identified simple but strong patterns: while weak players have a wide range of YN numbers, world class players have a very stable 1-2% values. In other words, they rarely make an illogical decision that turns out to be successful. Five years ago, I spent hundreds of hours analyzing BZ data and they had a YN value of nearly 5%.

Lessons from Kit Woolsey’s “Blind Leads”

Kit Woolsey’s wonderful “Blind Leads” BW article of August 20, and the follow up “Confession” article of August 22, gives a valuable lesson here. A quick YES/NO analysis shows that the player made the OPD in all 25 cases (here, clearly, we have the “partner kibitzing” scenario rather than “self kibitzing” one), but in roughly

50% of the cases it was not the natural or logical decision.

So, here, we have YN of 50% – way above the expected 2% value. Does this then imply that the pair was cheating? No, not at all. This simply shows ever so clearly the weakness of cherry-picking. This pair played something like 1000 boards in the three lengthy Team Trials, so the 12 YN boards are merely 2.4% of the total (assuming they were on lead 50% of the time) – a respectable number.

I repeat: this methodology will not produce smoking guns. But I believe it will help us in narrowing down our options. (*End of Olafsson's statement.*)

Eldad Ginossar's opinions are, like Boye Brogeland's, always interesting, if occasionally a bit more severe than Brogeland's (I am nearly always in agreement with Eldad). Like Brogeland, Ginossar is a member of the ACBL Anti-Cheating Commission. This article appeared on Bridge Winners on September 25, 2020.

The 2020 Online Cheating Scandal



Eldad Ginossar

The strength of a nation derives from the integrity of the home – Confucius

Since March 2020, more than 30 top bridge experts have been found cheating in high-level online tournaments. Most of these players “self-kibitzed.” With a different device, under an anonymous or fake account, these players log in to ostensibly kibitz their own game, which enables them to see all 52 cards. Some top pairs cheated collusively by communicating their hands to their partners. More high-level cheaters probably have still escaped detection.

In the cases completed so far, the evidence of cheating has been indisputable. In each “self-kibitzing” case, we have detailed hand records combined with electronic

evidence. In the cases of collusion, we have overwhelming evidence based on countless hands, totally unnatural plays which perfectly match partner's actual hand.

Many of these cheaters are extremely well-known players: NABC winners, Europeans medallists, world champions, and even bridge officials. Many have their own Wikipedia page, and thus enjoy the respect and admiration of bridge fans and students around the world. These players violated some combination of Laws 16, 73, and 74 as well as basic laws of ethics – simply to enhance performance for their personal gain. They do it for the most basic and crass reasons: money, status, ego.

Top players are not the only cheats in bridge. Cheating is everywhere, from major events to the local bridge club. Whenever and wherever cheats appear, they leave behind a toxic trail, poisoning our community and threatening to ruin our much-loved game. However, the recent spike in online cheating by top players poses a special danger to bridge. This has become a scandal of historic proportions which threatens to destroy the image of bridge, a game which is already struggling to survive.

When bridge organizations are slow to react to point-blank cheating, then concerned individuals have to step in and volunteer to lead the fight (e.g., the Credential Advisory Team, the CAT). These individuals share the passion, devotion, motivation and, indeed, sometimes an obsession, to protect the integrity of the game. But the constant around-the-clock and around-the-world fighting takes a huge personal toll on individuals who cannot succeed forever on their own. Bridge needs the help and resources of organizations. (*End of Ginossar's statement.*)

The Official Stance

Some National Bridge Organizations are taking steps to curb online cheating. Some examples:

From the English Bridge Union's website:

“The Laws and Ethics Committee has created an Online Ethics Investigation Group to examine cases of suspected cheating and provide the EBU's Prosecution Panel with information to help them when cases arise from this. The group is headed by Sarah Bell and currently comprises David Burn, Joe Fawcett, Ben Norton, Peter Clinch, Stephen Kennedy, Neeraj Tanna and Michael Byrne.

The EBU Disciplinary Panel has also been developing sentencing guidance for national use, which may be helpful for other bodies involved in any disciplinary cases of this sort. It establishes the standard sanction for cheating as an individual to be three years' membership suspension and, for any pair that colludes,

the standard sanction will be ten years' suspension from membership. The names and sanctions should be published on the front page of the website.

An admission of guilt will usually result in a reduction of a third of the appropriate sanction for the offence as set out in the Disciplinary Panel's sentencing guidance. This reduction adheres to the advice set out by the Sentencing Council of England and Wales."

The Canadian Bridge Federation has created a similar body and is currently developing standard practices and sanctions.

The ACBL, as much as any bridge organization, pursues, catches, prosecutes and convicts the cheats in its events. It created the Ant-Cheating Commission after the 2015 revelations, has a National Recorder to receive complaints about unethical behaviour, has a 72-page Code of Disciplinary Regulations and publishes a list of players "Currently Under Discipline". The list includes players who are suspended, expelled, on probation, who have resigned to avoid possible disciplinary action and those who are prohibited from playing in specific events. Notable players currently under suspension include Sylvia Shi and Kay Schulle, both Women's World Team Champions. Expelled players include Steve Sion, Claudio Nunes, Fulvio Fantoni, Lotan Fisher, Ron Schwartz and Andrea Buratti (Alan Cokin, Sion's partner, and Massimo Lanzarotti, Buratti's partner, have been reinstated).

In 2019, the ACBL Board of Directors voted to remove titles from pairs expelled from the organization for collusive cheating. Further, the approved motion strips any NABC+ titles and second-place finishes held by such pairs, or by teams including such pairs, to the first date of any recorded partnership of those pairs in the ACBL. Such titles and second-place finishes will be recorded in official ACBL records as "Vacated."

The WBF's Management Committee:

1. reaffirms its strong revulsion, unwavering rejection and firm condemnation of this kind of aberrant and unacceptable behaviour which, wherever and whenever it occurs, causes great harm to bridge and threatens its credibility;

2. reiterates its full support of the players in the fight against cheating and improper behaviour, adopting all measures needed to prevent and to repress these actions;

3. remarks that participation in WBF events is subject to the approval of the Credentials Committee, which carefully considers all submitted requests regarding players involved in suspicious cases, wherever and whenever they occurred." (*End of Official Stance.*)

Ron Tacchi's views are always presented with his trademarked, legendary, sense of humour. We'll close with Ron's take...

He That Is Without Sin



Ron Tacchi

The headline above is part of a quote from a book and my internet researches suggest that Fox News reports it as non-fiction. The full quotation is: "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her:"

There are websites which appear to delight in casting verbal stones at some weaker members of our fraternity who have exposed their frailties. My suggestion is that should any of those who pronounce upon those less fortunate than themselves, but have a regular partnership, should realise that they themselves are guilty of cheating (*This is surely hyperbole – I hope. One cannot compare the behaviour of a random, ethical, expert partnership to the evil of, say, Fantoni/Nunes. – Ed.*). They may not mean to cheat, they may even take enormous steps to try not to cheat. But the truth of the matter is that any regular partnership will be full of unauthorised information. It cannot be otherwise; we all have idiosyncrasies of which our partner will be aware. Partners, themselves, may not even be aware of them, but you will. Such unauthorised information will, from time to time, affect one's behaviour no matter how hard one tries to ignore it.

As an example, one of my partners has a tendency to a certain habit when he is weak for his bid, I know this and try and to take no notice. I am probably fairly successful in ignoring it but how do I react to the reverse side of this coin when he does not act in this manner, almost certainly less so as there is no 'flag' to remind me that I have been given unauthorised information.

It may well be that some correlate cheating with murder, in the sense that there are different degrees attracting different sentences on being found guilty. There may be others who equate being a cheat with being a virgin – you either are or you are not.

The only upside to this current brouhaha with cheating is that my new book, *Cheating for Dummies*, has a huge pre-order, so great that the sequel, *Cheating for Declarers*, has already been commissioned.



online bridge events organized by bid72 & netbridge.online

Christina Lund Madsen, Hellerup, Denmark
Mark Horton, Shrewsbury, Shrops., England
Martin Cantor, Hamm, North Rhine-
Westphalia, Germany
Toine van Hoof, Utrecht, Netherlands

The Qualification

Lombard's Lambada (Lund Madsen)

Twenty-four teams of four to ten players entered the MontréalAlt Qualification. They played 12 rounds of 14-boards in a Swiss-Teams format. The top eight teams qualified for the MontréalAlt itself, with the top two having their entries paid.

Team Lombard (Bert Geens, Rens Philipsen, Jamilla Spangenberg, Dennis Stuurman, Wouter van den Hove, Ruud Von Seida, Chris Westerbeek, Dafydd Williams, Jasper Williams) danced through the MontréalAlt Qualification to win by more than 10 VP ahead of Sweden Mixed (Nils Åhlen, Tommy Bergdahl, Anders Eriksson, Daniel Eriksson, Eva Gunnarsson, Malin Helin, Fredrik Jarlvik, Emma Övelius, Ylva Pyykkö, Tatyana Trendafilova) in second place. Third went to Amateurs (Hailong Ao, Franco Baseggio, Ira Chorush, Jiang Gu, Alex Kolesnik, Ai-Tai Lo, Harrison Luba). The other qualifiers were Israel, Transnationals, McAvity, Bridge Too Far and Hungary-Galim. (Their team rosters, as well as those for all the other teams, can be found at <https://bid72.com/events> in the MontréalAlt Qualification Pre-Bulletin.)

Board 13. Dealer North. Both Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
v. de Hoek	Westerbeek	Witvliet	D. Williams
—	1♥	Pass	2NT ¹
Pass	3NT ²	Pass	5♣ ³
Pass	5NT ⁴	Pass	6♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

1. 8+ HCP, 4+ hearts
2. Spade void, minimum
3. Exclusion RKCB
4. Two key cards and the heart queen

In Round 10, Lombard faced another Dutch team, Bid72, and Lombard won the right to gloat with a victory of 46-22 IMPs. These 17 IMPs came in handy:

Good agreements are worth many IMPs; the contract was makeable on any lead, admittedly sometimes with delicate play.

East led the two of diamonds, so declarer did not have to worry about finding the queen. Declarer, Chris Westerbeek, World Junior Champion from 2012, won in hand and ruffed a club at trick two. Declarer played a heart to the ace, seeing the 4-0 split, ruffed another club, cashed the ace of spades, pitching a club, ruffed a spade in hand and ruffed his last club with dummy's last trump. To avoid tapping himself, he carefully played a diamond. West ruffed in and played the king of clubs, but declarer ruffed that, pulled the last two trumps and claimed plus 1430.

At the other table, six hearts was also reached:

West	North	East	South
Spangenberg	Steenbakkers	J. Williams	Ijsselmuiden
—	1♥	Pass	2NT ¹
Pass	3♣ ²	Pass	4♣ ³
Pass	6♥	Pass	Pass

1. 8+ HCP, 4+ hearts
2. Unbalanced invitation
3. Shortage in clubs and 11+ HCP

Three clubs was conservative in my opinion but, after four clubs, North (perhaps lacking the methods to ask for key cards outside the spade suit after partner had shown short clubs) decided to jump to slam.

East led the ace of clubs. Declarer ruffed, played the ace of spades and ruffed a spade. Another club ruff followed, and a heart to the ace revealed the 4-0 trump break. Declarer played the king of diamonds and a diamond to dummy's jack, ruffed by West. She returned a brave spade from her king (a heart would have worked as well) and, when North ruffed, he had no way to recover. He pulled trumps and ended up losing a diamond and a club at the end for down two (he could have secured down one by ruffing his last club first).



Nine Men's Morris (Horton)

Nine Men's Morris (a strategy board game similar to, but less complex than, Go – think in terms of draughts and chess – Ed.) is one of the games that the computer has 'solved' in that, with best play on both sides, it must end in a draw. That is never going to be the situation in bridge, as this deal from the first round of the Montréal aptly illustrate:

Board 3. Dealer South. EW Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
Fredin	Ventin	Gottlieb	Pacareu
—	—	—	1♦
Pass	1♠	Pass	INT
Pass	3NT	Pass	Pass
Pass			

West led the five of hearts. Declarer took East's ten with the king, played a diamond to the ace and ran the jack to West's queen. South won the heart continuation, played the queen of spades, covered by the king and ace, and cashed three diamonds. East pitched the queen of hearts on the fourth round, so declarer took four tricks in the heart suit! With the ace of clubs onside he recorded plus 460.

West	North	East	South
Brenner	Gower	Vilas Boas	Apteker
—	—	—	1♦
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♦
Pass	3♣	Pass	3NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

West led the three of clubs. East won with the jack and switched to the queen of hearts. Declarer won with the ace and went after the diamonds, losing the second round to West's queen. When West returned the two of clubs, declarer again played low from dummy (no doubt thinking that no-one leads from ace-to-four against three notrump) and East won with the queen and played the jack of hearts. Declarer ducked that, so East switched to a club West's ace, representing the setting trick and a gain of 11 IMPs.

Back in the Alt Routine (Cantor)

For the first match back after the short summer break, my co-commentator Peter Lund wanted to kibitz his fellow countryman Dennis Bilde, which had the added spice of it being the match between the teams Vinita and Gupta, captained by wife and husband Vinita and Naren Gupta respectively. We didn't have to wait long for the action to start.

Board 2. Dealer East. NS Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
D. Bilde	de Wijs	Jepsen	Muller
—	—	1♠	Pass
INT	Pass	2NT ¹	Pass
3♣ ²	Pass	3♥ ³	Pass
3NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

1. 6 spades and 4 of either minor, 16+ HCP
2. Asks
3. 16-18, 4 clubs

De Wijs led the four of hearts and success depended on the spade finesse (and more). Not today, and a quick one down. In the other room:

West	North	East	South
Lorenzini	V. Gupta	T. Bessis	M. Bilde
—	—	1♠	Pass
3♦ ¹	Pass	3♠ ²	Pass
4♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

1. Limit in diamonds
2. Natural, forcing

Morten Bilde attacked with the jack of hearts. Bessis ruffed the third round, then played a low trump toward dummy's ten, ducked by South. A club to the ace was followed by the ace and queen of trumps. South won, to switch to a

diamond; a second diamond was cashed for a club discard, and declarer breathed a sigh of relief when the club queen popped up on the next round. Ten IMPs were well-deserved for getting to the better game. (*Not clear. – Ed.*)

It Don't Mean a Thing if It Ain't Got That Swing (Cantor)

Board 8. Dealer West. Neither Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
Korczyn	de donder	Porat	Bahbout
1♥	3♠	4NT ¹	Pass
5♣ ²	Pass	5NT ³	Pass
6♦ ⁴	Pass	6♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		

1. RKCB
2. 1 or 4 key cards
3. King ask; guarantees all key cards and the heart queen
4. King of diamonds

That was a comfortable auction to a comfortable spot, making an overtrick. At the other table, there was a higher-level pre-empt:

West	North	East	South
Arts	Warszawski	de Roos	Israeli
1♥	4♠	4NT ¹	Pass
5♣ ²	Pass	5NT ³	Pass
6♣ ⁴	Pass	6♦ ⁵	Pass
7♣	Pass	7♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		

1. RKCB
2. 1 or 4 key cards
3. King ask; guarantees all key cards and the heart queen
4. Either the club king or both other kings
5. Bid seven if you have both other kings

All 32 Wests played a heart slam, 21 of them the small slam and 11 the grand.

The Barnsley Chop (Horton)

You might be forgiven for thinking that my title reflects the use of a cunning technique in some martial art but, in fact, it refers to a particular type of lamb chop, favoured by serious trenchermen. The word chop has

other connotations – I'll leave you to judge which might be most appropriate as I revel in what happened when A Bridge Too Far faced Barnsley in Round 4.

Board 3. Dealer South. EW Vul.

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

At one table, South was allowed to declare four hearts unmolested for plus 420. At the other table...

West	North	East	South
Cope	Kemeny	Crouch	Trenka
—	—	—	1♥
1♠	3♥	3♠	4♣
4♠	Pass	Pass	5♥
Double	Pass	Pass	Pass

West led the king of spades. Declarer ruffed and played a club for the ten and jack. Back came a spade and declarer could not avoid the loss of a heart and a diamond for minus 100 and the loss of 11 IMPs.

If you think that West's double strongly suggested that he held the missing kings, after ruffing the spade, declarer could have played two rounds of hearts, putting West on lead. West could not have played a spade, so might have tried a desperate diamond, but would probably have fallen back on a club, allowing declarer to set up three club winners for dummy's losing diamonds.

Hobson's Choice (Horton)

As the last qualifying round got under way, I opted for a match that might determine who took the eighth place, Black vs. Macavity.

Board 2. Dealer East. NS Vul.

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

Continued on page 12...



IBPA Column Service

Tim Bourke, Canberra



Members may use these deals as they wish, without attributing the author or IBPA.

1017. Dealer North. EW Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
—	1♥	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♦	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			

This deal was played in four spades in a team match after an identical auction at each table. Both West players led a low trump.

At the first table, declarer played too quickly. After winning the jack of trumps at the first trick, declarer threw a low club on the ace of hearts, ruffed a heart in hand, then ruffed a low club in dummy. Declarer then ruffed another heart and drew West's three remaining trumps, exhausting himself of the suit. A low diamond to the three, ten and East's queen followed. East cashed the queen of hearts, upon which West discarded his king of diamonds. East shifted to the jack of clubs. The defenders took the rest to defeat the contract by two tricks.

At the other table, declarer paused to form a plan. As entries to hand were scarce, instead of letting dummy's jack of trumps hold the first trick declarer overtook the jack of trumps with his queen. He ruffed a club in dummy, discarded a club on the ace of hearts and ruffed a heart back to hand. Declarer drew West's remaining trumps and continued with a low diamond to the

three, ten and East's queen. East exited with the jack of clubs and West took two club tricks. After ruffing the next club, declarer led his jack of diamonds to the king and dummy's ace. The ten of diamonds took the thirteenth, and contract-fulfilling, trick.

1018. Dealer South. Both Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
—	—	—	2♣
Pass	2♦	Pass	2NT
Pass	3NT	Pass	Pass
Pass			

West led the queen of spades. East won with the ace and returned the three of spades, which in declarer's mind marked the suit as originally 5=2. East would have carded differently with three or four spades. Declarer took trick two with the king of spades.

Declarer counted only six top tricks. One thought was to cash the ace and king of diamonds, hoping for a singleton or doubleton queen. As the chance of that happening was a little less than one in three, declarer looked for a better option.

If the spades were 5=2 as supposed, the chance that East had the queen of diamonds was, on a vacant places argument, an eleven to eight favourite (nearly a 60% chance). So, declarer continued by cashing the ace and king of hearts and led his nine of diamonds to dummy's ten. East took his queen of diamonds and shifted to a

low club. Declarer rose with the ace of clubs then led the four of diamonds to dummy's seven to cash the queen of hearts for his sixth trick. The ace, king and jack of diamonds made nine.

A point of interest is that it would have been wrong to cash a high diamond before leading the nine of diamonds to dummy's ten. That would have tangled the entries.

1019. Dealer South. NS Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
—	—	—	1♠
2♥ ¹	Pass	2NT ²	3♠
Pass	4♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			

1. Hearts and a minor
2. Asks for the minor

West led the queen of diamonds. Declarer noted that West's second suit was almost certainly diamonds, since there were more diamonds outstanding and on the basis of the opening lead. Declarer thus deduced that West's most likely shape was 1=5=5=2 and decided to play accordingly.

Declarer won the first trick with his king of diamonds, cashed the ace of trumps and led a low club to dummy's king. He discarded his low heart on the ace of diamonds, then ruffed a diamond. The moment of truth had arrived: declarer cashed the ace of clubs and was relieved to see that West followed suit. Declarer now ruffed a club in dummy to lead dummy's remaining diamond.

East saw that there was no point in ruffing this and so discarded a club. Declarer ruffed this low for his eighth trick, leaving himself with three trumps headed by the king. Declarer led the king of hearts to West's ace and then queen. East was now in a similar dilemma as when the last diamond had been led from dummy: if he had ruffed West's exit, declarer would have discarded his club loser and made two further trump tricks, as he did when East discarded.

Note that if declarer had thrown a club on the ace of diamonds, then West would have taken two heart tricks and East two trump tricks. Also, this deal shows

a danger in making a two-suited overcall if the opponents win the contract: a competent declarer may benefit from knowing the likely distribution.

1020. Dealer North. Both Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
—	1♦	2♥	2♠
Pass	3♠	Pass	4NT
Pass	5♥	Pass	6♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

After East's weak-jump overcall, North planned to raise two spades to three before South had bid (it was, he decided, his least-worst option). South then drove to the spade slam via Key Card Blackwood.

West led the two of hearts, an obvious singleton. Declarer counted ten top tricks. An eleventh could come by finding the queen of clubs, but a twelfth seemed a forlorn hope as the only chance was for that trick was in diamonds. Alas, it seemed that there were not the entries to establish the diamonds unless West had the queen of clubs and did not play it when a low club was led toward dummy – then, if diamonds were 4-3 he would be home.

Rather than rely on that chance, declarer found a neat solution to his problem that relied only on West beginning with four diamonds, a far more likely prospect than East having that length. So, after winning the first trick with the ace of hearts, declarer cashed his king of trumps and then led the queen of diamonds. West covered this with the king and dummy's ace won the trick. After ruffing a diamond in hand, declarer crossed back to dummy with a trump to the ace to ruff a second diamond.

Next, declarer drew West's remaining trumps with the queen and jack, while throwing hearts from the table. Now he was ready for the clever bit of his plan: he led his jack of clubs to dummy's king and then played a diamond, throwing a heart from hand. West had to win the trick but only had clubs left in his hand. It did not matter who held the queen of clubs, or whether East played low or high to the next trick, for declarer would always take two clubs and a diamond to make his contract.

West	North	East	South
Dewit	McIntosh	Vandewiele	King
—	—	1♣ ¹	Pass
1♥ ²	Pass	2♦ ³	Pass
2♥ ⁴	Pass	3♦ ⁵	Pass
3♥ ⁶	Pass	3NT	Pass
Pass	Pass		

1. 2+ clubs
2. 4+ spades
3. Reverse or 6+ clubs and 2spades, 15-17 HCP
4. Relay
5. Reverse
6. Fourth suit

I could easily have written about Board 1, a misdefence in one room and a dubious opening bid in the other but, as one of the contracts was one notrump, I did not want to risk incurring the wrath of David Bird and kept my powder dry in the hope of something better. However, we should note that Macavity picked up 6 IMPs on the board. On this board...

South led the two of hearts. When declarer put in dummy's ten, he was in clover and finished with 10 tricks for plus 430.

West	North	East	South
Black	van Bijsterveldt		Gold
Schols		1♣ ¹	Pass
—	—	2♦	Pass
1♥ ²	Pass	3♦	Pass
2♥ ³	Pass	5♠ ⁴	Double
4♦	Pass	6♦	Pass
Pass ⁵	Pass		
Pass	Pass		

1. 2+ clubs
2. Transfer to spades
3. Fourth-suit forcing
4. Exclusion Key Card Blackwood
5. 1 key card

South led the jack of hearts. Declarer won in dummy and played three rounds of clubs, ruffing with dummy's ten. He then played on trumps for plus 920 and 10 IMPs for Black.

Alt about Undos (Lund Madsen)

In the semifinal between Swelce and Red Devils, a declarer from Red Devils landed in five hearts doubled after this auction:

West	North	East	South
—	4♥	Pass	Pass
Double	Pass	4♠	5♥
Pass	Pass	Double	Pass
Pass	Pass		

East was on lead with ♠ AK1043 ♥ Q42 ♦ 95 ♣ QJ10. He intended to lead the ace of spades but, playing with cards on BBO (as opposed to hand

diagrams), BBO autosorts the suits after a trump suit has been decided. So instead of clicking on the ace of spades, East hit the queen of hearts. He asked for an undo, but was not granted one by declarer.

The semifinal was close, with a victory for Red Devils by 53-40 and the result on the board could potentially have changed the outcome.

After this was reported, the Alt organisers discussed what to do in a situation with an obvious misclick and a refusal of an undo. First of all, we believe it is in the spirit of the game and the Alt to grant an undo if it – as in this case – is an indisputable misclick (*We agree 100% – Ed.*). Secondly, we encourage players to adjust their settings to use hand diagrams rather than pictures of cards to avoid this auto-placing the trump suit (using hand diagrams, BBO does not auto-re-sort your hand). (*You can also set BBO to ask you to confirm that you want to play the chosen card. – Ed.*)

This incident has led the Alt events to amend the rules regarding undos in the following way: to avoid such refusals in obvious misclick-situations (bidding as well as play), each player will get a “challenge” (in the Round Robin as well as the KO phase) whereby the TD can be summoned to the table. Play at the moment of the challenge must be shut down until the TD arrives. The TD is the one who can assess the situation, and if he believes the undo is justified by an obvious misclick that no reasonable player should refuse, the undo has to be accepted by the opponents. The Conditions of Contest of the Alt events will be adjusted to reflect this policy.

“An Amazing Pair of Pushes” – The Final of the Montréal Alt (Van Hoof)

Team Gupta (Bessis/Lorenzini, Gupta/Mahmood and Muller/de Wijs) dominated the Swiss and won their quarterfinal match against Macavity quite comfortably. After a narrow escape in the semifinal against Koepfel, they faced the Red Devils (Bahbout/De Donder, Caputo/Van der Vorst, Coenraets/Engel and Arts/De Roos) in the final. The Belgians qualified as eighth for the KO phase and subsequently beat Black and then Swelce.

Reaching the final probably came as a surprise to them because they could only field one regular partnership. In the first half Geert Arts and Steve De Roos played in the open room against Thomas Bessis and Cédric Lorenzini, while Steven De Donder partnered Zvi Engel in the closed room against Naren Gupta and Zia Mahmood.

Here are the two deals:

Board 12. Dealer West. NS Vul.

♠ A 7
 ♥ A 7 3
 ♦ A K J 8 2
 ♣ K 6 4

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

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

 ♠ K J 9 6 3 2
 ♥ Q 5
 ♦ 7
 ♣ A Q J 8

West	North	East	South
Arts	Lorenzini	de Roos	T. Bessis
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♥ ¹
Pass	3NT	Pass	4♠ ²
Pass	5NT ³	Pass	7♣
Pass	Pass	Pass	

1. 5+ spades
2. 4+ clubs
3. Pick a slam

West	North	East	South
Mahmood	De Donder	Gupta	Engel
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♥ ¹
Pass	3♠ ²	Pass	4♣
Pass	4♦	Pass	4NT ³
Pass	5♦ ⁴	Pass	7♣
Pass	Pass	Pass	

1. 5+ spades
2. No fit
3. RKCB
4. 1 or 4 key cards with clubs as trump

Impressive bidding by both sides and, in the second instance, the grand seemed a slightly better proposition.

Against Bessis, West led a low heart to the ace in dummy. Bessis cashed the ace and king of spades and played the nine of spades. West showed out and did not have an intermediate trump, so declarer could ruff with the four of clubs. He drew trumps and claimed.

Engel's task was much harder when West led a traditional trump. Declarer played low from dummy, East inserted the ten, and South won with the ace. He crossed to the ace of spades and played the seven of spades, seeing the ten appear from East. Engel spent several minutes weighing his chances. He could play the king of spades and ruff a spade in dummy (needing to ruff with the king if West followed). Even if he was allowed to ruff a spade with a low trump, he would then be forced to overtake the king of clubs, so this play would require the clubs to break (unless ten of spades had been a falsecard and the spade queen was due to drop under the king).

Engel chose the probably best and, here, winning line of finessing. When the jack of spades held, he could soon claim his 2140.

After the next deal, Warren Spector commented on BBO: "An amazing pair of pushes."

Board 13. Dealer North. Both Vul.

♠ K J 7 5 2
 ♥ A 10 9 8
 ♦ 3
 ♣ A 6 2

 ♠ A 6 3
 ♥ 7 5
 ♦ K J 6 4
 ♣ Q 9 8 5

 ♠ 9
 ♥ 6 4 3 2
 ♦ Q 9 8 7 5 2
 ♣ 7 4

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

Both North/South pairs drove to the six-spade slam that required finding the queen of clubs. Both Lorenzini and De Donder went out to discover the count, which made them none the wiser. They had to guess and both guessed wrong for a push.

Defence Is Tough – Most of the Time (Cantor)

From the second half of the final...

Board 20. Dealer West. Both Vul.

♠ 5
 ♥ J 9 8 7 6 4 2
 ♦ Q 5 3 2
 ♣ 5

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

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

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

West	North	East	South
Arts	Lorenzini	de Roos	T. Bessis
4♠	Pass	Pass	Double
Pass	5♥	Double	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Here's a tough defensive problem. You have doubled because of your two quick tricks, and it is certainly right to lead your ace-king this time before the mice get at them. When partner discards on the second round, what do you play at trick three? Does the discard make a difference? (*I should think so! With a trump, West should discard a discouraging spade; with no hearts, he should discard an encouraging spade, in this case, perhaps the ace? – Ed.*)

If partner has nine spades, there is no trick there, so you need a diamond ruff. If partner has eight spades you can beat the contract by one trick by playing a spade, but if he also has a heart (North surely has at least six of them), then a diamond will take it two off. Since your side can probably make 620 in four spades, it is not unreasonable to go for the diamond ruff, and that is what de Roos did.

He was disappointed. Arts had discarded the three of clubs on the second diamond, but I am not sure what discard would say, "I don't have a trump, play a spade." The auction was friskier at the other table, where it looks like nobody was sure who was sacrificing.

West	North	East	South
<i>De Donder</i>	<i>de Wijs</i>	<i>Engel</i>	<i>Muller</i>
4♠	Pass	Pass	Double
Pass	5♥	5♠	6♥
6♠	Double	Pass	Pass
Pass			

I was glad to see the final double to stop the merry-go-round as, by this point, I was getting dizzy.

The deal was over quickly: North led his club; South cashed three clubs, then tried the ace of hearts. Declarer ruffed and claimed, for 8 IMPs to Gupta.

THE ALT INVITATIONAL

online bridge events organized by
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Future Alts

- 12–16 October – Minor Alt Invitational III
- 19–23 October – Alt Mixed V
- 16–20 November – Minor Alt Invitational IV
- 16–19 November – TampAlt (Qualification)
- 30 November – 4 December – Alt Mixed VI
- 14–18 December – TampAlt (Main Event)

Eight top teams will compete in the Minor ALTs and up to 16 teams in the Alt Mixed.

All participation is by invitation.

For more info and to apply for an invitation, see alt.bridgeresults.org or write to info@netbridge.online.

The Alt team reserves the right to make changes to the schedule.

Quite Cute
Gabriel Chagas,
Rio de Janeiro



I found this deal, maybe not spectacular, but quite cute.

As East, you hold: ♠ A 7 6 ♥ A Q 2 ♦ 10 2 ♣ 8 6 5 3 2

The bidding goes:

West	North	East	South
<i>Chagas</i>	—	<i>Ozdil</i>	INT
—	—	—	INT
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♥
Pass	3NT	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Partner leads the five of diamonds, attitude leads, and you see:

North (Dummy)

♠ Q J 10 3
♥ J 6
♦ K Q 9 4
♣ 10 9 7

East (You)

♠ A 7 6
♥ A Q 2
♦ 10 2
♣ 8 6 5 3 2

Dummy plays the four. My partner, Melih Ozdil, played the two! Declarer won with the six, cashed the ace of diamonds, and played a spade to the queen. Ozdil won with the ace and played the queen of hearts. Curtains!

The whole deal was:

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

Had Ozdil played the ten, third-hand high, on my lead, declarer could have taken four club tricks, four diamond tricks and one trick in the majors to make his contract. That was very imaginative defence.



We all know the Emperor's Coup, the discarding of an ace in defence to create an entry to the winners in partner's hand. The term was coined by the legendary French player Jacques Blaizot. He named it after Bao Dai, the last emperor of Vietnam. According to Blaizot, as cited by a skeptical Pierre Albarran in his book *Cent Donnes Extraordinaires*, during a rubber at the Dalat Palace the emperor even threw away two aces to defeat a three-notrump contract.

Some of us will also remember that Jean Besse won the Bols Brilliancy Prize in 1982 by executing an Emperor's Coup in the World Championships in Biarritz. However, I doubt that anyone has since seen such a play in real (or online) life. I certainly had not, until I watched the match between Zhao and Donner in the second Minor Alt Invitational of September this year.

Board 1. Dealer North. Neither Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
Grue	Zhao	B. Moss	Muller
—	Pass	1♣ ¹	3♠
4♣ ²	Pass	4NT	Pass
Pass	Pass		

- 1 Strong
- 2. Hearts; positive response

Against the unhappy contract of four notrump, Bauke Muller led the queen of spades. Brad Moss won with the ace and started working on diamonds. He advanced the eight which ran around to the jack(!). North probably hoped that declarer started with two

diamonds and would play a diamond to the ten next. So he was not inclined to return a diamond (which was, double dummy, the only way to beat the contract; South, when in with the ace of diamonds, must push the nine of clubs through).

When North continued with a low club instead, declarer was in business. He let it run to the ten and played the king of hearts. Chen Zhao won with the ace and played another club to East's jack. With no more entries to his hand, Moss nevertheless began to see the light. If South had the bare ace of diamonds left, declarer could cash the ace and king of clubs, discarding dummy's two low hearts, and play a diamond. However, on the second high club, Muller, South, made the brilliant move of jettisoning the ace of diamonds, a classical Emperor's Coup. As planned, Moss pitched the nine of hearts and played a diamond. When South showed out he put up the king, followed by the five of diamonds to North's queen. Zhao cashed the queen of clubs for down one.

At first, I was a disappointed to see GIB indicate that, in spite of this great defence, declarer could have prevailed. Look at the beautiful ending that emerges if declarer throws a diamond instead of the nine of hearts:

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

With the ace of diamonds out of the way, declarer can afford to cash the king of spades. He discards another diamond in dummy and North is squeezed in three suits.

At the other table, Ricco van Prooijen was one of the few who made three notrump. Team Zhao won 10 IMPs on the board, but lost the match by 12.

It must not go unmentioned that, on this deal, Terje Aa (of Team Fredin) made five diamonds doubled for a 12-IMP pickup, that Okay Gur (of Team Obezit Int) won the same number of IMPs for making three notrump doubled, and that Team Robinson produced a bizarre push against Harris by scoring plus 800 for three notrump redoubled just made (Zach Grossack) and minus 800 for three spades doubled minus four (Alon Birman).



The 1st Online World Teams event was one of many popular online tournaments during the Covid-19 trouble time. I played a few matches without any success. This deal came up in the last qualifying match. In it, a fun defence became a lost opportunity for me and a valuable lesson in how the strongest players in the world take advantage of the suit-preference signal in defence.

Maybe you can do better than I did?

Dealer South. EW Vul.

♠ J 10
♥ J 7 5 4
♦ K Q 10 9 3
♣ Q 10

♠ 7 6 3
♥ A K Q 10
♦ 8 7 6 5
♣ 7 6

West	North	East	South
Me			INT
—	—	—	INT
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♠
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

I led the king of hearts: four, two, three. How would you beat three notrump?

It seemed like the best chance to give declarer a guess was to continue with the ten of hearts. Maybe declarer should have played the jack, but he didn't want to give us the hearts in case my holding was king-queen-ten-nine-fourth or -fifth. In any case, declarer followed with a low one from the dummy, letting the ten win the trick: five, eight from East and six from South.

Let's give you another chance to plan the defence; how do you beat three notrump after this start?

Happy for my (daring?) play to succeed, I cashed both the ace and queen of hearts. This was an easy defence, since East got to discard, giving me a signal about what suit I had to play next. My partner followed with the nine of hearts, then discarded the two of clubs, encouraging. I shifted to the seven of clubs: ten, jack, ace.

That was not good enough to beat the contract. The full deal looked like this:

♠ J 10
♥ J 7 5 4
♦ K Q 10 9 3
♣ Q 10

♠ 7 6 3
♥ A K Q 10
♦ 8 7 6 5
♣ 7 6

♠ K 9 5 2
♥ 9 8 2
♦ 4 2
♣ K J 3 2

♠ A Q 8 4
♥ 6 3
♦ A J
♣ A 9 8 5 4

Declarer took his diamonds down to this position:

♠ J 10
♥ —
♦ 9
♣ Q

♠ 7 6 3
♥ —
♦ —
♣ 6

♠ K 9 5
♥ —
♦ —
♣ K

♠ A Q 8
♥ —
♦ —
♣ 9

The nine of diamonds made life hard on East. He had to discard a spade; South got rid of the nine of clubs and I discarded my club. The jack of spades was covered by the king and ace as I followed low. Declarer had to hope his lucky day had come around and played the queen of spades: six, ten, and ... nine. The eight of spades had become a winner and had given declarer his contract after a fun (for South) end position. For us, it was a shame that I didn't have a five-card heart suit to beat the contract.

After the match, I discussed the board with my teammate Barnet Shenkin. He had some interesting views on the defence.

This is definitely a suit-preference position since East had to play low on the hearts. East should be able to signal a suit preference with his first two heart plays. Let's say East first signals standard count with the two, as he did. Then, it is obvious that, at the next trick, the eight would be a signal for clubs and the nine would signal for spades. If I just had given it more thought, I would have seen the squeeze coming up if East had held both kings.

When my partner signalled for clubs, it should have been an option to shift to clubs after the ten of hearts held at trick two. If partner had held the ace, he would have won it and returned a heart. So, I made a mistake

and could only blame myself for not taking advantage when declarer got the hearts wrong.

When I woke up the next day, I still couldn't shake off that missed defence. Then I got to thinking about it some more. What if East had held only two hearts, would it still be suit preference playing two-eight to signal clubs, or is it always count in the first card? It would have been embarrassing if, East had held the eight-two of hearts and the ace of clubs and I had shifted to a club at trick three.

I guess we have a way to go before our defensive signals come up to the leading pairs in the world. Maybe this board can be the occasion to step up the suit-preference signal in defence.



“Come quickly, I am tasting the stars!”

Dom Perignon, French Benedictine monk

Board 19. Dealer South. EW Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
B. Moss	Demuy	Grue	Bathurst
—	—	—	Pass
1♥	Pass	1NT ¹	Pass
2♠ ²	Pass	2NT ³	Pass
3♣ ⁴	Pass	4♦ ⁵	Pass
4♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

1. Game-forcing relay
2. Minimum, four-plus spades
3. Relay
4. 6-4 or 7-4
5. End signal

Shortly before play began today I put the finishing touches to *Misbid These Hands with Me* which should appear sometime next year. That is a good enough reason to open a bottle of champagne, and one is on ice pending the completion of Round 3, where I'm taking a look at Potter versus Donner.

North led the jack of clubs and, when it held, he continued with the queen, covered by the king and ace. When South next played the ten of clubs, declarer ruffed, played a diamond to the queen, pitched a spade on the ace of diamonds (North dropping the king), ruffed a diamond high, played a heart to the jack, ruffed a diamond high, played a heart to the queen and ran the jack of spades to North's king. He was able to claim when the nine of spades was returned.

That looked as though it were worth a drop of the bubbly!

If South had switched to a spade at trick three, declarer could not have scored more than nine tricks. Therefore, declarer should withhold dummy's king of clubs at trick two. Say North switches to a trump. Declarer wins in hand, plays a diamond to the queen, cashes the ace of diamonds, ruffs a diamond high, crosses to dummy with a trump, ruffs a diamond, crosses to dummy with a trump and ruffs the king of clubs. West then plays a low spade to endplay North. (North had to discard his fourth club on the third heart to keep three spades.)

Nevertheless, there is a defensive countermeasure – North must lead a low club at trick two! Then South gets in and can safely lead a spade. On the other hand, had declarer put up the king of clubs at trick one, perhaps South might have won with the ace and continued with the five of clubs to ensure that North had the correct count.

West	North	East	South
Dwyer	C. Rimstedt	Huang	Donner
—	—	—	Pass
1♥	Pass	2♣ ¹	Pass
2♥	Pass	4♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		

1. Two-plus clubs, game forcing

North led a trump. Declarer won in hand, crossed to dummy with a trump, and ran the jack of spades, North winning with the queen and switching to the queen of clubs. That left declarer with no chance, so Donner had 12 well-deserved IMPs.

Had declarer taken the diamond finesse at trick two he could have then ditched a club on the ace of diamonds, after which it would not have been too difficult to get up to ten tricks. But why should the king of diamonds be onside rather than the ace of clubs? Perhaps the trump lead should have indicated something in all the other suits?

QED *Quod erat demonstrandum* –
thus it has been demonstrated

One of the few things I can recall from my hopeless attempts to master mathematics was the use of the letters QED, which one placed at the end of a document to indicate that you had proved your argument. If I remember correctly, one had to go through three stages, Given, To Prove and Proof.

During the semifinal of the recent ALT Mixed, the following deal brought this to mind:

Board 20. Dealer West. Both Vul.

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

Given

In this 28-deal match, you are trailing 1-57 at half time, so you need to adopt an aggressive stance if you are to have any chance. You may also have to take some good views when you are declaring.

To Prove

In your room you quickly reach the spade game, thusly:

West	North	East	South
Lorenzini	Michielsen	Zochowska	Cullin
Pass	Pass	1♠	2♥
4♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

South leads the king of hearts and you must consider your line of play. On the face of it, you appear to have a loser in each of the red suits but, as long as you can avoid the loss of two trump tricks, you ought to be able to make four spades. The natural line is to win the heart lead, cross to the ace of spades, return to hand with a club and play a second spade toward the queen. That would work unless North held king-jack (or ten) low or either opponent all four trumps. You can be sure that they will be in four spades in the other room, and you know that the declarer, one Helgemo, is not going to miss this line so, if you follow it, the best you can hope for is a flat board. Is there any way in which you can reasonably play for a swing?

Proof

If North has the king and any two other trumps, the natural line will fail. However, if declarer assumes that is the trump position, the contract might be made by playing to discard two of dummy's hearts on the club suit. Playing off the top clubs will work if the suit is three-three or if South holds a doubleton jack, but what if North started with jack-to-four? Then you will need to take a second-round finesse of the ten.

This was the full deal:

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

QED

Alas, declarer took the normal line, and like her counterpart, was one down. Had she made the contract, her partner, being French, would surely have popped a cork for her.



Correspondence

The Editor reserves the right to abridge and/or edit correspondence.
Email: ibpaeditor@sympatico.ca

Hi J.C.,

I hope you and Katie are well. It's been dreadful, reading about the recent passing of so many bridge players.

I had been working on a bridge-related game that I hoped teenagers and young people would enjoy playing – hopefully at a later age turning to full-blooded bridge. These days, the younger generation want games that involve all of the players all of the time – and that they are fast. (More and more people are turning to playing games with people physically present, rather than on the internet. My sales figures confirm that, as does my bank manager.) This is why many of the games I invent nowadays are fast play, because fast play sells. I was shocked to read that less than 2% of the 13-24 age group play bridge, and that university bridge clubs are fast disappearing.

The main problem with bridge is the dummy. That had to go. Which reduces the players from four to three.

The game basis:

Stage I.

A standard pack is used and four hands are dealt.



The **D** hand is turned face up.

The dealer **A** has first choice.

S/he can accept the **D** hand, or reject it.

If rejected, it passes to **B1** to accept or reject.

If rejected, it passes to **B2** to accept or reject

If rejected, **A** is to play it.

D will always be placed opposite the acceptor, so some movement of cards may be necessary. The other two players defend as a partnership.

Stage 2

In order, players state their point count, on the regular 4,3,2,1 basis. (This was a method I was using some half-century ago when teaching bridge at a youth club, and is now also used in mini-bridge.)

Players then state:

1. The length of their longest suit.
2. The length of their shortest suit.

The player who controls the dummy then nominates the contract.

First – the suit or no-trumps.

Second – the level: 7 or 10. (Scoring is still being thought out.)

Three deals form a rubber.

The leader sits over the declarer, as in bridge.

If anyone wishes to try out my game – both players and non-players – and has ideas to contribute, such as a name, I'd be interested.

There's quite a bit to be gleaned from the declarations, e.g., if a player states '4' for his longest suit and '1' for his shortest, his shape must be 4-4-4-1; and if '4' is his longest suit and '3' is his shortest, his shape is 4-3-3-3.

Best wishes,

Maureen Hiron maureen@maureenhiron.com

Dear John,

Here's a little Alt history, brief as it is. For Alt information, check www.bridgeresults.org, which delivers an ocean of info (including Daily Bulletins). The Alt concept was originally invented by Paul Street (a Florida-based bridge sponsor) early in March 2020 as an alternative for the cancelled Columbus, Ohio Spring Nationals. As far as I know, it was the first serious, world-class online event offering a playground for pros and sponsors. I was asked to organize it but, due to a lack of time, I passed the baton to Jan van den Hoek, a bridge aficionado (and lawyer) who had already built a solid name for himself in The Netherlands and Europe organizing online bridge matches.

Van den Hoek, with the help of Sjoert Brink did, and has done, a brilliant job, attracting world stars (like Zia, Thomas Bessis, Marion Michelsen, Cédric Lorenzini and many others) to the Alts. Alts are now played about every other week (e.g., Minor, Major, Mixed, Montréal). The events last for five days in a row, starting with a round robin, then quarterfinals, semifinals and final. Most Alts come with a lively Daily Bulletin, with Christina Lund Madsen as the editor, and with contributions by well-known journalists such as Mark Horton and Toine van Hoof.

Regards,

Jan van Cleeff, The Hague

NEWS & VIEWS



Bridge in the Asian Olympic Games 2022

It has been announced that Bridge will be included in the 2022 Asian Olympic Games, to be held in Hangzhou, China, 10th to 25th September. The Asian Olympic Games is the main continental sports event in Asia, celebrated every four years and Bridge was admitted for the first time in its history in the previous edition held in Jakarta, Indonesia in 2018.

This confirmation is extremely significant, meaning that Bridge is considered a true sport in line with all the other sports recognised by the International Olympic Committee.

Arianna Testa



The WBF has announced that Arianna Testa has taken over as Secretary in Lausanne on October 1, replacing Simon Fellus, who spent the previous five years in that position. Testa is already well-known by Zonal and NBO Officers, and players across the world, in her capacity as Secretary to the Executive Council and Management Committee; she has also been a member of our championship staff for several years.

GGP and Bridge Baron

52 Entertainment group has completed the acquisition of Great Game Products, Inc. and its flagship product Bridge Baron. 52 Entertainment group also includes Bridge Base OnLine, Funbridge, Goto Games, Le Bridgeur and China Bridge OnLine.

Guide to Online Events

With the Covid-19 pandemic forcing the cancellation of bridge tournaments worldwide, there has been a proliferation of online bridge events. Here is the information we have been able to gather to date:

WBF – Cancelled the 2020 Online World Championship until such time as a live final can be played. See <http://www.worldbridge.org>

ACBL – Has been organising pair events on BBO for some years now. See <https://www.acbl.org> and <https://www.bridgebase.com>

Zonal Organisations – Some Zones of the World Bridge Federation have run and will continue to run online championships until the pandemic ends. Check the Zonal websites for information.

NBOs – Many National Bridge Organisations have organised, or are in the process of organising, online events for their own members. Check the NBO websites for specifics.

Reynolds Knockouts – TD Tom Reynolds has been organising monthly knockout tournaments and quarterly double elimination knockouts since April. Information can be found at <http://www.reynoldsteammatches.com>

Alt Invitationals – Invitational tournaments, usually lasting five-seven days, have been organised since April by bid72 and netbridge.online. To date, there have been Alt Invitationals (open team tournaments), Alt Mixed events (all comprising eight teams), and Alt Majors (32 teams). Information can be found at <https://bid72/events>. Each event has a daily bulletin.

OCBL – The Online Contract Bridge League organises Open and Mixed events. Details can be found at <https://ocbl.org>

Bridgehouse – This new organisation is now arranging online team events with daily bulletins and pretty hefty registration fees. Information can be found at <https://bridgehouse.club>

All of the online tournaments named above are on BBO. Other useful sites for information are <https://bridgescanner.com> and <https://bridgewinners.com>

Anyone organising an online tournament can submit details to Marek Wójcicki at marek.wojcicki@bridge.com.pl for inclusion on the IBPA website.



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