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BRIDGE & SCIENCE

By Marek Malysa, Gdansk

(Dr. Malysa is a retired Mathematics professor from Gdansk University, Chair of the WBF Bridge and Science Committee, organiser of the 2016 World Bridge Games in Wroclaw, an author, a bridge teaching programme developer, the organiser of several scientific conferences and a Polish Bridge Union vice-president. – Ed.)

Some time ago, the WBF established a Bridge & Science Committee in order to obtain serious scientific results and to use them in the promotion of our game. It wasn't unique, since scientific research had already been established: Samantha Punch of the University of Sterling had created the Sociology of Bridge, with its own Ph.D. programme; Véronique Ventos, with NukkAI, is exploring Artificial Intelligence to be used in bridge; and the first and second International Scientific Conferences dedicated to our game took place in Poland (while the next one was in Croatia).

Following twenty-year-old data from the University of California, Berkeley, about the health advantages of playing bridge, academics from Nicolas Copernicus University in Torun (Poland) started research on how playing bridge can delay the onset of dementia and, particularly, Alzheimer's Disease. Despite some problems caused by COVID-19, we completed our pilot research in two Welfare Houses and, on this basis, we shall start the main research soon.

The main question is, can playing bridge prevent or even reverse dementia? We all know that playing bridge keeps us in fine mental shape (the premise is that Cognitive Reserve – defined as the mind's resistance to brain damage – increases when we play bridge) but strong scientific proof is needed. M.C. Diamond's report tells us that playing bridge lowers the chance of Alzheimer's by as much as 75%. In my opinion, that's an underestimate.

To test all that, we tried to teach bridge to patients of the Alzheimer's Centre in Warsaw, all of them diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease (in their case, Mild Cognitive Impairment). They were brought by their families to the Centre and taken back home each working day. The patients had three hours of bridge lessons a week. Initially, they couldn't count to ten and keep their cards properly arranged but, after six months, it wasn't a problem for them any more. They played bridge – simplified – with no bidding, but taking tricks, counting to 13 and 40. This was a huge, very pleasant, surprise for all of the bridge experts and the Alzheimer's Centre staff. MCI patients were actually able to learn a brand new skill!

Our research group also had other kinds of therapy like dancing, dog therapy, while a control group also had the other therapies but had no bridge lessons at

Continued in NEWS & VIEWS, page 12...

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THE ALT INVITATIONAL

online bridge events organized by
bid72, bridge24 & netbridge.online



Alt Mixed III – The Minor Alt Invitational
IV – TampAlt – Alt Supports CAT
Brian Senior, Nottingham
Toine van Hoof, Utrecht
Martin Cantor, Hamm,
North Rhine-Westphalia

A Well-Earned Swing - Senior

Playing in the Alt Mixed III, my team was beaten in Round 9 of the Swiss Qualifying stage by a team featuring the strong Israeli pairing of Noga Tal and Yaniv Zack.

Seven pairs played in four hearts on this deal, always played by East. Three were successful, four were not. Zack, alas for our cause, was one of the successful ones.

Board 6. Dealer East. EW Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>N.Tal</i>	<i>B. Senior</i>	<i>Zack</i>	<i>Penfold</i>
—	—	INT ¹	Pass
2♦ ²	Dble ³	2♥ ⁴	3♦
Double ⁵	Pass	4♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		

1. 15-17
2. Transfer
3. Diamonds
4. Heart support
5. Game try

At most tables, North overcalled two notrump to show the minors; I chose to only show diamonds – for the lead against a likely heart contract. Sandra Penfold led the six of diamonds, MUD, to the three, nine and king. Zack played back his remaining diamond, so I won and played the queen of clubs, which he ducked, followed by the ten of clubs. Zack won with the ace and drew trumps, ending in hand, ruffed the third club, then led a low spade to the four, nine and queen. He ruffed the diamond return and led the jack of spades to the king and ace, pinning my ten; plus 620.

Whether North shows both minors or only diamonds, declarer has a pretty good idea regarding the distribution by the time he reaches the crucial play. It is therefore surprising that, of the seven declarers in game, two played the ace and another spade, and a third made the bizarre play of low from dummy to the four and jack (perhaps that was a miss-click?).

As well as Zack, Geir Helgemo and Namik Kokten found the play of low to the nine followed by pinning the ten – well played by all three declarers.

However, this deal bothered me and I realised that I could have done better on defence. When declarer led the first spade from dummy, he was hoping to find me with either ten-low or honour-ten doubleton. What if I had played the ten? Might Zack not now have played me for the latter holding and gone down, especially if Penfold had won with her king? So I went through the play records and found that one of the four Norths put to the test had indeed put in the ten and declarer had indeed misguessed the position when his jack lost to the queen and a low spade came back, going up with the ace.

The successful defender was Sweden's Cecilia Rimstedt and, as her teammate, Geir Helgemo, was one of those to make the contract, I think we can say that this was a well-earned 12 IMPs to their side.

Minor Alt IV – van Hoof

Having skipped the previous Minor Alt Invitational, Sjoert Brink was back and he immediately made his mark.

Board 18. Dealer East. NS Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Failla</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>De Michelis</i>	<i>Brink</i>
—	—	Pass	1♦ ¹
Pass	1♠	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♣ ²	Pass	2♦ ³
Pass	3NT	Pass	Pass
Pass			

1. 5+ diamonds unless some 4441
2. Asks for three-card spade support
3. No three-card support

Giuseppe Failla had an awkward lead and did well by tabling the two of clubs. Brink inserted the jack, losing to the king. Luca De Michelis continued with the four of clubs. East put up the queen, which was ducked, and a third club cleared the suit, East contributing the eight and South the heart five. Brink now cashed the king of diamonds and played a diamond to the ten, won by the jack. West got out with a spade, which went to declarer's ace. Brink led the ace of diamonds and, when the queen dropped, he could cash two more. This was the end position:

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

On the penultimate diamond, West could afford to discard the heart eight. Giving up a possible overtrick, Brink threw the spade three from dummy. Then came the last diamond and West was squeezed out of his

queen of hearts. Brink discarded the seven of spades and led the king of hearts, establishing his ninth trick. Plus 600 and plus 300 from the other table meant a 14-IMP win for the Moss team.

Brink had read the club position perfectly, allowing him to duck a diamond to West. He said he had four clues. Firstly, East-West lead third and fifth. Secondly, West seemed to have had a difficult lead. Thirdly, Brink noticed that, for a short moment, East had considered whether or not to double two clubs. And finally, it was obvious that West, by playing the queen of clubs at trick two, instead of the seven, had unblocked the suit. These all pointed in the same direction and Brink went for it.

Double-dummy analysis shows that the defence could have defeated the contract by switching to a spade at trick two or three. This effectively messes up declarer's transportation. The deal was played in three notrump at 15 tables and went down 12 times. Brink was the only one who made it on a club lead. After ducking twice, most declarers started by cashing three spades, planning to cash two more and hoping something nice would then materialize. When the spades did not break they invariably went two or three off.

TampAlt – Cantor

This deal comes from the Round 3 top-of-the-table clash between Pelka and Sweice ...

Board 4. Dealer West. Both Vul.

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

The cards lie so well for East/West that they can make a grand slam in notrump, spades and, rather wonderfully, their four-two diamond fit. But not in their excellent five-two heart fit. Ain't bridge fabulous? So, how did it work out at the table?

West	North	East	South
<i>Bergström</i>	<i>Kerr</i>	<i>Nilsland</i>	<i>Reynolds</i>
Pass	Pass	2♣ ¹	Pass
2♦ ²	Pass	2♥ ³	Pass
2♠ ⁴	Pass	3♠ ⁵	Pass
4♣ ⁶	Pass	4♦ ⁷	Pass
4♠ ⁸	Pass	4NT ⁹	Pass
5♣ ¹⁰	Pass	5NT ¹¹	Pass
6♥ ¹²	Pass	Pass	Pass

Alert explanations are on the next page...

1. (a.) 18-21 balanced or (b.) hearts, spades or clubs
2. Waiting
3. (a.) 18-21 balanced or hearts
4. Waiting, value-showing
5. Game-forcing with 5+ hearts and 4+ spades
6. Sets hearts
7. Slam try
8. Spade control, accepts slam-try
9. RKCB
10. 1 key card
11. King ask; grand-slam try, guaranteeing all key cards and the heart queen
12. No minor-suit king

Tom Reynolds found the best lead of a club. From declarer's point of view, the hand looked easy enough, with a club going on the queen of diamonds and maybe a spade to lose. So, Nilstrand went up with the ace of clubs, of course, and raised an eyebrow when the jack of hearts brought down the ten from North. When North showed out on the second round of trumps, a frown appeared. Nilstrand drew four rounds of trumps, unblocked the ace-king of diamonds, crossed to the king of spades and, when the diamond queen dropped the jack, he could discard a spade on the ten.

If South had ruffed the fourth diamond, declarer would have had no option but to try to drop the queen of spades, so Reynolds discarded, but now a club from dummy was ruffed in hand, the ace of spades cashed, and South's boss trump was the only trick for the defence. That was nicely done.

And at the other table?

West	North	East	South
<i>Pelka</i>	<i>Baldursson</i>	<i>Anikovitch</i>	<i>Jonsson</i>
1♦ ¹	Pass	1NT ²	Pass
2NT ³	Pass	3♣ ⁴	Pass
3♠ ⁵	Pass	4♥ ⁶	Pass
4♠ ⁷	Pass	6NT	Pass
Pass	Pass		

1. 1+ diamonds
2. Game-force
3. Balanced 11-13
4. Relay
5. 3=2=4=4
6. Key-card ask for clubs
7. 1 (or 4) key cards

Jonsson led the seven of hearts, taken in dummy for a heart continuation (spade from North). Diamonds were unblocked, a spade went to the king, then the spade jack lost to South's queen, leaving this position:

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

South could not profitably exit with a diamond or heart, and so led a club, offering declarer a choice of plays: playing South for the king of clubs or trying to drop the jack of diamonds. Had South held the king of clubs and two low diamonds, he should lead a club but, with his actual holding, he had to lead a club. So, maybe there is a little Restricted Choice pointer to the winning line. On the other hand, North seems to have been grimly holding on to the diamond length, so maybe that is a small indicator the other way.

If I had been declarer, I'd like to think I'd have thought all that through but then, being none the wiser, would have tossed a coin. I'm sure Anikovitch didn't resort to a coin, but he did go with the wrong nudge, Baldursson scoring his king of clubs and, with it, 17 IMPs.

Iain Macleod wrote a justifiably famous bridge book entitled *Bridge Is An Easy Game*. He obviously never met this deal.

Board 8. Dealer West. Neither Vul.

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

Almost every North opened (or overcalled if West opened) in spades, and a huge majority of Souths (33 of 38) then forced to game. Such is bridge in the modern era.

The great GIB tells us that best defence holds the contract to nine tricks. But it also tells us that this is only true if East can find a diamond lead – any diamond.

Nobody did. The natural-looking heart lead was very popular; a few led the singleton trump; and one outlier found an extravagant two of clubs.

Let's look at how the play developed where Espen Lindqvist was card-perfect, albeit extremely (if understandably) slowly.

West	North	East	South
Huang	Lindqvist	Dwyer	Brogeland
Pass	1♠	Pass	3NT ¹
Pass	4♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			

1. 10-12, some shortage, four-card spade support

Huang won the low-heart lead with the queen and shifted to the four of clubs. Declarer passed the first test by going up with the ace. He then ruffed a club, ruffed a heart and played a diamond to the king – East rising with the ace makes no difference. Another heart ruff brought down the ace, and now it was time for a club honour for the ruffing finesse. East ducked (again, rising makes no difference) and a diamond was discarded.

Next, a spade went to the ace, another spade was led to the king, the last club was ruffed in dummy and the boss heart established the nine of spades en passant for the tenth trick.

If you want to get a full idea of how sure-footed this play was, then go to alt.bridgeresults.org and click through the play, checking with GIB at each trick how often a different card would have led to potential defeat. There were three key elements to the play, with timing playing a key part. You need to lead a diamond towards the king, but you must not do it too soon. With the benefit of the heart lead, you need to ruff hearts in hand, setting the king up.

Alt CAT – van Hoof

In one of the semifinals, Diego Brenner (team Bernal) found himself in what turned out to be a complicated four-spade contract against the Red Devils.

Board 4. Dealer West. Both Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
Brenner	De Donder	Villas Boas	Bahbout
1♠	3♥	3♠	4♥
4♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

North led a heart to declarer's queen. Brenner led a spade to the queen and ace and a spade back, ducking when South inserted the jack. South continued with a heart to declarer's ace and now, according to my double dummy solver, the two of diamonds is the only card to make the contract against any defence.

Brenner played the ten of clubs instead, which was correctly ducked by Sam Bahbout, and then advanced the king of diamonds, ducked by Steven De Donder; South showed count by following with the jack. Declarer continued with the two of diamonds, North taking the ace and leading a club to his partner's ace. This was the ending, with South on lead:

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

South did the best he could by playing a heart, but now Brenner fell from grace. Instead of ruffing in hand and overruffing in dummy he pitched the nine of clubs and went one off.

The same ending would have been reached if declarer had played the two of diamonds at trick five.

North would have secured the demise of the contract by taking the king of diamonds with the ace at trick six and continuing with hearts (South plays the fourth heart when in with the ace of clubs and West is short).

At the other table, Geert Arts (Red Devils) was allowed to make four spades. After a heart to the queen, a spade to the ace and a spade to the ten and king, he drove out the ace of clubs. That should have led to defeat but, when North played low on the two of diamonds at trick seven, Arts had his entry to lead the seven of spades from dummy: plus 620 and 12 IMPs.

In Clement vs. Sweice, Björn Fallenius (Sweice) went one off in four spades. After the same beginning, he cashed the ace of hearts at trick four and could no longer make his contract.

At the other table:

West	North	East	South
Amiry	Baldursson	Samir	Jörgensen
INT	2♦ ¹	Pass	3♥ ²
Pass	4♥	4NT ³	Double
5♣	Double	Pass	Pass
Pass			

1. Either major
2. Pass or correct
3. Minors

Jon Baldursson led the queen of spades. After a club to the ace, he received his spade ruff and cashed the ace of diamonds for one down and a gain of 3 IMPs.

Board 9. Dealer North. EW Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
Brenner	De Donder	Villas Boas	Bahbout
Arts	Bernal	De Roos	Versace
—	Pass	Pass	4♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Brenner led the king of clubs and, seeing the diamond threat in dummy, switched to the four of hearts. Bahbout misguessed by putting up the king. Miguel Villas Boas won with the ace, cashed the ace of clubs, and played a heart for down two.

Arts also led the king of clubs. He cashed the queen and then switched to the nine of hearts. Alfredo Versace played low, seeing Steve De Roos produce the ace. A heart back went to the king. Versace made the fine play of ruffing a diamond before drawing trumps. He was rewarded when he entered dummy with the nine of spades and the king of diamonds fell under the ace.

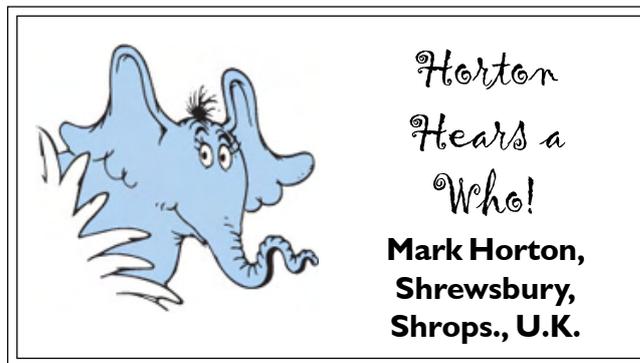
West	North	East	South
Fallenius	Maamarbachi	Nilsland	Vroustis
—	Pass	Pass	4♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

In the other semifinal, Fallenius led the king of clubs and switched to the nine of hearts. Vassilis Vroustis played low and, like Versace, duly made his contract by ruffing a diamond when in dummy with the king of hearts.

West	North	East	South
Amiry	Baldursson	Samir	Jörgensen
—	1♦ ¹	Pass	4♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

1. 10-15 HCP, 0+ diamonds

Amiry gave Aðalsteinn Jörgensen no chance to shine. He kicked off with the king and queen of clubs and then found the excellent shift to the jack of spades. On this layout, the queen of hearts and even either diamond would also have done the trick. After drawing trumps declarer played a heart to the king and went two off.



These deals were all played in recent online events. In the TampAlt Qualifying, I kept an eye on Jedi Knights v Transnationals.

Slammed Around

Board 6. Dealer East. EW Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
Weiss	Jones	Selway	Smith
—	—	3♥	Pass
6♠	6NT	Pass	7♣
Double	Pass	Pass	Pass

North's unusual notrump came at the highest possible level. West led the ace of hearts and switched to the ace of spades. Declarer ruffed in dummy and played a diamond to the ace. West ruffed that and played the heart six. Declarer ruffed in dummy, cashed the ace of clubs, drew the outstanding trump and forced out the king of diamonds; three down, minus 500.

West	North	East	South
Shields	Mickelson	Chamberlain	Baldis
—	—	2♦ ¹	Pass
2♠ ²	Pass	3♦ ³	Pass
6♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

1. Multi
2. Pass or correct
3. Hearts, good hand

North cashed the ace of clubs, but that was the only trick for the defence; plus 1430 and a 14-IMP swing for the Knights.

In Round 10, three pairs reached a slam on this deal, but only one of them was successful ...

Board 7. Dealer South. Both Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>J. Bishel</i>	<i>Jones</i>	<i>T. Bishel</i>	<i>Smith</i>
—	—	—	1♠
4♦	4♠	5♦	5♠
6♦	Pass	Pass	Double
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Declarer ruffed the spade lead in the dummy, cashed the ace of hearts for a club discard, ruffed a heart and played a club to the queen. South took that and forced dummy with a spade. Declarer took the ruff, led the ten of clubs to the king and ruffed a club with the queen of diamonds. With just hearts remaining in the dummy, North's jack of diamonds was promoted into the setting trick.

That was worth 13 IMPs against the five-diamond contract reached at the other table.

West	North	East	South
<i>V. d. Starre</i>	<i>Egmund</i>	<i>Huber</i>	<i>Jansen</i>
—	—	—	Pass
5♦	Pass	6♦	Pass
Pass	Pass		

North led the ace of spades. Declarer ruffed and led the queen of clubs. South won and switched to a trump, leaving declarer with no play. That was a 13-IMP swing against four hearts at the other table.

West	North	East	South
<i>Spinkhuizen</i>	<i>Dewit</i>	<i>Eskes</i>	<i>Vandewiele</i>
—	—	—	2♠ ¹
3♦	4♠	6♦	Pass
Pass	Pass		
1. 6 or 7 spades, 10-13 HCP			

Declarer ruffed the spade lead in dummy, led the ace of hearts to pitch a club, ruffed a heart, ruffed a spade, cashed the queen of diamonds, ruffed a heart high, drew the last trump and played a club to the ten; plus 1370 and 13 IMPs in.

Remembering Reese

The mark of a great player is the ability to make a difficult hand look easy. On this deal from a recent Alt event, four spades was attempted 24 times ...

Board 13. Dealer North. Both Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>R. Goor</i>	<i>Bertheau</i>	<i>S. Goor</i>	<i>M. Rimstedt</i>
—	1♣	Pass	1♠
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♥
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

West led the ten of clubs. Declarer has a lot to think about, his chief concerns being how to tackle the major suits. Taking each of them in isolation, the computer's top option in spades is low to the jack, which results in four tricks 37.30% of the time. In hearts, running the nine is a 78% chance of losing only two tricks in the suit. However, as Terence Reese famously wrote, it is not only a question of how a suit lies, but of how you would like it to lie.

If trumps are three-two, either player could have a doubleton honour. If you assume that East is going to win the first spade, then, if he started with a doubleton honour, he will almost certainly return a trump, as nothing else is attractive. Then you will be sure to lose two trump tricks and almost certainly two or three hearts. Virtually every declarer confronted with this problem started with a low spade to the jack; East won and returned a spade (one miscreant saw fit to cash the ace of hearts and give his partner a ruff, handing declarer the contract on a plate).

Mikael Rimstedt played the ten of spades at trick two! If West had covered, declarer would have needed to take a winning view on the next round, but there were reasons why West would be reluctant to play an honour, not least because East might have a singleton honour. In any event, West did not cover and East won with the king. As expected, he returned a spade, which allowed declarer to draw trumps.

Now it only remained to solve the problem of the heart suit. Short of entries to hand, Mikael's answer was to start with dummy's king. East won with the ace and exited with a diamond, but declarer won with dummy's queen and led the eight of hearts, claiming when East took the queen. He was one of only two declarers to record ten tricks.

The Greatest Gift

Most households have a number of rituals that must be observed at Christmas. One of ours is to watch Frank Capra's masterpiece, *It's a Wonderful Life*. Like so many films that have subsequently been recognised as classics, it was not a financial success when it was released. I recently discovered that the film was based on a short story entitled *The Greatest Gift*. Bridge players are delighted to accept gifts, especially from their opponents. Would any be on offer in the top-of-the-table clash between Orca and Hinze in a recent Alt? Here was one:

Board 4. Dealer West. Both Vul.

♠ Q J 6 3
♥ Q 8 5 4
♦ J 10 8 3 2
♣ —

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

♠ A 9
♥ A 10
♦ A K 9 6 5
♣ J 7 5 4

West	North	East	South
<i>Crouch</i>	<i>Hinze</i>	<i>Cope</i>	<i>Enfield</i>
Pass	Pass	1♣ ¹	INT
3♣	Double ²	Pass	Pass
Pass			

1. 2+ clubs, maybe 5 diamonds if (10)11-13 balanced
2. Takeout

South ignored Edgar Kaplan's dictum – 'I prefer that my partners take out my takeout doubles'. Had South bid three diamonds, North might have raised.

Having cashed the ace of diamonds at trick one, South led the ace and another spade. A grateful declarer won with his king, drew trumps and led a heart to the nine. South won with her ten and led the king of diamonds. Declarer ruffed in dummy and ducked a heart to South's ace, who led another diamond. While all that was going on North was being squeezed in the majors and declarer took the last two tricks with dummy's king-seven of hearts for plus 670.

If South had continued diamonds at trick two (or switched to a trump), careful subsequent defence would have held declarer to eight tricks.

West	North	East	South
<i>Demuy</i>	<i>Plackett</i>	<i>Kranyak</i>	<i>Erichsen</i>
Pass	Pass	1♣	INT
3♣	Double	Pass	4♦
Pass	5♦	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Four diamonds was a very well-judged bid, and made it easy for North to raise to game. Five diamonds was in no danger and declarer, having taken the spade finesse, played on crossruff lines to record plus 600 and collect 15 IMPs.

Only eight pairs managed to reach the diamond game, and one went on to six diamonds. Declarer ruffed the ace-of-clubs lead, came to hand with a trump, ruffed a club and led the queen of spades, covered by the king and ace. Declarer ruffed another club, cashed the jack of spades, ruffed a spade and then tried to ruff another club. East could overruff and exit with a spade, leaving declarer with a losing heart, minus 100.

Having ruffed a third club, declarer should not have cashed the jack of spades. Instead, he should have drawn the last trump and then played three more rounds of diamonds. That would have squeezed East in the majors and he would eventually have been thrown in to lead away from his king of hearts.

Had East not covered the queen of spades and subsequently unblocked the king of clubs, life would have been rather more difficult for declarer.

Board 8. Dealer West. Neither Vul.

♠ J 4
♥ K J 10 9
♦ K J 2
♣ J 10 8 5

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

♠ Q 9 8 6
♥ 8 7
♦ 9 8 7 4
♣ 9 4 3

West	North	East	South
<i>Crouch</i>	<i>Hinze</i>	<i>Cope</i>	<i>Enfield</i>
1♦ ¹	Pass	2♠ ²	Pass
3♦	Pass	3♥ ³	Pass
3NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

1. Forcing, 5+ diamonds but does not promise extra values
2. 5+ clubs and a major
3. 4 hearts and 5+ clubs

North led the jack of hearts. Declarer won with the ace and played back the three, ducking when North played the ten. If North had now cashed the king of hearts and exited with the jack of spades, declarer would have been doomed (as long as South pitched a club), but that was hard to see and North exited with the jack of clubs. Declarer cashed dummy's three winning clubs, pitching diamonds, took the ace and king of spades and exited with a heart. North won, cashed the eight of clubs and exited with a diamond. Declarer won, cashed the ace of diamonds and exited with the queen. That forced North to give the last trick to dummy's queen of hearts.

If declarer had guessed to play dummy's queen of hearts on either of the first two tricks his life would have been much simpler.

West	North	East	South
<i>Demuy</i>	<i>Plackett</i>	<i>Kranyak</i>	<i>Erichsen</i>
1♦	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♣	Pass
3♦	Pass	3NT	Pass
4♦	Pass	4♠	Pass
5♥	Double	Pass	Pass
Redouble ¹	Pass	5NT ²	Pass
6♦	Pass	Pass	Pass

1. First round control
2. Pick a slam

East's first three bids should have sounded a warning note to West. The contract was two down, minus 100, and it cost 11 IMPs.

Board 9. Dealer North. EW Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Crouch</i>	<i>Hinze</i>	<i>Cope</i>	<i>Enfield</i>
—	1♦ ¹	Pass	2NT ²
Pass	3NT	Pass	Pass

1. 2+ diamonds, 11-15
2. Invitational

West led the nine of spades. When dummy's jack held, declarer led the queen of clubs. East played the king and, when it held, played a second spade. Declarer was in control, scoring plus 430.

West	North	East	South
<i>Demuy</i>	<i>Plackett</i>	<i>Kranyak</i>	<i>Erichsen</i>
—	1♣ ¹	Pass	1♠ ²
Pass	2♦ ³	Pass	2NT
Pass	3NT	Pass	Pass

1. 2+ clubs, may have 5 diamonds if 11-13
2. Diamonds
3. 11-13 with 4 diamonds

Again, West led the spade nine. This time, when dummy's jack held, declarer led the five of clubs. East also went up with the king and, when West followed with the eight, Reverse Smith, denying further interest in spades, East

switched to the two of hearts. West won with the king and returned the ten to the jack, queen and ace. When declarer played a second club, West won and produced the seven of hearts (declarer had been hoping to see the nine), so that was two down, minus 200 and 11 IMPs.

We have all read about this type of defence, but it is clearly much easier to find on paper. When South was declarer, this was the only occasion on which three notrump was defeated.

The Winning Edge

These two deals saw significant swings:

Board 1. Dealer North. Neither Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Minter</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>Hurd</i>	<i>Katz</i>
—	1♦	Pass	2♣ ¹
Double	3♣	Pass	3♠ ²
Pass	4NT ³	Pass	5♥ ⁴
Pass	7♣	Pass	Pass

1. Natural, game-forcing
2. Stopper
3. RKCB
4. 2 key cards

From North's point of view, the only risk was that South might hold three low diamonds. That was plus 1440.

West	North	East	South
<i>Baraket</i>	<i>Bathurst</i>	<i>N. Tal</i>	<i>Wolpert</i>
—	1♦	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♥ ¹
Double	Redouble	Pass	3♣
Pass	3♦	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♣	Pass	4♦ ²
Pass	4♠ ³	Pass	4NT ⁴
Pass	6♣	Pass	Pass

1. Fourth-suit-forcing to game
2. RKCB
3. 0 or 3 key cards
4. Queen ask

Would you as South have been tempted to play partner for the ace-king of diamonds and go on to seven clubs? Had you done so, you would have saved 11 IMPs.

Board 8. Dealer West. Neither Vul.

♠ 5
 ♥ —
 ♦ A J 8 7 6 5 4
 ♣ A J 10 6 5

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

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Miniter</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>Hurd</i>	<i>Katz</i>
Pass	1♦	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♥ ¹
Pass	3♦	Pass	3♠
Pass	5♣	Pass	6♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

1. Fourth-suit-forcing to game

West led the two of hearts. Declarer ruffed in dummy, ruffed a diamond, drew trumps, cashed one more spade, then played the nine of clubs to dummy's ten, claiming the rest when it lost to East's queen; plus 980.

A trump lead would have been more testing. One option for declarer is to play in the style of Maurice Harrison-Gray, running the long suit to see what happens. After six rounds of spades these cards remain:

♠ —
 ♥ —
 ♦ A J
 ♣ A J 10 6 5

♠ — ♠ —
 ♥ Q 10 7 4 ♥ K 8
 ♦ K 10 ♦ Q 9
 ♣ 8 ♣ Q 7 4

♠ 4
 ♥ A J 9 6
 ♦ —
 ♣ K 9

Declarer plays the nine of clubs and runs it. East cannot afford to win, so declarer continues with the last spade, pitching a club from dummy as West parts with a heart. East can't spare a club, so must part with a red card. If he throws the nine of diamonds, declarer plays the king of clubs. If West pitches another heart, declarer can play two rounds of hearts endplaying whoever wins. If West pitches a diamond, declarer overtakes the king of clubs with dummy's ace cashes two tricks in diamonds and then exits with a club, securing the

last trick with the ace of hearts. It's a similar story if East pitches the queen of diamonds.

If East throws a heart on the last spade, declarer again cashes the king of clubs. If West discards a heart, declarer can play two rounds of hearts. Discarding a diamond allows declarer to exit with a low heart and East is endplayed.

Finally, if East discards the king of hearts, declarer cashes the king of clubs and exits with a low heart, endplaying West.

West	North	East	South
<i>Baraket</i>	<i>Bathurst</i>	<i>N. Tal</i>	<i>Wolpert</i>
Pass	1♦	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♥ ¹
Pass	3♣	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♦	Pass	4♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

1. Fourth-suit-forcing to game

Here too, West led a heart and declarer took all the tricks when East pitched two clubs, plus 510, losing 10 IMPs.

To Catch a Thief

The CAT Defence Fund was headlined as *Felines to the Rescue* which set me thinking about possible titles. One of my favourite actors is Cary Grant (I watched him for the umpteenth time in *North by Northwest*; remind me to use that sometime) on Friday evening. In the Hitchcock movie which serves as my title, he plays a retired cat-burglar who specialised in jewel robberies. Would there be any priceless gems in the opening round?

Yes, as it happened. This was one:

Board 4. Dealer West. Both Vul.

♠ 8 5 2
 ♥ Q 9 8 7 5 4
 ♦ J
 ♣ J 7 3

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

♠ Q 7 4
 ♥ K J 10
 ♦ K 8 7 3
 ♣ Q 8 5

West	North	East	South
<i>Donner</i>	<i>Bilde</i>	<i>C. Rimstedt</i>	<i>Madala</i>
1♦ ¹	Pass	2♦ ²	Pass
2♥ ³	Pass	3NT	Pass
Pass	Pass		

1. 2+ diamonds
2. Natural, forcing for one round
3. Artificial, 11-13 balanced

When South led the jack of hearts, it appeared to declarer that she was doomed. She won with the ace, cashed the ace of clubs just in case an honour fell from North, and then played two rounds of diamonds, South winning and playing hearts from the top, two down, minus 200.

West	North	East	South
Zia	Moss	Gupta	Grue
Pass	Pass	1♦	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♠	Pass
2NT	Pass	3♦ ¹	Pass
3NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

1. Good hand with three spades

North led the seven of hearts. South followed with the ten as declarer won in dummy and ran the jack of spades. He then cashed three more spades and, on the last of them, North pitched the four of hearts, so declarer exited with a heart. South won with the king and continued with the jack, North winning and cashing two more tricks in the suit. South came down to the king-seven of diamonds and the queen-eight of clubs. North led a club and the nine went to the queen and king. A club to the ace was followed by the queen of diamonds and that was plus 600 and 13 IMPs.

If North had pitched a club instead of a heart declarer could still have pinned the jack of diamonds for nine tricks.

Four declarers made three notrump after a heart lead, but the other three did not get a testing defence since South blocked the hearts.

Perhaps this was the 'jewel in the crown'. In the Open Room, three notrump had gone two down. In the Closed Room ...

West	North	East	South
Klukowski	Hinze	Gold	Enfield
1♣	Pass	1♦	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♥ ¹	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♣	Pass
4♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

1. Fourth-suit-forcing to game

North led the jack of diamonds for the queen, three and ten. Declarer continued with a diamond to the ace, North ruffing and exiting with the eight of hearts. Declarer won with dummy's ace of hearts and ruffed a diamond with the nine of spades. When North could not overruff, West played the two top spades ending in dummy, ruffed a diamond, crossed to dummy with the ace of clubs and played diamonds, claiming.

Solo

I had kept an eye on an Alt match between de Botton and Skeidar.

Board 11. Dealer South. Neither Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
Johansen	Hoftaniska	Aaseng	Charlsen
—	—	—	1♠
Pass	2♥	Pass	2♠
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♣
Pass	6♣	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Declarer took the lead of the ten of diamonds with dummy's ace, cashed the ace of clubs and the queen of spades, played a club to the queen and cashed the top spades, discarding dummy's diamonds. A spade was ruffed with the ten of clubs and the last trump drawn; an easy-peasy plus 920.

West	North	East	South
Bakhshi	Helgemo	Townsend	Andresen
—	—	—	1♠
Pass	2♥	Pass	2♠
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♣
Pass	4♣	Pass	4♥
Pass	4NT ¹	Pass	5♦ ²
Pass	5NT ³	Pass	7♣
Pass	Pass	Pass	

1. RKCB

2. 1 key card

3. Grand-slam try; guarantees all key cards and the queen of trumps

Was this a potential candidate for a 2021 IBPA award perhaps? Let's see.

West led the five of hearts. Declarer won with the king, played a heart over to the ace and a third heart, ruffing low when East pitched the seven of spades. A spade to the queen was followed by the ace of clubs (East dropping the jack) and a fourth heart. Having ruffed that, declarer cashed the queen of clubs, uncovering East's small deception, pitched two diamonds on the ace and king of spades, crossed to dummy with the ace of diamonds and drew the outstanding trump; plus 1440 and 11 IMPs in.

Only one other pair reached seven clubs but, after a diamond lead, declarer drew trumps and finished two down. Twenty pairs stopped short of slam.

All in a Day's Work (with Ron Tacchi)

Despite the pandemic, the workload of the average journalist has in many cases increased. Not least in the creation of online Bulletins. One such stalwart is Ron Tacchi and he is currently editing for the 2020 Saudi Bridge Championships:

<https://www.bridgewebs.com/sbcchamp/>

In our discussions (we are working on so many projects that a daily Skype is obligatory), he has developed a habit of posing defensive problems that might be used in some online material we are preparing for Bridge Baron. Here is one such problem:

Board 1. Dealer North. Neither Vul.

♠ J 9 8 5
♥ A J 8 2
♦ 8 4 2
♣ 9 3

With this modest South hand you see the auction unfold like this:

West	North	East	South
Zorlu	Jaber	Avcioglu	Malkawi
—	Pass	Pass	Pass
1♣ ¹	Pass	1♦ ²	Pass
1♠ ³	Pass	1NT ⁴	Pass
3NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

1. Various possibilities
2. Hearts
3. Strong, natural, denies 3-card heart support
4. 6-8 HCP; 5 hearts

You elect to lead the four of diamonds and this is what you can see:

♠ A K Q 7
♥ K
♦ Q 10 9 5
♣ A 10 8 2

♠ J 9 8 5
♥ A J 8 2
♦ 8 4 2
♣ 9 3

When declarer calls for dummy's ten partner covers with the jack and declarer wins with the ace and plays back a diamond for the nine and king. Partner switches to the king of clubs. Declarer wins with dummy's ace and leads the king of hearts, which you take with the ace as partner follows with the five. When you exit with the nine of clubs, it is covered by the ten and jack. Partner exits with the six of diamonds, declarer following with the seven and cashing dummy's diamonds followed by the top spades.

I trust that you were wide awake and unblocked the spade suit! If you hadn't, declarer would have thrown you in with the fourth spade to lead into declarer's queen-ten of hearts. This was the full deal:

♠ 10 3 2
♥ 9 7 5
♦ K J 6
♣ K Q J 7

♠ A K Q 7
♥ K
♦ Q 10 9 5
♣ A 10 8 2

♠ 6 4
♥ Q 10 6 4 3
♦ A 7 3
♣ 6 5 4

♠ J 9 8 5
♥ A J 8 2
♦ 8 4 2
♣ 9 3

They also reached three notrump in the other room, but North led a top club and declarer had no real chance, finishing two down.

NEWS & VIEWS



all. After one year, the loss of cognitive ability in the bridge group was more than two times lower than that in the control group. That is impressive but, unluckily, statistically not significant enough. So deeper and wider research, in terms of evaluating methods, is needed.

That's why the non-profit foundation *Bridge to the People* (<https://www.facebook.com/pg/BridgetothePeople/reviews/>)

will continue financing research and searching for sources of financing. More about them, and how to donate, can be found on their web page:

www.bridgetothepeople.eu

Their first research report from the pilot stage can be found at:

<http://www.worldbridge.org/2020/06/18/bridge-and-dementia-prevention/> .

The foundation, together with Gdansk Medical University, will soon start research on Playing Bridge and the Immune System. We are seeking funds for this as well.

How this kind of promotional message works was observed in Poland within my program BRIDGE60+. Using a dementia prevention slogan, I recruited 310 clubs (created in the program) containing thousands of elderly people, giving them a chance to avoid social isolation and build the cognitive reserve necessary to avoid or at least delay the onset of dementia.

All of this shows that whenever serious scientific research results are ready, we (VBF, EBL and other bridge organizations) will have in our hands strong promotional arguments that playing bridge carries additional values worth sponsoring.



Norwegian
Corona
Bridge
Knut Kjærnsrød,
Tored, Norway

The Covid-19 virus is still controlling our bridge but, luckily enough, we can trust the 'net. Recently, we have been introduced to RealBridge, which gives us the opportunity to see and speak to our opponents, just as if we were sitting at the table – a great improvement compared to BBO.

The third round of the Norwegian Teams Championships is well underway, and Liv Strøm of Horten nicely landed this four-heart contract, contributing substantially to her team's victory over Arendal.

Dealer North. Both Vul.

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

With Arendal North/South, West declared in four clubs doubled, one down for minus 200, losing three spades and one heart. With Strøm in the South seat, the bidding went:

West	North	East	South
—	—	Pass	1♦
4♣	Pass	Pass	Double
Redouble	Pass	Pass	4♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

The king-of-clubs lead was overtaken by the ace, and a diamond was led to the ace and ruffed. Strøm trumped the club return, played a spade to the king and finessed in trumps, revealing the distribution. She took the ace of spades, a spade ruff, led a diamond to the ten and, after cashing her two diamond honours, this final ending emerged (see top of next column):

The knave of spades was ruffed and overruffed, but East then had to surrender.

♠ —	♠ —
♥ 5 4	♥ K 9 7
♦ 9	♦ —
♣ —	♣ —
♠ Q	♠ J
♥ —	♥ A Q
♦ —	♦ —
♣ J 9	♣ —

In an international match in October, Martin Andresen had to cope with an even worse trump distribution.

With two of our famous Norwegian stars, Geir Helgemo and Tor Helness East/West, the bidding had a touch of fire:

Dealer North. Both Vul.

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

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

Helness led the queen of diamonds to the ace. Andresen cashed three rounds of clubs discarding a spade and a diamond from dummy. The ace of spades and a spade ruff followed, and a diamond ruff led to this ending:

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

On the five of spades, Helness elected to part with his diamond knave, the heart ten won the trick, the ace was cashed, and Andresen concluded his brilliant play by discarding his four of clubs on a diamond from dummy. Helness had to ruff and finally concede a trick to Andresen's knave of trumps.



Bridge: A MindSport For All
Connects People, Challenges Minds

Elite Bridge Players: Skills and Strategies

Punch S, and Snellgrove, M (2020) 'Playing your Life: Developing Strategies and Managing Impressions in the Game of Bridge', *Sociological Research Online* <https://doi.org/10.1177/1360780420973043>

Introduction

This is a practical summary of the paper 'Playing your Life: Developing Strategies and Managing Impressions in the Game of Bridge'. It is intended for players, teachers, organisers and policymakers. As well as having a practical application, this summary illustrates the ways in which academic research can be used to provide evidence for the skills required to play bridge at an elite level. Feedback and comments on this summary are welcome - please send to: bamsa@stir.ac.uk.

Summary

This academic paper focuses on the highest level of competitive bridge. It analyses the dynamics of the game and the skills that elite players need in order successfully to manage interactions at the bridge table.

By analysing the experiences of world class players, the paper demonstrates that bridge is a challenging, multi-faceted and fascinating game. The findings reveal that playing bridge at the highest level requires an ability to read people and scenarios strategically, to respond with discipline to changing and sometimes demoralising situations, and to nurture a trusting and supportively silent relationship (at the table) with one's partner. The research provides evidence that skills such as strategic planning, flexibility in problem-solving, concentration and focus can be developed at the bridge table. There is also some evidence that some elite players have applied these skills to other areas of their life.

The elite game of bridge requires an ability to read people and cards strategically, careful management of impressions and gameworthiness through preparation and planning, managing mistakes and supportive silence. Though these skills are learned during the course of everyday life, there is evidence that elite players test, practise and negotiate these interaction skills at the bridge table.

The findings are based on an analysis of transcripts of interviews with 52 elite bridge players mainly from the USA and UK carried out by Professor Samantha Punch and the Bridge: A MindSport for All (BAMSA) team at the University of Stirling.

Findings

The views and experiences of elite players, as revealed in the research data, demonstrate the extraordinary complexity of the mindsport bridge and the skills necessary to become a top player. The general consensus among the elite players was, for example, that certain skills are essential for tournament success and can be learned or enhanced through play.

Reading people and play strategically: By closely observing card play and body language, the best players learn to anticipate and often predict the cards their opponents hold and how they might play them. Thoughtful and logical analysis of situations at the table enables players not only to assess the best course of action to achieve their own objectives, but also to find ways to scupper their opponents' plans. Accurately reading a situation involves piecing together several pieces of information, in the same way that a detective follows a trail of clues to solve a mystery.

Responding with discipline: Bridge is a game of mistakes and learning from errors is an important part of becoming a better player. In addition to reading people strategically, successful players respond to events in a disciplined manner and manage the impressions they give off. They learn to anticipate possible reactions and problems that might occur and to prepare accordingly. If (and when) things go wrong, bridge is a game that requires supportive silence in the face of mistakes, and a calm demeanour in the face of difficulties.

Developing trusting relationships: Bridge involves playing in a partnership. Building a strong partnership takes time and effort. It requires empathy and understanding and an ability to support one's partner through mistakes made by both parties. Bridge teaches the value of loyalty, cooperation and mutually supportive relationships. Bridge is a game that requires an unspoken communication in which messages are conveyed through bids made and cards played according to agreed systems. Partnerships develop these methods of communication through practice, discussion and preparation. Practice, practice and more practice is a key element of becoming an elite player in order to avoid mistakes and engage in supportive silence.

Applying the findings to practice

As some of the interviewees pointed out, the skills that can be learned at the bridge table can be an advantage in other areas of business, personal and social life.

The educational potential of bridge: An ability to weigh up different options and to calculate risk and probability, to make logical assessments of a situation and to plan accordingly are aspects of playing bridge at the highest level. In addition to analytical thinking, elite players learn and practice interpersonal skills, resilience and emotional self-control. They put personal feelings aside in order to get the best for the partnership, and they keep calm in the face of setbacks (their own mistakes and their partner's). Bridge encourages concentration, requiring players to remain focused and not to let distractions affect one's play. That these skills can be learned and practised at the bridge table suggests the educational potential for teaching bridge in schools.

Key quote

'Elite bridge players are displaying the capacity to make crucial gameplay decisions based on incomplete information whilst judging their partner's card play and opponents' impressions correctly (and incorrectly). At the same time, they need to be able to control their irritation with their own failings or those of their partner so as not to give their opponents an advantage through a verbal outburst, whilst also changing game-plans based on the ever-evolving card game.'

These skills arguably build resilience as players learn to engage with opponents and cope with losing or try to recover when game plans do not go well. Through partnership interaction, bridge players develop coping strategies as well as cultivate skills of empathy and cooperation.' (Punch and Snellgrove, 2020: 16).

Findings worthy of further research

This paper focuses on the skill set of a typical elite bridge player. A further study of the experiences of players at different levels of tournament bridge might establish the extent to which these skills are common to other types of players.

The skills of observation, deduction and strategic planning have an application far beyond the bridge table. Further research into transferrable skills might cast light on the extent to which these skills can be transferred from the bridge table to everyday life.

This paper has touched on the skills required for bridge players competing at an elite level. Some of these skills are relevant to business, family and social life but further research is needed to see the ways in which bridge can enhance a variety of life skills.

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UNIVERSITY of
STIRLING 





IBPA Column Service

Tim Bourke, Canberra



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

1029. Dealer South. Both Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
—	—	—	2♣
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♠
Pass	3♣	Pass	3NT
Pass	4♠	Pass	6♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

North's three-club rebid was a second negative. Next, South bid what he thought he could make. His leap to six spades may have been a trifle optimistic, although South thought that North had to have had some good reason to remove three notrump.

West led the jack of hearts and declarer received a decent dummy. After winning the first trick with the ace of hearts, declarer decided to rely on a two-two trump break to make his contract. So, he cashed the ace and king of trumps, but they proved to be three-one. Declarer continued by playing his three top diamonds. All would have been well if East had ruffed in, but he found the good defence of discarding a heart. Declarer drew the last trump but eventually he had to concede two club tricks to finish down one.

North was not impressed and said so in the post-mortem. "After the defenders followed to the first round of trumps, the contract was all but certain. Instead of cashing a second round of trumps you should have played your three top diamonds. What

can East do? If he ruffs in, the defence is finished on this layout. You would be able to win the return, cash the king of trumps to draw the last trump and cross to dummy with a trump to the ten. Dummy's diamonds would then have taken care of you club losers."

North continued, "Of course, East might have found the good defence of not ruffing the third diamond. You would have countered this by leading the nine of trumps to dummy's ten. When East took this with the jack and played a heart you would have ruffed it high. You would then have crossed to dummy by playing the four of trumps to dummy's seven. Dummy's diamonds would then have taken care of your club losers."

1030. Dealer North. EW Vul.

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

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

North made what turned out to be a winning decision when he bid three spades over two notrump, for three notrump would have failed on the normal lead of the five of diamonds.

West led the king of hearts against the final contract. If trumps had been three-two, declarer would have needed four tricks in clubs to make the contract. What

if trumps were four-one? The only hope would have been if he could have cashed four clubs to discard a heart, then taken a couple of heart ruffs in hand.

That possibility was firmly in mind when declarer won the opening lead with the ace and cashed the ace-king of trumps. When East discarded a heart on the second trump, declarer put his reserve plan into action, playing the ace, queen and another club. When West followed with three low clubs, declarer saw that a three-three club break would not help his cause since West would ruff the fourth club and cash three red-suit winners. So, declarer finessed the ten of clubs. East discarded an encouraging diamond, but it was too late. Declarer played the king of clubs and threw the nine of hearts from hand. After ruffing dummy's low heart in hand, declarer returned to dummy with a trump to the queen to ruff the jack of hearts. When this was not overruffed, declarer had ten tricks: five trumps, a heart and four clubs.

1031. Dealer South. Both Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
—	—	—	INT
Pass	3NT	Pass	Pass
Pass			

West led the jack of hearts from his better major suit. Declarer counted seven top tricks, so he would need two more tricks, and really the only viable source of those was the diamond suit. Declarer saw that he could play the diamond suit for five tricks by cashing the ace and finessing the jack. If diamonds were three-two and the finesse won he would make ten tricks.

However, this declarer was a little more cautious than most and decided to aim for nine rather than ten tricks. After winning the first trick with the king of hearts, his next move was to cash dummy's king and queen of spades. Then he led a low diamond to his ace then played a second diamond. When West played a crafty queen of diamonds, declarer made sure of his contract by calling for a low diamond from dummy – if he had taken the queen with the king he would have been restricted to three diamond tricks and the contract would have failed.

West exited with the ten of hearts, which was taken by declarer's ace. After cashing the ace of spades, declarer claimed three diamond tricks. He made three spades, two hearts and four diamonds for nine tricks and his contract.

Note that if declarer had played on simple lines by winning the heart and immediately playing ace and another diamond to the jack, he would not have been able to unscramble his winners.

1032. Dealer North. Both Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
—	Pass	1♦	INT
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♥
Pass	4♥	Pass	Pass
Pass			

West led the two of diamonds, which declarer placed as either a third-highest lead or a singleton. Declarer was a little chagrined about the final contract, since the (he thought) obvious advance on the North hand was three notrump rather than two clubs: there would have been nine easy tricks notrump, just as there were in hearts. Declarer's problem was to conjure a tenth trick and that could only come from spades. Furthermore, spades had to be worked on before the defenders attacked clubs.

Declarer decided to play East for four diamonds in a balanced hand. If that were the case, East should have at least 12 high card points – almost all of those outstanding, including the ace and queen of spades. So, declarer took the opening lead in hand with the ace of diamonds, led a heart to dummy's ace and then a low spade toward his hand. East rose with the queen of spades and shifted to the queen of clubs, taken by declarer with the ace.

Declarer continued with the jack of spades to East's ace and took the club return with his king. After crossing to dummy with a low diamond to the king, declarer threw his remaining club on the king of spades. When this passed off successfully, declarer led a trump from dummy. East rose with the king of trumps and tried to cash a club. However, declarer ruffed this with his jack of trumps and claimed ten tricks: a spade, four trumps, three diamonds and two clubs.



CRISS-CROSS

In South Australia, we have been very fortunate in terms of bridge. Our post-pandemic face-to-face bridge recommenced in early July, although we have had a recent two-week closure due to an outbreak. The latest outbreak has meant that, as we return to live bridge, we are restricted to one person per four square metres (previously one person per two square metres). This regulation doesn't mean that we have to have bigger tables, but it does halve our permitted player numbers – hopefully for two weeks only.

Bear in mind that each state in Australia has done different things, so I can only provide a South Australian perspective. After re-opening my own club, numbers boomed! Despite having had online bridge, people were very keen to get back to holding 'real cards' and enjoying the social contact that bridge provides. In fact, when our state-level bridge restarted, even though a few players stayed away, the numbers playing were slightly higher than in the past two years.

Anyway, to the point of this article, based on face-to-face bridge at my club...

It is rare enough to encounter one criss-cross squeeze, let alone two on successive deals! This happened in a recent session at my club, and my husband, Howard Melbourne, was dummy on both deals. Here they are...

Dealer North. Neither Vul.

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

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

The opening lead of the four of hearts was won with the ace. Being short of entries to dummy, declarer rejected the trump finesse, instead leading a low spade to the ten, which held. She trumped a heart to hand, then led the ace of spades, discarding a heart from dummy. North tried to revoke, discarding the five of clubs, but realised in time and played his remaining spade. North's five of clubs was now a penalty card.

Whereas I would now have led a club and finessed, knowing the five had to be played – i.e., the finesse must work, East chose to lead a low diamond from hand, South rising with the queen. I wasn't called to the table – declarer had options because there was a penalty card on the table. South cashed the king of spades, which allowed North to discard the five of clubs – so East had failed to capitalise on the penalty card. South now led an unwise diamond, North playing low and East winning with the nine.

That set the scene for the criss-cross squeeze. East could have ended up with this position had she led all her spades:

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

On the last spade, the jack of clubs is discarded from dummy, then North has to find a discard. If he discards a diamond, East cashes the ace of diamonds, dropping the king, crosses to the ace of clubs and the jack of diamonds is now a winner. On the other hand, if North discards a club, declarer crosses to the ace of clubs, bringing down the king, then can cross back to hand with the ace of diamonds to cash the queen of clubs, which is now a winner.

East/West moved and encountered this as their next deal:

Dealer North. Both Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
—	Pass	INT	Pass
3NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

South's lead of the five of clubs wouldn't be recommended on this auction: six, nine, king. At trick two, East led the six of hearts. South simplified life by playing the queen: king, two. North/South clearly liked to play their high cards; on the lead of the three of diamonds from dummy, North played the ace and, once again, the defence had helped declarer set the scenario for a criss-cross squeeze.

The four of clubs was returned, which meant that declarer had three club tricks once she played low. South won with the ace and returned a club, with dummy's jack winning. Declarer crossed to hand with a heart and took the spade finesse, winning. She now cashed the remaining heart winners...

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

On the last club. South ran into problems controlling both the spade and diamond suits. When East led the queen of clubs, South had to find a discard. A diamond discard would see declarer cash her king, felling the queen, and dummy would be high. A spade discard would mean that declarer could lead to the ace of spades, catching South's king, then she could return to her king of diamonds to cash her spade winner.

We don't see criss-cross squeezes very often, so having two in successive hands should suffice for a while!



Peter Is Over Your Shoulder

The Latvian Team Championship started on November 19, with six teams in the A Division. Unfortunately, we cannot play face-to-face bridge, so there will be two round robins on BBO. We have played three rounds so far and it looks like a four-team fight for the medals (real ones!).

In the first round, when our team, RTU (Riga Technical University), faced last year's winner DAUGAVA, as North, I picked up this collection:

Board No 11. Dealer South. Neither Vul.

♠	A J 9 7 2
♥	A 6 5 4
♦	A J 3 2
♣	—

My partner, Martins Lorencs, with neither side vulnerable, opened with three diamonds, first in hand. Our agreement is that that is constructive, promising at least two of the top three honours and, normally, a seven-card suit. RHO passed and I had to make a bid.

At that moment, it felt like Peter Fredin was sitting behind me with his advice: "Never open a preempt with 7-2-2-2." It felt that this was the case: if my partner had three or even four clubs, then six diamonds would be almost cold. If he had only two clubs and one heart, perhaps we could get an extra trick in spades, but if he had just one spade, then maybe they would divide four-three and the twelfth trick would come from the spade length. Additionally, he might have a side king. So, I bid six diamonds directly and was right, when the whole hand looked like this:

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

We won 11 IMPs on this board when our opponent at the other table, in a similar situation, bid just five diamonds.

In Round 3, another Peter from Sweden – Bertheau – was sitting behind Martins. Many of you remembers his best-bid hand from the 14th World Bridge Games in Lille, in 2012. This time a similar hand, I would say also a possible nominee, was dealt to Lorencs:

Board 12. Dealer West. NS Vul.

♠	J 8 7 5 4
♥	A J 10 8
♦	—
♣	A K 9 2

I opened two spades in second seat (a normal weak two), his RHO bid three diamonds and Martins bid just four spades. West bid five diamonds and, after two

spade, or East could have won and led a spade, ducked, to endplay West.

The deal arose in a Swiss Pairs held by the New South Wales Bridge Association. Making five diamonds for plus 400 gave North/South a 95% score. Top board went to three notrump by North, making ten tricks for plus 430, after East led a top club and switched to the nine of hearts at trick two. There were five other pairs in five diamonds, once by North on the nine-of-hearts lead and four times by South on a low heart lead. They all went one down, minus 50 and 18%. They all basically relied on bringing in the spades for only one loser and most finessed the queen of spades on the first round of spades.

Where South was declarer and West began with a low heart, none of these Souths played the free-finesse jack of hearts at trick one. At one table, South won trick one with the king of hearts, played the diamond queen and ace and then finessed the jack of hearts. It won . . . phew . . . but the jack of hearts was so much safer at trick one. South then slipped by pitching a spade on the ace of hearts instead of a club and meandered around to one light.

The winners of the event were Paul Dalley–Tony Nunn, with Pauline Gumby–Warren Lazer second and Liz Adams–Andrew Peake third.

Duck Tape

Dealer South. Neither Vul.

♠ 7 6 2
♥ 10 8 6 4
♦ 10 9 3
♣ K Q 5

♠ 8 3
♥ K 9 5
♦ A K J 5
♣ 9 8 4 2

West	North	East	South
—	—	—	1♥
Pass	2♥	2♠	4♥
Double	Pass	Pass	Pass

West leads the ace and king of diamonds. South ruffs the second and leads the jack of hearts. What would you do as West?

The deal comes from a high-stakes rubber bridge game. Sitting South was William Zhang and he pulled off a very pretty coup here when faced with this situation:

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

The usual approach would be to finesse in hearts. This would win if East had begun with the king of hearts no longer than three times.

Zhang looked more deeply into the situation. East figured to have five spades for the two-spade overcall. That left West with two spades (he would surely have led it or shifted to it had he held a singleton). If East had held the king of heart with one or two low ones, West would have had 10 or 11 cards in the minors. With such a holding, including the diamond ace-king already seen, West would surely have taken some action over one heart. It was far more likely that West had a balanced or semi-balanced hand.

Zhang thought a psychological ploy had a much better chance for success. At trick two, he played the heart jack from hand. That brings us to today's problem. What should West do? It would look very silly to rise with the king of hearts and have it collide with East's ace or queen. West thought it was safe to duck. It wasn't. This was the full deal:

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

After the diamond ace-king, ruffed, and the heart jack, winning, East discarding a diamond, South played a low spade from both hands. East won with the ten and continued with the king. South won with the ace of spades, cashed the ace of hearts, crossed to the king of clubs and ruffed dummy's last diamond. Then came the ace and queen of clubs, leaving these cards:

	♠ 7	
	♥ 10 8	
	♦ —	
	♣ —	
♠ —		♠ Q J
♥ K		♥ —
♦ J		♦ Q
♣ 9		♣ —
	♠ 9	
	♥ Q 7	
	♦ —	
	♣ —	

When South now led a heart, West won with his king and had to lead a minor. That gave South a ruff-sluff and away went South's spade loser. Very nicely done, Mr. Zhang, not only for the deceptive heart jack, but also for the fine elimination technique thereafter.



The International Bridge Press Association

IBPA Annual General Meeting

Saturday, December 12, 2020 online at 09:00 EST, 14:00 GMT

Minutes

Attendance

33 participants and 21 proxies – see list below. Some who had given their proxies were able to attend.

0. Recommend a Chairman of the AGM

Barry Rigal was elected as Chairman, proposed by David Stern. Seconded by everyone with 1 abstention.

1. Remembrance

Unfortunately, this year, a number of bridge players have died. Barry Rigal wanted to pay special respect to four people who were very important to the bridge world. **Elly Ducheyne**, who ran the Press Room for decades until her brother Jan Swaan took over. **Roland Wald**, who was extremely important for BBO. **Maria Teresa Lavazza**, who contributed so much to the Italian Bridge Federation and the Bridge World at large. **David Birman**, who gave so much energy to the Youth Players of Israel. We paid our respects with a minute of silence.

2. Approval of the minutes of the AGM on September 23 in Wuhan China.

Proposed by David Stern and seconded by Per Jannersten. No questions asked. One abstention and approval by all the others.

3. Officers' Reports (Attached)

Chairman Per Jannersten reported that the IBPA is in excellent good standing but it is important to stay that way. To be relevant and alive also in 10 years' time he asks everybody to put in an effort to find new members by approaching the Bridge Organization in their own country. Approved by all.

Secretary Elisabeth van Ettinger reported that the little work she had to do was all online. Approved by all.

President Barry Rigal thanked the Sponsors although he noted that it is important not to be dependent on them financially. David Stern pointed out that even without the sponsor money we break even. Jozsef Blass, who has passed away, was important in subsidizing the membership fees for members from Eastern Europe. Barry expresses his wish to keep those members even if the IBPA has to give them a reduction. Barry finds it important to think of ways to make membership worthwhile for the members. For instance, by making the pressroom a pleasant experience to visit and a good work place. Approved by all.

4. Appointees' Reports (Attached)

Editor John Carruthers explained the difference this year in which all the articles concerned on-line tournaments. His biggest contributor this year was Mark Horton. He thanks his proof readers P.O Sundelin, Katie Thorpe and Philip Alder. Approved by all.

Membership Secretary Katie Thorpe reported that we have a total of 240 members, 64 sponsored members and 9 honorary members. Approved by all.

5. Treasurer report (Attached)

Due to the big time difference David Solomon could not present his report live. Nevertheless, he reported that we have a solid financial position and enough cash. 1 abstention and all the others approve.

6. Membership fees

Membership fees will remain unchanged for 2021. Members who contribute regularly to the bulletin will not have to pay membership fees. All the attendant members approve. 1 abstention in the proxies.

7. Elections

Proposed for annual re-election are:

Hon. Auditor Richard Fleet. Approved

Hon. General Counsel: David Harris: Approved with 1 vote against and 2 abstentions.

Honorary member: P.O. Sundelin.: Approved.

Per Jannersten explained that he has been reluctant in suggesting P.O as Honorary member since they are friends and work often together. But Per felt that it was much deserved and everybody agreed.

8. Elections of Executive Members.

Barry Rigal as President: Approved unanimously

Per Jannersten as Chairman: Approved unanimously

David Stern as Exec. Vice-President: Approved with 1 abstention

Dilip Gidwani as Org. Vice-President: Approved unanimously

Elisabeth van Ettinger as Secretary: Approved unanimously

Richard Solomon as Treasurer: Approved with 1 vote against.

John Carruthers to the Executive until 2023: Approved with 1 vote against and 1 abstention.

Fernando Lema to the Executive until 2023: Approved with 4 votes against.

Marek Wojcicki to the Executive until 2023: Approved unanimously.

10. The IBPA Annual Awards

Barry Rigal explained that in the past all the awards were presented at the AGM. But 3 years ago the Hainan Bridge Festival proposed to sponsor the presentation of the awards. Obviously this year the festival was cancelled but they would like to continue the sponsoring and have plans for next year to maybe combine 2020 and 2021. This also means that the winners have to be present at the festival and will be kept a secret until then. So now only 2 awards are presented.

The Master Point Press for the Book of the Year award was won by **Kim Frazer** with her Book: *Gaining the Mental Edge on Bridge*. Barry Rigal explains that this book is focused on the psychological way of how to bring the best play to the table. Kim is a Champion in Bridge and Physical Sports and she approaches Bridge in a useful and unusual way. Kim thanks her proofreader Liam Milne, who convinced her to put more bridge deals in the book, and the team of Master Point Press. Ray Lee from MPP tells us that MPP is ongoing and going upwards. He will retire in the future but MPP has increasing resources and market share.

The Alan Truscott Memorial Award was won by **Tom Reynolds** and **Jan van den Hoek**. According to Barry Rigal, they have both played a significant part in us being able to enjoy expert online tournaments during the last nine months, when face-to-face bridge was impossible. Jan joined our AGM for a short while to receive his award. He feels honoured and has many plans for future tournaments.

11. Any Other competent business

Samantha Punch gave us information about an upcoming BAMSAs Conference, the Bridging Academia, Policy and Practice Conference. It will be a virtual BAMSAs event with the keynote address on well-being by psychologist Marty Seligman and panel discussions including Jan Kamras (EBL President) and Boye Brogeland.

Monday, 28 June 2021 – Bridge as a Mind Sport

Tuesday, 29 June 2021 – The New Bridge Normal: Opportunities and Challenges

Wednesday, 30 June 2021 – Gender, Age and Intergenerationality within the Bridge Community

Thursday, 1 July 2021 – Learning, Education and Development in Bridge

If you are interested, email bamsa@stir.ac.uk

Also, the BAMSAs paper, published yesterday, is *Playing Your Life: Developing Strategies and Managing Impressions in the Game of Bridge* <https://doi.org/10.1177/1360780420973043>

And our recent BAMSAs paper: **(Per)forming identity in the mindsport bridge: Self, partnership and community**. It is available at <https://doi.org/10.1177/1012690220959648>

Marek Wojcicki mentioned an upcoming Senior Championship starting January 18, co-sponsored by the Polish and Canadian Federations. Jan Kamras is interested in our experience with a combined Press and Bulletin Room. According to David Stern, it depends on the size of the room. In Wuhan we had an enormous room so there was no problem. There is a discussion on the question if we should open the Press Room only to members because there might be some disturbance if teams use the Press Room as a space to compare results or view the matches on BBO. Jan Swaan stated that welcoming a great variety

of people leads to more knowledge of the IBPA and to new members. In Wuhan he initiated 15 new members. Most people agree on making the Press Room an inviting place.

Peter Cox, who is no expert player he explains, is interested in other aspects of bridge to be published in the Bulletin, not just difficult hands. According to John Carruthers he publishes every article that is presented to him. So he invites the journalist to write about these other aspects.

John Carruthers brings up the fact that we have different categories of Memberships, for instance associate membership. He would like to get rid of that. According to Per Jannersten this is a heritage of Patrick Jourdain. Per mentions the danger that an Organization can be overrun by 1000's of members who then take over the Organization. He will discuss this problem with David Stern to see how we can prevent this danger. He will also propose a change in the Constitution to include Online Meetings as a legal format.

Several participants expressed their thanks to David Stern for organising the online AGM David did a terrific job and in the future we could maybe combine a live AGM with online possibilities for people who are not able to be present.

List of attendees to the AGM:

Kaj Backas, Nikolas Bausback, David Bird, John Carruthers, Simon Cochemé, Peter Cox, Dilip Gidwani, Nicolas Hammond, David Harris, Mark Horton, Per Jannersten, Bob Jones, Jan Kamras, Laurie Kelso, Slawek Latala, Bridzs Lativija, Ray Lee, Fernando Lema, Joe Lenz, Eitan Levy, Jerry Li, Samantha Punch, Barry Rigal, David Stern, Suzi Subeck, Jan Swaan, Katie Thorpe, Elisabeth van Ettinger, Jian Jian Wang, Marek Wojcicki, Tadashi Yoshida, Malgorzata Maruszkin, Jan van den Hoek

Proxies:

Hans Christer Andersson, David Berkowitz, Francesca Canali, Jan van Cleeff, Allan Falk, Patrice Foulon, Dilip Gidwani, Nicolas Hammond, Peter Hasenson, Maureen Hiron, Per Jannersten, Jean-Francois Jourdain, Liam Milne, David Robert Pitts, George Retek, Ana Roth, Karlis Rubins, Wlodzimierz Starkowski, Peter Ventura, Artur Wasiak, Margaret Maruszkin



The International Bridge Press Association

INTERNATIONAL BRIDGE PRESS ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
For the year ended 31 December 2019

Index	Page
Auditors report	3
Balance sheet	4
Income statement	5
Cash flow statement	5
Notes to the financial statements	5

Approval

The financial statements which appear on pages 4 to 5

were approved by the President and Treasurer on and are signed by:

PRESIDENT

TREASURER



The International Bridge Press Association

Financial Statements

Treasurer's Report to AGM by Zoom, Sunday, December 12th, 2020 From Richard Solomon

I have never been able to attend an AGM of this organisation in person. Thus, the holding of an AGM by Zoom offered for me a unique opportunity to attend an AGM for the first time. Unfortunately, the timing of this meeting, 3:00 a.m. New Zealand time, makes this very unlikely: hence this report.

Presented to you are the actual accounts for the year ended 31st December 2019, a projected Income statement for the year to 31st December 2020 and a budgeted income statement for the year to 31st December 2021.

Actual Excess Income for the last financial year was US\$10,157 with current year Projected Income \$8,400 and Budgeted Income for 2021 US\$4,300, the variance coming mainly from the amount of income received from "Fun Bridge".

Overall, the Association is in a very strong position financially. Subscription income is relatively static allowing for the fact that many members now fall into the Honorary/Sponsored Membership categories, the cost of which is shown as an expense.

Award Sponsors includes \$11,000 granted by Hainan Bridge Federation in relation to the Awards ceremony. Receipts from Fun Bridge are shown only in respect of what has been received.

Expenses remain/will remain very level over the three related years.

The Association has more than enough cash funds in reserve and is in very sound financial footing.

Therefore, I make the following recommendations:

I move acceptance of the Audited Financial Accounts of the Association for the year ended 31st December, 2019 and adoption of the projected Income and Expenditure Statement for the year ended 31st December, 2020 and budgeted Income Statement for the year ended 31st December, 2021.

I also move that membership subscriptions for the year to 31st December be kept at the same rates as for the current financial year.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the help given by the honorary auditor, Richard Fleet in respect of the audit of the financial accounts for the year ended 31st December, 2019.

Richard Solomon
Treasurer, International Bridge Press Association
23rd November 2020

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

Management of
International Bridge Press Association
611 Pleasant Street
Miles City
Montana 59301
USA

I have audited the accompanying balance sheet of the International Bridge Press Association ("the Association") as of December 31, 2019 and the related statements of income, retained earnings, and cash flows for the year then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of the Association's management. My responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on my audit.

Scope

I conducted my audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United Kingdom. Those standards require that I plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. I believe that my audit provides a reasonable basis for my opinion.

Qualification

In common with similar organisations, it is not feasible for the association to institute accounting controls over cash collection from donations, subscriptions and fund raising prior to initial entry of the collections in the accounting records. Accordingly, it was impracticable for me to extend my examination beyond the receipts actually recorded.

Audit Opinion

In my opinion, except for the effect on the financial statements of the matter referred to in the preceding paragraph, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Association as at December 31, 2019, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.



Richard Fleet

Westcombe
Moorcourt Close
Sidmouth
Devon
EX10 8SU

18 October 2020

INTERNATIONAL BRIDGE PRESS ASSOCIATION

INCOME STATEMENT

For the year ended 31 December 2019

2018		2019	2019	2020
Actual Income		Actual	Budget	Projection
8152 Subscriptions	Email	9466	8000	9500
483 Subscriptions	Printing	288	500	300
2500	WBF Grant	2500	2500	2500
10500	Award Sponsors	15500	15500	15,500
0	"Fun Bridge"	6000	6000	0
0	Gain on Exchange	0	0	0
21635	Total Income	33754	32500	27800
Expenditure				
12300	Bulletin Editor's Fee	13200	13,200	13,200
1050	Bulletin Editor's Allowance	0	0	0
0	Bulletin Editor's Travel	0	300	0
1000	Bulletin Hands Columnist	1000	1000	1,000
792	Bulletin Printing and Postage	504	500	500
478	Computer Costs	0	0	0
1161	Honorary and Sponsored Members	2580	1200	2800
0	President's Expenses	95	0	0
0	President's Travel	0	0	0
500	Treasurer's Allowance	500	500	500
1150	Travel and Accommodation- Hainan	1000	1200	1200
0	Member Advertising	0	0	0
500	Membership Secretary Allowance	500	500	500
1800	IBPA Award Prizes	2950	1800	3000
0	IBPA Award Costs	300	200	300
156	Credit Card Charges	143	200	200
54	Bank Charges	73	100	100
215	Miscellaneous Costs	50	200	100
1843	Loss on Exchange	702	0	0
22999	Total Expenses	23597	20900	23400
-1364	Excess Income (Expenditure)for the year.	10157	11600	4400

Note Subscriptions

6991	Subscriptions due	6886		
483	Subscriptions due (printing)	288		
0	Subs. Paid in advance	0	see note 1	
0	Subs paid in advance (printing)	0	see note 1	
1161	Honorary and Sponsored Members	2580		
8635	Total	9754		
8152	Subscriptions	288		
483	Subscriptions	9466		
8635	Total	9754		

INTERNATIONAL BRIDGE PRESS ASSOCIATION
BALANCE SHEET
as at 31st December 2019

	2018	2019
	\$	\$
Assets		
Current Assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	71,933	84,034
Trade Debtors	1,550	0
Total Assets	73,483	84,034
Current Liabilities		
Award money in advance	0	2,000
Subscriptions Received in Advance	860	2,397
Trade and other payables	3,143	0
WBF Grant in advance		0
Total Current Liabilities	4,003	4,397
Net Assets	69,480	79,637
Reserves		
Retained profit brought forward	65,371	64,007
Profit and Loss Account	-1,364	10,157
Jourdain Bequest	5,473	5,473
Total Reserves	69,480	79,637

INTERNATIONAL BRIDGE PRESS ASSOCIATION

CASH FLOW STATEMENT

for the year ended 31st December 2019

	\$	
Cash Funds as at 1st January 2019	84,590	71,933
Net Inflow(Outflow) of Cash during the year	-10,814	12,803
Exchange Gain / (-Loss) in Euro account	-1,843	-702
Cash Funds as at 31st December 2019	71,933	84,034

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 31st December 2019

1 Subscriptions paid in advance

Subscriptions received relating to the actual year are recorded as Income and Subscriptions received for the following year are shown as Prepayment in the Balance Sheet.

2 Assets

Computers, printers and fax machines are all written off to Nil in the year of purchase.

3 Cash Funds 31st December 2019

	US\$	US\$
Paypal	4,018	4,018
Handelsbanken US\$	33,538	44,808
Handelsbanken Euro Account	34,203	32,888
US Stripe Account	174	2,320
Per Balance Sheet	71,933	84,034

4 Jourdain Bequest

As at 31st December 2018	6,328	5,473
Printing, Packing and Postage of handbooks	-855	0
As at 31st December 2019	5,473	5,473

**INTERNATIONAL BRIDGE PRESS ASSOCIATION
BUDGET INCOME STATEMENT
For the year ended 31 December 2021**

2019		2020	2021
Actual	Income	Projection	Budget
	9 466 Subscriptions Email	9 500	9 000
	288 Subscriptions Printing	300	300
	2 500 WBF Grant	2 500	2 500
	15 500 Award Sponsors	16 500	16 500
	6000 "Fun Bridge"	3 000	0
	33754 Total Income	31800	28300
	Expenditure		
	13 200 Bulletin Editor's Fee	13 200	13 200
	1 000 Bulletin Hands Columnist	1 000	1 000
	504 Bulletin Printing and Postage	500	500
	2 580 Honorary and Sponsored Members	2 800	3 200
	95 President's Expenses	0	0
	500 Treasurer's Fee	500	600
	1 000 Travel and Accommodation- Hainan	1 200	1 200
	500 Membership Secretary's Fee	500	600
	2 950 IBPA Award Prizes	3 000	3 000
	300 IBPA Award Costs	300	300
	143 Credit Card Charges	200	200
	73 Bank Charges	100	100
	50 Miscellaneous Costs	100	100
	702 Loss on exchange	0	0
	23597 Total Expenses	23400	24000
	10157 Excess Income (Expenditure) for the year.	8400	4300

Note Subscriptions

6886 Subscriptions due
 288 Subscriptions due (printing)
 0 Subs. Paid in advance
 0 Subs paid in advance (printing)
 2580 Honorary and Sponsored Members
9754 Total



Richard Solomon
 Treasurer
 23rd November 2020



Correspondence

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

A Chance to Clear the Air and Start Over

by **Bridge Winners Dec. 14, 2020**

BW Editors' note: This article was not written by Bridge Winners, but by a group of people representing many prominent sponsors of professional bridge.

An Appeal from Sponsors To Professional Bridge Players

As the coronavirus hit our world and forced bridge to shift online, cheating in online bridge has consumed far too much attention and energy. We, the undersigned sponsors who have from time to time engaged professionals, have been disappointed and saddened at the revelations of unethical behavior including self-kibitzing and collusive information-sharing. We desire to find a way back to a clean game that can include everyone, even those who have acted unethically but are willing to ask forgiveness.

There is no excuse for cheating. But we believe in a chance for forgiveness.

We, as sponsors of professional bridge, are proposing a path through all of this. We appeal to all who have transgressed to step forward and in return earn our forgiveness. We appeal to all who have been wrongly accused to follow a confidential path to clear your name. And we appeal to all who have been denied entry into online invitational events to pursue one of these two paths.

To anyone who has acted unethically before the WBF updated their Disciplinary Code, we offer the following:

- Acknowledge that you have committed ethical violations by commenting "I confess to ethical violations in online bridge during the period March 1, 2020-November 27, 2020." in this thread. This confession must be made by January 7, 2021. You do not have to provide details in public unless you wish to do so.
- Every player that confesses as above must provide a statement detailing the extent of their unethical actions to Matt Smith via email at matt.smith.unitedsponsors@gmail.com who shall hold the statement confidentially and review it for completeness. Confidentiality will only be rescinded in the event that the player is found to have been guilty of subsequent ethical violations.

- In doing so, you will agree to accept the following absence from organized bridge:
- No participation in ACBL-sanctioned events until the conclusion of the second F2F NABC after the confession.
- For USBF members only: No participation in each of the first F2F USBCs in all categories.
- No participation in the first F2F transnational championship organized by the EBL/WBF (One of the European Transnational Championships, European Winter Games, World Transnational teams, World Bridge Series).
- No participation in organized online bridge events for six months from the date of acknowledgement.

This opportunity is not being offered to players who served in an administrative or official capacity for an official bridge organization, including the WBF, an NBO, or a ZA, as they will be held to a higher standard. Neither Michal Nowosadzki nor Sylvia Shi is required to accept the absence from organized bridge because each has fully confessed and invested considerable time in support of efforts to administer a clean game. This offer is independent of NBOs who claim jurisdiction (such as the English Bridge Union) which may impose sanctions which would not be affected by this offer. However, most NBOs and major bridge organizations have denied jurisdiction in online events unsanctioned by their own organization. In addition, this does not compel any online event organizer to accept someone into their tournaments although we would encourage them to do so consistent with the agreed-upon absences stated above.

With the WBF update of the Disciplinary Code, the WBF or NBOs will have jurisdiction in all future cases.

We ask for the support of all Bridge Organizations as well as the rest of the expert bridge-playing community. We hope you will express your support of this initiative.

To anyone who believes they have been wrongfully accused of acting unethically, we offer the following:

- Players who believe that they have been wrongfully accused can ask for a confidential and impartial investigation by writing to: unitedbridgesponsors@gmail.com. The player must agree to the release of all relevant information such as: system notes, BBO connection data, site tracking data from their devices. They must also agree upfront to accept

the conclusion and consequences of the investigation.

- Should the investigation find that a player has committed ethical violations, the player will be expected to sit out for twice as long as if they had acknowledged their unethical behavior in the first place (all ACBL-sanctioned events until the conclusion of the fourth F2F NABC, second set of F2F USBCs, and two transnational EBL/WBF events).

What will players achieve by acknowledging their unethical behavior?

After you have admitted to past transgressions and sat out the events listed above, all of the undersigned sponsors will agree to accept you back in the bridge community. Some will welcome you back immediately and be happy to see you; many of us will hire you either immediately or over time as if nothing has happened; others might not want to play on teams with you or hire you at first, but we will all treat you with respect and honor at the bridge table. We all fail sometimes and we are ready to forgive and forget. So please step forward and accept the consequences of your actions.

What happens to players who do not step forward?

Some players will not wish to either acknowledge their unethical actions or attempt to resolve accusations against them. To these players, we say:

- Even though you may not have treated online bridge as seriously as pre-COVID F2F bridge, many of your competitors have treated it as a lifeline to the game we love and rely on the integrity and fairness of the online experience.
- Many of us have felt personally cheated because we have had teammates who have behaved unethically. We will not risk being taken advantage of again. We as sponsors can hire who we want based on our own criteria. However, we want to avoid the situation where nobody wants to play with or hire somebody because they are under suspicion. We want to resolve all situations through either an acknowledgement or a fair resolution because the suspicion was not justified.
- However, be aware that while there has never been a published list of players barred from online competition under suspicion of cheating, that many of the undersigned know or suspect your status. This is the opportunity to come out of hiding and resolve your situation. Doing so will be of benefit to you, us, and the game of bridge.

How this Agreement Serves the Global Bridge Community

This initiative is an attempt to clean up and move on. Let us stop debating who did what and what the

penalty should be. Resolve this, and let us meet at the table as friends in the near future. Some may believe that players who accept this offer do not deserve a second chance or that the punishment is too lenient. Others may believe that online play was not serious bridge and the punishment is too harsh. We are lost in a labyrinth and need to find our way out. The bridge organizations are finally establishing clear jurisdiction over all organized bridge in the future. What we offer now is an opportunity to resolve questions about your ethics; we urge you to seize it.

Even if none of you decide to step forward, realize that sponsors from all over the world have come together to state once and for all that any cheating is not acceptable – not online, not in person – not ever. But we are also clearly stating that you have a path back and it is up to you to accept that path or to reject it. We sincerely hope you accept this opportunity.

The undersigned sponsors have not circulated any list of suspected cheaters. Many of the undersigned sponsors do not know each other. Some sponsors may not even know of anybody who is under suspicion. All of us want a clean game and to treat everyone fairly.

United Sponsors:

(We welcome additional sponsors to join us by commenting on this article):

United States:

Margie Tucker Cole, John Diamond, Gary Donner, Jodie Edmonds, Marty Fleisher, Naren Gupta, Vinita Gupta, Joyce Hill, Geeske Joel, Barbara Kastle, Gaylor Kastle, John McAllister, Rose Meltzer, Joan Millens, Reese Milner, Gillian Miniter, Nick Nickell, Linda Robinson, Andrew Rosenthal, Marty Seligman, Warren Spector, Stan Tulin, Allison Wilson, Jeff Wolfson, Daniel Zagorin

Europe:

Andrew Black, Herman Drenkelford, Jonathan Harris, Mark Moran, Erikas Vainikonis, Vytautas Vainikonis, Juan Carlos Ventin, Pierre Zimmermann

Asia:

Mr Ji Chen, sponsor of PD Times & Pioneers Bridge Club, Mr Yicheng Tian, General Manager of Zhejiang Qiantang Bridge Club, Mr Dade Wang, sponsor of Jinshuo Bridge Club, Mr Chen Zhao, Captain of team Zhao in ALT and OCBL events.

BW Editors' note: To our community: We know you have strong opinions on consequences for cheaters. This thread is not the place to repeat them. We also ask that you show restraint and compassion towards those who come forward. The goal is to encourage confessions and move on. Let's justify the faith the signatories showed in our community by publishing here.

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. Has started NAOBCs. 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. Email info@netbridge.online for an invitation (Jan van den Hoek).

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

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

PBU & CBF – The Polish Bridge Union (pzbs.pl) and the Canadian Bridge Federation (cbf.ca) are co-sponsoring the Transatlantic Online Seniors Championship for national teams Jan. 18-Feb. 7, 2021 on BBO.

All of the online tournaments named above are on BBO or RealBridge. 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.



www.ibpa.com

This Bulletin: You can access an electronic copy of this Bulletin at www.ibpa.com/672az.pdf

Subscriptions: You can apply to join the IBPA or renew your subscription on the website by clicking on the appropriate button on the top of the homepage.

Members' Addresses: You can find fellow members' contact details at: www.jannersten.org. If you have forgotten your access code: thorpe.katie@gmail.com

The 2018 Handbook: To access the electronic version of the Handbook, go to the IBPA website: www.ibpa.com

Personal Details Changes: Whenever your contact details change, please amend them as appropriate in the database found at: www.jannersten.org or inform the Membership Secretary, Katie Thorpe: thorpe.katie@gmail.com