



## BULLETIN

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## THE INTERNATIONAL BRIDGE PRESS ASSOCIATION

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May 10, 2021

In March, we interviewed EBL President Jan Kamras for the Bulletin. At that time, Kamras was optimistic that the European Championships would take place in Madeira as planned. Since then, however, those Championships have been cancelled and the EBL was looking into holding an online Championship, **IF** the WBF went ahead with its plans to hold the World Championships in Salsomaggiore later this year. Thus we decided to interview WBF President Gianarrigo Rona. Here's what he had to say.

*IBPA: Mr. President, in May 2020 we were informed that the World Teams Championships in Salsomaggiore Terme were "postponed". The WBF website currently says NO EVENTS. Does this mean that you do not plan to stage any events this year?*

GR: As you know the WBF decided to consider 2020 events as non-existent, planning to hold, in 2021, the World Bridge Teams Championships and postponing until 2022 the World Bridge Games. Concerning the World Youth Teams Championship, we decided to move it to 2021. This decision was immediately published and communicated on 25<sup>th</sup> May, 2020. The plan that we strongly want to carry out is to hold the World Bridge Team Championship in Salsomaggiore Terme in the last part of October 2021. Unfortunately, Covid-19 has continued its horrific spread in late 2020 and early 2021, and the battle is still not yet won. Together with the Salsomaggiore and FIGB authorities, we are continuously monitoring the situation, day by day.

The dates and the organisational details of the Championships will be decided at the next meeting of the WBF Management Committee to be held at the end of April or the beginning of May, and will be immediately published and communicated. On that occasion, a final decision about the Youth Teams Championship will also be made, bearing in mind that in any case this event can be held only in July/August.

*IBPA: Is there a Plan B for the 2021 events? Or is your choice between face-to-face bridge, on-site, and cancelling?*

GR: The situation is clear: if, unfortunately the Championship cannot be held face-to-face, it sadly will be cancelled.

*IBPA: How do you intend to reduce the risk that Covid-19 will be spread during the event? Will participation be restricted to those who have been immunized? Or...?*

GR: All persons allowed to enter the venue will have to have been immunized or to have had a negative test result (swab) 48 hours before the start of the Championships. In any case, the body temperature of everyone allowed to enter the venue will be checked, distances will be respected, and gatherings will be forbidden. To wear a mask inside the venue will be mandatory, but we will guarantee a safe distance and non-contact between players during play (adopting tables of 1.35 x 1.35 m, duplicated boards, and use of personal bidding boxes). The players will not have to wear a mask during play.

This is the picture today. All the details will be published in due time, hoping that the situation will be normalized and some restrictions will be avoided.

**Continued overleaf...**

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IBPA: Will spectators and followers be allowed or do you mean that it will be entry by invitation only?

GR: Currently, we consider that only players, Championship officials, medical staff, tournament personnel, accredited journalists and other authorized persons can be present at the venue; no spectators and/or followers will be permitted to attend.

IBPA: Unethical behaviour and cheating have been an issue in the past. How do you intend to prevent that this time?

GR: With the adoption of the new security system, managed by Trian Chira, during play, all tables will be constantly monitored by cameras and the full bidding and play recorded.

IBPA: Thank you, Mr. President.

Subsequent to this interview, on May 8, 2021, the WBF announced the cancellation of the 2021 World Youth Team Championships and the 2021 World Team Championships, both of which were to have been held in Salsomaggiore, Italy, in August (Youth) and October (Open). Plans are underway for Salsomaggiore to host the World Team Championships in February/March 2022. The World Youth Team Championships will next be held in 2023. There are no plans to hold any World Championships online.



## A Team of Destiny? Paul Thurston, Tweed, ON

We'll let the readers decide about that "destiny" moniker, but it did seem that the crew assembled by Captain Mike Rippey was smiled on by Lady Luck. Of course, good luck is often said to be the by-product of good work and lots of that was done by the team in the 13-match Round Robin. Playing with Rippey were Polish stars Kamil Nowak/Michal Klukowski, Piotr Nawrocki/Piotr Wiankowski and Canadians Keith Balcombe/Paul Thurston.

In board-a-match, each board is scored as either a win (1) or a tie (1/2) with the loser of a board recording 0. The size of the difference doesn't matter as a ten-point margin is just as conclusive as 1400 – a win is a win!

Our team finished third in the qualifying rounds, a result that would prove dramatically significant for the playoffs. However, that was not the case in the quarterfinals where RIPPEY dispatched GUPTA without the 1.1 board carryover affecting the result.

For the carryover, the team that finished higher in the Round Robin than its playoff opponent received a carryover of at least 0.1 of a board, mainly to avoid ties and any subsequent need for overtime boards. That carryover started to seem like it might be significant when the two teams that finished ahead of

us were both eliminated in the quarterfinals so that, as the highest seed still standing, we would have that positive carryover as long as we survived.

And survive we did in our semifinal match versus HUANG by, you guessed it, precisely 0.1 of a board! On to the final, where we trailed by one board (minus the carryover) after the first 12 deals but recorded a win by one board in the second half to finish exactly 0.1 boards ahead of QUARANTEAM. Now that's DESTINY!

This deal from the quarterfinals is a perfect example of the tiniest of differences determining which team would win a board.

**Dealer North. Neither Vul.**

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

At our table, Dutch stars Simon de Wijs and Bauke Muller wheeled out their Tarzan Forcing Club system.

| West     | North           | East     | South            |
|----------|-----------------|----------|------------------|
| Balcombe | de Wijs         | Thurston | Muller           |
| —        | 1♣ <sup>1</sup> | Pass     | 1♦ <sup>2</sup>  |
| Pass     | 1♥ <sup>3</sup> | Pass     | 2♦ <sup>4</sup>  |
| Pass     | 2♥ <sup>5</sup> | Pass     | 2NT <sup>6</sup> |
| Pass     | 3♣ <sup>7</sup> | Pass     | 3NT <sup>8</sup> |
| Pass     | Pass            | Pass     |                  |

1. Forcing, at least 15 HCP
2. Artificial, 0-8 HCP
3. Relay, asking
4. 6-8 balanced
5. Relay, asking
6. Both majors or both minors
7. Relay, asking
8. 4=4=3=2

Balcombe started with a fourth-best five of diamonds. Declarer won and crossed to the ace of spades to run the club jack. On a second club to the queen, East started feeling the pinch. Forewarned that South held four spades, East reluctantly pitched a diamond and a second diamond when South cashed the ace of clubs, and yet again another diamond when South sold a club trick to West. The defenders took their three diamond tricks, so North/South recorded plus 400.

At board-a-match, South might have broached spades by leading the nine to the ace. That would have allowed him to cash the king later to mop up four tricks in the suit for plus 430, but would you really risk the contract (losing three diamonds, one spade and one club if the spade queen didn't drop as it did)?

Would it matter?

Actually, it did, since Nowak/Klukowski took a different approach in the bidding.

| West   | North           | East   | South           |
|--------|-----------------|--------|-----------------|
| Korbel | Nowak           | Gupta  | Klukowski       |
| —      | 1♣ <sup>1</sup> | Pass   | 1♥ <sup>2</sup> |
| Pass   | 2♦ <sup>3</sup> | Double | Pass            |
| Pass   | 3♣              | Pass   | 3♠              |
| Pass   | 4♥              | Pass   | Pass            |

1. (i.) 12-14 balanced (ii.) 15+ with clubs (iii.) any 18+
2. 8+, 4+ hearts, forcing to game opposite option (iii.)
3. Option (iii.)

This was a great BAM decision by Kamil Nowak as it turned out, since careful play by Michal Klukowski brought home the contract. Daniel Korbel led the five of diamonds to dummy's ace. Declarer led a spade to the ace and ran the jack of clubs, followed by a club to the queen. Naren Gupta ruffed that and exited with a spade to the jack, queen and king. The heart ace-king felled the queen and Klukowski led the ace of clubs, ruffed a club and ruffed a diamond. That was nine tricks and the jack of hearts was number ten for plus 420 and a win on the board.

Sonny Moysé smiled from wherever he's playing these days!

Very often, BAM auctions feel like a cat-and-mouse contest, the challenge being to determine whether you're the cat or the mouse on any particular deal.

**Dealer East. EW Vul.**

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

| West            | North   | East            | South  |
|-----------------|---------|-----------------|--------|
| Balcombe        | de Wijs | Thurston        | Muller |
| —               | —       | 1♣ <sup>1</sup> | 1♦     |
| 1♥ <sup>2</sup> | Double  | Pass            | 2♥     |
| Double          | 3♥      | Pass            | Pass   |
| Double          | Pass    | Pass            | Pass   |

1. 2+ clubs
2. 4+ spades

I'm hiding this article from any impressionable students as I would never advocate opening the bidding with this junk, EXCEPT that Keith and I play a light opening-bid style just to be *au courant*, so one club it was. One heart was more of that modern stuff as partner's response was a spade-showing transfer, in order to give North the opportunity to double to show hearts and let South raise his partner's suit. Back came Balcombe with an extra-values competitive double and then the cat-and-mouse theme arose: sensing East/West might well have a vulnerable game in the offing, North bid one more heart for the road. Mouse for the moment, I covered in the corner and passed. Another double by Balcombe.

While North was correct that we could make a vulnerable game (four spades, thanks to the favourable lie of the black suits), I didn't believe I would provide as much help for that effort as partner might need, and so passed to see what we could get on defence. Quite a bit, as it turned out: two spades, one heart, two diamonds and two clubs after Balcombe's low-club lead to the jack and a shift to the ace and another spade.

At the other table, West did indeed declare in spades, but only at the two-level (very reasonable) and plus 500 out-pointed minus 170 for a RIPPEY win on the board.

In the final, Captain Mike and I faced two very capable juniors (Alexander Sandin of Sweden and Christian Lahrman of Denmark) for the first 12 deals and had several cat-and-mouse adventures. Starting with the following:

**Dealer South. NS Vul.**

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

| West   | North  | East    | South    |
|--------|--------|---------|----------|
| Sandin | Rippey | Lahrman | Thurston |
| —      | —      | —       | INT      |
| Pass   | 2♣     | 2♥      | Pass     |
| 3♥     | Pass   | Pass    | 3NT      |
| Double | Pass   | Pass    | Pass     |

After partner's Stayman and East's intervention, I decided to pass like a good little mouse and await further developments. And, yes, I do realize that, even in Canada, South might upgrade that hand and treat it like 18 HCP, but as a 'small-c conservative' and a hater of jacks, I'm not a big fan of such upgrades. When West's raise came back, it didn't seem like he could possibly be inviting game, so he was trying to set a trap that I triggered for him by bidding three notrump. "Double," said the would-be cat, but dummy had just the right stuff and, aided by East's club pitches on the run of the diamonds, two doubled and vulnerable overtricks rolled in for plus 1150.

As it happened, West's double turned out to be cost-free since the other team's North/South landed in four spades (another Moysian!) and could only make +620 after a diamond lead by East.

Not all of the Sandin/Lahrman escapades turned out to be losses for QUARANTEAM.

**Dealer South. Neither Vul.**

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

| West   | North  | East     | South   |
|--------|--------|----------|---------|
| Rippey | Sandin | Thurston | Lahrman |
| —      | —      | —        | 2♥      |
| Double | 4♥     | Double   | Pass    |
| Pass   | Pass   |          |         |

After the heart barrage launched by the youngsters, we did manage plus 500 on defence after Mike very sensibly passed my Responsive Double, but had we caught a mouse or landed in its trap?

Full marks to Israelis Ami Zamir and Asaf Yekutiezi for finding a route to six diamonds, the only making slam on the East/West cards. Of course, without having to contend with molesting cats in the North-South chairs!

Finally, an unpaid advertisement for one of my favourite bidding treatments that is actually making a comeback in many circles.

**Dealer West. NS Vul.**

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

| West     | North  | East     | South |
|----------|--------|----------|-------|
| Balcombe |        | Thurston |       |
| INT      | Pass   | 2♠       | Pass  |
| Pass     | Double | Pass     | 3♣    |
| Pass     | Pass   | Double   | Pass  |
| Pass     | Pass   |          |       |

One notrump was 14-16 and two spades was, believe it or not, natural and non-forcing! That weak-seeming start lured North into balancing and when South's takeout to three clubs came round to East, a maximum-showing competitive double was excellent news to West who had no problem passing for penalty.

That penalty was eventually plus 500 for East/West after a high-heart lead, followed by three rounds of clubs but even plus 200 would have been enough, since the other team's East/West declared in two spades after the one notrump opening and 'standard' transfer response by East.

For sure, we were the cats on that deal!



## WBT Masters Tom Townsend, London

Try this hand as an opening-lead problem. As West, you hold...

**Dealer South. EW Vul.**

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

...and see the following bidding:

| West | North           | East | South           |
|------|-----------------|------|-----------------|
| —    | —               | —    | 1♥              |
| Pass | 2♦ <sup>1</sup> | Pass | 2♠ <sup>2</sup> |
| Pass | 3♠              | Pass | 4♣ <sup>3</sup> |
| Pass | 4♦              | Pass | 4♥              |
| Pass | 5♣              | Pass | 5♥              |
| Pass | 7♠              | Pass | Pass            |
| Pass |                 |      |                 |

1. Natural, forcing to game
2. Second suit, any strength
3. Shortage

Contract: 7♠ by South

Your opening lead?

This lead problem was from the World Bridge Tour Masters. North/South were Andrew Black and David Gold. Their auction has been quite informative. Perhaps you can use that to your advantage. Declarer (South) has shown four spades and longer hearts, a singleton or void club, the ace-king of hearts and no diamond control. Dummy has four spades, longer diamonds and the minor-suit aces. One wonders why he went the control-bidding route over four hearts rather than bidding four notrump (RKCB).

Better not lead a trump, in case partner has queen-to-three or even king-to-three. A club looks safe, but is there anything else more dynamic? How can we hope to beat this grand slam, after all, with spades three-two and the king of diamonds under the ace?

West was Victor Silverstone. The veteran Scot found the crafty lead of the five of diamonds, forcing South to an immediate decision in the suit. It worked a treat on the actual layout (see next column).

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

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

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

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

Reluctant to go down at trick one, Gold put up the ace of diamonds. He drew trumps and played hearts from the top, hoping for six tricks from the suit (a fifty-two percent chance).

This time, Silverstone had hearts stopped and made the king of diamonds at the end for one down.

In my team's match, East was on lead to seven spades. From that side, there were no good moves for the defence. North won the trump lead, drew trumps, ruffed out hearts and got home with the diamond finesse.

Table 1: 7♠ minus one by South, N/S minus 50  
Table 2: 7♠ made by North, N/S plus 1510

## Special Key-Card Ask

Jerry Li, Beijing

While chatting with my long-time friend Dr. Jian-jian (J.J.) Wang recently, I learned about the following deal with great interest (maybe a candidate for the 2021 Best Bidding of the Year award?). It's from the 2020 ACBL Grand National Team District 6 Final.

**Board 1. Dealer North. Neither Vul.**

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

| West              | North | East             | South |
|-------------------|-------|------------------|-------|
| <i>Hailong Ao</i> |       | <i>J.J. Wang</i> |       |
| —                 | 1♠    | Double           | Pass  |
| 2NT               | Pass  | 3♥               | Pass  |
| 3♠                | Pass  | 4♦               | Pass  |
| 4♥                | Pass  | 5♣ <sup>1</sup>  | Pass  |
| 5♦ <sup>2</sup>   | Pass  | 5♠ <sup>3</sup>  | Pass  |
| 6♠ <sup>4</sup>   | Pass  | 7♥ <sup>5</sup>  | Pass  |
| Pass              | Pass  |                  |       |

**See next page for alert explanations...**

1. Based on their agreements: four spades and four notrump here are cuebids (opponent's suit) and Kickback RKCB, respectively. And, five clubs is a Special Keycard Ask (more details in the following text).
2. 1430 answer showing one ace (nothing about the trump king at this moment).
3. Relay, asking for the trump queen (or king). When five spades is an asking bid over five hearts, it also shows grand-slam interest.
4. Heart queen (or king) plus spade king (an answer over six hearts commits to 6NT at least).
5. Thank you, partner!

Seven hearts is an easy make after picking up North's marked heart king. If using ordinary Roman Key Card Blackwood (RKCB), the best East/West can do is to reach six hearts because of a missing key card. Making seven hearts was a 14-IMP pickup for their team as the opponents played in five hearts at the other table.

That was a memorable deal right before all bridge tournaments going online due to the pandemic!

It is well-known that RKCB, in which the king of trumps is treated as a fifth ace, has a clear advantage over plain Blackwood in most situations. However, we may also learn from experience that trump king is not always equal to an ace. For instance:

- When our side has 11 or 12 trumps, we have a 52% or 100% chance, respectively, to drop the missing trump king, but not the trump ace;
- If an opponent has made a strength-showing bid (but not a pre-emptive bid), we should have a much better-than-50% chance to successfully finesse against his/her trump king, but there would be a sure loser if missing an ace;
- Sometimes, we need a swing (or just feel lucky), and therefore are willing to play in a slam relying on a successful finesse of the trump king, but not when risking a missing ace.

In brief, under certain circumstances, it is crucial for us to distinguish among the trump ace, a side ace, and the trump king to decide if a slam is plausible. These are the times when Special Keycard Asking (SKCA), invented by J.J. a few years ago, comes into play. The method is simple and effective: use one step above the ordinary keycard ask as SKCA, provided that it does not conflict with a more useful meaning (e.g., Exclusion RKC).

The Asker should be missing both the trump ace and king if in FRONT of the stronger opponent (hoping partner's trump ace can catch LHO's trump king), but hold the trump ace only if BEHIND the stronger opponent (hoping the trump ace in hand can catch RHO's trump king).

The Teller's replies to SKCA are relatively simple:

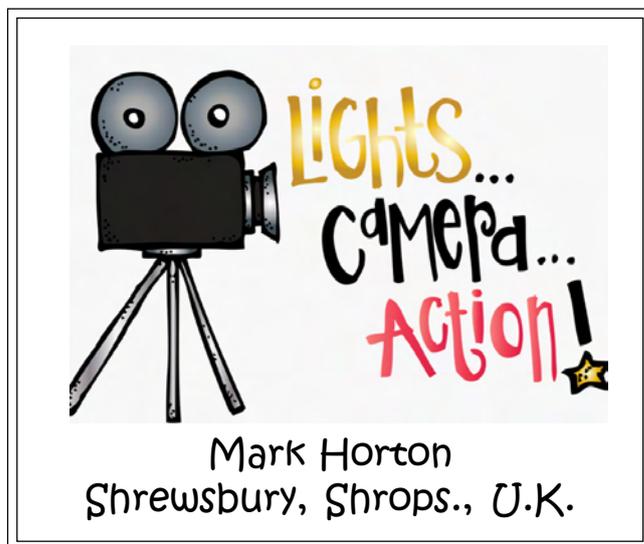
- If the Asker is behind the stronger opponent (and therefore will hold the trump ace): Teller replies to the SKCA with the same steps as in ordinary Blackwood, i.e., but not treating the trump king as a key card (Asker expects a successful finesse of the trump king if needed).
- If the Asker is in front of the stronger opponent (and therefore will lack both the trump ace and king), the Teller's step replies are:
  - 1st step = 0-0.5 or 2.5;
  - 2nd step = 1 or 3;
  - 3rd step = 1.5 or 3.5; and
  - 4th step = 2 or 4 key cards,

respectively, where the trump ace counts as 1.5 key cards, a side ace counts as 1 keycard, and the trump king counts as 0.5 keycard.

The unusual definitions of key cards and step answers let you play a small slam if (a.) the trump ace is missing, or (b.) the trump king is missing along with a side ace (1.5 key cards in both cases), but avoids reaching a slam missing both the trump ace and king (2 key cards).

Later, if Asker, having hoped to reach seven on a trump-king finesse if partner has the trump ace, receives a 0-0.5 key card reply to a special ask, he can make the cheapest bid outside the agreed trump suit to ask for the trump king (0.5 key cards) for a small slam.

All other follow-ups to SKCA, including trump queen (or king if Asker is BEHIND the stronger opponent), specific king asks, etc., are similar to those after ordinary key card asks.



I suspect everyone is familiar with the phrase that forms my title, the cue to a film crew as shooting begins. No-one knows when the exciting moments of a match will take place, but sometimes they occur from the very first deal and keep on coming. That was certainly the case in the third round of the OCBL April Cup, where at times we saw both dramatic and superb passages of play. Here's a lead problem from the second deal of the round.

**Board 2. Dealer East. Neither Vul.**

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

In Black v. Hungary, you are Thomas Paske, South...

| West             | North           | East           | South        |
|------------------|-----------------|----------------|--------------|
| <i>Dumbovich</i> | <i>McIntosh</i> | <i>Winkler</i> | <i>Paske</i> |
| —                | —               | 1♦             | Pass         |
| 2♣               | 3♥              | 4♦             | Pass         |
| 4♥               | Pass            | 4♠             | Pass         |
| 5NT <sup>1</sup> | Pass            | 7♦             | Pass         |
| Pass             | Pass            |                |              |

1. "Natural, invitation for 7"

A mundane heart, a surprise spade or a classic trump lead would all have led to minus 1440.

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

South led the four of clubs. Declarer put up dummy's ace. North ruffed with the king of diamonds (just in case declarer was also void and Partner had the singleton diamond queen – it was a play that could not lose) and exited with a trump. Declarer could eliminate the hearts and run his trumps to execute a show-up squeeze against South, but that was one down, minus 100.

Note that North did not double seven diamonds, fearing seven notrump. Had he doubled seven diamonds, East/West would indeed have had the opportunity to remove it to the unbeatable (on the lie of the cards) seven notrump. North trusted that his partner would realise there was no future in a heart lead (especially as he had not doubled West's control-bid) and his hopes were fulfilled.

In the other room...

| West            | North               | East            | South          |
|-----------------|---------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| <i>Black</i>    | <i>Hegedüs</i>      | <i>Gold</i>     | <i>Szegedi</i> |
| —               | —                   | 1♦ <sup>1</sup> | Pass           |
| 2♣ <sup>2</sup> | 2♥                  | 3♦              | Pass           |
| 3NT             | Pass                | 4♦              | Pass           |
| 4♥              | Double <sup>3</sup> | 4♠              | Pass           |
| 5♣              | Pass                | 5♦              | Pass           |
| 6♦              | Pass                | Pass            | Pass           |

1. Usually unbalanced
2. Game forcing
3. "Lead something else"

Here too, South found a club lead and North ruffed dummy's ace. He exited with the seven of spades, and declarer ran it to dummy's ten, plus 920 and a 14-IMP swing.

**Board 3. Dealer South. EW Vul.**

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

It is easy to predict that after West opens one spade North will do something, either doubling or risking a two-heart overcall. My interest lay in whether any pairs would then reach six spades – and make it.

**Leslie v. Gillis**

| West             | North       | East             | South        |
|------------------|-------------|------------------|--------------|
| <i>Brogeland</i> | <i>Dyke</i> | <i>Lindqvist</i> | <i>Byrne</i> |
| —                | —           | —                | Pass         |
| 1♠               | Double      | 4♣ <sup>1</sup>  | Pass         |
| 4♦               | Pass        | 4♥               | Double       |
| 6♠               | Pass        | Pass             | Pass         |

1. "Short"

North led the three of hearts. Declarer ruffed and played the king of diamonds, North taking the ace and switching to the nine of spades. Declarer won with dummy's ten, pitched a club on the ace of hearts, ruffed a heart with the queen of spades and advanced the ten of diamonds, covered by the jack and queen. Declarer ruffed a heart, cashed the black aces pitching dummy's jack of hearts, ruffed a club and drew the outstanding trump but, when the diamonds did not break, he had to lose the last trick for one down.

| West                  | North              | East            | South         |
|-----------------------|--------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| <i>Norton</i>         | <i>Sælensminde</i> | <i>Bell</i>     | <i>Gillis</i> |
| —                     | —                  | —               | Pass          |
| 1♠                    | Double             | 4♣ <sup>1</sup> | Pass          |
| 4♦ <sup>2</sup>       | Pass               | 4♥ <sup>3</sup> | Double        |
| Redouble <sup>4</sup> | Pass               | 5♣              | Pass          |
| 5♦                    | Pass               | 5♥              | Pass          |
| 5♠                    | Pass               | 6♠              | Pass          |
| Pass                  | Pass               |                 |               |

1. 4-card support, void in a minor
2. Which minor?
3. Club void
4. First-round control

North led the three of hearts. Declarer ruffed and played the two of diamonds. North had to consider

the possibility that declarer held only two diamonds and, if he played low, declarer would be able to win with dummy's queen and then pitch the king of diamonds on the ace of hearts (a classic Morton's Fork Coup), so he took the trick and exited with a heart. Declarer ruffed, cashed the king of diamonds, pitched a heart on the ace of clubs, ruffed a club, threw a diamond on the ace of hearts, ruffed a heart and claimed the last five tricks on a high cross-ruff, plus 1430 and 17 IMPs in.

### Fredin v. Apex Predators

| West          | North            | East            | South        |
|---------------|------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| <i>Fredin</i> | <i>Tommasini</i> | <i>Apteker</i>  | <i>Thoma</i> |
| —             | —                | —               | Pass         |
| 1♠            | Double           | 4♣ <sup>1</sup> | 5♣           |
| 6♣            | Pass             | Pass            | Pass         |

1. "Void showing, ♠ support"

North led the nine of spades. Declarer won with dummy's jack and played a diamond for the king and ace. North returned the three of diamonds, but declarer ran it to his ten, ruffed a club, came to hand with the queen of spades, ruffed a club, ruffed a heart, drew the last trump and played a diamond to the nine for plus 1430.

| West             | North      | East             | South             |
|------------------|------------|------------------|-------------------|
| <i>Rodrigues</i> | <i>Nab</i> | <i>Barbosa</i>   | <i>B. Drijver</i> |
| —                | —          | —                | Pass              |
| 1♠               | Double     | 2NT <sup>1</sup> | 3♥                |
| 4♥               | 5♥         | Pass             | Pass              |
| 5♠               | Pass       | Pass             | Pass              |

1. "4+♠ raise, invitational"

The vigorous competition was enough to bully East/West out of slam, resulting in a loss of 13 IMPs.

It's not clear what constitutes the best line in six spades. One possibility is to ruff the heart lead, ruff a club, cash a top spade, come to hand with the ace of spades, ruff a club and play a diamond to the king. Then declarer will get home by taking the correct view in diamonds. What I can say is that where declarer ruffs a heart lead and then plays the two of diamonds, if North withholds the ace (not easy) declarer has no obvious route to 12 tricks.

### Board 5. Dealer North. NS Vul.

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

I picked this deal out because I wanted to see if anyone would reach six clubs. I'll come to that in a moment, but first here is a beautiful defence that IBPA President Barry Rigal brought to my attention:

### Hill v. Wilson

| West           | North        | East           | South        |
|----------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|
| <i>Verhees</i> | <i>Dwyer</i> | <i>Tijssen</i> | <i>Huang</i> |
| —              | 3♦           | Pass           | Pass         |
| Double         | Pass         | Pass           | Pass         |

East led the queen of spades. Declarer took dummy's ace and played the jack of hearts, West taking the ace and switching to the seven of clubs! East won and returned the eight of spades, West taking dummy's jack with the king, cashing the ten and then, East having pitched the ten of hearts, played the five of hearts for East to ruff. Declarer ruffed the club exit and played the king of diamonds; East won and again exited with a club. There were still two trump tricks to come, plus 1100.

| West               | North               | East               | South         |
|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| <i>O. Rimstedt</i> | <i>van Prooijen</i> | <i>M. Rimstedt</i> | <i>Wilson</i> |
| —                  | 3♦                  | Pass               | Pass          |
| Double             | Pass                | Pass               | 3♥            |
| Pass               | Pass                | 3NT                | Pass          |
| Pass               | Pass                |                    |               |

South's decision to bid three hearts was a big winner (at most one down) and East settled for the most likely game. South led the six of hearts and declarer won the second round of the suit with dummy's ace and cashed out, plus 600, but a loss of 12 IMPs.

### Hotspurs v. Orca

| West          | North        | East         | South          |
|---------------|--------------|--------------|----------------|
| <i>Crouch</i> | <i>Naqvi</i> | <i>Zorlu</i> | <i>Ritacca</i> |
| —             | Pass         | 1♦           | 2♥             |
| 3♣            | Pass         | 3♦           | Pass           |
| 3♠            | Pass         | 4♣           | Pass           |
| 4♥            | Double       | 5♣           | Pass           |
| Pass          | Pass         |              |                |

North led the five of diamonds. Declarer took the 'free' finesse, overruffing South's eight of clubs with the nine and playing a spade to the queen and ace. He won the heart return, crossed to the king of clubs and claimed 12 tricks, plus 420.

| West            | North           | East           | South           |
|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| <i>Kendrick</i> | <i>Plackett</i> | <i>Gibbons</i> | <i>Erichsen</i> |
| —               | 3♦              | Pass           | Pass            |
| 5♣              | Pass            | 6♣             | Double          |
| Pass            | Pass            | Pass           |                 |

North led the nine of diamonds and dummy's queen was ruffed and overruffed, declarer then cashing the ace of clubs and claiming, plus 1090 and 12 IMPs.

## Phoenix v. de Botton

| West            | North             | East           | South             |
|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| <i>Croswell</i> | <i>Hoftaniska</i> | <i>Thrower</i> | <i>T. Helness</i> |
| —               | 3♦                | Pass           | Pass              |
| Double          | Pass              | Pass           | 3♥                |
| Pass            | Pass              | Double         | Pass              |
| Pass            | Pass              |                |                   |

West led the ace of clubs and switched to the three of spades for the queen and ace. Declarer ruffed a club and played the queen of hearts, West taking the ace and exiting with a club. Declarer ruffed, drew trumps and, in due course, played a spade towards the nine, establishing a second trick in spades and nine in all, plus 730.

| West            | North            | East         | South           |
|-----------------|------------------|--------------|-----------------|
| <i>Charlsen</i> | <i>Sanderson</i> | <i>Padon</i> | <i>Ahmed</i>    |
| —               | 3♣ <sup>1</sup>  | Pass         | 3♦ <sup>2</sup> |
| 4♣              | Pass             | 5♣           | Pass            |
| 6♣              | Pass             | Pass         | Pass            |

1. "Weak diamonds or 5/5+ majors"
2. Pass or correct

North led the nine of spades. South took the ace and switched to the seven of hearts, declarer taking the ace, cashing the ace of clubs, then claiming, plus 920 and 17 IMPs.



## The Scottish Senior Trials

In 1971, I played in my first Scottish representative match in the Junior Camrose, and graduated to play my first proper Camrose match in 1973. Over the next twenty years, my Scottish partners were George Cuthbertson, Michael Rosenberg, Victor Goldberg, Victor Silverstone and Les Steel. My last match was in 1993 and I moved to the USA in 1998. My wife Maggie and I are now going to spend most of our time in Scotland.

I recently had the opportunity to play with my old friend Victor Silverstone, who now lives in London, in a trial for the Scottish Senior team. The event was played on Real Bridge with live video, and a little more complexity than BBO. The main drawback was a 10.30 a.m. start time in the U.K. which is 05.30 in Florida. I had to wake at 04.45 a.m. to get coffee and try to be as awake as I could. So on a Saturday and Sunday, I was up, but not exactly raring to go.

Here is a deal that took place towards the end of the Trial. My East/West opponents were my first-ever bridge partner from 1969, Cameron Maclatchie, and my cousin, David Shenkin, with whom I had played for the Great Britain Juniors in 1974.

### Dealer North. Both Vul.

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

| West              | North              | East         | South         |
|-------------------|--------------------|--------------|---------------|
| <i>Maclatchie</i> | <i>Silverstone</i> | <i>David</i> | <i>Barnet</i> |
| —                 | Pass               | Pass         | 1♦            |
| Pass              | 1♠                 | Pass         | Pass          |
| 1NT               | Pass               | 2NT          | Pass          |
| 3NT               | Pass               | Pass         | Pass          |

Victor led a diamond to my king. I saw no future in diamonds and shifted to the spade six. Declarer allowed the queen to win the trick and also ducked the spade king. North continued with a third spade.

Take a minute to see if you can formulate a plan to make the contract as declarer. Unless South has opened a ten-point hand, not likely as North passed one notrump, South must hold the king of hearts and the ace of diamonds. The only chance to make the contract is to play as follows: spade ace discarding the jack of hearts. Then a diamond from dummy to the queen. South cannot play the ace on this trick or give two diamond tricks to declarer. Then the ace and king of clubs, unblocking the jack, and three more clubs. Declarer has made seven tricks and the defence, three. Here is the position as declarer cashes his last club.

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

South has to make a discard. If he throws a heart, the king drops. If he throws the seven of diamonds, declarer plays a diamond, and makes the last two tricks



# IBPA Column Service

**Tim Bourke, Canberra**



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

### 1045. Dealer South. EW Vul.

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

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| —    | —     | —    | 1♠    |
| Pass | 2♠    | Pass | 4♠    |
| Pass | Pass  | Pass |       |

This deal requires declarer to show a modicum of technique. West led the queen of clubs. Declarer called for a low club from dummy and, after the queen held, West continued with the jack of clubs. When that also held the trick and West played a third club, declarer ruffed East's ace of clubs with the ten of trumps.

Declarer next cashed the ace of trumps and then led the queen of trumps to dummy's king, pleased to see that the outstanding trumps were two-two. A low diamond was led to the queen and, when that held, declarer played his carefully preserved five of trumps to dummy's six. After repeating the diamond finesse with a diamond to the jack, declarer cashed his ace of diamonds then ruffed a diamond to bring his total of tricks to eight. The ace of hearts would be his ninth trick and the jack of spades his tenth.

The main lesson for intermediate players is to unblock trumps (by ruffing the third club with the ten) if there is no danger of creating a trump loser, especially if it may clear up some entry problems in the process. In this case, doing so paved the way to take advantage of the two-two break in trumps when East began with at least three cards in diamonds headed by the king.

### 1046. Dealer South. Both Vul.

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

| West | North            | East   | South                 |
|------|------------------|--------|-----------------------|
| —    | —                | —      | 2NT <sup>1</sup>      |
| Pass | 4♥ <sup>2</sup>  | Double | Redouble <sup>3</sup> |
| Pass | 4NT <sup>4</sup> | Pass   | 5♣ <sup>5</sup>       |
| Pass | 5NT <sup>6</sup> | Pass   | 6♣ <sup>7</sup>       |
| Pass | 6♦ <sup>8</sup>  | Pass   | 7♠                    |
| Pass | Pass             | Pass   |                       |

1. 20-21 points
2. Transfer to spades
3. Promises the ace of hearts
4. RKCB
5. 0 or 3 key cards
6. Grand-slam try; asks for specific kings
7. King of clubs
8. Asks for king of diamonds

West duly led a heart. When dummy went down, declarer counted 13 tricks so long as trumps were three-two. Declarer took the first trick with the ace of hearts then cashed the ace and king of spades. The bad news was that trumps were four-one, but the good news was that East's singleton was the ten.

Declarer's first requirement to make the contract was that he could cash all of his diamonds without West ruffing. Also, he had to reduce dummy's trumps twice by ruffing hearts (to have a chance of coupling West's trumps). So, he played a diamond to his ace and ruffed a heart low in dummy. Declarer then cashed the queen

and king of diamonds and then led the jack of diamonds, hoping that West would follow suit. When he did, declarer discarded a club from dummy, then led the jack of hearts. West discarded a club and declarer ruffed it with a low trump in dummy. Next, declarer cashed the ace and king of clubs (West was by now marked with an original 4=2=4=3 shape), reducing everyone to two cards. Declarer led one of his clubs to capture West's jack-eight of trumps with dummy's queen-nine.

Note that the fall of the ten of trumps did not establish a restricted choice position: East could have played the ten from jack-ten alone or any jack-ten-low.

**1047. Dealer West. Neither Vul.**

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

| West            | North | East | South |
|-----------------|-------|------|-------|
| 2♠ <sup>1</sup> | Pass  | Pass | 3NT   |
| Pass            | Pass  | Pass |       |

1. 6-9 points, exactly five spades and a side four-plus card minor

South shrewdly judged that, if he doubled two spades, North was likely to bid a Lebensohl two notrump to deny invitational values, thereby wrong-siding the likely contract of three notrump. Instead South opted for a practical leap to the notrump game.

West led a fourth-highest six of diamonds and declarer took East's ten with the king because he did not want a spade shift at trick two. Declarer had to decide how to tackle the club suit on the assumption that West's minor was diamonds. As any play would work if clubs were two-two or if there were a singleton king, declarer turned his attention to what to do if East had three clubs to the king.

Accordingly, declarer led a low club to the ten at trick two, which held the trick. Declarer continued by calling for dummy's queen of clubs. When East followed with a low club, declarer went with the odds by playing low from hand. After West discarded a spade, declarer was in with chance as he now had eight sure tricks (five tricks in the minors, two in hearts and one in spades).

The ninth trick would have to come from an endplay against West. Declarer saw that this would be possible if West had begun with 5=2=5=1 shape. So, he cashed the ace of clubs, followed by the ace-king of hearts to

remove West's hoped-for doubleton in that suit. Then declarer played the ace and nine of diamonds. West cashed three diamond winners but then had to lead a spade. The queen of spades was declarer's ninth trick.

**1048. Dealer South. EW Vul.**

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

| West | North           | East | South            |
|------|-----------------|------|------------------|
| —    | —               | —    | 1♠               |
| Pass | 3♠ <sup>1</sup> | Pass | 4NT <sup>2</sup> |
| Pass | 5♦ <sup>3</sup> | Pass | 6♣               |
| Pass | Pass            | Pass |                  |

1. Limit raise with four or more spades
2. RKCB
3. 1 or 4 key cards

West led the queen of hearts, advertising that East held the ace of hearts; declarer played low from dummy. West continued with the jack of hearts and declarer played low from dummy a second time. After ruffing in with the ace of trumps, declarer led his ten of trumps to dummy's jack to lead dummy's seven of hearts, in the hope that East had begun with ace-third of hearts. When East followed with a low heart declarer ruffed with the king of trumps.

As the ace of hearts had not appeared, declarer had only ten tricks. It appeared that he needed diamonds to be three-three so that he could discard a club from dummy on the thirteenth diamond (his eleventh tricks) and eventually ruff a club in dummy for his contract.

However, this declarer was not content to rely on just that rather poor option. Instead, he looked for a way to improve his chances over the three-three break in diamonds. Putting his plan into action, declarer crossed to dummy with a low trump to the eight to lead the king of hearts. When East produced the ace of hearts, declarer ruffed this with his queen of trumps, bringing his total sure tricks to eleven. Declarer cashed the ace of clubs in hand before crossing to dummy with his last trump to the nine. Finally, he played the two of trumps and threw the nine of clubs from hand.

West could see that parting with the king of clubs would be fatal, and so threw a diamond. As the king of clubs had not appeared, declarer cashed the ace, king and queen of diamonds and the the four of diamonds was the twelfth trick.

in hand, with the ten of diamonds and the queen of hearts, or in dummy with two hearts. As I was in the South chair, I would like to think I'd have been awake just enough to pitch the ace of diamonds, allowing partner to win the jack of diamonds and the nine of spades, to defeat the contract.

Had I been dealt the jack of diamonds instead of the seven, there would have been no defence. As with many bridge deals, the story was spoiled by declarer not leading a diamond, but simply taking a heart finesse, and I cashed the diamond ace for the setting trick.

The result on this board helped Victor and me to a second-place finish and a spot on the team with Brian Short/Alan Goodman and John Murdoch/Iain Sime. In the Teltscher Torphy, we finished third behind Ireland and England.

Below is a link, should you wish to see this deal, or my other deals on my "hand of the week" video channel on YouTube.

<https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLXg0fSwrUp8foilJz9rF2UOaaivCc8IU->

## Unsinkable

Dealer South NS Vul.

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

| West            | North | East   | South |
|-----------------|-------|--------|-------|
| —               | —     | —      | INT   |
| 2♣ <sup>1</sup> | 2♦    | Double | 2♠    |
| Pass            | 3NT   | Pass   | Pass  |
| Pass            |       |        |       |

1. Majors

This deal was played in three notrump at more than 30 tables in the OCBL April Cup. Many West players had shown the majors. Played by South on the queen-of-spades lead, all the declarers went down. East takes the spade ace and returns a spade, won by the king.

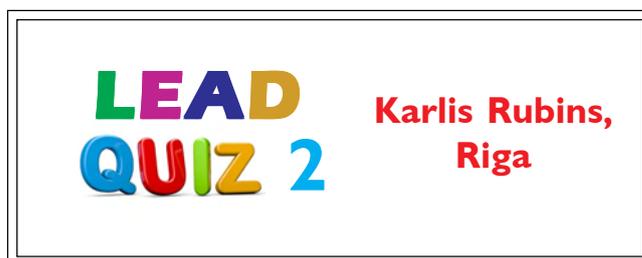
It looks like declarer has options. He can hope for four club tricks, and try to throw West in to lead a diamond from the king in the end game. Alternatively, declarer could make four clubs tricks and take the diamond finesse. On the diagrammed bidding, which occurred at one table, it would also be reasonable to

play East, who is marked with longer diamonds, for the king. A club to dummy and a diamond to the jack wins the trick as West pitches a heart.

At this point, only West can have four clubs, in a possible 5=4=0=4 distribution. It is thus safe either to cash the ace of diamonds or to lead a low diamond and win any return. West must keep three hearts to the queen or he can be thrown in with a spade after declarer cashes the ace-king of hearts to lead clubs or East can be thrown in to lead a diamond from the king later.

Let's say declarer cashes the ace of diamonds and West throws a spade. Now a spade exit to West means that, after cashing his last spade for the defence's third trick, West must get out with a heart. If he exits with a low heart, he will be thrown in with the queen later to break clubs. So, he tries the heart queen. Now declarer wins and cashes his two club winners before playing the fourth club. West wins with the jack and must lead another heart at trick 11. Declarer can guess to play low and make his contract.

It's a very interesting deal and, if you enjoy spending time on different actions, it is worthwhile. You will find that three notrump is unbeatable should declarer read the situation accurately.



In all of the following problems, as for the first five, you are still playing teams. All of the problems are real – they were played by Latvian or other international players. The bidding is as it was at the table (or as I remember it!) and you have to choose one of the given alternatives. And finally – all of the problems have an accompanying story. Good luck!

### Problem 6. Dealer North. Both Vul.

You are West; your hand:

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

| West            | North           | East                  | South |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------------|-------|
| <i>You</i>      |                 | <i>Partner</i>        |       |
| —               | Pass            | Pass                  | INT   |
| 2♣ <sup>1</sup> | Double          | Redouble <sup>2</sup> | Pass  |
| 2♦ <sup>3</sup> | Pass            | 2♥                    | 3♦    |
| Pass            | 3♥ <sup>4</sup> | Pass                  | 3NT   |
| Pass            | Pass            | Pass                  |       |

See next page for alert explanations...

1. Majors
2. No preference; bid your better suit
3. No, you bid
4. Values in hearts

Your lead?

- (a.) ♠3
- (b.) ♥Q
- (c.) ♥8
- (d.) ♦4

**Problem 7. Dealer North. Both Vul.**

You are South; your hand:

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

| West | North   | East | South |
|------|---------|------|-------|
| —    | Partner | —    | You   |
| 1♥   | Pass    | 1♦   | Pass  |
| 3NT  | Pass    | 1NT  | Pass  |
| —    | Pass    | Pass | Pass  |

Your lead?

- (a.) ♠3
- (b.) ♥10
- (c.) ♥3
- (d.) ♣6 (♣2)

**Problem 8. Dealer South. Both Vul.**

You are West; Your hand:

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

| West | North           | East    | South           |
|------|-----------------|---------|-----------------|
| You  | —               | Partner | —               |
| —    | —               | —       | 1♥              |
| Pass | 2♣ <sup>1</sup> | Pass    | 2♦              |
| Pass | 3♦              | Pass    | 3♠              |
| Pass | 5♥ <sup>2</sup> | Pass    | 6♣ <sup>3</sup> |
| Pass | 6♦              | Pass    | Pass            |
| Pass | —               | —       | —               |

1. Natural; GF
2. Exclusion Key-Card Blackwood
3. 2 key cards, no diamond queen

Your lead?

- (a.) ♠7
- (b.) ♥5
- (c.) ♦J
- (d.) ♣3

**Problem 9. Dealer West. Neither Vul.**

You are North; your hand:

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

| West | North | East   | South   |
|------|-------|--------|---------|
| —    | You   | —      | Partner |
| Pass | 2♠    | Double | Pass    |
| 2NT  | Pass  | 3NT    | Pass    |
| Pass | Pass  | —      | —       |

Your lead?

- (a.) ♠10
- (b.) ♥3
- (c.) ♦10
- (d.) ♣10

**Problem 10. Dealer South. Both Vul.**

You are West; your hand:

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

| West | North | East    | South |
|------|-------|---------|-------|
| You  | —     | Partner | —     |
| —    | —     | —       | 1♥    |
| Pass | 1♠    | Pass    | 4♥    |
| Pass | 5♣    | Pass    | 6♥    |
| Pass | Pass  | Pass    | —     |

Your lead?

- (a.) ♠7
- (b.) ♥2
- (c.) ♦6
- (d.) ♣Q

## The Winning Solutions

**6. b. ♥Q**

This deal comes from the German Bridge Trophy a few years ago. Martins Lorencs, sitting West, found the great lead of the queen of hearts. Let's take a look at the full deal:

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

Polish star Michal Klukowski ducked the queen of hearts and Martins continued with a low heart. Klukowski ducked again and Rubins took the trick with his jack and was so excited about his partner's lead that he continued hearts. A spade switch would have defeated the contract by at least three tricks. However, the situation was unclear and it was teams, so with

the heart at trick three, and imperfect defence thereafter, the contract went two down.

### 7. d. ♣6

This deal is special to me, because it was played in the 2005 European Mixed Team Championship, when I was still a Junior. My partner Maija Romanovska found a club lead. Take a look at the full deal and what happened later:

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

On the club lead, declarer put up the jack, I covered with the queen and declarer played the nine. I played back the three of clubs to the ace, two and eight. Declarer led a low diamond to the dummy, came back to his hand with a spade and played one more diamond. Maija took the ace and...switched to a low heart! Believe it or not but, after such a great lead, we (I cannot find any polite words in English) allowed the contract to make. Her argument was that I did not return the correct club. We won the match anyway. and later the bronze medal.

### 8. c. ♦J

This board comes from the Jeppe Juhl/Peter Fredin book, "Master of Bridge Psychology". Fredin mentions it as one of the two most-obvious leads ever. Both times, he had to lead from king-jack-ten in the trump suit. The full deal:

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

Fredin: "After the auction, I knew the chances of beating the contract looked very slim. The queen of diamonds was in dummy, and my ace of hearts looked pretty worthless. It certainly looked like I had to try

to fool declarer in trumps. And once again, it could never cost a trick to lead the jack of diamonds."

### 9. c. ♦10

Of course, one could argue that this is not a 'classic' weak two and that you should not open such hands, but this is a lead quiz, not a bidding quiz. A spade seems out of question, because partner did not support them and has zero or one spade more of the time than even a doubleton. A heart needs a lot in the suit from Partner. So, it seems it is a question of which minor. Playing on BBO, I had a feeling that a diamond lead was better than a club:

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

We defeated three notrump, but I had this aftertaste in my mouth: what if the Sheriff and Nicolas Hammond asked me why I had opened two spades and then led a diamond? So I asked my friend Yuri Khiuppenen to do a simulation and statistical analysis of the opening lead's chances of defeating three notrump. and here is the data:

|     |       |
|-----|-------|
| ♦10 | 27.3% |
| ♥3  | 24.3% |
| ♠10 | 22.8% |
| ♣10 | 21.8% |
| ♣A  | 24.3% |

### 10. d. ♣Q

This deal comes from Michael Rosenberg's book "Bridge, Zia... and Me". The board is from the Cavendish and Michael has to find the killing lead to win the tournament. Here is the full deal:

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

Rosenberg: "Barnet had not doubled five clubs, but I knew that declarer was prepared for a diamond lead. It felt as if I had to attack, but neither minor looked promising. For a diamond to work, I needed Barnet to have the queen and neither opponent to have a singleton. For a club to be successful, partner needed the king, but he hadn't doubled five clubs. Perhaps that was because he had the queen of diamonds with fewer diamonds than clubs and did not want to steer me away from a diamond lead if I had the king of diamonds and declarer had a stiff club. Still, although I felt a club was more likely to work, I hated the idea of leading a club after partner's non-double, and finding that it was wrong. So, I led a diamond...and we came second."



When I became a syndicated columnist, I wanted my column to be fun to read as well as instructive. I envisioned something almost unprecedented: a column with a running story line. In my "Daily Bridge Club", the characters in an imaginary club I wrote about, were:

- Unlucky Louie, who ascribes his disasters to bad luck, despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary;
- Cy the Cynic, the club philosopher, suspicious of everything and everybody;
- Grapefruit, who owns and operates an acid disposition and makes his partners miserable;
- Wendy, our feminist. Ask Wendy how many sensitive, caring, unselfish men it takes to wash the dishes, and she'll say both of them;
- Minnie Bottoms, whose ancient bifocals make her mix up kings and jacks and bring her opponents a lot of grief;
- and many others.

The nature of a newspaper column prevents me from developing my characters as I'd like. Nevertheless, I have tried to paint pictures: Louie has a big family and is a spendthrift wife; Cy is a shameless chauvinist and is constantly worrying about his weight. The imagination of the incomparable Victor Mollo set a standard that won't be surpassed – who could outdo the Hideous Hog and the Rueful Rabbit? – but I like my club and I hope you will too.

### Louie's Good Fortune

The afternoon's penny Chicago game had ended, and Wendy, my club's feminist, announced that she was going home to make dinner for some friends.

"Amazing," growled Cy the Cynic, who had just finished a term as Wendy's partner, "I thought all she knew about cooking was how to bring a man to a boil."

The rest of us went to dinner at a Chinese restaurant where the principle of fast arrival didn't apply: Our food took an age, and finally, Grapefruit, my club's acid-tongued member, called for the manager.

"Did the waiter who took our order leave any family?" Grapefruit wanted to know.

When Unlucky Louie got his meal, his fortune cookie contained this: "You will meet a beautiful woman. You will give her money."

"Doesn't sound too bad," Louie smiled.

**Dealer South. Neither Vul.**

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

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

When we got back to the club, Louie had high hopes as he cut into a half-cent game. At three notrump, he took the deuce-of-spades lead with the ace and cashed the ace and king of diamonds, scowling when West discarded a heart. Louie next let the queen of clubs ride, but East produced the king, and the defence cashed four spades. Down one.

"My luck is as bad as ever," Louie sighed, "but at least I'm going to meet that beautiful woman."

"West's lead of the two of spades marked him with four spades," I pointed out. "After he had showed up with a singleton diamond, he must have had four hearts and four clubs or else he'd have had a five-card from which to lead. If West's clubs were, say, king-nine-eight-seven, you could never have taken four club tricks. Your only chance was to play East for the singleton king – which is what he had."

Louie groaned.

"By the way," I added, "that cashier at the Chinese restaurant was a real knockout, wasn't she?"



I have found defence to be the most difficult part of bridge. It takes a good understanding between my partner and me, but it also takes a lot of me as a bridge player to sort out when the critical positions come up.

I've been spending a lot of time kibitzing some of the greatest pairs in the world during the Covid shutdown. There is still more to learn, but sometimes it's not about being smart, it's just about understanding.

The 2021 Teltscher Trophy, the 'Seniors Camrose', was held on RealBridge. This deal came up as I kibitzed. See how you'd play.

**Dealer South. Both Vul.**

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

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

| West | North           | East | South           |
|------|-----------------|------|-----------------|
| —    | —               | —    | 1♣ <sup>1</sup> |
| Pass | 1♥ <sup>2</sup> | Pass | 1♠              |
| Pass | 3♠              | Pass | 4♠              |
| Pass | Pass            | Pass |                 |

1. 2+ clubs
2. 4+ spades

Barnet Shenkin, the Scottish international and bridge professional, led the queen of diamonds: four, eight, five. Shenkin shifted to a low heart at trick two.

That's annoying, why could Shenkin not have continued with a diamond, as they always do at the club back home. Now you must guess the hearts to make the contract. Do you play low or the king?

You do not want to be fooled by Shenkin, so you put up the king. Sadly, this was the full deal, as Mr. Shenkin had read the position when the dummy hit the table:

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

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

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

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

He knew the defence could not win more than two tricks in diamonds. The most-likely chance to beat the contract was for East to hold the ace-jack of hearts or for declarer to misguess when he shifted to a low heart.

Not a difficult defence, you might say. Yet, in the tournament, only one of 12 declarers went down.

Let's jump to the World Bridge Tour Survivor event. It's a fun format in which teams have extra lives before being knocked out.

**Dealer South. EW Vul.**

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

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

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| —    | —     | —    | 1♣    |
| Pass | 1♦    | Pass | 2♣    |
| Pass | 2♠    | Pass | 2NT   |
| Pass | 3NT   | Pass | Pass  |
| Pass |       |      |       |

West led the three of spades: (third and fifth): four, jack, queen. Declarer thinks for a moment before he continues with the two of spades to the five, king and ace. It appears that West is looking at the ten-nine-eight of spades. Is it just to guess whether to play a club or heart to beat the contract? Do you see the solution?

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

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

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

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

At the table, East returned a heart, and that was punished, as it deserved.

Declarer had to try the finesse with the queen. When it held the trick, declarer grabbed his nine tricks.

Again, the solution was simple. West knew South could not have had nine tricks, else why would he have risked the spade play, if not being a trick short?

Based on this, East should have known that South was missing either the ace or the king of clubs. If holding both, South would have already made the contract with one spade, six diamonds and two clubs. Therefore, a club was the best chance to beat the contract.

My farewell this time is not a defence, but a very well-played hand by Mr. Arve Farstad of Norway. Farstad won the National Pairs Championship back in 1977. He is still going strong and playing as well as ever – he has found his way online to play against the stars of the bridge world.

In the WBT Survivor event, Farstad made his game on the following deal. Can you follow in his footsteps?

**Dealer East. NS Vul.**

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

| West           | North           | East          | South             |
|----------------|-----------------|---------------|-------------------|
| <i>Farstad</i> | <i>Simonsen</i> | <i>Aaseng</i> | <i>F. Helness</i> |
| —              | —               | Pass          | 1 ♣               |
| 3 ♦            | 3 ♠             | 4 ♥           | Double            |
| Pass           | Pass            | 5 ♦           | Double            |
| Pass           | Pass            | Pass          |                   |

It does not look like you stand a chance to make five diamonds, losing a club and two spades. Give it a try when North leads the queen of spades: ace, king, two. Is there a chance?

Farstad took the ace of diamonds, led heart to the ace and a club from dummy. The full deal looked like this:

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

South won with the ace of clubs and continued with a heart, ruffed by Farstad. A club was ruffed in dummy then a heart ruffed back. The position looked like this:

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

I guess you have spotted the line. Farstad led the ten of clubs and, when North showed out, declarer discarded a spade from dummy. South won the club but had to give Arve a ruff-sluff on the return. At the other table, a strong player went down in the same contract on the same lead.

## NEWS & VIEWS



### Gabriel Chagas Suspended for One Year

From the Brazilian Bridge Federation's website (translated from the Portuguese and edited here):

In accordance with the process to investigate complaints reported to the Ethics Committee, the Board of the Brazilian Bridge Federation (FBB) communicates the following result of the proceeding against Mr. Gabriel Chagas.

Considering all the evidence and analysis presented in three specific stages of the process, as well as the defence reports and expert opinions, Mr. Gabriel Chagas admitted that the weight of evidence produced could, eventually, lead to his conviction, although, in his opinion, it was wrong. Nevertheless, Mr. Chagas decided to accept a plea bargain from the Executive Board, which consists of a suspension for a period of one year.

Thus, Mr. Gabriel Chagas is suspended from participating in tournaments sponsored by the Brazilian Bridge Federation and its associated clubs for a period of one year, as of the present date (April 15, 2021). In addition, the player is prevented from representing Brazil, nationally or internationally, for a period of one year, as of the present date.

*This pains me greatly, not least because Gabriel Chagas and I have been friends since we met in New Orleans in 1978. Chagas is one of the world's greatest players, a charismatic, charming and brilliant man. He has won three of the top four*

competitors of the WBF and finished runner-up in the fourth (wins in the Olympiad Teams, the Bermuda Bowl and the World Open Pairs, with a second in the Rosenblum). He is an acknowledged genius, a polymath and a polyglot, fluent in many languages. For example, when Brazil qualified for the 1991 Bermuda Bowl in Yokohama, Chagas taught himself Japanese before they went. He and I have spent many pleasant hours together unsuccessfully attempting to deplete his incredible wine cellar's contents – almost 40 years ago, he claimed that even if he lived to be 100 and drank one bottle a day, he could not empty the cellar.

I once posed the question to Chagas, "Who is the best Brazilian player ever?" I suggested there were three candidates: Chagas himself, Marcelo Branco and Gabino Cintra. Somewhat teasingly, I suggested that it was Branco, even though Chagas got most of the ink with his brilliancies. "Marcelo never makes a mistake," I opined. Chagas modestly agreed. – Ed

## Dirty Tricks

(From *Variety*, by Elsa Keslassy)

Daniel Sivan's Hot Docs-bound 'Dirty Tricks' documentary, unveiled by Yes Studios, the leading Israeli production and distribution banner, has unveiled a first still and a trailer for the feature documentary film "Dirty Tricks," which will have its world premiere at Hot Docs. "Dirty Tricks," set to unspool in the special presentation section at Hot Docs, takes an inside look at the world of competitive bridge, exposing a massive cheating scandal threatening to bring down the sport's billion-dollar industry.

In "Dirty Tricks," Sivan follows Lotan Fisher, the world's best bridge player (*self-proclaimed – Ed.*), who is nicknamed "The Michael Jordan of Bridge," (*but only by himself – Ed.*). When Fisher was accused of cheating, it caused a scandal that shook the entire sport to its core, confounding experts, criminal science, celebrities, and bridge aficionados worldwide. "Dirty Tricks" also sheds light on the billionaires who fund elite bridge players in high-stakes tournaments.

"'Dirty Tricks' is a hilarious, true-crime comedy that sheds light on the intense world of professional bridge – a sport with an unfortunate reputation seemingly dominated by pensioners and cream cakes," said Yes Studios' Danna Stern, who is executive producing the documentary, alongside Guy Lavie for Yes Docu. "We can't wait to share this story, brimming with scandals and rivalries, that is sure to do to bridge what 'The Queen's Gambit' did for chess," said Submarine's (co-producer) Ben Braun.

"The comedic tale of the bitter rivalry between two friends gone completely wrong, which subsequently unleashes a scandal in one of the most unlikely arenas (the competitive bridge world), is riveting and refreshingly fun," said Braun.

## ○ Canada

The Canadian Bridge Federation (CBF) has taken the unprecedented step of pausing, while in progress, its major 2021 event, the Canadian National Team Championship (CNTC), by at least one month, "to ensure the integrity of the event". Reading between the lines, it is evident that there have been accusations of cheating and the CBF wants time to decide what to do.

In this year's event, as in last year's, both played completely online, some previously unheralded teams have done surprisingly well. Last year's winners, almost completely unknown, dominated the event, easily qualifying for the eight-team playoffs and then thrashing three pretty-decent teams handily to win the Championship. This year, in one of two divisions of 13 teams each, the top three teams are virtually unknown. In the history of the CNTC, this has never previously occurred, prompting some raised eyebrows.

It is easy to criticize the CBF for not taking proper precautions, but they believed that there would no World Championships this year, or last, so they believed the result would be academic. The participants are on tenterhooks awaiting further decisions. Perhaps, if nothing can be proved in time, the most prudent outcome would be to cancel the event. That would, however, be awkward for the events already completed, the Women's, Seniors and Mixed Championships.



## Correspondence

The Editor reserves the right to abridge and/or edit correspondence.  
Email: [ibpaeditor@sympatico.ca](mailto:ibpaeditor@sympatico.ca)

I emailed Henrik Hansson to tell him that his photograph series "Faces of Bridge" had created quite a stir in the bridge world, sending him links to the various bridge sites featuring his work, as well as a pdf of the April IBPA Bulletin. This was his reply. – Ed.

Hello John!

Thanks for the links, I get so happy when I hear that my job is appreciated!

Best regards,  
Henrik Hansson, Borlänge, Sweden

Many thanks to Micke Melander for alerting us to Hansson's work and nomination for the World Photo awards. Hansson's photos took second prize in the Sports Story category. – Ed.

The following appalling missive (unedited here) appeared on the BridgeWinners site on April 11, 2021, just missing our April IBPA Bulletin deadline...

Dear Bridge World,

My name is Lotan Fisher; I guess some of you know me personally and some of you have heard of me in one way or another. A little over five-and-a-half years ago, I was suspended from all activity at Bridge. Since then, I have had very difficult years: I got into a big depression due to losing the most important thing in my life; I lost large sums of money due to trying to protect myself from losing the most important thing in my life; I lost people close to me; and worst of all, I lost myself.

I tried to find myself in other professions: high-tech, the capital market, restaurants, banking, sales and other areas, but no direction I tried was able to take out of me the abilities, passion and love that the game of bridge managed to take out of me. I'm breathing bridge, I think bridge, I dream of bridge, for more than five-and-a-half years, I have not been able to enjoy the thing I love the most in my life, sit around the table, with three more people, hold 13 cards and start playing bridge in an official setting, competitive.

Next month, in May 2021, the suspension period I received from the European Bridge League will end. For the last month I cannot sleep, I imagine the first competition I will reach and I can play bridge at the club, I am sure the feeling I will feel, I cannot describe in words, but only with a big smile. Accompanied by tears.

I want to go back and play the game I love so much, I'm not looking to get rich from Bridge, my main goal is not to compete for the title of European Champion or World Champion, I do want bridge players from around the world to respect that my suspension period is over and let me enjoy and play with them the game we all love so much.

I am asking each and every one of you, please, give me the opportunity to find myself anew, to enjoy the game of bridge, without persecution, without gossip. I have suffered enough in the last five-and-a-half years, I have served the time I received out of the game. And if by chance, you, or someone you know, are looking for a partner, looking for a player for the team, I would be more than happy to join, to embark on a new path, a way that I will not give anyone a reason to doubt my integrity and abilities.

I miss Bridge, miss so much, and keep counting until the days until my European suspension is over, only 37 days left.

Lotan Fisher, Tel-Aviv

*In reading this pathetic letter, I looked in vain for an admission of guilt, words of contrition, an apology, or any evidence of rehabilitation, even an admission of wrongdoing; anything to indicate that the bridge world would be a better place with Lotan Fisher in it than it would be without him. If you can detect any such thoughts, you are more astute than I (not so*

*difficult, some would say). All he admitted to was self-pity. Fisher cheated (not for the first time), he consistently lied about it and he bullied and threatened the people who exposed him. He says, "I lost large sums of money due to trying to protect myself from losing the most important thing in my life." These sums were spent on frivolous appeals and ill-considered and vicious lawsuits threatened and initiated against Boye Brogeland and Bobby Levin, for example.*

*Fisher's path has been exactly the same as that of disgraced American athletes Lance Armstrong and Alex Rodriguez, the convicted drug cheats in cycling and baseball, respectively. They also cheated, lied, bullied their detractors and defamed their accusers. There is one difference though: Armstrong and Rodriguez eventually admitted to their cheating. Fisher has not and shows no sign of ever doing so.*

*"I want to go back and play the game I love so much." So do we, Lotan. "I have suffered enough in the last five-and-a-half years," said he while, as one wag on BridgeWinners pointed out, "sitting at the wheel of his BMW, wearing his \$300 shades."*

*This letter reminds me of serial killer Ted Bundy's reply when asked where his first murders were committed: "The first murders took place in Washington state." Note, the phrase "took place", adroitly removing himself from the commission of the crimes. I suppose we ought to count ourselves lucky that Fisher is a mere sociopath and not a murderous psychopath. He is a recidivist, however, having been convicted a few times by the Israeli Bridge Federation, and we might expect more of the same from him in the future. The FBI's Behavioral Science Unit (now the Behavioral Analysis Unit) has always maintained that the best indicator of future behaviour is past behaviour.*

*The Israeli Bridge Federation was tougher than the EBL. Fisher and Schwartz were (i) banned from ever playing together again within the IBF; (ii) permanently barred from representing Israel; (iii) prohibited from ever directing, coaching, or teaching in connection with the IBF, and; (iv) permanently barred from playing within the IBF. Article (iv) can be reviewed after 10 years. The decision can be read in full at: <http://main.bridge.co.il/uploads/files/sec/sec-decision-30-en.pdf>*

*FS's previous crimes can be read about here:*

*[http://bridgecheaters.com/?page\\_id=112](http://bridgecheaters.com/?page_id=112)*

*Six separate incidents are noted, all occurring before the Israelis, with Fisher and Schwartz in the team, won the Jaime Ortiz Patiño Trophy for Under-26 teams in Philadelphia in 2010. One supposes that the Israeli Bridge Federation ought to be commended for their sentence of Fisher-Schwartz, which was much tougher than the EBL's, but what were they doing having these guys on their 2010 Youth Team?*

*Details about cracking their code can be read here: <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/sports/premium-have-alleged-bridge-cheats-finally-been-trumped-1.5390207>*

# Guide to Online Events

Here is information about cancelled live tournaments, current and planned online events, and news about some of the hoped-for live tournaments in 2021 and beyond:

**WBF** – The 2021 World Team Championships and the 2021 World Youth Team Championships have been cancelled and will not be contested online. See <http://www.worldbridge.org> and the Rona interview on page 1.

**ACBL** – Has both pair and team events online on BBO. See <https://www.acbl.org> and <https://www.bridgebase.com>. Hopes to begin live bridge again in 2021. The Providence Summer NABC has been moved to 2022; the Austin Fall NABC is currently scheduled to be held face-to-face.

**EBL** – Has cancelled the 2021 European Championships in June in Madeira. The 19<sup>th</sup> Champions Cup is still scheduled to be held in Slovakia Nov. 11-13, 2020 – see [www.eurobridge.org](http://www.eurobridge.org) for details.

**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, and are continuing to organise, online events for their own members. Check the NBO websites for specifics. Sweden plans to hold the Swedish Festival in Örebro live in July 2021. See <https://www.svenskbridge.se/eng/nyheter>. The USBF has postponed its 2021 Trials.

**Reynolds Knockouts** – TD Tom Reynolds has been organising monthly knockout tournaments and quarterly double elimination knockouts since April, 2020. Information can be found at <http://www.reynoldsteammatches.com>

**Alt Invitationals** – Invitational tournaments, usually lasting five to seven days, have been organised by bid72 and netbridge.online. To date, there have been Alt Invitationals (open team tournaments), Alt Mixed events (all comprising eight teams), Alt Majors (32 teams) and Alt BAMs. Information can be found at <https://bid72/events>. Each event has a daily bulletin. Email [info@netbridge.online](mailto: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>. OCBL also produces a daily journal. See also <https://www.worldbridgetour.org>

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

All of the online tournaments named above are on BBO (<https://www.bridgebase.com/>) or RealBridge (<https://realbridge.online>). Other useful sites: <https://bridgescanner.com> and <https://bridgewinners.com>

Anyone organising an online tournament can submit details to Marek Wójcicki at [marek.wojcicki@bridge.com.pl](mailto:marek.wojcicki@bridge.com.pl) for inclusion on the IBPA website ([www.ibpa.com](http://www.ibpa.com)).



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