

Articles for Open players

Including analysis by Liam Milne, Ron Klinger, Brent Manley, Eddie Kantar, Bridge Puzzle, Julian Foster & John Mottram.

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♦ LM – Defence in Detail 7



Liam Milne

Back again in 2022, Defence in Detail looks at real-life hands from the last six months with a focus on practical plays, counting the hand and logical thinking.

Open Challenge Hand 1

West
♠ J7
♥ AKQ86432
♦ K86
♣ -

Dealer S, Non-Vul

Standard Bidding			
West	North	East	South (D)
?			1NT

Bidding Notes	
1NT	15-17 Bal

What would you do as West holding this hand?

Paying attention to declarer's problems can often steer you off the 'obvious' yet unsuccessful line of defence. Sitting East in a national teams knockout match, you are able to mention your only asset:

♠ 975 ♥ 98 ♦ AQ875 ♣ K76

Open Challenge Hand 2

North
♠ AK9832
♥ 82
♦ AKJ
♣ KJ

South (D)
♠ Q6
♥ AT4
♦ Q542
♣ AQ65

Dealer S EW Vul

7NT is your contract and the opening lead by West is the ♥K. Plan your Grand Slam play.

Your opponents are playing the Precision system which gives your side a chance to interfere with their revealing auction.

Precision Bidding			
West	North	East	South (D)
			Pass
Pass	1♣	1♦	X
1♥	1♠	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♥	Pass	3NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Bidding Notes	
1♣	Precision, 16+ any shape
1♦	Overcall 5+D
X	5-7 any shape
1♥	Overcall 5+H
1♠	5+S
2♣	5+C
2♥	Asking for heart stopper
3NT	To Play

Partner dutifully leads the ♦2 and a fair, but minimum 1♣ opening dummy appears:

2 New Festive season RB Congress events

New NSBC Festive Season Online Swiss Pairs

Saturday 17th December 2022 on RealBridge

10:00am Start 2 Sessions – Swiss Pairs (IMP) Event

Prize Pool: Generous, but dependent on Entries

Convenor, queries & partnership advice: Gary Barwick 0413 884 805

Director: Ronnie Ng

Entry Management: Enter by MyABF

Pre-Payments: Visitors use MyABF Credits & NSBC Members to select "Club PP System"

Conducted under the auspices of the NSWBA. The ABF has approved the issue of red masterpoints at level B4. All players are subject to the NSWBA's Disciplinary Regulations. Yellow systems Restricted

Player Fees (pp) \$30pp

New NSBC Festive Season Online Swiss Teams

Sunday 18th December on RealBridge

10:00am Start 2 Sessions – Swiss Teams (IMP) Event

Prize Pool: Generous, but dependent on Entries

Convenor, queries & partnership advice: Gary Barwick 0413 884 805

Director: Ronnie Ng

Entry Management: Enter by MyABF

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Player Fees (pp) \$30pp

if declarer leads the ♣J off the dummy, we will duck, while if they try to sneak a low one past us we will rise ♣K to block the suit before returning a minor suit back to dummy.

Here is the full layout:

- [illegible]

Solution:

If you return a heart, declarer has an easy time making three spades, three hearts, two diamonds and one club for their nine tricks. A diamond return, however, gives declarer no chance. North-South must lose a spade, a heart, two diamonds and a club.


Point to remember:

When a weak dummy is on display, it is easy to realise that we should hold up our stoppers and deny dummy any entries. Exactly the same, tactics can be applied when the weak hand ends up as declarer, but it is often harder to find.

We have an easy exit of a diamond back to dummy on this trick. When declarer later plays a club, we must make sure that declarer can't win a trick with their hypothetical **♠T**;



♦ RK – A real Deal workout



A Real Deal Workout

with Ron Klinger

(You can find more Real Deal Workouts – five per week – via the www.ronklingerbridge.com website)

Solution: Open challenge 1

Teams: Dealer South : North-South vulnerable

Standard Bidding			
West	North	East	South (D)
			1NT
?			
Bidding Notes			
1NT	15-17 Bal		

What would you do as West with:

West	
♠	J7
♥	AKQ86432
♦	K86
♣	-

The deal arose in the final of the World Seniors' Teams and the semi-finals of the World Mixed Teams in 2022.

Board 21: Dealer South: North-South vulnerable

West		North	East
♠	J7	♠ QT63	♠ 9542
♥	AKQ86432	♥ 95	♥ T
♦	K86	♦ AQ	♦ T975
♣	-	♣ JT753	♣ Q862
		South (D)	
		♠ AK8	Vul NS Dir: S
		♥ J7	
		♦ J432	
		♣ AK94	

I would have expected that this was an easy decision for West. With ready-made defence against 1NT, you pass and hope that they stay in 1NT or even better, push on to 3NT. If North

runs to Stayman or transfers to a suit, you introduce the hearts later.

As you can see, North-South have 25 HCP and are likely to reach 3NT

Standard Bidding			
West	North	East	South (D)
			1NT
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♦
Pass	3NT	All Pass	
Bidding Notes			
1NT	15-17 Bal		
2♣	Staymanic		
2♦	No 5 Card Major, min		
3NT	to play		
Pass	For Vul Penalties		

West cashes eight hearts for **+400**. Meanwhile East-West can make only 9 tricks in hearts for **+140**.

Suppose you swap the North and East hands.

West		North	East
♠	J7	♠ 9542	♠ QT63
♥	AKQ86432	♥ T	♥ 95
♦	K86	♦ T975	♦ AQ
♣	-	♣ Q862	♣ JT753
		South (D)	
		♠ AK8	Vul NS Dir: S
		♥ J7	
		♦ J432	
		♣ AK94	

Now it is likely to go 1NT : Pass : Pass : Pass. With the DA-Q opposite, West can now make 11 tricks in hearts for +450. Good? Yes, but defending against 1NT is still better, with 8 hearts plus 2 diamonds, ten tricks, East-West +500.

If West doubles 1NT, North-South are likely to run to a safer spot. North-South can make 5♣ as the cards lie, but if West passes throughout, North-South figure to reach 3NT. North-South can make 4♣ if played by South. An unlikely club lead can defeat 4♠ if played by North.

When this deal arose only two East-West pairs produced a positive result. In the Seniors' final, at one table it went

Standard Bidding			
West	North	East	South (D)
			1NT
4♥	X	All Pass	
Bidding Notes			
1NT	15-17 Bal		
4♥	Pre-empt		
X	Penalty		

West made nine tricks (playing low diamonds twice set up the DK), North-South +100.

At the other table:

Standard Bidding			
West	North	East	South (D)
			1NT
4♥	X	Pass	4NT
5♥	X	All Pass	
Bidding Notes			
1NT	15-17 Bal		
4♥	Pre-empt		
X	Penalty		
4NT	Pick a minor		
5♥	Penalty		

West made nine tricks, **-300** and 5 Imps away. Still, that was better than if North-South had played and made 5♣ for +600. However, there was a better option for East-West.

In the Mixed Teams' semi-finals:

Table 1:

Standard Bidding			
West	North	East	South (D)
			1NT
4♥	X	All Pass	

1NT East-West **-100**.

Table 2, with East-West passing throughout:

Standard Bidding			
West	North	East	South (D)
			1NT
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♦
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

East-West **+400** and **+11 Imps**.

Table 3:

Standard Bidding			
West	North	East	South (D)
			1NT
X?	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♥	X	Pass	2♠
3♥	3♠	All Pass	
Bidding Notes			
1NT	15-17 Bal		
X?	Strong?		
2♣	Too Weak to pass for Pen		
2♥	My Suit		
X	Takeout		
2♠	Spades		
3♥	More my Suit		
3♠	To Play		

- T1 West led the ♥A, ♥5, ♥T, ♥7
 T2 West followed by the ♥2 (suit-preference for clubs). ♥9, ♠2 East ruffed, ♥J
 T3 East returned the ♠6: ♠A – ♠7 – ♠3.
 Declarer had the rest,
 North-South **+170**.

Table 4, with East-West passing throughout:

Standard Bidding			
West	North	East	South (D)
			1NT
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♦
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

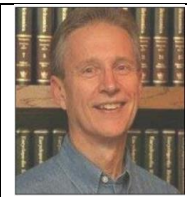
East-West **+400** and **+6 Imps**.

The East-Wests who passed went plus. The East-Wests who bid went minus. *Quod erat demonstrandum*.

Note the **Power of Pass**.

(You can find more Real Deal Workouts – five per week – via the www.ronklingerbridge.com website)

♦ BM – Slow it Down



Brent Manley

This Challenge hand was adapted from a Brent Manley Sourced from the ACBL Bridge feed website

Solution: open Challenge 2

North	Standard Bidding			
♠ AK9832	West	North	East	South (D)
♥ 82				1♦
♦ AKJ	Pass	1♠	Pass	1NT
♣ KJ	Pass	3♠	Pass	4♣
	Pass	4♦	Pass	4♥
South (D)	Pass	4NT	Pass	5♣
♠ Q6	Pass	5NT	Pass	6♣
♥ AT4	Pass	7NT	All Pass	
♦ Q542	Bidding Notes			
♣ AQ65	1♦	4+♦ opening Hand		
	1♠	4+♠, 6+hcp		
	1NT	Bal 12-14 <4♠		
	3♠	GF 6+♠		
	4♣	Cue, Max 2-3 ♠		
	4♦	Cue		
	4♥	Cue		
	4NT	Keycard (♠)		
	5♣	2 + ♠Q		
	5NT	Any Kings?		
	6♣	No		
	7NT	Matchpoints looking for top		

The Bidding

You (South) Open 1♦, partner bids 1♠ and you limit your hand with a 1NT bid (12-14 balanced hand). Partner then jumps to 3♠ (game force, long spades), You cue 4♠ (agreeing spades with your maximum 14 hcp hand). Partner Cues 4♦, so you Cue 4♥. Your partner used Roman Key Card Blackwood 4NT and you then showed 2+♠Q with your 5♠ bid. Partner then bids 5NT asking for any extra Kings When you denied the only missing king (hearts) with your 6♠ signoff, partner inferred that you must have at least one of the missing useful queens to make up your opening bid. With all that information he put you in the grand slam looking for a Matchpoint top with a 7NT bid.

How will you make it after West starts with the lead of the ♥K?

Preliminary analysis

Winners: 3x♠+1♥+4x♦+4x♣=12

Top Losers: None, but ♥ are set up

Strategies for making 13

- If the spades break 3-2 – No problem
- If Not, maybe all the Heart Honours (West from the ♥K lead) has the long spades and you can squeeze him?

Solution 1

- T1 Declarer won the opening lead with the ♥A.
- T2 Declarer then cashed the ♠Q. Every body following.
- T3 Then played a spade to dummy's ♠A. but East discarded a heart and declarer discovered that the contract could no longer be made.

Declarer moaned and muttered, "What rotten luck." After looking at South's hand, North said, "What was the rush to test the spades?"

Better Solution

- T2-6 You should first cash (unblocking) all dummy's 5 minor-suit winners ♦AKJ and ♣KJ
- T7 Then return to hand with a low spade ♠2 to the ♠Q.
- T8-10 Then, you cash the 3 high minor card winners that are in your hand (♦Q, and the ♣AQ),
- T11 There are only three cards remaining at this stage. West needs to keep three spades (♠JT7) and a top heart winner, an impossible task. He has been squeezed. In actual play, West would have had to discard the ♥Q and ♥J early hoping East may hold the ♥T. So, in that eventuality, you just cash your high ♥T at Trick 11.
- T12/3 then cash the top two spades ♠AK.

You made (3♠+2♥+4♦+4♣=13 tricks) You have caught West in an automatic simple Heart / Spade squeeze.

You as a good declarer, should play this hand this way, if spades are breaking, you will just make the last 3 spades, if not then the last hope is a squeeze.

The full deal:

	North	
	♠ AK9832	
West	♥ 82	East
♠ JT74	♦ AKJ	♠ 5
♥ KQJ9	♣ KJ	♥ 7653
♦ 83		♦ T976
♣ T92	South (D)	♣ 8743
	♠ Q6	
7NT/S	♥ AT4	Vul EW
Lead ♥K	♦ Q542	Dir: S
	♣ AQ65	

- T1 West opens lead cashing: ♠A.
 T2 West continues with the ♠K
 T3 West continues with the ♠J which you ruff with the ♥T to keep in entry practice.
 T4 You cash the ♥A Both follow
 T5 you cash the ♥K, but East discarding an encouraging club on the second heart.

Take over from here.

Preliminary


Winners: 4♥+4♦+1♠ = 9 One short

Losers: 2 spades, ♥Q still in the West Hand, Likely ♠K in East hand

Strategies for 10 Tricks?

Your options are limited, very limited. You've lost two spade tricks, you have a trump loser and East must have the ♠K, given West's original pass having already turned up with 10 HCP, not to mention East's signal.

♦ EK – MP – Test Your Play



Eddie Kantar

This article was based on a Kantar [‘Test your Play’](#) series article in the ACBL “Bridge Feed” website.

Matchpoint Scoring

North	Standard Bidding			
♠ 987	West (D)	North	East	South
♥ 9854	Pass	Pass	Pass	2♣
♦ 64	Pass	2♦	Pass	2♥
♣ A975	Pass	3♥	Pass	4♥
	All Pass			
South	Bidding Notes			
♠ QT	2♣	Game Force		
♥ AKJT7	2♦	Waiting		
♦ AKQJ	2♥	5+H		
♣ QJ	3♥	Support		
	4♥	to play		

(1) Might be the worst 23-point hand ever!

You might try a **swindle play** like leading the ♣Q to the ace and then a low club to your jack or vice versa. But in either case, it can't hurt East to go up with the ♠K. Even if you ruff, East still has the ♠T8 over dummy's ♠9.

There is a legitimate play for the contract, however, if West started life with a **singleton or void in clubs**. Lead a club towards the ♠A. West can't afford to ruff a loser (air) with the ♥Q if he is void, so he discards instead. But even if he follows to the first club, win the ♠A, cash your four diamond winners and toss West in with the ♥Q.

If you get lucky and find West with, say, a 4♠=3♥=5♦=1♣

or a

3♠=3♥=6♦=1♣

pattern, he will be endplayed and forced to give you a ruff-sluff, eliminating your club loser as you ruff in dummy

♦ BF - Bridge Puzzle 28



This article was derived from Bridgefeed, ["Puzzle This no 28"](#)

North		Standard Bidding			
♠ AQ9863		West	North	East	South (D)
♥ K6					1♠
♦ 93		Pass	2NT	Pass	4NT
♣ 654		Pass	5♣	Pass	5♦
		Pass	6♥	Pass	6♠
		All Pass			
South (D)		Bidding Notes			
♠ KT754		1♠	5+♠, Opening Hand		
♥ AQJ4		2NT	GF ♠		
♦ AQ		4NT	Keycard (♠)		
♣ K8		5♣	1 or 4 keycards		
		5♦	Do you have ♠Q?		
		6♥	Yes ♠Q & the ♥K		
		6♠	to play, missing an ace & king		

- T1 Win the ♥K in dummy
 T2/3 Draw the outstanding 2 trumps.
 T4-6 Finish cashing your heart winners ♥AQJ, eliminating hearts, whilst pitching two small clubs from dummy.
 T7 Next, re-enter dummy with a trump
 T8 Then play your last club ♣6 in dummy towards the ♣K in hand.

If East rises with the ♣A, you're home. As you can pitch the losing diamond on the ♣K

If your ♣K loses to West's ♣A, ruff the club return in dummy and then try the diamond finesse.

This is a **75% slam**, so if you go down, don't feel too bad.

You are South as declarer in 6♠, following a good auction.

T1 West leads a low heart

How are you going to play this hand?

You have 11 top tricks on top: 6♠+4♥+1♦

You can make the slam-going trick if the ♣A or if the ♦K is on your right. But if you draw trumps and then, say, take the diamond finesse and it loses, the defence can then cash the ♣A to beat you.

Alternatively, if you play a club to the ♣K and it loses to West ♣A, the defence can cash another club for down one.

What's the right way to do this? How do you test one of the finesses without risking an immediate down one?

First, there is no way to guarantee your contract. If West holds both the ♦K and the ♣A, you're toast. There is a way to give yourself the best chance, however, if only one of the 2 finesses is working.

♦ JF – Michaels Cue Bid - Counting



Julian Foster (many times NSW representative) analysing (bidding & play) on an interesting hand from a club session. Sourced SBC Wisdom articles.

The 9-card suit

		North		Dealer: South	
		♠ 6		Vul: EW	
West		♥ K		East	
♠ Q3		♦ T6		♠ AT9854	
♥ T75432		♣ AQJ876543		♥ Q6	
♦ AQ3				♦ J942	
♣ K9				♣ 2	
		South (D)		♣♦♥♠ NT	
10		♠ KJ72		N 4 1 - - 3	
11 7		♥ AJ98		S 4 1 - - 3	
12		♦ K875		E - - 1 1 -	
		♣ T		W - - 1 1 -	

A recent Club level game, contained a 9 card suit! These are very rare and there's no established set of bidding rules for them. But their power in trick taking is obviously enormous. Let's see what might happen. South will normally start with 1♦ (see advanced section for additional considerations in a weak NT system, however).

West will probably overcall 1♥. The suit quality is poor of course but you have 6 of them and a decent 11-point hand (in fact probably worth more since the ♦K is more likely to be on your right making your ♦AQ equivalent to the ♦AK).

1♦	1♥	?
----	----	---

North then must decide how many clubs to bid. I would start with just 2♣. There's no need to rush - with 9 clubs we really don't need much from partner to make 12 tricks so jumping straight to 5♣ seems premature.

1♦	1♥	2♣	pass
----	----	----	------

Some Easts bid spades at this point. This is dangerous – but you do have shape and you think the ♥Q6 is probably useful, but you are still looking outgunned on the hand (South has opened and North has made a forcing 2-level response). ♦J9xx in diamonds isn't worth anything really either. With the unfavourable vulnerability you could be in big trouble. I would pass, although if you are going to bid, then a competitive double is an option (see advanced section).

Over 2♣, South is pretty much forced into bidding 2NT and now it's North's next go.

1♦	1♥	2♣	pass
2NT	Pass	?	

Some players bid 3♣ and landed up playing there. Usually, a simple repeat of responders suit is not forcing (opener can have 11, you can have 10 and it can easily be the last making spot). So, we are way too good for that on this hand. A 9 card suit like this should always be bidding to at least 5♣. That's what I would bid over 2NT.

Slam is still possible, but we now know more - we know partner is only 11-14 and our ♥K probably isn't worth much having heard hearts bid on my right. So, I'd give up on slam at this point.

1♦	1♥	2♣	pass
2NT	Pass	5♣	All Pass

5♣ will no doubt then be the final contract.

At several tables, East made the reasonable but unfortunate ♥Q lead (**this is a reason for West not to overcalling with such a bad suit!**). How should declarer play?

Some declarers won the ♥K in hand and led a spade up. This should lead to them going off. East can win ♠A and switch to diamonds. In fact, after the defence cashing ♦AQ declarer only has trumps left so will be forced to trump and lead clubs from hand, also losing a trick to the ♣K as well for 2 off!

But if East ducks the ♠A then declarer should make 12 tricks as they win ♠K, discard one of their diamonds on the ♥A and then take the club finesse to make 1x♠, 2x♥ and 9x♣.

What declarer should do on the ♥Q lead instead, is take the ♥A in dummy (yes crashing his own king under it)! Why? Because it gives him his only guaranteed entry to the South hand. That has a double benefit. First he can play ♥J to discard his losing spade and second he can take the club finesse (note with 10 trumps missing the K the odds still favour finessing rather than trying to drop a singleton ♣K). When that all works declarer ends up leading towards the ♦K. Even though that fails he still makes 11 tricks (2x♥ and 9x♣). Discarding a certain spade loser is better than discarding a possible diamond loser (imagine the ♦A were in fact onside – now your diamond discard hasn't gained anything as you still lose the same one diamond trick you were always going to!)

Deep Finesse says the only game North South make is 3NT. I think that's pretty academic with such a long suit but it's an interesting exercise to work out how the defence hold it to 9 tricks. After all declarer has 9 clubs and 1 heart very easily! So the defence must be able to take the first 4 tricks which means they have to play diamonds - but see advanced section for exactly how they need to do this.

Key points to note

- 9 card suits are rare and potentially extremely powerful. They should be trumps almost regardless of the rest of the hands! And they should almost always be played at least at game level.
- There is no need to jump to game if you can make a forcing bid at a lower level first – you can find out more about partner's

hand then to potentially be able to bid slam.

- Be wary coming into an auction where both your opponents are bidding and have not really limited their hands – especially vulnerable.
- Sometimes you may need to crash your own honours to reach one hand where the entry is more important.
- Competitive doubles arise after 3 suits have been bid – they typically show the 4th suit and tolerance (but not direct support) for partner's suit (see advanced section).

More advanced

Playing standard your NT rebid is 11-14 so you can bid 2NT over partner's 2♣. But imagine you were playing weak NT system and then your NT rebid is strong (15-17 usually). This creates a horrible problem with the south hand. What do you rebid after 1♦-2♣? 2♥ or 2♠ are reverses showing much strong hands. 2NT is also now strong. The only answer, revolting though it is, is to rebid 2♦!

To avoid this you might plan ahead and open 1♥ (even if that normally shows 5) so that you have a 2♦ rebid over a 2♣ response. Or you might choose to open 1NT despite the singleton. 4441 hands are always awkward - you basically have to lie in some way, it's just a question of which lie you tell!

I mentioned a competitive double by East. This bid is typically made after 3 suits have been bid round the table. In 4th seat your double usually shows:

- Some scattered values
- The 4th suit (often at least 5 of it)
- Tolerance for partner's suit (so a doubleton).

It is basically saying you are happy to compete if partner can do something else. But you don't want to commit to a single action yourself.

Let's finish with the defence to 3NT even though surely no one will ever play this hand there! How can EW take the first 4 tricks? The key is what diamond East plays through. If he leads a small diamond declarer ducks and West wins the Q. But now the defence can

only get one more diamond trick no matter what they do. But consider the effect of East playing the ♦J through. Now declarer is helpless - if he covers West wins but his ♦Q then drops declarer's ♦T which promotes the ♦9. And if he doesn't cover East retains the lead for a 2nd diamond. Overall, the defence score ♠A and 3 diamonds. The play of the ♦J is an advanced defensive play known as a **"surround play"** - effectively East's ♦J9 surround North's ♦T and render it useless. It works because the defence also have the ♦9. Another example of this play is this combination:

Txx
Axx KJ9x
Qxx

The only card East can play through to enable EW to take all the tricks in the suit is the J. Try it and see!

Julian Foster (many times NSW representative)

♦ EK IMP – Test Your Play



Eddie Kantar

This article was based on a Kantar ["Test your Play"](#) series article in the ACBL "Bridge Feed" website.

IMPs Scoring

North	Standard Bidding			
♠ 8643	West	North	East	South (D)
♥ KJ				1♥
♦ A54	1♠	2♣	Pass	3♣
♣ A832	Pass	3♥	Pass	4♥
	All Pass			
South	Bidding Notes			
♠ Q	1♥	5+♥, Opening Hand		
♥ AQT94	1♠	5+♠, Nil vul Overcall		
♦ KQ6	2♣	4+♣, Forcing		
♣ QJ65	3♣	4+♣ fit		
	3♥	I have useful ♥ cards		
	4♥	To play		

Opening lead: ♠A.

North owes you a heart, but, then again, the ♥KJ are not chopped liver.

T1 West leads the **♠A** and East follows with the **♠2** (standard count) and you drop **♠Q**
T2 West continues with the **♠K**, East playing the **♠5**.

Plan the play.

Preliminary

Winners: 5♥, 3♦, 1♠ = 9 tricks

Losers: ♠A (lost), maybe ♠K

Strategies for 10 Tricks?

You are playing IMPs (Overtricks are not a major concern). So, you need only to make two club tricks for contract. As long as, you don't lose control when hearts are likely breaking 4-2 and East has the ♠K.

You can retain control if you discard a club on the second spade from hand and then ruff the third, exhausting East of nasty spades.

T2 West continues with the **♠K**, East playing the **♠5**, you discard **♣5**
T3 West continues with spades, East following, so you now ruff **♥4**.
T4-7 Now you can draw trumps, even if they are 4-2, finishing in hand.
T8 Now you can finesse clubs into East, and even if it loses, you still take 10 tricks as East does not have a 4th spade

You make five hearts, three diamonds and two clubs for your contract.

Full Deal

North		East (E)	
♠ 8643	♥ KJ	♠ 762	♥ Txxx
♦ A54	♣ A832	♦ xxx	♣ Kxx
South		Vul Nil	
♠ Q	♥ AQT94	Dir: S	
♦ KQ6	♣ QJ65		
West			
♠ AKJTx	♥ xx		
♦ xxxx	♣ xx		
4♥/S			
Lead ♠A			

♦ JM – Suit vs NT



John Mottram

Our ex-president provides insights on bidding

Suit vs NT

The hands for this week have a common theme. Playing Pairs, you have potential alternative contracts, but clearly hope to choose the one which scores the best.

Hand 1

In 4th seat, you hold

♠AKQ1052 ♥A86 ♦53 ♣A6.

After 2 passes, RHO opens 1♦ (3rd seat non vul). You are probably heading for 4♠, but you don't need to commit to it just yet. So, you choose to double at this stage. LHO passes, and partner bids 1NT – he has

♠ J8 ♥Q94 ♦Q876 ♣K754.

Of course, you don't know partner's exact hand, but you do know that he probably has a Diamond cover and a trick somewhere. If he has a possible second trick you can make 4 Spades; but then you can also make 4NT. If there is only one extra trick, you can make both 3♠ and 3NT. So, the odds favour bidding 3NT. Partner did indeed make 3NT. The rest of the field went off in 4♠.

This hand occurred in a regular on-line session earlier in November this year.

Hand 2

My next hand also occurred at a recent NSBC session. You are North in first seat. The hands are as follows:

North	South
♠ KQxxxx	♠ Axxx
♥ Ax	♥ Kxx
♦ Kx	♦ AQx
♣ AJx	♣ xxx

The bidding starts **1♠ P 2NT P**. 2NT is Jacoby. With 17 points and a 6th Spade you decide that a slam is likely. You find that partner has the 2 Aces plus a King, so bid the slam; but which one? 6♠ seems obvious, but what about 6NT? If partner can ruff a loser with the short trump hand then 6 Spades is probably the best spot, but this seems unlikely looking at your hand, so you bid 6NT, expecting the same 12 tricks (assuming the slam makes). You are rewarded with a **100%** score.

Observations with respect to the above

Most players will with a hand containing a long solid minor consider a NT contract rather than a contract in the minor. Why not the same with a long major instead of a minor. But see Hand 3 for further discussion.

While putting the 2 hands together, I was reminded of an article from many years ago by Ron Klinger. He advocated that with 2 flattish hands, better than minimum game values, and a known 5-3 major fit, one should seriously consider a NT game rather than a major game.

Hand 3

My last example is of a type which occurs from time to time.

The hands are as follows:

North	South
♠ Kxx	♠ Axx
♥ QJ	♥ Kxxx
♦ AQJxx	♦ Kxxx
♣ AJx	♣ Qx

If the Club finesse fails,
you make 10 or 11 tricks in 3NT: +430/460

If the Club finesse succeeds,
you make 11 tricks in 3NT: +460

If the Club finesse fails,
you make 11 tricks in 5♦: +400

If the Club finesse succeeds,
you make 12 tricks in 5♦: +420

If the Club finesse fails,
you make 11 tricks in 6♦: -50

If the Club finesse succeeds,

you make 12 tricks in 6♦: +920

As you can see, any Diamond contract other than 6♦ making will lose out to the NT bidders, so unless you have a gadget to enable you to bail out in 5NT having chosen to investigate a slam you should always bid the slam. Different story at teams.

♦ Club RB Comp Night Events

13th

XMAS Teams Championship
Comp Night – XMAS Teams (Imps)




2x Thursday Nights 7:00pm 8th, 15th December
 7pm Start– Swiss Teams (IMP/VP) Event
 Prize Pool: Generous, but dependent on Entries
 Convenor, queries & partnership advice: Gary Barwick 0413 884 805
 Director: Ronnie Ng
 Entry Management: Enter by NSBC Website
 Pre-payments: Visitors NSBC 'Make a Payment', Members via "Club PP System"
 2021 winners: **Liz Sylvester & Peter Gill, Yumin Li & Simon Zhang**


 NORTH SHORE BRIDGE CLUB
 Online Venue with RealBridge
 Tel: 0413 884 805

Conducted under the auspices of the NSWBA. The ABF has approved the issue of **red masterpoints at level 48c**. All players are subject to the NSWBA's Disciplinary Regulations. Yellow Systems Restricted.

Player Fees (pp) Members \$32 (2x\$16) Visitors \$38 (2x\$19)
Why not join? Remote Members just \$25/year

2023 Comp Nights – First Event

3rd

Summer Pairs (Imps)
Comp Night – Open & Restricted Pairs




2x Thursday Nights 29th Dec, 5th Jan
 7pm Start– Pairs Imp Event
 Prize Pool: Generous, but dependent on Entries
 Convenor, queries & partnership advice: Gary Barwick 0413 884 805
 Director: Ronnie Ng
 Entry Management: Enter by NSBC Website
 Pre-payments: Visitors NSBC 'Make a Payment', Members via "Club PP System"
 2022 winners: **Elliot Kaplan & Peter Gill**


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Conducted under the auspices of the NSWBA. The ABF has approved the issue of **red masterpoints at level B4c**. All players are subject to the NSWBA's Disciplinary Regulations. Yellow systems Restricted.

Player Fees (pp) Members \$32 (2x\$16) Visitors \$38 (2x\$19)
Why not join? Remote Members just \$25/year

♦ 2023 Club RB Congress Events

Then In early January

New

NSBC Summer
Online Swiss Teams




Sunday 8th Jan on RealBridge
 10:00am Start 2 Sessions – Swiss Teams (IMP) Event
 Prize Pool: Generous, but dependent on Entries
 Convenor, queries & partnership advice: Gary Barwick 0413 884 805
 Director: Ronnie Ng
 Entry Management: Enter by MyABI 
 Pre-Payments: Visitors use MyABF Credits & NSBC Members to select "Club PP System"


 NORTH SHORE BRIDGE CLUB
 Online Venue with RealBridge
 Tel: 0413 884 805

Conducted under the auspices of the NSWBA. The ABF has approved the issue of **red masterpoints at level B4**. All players are subject to the NSWBA's Disciplinary Regulations. Yellow systems restricted.

Player Fees (pp) \$30pp
Why not join the NSBC? Remote Members just \$25/year