

Dealer South, E/W vulnerable

|          |         |
|----------|---------|
| North    | South   |
| ♠ KQ9643 | ♠ A7    |
| ♥ 5      | ♥ AJS   |
| ♦ Q93    | ♦ AKJ10 |
| ♣ A72    | ♣ K654  |

### Articles for Open players

Including analysis by **Liam Milne**, **Brent Manley**, **BBO teams**, **Augie Boehm**, **Julian Foster**, **Eddie Kantar**, & **John Mottram**.

[Click Button below to open](#)

## ♦ LM – Defence in Detail 8



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

| North     | Dealer S, S, NS-Vul      |
|-----------|--------------------------|
| ♠ K6      |                          |
| ♥ A972    | You South, open 1♠,      |
| ♦ 743     | West Michaels 2♠, East   |
| ♣ 8743    | bids 3♥, and you bid 3♠, |
|           | then you land in 4♠      |
| South (D) |                          |
| ♠ AJT9873 | T1 West leads ♥K         |
| ♥ T       |                          |
| ♦ AK8     | What's your plan to      |
| ♣ K6      | make your contract?      |

With four trumps, consider if you can put declarer's trump holding under pressure somehow. If you force them into losing trump control, you will be able to create winning positions out of thin air.

You are West in a national teams final with a moderate balanced hand:

♠AJ76 ♥73 ♦A843 ♣983

| Standard Bidding  |                          |      |                   |
|-------------------|--------------------------|------|-------------------|
| You               | North                    | East | South             |
|                   |                          | Pass | 1♠                |
| Pass              | 1♥                       | 2♦   | Pass <sup>1</sup> |
| 3♦                | X                        | Pass | 3♠                |
| Pass              | 4♠                       | Pass | Pass              |
| Pass              |                          |      |                   |
| Bidding Notes     |                          |      |                   |
| 1♠                | 2+♠, Opening             |      |                   |
| 1♥                | 4+♥, 6+hcp               |      |                   |
| 2♦                | 5+D, overcall            |      |                   |
| Pass <sup>1</sup> | Denies 3♥ (no Support X) |      |                   |
| 3♦                | ♦ Support                |      |                   |
| X                 | Takeout                  |      |                   |
| 3♠                | 4♠, no penalty pass      |      |                   |
| 4♠                | Try for a game           |      |                   |

Your opponents meander into an apparent 4-4 spade fit after your side bids and raises diamonds.

T1 Seeing no appeal in a heart or club lead, you shrug and lead the ♦A which looks like a good idea when dummy appears:

## ♦ JAN/FEB Advanced Courses

Link to [Website Advanced Teaching](#)



Anita Curtis, will restart "Develop your Skills", "Gentle Hand Analysis" & Broaden your game after the Summer Nationals (Canberra) in early Feb.

**Anita Curtis**



The final lesson from Pete Hollands – "Healthy habits in defence" is on Zoom is on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> Jan

**Pete Holland**

|        | Dummy    |
|--------|----------|
|        | ♠ K542   |
| You    | ♥ AKJT84 |
| ♠ AJ76 | ♦ K      |
| ♥ 73   | ♣ 75     |
| ♦ A843 |          |
| ♣ 983  |          |

T1 ♦A, ♦K Partner plays the ♦Q, showing an honour sequence in the suit. ♦6

Dummy is unexpectedly strong, and partner and declarer hold only 17 points between them for their opening bid and two-level overcall.

Your side is playing an artificial 2♦ opening, so partner could easily hold six good diamonds and not have opened the bidding. It does not look like partner can have enough strength to significantly hinder declarer in clubs or hearts.

What is the best chance to create some tricks for your side?

### Solution:

Declarer (South) has 11+ points for their opening bid, so partner has at most 3-4 points outside of their ♦QJTxxx+. This means that declarer's clubs and hearts are both likely to run if we defend passively.

The most likely chance to defeat 4♠ is to score several trump tricks. The general strategy for building trump tricks is to weaken declarer's trumps (or dummy's). The only suit that we can force declarer to trump is diamonds, so we plan to continue with a diamond at trick two.

T2 You continue D3, Declarer ruffs in dummy S2

T3 Then leads a spade to partner's ST and his SQ. You win with SA

What should your next play be?

Of course, we must continue the forcing attack by playing a third round of diamonds even though this concedes a ruff and discard.

T4 D4, Declarer has no productive way to use this 'gift' and whichever hand they choose to ruff in, your trumps are growing ever more threatening.

Let's take a look at the full hand:

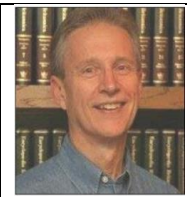
|         | North     |           |
|---------|-----------|-----------|
|         | ♠ K542    |           |
| West    | ♥ AKJT84  | East (D)  |
| ♠ AJ76  | ♦ K       | ♠ T       |
| ♥ 73    | ♣ 75      | ♥ Q93     |
| ♦ A843  |           | ♦ QJT952  |
| ♣ 983   |           | ♣ Q42     |
|         | South (D) |           |
| 4♠/S    | ♠ Q983    | Vul NS    |
| Lead DA | ♥ 62      | Dir: East |
|         | ♦ 76      |           |
|         | ♣ AKJT6   |           |

After AD, diamond ruffed in dummy, spade to the queen and ace, and a third diamond, declarer has no answer.

Whichever hand they ruff this trick in leaves them with no way to pick up your trumps. If declarer ruffs in dummy, he comes down to bare king while you still have three trumps. If he ruffs in hand, now you hold more trumps than either declarer or dummy and are due two more tricks. 4♠ eventually goes one down.

**Point to remember:** When you can work out that there is no future in any of the side suits, the only avenue to build defensive tricks is with trumps. Forcing dummy or declarer to ruff can often produce unexpected windfalls.

## ♦ BM – Slow it Down



Brent Manley

This Challenge hand was adapted from a Brent Manley Sourced hand from the ACBL Bridge feed website  
**“Careful Handling 2”**

## Solution Challenge Hand 1

| North     |  | Standard Bidding |                     |          |           |
|-----------|--|------------------|---------------------|----------|-----------|
|           |  | West             | North               | East     | South (D) |
| ♠ K6      |  |                  |                     |          | 1♠        |
| ♥ A972    |  |                  |                     |          |           |
| ♦ 743     |  | 2♠               | Pass                | 3♥       | 3♠        |
| ♣ 8743    |  | 4♣               | 4♠                  | All Pass |           |
|           |  | Bidding Notes    |                     |          |           |
|           |  | 1♠               | 5+♠, opening Hand   |          |           |
|           |  | 2♠               | Michaels 5♥+5 minor |          |           |
|           |  | 3♥               | Weak support        |          |           |
|           |  | 3♠               | 6+♠ Good hand       |          |           |
|           |  | 4♣               | 5+♣ Better than min |          |           |
|           |  | 4♠               | To play, ♠Kx & ♥A   |          |           |
| South (D) |  |                  |                     |          |           |
| ♠ AJT9873 |  |                  |                     |          |           |
| ♥ T       |  |                  |                     |          |           |
| ♦ AK8     |  |                  |                     |          |           |
| ♣ K6      |  |                  |                     |          |           |
|           |  |                  |                     |          |           |

This one required very careful handling.

T1 West leads the ♥K.

## Preliminary Analysis

Winners: 6♠+1♥+2♦ = 9 tricks

Losers: ♣A, likely ♠Q long in east, deep ♦/♣

## Strategies to make 10 tricks

On the bidding, you placed the ♠A with West. This left you with three sure minor-suit losers, so you will need to play the trump suit without loss for 7 tricks.

The bidding suggested that West would be short in trumps. If the trumps were 3-1 (at least an 8 to 3 odds favourite), then cashing the ♠K and playing ♠6, covering East's card, would be enough to make the contract.

But you as Declarer, then considered what he could do if trumps were 4-0. The answer was that you would have to ruff three cards in hand.

## Your Solution

- T1 West leads the ♥K, you win ♥A in dummy, east following ♥4 & ♥T from hand
- T2 As it could not cost to ruff a heart at trick two, You immediately did so, ♥2, ♥3, ♠7, ♥5. You were careful to ruff with the seven of trumps to preserve any options.
- T3 Next, you lead the ♠8 trumps, ♠2 to the ♠K East ♠2 A 4-0 Break!
- T4 You then ran the ♠6 when East followed with the ♠4, the preserved ♠3 from hand.
- T5 You then ruffed another heart ♥7, ♥8, ♠9, ♥6.
- T67 You then cashed the ♦AK to take advantage of your only hope for the contract – that West had started with 0=5=2=6 shape, as both EW followed
- T8 After that, you lead the ♠K as an exit card, and West took his ♠A, ♠3, ♠T
- T9 West then cashed his high club ♠Q, ♠4, ♦2, ♠6
- T10 But then had to play a card that declarer could ruff. West choose the ♠J, which you ruffed in hand ♠T
- T11 You now had a three-card ending. You had the ♠AJ trumps plus the ♦8 left. You exited ♦8, which East won the trick ♦J.
- T12 East then had to lead a trump from his ♠Q5 and you took the last two tricks with your ♠AJ for your contract.

The full deal:

|                 |  | North     |  |                       |  |
|-----------------|--|-----------|--|-----------------------|--|
|                 |  | ♠ K6      |  |                       |  |
| West            |  | ♥ A972    |  | East                  |  |
| ♠ -             |  | ♦ 743     |  | ♠ Q542                |  |
| ♥ KQJ65         |  | ♣ 8743    |  | ♥ 843                 |  |
| ♦ Q5            |  |           |  | ♦ JT962               |  |
| ♣ AQJ952        |  | South (D) |  | ♣ T                   |  |
| 4♠/S<br>Lead ♥K |  | ♠ AJT9873 |  | Vul All<br>Dir: South |  |
|                 |  | ♥ T       |  |                       |  |
|                 |  | ♦ AK8     |  |                       |  |
|                 |  | ♣ K6      |  |                       |  |

## ♦ BBO – Teams Play

|  |                                                            |
|--|------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | Hand from a BBO<br>Team Match,<br>French Premier<br>League |
|--|------------------------------------------------------------|

With neither side vulnerable, you are South holding:

| W              | N  | E | S  |
|----------------|----|---|----|
|                | 1♠ | P | 2♣ |
| P              | 2♠ | P | 3♣ |
| P              | 3♦ | P | ?  |
| <b>S South</b> |    |   |    |
| ♠ 32           |    |   |    |
| ♥ KJ           |    |   |    |
| ♦ AJ8          |    |   |    |
| ♣ AKJ876       |    |   |    |

What do you bid?

The action began with both South players in this team's match facing this same problem.

|                                                                                              |          |                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |   |   |   |   |  |    |   |    |   |    |   |    |   |    |   |     |   |   |   |  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|--|----|---|----|---|----|---|----|---|----|---|-----|---|---|---|--|
| <div>D</div> <div>1</div>                                                                    |          | <div>N Bompis</div> <div>♠ AKJ65</div> <div>♥ 653</div> <div>♦ Q75</div> <div>♣ Q10</div> | <table><tr><td>W</td><td>N</td><td>E</td><td>S</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>1♠</td><td>P</td><td>2♣</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td>2♠</td><td>P</td><td>3♣</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td>3♦</td><td>P</td><td>3NT</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td>P</td><td>P</td><td></td></tr></table> | W | N | E | S |  | 1♠ | P | 2♣ | P | 2♠ | P | 3♣ | P | 3♦ | P | 3NT | P | P | P |  |
| W                                                                                            | N        | E                                                                                         | S                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |   |   |   |   |  |    |   |    |   |    |   |    |   |    |   |     |   |   |   |  |
|                                                                                              | 1♠       | P                                                                                         | 2♣                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |   |   |   |   |  |    |   |    |   |    |   |    |   |    |   |     |   |   |   |  |
| P                                                                                            | 2♠       | P                                                                                         | 3♣                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |   |   |   |   |  |    |   |    |   |    |   |    |   |    |   |     |   |   |   |  |
| P                                                                                            | 3♦       | P                                                                                         | 3NT                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |   |   |   |   |  |    |   |    |   |    |   |    |   |    |   |     |   |   |   |  |
| P                                                                                            | P        | P                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |   |   |   |   |  |    |   |    |   |    |   |    |   |    |   |     |   |   |   |  |
| <div>W Combescur</div> <div>♠ 1074</div> <div>♥ Q9872</div> <div>♦ 942</div> <div>♣ 93</div> |          |                                                                                           | <div>E Giard</div> <div>♠ Q98</div> <div>♥ A104</div> <div>♦ K1063</div> <div>♣ 542</div>                                                                                                                                                                                 |   |   |   |   |  |    |   |    |   |    |   |    |   |    |   |     |   |   |   |  |
|                                                                                              |          | <div>S Lebel</div> <div>♠ 32</div> <div>♥ KJ</div> <div>♦ AJ8</div> <div>♣ AKJ876</div>   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |   |   |   |   |  |    |   |    |   |    |   |    |   |    |   |     |   |   |   |  |
| <div>3NT S</div> <div>NS: 0 EW: 0</div>                                                      |          |                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |   |   |   |   |  |    |   |    |   |    |   |    |   |    |   |     |   |   |   |  |
| Rewind                                                                                       | Previous | Next                                                                                      | Options                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |   |   |   |   |  |    |   |    |   |    |   |    |   |    |   |     |   |   |   |  |
| GIB                                                                                          | Play     | <div>B</div> Bridge Base                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |   |   |   |   |  |    |   |    |   |    |   |    |   |    |   |     |   |   |   |  |

On this deal, South decided that his heart stopper was adequate and advanced with 3NT, ending the auction.

- T1 West led a heart to his partner's ♥A.  
T2 West switched to a ♦3 and south ran it to dummy's ♦Q.

After cashing his clubs, he crossed to dummy in spades to repeat the diamond finesse for his twelfth trick:

**Score: N/S +490.**

|                                                                                           |  |                                                                                              |                                                                                                      |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <div>D</div> <div>1</div>                                                                 |  | <div>N J.Rombaut</div> <div>♠ AKJ65</div> <div>♥ 653</div> <div>♦ Q75</div> <div>♣ Q10</div> | <div>W N E S</div> <div>1♠ P 2♣</div> <div>P 2♠ P 3♣</div> <div>P 3♦ P 3♥</div> <div>P 4♣ P 4♦</div> |
| <div>W Oursel</div> <div>♠ 1074</div> <div>♥ Q9872</div> <div>♦ 942</div> <div>♣ 93</div> |  |                                                                                              | <div>E Mauberquez</div> <div>♠ Q98</div> <div>♥ A104</div> <div>♦ K1063</div> <div>♣ 542</div>       |
|                                                                                           |  | <div>S L.Rombaut</div> <div>♠ 32</div> <div>♥ KJ</div> <div>♦ AJ8</div> <div>♣ AKJ876</div>  |                                                                                                      |
| <div>6♣ S</div> <div>NS: 0 EW: 0</div>                                                    |  |                                                                                              |                                                                                                      |
| <div>Rewind Previous Next Options GIB Play</div> <div><div>B</div>Bridge Base</div>       |  |                                                                                              |                                                                                                      |

After an identical start to the auction, at the other table. North decided that he would prefer to play in one of the black suits if his partner could not provide some heart help. Over his fourth-suit 3♥, his partner showed his partial club fit (♠QT). South then cue-bid his diamond control, heard a spade cue-bid in return, and then Blackwooded himself into a 6♣ contract

Looking at all four hands, 6♣ looks fairly hopeless, with the ♠Q offside. Although spades split 3-3, there is no entry to reach the long cards in that suit.

However, the lead against 6♣ is critical:

Suppose West leads a 'safe' trump. Note what happens when declarer then cashes six rounds of clubs. East cannot afford to discard a spade, nor can he afford two diamonds, so he must throw two hearts and a diamond. Declarer then crosses to dummy with a high spade and plays a heart towards his king. East wins with the ♥A, but then has a choice of poisons, a spade away from the queen, giving declarer the whole suit, or a diamond from the king, giving him three tricks in that suit.

But at the table, West made no mistake.

- T1 He led a heart at trick one. West winning with the ♥A  
T2 Then had safe exits in either hearts or clubs. No matter what declarer tried from here, he could never come to more than eleven tricks.

**N/S -50**

Scored up = 11 IMPs Win

## ♦ AB - Bridge Puzzle 3

Bridge Puzzles 3

Augie Boehm

Logical thinking is the hallmark of the strong player. Virtually every bid or played card tells a tale, although sometimes the tale is too murky to be of much help.

For instance, suppose. partner deals and passes. Partner's strength is limited to 0–11 (or 12) points, depending on your opening bid style. Further, partner has excluded certain kinds of long-suited hands because of the failure to pre-empt. Not much to go on, but it's a start.

After a few rounds of bidding that provide details, a much clearer picture of the deal should emerge. Try to focus your attention. In the card play, the inferences tend to be crisper. The first few tricks are particularly apt to contain potentially useful clues. It's a good time to be alert.

The opponents have the following auction:

| SOUTH | NORTH |
|-------|-------|
|       | 1♠    |
| 1NT   | 2♥    |
| PASS  |       |

You are West. Playing fourth-best, partner (East) leads the ♦2. Dummy (North) shows four diamonds and you have a doubleton diamond. What distributions can opener hold?

**SOLUTION**

Given the likelihood that partner holds four diamonds, declarer holds three. Declarer's distribution is either

5♠=4♥=3♦=1♣,

5♠=5♥=3♦=0♣

6♠=4♥=3♦=0♣

North

♥ Q54

West (you)

♥ J832

You are defending a notrump contract and lead the heart ♥2, partner's secondarily-bid suit. Dummy plays low, partner the ♥T, and declarer the ♥K. Where are the missing hearts?

**SOLUTION**

Partner's hearts are the ♥AT76, leaving declarer with ♥K9. From the bidding, partner presumably holds four hearts (his secondary suit) and declarer two. Partner's play of the ♥T denies the ♥9 — third hand follows with the lowest of equals. Thus, declarer's hearts must be ♥K9. If you get the lead, the continuation of the ♥J will do wonders.

Consider this deal:

North (Dummy)

♠ KT5  
♥ 653  
♦ 92  
♣ AJT93

South (You)

♠ AJ983  
♥ J82  
♦ A86  
♣ KQ

| WEST     | NORTH | EAST | SOUTH |
|----------|-------|------|-------|
| 1♦       | PASS  | PASS | 1♠    |
| PASS     | 2♠    | PASS | 2NT   |
| PASS     | 3♣    | PASS | 4♠    |
| ALL PASS |       |      |       |

West opening lead is the ♣7.

Who will you finesse for the vital ♠Q?



## SOLUTION

West has the ♠Q and not just because he opened the bidding. The opponents hold 17 high-card points. East's first round pass limits his hand to about 5.

So far, it is possible for the weak hand to hold the ♠Q. But look further by considering the opening lead. Why the ♣7?

A singleton is hardly an attractive lead when partner is marked with a very weak hand and the low probability of an entry to obtain a ruff. The key inference is that opening leader (West) doesn't have an attractive honour-sequence to lead. Which places the ♥K with East. If West held ♥AKx(x), he might have started with a high heart. Similarly, if West held ♦KQJx(x), the opening lead would be the ♦K. Thus, East holds at least the ♦J. Once we mark East with the ♥K and ♦J, there is no room for the ♠Q.

Elementary, my dear Watson.

## ♦ JF – The Sacrifice

## JF – Hand Analysis



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

|          |  |           |               |
|----------|--|-----------|---------------|
|          |  | North     | Dealer: South |
|          |  | ♠ AQT5432 | Vul: Nil      |
| West     |  | ♥ T8      | East          |
| ♠ 6      |  | ♦ Q       | ♠ K97         |
| ♥ Q75    |  | ♣ 764     | ♥ AK9432      |
| ♦ AT9732 |  |           | ♦ 5           |
| ♣ 852    |  | South (D) | ♣ AJT         |
|          |  | ♠ J8      |               |
|          |  | ♥ J6      |               |
|          |  | ♦ KJ864   |               |
|          |  | ♣ KQ93    |               |
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This Board, played in a club level game, was an example of the “sacrifice” principle at pairs. What do I mean by that?

Basically, one side deliberately plays in a contract they know is almost certainly going down (doubled) but the score for that is still better than they would concede in the opponents' contract. When playing regular pairs sessions, we score using matchpoints where you score points based on how many pairs you beat (but not by how many points you beat them). A successful sacrifice can therefore win many matchpoints if other pairs don't find it.

In this example if we just look at the Deep Finesse analysis to start with it says EW can make 4♥ for which they would score +420.

But it also says NS can make 2♠. That means if NS deliberately played in 4♠ (**doubled**) they would expect to go 2 off. Not vulnerable that would score -300 – i.e., better than the -420 they would get by passing out 4♥. That is the best EW can do because they would go off if they pushed on to 5♥. 4♠ is therefore a profitable “sacrifice” on this board.

3rd Saturday 29th January 2023 on Realbridge  
10 am start... 2 x Sessions... Swiss Pairs (IMP) Event

**Online Swiss Pairs**

**BREAKING NEWS!**  
We just added a Under 300MP Section. Rookie & Restricted players encourage to play.

**GENEROUS PRIZES**

Club Champion

PLEASE CLICK HERE TO ENTER

Understanding the scoring and vulnerability makes a huge difference in this area.

- The best time to sacrifice is when you are not vulnerable, and the opponents are vulnerable. Now you can afford to go 3 off doubled and still show a profit (-500 v -- 620/-650).
- At equal vulnerability you can afford 2 off (-300 v -420/-450 or -500 v -620/-650).
- When you are vulnerable and they are not, you can only afford 1 off (-200 v -420/-450). Sacrifices here are rare.

Note that we are assuming throughout that the opponent's contract is making. That's an important factor. There is nothing worse than taking a "phantom sacrifice" by bidding 4♠ and conceding -300 when in fact 4♥ was going off all the time and you were about to score +50 or +100!

Of course, it's easy to consider all this afterwards by just looking at the hand. But what might happen in reality on this hand? A normal auction probably starts

1♦ P 1♠ 2♥ P 3♥ 3♠ 4♥ round the table.

South is worth an opening (just) but can't justify making a voluntary bid over 2♥ on the 2nd round, so Pass. Over 3♥ North will probably have another go 3♠ holding 7 spades and East is now quite likely to now bid 4♥ (their ♠K looks well placed and they know they have at least 9 trumps (see advanced section) so have good chances of winning 6x♥, ♠K, ♠ ruff, ♣A and hopefully one other trick from partner (who is likely to have something for 3♥ bid, albeit not much). That is basically what happens with the ♦A being partner's trick.

Judging whether to sacrifice is difficult! Should North or South bid 4♠ over 4♥? Even though it works on this hand I do not honestly think I would for a few reasons:

- South has quite a balanced hand with defensive cards (which might help beat 4♥ or mean we have **too many losers** in 4♠)
- Both players have 2 hearts which is the worst holding in the opponents suit as you almost certainly have 2 losers – very different if you are short yourself or have

length (from which you can infer partner will be short).

- The **vulnerability** - it's equal so I need to be at most 2 off. Not clear to either hand that will be the case.
- North is looking at 8 points opposite an opening bid (and partner could have a singleton spade) so there's no guarantee 4♥ is making.
- Even if it does make, 4♥ may not be bid everywhere (see advanced section). On the other hand, it is always very tempting to bid 4♠ over 4♥ as it's exactly what the opponents do not want to hear! It gives them a problem.

Sometimes they get it wrong – e.g., by bidding onto 5♥ and going off (we all know players who compete too much because they like to play the hand!) Or perhaps they double but only collect 300 when they were making 5♥.

In the actual scores on the board,

- almost all pairs did bid 4♥
- and two pairs successfully bid 4♠X and scored a "tops" on the board for conceding 300 instead of 420 or 450.

### Key points to note

- Sacrifice bids can gain lots of matchpoints and cause the opponents headaches.
- Vulnerability of both sides is critical - it determines how many off you can afford to go.
- Judging when to sacrifice is hard! But most pairs do it too much.
- Looking at your length in the opponent's suit is one useful guide. Holding a doubleton is usually bad (this hand happens to be an exception!).

### More advanced

First an aside that is not to do with sacrifices. How many trumps you have makes an enormous difference. A 9-card trump fit is HUGELY more powerful than an 8-card fit. This is partly because you are less at risk of being forced but it also gives you extra options to set up long cards in a side suit by ruffing in the other hand. In an 8-card fit you need 3

rounds to draw trumps (if they split 3-2) and you only have 2 trumps left. In a 9-card fit if they split 2-2 you can draw trumps in 2 rounds and still have 5 left! One of my biggest tips would be to bid much more aggressively once you know you have at least 9 trumps.

Back to sacrifices. In my experience many people sacrifice too often at matchpoints. Why? Because quite a few things have to work before it is right:

- The opponents have to be making their contract
- Your contract (**doubled**), has to be going for less than their contract would score
- The opponents have to be bidding their contract

Often none of these things are clear at the table. But the 3rd point is the one so many people forget. Here Deep Finesse said EW would make 4♥. OK, but will a lot of pairs actually bid it? If not, then most EW pairs will be scoring +170 and not +420. Now going -300 does not look so clever!

Considering South opens the bidding and EW only have a combined 21 points, it's by no means clear that all pairs will bid game. North is best placed to judge this here. They have 8 points and heard partner open the bidding, so they know the opponents don't have anywhere close to normal game values.

Julian Foster (many times NSW representative)



## ♦ EK – Test Your Play



Eddie Kantar

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

## Test Your Play

Matchpoints

| North    |  | Standard Bidding |                   |      |       |
|----------|--|------------------|-------------------|------|-------|
|          |  | West (D)         | North             | East | South |
| ♠ Q92    |  | 3♦               | 3♥                | Pass | 3♠    |
| ♥ AKJ932 |  | Pass             | 4♠                | Pass | 6♠    |
| ♦ 42     |  | All Pass         |                   |      |       |
| ♣ 54     |  | Bidding Notes    |                   |      |       |
| South    |  | 3♦               | Non vul Pre-emp   |      |       |
| ♠ AKJT86 |  | 3♥               | 5+♥, Vul Overcall |      |       |
| ♥ 74     |  | 3♠               | 5+♠, forcing      |      |       |
| ♦ AQJ    |  | 4♠               | 3♠ game           |      |       |
| ♣ KQ     |  | 6♠               | To play           |      |       |

- T1 West leads the ♥5. Say you play the ♥A, East playing the ♥8,  
 T2 You lead a spade to the ace, both following.

Now what?

### Preliminary Analysis

Winners: 6♠+2♥+1♦+1♣ = 10 short

Losers: ♠A, & ♦K surely with West, ♥Q with East

### Strategies for 12 tricks

Well, the ♥5 lead looks like a singleton, but with the ♦K marked with West, your only chance is to work with the hearts to set up the suit for two minor-suit discards. You have enough dummy entries to do it if West has but one spade.

If West has more than one spade with a singleton heart, you are cooked. Say West ruffs the second heart and cashes the ♠A or leads a club to East's ace: You still have the dummy entries to set up the hearts for two diamond pitches, but you'll wind up down one. (This will perhaps be a slightly below average



result, as slam is surely going to be bid at some tables.)

The key is to lead a second heart before a second trump. Even if spades are 2–2, you can't set up the hearts if either defender started with a singleton heart.

Unless you are prepared to take a second-round heart finesse if West follows to a second heart – a big play, as it would give West a 2=4=7=0 pattern and a silent East nine clubs! Please!.

## 2. IMPs

| North  | Standard Bidding |           |      |       |
|--------|------------------|-----------|------|-------|
|        | West (D)         | North     | East | South |
| ♠ J987 | Pass             | Pass      | Pass | 1NT   |
| ♥ JT9  | Pass             | 2♣        | Pass | 2♣    |
| ♦ K876 | Pass             | 3♣        | Pass | 4♣    |
| ♣ K9   | All Pass         |           |      |       |
| South  | Bidding Notes    |           |      |       |
| ♠ AKQT | 1NT              | 15-17 Bal |      |       |
| ♥ 32   | 2♣               | Stayman   |      |       |
| ♦ A54  | 2♣               | 4♣        |      |       |
| ♣ QJ32 | 3♣               | Game try  |      |       |
|        | 4♣               | To play   |      |       |

- T1 West Opening lead: ♥A.  
 T2 West continues with the ♥K  
 T3 West continues with a third heart, East furnishing the ♥Q, which you ruff high with the ♠A.

Plan the play from here.

## Preliminary Analysis

Winners: 5♠+2♦+2♣ = 9 - one short

Losers: ♥AK, deep ♦, 1-2 ♣

You are looking at two minor-suit losers, and clearly your best chance to reduce two losers to one loser is to finesse clubs.

- T4 Cash a top trump ♠K  
 T5 Cash a tanother ♠Q, retaining the ♠T,  
 T6 then lead a ♣2 to the ♣9 finessing the ♣T in West hand.

If this rather deep finesse drives out the ace, you will have two winning clubs in your hand to discard two diamonds from dummy.

If the ♣9 holds,

T7 Play the ♣K to drive out the ace, again having two winning clubs if the king is taken.

If both ♠9K clubs wins,

T8 re-enter your hand ♠9 to the ♠T

T9 You lead the ♣Q, discarding a diamond from dummy as they take ♠A

The ♣J will then afford a second diamond discard. Making 4♠.

Can anything go wrong outside of the ♣9 losing to the ♣T? Yes, if East has five clubs headed by the ace and West has ♣Tx. Say East ducks the first club (best), wins the second club and leads a third club. Now if West started with three trumps and East two, you will not be able to discard two diamonds from dummy on your two high clubs, as West will ruff the third round of clubs. Down one, but unlikely.

What about drawing 3 rounds of trumps before leading a club to the ♣9?

- T4 Cash top trump ♠K  
 T5 Cash top trump ♠Q,  
 T6 Cash ♠T, drawing all trumps  
 T7 then lead a ♣2 to the ♣9 finessing the ♣T.

That works if East has the ♣A without the ♣T

- T7 Lead a ♣2 to the ♣9 finessing the ♣T and East wins ♣A .  
 T8 East switches to a diamond. No problem: Win the ♦K in dummy  
 T9 Cash the ♠K  
 T10 Return to hand with the ♦A  
 T11 to enjoy your ♣QJ.

**Not so fast:** East might not be that generous and may duck both the ♣9 and the ♣K, leaving you stranded in dummy with only one hand entry, the ♦A, and no way to set up a club trick with the ♣QJ in your hand.

Keep the faith. **You are still alive.** If diamonds break 3–3 (36%), play on diamonds after winning two club tricks ♠9K in dummy. If they break 3–3, you will still prevail.

However, drawing just two trumps rather than three gives you a much better chance of bringing this baby home.

## ♦ JM – Exclusion Bidding



John Mottram

Our ex-president provides insights on bidding

**Exclusion Bidding****Exclusion Bidding**

There are 2 conventions available in the slam zone which involve control asking bids in a new suit after suit agreement (actual or implied). Partnerships must agree when such bids are conventional rather than natural, and if the former which of the 2.

**Exclusion Blackwood (also known as Voidwood)**

As an example, in the sequence

1♥ – P – 3♥ – P – 5♦, or

1♥ – P – 2NT – P – 5♦,

5♦ would be exclusion Blackwood (normal or keycard), excluding the Diamond Ace. The same might also apply to

1♥ – P – 4♦ or 1♥ – P – 3♠.

As has been stated already, the use of this convention would depend on the rest of one's system.

Recently, on Realbridge, I had the following hand.

♠AKQxx ♥987 ♦AKxxx ♣: Void.

Partner opened 1♥, so I was looking at a possible slam. This partner and I prefer splinter bids (mini and otherwise) to Bergen, so my bid of 4♣ showed a void. Partner just rebid Hearts. We hadn't ever discussed Exclusion Blackwood, but a bid of 5♣ would have elicited a response showing all 3 Heart honours, enough to bid 7♥. As it happened, nobody bid 7, and a few didn't even bid 6. But I should have bid 5♣ since it couldn't really have any other meaning.

**Exclusion 'Cue Bid'**

As an example, in the sequence

1♥ – P – 3♥ – P – 5♦, or 1H – P – 2NT – P – 5♦, 5♦ could be an exclusion 'cue bid', which tells partner that you have precisely 2 losers in Diamonds. Partner can bid 7 if he has both Ace and King or the Ace plus a running outside suit, or chance 6 if he has just the King ('on a finesse partner').

The same might also apply to 1♥ – P – 4♦ or 1♥ – P – 3♠. As has been stated already, the use of this convention would depend on the rest of one's system. I first used this convention 40 years ago, but I haven't used it with more recent partners, so don't know how many opportunities I might have missed.

**In Conclusion**

As with any possible changes to the system, each partnership must determine how such changes might impact the rest of the system. The above changes would undoubtedly replace more natural bids, or bids with alternative conventional meanings.

## ♦ Club RB Comp Night Events

After Canberra 2-week break,

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                          |                                                                                       |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>2nd</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <b>NSBC Summer Teams</b> |  |
| <b>Comp Night - Teams</b>                                                                                                                                                                                              |                          |                                                                                       |
| 4x Thursday Nights 26th Jan, 2nd, 9th 16th Feb                                                                                                                                                                         |                          |                                                                                       |
| 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"                                                                                                                                             |                          |                                                                                       |
| 2022 winners: Maurits Van Der Vlugt - Dagmar Neumann - David Beauchamp - Sophie Ashton                                                                                                                                 |                          |                                                                                       |
|  <small>Online Venue with RealBridge<br/>Tel: 0413 884 805</small>                                                                 |                          |                                                                                       |
| <small>Conducted under the auspices of the NSWBA. The ABF has approved the issue of red masterpoints at level 4Bc. All players are subject to the NSWBA's Disciplinary Regulations. Yellow systems Restricted.</small> |                          |                                                                                       |
| <b>Player Fees (pp) Members \$64 (4x\$16) Visitors \$76 (4x\$19)</b>                                                                                                                                                   |                          |                                                                                       |
| <small>Why not join? Remote Members just \$25/year</small>                                                                                                                                                             |                          |                                                                                       |

After 1 1 week break for Gold Coast

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                      |                                                                                       |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>36th</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <b>Club Mixed Pairs Championship</b> |  |
| <b>Comp Night – Mixed Gender Pairs (MP)</b>                                                                                                                                                                            |                                      |                                                                                       |
| 3x Thursday Nights 2nd, 9th & 16th March                                                                                                                                                                               |                                      |                                                                                       |
| 7pm Start – 36th Club Mixed Pairs Championship (MP) Event                                                                                                                                                              |                                      |                                                                                       |
| Prize Pool: Generous, but dependent on Entries                                                                                                                                                                         |                                      |                                                                                       |
| This event also incorporates "State Mixed Pairs Club Qualification" for the NSWBA finals on the 20/21 May. 4 Mixed NSBC Member pairs will be offered to represent the club at the NSWBA finals.                        |                                      |                                                                                       |
| 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 35th winners: David Beauchamp - Sophie Ashton                                                                                                                                                                     |                                      |                                                                                       |
|  <small>Online Venue with RealBridge<br/>Tel: 0413 884 805</small>                                                                 |                                      |                                                                                       |
| <small>Conducted under the auspices of the NSWBA. The ABF has approved the issue of red masterpoints at level 4Bc. All players are subject to the NSWBA's Disciplinary Regulations. Yellow systems Restricted.</small> |                                      |                                                                                       |
| <b>Player Fees (pp) Members \$48 (3x\$16) Visitors \$57 (3x\$19)</b>                                                                                                                                                   |                                      |                                                                                       |
| <small>Why not join? Remote Members just \$25/year</small>                                                                                                                                                             |                                      |                                                                                       |

♦ 2023 Club RB Congress Events  
In early January

New

## NSBC Summer Online Swiss Teams






Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> 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 MyABF 

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.

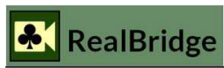
Player Fees (pp) \$30pp
Why not join the NSBC? Remote Members just \$25/year

Then in late January after Canberra

3<sup>rd</sup>

## Online Australia Day Weekend Open & Restricted (<300mp) Swiss Pairs





Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> Jan 2023 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”

2022 Open Winners: **Peter Gill & Jane Dawson**



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