

IRISH BRIDGE Journal

Summer 2023

Welcome

Here we go with the Summer Journal, the third since migration to online format. Feedback continues to be most positive. I'm indebted to all our contributors for bringing this about.

I must begin by noting with deep regret the passing in June of Eric Kokish, Canadian player, author and coach. For years, Eric shared his unparalleled knowledge of



Eric Kokish
1947-2023

Bidding Theory with Journal readers as a panellist for Gay Keaveney's Bidding Quiz. He stuck with us as we moved online, and it is poignant as well as touching that Eric's final contribution appears here in Bob Pattinson's piece. EOK delivered coaching sessions for Irish teams on several occasions, and one grateful recipient noted that "He never forced his ideas on you. He presented them and told you to go with what worked for you". Journal columnist Peter Pigot attended the sessions and struck up a friendship. Peter's piece in this issue is a tribute to Koach's extraordinary talents. Eric in his playing days was a Bermuda Bowl runner-up. He was for many years the coach of the powerful US Nickell team. May he rest in peace.



Enda Murphy, Editor

We applaud the near miss by our Women in the Lady Milne. Well done to Jeannie, Joan, Rebecca, Gilda, Teresa and Siobhán, and NPC Paul. They came agonisingly close to a maiden victory [no pun intended]. It has been a long time – too long – since an Irish Women's outfit grabbed the headlines. I'm very pleased that Rebecca O'Keeffe has obliged us with an inside account of the event.

Actually, there are grounds for optimism for the future; consider the following list of "absentees" – Anna Onishuk, Hilary MacDonagh, Lucy Phelan, Gráinne Barton, Diane Greenwood. Of course, there are good reasons why not all are available. Some prefer to play in Open events, as is their right. And the kind of commitment required to play in high-level international events is frequently more difficult for women to make. So it is indeed timely that in this issue we have an illuminating piece on the status of the Women's game by Mary Kelly-Rogers. Mary serves on the Women's Committee of the World Bridge Federation, having previously occupied a similar role at the European Bridge League.

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We have a personnel change on the Play Quiz, with our recent Camrose team member Tomás Roche taking the reins from BJ O'Brien going forward. My thanks to BJ for obliging me as we got the online Journal into gear.

In the previous issue I noted that Tablets were to be trialled at the latter stages of the US Spring Nationals in New Orleans [Vanderbilt Trophy]. To recap, this involves N/E sitting in one room and S/W in the other throughout. It was noteworthy that the winning team featured Zia Mahmoud, not a fan of tablets. In addition, Larry Cohen, previously a declared opponent [and thus proponent of "cards in my hand"] revised his view. For him, the clincher was that tablets allowed the precise identification and punishment of slow players.

Without a doubt, bridge at the very highest level features habitual offenders who play at funereal pace, for example Pierre Zimmermann and Joel Wooldridge. We are living in a time when sports are acutely conscious of the need to play at a sensible pace so as to

have a product that encourages participation and viewing. Some examples – baseball [pitch clock], rugby [kick clock], snooker [shot clock], tennis [service clock]. The competition for the attention of young people in terms of amusement/entertainment has never been so intense – and even if won, the attention span has grown alarmingly short. That is why the consistent imposition of penalties for slow play in high level bridge events is to be welcomed - and is long overdue. Although by no means is everyone sold, tablets may come to occupy a permanent place in the latter stages of top events. [Is there a halfway house whereby they are used only for the bidding?].

WBF President, Jan Kamras, has weighed into the debate by confirming he has no plans to deploy tablets in WBF events on his watch. He cites the practicalities of finding a venue with enough rooms to house the tablet format. I personally favour holding physical cards in my hand, but I do feel WBF should take a really tough stance against slow play. As I said in the previous issue, this will run and run.

The year 2020 saw the 48th and, unhappily, last ever Wexford Congress. Obviously I'm biased, being a native. I played in most of them, and vividly recall the glory years of the late 70s and 80s ("vivid" may be an overstatement, given the wholehearted social agenda).

Jim Doyle, my erstwhile classmate from St Peter's College, has contributed a memorial piece, for which I thank him.

Enjoy the Journal – and the Summer weather! Global warming my ass.

Enda Murphy
editor@cbai.ie

Newsflash!

The Journal is delighted to announce that the top American pairing of **Brad Moss [left]** and **Joe Grue** are joining the Bidding Panel.

Moss-Grue will be representing the USA in the Bermuda Bowl, commencing this month in Marrakech. Readers can look forward to their contributions in our next issue.





Results and Upcoming Fixtures

National Results

Lady Milne Trophy (Perth, Scotland, 23/24 April)

- 1st England
- 2nd Ireland (*Joan Kenny, Jeannie Fitzgerald, Rebecca Brown-O'Keefe, Gilda Pender, Teresa Rigney, Siobhan Part*)

Confined Events Weekend (Templeogue, 6-7 May)

Lambert Cup (Pairs)
Eoin and Mary Hodkinson

Cooper Cup (Teams)
Niall Kilroy, Ian Kilroy, Tony Ward, Bill O'Hanlon

JJ Murphy Trophy (Novice Pairs)
Yvonne Corrigan and Mick Stuart

IBU Club Pairs Championships (Online, 13 May)

Open
Thomas MacCormac and Jade Barrett

Intermediate
Mags Kelly and Paul Dunne

Teltscher Trophy (Newport, Wales, 19/21 May)

- 1st England
- 4th Ireland (*Paul Porteous, Fred Barry, Joan Kenny, Teresa Rigney, Michael McAuliffe, David Dunne*)

4Fun Inter-County Teams Championships (Westmanstown, 20 May)

- 1st Dublin North (*Mary Reid, Orla Duffy, Helen Ahern, Marian Smyth*)

Egan Trophy (All-Ireland Teams Championships, Belfast 27/28 May)

Mark Moran, John Carroll, Tommy Garvey, Adam Mesbur, Nick FitzGibbon

Upcoming Fixtures - Jan to Mid April 2023

Date	Event	Venue
Sept 2023		
16-17	Duais an Uachtaráin	Greenhills Hotel, Limerick
23-24	Trials Pre-Qualifier	Templeogue Bridge Centre
Oct 2023		
5-8	Drogheda Congress	ABCD Centre, Drogheda
13-15	Limerick Congress	Greenhills Hotel, Limerick
21	National Mixed Pairs Championship (Spiro Cup)	Templeogue Bridge Centre
22	National Mixed Teams Championship (Coen Trophy)	Templeogue Bridge Centre
27-30	Camrose Trials	Templeogue Bridge Centre
Nov 2023		
3-5	Donegal Congress	Abbey and Central Hotel, Donegal
6-10	IBU Simultaneous Pairs Week	In Clubs
10-12	Lady Milne Trials	Templeogue Bridge Centre
10-12	Kenmare Congress	Kenmare Bay Hotel
18-19	IBU Interprovincials Weekend	Cavan Crystal Hotel
24-26	Kilkenny Congress	Hotel Kilkenny
Dec 2023		
4-8	Celtic Nations Simultaneous Pairs Week	In Clubs
9-10	Master Pairs	Templeogue Bridge Centre

CBAI News

Dermot O'Brien



The CBAI held its AGM in the Castletroy Park Hotel in Limerick on 1 July, and it was great to see so many members in attendance, and to have the traditional game of cards afterwards, which raised almost €1,000 for the National Council for the Blind of Ireland.

This is the first time we have done this since covid, although an unfortunate incident with a burst tyre on my way down to Limerick put the kibosh on my plans to stay for the game. I'd like to thank our outgoing President, Pat O'Mahony from South Munster, who has represented his region wonderfully well, and to wish his successor, Gordon Lessells from North Munster, an enjoyable and productive year; Gordon is presumably champing at the bit, having been nominated as President-Elect as far back as 2020! Catherine Byrne has been nominated by Dublin North Region as the President for the 2024/25 season.

We have one change in the other officer positions, as Emer Kee has reached the end of her 10-year term as Vice-President, so we say goodbye and thank you to Emer for her most diligent service, and we welcome her successor, Martin



Newly elected CBAI President Gordon Lessells from North Munster with outgoing CBAI president Pat O'Mahony

Brady, who until now has been Joint Secretary of the IBU. We're delighted that Brendan Martin and Linda O'Riordan are staying on as Honorary Treasurer and Honorary Secretary respectively.

As I said in my last notes, the 2022/2023 season represented the first of what are likely to be several years of rebuilding after the impact that the covid pandemic had upon our game and our Association. Although we have not resolved all the problems facing us by any means, and live bridge remains a struggle in many areas of the country, there are reasons to regard 2022/23 as a reasonably satisfactory start on the road to recovery. In particular:

- (1) Our membership numbers grew by almost 25% from 2021/22;
- (2) The vast majority of our clubs have re-opened, and re-affiliated;
- (3) Our national events were generally well-attended, with all bar one more than covering its costs;
- (4) The Association generated a healthy financial surplus for the year;
- (5) Live and online bridge would appear to be coming into a natural equilibrium that will allow both forms of the game to co-exist successfully in the longer term;
- (6) Bridge is thriving in many areas, both urban and rural, with clubs full and lots of classes ongoing, although that is obviously not the experience everywhere.



Presentation by CBAI President Gordon Lessells to Emer Kee on reaching the end of her 10-year term as Vice-President.

The CBAI is committed to doing everything we can to help clubs and areas that still face challenges. The solution lies in encouraging lapsed members back; running classes to generate new members; promoting the game of bridge and the local club within the locality and more generally; keeping members up-to-date on what the clubs, regions, and the CBAI have to offer; and training new scorers, tournament directors, Bridgemate operators, etc, to replace the ones who are no longer active. If there's anything we can do on any of these fronts that we are not currently doing, please let me, or your local County Development Officer, know; all ideas will be actively considered.

We had no joy in any of the home internationals last season, unfortunately, with England completing a clean sweep of all five events. We came very close however in the Lady Milne Trophy (women's home internationals) in Scotland in April, where our team led throughout, only to fall at the final hurdle and come an agonizing second – this is the subject of an article by Rebecca O'Keeffe on page 22.



Our Open Team has been practicing hard for their World Championship (Bermuda Bowl) assignment in Marrakech, starting on 20 August. We wish them the best of luck, and you will be able to follow their progress, and watch some of their matches, via the WBF website. *[This piece was written before the start of the Bermuda Bowl in Marrakech. Unfortunately our team did not qualify for the knockout stages, winning ten, drawing one, and losing twelve matches, to finish in a creditable thirteenth place. Ed.]*

We had hoped that our Women's Team, as first reserves for the Venice Cup, might also get a spot, but unfortunately that did not materialise, making a second narrow disappointment for this squad.

Our team will of course be wearing their IBU, not their CBAI, blazers in Marrakech ... if indeed they will wear any blazers at all in what are likely to be 40-degree temperatures. For those of you who are not familiar with the IBU, it stands for the Irish Bridge Union, which is the confederation of the CBAI (representing the 26 counties of the Republic of Ireland) and the NIBU (representing the six counties of Northern Ireland) for the purposes of European and World bridge championships. The IBU is funded by grants from both the CBAI and the NIBU, and some competitions that it runs.

The expense of sending teams to international competitions is increasing significantly, like most other costs these days. As a result, a significant fundraising draw is being planned by the IBU, with valuable cash prizes for the winners. It is hoped that this will start in September, and it will be organised through the CBAI and NIBU clubs, with 25% of ticket sales being returned to the selling club, ensuring that they too will benefit from the fundraising exercise. Please keep an eye out for this fundraiser, and support it as much as you can.

Our calendar for season 2023/2024 is now finalised and can be found on the website at <https://www.cbai.ie/cbai-events>. You'll find all the regular CBAI competitions, for all grades, including a new confined Pairs and Teams event in February aimed specifically at Regional Masters, plus many of the usual congresses (although it seems that one or two congresses may not be returning, unfortunately). We realise that the cost of attending these competitions is increasing, but please support them wherever you can; without that support there is a danger that some will disappear forever from our lives. Also please note that a new starting time of 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, unless advised otherwise, will apply for

all the CBAI and IBU competitions this season. We also have the three Simultaneous Pairs weeks again this year; the only change is that the CBAI week has moved from the first week in February to the first week in March to avoid a clash with the new St Brigid's Day holiday, which affected our Monday numbers last year. If your club does not currently take part in the Simultaneous Pairs weeks, please encourage them to do so. The competitions are very enjoyable and instructive in their own right, and they offer an easy way for members to support the CBAI, the IBU, and junior bridge, to which the proceeds of the Celtic Nations event will be allocated again this season.

Thanks to all of you for your support over the season just gone, and good luck to our team in Marrakech. Enjoy the rest of the summer, and we'll hope to see you refreshed and raring to go for another season of enjoyable, and competitive, bridge in September!

Dermot O'Brien
CEO, CBAI



CBAI AGM Limerick, July 2023

CBAI President's Merit Award 2023

Each year, the CBAI's National President adjudicates on nominations for the President's Merit Award. This award is designed to recognise the unsung heroes and heroines of Irish bridge - the people who do all the hard work behind the scenes without which bridge clubs and competitions could not function, but without ever seeking official status or other recognition for themselves.

We are delighted to inform readers that Teresa O'Reilly, from Bailieborough, County Cavan, was selected as this year's winner of the President's Merit Award. Teresa's story perhaps epitomises the intent of this award, and is a great example of selfless devotion to the cause of bridge. She was involved in setting up Bailieborough Bridge Club more than forty years ago, and ever since then she has been an enthusiastic advocate for bridge in the area, teaching beginner and improver classes all over Cavan - in Bailieborough, Cootehill, Cavan Town, Virginia, Oldcastle, and Ballyjamesduff - generally without any payment. The many nominations she received mentioned her tireless work, as well as her patience, enthusiasm, and generosity; Aileen Timoney, who knows a LOT of bridge players, commented that she couldn't think of anyone who "had put such love and devotion into bridge" or deserved the award more. Kathleen McArdle, the President of Bailieborough Bridge Club noted that all in the club "are eternally grateful to Teresa and feel that she is truly deserving of this award."



Teresa O'Reilly, from Bailieborough, County Cavan, winner of this year's President's Merit Award at presentation with Councillor John Paul Feeney, Chairman of Cavan County Council and Pat O'Mahony, President, CBAI.

There were, as ever, several deserving candidates nominated for the Award this year, but there can only be one winner, and President Pat O'Mahony was convinced that it should be Teresa. He travelled to Cavan to present her with the award as part of the IBU Seniors Congress; our thanks to Aileen Timoney for organising that presentation, which many of Teresa's friends and club-mates were able to attend. Teresa is pictured below with Councillor John Paul Feeney, Chairman of Cavan County Council, and Pat O'Mahony, President, CBAI. We understand that a lovely evening was had by all, and the

celebration also made the Anglo-Celt newspaper, which was nice publicity for Teresa and her award, and also for bridge more generally. Many congratulations to Teresa on her well-deserved award!

The President's Merit Award will be open again for nominations in January 2024. If you would like to nominate someone who regularly goes the extra mile in service of bridge, as a teacher, director, or club organiser, without seeking formal recognition of their contribution, nomination forms are available on request from the CBAI Head Office.

Declan Byrne Bridge Online

More than 50 of Declan Byrne's online bridge students recently met for the first time to play bridge in-person.

Declan started his online courses in January 2021. This in-person 'Meet-Up' game was held in Dublin with players travelling from all over the country for an afternoon of bridge followed by dinner in a local restaurant. For some it was their first time to hold cards or sit at a bridge table while others have already joined local bridge clubs and are playing regularly. Declan Byrne Bridge provides an online game for his students on completion of courses and encourages all his students to join their local bridge club when they feel ready - **Learn Bridge Online, Play Bridge In Person!**

For more information email: learnbridgeonline@gmail.com Website: www.declanbyrne.ie



Further information: learnbridgeonline@gmail.com

www.DeclanByrne.ie

Excellent presentation, use of technology & investment of time from Declan. Superb! - **Nora (Kerry).**

I thought the course was brilliant and would highly recommend it to anyone thinking of starting.

I really enjoyed the lessons - **Colette (Wicklow).**

A brilliant teacher, communicator and most of all FUN. I highly recommend Declan's bridge classes for anyone thinking of learning bridge - **Nicola (Meath).**

Really, really impressive teaching style and tutor persona - **Noel (Meath).**

Thanks Declan for the brilliant lessons, a life saver during covid - **Brenda (Cork).**

You are the best! A patient and very communicative teacher - **Mary (Galway).**

You are an amazing teacher and made bridge fun to learn - **Annmarie (Meath).**

Thanks a million for such a wonderful introduction to Bridge. - **Inez (Tipperary).**



Bidding Quiz 3

By Bob Pattinson



All eight hands are from live pairs events. Entries to biddingquiz@cbaie by May 31st.

Good luck!

Question 1

Dealer East. Vul All.

- ♠ A10873
- ♥ K10
- ♦ 863
- ♣ 863

W	N	E	S
		P	1♣ ¹
P	1♠	P	3♣
P	?		
¹ 1♠ = 3+			

Question 2

Dealer South. Vul N/S.

- ♠ A53
- ♥ J
- ♦ AQJ9
- ♣ AKQ96

W	N	E	S
			1♣ ¹
P	1♠	P	2♦
P	2♦	P	?
¹ 1♠ = 3+			

Question 3

Dealer West. Vul All.

- ♠ 10
- ♥ AJ852
- ♦ AQ104
- ♣ J95

W	N	E	S
1NT	P	2♦ ¹	P
3♥ ²	P	?	
¹ 2♦ = transfer to ♥; ² 3♥ = 16-17: 4 good ♥			

Question 4

Dealer West. Vul E/W.

- ♠ Q98764
- ♥ 4
- ♦ AKQ42
- ♣ J

W	N	E	S
1♠	P	1NT ¹	2♣
?			
¹ 1NT = 6-10: F1			

Question 5

Dealer North. Vul All.

- ♠ J
- ♥ 98
- ♦ AKQ10862
- ♣ J86

W	N	E	S
	2♠ ¹	3♥	4♣
?			
¹ 2♠ = 6-10: 6 spades			

Question 6

Dealer South. Vul N/S.

- ♠ AQ43
- ♥ A3
- ♦ 109874
- ♣ 86

W	N	E	S
			3♣
3♥	?		

Question 7

Dealer North. Vul All.

- ♠ 2
- ♥ 7
- ♦ AJ9852
- ♣ AQJ102

W	N	E	S
	1♣ ¹	X	?
¹ 1♣ = 3+			

Question 8

Dealer East. Vul N/S.

- ♠ Q10
- ♥ A9875
- ♦ K852
- ♣ J2

W	N	E	S
		P	P
P	1♠	P	1NT ¹
P	2♠ ²	P	?
¹ 1NT = 6-10: F1 ² 2♠ = 6+			

Entries to:

biddingquiz@cbaie

by 30th September 2023

At the end of the fourth issue a €50 CBAI gift voucher will be awarded to the leading contestant in each of the following categories:

- Best Novice/ Intermediate B
- Best Intermediate A
- Best Master (below Life Master)

Please remember to state your grade in your entry



Bidding Quiz System

General Approach:

Five card majors, three+ minors, 2/1 GF,
1NT = 15-17,
2♣ = art GF with 2♦ waiting response

Balanced Hands

4333, 4432, 5332
(with five minor)

12-14 and 18-19 open 1♣/♦

20-22 : 2NT (may include five card major hence play puppet Stayman)

Major Suit Responses

1NT = 5-10 F1:

2♣/♦/♥ = 2/1 GF

3♣/♦/♥ over 1♠ opening and 2♣/3♣/♦ over 1♥ opening = four card+ trump support: 8-11 : first or second round control in bid suit.

3M = 4-7 and 4+ trumps

2NT = Jacoby 16+:

4+ trumps:

Opener bids a singleton at the three level, a second five card suit at the four level, rebids 3M with 17-19, 4M with 12-14, and 3NT with 15-16.

Responses to the forcing 1NT:

example for 1♥: 1NT: 2♣ = Gazzilli : either 11-16 with 5M and 4+ clubs or any 17+ hand

2♦ = 11-16 : 3+ diamonds

2♥ = 11-16 : 6+ hearts

2♠ = 14-16: 6 hearts and 5 spades

2NT = 14-16 : 6 hearts and a 4 card minor : now 3♣ pass/ correct; 3♦ = GF asks for minor; 3♥ - to play

3♣/♦ = 14-16: 5-5

3♥ = 14-16 : 6+ hearts and strong suit

Example of Gazzilli after 1♥:1NT:2♣

2♦ = any 8+ suit

2♥ = 5-7 : 5+ hearts

2♠ = 5-7 : 6+ spades

2NT = 5=7: 3 suiter with short hearts

3♣/♦ = 5-7 : 6+ minor

After responder bids 2♦ opener rebids

2M with 11-16 and 5 M and 4+ clubs

2NT = 17-19 balanced : other bids game forcing

Responses to 1nt Opening (15-17)

2♣ = non-promissory Stayman

2♦/♥/♠/NT = transfers

3♣/♦/♥/♠ = long suits with slam interest

Two Level Suit Opening Bids

Bid	Meaning	Responses
2♣	23 + or equivalent unbalanced	2♦ = waiting bid
2♦/♥/♠	6-10 : six card suit, using rule of two, three or four depending upon different vulnerability of the two sides	2NT = enquiry: opener signs off with three level rebid of own suit with minimum and bids a new suit to show a feature or 3NT with a feature in the opening suit

Three/Four Level Opening Bids

Bid	Meaning	Responses
3♣/♦/♥/♠	6-10 : six or seven card suit	New suit forcing
3NT	Eight card broken minor suit	4♣ = pass / convert 4♦ = interested in club slam but only part score in diamonds 5♣ = willing to play in game in either minor 4M = asking bid; interest in game in either major: seeks control in bid major 4NT = name suit and quality: 5♣/♦ = confirms suit but denies Ace or King : 5♥/♠ = respective suit and holds Ace or King in that minor
4♣/♦	Namyats: eight card solid major in ♥/♠ : three key cards	Bid of intermediate suits 4♦/♥ asks for shortage and 4M denies any shortage
4♥/♠	Eight card broken suit: less than three key cards	4NT = Roman key card Blackwood : 1430
3NT	Ace asking	5♣ = no ace; 5♦/♥/♠/6C = ace in bid suit; 5NT = two aces

Opening Side Action over Interference

Bid	Meaning
Negative double	Shows values in the remaining two suits
Support Double	Opener confirms three card trump support, so a raise of the suit shows four card support
4th suit	Forcing: asking for more information
Cue bid	Unassuming and forcing: asks for more information
Jump cue	Has a long running suit: seeks NT stop
2NT	Relay to 3♣: this may then be passed or converted to a new long weak suit; thus a direct new suit at the 3 level is GF
Transfers after own 1NT is overcalled	Double /new suit/2NT are all transfers to the next suit (2NT over 2♠); follow up in second suit is game forcing; transfer to intervening suit asks for NT stop, and now accepting the transfer denies a stop and 3NT confirms one

Intervening Bidding

Bid	Meaning
1NT overcall	16-18
Weak jump overcalls	6-10
Two suited overcalls	Direct cue = two highest suits 2NT = two lowest suits; 3♣ = two remaining suits
5-5 : either 6-10 or 15+	
Defence to 1NT	Double = minor two suiter or major two suiter: advancer assumes minors first 2♣ = three suiter with clubs; 2♦ = three suiter with diamonds 2♥/♠ = either six card suit or the bid suit plus a minor side suit: 2NT asks for the minor

Slam Bidding

Roman key card Blackwood (1430) and Kickback in the minors (1430)

Non serious 3NT: when a trump fit is found 3NT is artificial confirming a minimum hand still prepared to show controls if partner fails to sign off. By passing 3NT shows a strong hand, bidding 1st or 2nd controls up the line.



Play Quiz 3

Tomás Roche



My thanks to BJ for conducting Play Quiz 1 and Play Quiz 2. Good luck to all in Play Quiz 3.

Hand 1 Dealer North. Vul E/W.

♠ A104	N	♠ J653
♥ AQJ52	W	♥ 84
♦ AQ	E	♦ 95
♣ J74	S	♣ KQ1083

W	N	E	S
	P	P	P
1♥	P	1♠	P
2NT	P	3NT	All Pass

The Play

North leads the ♦4 to the ♦JQ. If you decide to tackle the club suit, North and South will follow with low cards on the first round.

Hand 3 Dealer South. Vul None.

♠ A1072	N	♠ J84
♥ AKJ	W	♥ 732
♦ K	E	♦ AQJ62
♣ AQ853	S	♣ K6

W	N	E	S
			P
1♣	2♥ ¹	3♦	P
6NT	All Pass		All Pass

¹2♥ = 6-card suit, 6-10 points

The Play

North leads the ♥10 to the ♥QA, giving you a good start. North and South will follow to two rounds of clubs and diamonds.

Hand 2 Dealer East. Vul ALL.

♠ AJ9	N	♠ 10
♥ AQ85	W	♥ J4
♦ J63	E	♦ AKQ9752
♣ AQ6	S	♣ 842

W	N	E	S
		3NT	P
4♦ ¹	P	4♠	P
6♦	All Pass		All Pass

¹4♦ = Asks for shortage

The Play

North makes the safe lead of a trump against 6♦, South playing the 10. If you decide to lead the ♥J from dummy, South will cover with the ♥K.

Hand 4 Dealer West. Vul N/S.

♠ K109752	N	♠ 863
♥ K6	W	♥ A743
♦ Q105	E	♦ K76
♣ 76	S	♣ AQJ

W	N	E	S
			P
2♠	P	2NT	P
3♦ ¹	P	4♠	All Pass

¹3♦ = Feature in ♦, ♥x or better

The Play

North leads a ♥Q against 4♠. If you lead trumps from dummy, South will play the 4.

Entries to:

playquiz@cbaei.ie

by 30th September 2023

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- Best Novice/ Intermediate B
- Best Intermediate A
- Best Master (below Life Master)

Please remember to state your grade in your entry



Strasbourg European Open Pairs 2023

Gay Keaveney



Here is a flavour of some of the hands from the very well supported Open Pairs tournament in Strasbourg in June.

However, for some reason the number of pairs playing in the Women's pairs tournament has dropped dramatically from pre-Covid days. The venue and running of the tournament in my view could not have been better.

I noticed a huge increase in the numbers playing a mini NT varying in range from 8-10, 1-12 and even 8-12. For sure a big increase from the Euros tournament in Poland last August. Strong NT is no longer the dominant choice.

Enda Glynn and I had a good run in the Pairs, finishing 28th out of 145 after six qualifying rounds, with a 53.32% score. This left us just two places out of qualification for the Final. Well done to Adam Mesbur and Tommy Garvey, who did make the Final, which was won by two of our Bidding Quiz panellists, Sabine Auken and Roy Welland. Here are a few interesting hands we came across.

Dealer West. Vul All.

♠ Q4			
♥ A862			
♦ 82			
♣ A8532			
♠ K95	N	♠ AT8763	
♥ KJ543	W	♥ 7	E
♦ Q76		♦ 953	
♣ Q9		♣ JT7	
	S		
		♠ J2	
		♥ QT9	
		♦ AKJT4	
		♣ K64	

West passed at our table (many opened 1♥). North also passed and East opened 2♣. South overcalled 3♦ and West bid 3♠. North doubled showing the other two suits. Holding a passed hand I think this double should not be made unless you have 9/10hcp. South could bid 4♥ hoping that North held five hearts. But South has defensive cards so I think he should pass knowing he has defence in all suits and looking at a useless ♠J. This certainly is the winning action when you know almost certainly partner does not hold three or four diamonds. You take it two off for 500 and a huge percentage score. The important point is that you do not make the above double on skimpy values. This enables South to pass the double showing the other two suits and competitive values. The ability to judge sharp penalty doubles is key to winning at Pairs.

Dealer West. Vul N/S.

♠ JT86			
♥ A9			
♦ 97			
♣ AJT62			
♠ 72	N	♠ Q3	
♥ J542	W	♥ QT86	E
♦ KQT5432		♦ AJ86	
♣ -		♣ 743	
	S		
		♠ AK954	
		♥ K73	
		♦ -	
		♣ KQ985	

West opened 3♦, North passed and over to East. Non Vul against what you know will be a making game or more what do you bid? Some tried the "smart" bid of 3NT and others 4♦. I think 4♦ is so wrong because it is like leaving the field gate open inviting in the bull to meet your

prize cow [By a mile the best metaphor since I became Editor. Ed]. Take up space and bid 5♦. (If East had enjoyed a liquid lunch he might essay 6♦, which would rightly skewer South). Now it is much more difficult for N/S to evaluate the strength of the hand because their space to do so has been taken. South will double and North will know almost certainly that E/W have 11 diamonds or maybe 10. Probably he will bid 6♣ and if South bids 6♥ he can convert back to 6♠ knowing South will have at least two spots in which to play. Very difficult to bid 7 once you are denied room to investigate. Another aid in this hand from the E/W point of view is the Law of Total Tricks. East knows partner has seven diamonds and with your four the Law tells you that you can afford to bid to the level of your combined (11)

Dealer East. Vul All.

♠ AK652			
♥ JT54			
♦ A62			
♣ 7			
♠ Q9873	N	♠ 4	
♥ Q96	W	♥ 873	E
♦ QJ		♦ KT985	
♣ QJ9		♣ 6432	
	S		
		♠ JT	
		♥ AK2	
		♦ 743	
		♣ AKT85	

South opens 1♣, North bids 1♠ and South rebids 1NT showing 15-17. North now knows game is on so makes the totally artificial bid of 2♦ which guarantees game values and is in effect showing five spades and also asking about hearts but does not guarantee to hold four hearts. South should show four hearts ahead of showing a three card spade suit.



In fact, East chose to double 2♦ and South passed denying four hearts or three Spades. Back to North - with this knowledge and knowing he can ruff clubs in his hand, what would you do? I asked Tom Hanlon and he suggested redoubling - the underused purple card!! South could hold four diamonds when not holding three spades or four hearts. East's double was ill-judged and the ♦QJ could be in the South hand. Even without them, eight tricks roll home for 560.

Dealer East. Vul All.

♠ -		
♥ AJT5		
♦ A9843		
♣ Q842		
♠ T762	N	♠ AKQJ543
♥ KQ876	W	♥ -
♦ K5	E	♦ J
♣ A9	S	♣ JT753
♠ 98		
♥ 9432		
♦ QT762		
♣ K6		

East opened 4♣ at every table and it went around to North. Most Norths made a takeout double. In the South position here most used to play this as strong NT or better. However, in the protective position it can be weaker with an emphasis on takeout. Many Souths passed with East making 990 with one overtrick. Would you believe N/S scored 54% for this result such were the results on this board. Many made 4♠x+2 because if a diamond is not led then it disappears on a ruffing finesse of the ♥KQ through the ♥A so 1190 was common. Many more bid 6♠. Should South bid 5♦? I think so as he has two places to play and North also should have two places to play. If North has clubs and hearts he can bid 5♥ over 5♦. 5♦ would only go one or two off though it is unlikely to be the final contract as West will bid 5♠. Would you double that as North?

Dealer North. Vul E/W.

♠ AT986		
♥ KQJ72		
♦ 8		
♣ Q2		
♠ Q	N	♠ J54
♥ A95	W	♥ 6
♦ Q93	E	♦ AKT762
♣ AKJ986	S	♣ T53
♠ K732		
♥ T843		
♦ J54		
♣ 74		

It is almost impossible to bid the slam in either clubs or diamonds. Amazingly 12 tables out of 73 were allowed to play in game or at a level below game in a major on the N/S hands. West is going to bid clubs at whatever level he has to and surely East, with control in diamonds and singleton heart and knowing partner has one or no spades from the auction, will raise to 5♣ and maybe even take a push to 6♣ if forced to do so. For playing in 5♣ making 13 tricks you got 67.4% which is astonishingly high.

Comyn's Corner

More anecdotes from John Comyn's book "Doubled Up".

John has been playing bridge for over 70 years and has been Bridge Correspondent of the Sunday Independent for 59 years. In 2010 he published a personal memoir "Doubled Up", recounting the funniest episodes he'd encountered. John kindly agreed to let us dip into his treasure trove of funny recollections.

Heard it through the Grapevine

This story comes from the pre-bidding box era, when bids were spoken.

The late, great Pat Walshe saw his partner play 4H and make plus one. He went ballistic. "Partner that was terrible!! Can't you see that 6H is cold!! His poor partner [John Comyn] was perplexed. "Pat there are 11 tricks and out". Pat wasn't having it. "6H is cold", he shouted. "End of story".

After the game, a grinning Pat showed John the scoresheet. 4H+1 everywhere bar one table, which played 6H-1. "That guy at the next table was earwiggling all night, so I gave him something to chew on", Pat explained happily!!



European Transnational Teams 2023

Derek O’Gorman



The 10th European Transnational Championships were held in Strasbourg, France from 3rd to 17th June 2023. A total of 26 players from Ireland and two TDs (Fearghal O’Boyle and Diarmuid Reddan) played. The entries for the team events were - Open (93), Women’s (15), Mixed (69), and Senior (16).

Team Moran qualified for the knock out stages of the Open event with a solid qualifying campaign. They lost by 18 imps over 56 boards to the Street team, so that ended their run in this event. Team Coyne missed qualification for the knock out phase by two imps, so we were all too close.

Ireland Mixed missed qualification for the Mixed teams knock out phase by one imp, so an even closer margin for them. Journal columnist and Bidding Panel member, Sally Brock, took silver in the Women’s Team event.

While there were many interesting and well played hands by the Irish contingent, I have featured two well bid hands from the tournament.

The first hand relates to the Women’s teams where one of the Irish teams gained six imps on a hand through very competitive bidding. This features Gilda Pender and Rebecca (O’Keeffe) Brown sitting as N/S against Sally Brock and Fiona Brown as E/W. Brock and Brown were part of the Baker team which were the eventual silver medallists.

Board 1. Dealer North. Vul None.

♠ T82		♠ J654	
♥ JT96		♥ 42	
♦ K7		♦ JT95	
♣ AQ76		♣ 853	
♠ KQ97	N	♠ J654	
♥ AK7	W	♥ 42	
♦ 832	E	♦ JT95	
♣ KT9	S	♣ 853	
♠ A3		♠ J654	
♥ Q853		♥ 42	
♦ AQ64		♦ JT95	
♣ J42		♣ 853	

W	N	E	S
	P	P	1NT
X	P	P	2♦
P	P	X	All Pass

West’s double was penalties and North’s was takeout-oriented.

This resulted in +300 to North South. Teresa Rigney and Siobhan Part played in 2♠-1 against Lynn Baker and Karen McCallum at the other table for -50. So an overall gain of 250 to Ireland, which translated to six imps. This hand demonstrates the benefit of playing takeout doubles in these competitive auctions around 1NT openings. A success for the weak NT opening too, and it confirms the importance of good partnership agreements in these situations

The overall result of the match was a six imp win to Ireland and 12.18 VPs out of 20.

The second hand relates to the Open teams where team Coyne played team Mauritius.

Board 25. Dealer North. Vul None.

♠ K 9 8 3		♠ Q 4 2	
♥ A K J 4		♥ 8 7 5	
♦ 5		♦ Q 2	
♣ T 7 5 3		♣ A K Q J 2	
♠ J 7 6	N	♠ Q 4 2	
♥ T 9	W	♥ 8 7 5	
♦ T 9 8 7	E	♦ Q 2	
♣ 9 8 6 4	S	♣ A K Q J 2	
♠ A T 5		♠ Q 4 2	
♥ Q 6 3 2		♥ 8 7 5	
♦ A K J 6 4 3		♦ Q 2	
♣ -		♣ A K Q J 2	

W	N	E	S
	2♦	P	2NT
P	3♣	X	3♦
P	3NT	P	4♦
P	4♥	All Pass	

In the Open Room, Ciaran Coyne and David Walsh played E/W against Simon deWijs and Bauke Muller.

The 2♦ opening showed three suits with short diamonds. After that, it proved too difficult to find out enough about the differences in suit quality and thus the exact location of North’s top cards. Twelve tricks, Mauritius +480.

In the Closed Room Peter Pigot and Derek O’Gorman played against Rob Helle and Ed Hoogenkamp. This hand featured in the daily Bulletin with the following comment appearing ‘Talking about nostalgia: it is long ago that I have seen someone being able to open the North hand 1♥’. This time, it was the perfect introduction to a laydown slam. Coyne +980 and 11 IMPs to them.

W	N	E	S
	1♥ ¹	P	2♦ ²
P	2NT ³	P	3♥ ⁴
P	3NT ⁵	P	4♦ ⁶
P	4♥ ⁷	P	5♥ ⁸
P	6♥	All Pass	

¹ 1♥ = 4+;
² 2♦ = natural GF;
³ 2NT = 12-14 natural GF;
⁴ 3♥ = 3+;
⁵ 3NT = to play;
⁶ 4♦ = good D and 4H;
⁷ 4♥ = nothing extra;
⁸ 5♥ = bid 6H with good trumps

No point in using Keycard Blackwood, as the ♣A is of no use. In an uncontested auction, the raise to 5♥ asks about trump quality. Sometimes the old fashioned methods are best!!



When I was a Boye!

Tales from the man in the middle of it all

Boye's bridge

Don't be afraid to bid 'em up

By **BOYE BROGELAND**, FLEKKEFJORD NORWAY

THURSDAY 30th July 2009 in Washington DC. It's time for the last eight of the prestigious Spingold tournament at the Summer Nationals. One of the matches is Onstott vs the Strul team which has hired Espen Lindqvist and myself to deliver the goods. Our sponsor, Aubrey Strul, fortunately appears satisfied with our debut so far. He hired us after Norway's sensational win in the European championships last year and we have a one year agreement which includes the next three Nationals. However, Aubrey is not as pleased with the other newcomers to the team, the star pair of Fulvio Fantoni and Claudio Nunes who have not been on top form in the early knock-out matches. Hopefully the Italians will wake up when the going gets tough. After the first session when Aubrey and his partner were playing with Fantoni - Nunes at the other table we were 9imps down. For the next 16 hands Espen and I take over from the Italians but we lose another 13imps



when John Onstott and Gary Cohler produce a good card against Aubrey and Mike. The two sponsor pairs have done their bit and the professionals will play the second half of the match. Espen and I (our team has seating rights for the first and third session) choose to play against Drew Casen and Jim Krekorian again as we felt good against them in the previous session. The Americans are of course good players but we found them relatively easy to read both in the bidding and play. We therefore find it more comfortable to play against them as opposed to the crafty Egyptians, Walid Elahmady and Tarek Sadek. On the first hand Espen's aggressive bidding after a weak two opening gets him to 3NT, off five, fortunately undoubled. On the second hand Casen - Krekorian go one down in 6♥ and they are two off in 6♥ again on hand three. Despite the first hand which probably will cost us between three and sevenimps we've had a dream start when Espen picks up these cards at game all:

♠ A 8 4 3 2 ♥ K Q 7 6 ♦ 8 4 ♣ 10 2

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Krekorian	Boye	Casen	Espen
	1♣ ¹	1♦	1♥ ²
pass	2♣ ³	pass	?

1. Can be doubleton club.
2. At least four spades.
3. Denies three spades.

Do you allow partner to play 2♣ or do you introduce your hearts?

This hand has great playing strength provided partner has heart support. Almost any opening hand with 4-6 in hearts and clubs will give good play for ten tricks in hearts. Therefore I agree totally with Espen's choice of 2♥. This bid galvanises partner who jumps to 4♦. What does this show and what do you do now?

4♦ clearly agrees hearts. Partner could have jumped to 4♥, so he must have such a good hand that he believes slam could be on opposite your limited hand (2♥ was non-forcing). Most likely he is short in diamonds and has good values but it is perhaps possible that he has a strong hand that wasn't quite good enough for a reverse. Regardless, Espen, with two top honours in trumps, the ace of spades and no wasted values in diamonds, finds no reason to waste time, and leaps to 6♥! Krekorian leads the ♦J and dummy is perhaps a bit of a disappointment:

- ♠ —
- ♥ A J 9 5
- ♦ A 9 3 2
- ♣ A K 6 4 3

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

How do you plan to make this?

You have four top tricks in the side suits and therefore need eight trump tricks if you are considering a cross-ruff. However, you don't have the communications to achieve this. In order to fix the communications problem you'll have to give up a diamond and the opponents can then limit your trump tricks to a maximum of seven by leading one. You should therefore



Drew Casen and Jim Krekorian (photo from US Bridge Federation)



look for a line where you can set up a side suit in addition to making six or seven trump tricks.

Espen wins the ace of diamonds and immediately plays another diamond. East plays the ten, West follows suit and Casen, after a little thought, continues with the queen of diamonds. Espen ruffs high and West discards a spade. How are you planning to making the rest?

Espen starts with the ace of spades and throws the last diamond from dummy. A spade is ruffed low and East who followed with the ten on the previous round now contributes the king. Espen plays three rounds of clubs ruffing low and they divide 3-3. That

leaves these cards for North-South:

♠ —
♥ A J 9
♦ —
♣ 6 4

There is no possibility of making on a cross-ruff as both the 8 and 10 of trumps are missing but the clubs are good so you just need a 3-2 trump

break. It looks as if the 3-2 break is going to materialise as long as East hasn't false-carded from four spades.

♠ 8 4 3
♥ Q 7
♦ —
♣ —

Queen of hearts, ace and jack draw the trumps and the two good clubs make twelve tricks and a score of 1430. A difficult hand to bid that was also well played by Espen. Surely Aubrey will now be even more impressed by the young southerner.

This was the complete deal:

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

Have you spotted an imperfection in Espen's line?

He should probably have started with three rounds of clubs, ruffing low, be-

fore exiting with a diamond. The way the play actually went West could have given him a problem by discarding a club on the third round of diamonds (he was perhaps worried that Espen might have had three small clubs). In that case Espen will need to guess whether it is West or East who has three trumps.

If West has the long trumps Espen will need to ruff the third round of clubs high and finesse against the ten with West (more likely than 10x with East). On the other hand if East has the long trumps (as at the table) Espen must cash a high heart in hand and dummy before ruffing the third round of clubs. Not an easy choice!

Casen - Krekorian are unable to recover after this blow and it's a "heavy" card we bring back to score up. Fantoni - Nunes have done well against the Egyptians and we win the session 59-17. This means that we are 21 imps up before the last sixteen.

Our opponents obviously choose to change the line up for the last session. The Egyptians keep shooting from the hip and they hit the bullseye quite a few times. I have two critical leads to

make which I get wrong as well as choosing the wrong endplay on another hand. To make matters worse we lose 5 imps on a Lightner double when no lead would have defeated the slam. Luckily we also have a couple of good boards but I still feel that we need some help from Fantoni - Nunes to win. The Italians have a decent card but we're still a few imps short, losing 141 to 146.

I hate losing by a small margin because there are always a few hands where you might have won the match. Nevertheless it's easier to accept losing if you know that you've done your best. The fact that Aubrey immediately after the match offers to extend our contract for another year also helps to improve the mood.

Tip: Try to picture during the bidding the different kinds of hands partner can have consistent with the auction. If there is great potential given the right cards you should try to "keep the ball in play." By doing so you evidently risk ending up a level too high but the times you go off are more than repaid over time by the game and slam bonuses gained. ♦♦

Movie news

American actor Dustin Hoffman (left) has landed the role of Bob Hamman (right) in the upcoming Lance Armstrong biopic, *The Program*.

Winner of just two Academy Awards despite seven Best Actor nominations, Hoffman will take on one of bridge's biggest names, with 12 world championships and 13 silver medals to his credit.

The film will portray Hamman in his professional role as president of SCA Promotions, a prize promotion company engaged in a multi-million dollar legal battle against Armstrong.





Bric-A-Brock

Sally Brock



Editor's Note: Sally has been one of the most successful women in bridge for many years now, capturing multiple World and European titles. She's been a constant friend of the Journal and we're greatly in her debt. In this series, Sally shares her experiences in top-level competition.

The World Championships in Salsomaggiore Terme, Italy, held in April 2022, represented the first face-to-face bridge organised by the World Bridge Federation since Covid times.

This was an interesting deal from our (England's) Round 1 confrontation with Sweden, the eventual winners.

Dealer North. Vul All.

			♠ 7		
			♥ 84		
			♦ 109875		
			♣ A9743		
♠ AJ10642	N		♠ 95		
♥ 1092			♥ 53		
♦ 32	W	E	♦ KJ642		
♣ Q6			♣ KJ1052		
		S			
			♠ KQ83		
			♥ AKQJ76		
			♦ AQ		
			♣ 8		

Most tables ended up in 4♥ by South. Neither I nor the Swedish South had any opposing bidding (I opened 2♣ and my counterpart chose 4). Both Wests led the ♥10 and the basic question was whether to use dummy's one entry to lead up to declarer's spades (playing East to have the ace) or diamonds (playing East to have the king).

45TH WORLD 2021 BRIDGE TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS

Salsomaggiore Terme, Italy • 27 March - 9 April 2022



There didn't seem much in it to me, but I could see that if I played on spades I could put off the key play for longer than if I played on diamonds. Accordingly, I won the lead in hand, tried the ♠Q which West won and continued with another the ♥9.

I ducked a spade, ran off a few trumps but eventually took the diamond finesse and was home. My counterpart won the lead, crossed to a club and played a spade. When that lost to the ace, she had no more chances and was effectively down immediately, luckily for us.

In several other matches where South opened 1♥ or 1♣ (strong), West overcalled in spades. This led declarer to believe that the ♠A would certainly be wrong, and likely the ♦K also.

So there was a third line which would work if West had both those cards: win the trump, play a high spade, win the next trump, run some trumps, play a club to the ace and ruff a club, play off the rest of the trumps and the other high spade and exit with a spade to endplay West to lead a diamond. An excellent line, but not successful on this layout.

Wexford Congress through the Years

Jim Doyle



One event which has recently disappeared from the Irish Bridge Calendar is the Wexford Bridge Congress. The committee took the decision not to continue with the staging of the event following the 48th holding of the Congress in February 2020.

It is surely then an opportune time to look back on its inception and on some of the people involved in different ways over the years.

The Congress had its genesis in the players of the Wexford Bridge Club. Moreen McCarthy, probably Wexford's greatest ever player, a frequent international cap who had served as President of the CBAI, 1968-69, was one of the driving forces and became the President of the Congress. Nora Connolly, the secretary of Wexford Bridge Club and also the County Librarian took on the task of Secretary/Treasurer.

The first Congress held in White's Hotel in February of 1971 proved very popular with the Senior Pairs [Congress Pairs nowadays] attracting 38 pairs, with Mr OG Giddings [Oswald, husband of Ruth] and Commandant Tom Gleeson



coming out on top. The Junior Pairs with 44 entries was won by R McAuliffe and K Murphy, both UCD. The Teams competition was won by E & P Boland, Bray, Moreen McCarthy and W Robb of Portadown. Alongside the main competitions, the Open Pairs also proved popular with at least 14 different sections over the weekend and included among the prize winners a pair from Lancashire.

Prizes in the first years were household items such as tableware and cutlery. Winners had first pick. Subsequently the prizes became Waterford Glass Crystal before hard cash became the prize of choice, perhaps reflecting our evolution as a society.

By 1973 the Congress was firmly established on the Irish bridge calendar. Its popularity can be gauged by the fact that there were at least 17 sections of Open Pairs and visitors included a group of about 20 from Belfast as well as a number from England. Katherine Lennon, who herself represented Ireland in the World Championships in Geneva in 1990 and served as President of the CBAI 2014-15, took over as secretary supremo in the early years and continued in that role until 2001.

The "Enniscorthy crew" featured prominently in the list of prize winners for many years. Names such as "Ogie" Nolan and Larry Codd were followed in time by Rory Kelly and Niall Tóibín. In Wexford Town itself we had Moreen, Stephen Scallan, Tommy

Tierney, Frank O'Farrell and of course Katherine. A trio of young turks showed up from Rosslare – Tomás Roche, your Editor and Maurice Roche. Sadly, the young blood slowed to a trickle as time wore on – an issue not unique to Wexford.

The Congress moved to the Talbot Hotel in the mid 1980s and continued to be as successful as ever. Indeed by then the numbers competing were such that the committee had to use the Wexford Bridge Centre for the Intermediate B competition. Numbers actually had to be restricted and in some cases people had to be turned away once space was no longer available. The highest recorded numbers came in 1989.



The music and dancing in the hotel after bridge on Saturday night was popular for many years. Mass in the Bridge Centre on Sunday morning followed by prize giving and a cheese and wine reception meant that the Teams event always had a very friendly atmosphere. Quite a number of visitors to the Congress also enjoyed the retail therapy available within easy walking distance on the Saturday mornings. The fact that there was an afternoon train from Dublin to



Wexford on Friday was a boost to numbers, though the rush to catch the evening return on Sunday sometimes caused problems for the final round of the Congress teams.

Problems arising from a difficulty with a suitable venue led to the Congress not happening in 2002 and 2003 but a new committee with Michael Coffey as chairman and Maurice Brosnan as secretary began a new chapter for the Congress when they staged the 32nd renewal in 2004 in the Talbot Hotel. The current Editor of this Journal scored a notable double in 2006 when he won the Congress Pairs with Tomás Roche and then teamed up with BJ O'Brien and John Comyn to take the Congress teams.

The following hand from the second session of the Pairs contributed greatly to their winning score. Enda sat North and Tomás was South.

Board 7. Dealer South. Vul All.

			♠AQJ8753		
			♥AK87		
			♦-		
			♣J8		
♠K62		N		♠1094	
♥52				♥94	
♦AJ8752	W	E		♦K1063	
♣Q5		S		♣10643	
			♠-		
			♥QJ1063		
			♦Q94		
			♣AK972		

W	N	E	S
			1♥ ¹
2♦	5♦ ²	X ³	P ⁴
P	5♠ ⁵	P	6♣ ⁶
P	7♥	All Pass	

- ¹ 1♥ = 5+;
- ² 5♦ = Void, good H support; exclusion KC Blackwood for ♥
- ³ X = the double helpful as Tomás probably did not have many values in ♦;
- ⁴ P = ROP1 showing 1;
- ⁵ 5♠ = asking about trump queen;
- ⁶ 6♣ = yes, and ♣K;

The play did not take very long and the lead of ♠Q did help. But even on the lead of a trump or ♦A declarer can set up the spades. The play went heart to King, Spade Ace, Spade ruff, heart to Ace, spade ruff and with 3-3 spade break, declarer did not need ♣J as an extra entry. 7♥ bid and made was a 96% score as it was only bid at one other table.

Enda Murphy regularly used the Wexford Congress as a vehicle for his "annual lesson for BJ". They warmed up in the Open Pairs on Friday night and then normally made a serious assault on the prize money on offer in the Congress Pairs and Teams. All the Open Pairs regulars wanted to play in BJ's section on the Friday night! *[They were right! I only played bridge a couple of times a year, and BJ's game tended to have drifted as a result. I could be wrong, but if we won one Open Pairs that was about it. Ed.]*

The event moved back to the newly revamped Whites Hotel in 2008.



Here is a hand from that year's Congress Pairs when first prize went to Simon Cope and Duncan Happer, just out of the English Junior ranks. Cope and Happer were pleased with their bidding on the following hand from the first session which brought in most of the Match Points.

Board 7. Dealer South. Vul All.

			♠J5		
			♥Q		
			♦Q965432		
			♣AK4		
♠Q862		N		♠93	
♥K8743				♥106	
♦AJ	W	E		♦107	
♣93		S		♣QJ108652	
			♠AK1074		
			♥AJ952		
			♦K8		
			♣7		

W	N	E	S
	1♦	P	1♠
2♥	P	P	X ¹
P	3♦	P	3♥ ²
P	1♠	P	4♦
P	3♥	P	4NT
P	5♣ ²	P	4♦
All Pass			

- ¹ X = Takeout;
- ² 3♥ = General force, asking for more information
- ³ 6♣ = one keycard

Happer (N) had got across his hand shape nicely, enabling Cope (S) to take a pot at the slam. East led ♥10 and Happer won in dummy with the A, led a diamond to the Q (playing this way to cater to stiff Ace onside) and a diamond back to the K. When this lost, Happer could simply take a ruffing heart finesse (marked on the auction) to bin his club loser. (Sometimes bidding with a hand like west had here only helps the opponents!). However, had east made a more passive lead in the ♣Q, Happer could simply have won in hand, ruffed a low club and played ♦K off the table, with six diamond tricks, two clubs, two spades, one heart, and a ruff in the short hand to bring his total to twelve. *[Apologies but this hand kills me. I was South, playing with Jim "Sexy Wexy" Sexton. I put him in 6♦ and Frank O'Farrell doubled. For reasons which have yet to come to light, James managed to go down. THAT is why Cope-Happer beat us into second. Grr and brr. Ed.]*



By the second half of the 2010s it became apparent that the numbers were gradually falling, with little realistic prospect of recovering. There were several possible reasons for the decline. Players around Wexford town now had a choice of two clubs to play in on each of the first four nights of the week, so Open Pairs on a Friday was less appealing. There was also bridge available in many of the towns and villages around the rest of the county.

The National Calendar had also filled up considerably - Waterford, Ennis and Cork congresses in January now preceded the Wexford date of the first weekend in February, while the Homes Wilson and the Burke Trophy tended to be held on the next two weekends in February. The fact that our two venues were both 4-star hotels meant that hotel rates, though still good value, were not going to be necessarily the cheapest congress weekends available and so some people had to make an economic choice.

Following the 48th Congress held in February 2020 (just before you know what!) the committee met to review the Congress and its future. The numbers attending Open Pairs had continued to drop and from a high in the early years we were now down to seven sections of Open Pairs over the weekend with many of those only six or seven tables.

Having had up to 24 Congress Teams early in the 2010s we were now averaging a little over a dozen. While the numbers in the Congress Pairs and the Mixed Pairs were still good, the Intermediate Pairs numbers had fallen considerably. After careful consideration, the committee very reluctantly decided to relinquish our date on the calendar. Sad yes, but no alternative.

To all those who attended our Congress over the years, thank you. I hope you enjoyed your game and also the unique atmosphere of Wexford town with its narrow main street and proximity to the sea. Thanks to the Talbot Hotel and Clayton Whites Hotel who provided excellent venues and also to our various sponsors. Thanks also to the many hardworking committees who ensured the successful running of the event for so long.

Who knows, but like Lazarus himself, Wexford Bridge Congress may at some future stage reappear.

PS. If anyone knows the whereabouts of the Congress Pairs trophy, missing for many years, Wexford Bridge Centre would love to have it returned! *[This is a mystery worthy of Poirot himself. No names, no pack drill, but I suspect a certain Thomas J. Hanlon of Rochfortbridge, County Westmeath, may be able to assist the authorities with their enquiries. Ed.]*



Celtic Nations Simultaneous Pairs

Nicola O'Dowd



Nicola is our resident – and rapidly improving – Intermediate columnist. This was a great result. Well done! Ed.]

On the Week of the 5th – 9th of December 2022 the CBAI took part in the Celtic Nations Simultaneous pairs.

This event was supported by clubs from Ireland, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. The same hands are played in all the participating clubs on the same day and scored as one competition.

My regular partner Dara Voyles and I played on the Monday and were thrilled to win in our local game with a score of 70.5% but when this score was uploaded to the national results it increased to 74.60% which turned out to be the winning national score. We were surprised and delighted as was our teacher Declan Byrne.

To be honest I still don't fully understand the way the results change from the local club to the national result even though it is explained on the ecats website. You will find the information on ecats.com. Nevertheless, it was great to have our names mentioned by Séamus Dowling in the Irish Times.

The great thing about Simultaneous pairs is that the hands can be viewed with written commentary after each tournament. This hand and commentary file can be found on the Ecats and CBAI website after the game.

We had a few boards that gave us a chance to refine our system.

Board 7. Dealer South. Vul All.

♠ 104			
♥ Q105			
♦ 543			
♣ 109654			
♠ J8753	N	♠ AKQ6	
♥ 96	W	♥ AJ7432	
♦ A1086	E	♦ J	
♣ A8	S	♣ K7	
♠ 92			
♥ K8			
♦ KQ972			
♣ QJ32			

W	N	E	S
			P
P	P	1♥	P
1♠	P	2♣	P
2♥	P	4♠	All Pass

We missed slam on this one. I used to rebid at the 3-level showing 16+ but have changed that lately. Now taking the 2♣ rebid as 12-18. I rebid 2♣ as a waiting (artificial) bid, so I can find out more about Dara's hand. I wonder if I had rebid 3♣ or 3♥ forcing instead what would Dara have done. He doesn't know we have a fit in spades. Or maybe after Dara's 1♠ response use the Losing Trick Count and go straight to 6♠? [I'd suggest 1♥-1♠-4♦-4NT-5♦-5♥-6♠-6♠. 4♦ is a splinter, showing good spade support and shortage. 4NT is KCB, 5♦ shows three or none, 5♥ asks about ♠Q, 6♠ shows ♠Q and ♣K. Ed.]

Board 7. Dealer South. Vul None.

♠ 108654			
♥ K			
♦ KQ976			
♣ 109			
♠ KQ92	N	♠ J3	
♥ Q	W	♥ J10973	
♦ 1032	E	♦ AJ4	
♣ AK753	S	♣ Q84	
♠ A7			
♥ A86542			
♦ 85			
♣ J62			

W	N	E	S
			P
1♠	P	1♥	P
1♠	P	2♥	All Pass

I think I bid this one wrong and was lucky to make 2♥ as E/W, I should have done a preference bid and we play in 2♣. [The par auction is 1♠-1♥-1♠-1NT. Nine tricks seem likely. Ed.]

Board 14. Dealer East. Vul None.

♠ AQJ1043			
♥ A7			
♦ 10			
♣ AJ73			
♠ K95	N	♠ 82	
♥ QJ43	W	♥ K1052	
♦ 85	E	♦ Q974	
♣ K1062	S	♣ Q94	
♠ 76			
♥ 986			
♦ AKJ632			
♣ 85			

W	N	E	S
			2♦
P	2NT	P	3NT
All Pass			



Opening a weak 2 and using our 2NT enquiry worked out well in this board, though my regular partners differ on the responses 2NT enquiry. Dara Opens weak 2, even with an outside four-card major, Maria will not. So, if Dara answers my 2NT question by bidding a major I know he has four of them. If Maria answers my question with a major, she is showing a feature, like an Ace in that major. Which do you like? *[It is most common to bid a new suit to show a high card feature in that suit – AK or Q. Ed]*

East led a heart. Thanks to the 4-4 break Dara could give West his ♠K and make five spades, two diamonds, ♥A and ♣A.

Board 17. Dealer North. Vul None.

		♠A107			
		♥K43			
		♦Q7			
		♣KJ1096			
♠KQ96	N		E	♠8432	
♥AQ9	W			♥J1076	
♦AK42				♦J96	
♣72	S			♣AQ	
		♠J5			
		♥852			
		♦10853			
		♣8543			

W	N	E	S
	1♣	P	P
X	P	1♥	P
2♥	All Pass		

My quandary on this board was in reply to Dara's double if I had bid 1NT, showing my values, am I denying a four-card major? I had both majors. *[West is very likely to have at least one major, so maybe 2♣ from East will persuade West to bid 2S. Ten tricks look to be available. Ed.]*

It was a fantastic experience playing in the Celtic Nations Simultaneous pairs and all the commentaries are appreciated by us intermediates, excited to find how and what we can learn from it.

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Lady Milne 2023

Rebecca O’Keeffe



Moving up into second place late in an event makes you feel great; snatching defeat from the jaws of victory leaves you feeling devastated.

Unfortunately, Ireland’s second place came despite leading with only one session to play. England took the trophy by less than two Victory Points. Such is life at the bridge table... and all six players and our lovely captain Paul Porteous will each be having nightmares over individual hands and decisions which could have made the difference.

Lots of congratulations and comments ranging from “it was the Republic of Ireland’s best ever Lady Milne performance”, and that we “finally put ourselves in contention” were meant to help, but it still hurts.

Ireland started the Lady Milne against an England team which had both youth and experience.

Match 1 Ireland versus England

Board 1 set the tone for an exciting match. Ireland’s Siobhan Part and Teresa Rigney played in 3NT – avoiding a heart lead and collecting 12 tricks. 3NT is a poor contract – 5♦ makes even with a heart lead and a diamond loser. England’s Nevena Senior and Anne Rosen played in a very nice 6♦ contract – knowing to avoid NT via an aggressive double from Jeannie FitzGerald, after which Joan Kenny showing her heart suit and E/W finding their fit. The mirror hands meant this lovely contract required one of two finesses to be right to come home – and fortunately

for Ireland, both were wrong, so Ireland were off to a positive start. Happy to be lucky!

Board 1. Dealer North. Vul None.

Bd 1, Dir N 6♦-1 S		N Nevena Senior	
W Jeannie FitzGerald		Other table *3NT+3 N	
♠ AQ10	♥ 32	♠ 53	♥ KQ107
♦ 108654	♠ AJ8	♦ —	♣ Q1097543
♣ J9764	♣ 6	W N E S	1♠ P 1♦
♥ J9854	♥ A6	X 2♦ 2♥ 3♥	P 4♦ P 4♥
♦ K9	♦ AQJ732	P 4♠ P 4NT	P 5♥ P 6♦
♣ 6	♣ K2	P P P	
Anne Rosen S		Joan Kenny E	

However, the 10 imp lead didn’t last long, as on the very next board, England got their own back.

Board 2. Dealer East. Vul N/S.

Bd 2, Dir E 5♣= N		N Nevena Senior	
W Jeannie FitzGerald		Other table 2♠-1 S	
♠ —	♥ 10862	♠ 8	♥ Q953
♦ 863	♠ AKJ1083	♦ K109542	♣ 42
♣ AJ10743	♣ Q9	W N E S	1NT P 1♠
♥ 74	♥ AKJ	P 3♣ P 3♥	P 4♥ P 5♣
♦ AJ7	♦ Q	P P P	
♣ Q9	♣ KQ9652	P P P	
Anne Rosen S		Joan Kenny E	

Four of the six N/S pairs played in 2♠, after a 1♠-1NT-2♠ auction. However, Nevena bid a non-forcing 3♣ with her spade void after the same start and ended up in 5♣. With a favourable club position and the heart finesse working, 600 in versus 100 out at the other table allowed England to recoup their losses and go ahead.

Things calmed down somewhat after that start, but there were still plenty of difficult decisions and substantial swings over the remaining 14 boards of the first set, leaving Ireland narrowly behind after the first half.

Board 17, the first of the second half, demonstrated that many swings come from high level decisions made on little information, where you are far from certain that you have made the right choice. N/S are Vulnerable.

Board 17. Vul N/S.

♠ 42		♠ KQJ953	
♥ KQ874		♥ 9	
♦ A3		♦ QJ54	
♣ 6542		♣ AJ	
♠ 10876	N	♠ KQJ953	
♥ J	W	♥ 9	
♦ 10872	E	♦ QJ54	
♣ Q1098	S	♣ AJ	
♠ A		♠ A106532	
♥ A106532		♥ K96	
♦ K96		♣ K73	
♣ K73			

Fortunately for Ireland, N/S (Gilda Pender and Rebecca O’Keeffe) were allowed to play in the making vulnerable 5♥ game, whereas E/W (Joan Kenny and Jeannie FitzGerald) went on to 5♠X and got away with it, only going down two for 300 (N/S not managing to find their potential diamond ruff and giving a further trick away in defence).

Board 25 was yet another swing hand, with Hilary McDonagh having to come to the rescue of the commentators to provide the bidding explanations for a bemused audience.



Board 25. Dealer North. Vul E/W.

♠ QJ753 ♥ 43 ♦ J3 ♣ KJ43		N Gilda Pender Other table 5♣+1 S	
♠ A98642 ♥ Q7 ♦ AK52 ♣ 5		W Debbie Sandford ♠ K10 ♥ J105 ♦ Q109764 ♣ 108	
0 0 Rebecca O'Keefe S		W N E S P 2♦ 4♠ 5♦ 5♣ P P P P P P	
♠ — ♥ AK9862 ♦ 8 ♠ AQ9762		W N E S P 2♦ 4♠ 5♦ 5♣ P P P P P P	

Over a weak 2♦ opening, Rebecca bid 4♣ – a leaping Michael’s bid showing a good hand with clubs and a major. A jump to 5♦ by West left Gilda with one of those difficult high-level calls that has to be made on very little information. A pass would not be forcing. A double would be likely to be passed. Instead, Gilda chose to show her spades, in the knowledge that this might well be converted to 6♣ if south holds H/C. 6♣ as the final contract gave 11 imps to Ireland, as Nevena and Anne played in 5♣+1 at the other table (E/W never finding their diamond fit).

Many swings and roundabouts later, **the first match ended with Ireland winning by 11.47 – 8.53**, and going to bed wondering if every match was going to be as dramatic.

**Match 2
Ireland versus Scotland**

Scotland, as hosts, had two teams playing in the Lady Milne, but this was their A-team. It was a relatively uneventful first half, with the only major swing coming on Board 14, where high level decisions resulted in a game swing in Ireland’s favour.

Board 14.

♠ J10864 ♥ A3 ♦ 1095 ♣ Q84		N ♠ K	
♠ 52 ♥ K974 ♦ Q84 ♣ K532		W E ♥ QJ10865 ♦ KJ76 ♣ A6	
♠ AQ973 ♥ 2 ♦ A32 ♣ J1097		S ♠ AQ973 ♥ 2 ♦ A32 ♣ J1097	

The E/W pairing of Teresa and Siobhan did well to play in 4♥, which made the requisite 10 tricks. At the other table, Gilda and Rebecca bid on to 4♣ and E/W made the decision to bid on to 5♥, which went down 1. These were the only two tables where hearts were the final contract.

Although 4♣ should go down, in practice it was difficult to beat after a heart lead, with E/W needing to play on diamonds before the ♣AK are dislodged to provide a diamond discard. If the defence get off to a minor suit lead, then 4♣ is easily defeated.

NS	EW	Contract	Lead	Score
Katharine Bailey & Amanda Douglas	Jo Copping & Joan Murray	4♠=S	♥4	420
Gilly Clench & Aida Aris	Joan Forsyth & Edith Rennie	4♠=S	♥4	420
Gilda Pender & Rebecca O'Keefe	Abi Minto & Sheila Adamson	*5♥-1 E		50
Kath Stynes & Debbie Sandford	Anne Fitzpatrick & Mary Kelly-Rogers	5♠-1 S	♥4	50
Sandie Millership & Anne Hassan	Venelia Anoykatis & Sally Anoykatis	5♠X-1 S	♥4	100
Liz McGowan & Fiona McQuaker	Teresa Riegray & Siobhan Part	*4♥= E		420

In the second half, Joan and Jeannie were the only pair to stay out of 6♥ on Board 21 – a good decision that resulted in another swing in Ireland’s direction.

Board 21.

♠ A10652 ♥ 32 ♦ 65 ♣ 7532		N ♠ KJ4	
♠ 7 ♥ QJ10954 ♦ 943 ♣ AK4		W E ♥ AK86 ♦ AJ72 ♣ Q8	
♠ Q983 ♥ 7 ♦ KQ108 ♣ J1096		S ♠ Q983 ♥ 7 ♦ KQ108 ♣ J1096	

At many tables, after a 1♦ opening from East and a 1♥ response from West, East bid 4♥ or some equivalent to show a balanced strong hand. West typically couldn’t resist and missing one ace punted 6♥. Even with the ♠A onside, there is no way to get rid of your long diamond, so at five of the six tables the result was 6♥-1.

Jeannie viewed her three small diamonds as unattractive opposite a balanced hand and made the accurate decision to stay out of slam.

A couple of boards later, another decision allowed Ireland to pick up more imps.

♠ AKQJ ♥ 10 ♦ A10974 ♣ Q53		N ♠ 643	
♠ 1098 ♥ KJ974 ♦ QJ ♣ AJ6		W E ♥ Q ♦ K6532 ♣ 10982	
♠ 752 ♥ A86532 ♦ 8 ♣ K74		S ♠ 752 ♥ A86532 ♦ 8 ♣ K74	

After a multi 2♦ bid from South, West made the unfortunate decision to overcall 2♥ on the hand. In retrospect, it would have been better to wait and see which suit South had, but in the expectation that it was more likely to be spades and not relishing the idea of bidding 3♥ over a 2♦-2♥-2♠ sequence, it is easy to understand the rationale behind the 2♥ bid at the table. Siobhan had a perfect double on the North hand and Teresa had an easy pass. With nowhere to go, West played in 2♥X and went down three for 800 to N/S. At the other table it was N/S who played in hearts, going down one in 3♥.

A final game swing on Board 25 helped to cement a comfortable victory, with Siobhan and Teresa the only pair to bid and make 4♣ on this deal.



		♠ K87		
		♥ J96		
		♦ K7		
		♣ K7653		
♠ Q3	N		♠ 642	
♥ Q1087	W	E	♥ A43	
♦ 10642			♦ AJ93	
♣ QJ8	S		♣ 1094	
		♠ AJ1095		
		♥ K52		
		♦ Q85		
		♣ A2		

Teresa upgraded her 14pt South hand to a strong NT and Siobhan's bid of 2♣ asked for a four or five card major. This nice auction resulted in 11 tricks when Teresa found the ♠Q and was able to set up the club suit.

The final result was 16.9 - 3.1, making it two wins out of two. Onwards and upwards!

Match 3 Ireland versus SBU

Each side traded imps in the first half, with one board in particular showing the difficulty of getting the high-level decisions right.

		♠ J1063		
		♥ K82		
		♦ A6		
		♣ A873		
♠ KQ87	N		♠ A952	
♥ AQJ53	W	E	♥ 104	
♦ KJ74			♦ Q9532	
♣ -	S		♣ 65	
		♠ 4		
		♥ 976		
		♦ 108		
		♣ KQJ10942		

Rebecca and Gilda bid on to 5♠ over 5♣ and Gilda, playing to make it, went two off for 500. Joan and Jeannie's opposition also bid on to 5♠ and here it was the decision not to double that cost: -3 for 300 made it a five imp loss.

At half time we needed to buck up our ideas and come out fighting. The same team lined up, and after a couple of misplayed hands by our opponents and a few part score swings our way, Ireland gained a 16.35 - 3.65 victory.

We were in the lead going into the final day.

Pos	No		Score
1	1	Ireland	44.72
2	2	England	37.77
3	6	Wales	34.93
4	3	Scotland	34.33
5	4	Nrn. Ireland	19.40
6	5	SBU	8.85

Match 4 Ireland versus Wales

This was a case of what could have been...

In the first set there were quite a few game decisions with 23-25 points, the first of which was board 2.

Siobhan and Teresa ended up in a nice 3NT contract, which sadly failed due to assiduous counting points and paying attention to the bidding!

		♠ O42		
		♥ A9		
		♦ K963		
		♣ K1074		
♠ AKJ8	N		♠ 10653	
♥ K86	W	E	♥ 75432	
♦ A542			♦ 87	
♣ Q5	S		♣ 92	
		♠ 97		
		♥ QJ10		
		♦ QJ10		
		♣ AJ863		

West, having doubled South's 1♣ opening, started with the ♠AK and another. As Teresa tackled the red suits, West also revealed ♦A and ♥K, then subsequently showed up with the ♦A and the ♥K. Seeing 15 points already with West, who was silent after her initial double, Teresa took a view that she was likely 4-4-4-1 and the ♣Q was more likely to be with East. Down one. The other side stayed in 2NT, making eight tricks. That was the first of several hands which could so easily have gone in Ireland's direction.

An unfortunate lead cost another 13 imps, followed by a tight game swing that cost a further 10 imps. Things got worse with another game swing towards Wales, and it was all going horribly wrong. At half time the score was very unfavourable, and Ireland had to hope that their luck would turn.

The first few boards were flat, and then Ireland's luck turned with a vulnerable game swing going our way.

		♠ A643		
		♥ AQ		
		♦ J5		
		♣ Q10853		
♠ 1092	N		♠ K85	
♥ 9543	W	E	♥ 8	
♦ K82			♦ A1097643	
♣ AJ9	S		♣ K7	
		♠ QJ7		
		♥ KJ10762		
		♦ Q		
		♣ 642		

Unlike most tables, where E/W went on to 5♦, aggressive bidding by Siobhan and Teresa allowed them to play in 4♥.

South got a diamond lead, won by East with the ♦A. A low diamond was returned which was ruffed. Trumps were then drawn in four rounds (discarding spades from dummy) with East discarding diamonds. South then played a club from her hand and this was the opportunity for West to shine. Going up with the ♣A now and returning either a spade or diamond would defeat the contract. When West played small, (potentially thinking that South had the ♣K instead of East) the ♣10 from dummy was won by East with the ♣K. East played another diamond which was won with the last remaining heart - declarer discarding a third low spade from dummy. South could now play another club and West was doomed. Three clubs, six hearts and one spade ensured the contract was made and Ireland were on the way back.

A few boards later and it was another good break for Ireland, where a weak NT versus strong NT auction meant another vulnerable game went Ireland's way.



Board 25, Dir N
4♥ = E
W Rebecca O'Keefe
♠ K10
♥ AQ83
♦ A54
♣ K543

♠ Q732
♥ 962
♦ KJ86
♣ 86

Other table
1NT+2 W

Gilda Pender E
♠ A94
♥ 10754
♦ 1072
♣ A102

W N E S
P P P P
1♠ P P P P
3♥ P P P P
4♥ P P P P

♠ J865
♥ KJ
♦ Q93
♣ QJ97

Ceri Pierce S

Playing weak NT, Gilda and Rebecca found their heart fit and were able to reach 4♥ (which requires luck in the heart suit but comes home easily on the lie of the cards). The other side played in 1NT, with the East hand not moving after a strong NT from West.

You can be on the lucky or unlucky side of these results – but after a first half where the luck had not been in Ireland's favour, we were happy to be getting some back.

A few flat boards later, another swing went Ireland's way:

Board 27, Dir S
4♥ = W
W Rebecca O'Keefe
♠ K92
♥ AQ10632
♦ 6
♣ A74

♠ 10864
♥ -
♦ QJ9852
♣ K109

Other table
5♠-1 S

Gilda Pender E
♠ A53
♥ K985
♦ 107
♣ J863

W N E S
P P P P
1♠ X P P P
2♥ X P P P
4♥ P P P P

♠ QJ7
♥ J74
♦ AK43
♣ Q52

Ceri Pierce S

A 1♣ opening (rather than 1♦ at the other table) meant that N/S never found their 10-card diamond fit, making it much more difficult to bid on over West's 4♥ bid.

The defence can knock 4♥, but it requires a spade switch at trick two to do it – which is hard to find. Without that, West was able to set up the long club for a spade discard.

At the other table, a 1♦ opening enabled Siobhan and Teresa to find the winning strategy and bid on to 5♦, which went down 1.

Other boards swung Wales' way, but the damage was less extensive than it could have been, even though it was Ireland's first loss of the weekend, losing 7.05 – 12.95.

Despite this, Ireland had the lead going into the last match, with the scoreboard as follows:

Pos	No	Score
1	1 Ireland	51.77
2	2 England	47.99
3	6 Wales	47.88
4	3 Scotland	44.11
5	4 Nrn. Ireland	32.69
6	5 SBU	15.56

Match 5 Ireland versus Northern Ireland

It all came down to this last match ... and it started with a bang. Dealer North, Nil All.

♠ K8653
♥ 52
♦ AKJ95
♣ 6

♠ -
♥ AKQJ8743
♦ -
♣ 108543

N
W
E
S

♠ AQJ42
♥ 9
♦ 7632
♣ J72

♠ 1097
♥ 106
♦ Q1084
♣ AKQ9

You do have to wonder if the international bridge community have the same sort of random deals as you would get if you dealt the boards yourself, and this was yet another extreme hand where you had to make difficult decisions at a high level with very little information.

Playing N/S, Joan and Jeannie made the correct decision to defend against the aggressive overcall of 5♥X – plus 300 to Ireland.

W	N	E	S
	1♠	P	2♣*
5♥	P	P	X
All Pass			

At Gilda and Rebecca's table, instead of 5♥, West bid 4♥ and this time the opps were allowed to play in 4♠X, generating 300 points too. A 12-imp start was just what Ireland wanted.

W	N	E	S
	1♠	P	2♣
4♥	X	P	4♠
P	P	X	All Pass

The next couple of boards were flat and then a misunderstanding in the defence by Rebecca and Gilda gave a vulnerable game swing back to Northern Ireland. We were back to flat.

Two boards later, a difficult defence was missed, and Ireland gained a vulnerable game swing back.

A couple of part score swings went Ireland's way, before another game swing pushed Ireland further ahead, up 30 imps at the end of the first half.

The first few boards of the second half were flat, before a bidding misunderstanding resulted in an 11-imp swing to Northern Ireland. Ireland still had the overall lead at this stage, even though England had stepped on the gas in their match and were heading for a substantial victory, meaning that Ireland couldn't afford any further setbacks.

The next two boards saw 5-6 imps being traded. A guess in the heart suit meant Ireland went down in a non-vulnerable game, while NI stayed in a part score. Ireland then bid and made a NV game, while NI stayed in a part score once more.

Board 26 was dramatic, with the assorted kibitzers struggling to agree what the right bidding and play should be:



AKJ954		N Siobhan Part	
Bd 26, Dir E	♥ Q109865	Other table	
3♠ = S	♦ -	5♠ = S	
W Mary Kelly-Rogers	♣ J	Anne Fitzpatrick E	
♠ 72		♠ 1086	
♥ A2		♥ K743	
♦ Q7642		♦ KJ105	
♣ AQ95		♣ K2	
0	♠ Q3	W N E S	
0	♥ J	P P P P	
	♦ A983	1♦ 3♠ 3♦ P	
	♣ 1087643	P X P P	
Teresa Rigney S			

Over a 1♦ opening from West, Siobhan bid 3♣ showing both majors and N/S ended up playing in 3♠.

At the other table, the bidding was more aggressive, with South ending up playing in 5♠ after Joan and Jeannie rightly decided to compete to 5♦ over 4♠. Having bid and agreed diamonds, a diamond lead looked natural and that was that; the club loser disappeared, and N/S only lost two heart tricks.

Sadly, that was enough to tip the result, and despite Ireland winning their fourth match of the weekend, they were pipped at the post by England.

Whilst Ireland lost, and every pair and player had plenty of opportunities to do different things on different boards, we will be able to look back on the event with some pride (and some dismay...). It was our closest shot at victory in this event and whoever plays on the Irish side next year will be hoping to go one better and bring back the trophy.

Team	Wal	Ire	Sco	Nlr	Eng	SBU	Total	Position
Wales		12.95	5.61	8.14	10.22	16.35	53.27	4
Ireland	7.05		16.90	13.46	11.47	16.24	65.12	2
Scotland	14.39	3.10		12.78	10.00	18.45	58.72	3
N Ireland	11.86	6.54	7.22		0.00	13.29	38.91	5
England	9.78	8.53	10.00	20.00		18.76	67.07	1
SBU	3.65	3.76	1.55	6.71	1.24		16.91	6



Ireland's Lady Milne Team 2023: Jeannie Fitzgerald, Joan Kenny, Rebecca Brown-O'Keeffe, Gilda Pender, Teresa Rigney, Siobhan Part, and NPC Paul Porteous

Ruth Giddings - Irish Bridge Legend

Séamus Dowling



Ruth Giddings was, remains and probably always will be Ireland's greatest female player. That blunt statement does not do her full justice. In fact, she is a contender for Ireland's greatest player, male or female.

Statistics support these assertions: Fifty-four Irish championships; twenty-eight times selected on Irish teams in World, European and European Union championships (no-one else has got near that figure). From the commencement of the master-point scheme in 1958 she topped the awards list year after year. And if statistics alone were not sufficient to convince us we are fortunate that many of her brilliant plays were recorded.

Born Ruth Wellwood in Cork in September 1911 into a prosperous family, she attended Alexandra College in Dublin and worked in the Bank of Ireland where she met her husband Oswald G. Giddings. During an era when a wife, legally was her husband's chattel, her name appeared in bridge results as Mrs. O.G. Giddings. Unlike most players who got to the top she did not play the game when she was young. She was in her mid-thirties when she watched rubber bridge games at Rathfarnham golf club, sat in and did what she watched others doing – only better. She never had a bridge lesson but took to the game with a natural aptitude and never found it difficult.

Her first national championship win came in 1947, shortly after she had taken up the game, when she won the Holmes Wilson cup; her partner was Dermot Egan (of Egan cup fame) with Rita McNally

and Lilly McDonagh completing the team. She played in the home-international championship (Camrose trophy) twice, in 1951, with May McNulty on each occasion – the last two matches before Ireland left the tournament. She never got to take part in the women's championship (Lady Milne trophy). Indeed, Ireland participated only once during that period - in the inaugural competition in 1950. The winners of the McMenamin Bowl were selected to represent Ireland; Ruth's team had finished second. Fifty-seven years later, when I interviewed her, I sensed a tone of regret as she recalled hands where mistakes were made.

'Why did you retire from international bridge in 1981?' I asked her when I was researching for the book 'Thank You Partner, The History of Bridge in Ireland.' (published by Liberties Press in 2009). 'Séamus, you forget; I was seventy in 1981,' she reminded me. Then she added: 'My husband was ill, so I decided to stop.' She continued to compete occasionally in national championships and won her last major title (McMenamin Bowl) in 1992. She played at the Regent and Civil Service clubs until she was 97 and won the respective president's prizes in these two Dublin clubs, one when she was 95, the other when she was 96 years old. Each of these competitions was contested over five weeks with five different partners. Many who played with her and against her at that time thought she could still win her place on the Irish women's team, had she contested the trials. At the age of 96?



Ruth Giddings

Unlikely, most people might think. But the sharpness of mind, the confidence, and, above all the mastery over the game had not diminished. For Ruth, bridge was still easy. Shortly after winning her last president's prize she decided to stop playing. She was not ill, she was not tired of the game. One night, at the end of a game in the Regent bridge club, she simply announced: 'That was my last game of bridge.'

Never interested in sophisticated bidding systems or complicated signals, her approach to the game was simplicity itself. I had the honour of partnering her a few times at the Regent. When I broached the subject of bidding system she said; 'When I have a suit I bid it.' That was it. When I tried to open a discussion on signals she cut me short. 'A partner who doesn't know what to switch should not be playing this game.' Bridge, in Ruth's view, was common sense.

Many of her fine plays were recorded.



The following deal is from the European championships in Beirut in 1962. North was dealer.

	♠ AK4		
	♥ 1063		
	♦ AK105		
	♣ J62		
♠ QJ9632	N	♠ 108	
♥ 95	W	♥ KQJ742	
♦ 643	E	♦ Q72	
♣ 74	S	♣ 83	
		♠ 75	
		♥ A8	
		♦ J98	
		♣ AKQ1095	

W	N	E	S <i>R Giddings</i>
	1♦	1♥	2♣
P	3♣	P	4NT
P	5♥	P	6♣
All Pass			

Giddings won the heart lead, drew trumps and embarked on a discovery play. She cashed dummy's top spades and ruffed a spade. At that point she knew that East had started with five or six hearts, two spades and two clubs, therefore three or four diamonds. Next she ran the clubs. This was the end position:

	Dummy		
	♠		
	♥ 10		
	♦ AK10		
	♣		
Not relevant	N	♠	
	W	♥ K	
	E	♦ Q72	
	S	♣	
		♠	
		♥ 8	
		♦ J98	
		♣	
	Declarer		

Giddings played the ♥8 forcing East to play away from the Queen of diamonds. At the other table the British declarer, also in 6♣, finessed the diamond and went one down. That play helped Ireland to win bronze in Beirut, one of five European medals (two silver and three bronze) that Ruth won between 1952 and 1973.

Ruth, when bidding, recognised the power of distribution. She applied the wisdom of her adage, referred to above, *'when I have a suit I bid it'* in the following deal in the European championships in Oslo in 1969 when Barbara Seligman was her partner.

Dealer East. Vul None.

	♠ Q1092		
	♥ J72		
	♦ A632		
	♣ K5		
♠ A86	N	♠ K753	
♥ AKQ1094	W	♥ 8653	
♦ QJ	E	♦ 8	
♣ Q9	S	♣ 8742	
		♠ J4	
		♥ -	
		♦ K109754	
		♣ AJ1063	

W	N	E	S <i>R Giddings</i>
		P	1♦
X	XX	P	2♣
2♥	3♦	3♥	5♦
All Pass			

Ruth, South, did not hesitate with her nine-point hand. She had a suit; she bid it. And she had another suit to back it up. When Barbara supported her diamonds on the next round she did not hesitate before bidding the diamond game. On the heart lead she established her clubs and made 12 tricks. At the other table South did not consider her hand worth an opening bid and passed, and although she later showed her minors it was not clear to North to bid over the 4♥ bid by Ireland's East-West, sisters Kathleen Banks and Molly Jones. 4♥ went down two but Ireland gained eight IMPs thanks to Giddings' assessment of the distributive strength of the South hand.

Her contribution to 'Thank You, Partner' was immense. She had a remarkable memory and knew everyone worth knowing in the game, including the founders of the CBAI. Researching Kathleen Lambert, one of the founders in 1932, I asked Ruth if she ever met

her. 'She was my husband's Aunt Kitty,' she nonchalantly informed me, before giving me a potted biography. 'Did you know Harry Daly in the Civil Service club?' I asked. 'I knew him well,' she replied. And then she added the casual, throwaway remark: 'His wife was convicted of murder.' Now, that caused me to pay attention. She told me the story; I looked it up in the newspapers of the time; an interesting and harrowing tale. That was a wonderful thing about Ruth. Interested in everyone, she had story after interesting story and was revealing about the secret lives of certain players, about which she swore me to secrecy. And she made me promise not to write anything bad about anyone.

This was the kind, thoughtful Ruth Giddings. At the bridge table she could be fearsome, remorseless; she took no prisoners. She was a taxing partner, intolerant of careless play or lack of concentration. She was a tough opponent. There was no small-talk; you were there to take the game seriously. She could humiliate with a short acerbic phrase that could mock and chasten. Once, my partner and I, defending, were down to the last three cards, all spades. My partner led small from Qxx. Declarer played low from Kxx; I had AJ10 and was end-played. Ruth, in the same position at the other table, had led the Queen and defeated the contract. 'I led a real spade,' she announced, to my partner's discomfort, as we discussed the play afterwards.

Away from the table she was a genial person who never uttered an adverse personal remark about anyone. Ruth had presence and there was power in that presence. It could be benign but it was always formidable.

She came to the fore during the time that has been described as the golden age of Irish women's bridge. Her opinions about her contemporaries, males included, were interesting.

She insisted that May McNulty, her partner during the 1950s and early 60s was Ireland's all-time greatest female player. Those who knew Ruth, of course will dispute that. Giddings-McNulty were a regular partnership for little more than ten years but during that time they took 14 major titles, including the Davidson cup four times – the latter still a partnership record. She admired Ina McMenamin and she said if she hadn't partnered May she would have played with Ina. She respected Eileen O'Sullivan: 'When Eileen was at the other table you felt confident,' she said. High praise indeed. Ruth's partnership with Barbara Seligman was the most successful in the history of Irish women's bridge – they won 20 national tournaments together. What did she think of Paddy Paul Donovan, the brilliant but irascible player of the late 1940s into the '70s, considered the best of his time by contemporaries? 'Oh! Paddy was a great friend of mine,' she said. 'Of course, I never agreed with him'

She made an interesting observation about partnerships. Partners must like one another if they are to succeed. Ruth's 54 national championships were shared with 15 different partners and she played on Irish women's teams with at least six different partners. But, yes, Ruth liked all of her partners.

Towards the end of her life she lived alone in a ground-floor apartment in Dartry where visitors were offered a cup of tea or coffee or a glass of sherry (she herself did not drink). Considering her prowess as a player, you might expect to see an array of trophies on display. But no! There was nothing. She placed no value on mere things. She had given these 'mere things' away. She had kept her player's bag from her last international appearance in Birmingham in 1981 but displayed no emotional attachment to it when she gave it to me (I have given it to the Regent bridge which will celebrate its centenary in 2025).



Ruth Giddings with Seamus Dowling at the Launch of his Book 'Thank you Partner'.

This exacting partner and fearsome opponent at the bridge table often displayed a sense of humour, sometimes accompanied by a little laugh at herself. One of her late-in-life friends was Edith Ingram, former principal of Shelbourne Road Commercial College who, as a young woman, had been a racing-car driver competing, often successfully against leading male drivers. In the early 2,000s, of similar age to Ruth, she was still driving. Ruth humorously related how Edith couldn't walk and Ruth couldn't drive, so Edith used to call for Ruth to bring her shopping. While Ruth shopped for both of them in a supermarket Edith, who followed the horses, hobbled into a bookies shop nearby. Referring to her long life and her ability, at an advanced age to still outplay her opponents, she described herself as 'a freak.' She certainly was a most extraordinary person.

Ruth Giddings remained in good health and retained her mental faculties until she died in November 2015, age 104.

"Partners must like one another if they are to succeed."

Ruth's 54 national championships were shared with 15 different partners and she played on Irish women's teams with at least six different partners. But, yes, Ruth liked all of her partners.



Teltscher Trophy 2023

David Dunne



The Teltscher Trophy is an annual event for Seniors, with teams competing from Ireland, England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The host nation fields two teams, evening up the total number to six.

This year it was held in Wales and therefore included a team representing the Welsh Bridge Union. The venue was the Holiday Inn hotel in Newport, with the tournament running from Friday 19 May to Sunday 21 May.

Ireland was represented by Paul Porteous and Fred Barry, Teresa Rigney and Joan Kenny, David Dunne and Michael McAuliffe, with non-playing captain Peter Goodman.

A difficult start against Scotland resulted in a heavy loss in that match [3.43 out of 20]. Later the team results improved significantly, with good wins against Wales [14.24] and the Welsh Bridge Union [15.63] and finished with a hard fought match against England, where we had plenty of chances to come out on top [7.58].

England ran out comfortable winners overall, but there was some excitement toward the end, as with four boards to play only two VPs separated second and fifth place. Sadly, the final few boards didn't go our way and we finished fourth, a little frustrating as there was a real opportunity with a final flourish to achieve the considerable consolation of second place.

Here is hand from Round 3 against the Welsh Bridge Union:

Board 4. Dealer West. Vul All.

		♠ A106		
		♥ J94		
		♦ 8753		
		♣ 742		
♠ QJ42	N	♠ K		
♥ K6		♥ AQ10873		
♦ K9	W	♦ AJ74	E	
♣ AKQJ6		♣ 109		
	S			
		♠ 98753		
		♥ 52		
		♦ Q102		
		♣ 853		

W Dunne	N	E McAuliffe	S
2NT	P	4♦ ¹	P
4♥	P	4NT ²	P
5♥ ³	P	6♥	All Pass

¹ 4♦ = transfer to H;
² 4NT = RKCB
³ 6♥ = 2 No Queen

I was West and picked up the nice hand above. If you add it up, there are 19 HCP, perhaps suitable for a one level opening? I don't think so, the source of tricks in clubs makes the hand very strong. If partner has only five spades to the King and nothing else, four spades would be a very good contract, but a one level bid risks being passed out. Also, the two red Kings need to be protected on the opening lead so the hand really should be declared from my side. For all these reasons, I was very happy to open upgrade to 2NT, showing 20-22 HCP.

We use 4♦ in this sequence as either a sign off in the major, or with strong slam interest usually followed by a key card ask, as in this auction. The lack of a club control is a theoretical consideration, but from partners point of view we have at least 34 HCP and therefore can't be missing an A, K, off the top. Will the 2NT

opening come back to bite me!? Not even close, it's curious we can actually make a slam in the suit of partners weak doubleton, 6♣!

The 6♥ contract needs only hearts 3-2, or 4-1 with a singleton Jack and came home this time. Surprisingly, this was worth 12 imps to Ireland, when our opponents were the only pair to stay out of slam, having opened 1♣ and failed to catch up, ending in 4NT.

The following hand was from Round 5 against England:

Board 10. Dealer East. Vul All.

		♠ 986		
		♥ AK108		
		♦ 95		
		♣ 9754		
♠ K104	N	♠ QJ732		
♥ Q653		♥ J942		
♦ AKJ7	W	♦ 32	E	
♣ AJ		♣ 106		
	S			
		♠ A5		
		♥ 7		
		♦ Q10864		
		♣ KQ832		

W Dunne	N	E McAuliffe	S
		P	1♦
1NT	P	2♣	X
2♥	All Pass		

¹ 4♦ = transfer to H;
² 4NT = RKCB
³ 6♥ = 2 No Queen

This is a good contract, with a club, a spade and potentially three trumps to lose. South did well to double clubs to get the favourable club lead. North duly led the ♣5 to the 6-Q-A. I now immediately played the ♠K which contains some risk of a ruff, but setting up the spades works well against most opponent holdings. South took



the Ace but didn't cash the club, he is after all trying to find a holding to beat the contract and instead switched to a diamond. I rose with the Ace and played a trump to the 9, which held! I'm sure of eight tricks now and things got even better when the opponents couldn't ruff in on the third spade, allowing me to ditch the remaining club, losing only three trumps and a spade for +140.

At the other table, after a similar start, East transferred to spades and West super accepted with three spades. A good convention which has two ways to win, either bid a good game you otherwise wouldn't get to, or pre-empt the opponents if partner has very poor values. This works mainly because of the principle of bidding to the level of your trumps, if you have nine trumps, the 3-level should be safe. Although West has very good values there are only three trumps in support and they have the spade suit, so therefore one less way to gain from a pre-empt.

Paul and Fred got to work with ♥AK and a ruff. Then the ♣K from South. Declarer still has a chance if the diamond finesse is right and diamonds are 4-3. A diamond to the Jack risks two off, it holds, but when declarer attempted to ditch the club on the ♦K it was ruffed, the club loser can't be eliminated, so one off. That was +100 to add to our +140, for +240 and six imps to Ireland.

The final placings were as follows:

		VPs
1st	England	72.07
1st	Wales	72.07
1st	Scotland	72.07
1st	Ireland	72.07
1st	Welsh Bridge Union	72.07
1st	England	72.07

Thanks to an excellent team spirit and our very efficient and supportive non-playing captain, it was a very enjoyable experience and most importantly a great privilege to represent Ireland.



Peggy Bayer and Junior Camrose 2023

Luca Crone



Recently our juniors travelled to Manchester, England to play in the Peggy Bayer and Junior Camrose.

These competitions are for the best U21 and U26 teams from Ireland, Northern Ireland, England, Wales and Scotland to compete for the respective trophies.

The Junior Camrose was created in 1971, 34 years after the Camrose itself. The Peggy Bayer was added for U21s in 1990 and soon after in 1999 Ireland joined both competitions.

For Ireland the teams were:

Junior Camrose: Luca Crone and Matthew O'Farrell, Sheila Walsh and Isabel Burke, Denise Walsh and Leah Finnegan

NPC: Karel De Raeymaeker

Peggy Bayer: Adam Murphy and Isabel Burke, David Hoyne and Phedra Kingston, Eve Connell and Klara Flanagan

NPC: Margaret Murphy

Those awake may have noticed one name in both teams. Unfortunately, Adam's partner fell ill at the last minute, so Isabel was enlisted. She is only 18 and therefore eligible for both categories. As a result, she played every match either in Junior Camrose with her normal partner Sheila, a veteran and in her last year of junior bridge, or with Adam in the Peggy Bayer. Most of the Peggy Bayer team were first timers with Adam being the only one to have played in the event before. The Junior Camrose team are seasoned junior bridge players and with Sheila in her last year she was hopeful to extend her and Isabel's unbeaten run.

For Northern Ireland the teams were:

Junior Camrose: Andrew Newbold and Aileen Armstrong, Xander Todd and Lucy O'Kane

NPC: Wayne Sommerville

Peggy Bayer: Amy Taylor and Adam Hendry, Alex Millar and Evan McKeown, Alex Haggan and Ewan Todd

NPC: Sandie Millership

The Junior Camrose team remains unchanged from last year so thankfully they have had practice in playing every match of the weekend. Most of the Peggy Bayer team have played in the competition before and are back to get some payback.

Unsurprisingly, the pre-tournament favourites were England and as they were the hosts there were now two English teams to contend with in the Junior Camrose (host gets two teams). In the Peggy Bayer, Wales couldn't field a team, so it was a triple round-robin between Ireland, Northern Ireland, Scotland and England. As expected, England were dominant from the start leading throughout the weekend only to be bested once, by Northern Ireland. They always say slams can make or break a match. This turned out to be true here as England bid three slams that were not replicated on the other side. It turned out costly when they all proceeded to go down! These reverses, plus a double swing NI's way on the last board, was enough to give them a four IMP win and a prize scalp. There was only one flat board in the match.

Adam and Isabel, despite being a scratch partnership as mentioned earlier, bid and made a 7♦ which eluded all other pairs including those in the Junior Camrose. Well done guys!

Over in the Junior Camrose, things weren't quite as easy for England. It was run as a double round-robin between Ireland, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales, England and the EBU (the second English team). In the first round-robin we had a convincing win over EBU where Matthew and I doubled our opponents for a handsome penalty on four different occasions. At the halfway point of the event England had created a convincing lead, but that didn't mean they were unbeatable. We proved that in the third last round when we beat them by six IMPs. A contributing gain was board 6

Board 6. Dealer East. Vul E/W.

		♠K		
		♥AJ9865		
		♦KJ4		
		♣854		
♠Q984	N		E	♠J765
♥KQ3	W			♥10742
♦1082				♦76
♣AQ10	S			♣963
		♠A1032		
		♥-		
		♦AQ953		
		♣KJ72		

Here both declarers were in 3NT. Leah Finnegan was South on a diamond lead after West had made an unwise and revealing takeout double of her 1♦ opening. She won in dummy and played a club to the ♣J. West won and switched a spade to Dummy's bare King. Leah now ran the diamonds (stranding the ♥A in dummy, but how were

E/W to know !?). She now exited a spade, West winning the 9. HK continuation was ducked [!] and West exited his remaining spade, the Queen. East at this point held ♠J6, and failed to find the necessary unblock of the Jack. Leah pounced, winning ♠A and endplaying East on her last spade to lead back to ♥AJ in dummy. 3NT failed on a spade lead in the other room, so this fine effort gained 12 IMPs.

We were leading by 20 imps going into the last board, but a tough lead problem resulted in 14 IMPs out and England holding their loss to six IMPs. England were also beaten by Scotland in the last round, but it wasn't enough to stop them completing the double of both Junior Camrose and Peggy Bayer.

Overall, everyone enjoyed the weekend. We are always looking for more juniors so if you know of anyone under the age of 25, please send them our way via: irishyouthbridge@gmail.com



In action in Manchester...





Defence Carding

Peter Pigot



Whilst playing in the recent EBL Transnational championships in Strasbourg we learned of the sad passing of Canadian Eric Kokish. Eric had many Major championship successes including silver at the Bermuda Bowl in 1995 but he will probably be most remembered for his work as the World's most successful International Coach.

I got to know Eric back in the early 1990s during some IBU squad sessions. I met him for a beer in 2011 in Veldhoven at the WBF Transnationals and posed this question to him.... "Which key areas would you work on to quickly improve a partnership?" ... "Agreements in competition and Defensive Carding", was his reply. I went to work to develop my strategies and herewith some of my theories on the latter.

There are three main carding types, Attitude, Count and Suit Preference (SP). You might hear a quick chat before play from a "put together" partnership... lines like "UDCA, Ace for attitude, King for count or unblock, Suit preference discards etc etc", all very important....but!

For me - **"The SITUATION determines the Signal Type", is the best defensive carding agreement for a partnership.** Here are three examples illustrating this notion.

Example 1. 4♠ by South.

		♠ J109		
		♥ AK		
		♦ K432		
		♣ K432		
♠ A32		N		♠ 54
♥ J1098		W		♥ 76542
♦ J65		E		♦ AQ10
♣ J65		S		♣ 987
				♠ KQ876
				♥ Q3
				♦ 987
				♣ AQ10

After an auction where South showed five Spades and North Spade support and values for game West led the Jack of Hearts. Declarer won with the King and played the Jack of Spades won by West, who had no idea what to do next. West has 10 cards in his hand that are a losing options as declarer has a raft of counter measures in various situations against any defence other than perfect. The ONLY card to beat the hand is the JACK of diamonds from West at trick three. How can West know this is the right play? Let's go back to trick one. West led the Jack of Hearts and dummy won with the King, what card did YOU play as East and what was it telling partner? Is it Attitude? - does partner need to know whether I like the Heart lead or not? - NO. Is it Count? Does partner need to know how many cards I have in Hearts? - NO. Would East like to tell partner what to do next? - YES. Therefore the card East plays when dummy wins the trick is a SP card, the Highest card says Diamonds, the Lowest says Clubs and a middle card says, no preference. East thus plays the SEVEN of Hearts at trick

one. Now when West gets in he knows to switch to a Diamond and needing THREE diamond tricks and this the last time he will be on lead, the Jack clearly becomes the correct card to table, hoping to find East with not alone the A-Q but also the 10. That's the only way we score three diamond tricks and beat the contract.

Example 2. 4♠ by South.

		♠ J65		
		♥ A43		
		♦ K652		
		♣ K65		
♠ K7		N		♠ 32
♥ KQJ10		W		♥ 8652
♦ 1084		E		♦ 973
♣ 10982		S		♣ AQ74
				♠ AQ10984
				♥ 97
				♦ AQJ
				♣ J3

West led the King of Hearts. From declarer's viewpoint, five or six Spades, one Heart and four Diamonds would be nice. Declarer decided to win the Heart with the Ace. What card type are you playing from East - Attitude, Suit Preference or Count? 'King is for count', I hear you say and that would be correct. Why? Because you need to tell partner how many Heart tricks you can cash. East-West had agreed to play Hi-Lo to show an even number so East played the six of Hearts (second from four to distinguish from only two [two lower cards]), declarer following with the seven (where are the five and two!!) Declarer now finessed in trumps to West's King who tabled the TEN of Hearts. What card from East now?



East's next card will be a SP card, the TWO signifying a club shift.... *"the card I play on the trick prior to partner's KNOWN change of suit will be a Suit preference card"*. East knows that West is shifting because he has KQJ10 exactly since East is known to have FOUR heart cards, the 8652. West switches to the ten of clubs and the contract fails when East holds the Ace and Queen.

Example 3. 4♠ by South.

		♠QJ10986		
		♥A4		
		♦653		
		♣65		
♠K2		N		♠7
♥QJ963	W		E	♥K72
♦107				♦9843
♣AJ32		S		♣Q10984
		♠A543		
		♥1085		
		♦AKQJ		
		♣K7		

South Opened a 15-17 NT and North transferred. West led the Queen of Hearts and declarer won with the Ace in dummy and finessed in Spades, West winning with the King. Should West hope to find the King of Clubs with East? Maybe East has either the King of Hearts or the Ace of Diamonds and can be persuaded to switch to a Club? But which of those cards does he have? Back to trick one. Declarer won with the heart Ace in dummy, what card type should East play... Count, SP or Attitude? West led the Queen so doesn't hold the King, therefore the defending side needs to know if they have a Heart trick coming, i.e. does declarer have that card or do you, East? East should show attitude on the Ace of Hearts (I prefer LOWEST card to show, "I like", i.e. I have the King).

Now when the Queen of Spades is finessed to West she knows East has an entry in Hearts. Remember Example 2 - the card I play on the trick prior to a change is a SP card. East is winning the Heart with the KING but will be changing tack at the next trick. West returns the TWO of Hearts, a SP signal for the lowest ranking suit outside trumps, CLUBS. East wins with the King of Hearts and tables the Jack of Clubs. One off.

In summary, agree with your partner how you show **Count** [hi-lo showing an even number of cards or the other way around], and **Attitude** [high or low encouraging]. Incorporate **Suit Preference** signals into your defensive arsenal. Above all, remember the mantra "**The SITUATION**" determines the signal type".

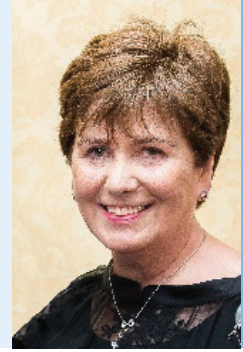
For Bridge Classes this September 2023 - <https://www.bridgewebs.com/peterpigotbridge/>



Women's Bridge Category

'To be or not to be – that is the question'

Mary Kelly Rogers



Women have their own category at European and World Championships. The other categories are Open (where men and women can play), Seniors and Mixed.

Purists say 'it should be just Bridge' and that women should play in the Open. In an ideal world that is what it could/should be - but it seems we are not quite there yet. The difficulties to play at international level facing women are well documented and thus it was in 1985 that an Italian woman, Anna Maria

Torlontano, set up the European Women's Bridge Committee to work so that 'women... would not only have full participation in Bridge... but be

active on Executive Bridge Unions throughout Europe'. You might wonder about the latter as here in Ireland women are active on our Executive and often make up the majority of members. However, at European executive level, nearly 30 years later in 2014,

12 men and one woman, Sevinç Atay, were elected to the European Bridge League (EBL) Executive. At

the 2018 elections in Ostend two women and 11 men and last year at the 2022 elections in Madeira four women and nine men; a better 'participation' - but it took 37 years!

In 2018 it was time to look at the issue of Women's Bridge at the 9th EBL Officers' Conference and when asked as a member of the EBL Women's Committee to deliver Workshops on Women's



Anna Maria Torlontano



Sevinç Atay

Bridge I posed the question, quoting Shakespeare, *Women's Bridge 'to be or not to be – that is the question'*.

- ▶ At the seminar we teased out should Bridge be segregated totally as in many physical sports but the consensus was that this would not enhance the women's game, to improve - women need to play against the best and the best is to be found in the Open.

- ▶ We looked at what women had to say and had input from Junior players. We looked at the obstacles that face women on their path to the top.
- ▶ We looked to women who had reached the top and asked their opinion and while some would say it should just be Bridge there was a view that Women's Bridge should be there while women wanted it.

Here are a few of the views from World and European champions:

"There should be women's events if there are enough women wanting to play in them ... Any achievement in this category will not be regarded as a comparable achievement in the Open category."

"Anyone who wants to become as good as they can be, must compete against the best, and the best are to be found in the Open Series."

"Why would we want to eliminate women's bridge altogether – while that may be the best way to improve women's bridge in general?"

... and from up-and-coming players and young players:

"The reason there are fewer good women players is that they have a hard road in the bridge world. Women cannot devote the time to bridge that men can because of raising a family etc."

"Women's Bridge has been neglected. Women players are regarded as second-class members."

"If women played only in the Open, it would not do much for their confidence."

To expand a little on some of these comments - it is known that it becomes a difficult path for women. It is also known that the best time to learn bridge is when young and teenagers, simply because our brain cell count is at its maximum. Boys and girls at this stage have an equal chance going forward with their bridge standard equal between the sexes in general. There are exceptions and to get further insight I contacted Sophia Baldysz, a member of the Polish team who are European Women Champions and who has come through the junior ranks. Sophia had this to say *"boys and girls can have equal results but it depends on their dedication. Fewer Polish girls play and boys find it easier to launch their career and are more dedicated and thus can show better results"*.

For couples with young children who both want to take up bridge the male has an advantage. Much and all as a woman loves the game and much and all as she wants to excel in it, she is at a disadvantage. There is no need to paint the picture but no harm to remind that 40 weeks of pregnancy with all its ups and downs: morning sickness, insomnia plus running a household combined with their place in the workplace puts Bridge in to second

place. Postpartum the burden may be shared a little but there is still the matter of breast feeding, broken sleep and so on. All of the above are some of the challenges faced by women in bridge, yet thankfully they can get over these obstacles and in later life progress but it is catchup. In the interest of balance there are men who have taken time out from Bridge to raise family and for their professional work career and we know this has been the case for some of our Irish top male players but across the board it is still more difficult for women.

Other difficulties for women that were highlighted at the Workshops were of a financial nature. When asked why some countries only sent an Open Category to Championships the answer was finance. Here's an example: The EBL National Women's Pairs had a revival in Budapest in 2016. 66 Pairs played, 11 of which were Irish pairs; one sixth of the field! [see photo below]. Two pairs from Hungary played. This surprised me because when this same Women's National Pairs was played in 1991 in Killarney, 102 players played and 22 of these were Irish. (Eileen O'Donovan and Ann Quinn led the Irish field finishing 23rd). So why only two pairs from Hungary? I did

not expect the answer that was forthcoming from one of the Hungarian women. It was that the entry fee for the pairs was equivalent to a week's minimum wage in Hungary. Hungary would not have been alone amongst European countries where finance would be an obstacle for women's bridge participation.

Back to the Seminar! After much discussion the Officer delegates were asked the Way Forward - Was it to?

Scrap the women's category?—this could halve women's international involvement.

Segregate totally, as in most physical sports - this prevents women playing against some of the top players.

Or keep the status quo... where women can choose Open or Women's.

Unanimously the Officers decided to keep the status quo and so it was put to them were they willing to select a Women's Bridge representative in their National Bridge Organisation (NBO).



Ireland's 22 Pairs participants with EBL President Yves Aubry, Budapest 2016.



They were, and hence the Women's Bridge Co-ordinator (WBC) was born. Thirty countries appointed their WBC. This was progress that brought about Women's Networking, Women's Quarterly Newsletters to inform, weekly at first and then twice monthly Practice matches and Online Series to 'Develop and Progress' starting with four countries Estonia, Norway, Sweden and building to 24 countries with Ireland among them.

The Irish women's team has acknowledged that these Practice matches and Series before and during pandemic acted as an enabler of their fine 9th place in the European Championships. The current World Champions Sweden, also acknowledged that the schedule of matches helped the team achieve Gold in 2019 and in 2022.

That's the EBL - So what's happening globally?

WOMEN'S BRIDGE Segregation Pros and Cons

Eight zones make up the World Bridge Federation. In June 2021 at the BAMS (Bridge A MindSport for All) Conference, the whole question of Women's Bridge and its future was to the fore under the heading 'Segregation or Not'. For the purposes of this conference contact was made with representatives of the eight WBF zones.

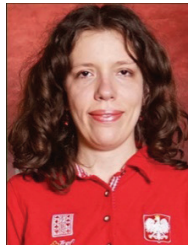


Bridge: A MindSport For All
Connects People, Challenges Minds

Seven responded and six wanted Women's Bridge to continue, some reporting that if the category was not an option women's participation in international bridge would drop significantly.

When top players and captains from the European zone were contacted, stark reasons for the continuation of Women's Bridge were given and women wrote of generally being intimidated by the Open game and especially in the communication with male players. One player said '... until the whole 'macho' culture in bridge is a thing of the past; it makes being in the company of mostly male bridge players rather uncomfortable at times'. A common catch phrase was "Keep the Venice Cup". That's the World Championship for women which will be played in Marrakech this month [August 2023].

Of course, not all women feel intimidated by the Open game. Polish champion, Sophia Baldysz recently contacted had this to say "By



Sophia Baldysz

no means, I don't find the Open category intimidating. I think that on average there's a higher level of play in the Open category and I find it a bigger challenge to play in it, but it's a great opportunity to learn and play against good opponents. It's fun to clean the guy's clocks once in a while! I think though that women's participation would decrease if there was only the open category. I personally like the fact that I have the possibility to choose where I can play (women or open). I think the fact that there's a women's category encourages women to play and also encourages junior girls to play in the junior girls category".

To 'choose' echoes the consensus at the EBL Officers Conference.

The United States Bridge Federation (USBF) had four teams compete to play the upcoming Venice Cup; two will now go forward to compete in the World Championships. This is a turnaround as in the early years more than 20 teams competed falling in 2005 to 12 teams, eight teams between 2007 and 2012 and then five teams in 2019 and now in 2023 - four teams.

It begs the question - Where are all the USBF women players gone?

Not to the Open category as only two women players competed in the 14 teams that trialled in the recent Open trials for the Bermuda Bowl (Open World Championship). In 2021, 20 teams entered the 2021 Open trials - this included seven women players, mostly with just one woman on a team, although there were two teams with two each. Nine teams trialled in the Mixed. Women's participation in the Open trials has fallen from seven women to two women trialling in the Open and only four teams trialling in the Women's.

So, what's happening? When Jan Martel of the USBF was asked her opinion of the status of Women's bridge in 2021 she had this to say "I think we no longer see large fields primarily because women who don't think they have a chance to qualify don't play in the Trials any more. ... People used to play because it was fun to play against good teams. That's very much less true these days. We see a few women in the Open and Senior Trials, and of course more in the Mixed".

This year shows a big decline of women entries in both the Open and Women's and in both, a decline in the number of teams trialling.



In Europe - 19 women's teams played in the European Championships for the eight qualifying places in the Venice Cup. On average the number is 24 but numbers were less across all the categories.

And here in Ireland - to trial and represent Ireland in European Championships, the gate to play the Venice Cup: Irish women's trial participation has risen from eight pairs in 2014 to eight teams in 2020. On the other hand, Open teams trials has fallen over the years from nine in 2014 with eight women playing to three teams in the last trials and no women. There is a message!

Irish women, like their European counterparts are not deterred by negativity about the category and simply get on with their multi-tasking, play women's events and are fulfilled. It was hoped that the Irish women's team would be further fulfilled by an invitation to play the Venice Cup (World Women's Championships). This is now unlikely for the team of Joan Kenny, Jeannie Fitzgerald, Teresa Rigney, Diane Greenwood, Gilda Pender and Rebecca O'Keeffe Brown, captained by Paul Porteous - but all should take a bow after their performance in the European Championships. To play Venice Cup would have been a first for Ireland.

No women will play in the Open World Championships (Bermuda Bowl), however two women will captain teams.

Grainne Barton will captain Ireland (Moran Team) and Jan Martel will captain USA (Nickell team)

How insightful of these teams!



Joan Kenny, Jeannie Fitzgerald, Teresa Rigney, Diane Greenwood, Gilda Pender and Rebecca O'Keeffe Brown, with captain Paul Porteous

Women's Bridge 'To be or not to be' - The answer was YES and is YES.

It seems from trends that if the Women's category was dropped then only a small percentage of women players would play Open, a better percentage would play Mixed but a large percentage of women would cease playing championship Bridge. Let's "Keep the Venice Cup" as was the cry but continue to build, develop and enhance the game for women. The World Bridge Federation (WBF) Women's Committee along with the EBL Women's Committee are committed to supporting Women's Bridge and Women in Bridge.

Mary Kelly Rogers

EBL Women's Committee 2014-2022 WBF
Women's Committee 2022

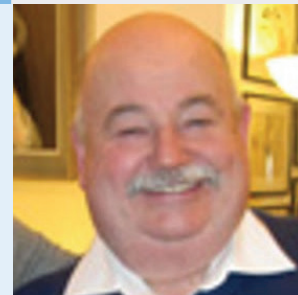


Grainne Barton and Jan Martel.



Burke Trophy

BJ O'Brien



This year's Inter County Teams Championship was held in the splendid Cavan Crystal Hotel.

The inimitable Aileen Timoney ensured that everyone was made to feel very welcome. Harold Curran, President of the Irish Bridge Union also ensured that all the players enjoyed the event and Diarmuid Reddan and his lovely wife Louise ran the tournaments (The O'Connor Cup for Intermediates as well) in exemplary fashion as always despite the awkward movement.

With 12 six-board matches over three sessions all the teams played each other and it led to a very exciting last round where four teams were in with a realistic chance of winning. These were the leading scores as the final round began.

Derry	143.32
Donegal	138.11
Dublin South	137.71
Dublin City	137.27

One team with a winning opportunity was our CBAI Camrose team representing Dublin City [Martin Brady, Paul Delaney, Tomás Roche, David Dunne] but a last round narrow defeat (1 imp) to Mary Kelly Rogers' Fermanagh team left them in fourth place. The Donegal team [Denis Ellis, John McGinley, Connell McLoone, Margaret Farren] had been in the top two places throughout but they also lost their last match to Longford and finished in third spot. That left the Derry team [Ian Hamilton, Hastings Campbell, Pat McDaid, Zrinka Kokot] to vie with the South Dublin team [Peter Goodman, Aoife MacHale, Teresa Rigney, B.J. O'Brien] for the title.

Derry posted a narrow win [10.99] in their final match, but an 18.38 score saw Dublin South claim the spoils, winning by 156.09 Victory Points to 154.31.

A hand of interest. You hold:

♠ QJ7
♥ -
♦ AKJ10
♣ AKQJ98

Right hand opponent opens a weak two in hearts and you are vulnerable versus green.

Do you double? Do you bid 3♥ and over partner's 3NT what if anything do you do? Do you bid some number of clubs? Or is there any other bid you feel might be correct?

Your Partner held.

♠ K82
♥ AJ764
♦ 872
♣ 64

At both tables this huge hand doubled. At the first table, partner passes and you collect a penalty of 300. Yuck!!

At the other table partner bid a natural 2NT (not playing Lebensohl, therefore showing values) and you make the practical bid of 6♣ which rolls home with the doubleton Queen of diamonds onside and no bad breaks. 14 imps plus or minus.

A great weekend, good competition, terrific camaraderie, fab food and brilliantly run.

[This was BJ's ninth win in the Burke, making 30 National titles in all. He's in the top five all-time list of Irish Masterpoint holders. Ed].



Burke Trophy winning team: South Dublin - Peter Goodman, Aoife MacHale, Teresa Rigney, B.J. O'Brien with Harold Curran President of the Irish Bridge Union.



IBU Seniors Congress

Peter Goodman



It was good to see such a big turnout for the IBU Seniors Congress, especially as numbers had been on the low side in 2022.

There were 56 entries for the Gala Open Pairs, 40 for the Congress Pairs, and we had 18 Teams.

The main prizewinners were:

Gala Pairs

1st Helen Hall and Michael McFaul

2nd Anna Shalvey and Ann Gaffney

Congress Pairs

1st Gay Keaveney and Peter Goodman

2nd Pat McDevitt and Enda Glynn

Congress Teams

1st Pat McDevitt, Gay Keaveney, Enda Glynn, Peter Goodman

2nd Paul Delaney, Tomás Roche, David Dunne, Michael McAuliffe

It was a pleasure to play in a team with someone of Pat McDevitt's stature on the international stage. Pat and Enda were only a fraction of a % short of winning the pairs to complete the double themselves.

These two hands helped on our way to winning the Teams.

Match 2

This was a tough hand to bid to the best spot of 6♦ but 6♥ is a pretty decent 68% shot too. If South held the ♥Q we would have probably been in seven.

It is vital to agree that 4♠ is a void and not a singleton A (South would have bid 4NT with that!).

Board 7. Dealer South. Vul All.

			♠6432				
			♥K432				
			♦K64				
			♣KJ				
♠QJ985	N			E	♠AK107		
♥QJ	W			E	♥1076		
♦2					♦J9		
♣109752		S			♣Q843		
			♠-				
			♥A985				
			♦AQ108753				
			♣A6				

	W	N	E	S
				1♦
P		1♥	P	3♠
P		4♣	P	4♦
P		4♥	P	4♠
P		4NT	P	5♦
P		5♠	P	5NT
P		6♥	All Pass	

Match 4

Board 24. Dealer West. Vul None.

♠2		N		E	♠K1094		
♥10974	W			E	♥KJ83		
♦5					♦984		
♣J987652		S			♣Q10		
					♠Q7		
					♥A6		
					♦KQ107632		
					♣K3		

	W	N	E	S
	P	1♠	P	2♦
	P	2♠	P	3♦
	P	4♦	P	4♥
	P	4♠	P	4NT
	P	5♦	P	6♦
	All Pass			

Not so sure this is a great 6♦ but on the "obvious spade" lead it is an easy make.

Maybe West should find the killing heart lead, as he only has one trump.

In general it is best if the person holding the Trump Queen bids blackwood wherever possible.



Congress Pairs winners: Gay Keaveney and Peter Goodman



Congress Teams winners: Enda Glynn, Pat McDevitt, Gay Keaveney and Peter Goodman



Regent Teams Leagues

Willy Clingan and Bríd Kemple



The Regent Bridge Club in Dublin is again inviting entries for its Premier League which gives players the unique opportunity to play 24-board matches once a month against top teams.

The names of many of the great and good in Irish bridge are already engraved on the Seán Stack Memorial Trophy, and several of them will be bidding to win it again next season.

The league, the brainchild of the late Seán Stack, has been up and running for many years. Sean secured generous sponsorship from Roadstone - now part of the CRH group - and this provided generous prize money [by Irish bridge standards] for the Roadstone League, as it was called in the early days.

It attracted everybody who was anybody in bridge in the greater Dublin area: Pat Walshe, Niall Tóibin, Joe MacHale, Ruth Giddings, Don and Barbara Seligman, Alex and Ann Montwill, Gráinne Barton, Rory Boland, Brian Dolan, Terry Walsh, BJ O'Brien, John and Aileen O'Keefe, Pat Barry, David Jackson, Adam Mesbur, Nick FitzGibbon, Micheál O'Briain, Donal Garvey. John Carroll and many more. *[I predict a lawsuit from one T Hanlon – Ed]*. Competition was fierce, with every match taken very seriously for points and prestige.

Alas, just before Seán died, so did the sponsorship deal for the event. However, a bequest in Sean's will ensured that sponsorship continued for another 10 years with the invaluable assistance of the Regent Bridge Club itself. In addition, a trophy was donated by John Comyn and BJ O'Brien. The

league then continued as The Seán Stack League.

Nowadays, the Regent itself generously hosts the competition and in addition to the Regent Premier League playing for the Seán Stack Memorial Trophy, the club also runs very successful Area Masters and Intermediate Leagues.

BJ O'Brien relates one small story from the past in order to show how seriously the players took the competition. The World Bridge Federation had just introduced the "STOP" rule to ensure no unauthorised information would be obtained from the speed of an opponent's bid after a jump bid. In a match where Pat Walshe was playing with Gráinne Barton, their opponents bid immediately after a jump bid was made and Pat asked that they obey the 10-second rule. Although they were an experienced pair, they had forgotten about the fairly new rule and they apologised, adding that they would try and not repeat the offence. However, three boards later they "forgot" again and Pat was not happy. He took off his wrist watch and placed it in the centre of the table, tapping the second hand for the opponents' benefit.

It took BJ, who was Tournament Director, at least five minutes to restore a modicum of peace at the table.

Looking forward to this coming season, if you wish to enter a team for the Regent Premier League, it's time to start organising your team. The league will begin at the end of September, with matches being played face-to-face in the Regent Bridge Club once a month on Monday nights.

The rules of the competition have been refined down the years to give teams maximum flexibility to fulfil their matches - there can be up to seven core members on a team, and in addition teams can call up two once-off substitutes. As a result, teams tend not to have problems fielding four players on the scheduled match nights, making for a convivial, as well as competitive, atmosphere in the Regent.

Premier League organiser Bríd Kemple is keen to encourage teams from outside Dublin to consider playing - and to take on the challenge of meeting the best players in the country. Team Moran takes time out from travelling the world representing Ireland to play their monthly game on Terry Walsh's team, and Terry will tell you that Tom Hanlon will be the first to put his hand up to play when he is available. Currently, the league has players from as far away as Belfast as well as many regulars from all across Leinster in addition to Regent stalwarts.

Team captains and anyone else with queries about the Premier League may contact Bríd Kemple at 087-1954528 and browse <https://www.bridgewebs.com/regent>. Entry forms and full details of all three leagues will be published on the Regent website shortly.

The Regent Bridge Club is grateful to **Audico Hearing Solutions** for again agreeing to sponsor the Regent Premier League for 2023-2024.

For last years Regent Open Teams winners click [here](#).



Holmes Wilson 2023

Martin Brady



In a welcome sign of a return to normality, the 2023 Holmes Wilson attracted 96 teams from all over Ireland, and both north and south of the border.

There were also encouraging signs that the game continues to grow and the next generation is secure – recent juniors Conor Boland and Kelan O'Connor were on the winning team, current juniors Isabelle Burke and Luca Crone came in fifth, and a number of new names forced themselves forward into prize-winning positions. A full honours board follows at the end of this article.

The deals were full of interest and presented a range of challenging problems, both in the bidding and the play. Before I get to discussing them, **here's a quiz for you – three bidding problems that we faced at this event.** What would you do as North in these positions?

(i) Session 1

Board 28. Dealer West. Vul N/S.

♠ T85
♥ KQJ853
♦ 2
♣ KJ6

W	N	E	S
2♠	?		

2♠ was Muiderberg, often incorrectly called "Tartan" – about 5-10 HCP, five or more spades, and a side five-card minor. Does the quality of your hearts encourage you to overcall? Or with an aceless ten count, are you going to pass and let partner decide what to do?

(ii) Session 3

Board 17. Dealer North. Vul None.

♠ K963
♥ K873
♦ A953
♣ 3

W	N	E	S
	?		

Does your partnership, or your conscience, allow you to open the bidding on this? Or are you going to pass and wait to judge what to do when the auction gets back to you?

(iii) Session 3

Board 25. Dealer North. Vul E/W.

♠ QT3
♥ 5
♦ KQJT4
♣ AT86

W	N	E	S
	1♦	1♥	P
P	?		

You opened a normal but minimum hand, and partner didn't act over 1♥. Do you double, risking partner's bidding spades? Do you show your shape with 2♣? Or do you pass, happy to go quietly when partner failed to come in?

Answers and discussion:

Before I get into the details, I have to give you a bit of context. My analysis of the boards my partner and I played in the January Camrose weekend had taught me an extraordinary lesson about high-level play: every time I thought about bidding, but chose instead to pass, I lost IMPs. Sometimes the loss was actual, as my opponent at the other table made the choice I rejected; sometimes the loss was just theoretical, as I had thrown away an opportunity either to jam the opponents' auction or to reach a better-scoring contract our way. Either way, it clearly reinforced a key lesson that bridge is a game for bidders, not passers. In discussing this with my team, I called this the "Brady Principle": when the choice is between bidding and passing, it is often wrong to pass.

Long story short, if you chose "pass" on any of the above problems, you've violated the "Brady Principle" and your score at the Holmes Wilson would have suffered. Let's see how things worked out at the table.

i) Session 1

Board 28. Dealer West. Vul N/S.

		♠ T85		
		♥ KQJ853		
		♦ 2		
		♣ KJ6		
♠ KJ763		N		♠ Q942
♥ 7				♥ 62
♦ QJT54	W	E		♦ 863
♣ J2		S		♣ 9853
				♠ A
				♥ AT94
				♦ AK97
				♣ AQT4

W	N	E	S
	<i>M Brady</i>		<i>D Dunne</i>
2♠	P??	4♠	X
P	4NT ²	P	5♣
	5♥		6♥
All Pass			

I had planned to open this hand 1♥ (wouldn't everyone?) but chickened out of coming in at the three level. Unfortunately East found the all-too-predictable blocking raise to 4♠ (excellent enterprise on a two-count) and partner, with his best hand of the decade, was unpleasantly cramped. We were able to recover to the small slam thanks to a nuanced agreement – my 4NT initially suggested I was offering a choice between clubs and diamonds, but when I overruled him to bid 5♥, this showed a slam invite in hearts – but the other table had an uninterrupted auction and sailed into 7♥, so that was 13 IMPs away.



If I had overcalled 3♥, partner could have bid 4NT Keycard Blackwood, and when I show one keycard, the ♥Q, and the ♣Ks, he can count at least 13 tricks. Only 12 tables reached the grand slam and 14, remarkably, only played in a heart game – heavy pre-emption must have played its part at those tables too. Passing over 2♠ was a clear violation of the “Brady Principle”, and you can be sure I took the lesson to heart.

(ii) Session 3

Board 17. Dealer North. Vul None.

		♠K963			
		♥K873			
		♦A953			
		♣3			
♠J82	N	♠54			
♥T654	W	♥QJ92			
♦KQT	E	♦J2			
♣AQJ	S	♣KT876			
		♠AQT7			
		♥A			
		♦8764			
		♣9542			

W	N	E	S
	<i>M Brady</i>		<i>D Dunne</i>
	1♦	P	1♠
P	2♠	P	2NT ¹
P	3♣ ²	P	3♦ ³
P	3♥ ⁴	P	4♠
All Pass			

¹ 2NT = Artificial, invitational values or better
² 3♣ = Minimum (this is not in dispute!)
³ 3♦ = Artificial, asks for shortage
⁴ 3♥ = Club shortage

North and South both have ten counts on the 4-3-2-1 scale and by traditional valuation methods should both be passing. But bridge is a game of tricks, not points, and you have to figure out how a hand will actually play. As North, I knew my hand had enormous potential as dummy in a major suit contract and my 1♦ opening allows us to find a major fit straight away. In addition, aces and kings are undervalued in suit contracts on the 4-3-2-1 scale, so my ten points (AKK) are definitely trending upwards. The same applies for my partner, with his own quick trick sources (aces and heart ruffs), his

high quality trump suit (a queen is worth more when it's behind an ace than when it's alone), and – as the auction transpired – weak clubs opposite a singleton, allowing him to score three club tricks at the expense of zero high card points.

In trump contracts, aces, kings and fits are more important than raw high card points. Reaching the cold game on 10 opposite 10 brought in a very appropriate 10 IMPs, on a hand where only six other pairs out of 96 reached the same game and many sold out to a heart partscore. A comfortable profit for the “Brady Principle”.

(iii) Session 3

Board 25. Dealer North. Vul E/W.

		♠QT3			
		♥5			
		♦KQJT4			
		♣AT86			
♠98765	N	♠AJ			
♥A2	W	♥QT974			
♦9653	E	♦A8			
♣53	S	♣J742			
		♠K42			
		♥KJ863			
		♦72			
		♣KQ9			

W	N	E	S
	<i>M Brady</i>		<i>D Dunne</i>
	1♦	1♥	P
P	X	All Pass	

If you passed here, you committed the classic error of bidding for yourself, rather than the partnership. Where are the points? You only have 12, East only found an overcall, and West couldn't find an advance. Partner must have a decent collection. So why didn't partner act? The answer can only be that he holds a heart stack and had no good positive action – indeed, since he didn't try 1NT, his hearts must be long enough that he prefers to defend and take a penalty. You must double here, ostensibly takeout, but with the strong expectation that partner will pass and you'll take a heavy bite out of their contract.

We only got this one off, but +200 was worth six IMPs against 3NT-1

at the other table. David's two passes are absolutely not a violation of the “Brady Principle”, because he has a clear belief that, at this vulnerability, defending 1♥X will be the best scoring contract for our side.

The last two hands contributed to a comfortable victory in our final match, which is exactly the right moment to bring in a big result in a Swiss. We weren't touching the winners, but third was a very satisfactory finishing position.

Leaders and prizewinners:

1st Karel De Raeymaeker, Anna Onishuk, Kelan O'Connor, Conor Boland

2nd Joan Kenny, Jeannie Fitzgerald, Siobhan Part, Derek O'Gorman

3rd Martin Brady, David Dunne, Tomás Roche, Paul Delaney

Leading Men's Team:

Peter Pigot, James Heneghan, John Flavin, Edward Spain

Leading Women's Team:

Louise Mitchell, Lucy Phelan, Ann O'Connell, Valarie Burke-Moran

Leading Mixed Team:

Peter Stewart, Dolores Gilliland, Michael McAuliffe, Sandra Newell

Leading Senior Team:

Terry Walsh, Bríd Kemple, Peter Goodman, Aoife MacHale

Leading Regional Masters:

Ian Kilroy, Niall Kilroy, Bill O'Hanlon, Tony Ward

Leading Area Masters:

Ronan Nolan, Paul Victory, Pawel Turczynowicz, Collette Maher

Leading Intermediates:

Eileen Brennan, Margaret Barron, Joan McDonnell, Stephen Catterall

First Session Prize: Hilary McDonagh, Gilda Pender, John Carroll, Anne-Marie Horan-Carroll

Second Session Prize: Fred Barry, Paul Porteous, Margo English, Miriam McConville

Third Session Prize: Deirdre Leopold, Philip Robinson, Liz Jennings, Peter Ryan



Bidding Quiz 2 - Results

Introduction

Again thanks to the members of the panel for returning their bids and comments, especially as so many have been engaged in competing in face-to-face competitions around the world.

It was sad news to learn of the death of Eric Kokish, a long-time member of the Irish Bridge Journal bidding panel, before continuing with the new CBAI bidding panel. Although I didn't know Eric that well, a few years ago, after reading one of my articles in the Irish Bridge Journal, in which I briefly mentioned the Kokish convention, he kindly sent me his detailed notes on all the follow up bids in his system. It took two articles to cover all his ideas. He will be greatly missed.

On a happier note a warm welcome to a new member of the panel, one of Ireland's younger up and coming players, Luca Crone, and he has made a positive start with his first contributions to the quiz.

Question 1

Dealer East. Vul E/W. Pairs

- ♠ 875
- ♥ AJ107
- ♦ 10
- ♣ AQ982

W	N	E	S
		1♠ ¹	2♦
3♠ ²	?		
1♠ = 5+; 2♠ = 4+; 4-8			

Votes: Double=17; 4♣=1; Pass=1

This first hand differentiates between the responsive double, showing the ability to play in the two unbid suits and lacking 3+ trump support, and the overcall showing a single suited hand with at least a 6-card minor suit. Another feature of this hand is the 3-card holding in spades, which implies shortage in partner's hand when both opponents have bid the suit.

Eric highlights these points concisely.

Eric X: Responsive double caters nicely to hearts and clubs and I'm not ashamed of this hand for diamonds. Facing short spades my cards are working and I'm not going to stop short of game, at least not facing something I consider an acceptable 2-level overcall.

Rebecca X: Partner has a maximum of one spade and is likely to have six diamonds, leaving them with six cards in the other two suits. There is the possibility they may have a 4-card heart or club suit, which would fit very well. While the double is takeout, there is also the possibility that partner may pass in pairs, which could be very attractive at this vulnerability.

Sally X: It looks as if partner has a singleton spade and therefore either a 6-card suit or a 4-card suit with me. Let's hope for the latter. With six not very good diamonds and three clubs then the rebid could be 4♣.

Anna X: My partner has a shortage in spades, possibly even void, so we have a fit in one of the suits, or else partner has long diamonds, or can even pass with a good hand. A trump lead would not be pleasant for opponents in 3♠X.

Tom X: Pretty much a textbook hand for this action. Partner has 0/1 spades so we should be assured of a fit somewhere. I will double again if left hand opponent bids 4♣ and partner passes.

Peter G X: This seems the most flexible bid, although I can see the case for a pass and look for 200 as this is pairs.

Sabine Pass: It is a difficult decision between a pass and a double. I like to have at least partial support for partner's suit when I double unless I have a very good hand. This one is borderline for me. I fear partner will be in 4♦ going down, when 3♠ also goes down.

Micheál 4♣: A close decision between this and double. The weakness of double is that partner will rebid diamonds with 1363 distribution when clubs may well play better here. If partner has four hearts this can be shown over four clubs.

		♠ 875		
		♥ AJT7		
		♦ T		
		♣ AQ982		
♠ KJ73		N		♠ AQ9642
♥ 53		W		♥ K964
♦ 76532		E		♦ -
♣ 63		S		♣ JT7
		♠ -		
		♥ Q83		
		♦ AKQJ984		
		♣ K54		

W	N	E	S
		1♠ ¹	2♦
3♠ ²	?		
1♠ = 5+; 2♠ = 4+; 4-8			
N/S contracts: 7♦; 7♠(N); 6♣(S); 5♥			

Summary

This hand illustrates the flexibility offered by the double in this competitive situation:

- ▶ Ability to play in the other two suits
- ▶ Likely shortage in partner's suit
- ▶ Supporting values if partner wishes to penalise a subsequent 4♣ contract

Although the panel as a whole were agreed with the double some of this majority did express slight reservations about possibly ending in a losing 4♦ contract. Micheál's 4♣ bid anticipated a 1363 shape in partner's hand and would have established a 5-3 fit in clubs, and Sabine's pass would still allow partner to take more action.

Although the cards lie favourably for minor suit slams, the quiz was seeking answers to responder's bid earlier in the auction, and the intervening hand might have held much lesser values.

Marks: X=10; 4♣=8; Pass=7



Bidding Tip:

In a competitive auction select the bid which can offer the most flexible information to partner, as shown here with the advantages of the double over the single suited response.

Question 2

Dealer North. Vul All. Pairs

- ♠ A98
- ♥ AJ10983
- ♦ Q3
- ♣ J9

W	N	E	S
	P	1♥	2♣
2♠	2♣	?	

Votes: 3♠=17; Pass=2

Although there is a clear majority for making a simple raise of partner's spades, several of the advocates for this bid do mention the limitations of the opening hand in terms of poor minor suit values and the eight losers. The two panellists deciding on balance to pass and await further action from partner, take the more conservative approach.

George 3♠: I have a simple raise. No point in rebidding hearts as we have already found an 8-card fit.

Ciaran 3♠: Not worth 4♠ with the soft values in clubs and diamonds.

Eric 3♠: Terrible minors so not enough to force to game, but perfectly fine for a competitive 3♠. Often the raise helps partner revalue what started out as an invitational strength hand.

Tom 3♠: Happy to compete but too many losers to force to game. I have opened the bidding and shown a fit freely so partner will bid game if it's a good prospect.

Peter P 3♠: The idea that one always needs decent values and support to make a part score raise is a dying idea. I like to treat them as 'courtesy' raises to show support but no real extra value. This would suit this hand well.

Luca Pass: I will be disciplined, would prefer to have more to bid here, and the minor suit holdings could be wasted. I would expect partner to compete on most hands.

Roy Pass: The answer might depend on my style of weak two bids, but assuming that partner is unlikely to have six spades I would pass, and see if partner takes another action.

		♠62			
		♥K64			
		♦AJ982			
		♣Q43			
♠QJT543	N		E	♠A98	
♥Q5	W			♥AJT983	
♦K765				♦Q3	
♣7		S		♣J9	
		♠K7			
		♥72			
		♦T4			
		♣AKT8652			

W	N	E	S
	P	1♥	2♣
2♠	2♣	?	
N/S contracts: 3NT North E/W contracts: 4S			

Summary

If bridge favours bidders then having made the initial decision to open it seems logical to make a minimum raise in partner's suit with this hand. Roy does draw attention to the style of weak two openings, and if the range for these bids was 7-11 then perhaps you would have already shown the values of your hand with an opening bid of 2♥. If so a pass now seems a wise choice (note the range for this quiz is 6-10).

As the cards lie if responder with seven losers bids game the ♦Q contributes to the 10th trick.

Marks: 3♠=10; Pass=7

Bidding Tip:

In a competitive auction, even with a minimum opening values, raise partner's five card suit holding three card support.

Question 3

Dealer North. Vul N/S. Pairs

- ♠ ---
- ♥ 982
- ♦ AQ10932
- ♣ QJ75

W	N	E	S
	2♠ ¹	2NT ²	P
?			
¹ 2♠ = 6 suit : 6-10; ² 2NT = 16-18 balanced			

Votes: 3NT=9; 3S=7; 3C=1; 4D=1; 5D=1

This is a difficult hand as the bidding system has four suit transfers and 3♣/♦/♥/♠ as slam tries over 1NT openings and Puppet Stayman over 2NT openings, thus leaving this sequence with no set agreement. All the more interesting for readers to discover the range of gadgets panel members use in this situation.

George 3♠: If this is minor suit Stayman, I will find out if we have a club fit. If not, I already know we have 8+ cards in diamonds. If we do not play this as minors, I still want to game force in diamonds. Not interested in a 4-3 heart fit with a potential bad split, and if partner had five hearts this might be the choice over 3NT.

Sabine 3♠: In our methods this shows the minors. If I can't bid that I would bid 3NT.

Karel 3♠: Most play system on. No way to transfer to diamonds (see the 3♣ transfer to diamonds from Thomas below). 4♦ is a transfer to hearts so the only bid available seems to be 3♠. I'll pass 3NT and raise 4m to 5.

Irene 3♠: I play this shows the minors. I am not bidding 3♣ or 3NT as it's obvious that I have some minors and either a slam interest or a problem in spades.

Rory 3♠: Playing this as a minor two-suiter slam try, over which 3NT asks for my distribution.



Tim 3♣: Seems right on many fronts. It should indicate an interest in the minor suits as 3♣ would be Stayman and 3♦/♥ transfers. I would not criticise a direct 3NT.

Anna 3♣: I'll start with 3♣. If my partner has a double stopper in spades then 3NT is welcome. Otherwise I bid 4♦ over 4♣, or 5♦ over 4♥. I really don't want to bypass 3NT.

Roy 3♣: Shows either diamonds or both minors.

Sally 3♣: I play this as optional minor suit Stayman. I expect partner to bid 3NT only with pretty solid spade stoppers. Even without this agreement 3♣ should surely show (1) only 3♥ as there was no 3♣ enquiry, and (2) extreme spade shortage.

Ciaran 3NT: At pairs a simple 3NT. Partner usually has a double spade stop, and right hand opponent probably has enough spades to lead one, even when a heart lead might be better for the defence.

Rebecca 3NT: Playing pairs I would want to be in 3NT every day of the week. It will be deeply unfortunate (or unlikely) if 5♦ or 6♦ can make, but 3NT goes down. I trust my partner to have a good spade stop.

Peter G 3NT: I would look for more opposite a 2NT opener but here partner is likely to have too much wastage in spades and we note South's failure to bid 3♣ as further evidence of partner's likely spade wastage.

Tom 3NT: Slam is way off when partner has a lot of wastage in spades, no raise from South so likely to have four spades. Heart and club cards will be offside. 3NT is hopefully safe but we don't have the methods to investigate 5/6 diamonds.

Peter P 3NT: I feel I am guessing slightly. The clues to bid 3NT rather than looking for a minor suit contract are based on South's non-action. Holding four decent spades and a diamond shortage then spades may have been raised. I suspect partner has two decent

spade cards with some length (but not too much as 2♠ could be passed hoping for a takeout double from you), so it looks good for 3NT but not so good when playing in clubs/diamonds.

Ralph 3NT: I like to play 3♣ as a puppet to 3♦, and then a cue to 3♥ with short spades, but without this agreement 3NT is my bid.

Thomas 3♣: Transfer to 3♦ in my system, any strength, which I follow with 3♣ to show a game forcing hand with a shortness in the suit. Otherwise I would probably try 3♥ which should be taken as a game forcing minor oriented hand without four hearts, either 5-5 or short in spades.

Eric 3NT: Playing some pre-discussed methods, I can choose between 3♣ which forces 3♦, followed by 3♣ as spade shortage, with exactly three hearts, and 3♥ showing one or both minors. Or, of course I could bid 3NT or 5♦ without getting involved, as I would with no agreement in place. I would choose the first sequence.

Micheál 4♦: A natural slam try which partner can reject with a non-forcing 4NT rebid which I will pass. Over other bids, I shall bid 6♦.

Luca 5♦: What is 3♣? Partner's stopper does not always have to be solid for 2NT here so we will take the practical approach and bid 5♦.

			♠AK8432
			♥T4
			♦J85
			♣96
♠ -	N		♠QJT5
♥982	W	E	♥AQ
♦AQ1T932			♦K4
♣QJ75	S		♣AKT32
			♠976
			♥KJ7653
			♦76
			♣84

W	N	E	S
	2♠ ¹	2NT ²	P
?			
¹ 2♠ = 6 suit : 6-10;			
² 2NT = 16-18 balanced			
E/W contracts: 7C; 6D; 3NT+2			

Summary

Although this hand falls mid-stream on actions over the 2NT bid, there is acceptance that partner's 2NT has a true spade stopper as shown by the number of panellists bidding 3NT.

With only three points in spades yet two solid stoppers for 3NT, it makes it difficult for West to realise the void spade minimises wasted values between the two hands, and that the lie of the cards favour the minor suit slams. Micheál's 4♦ slam try eases the passage to slam directly, but the 3♣ minor suit Stayman bids are moving in that direction.

3NT and 5♦ offer safe games, but at pairs the latter scores poorly. It is worth noting the suggestions of Eric and Thomas, whereby 3♣ is a transfer to diamonds, followed with 3♣ to show shortage in that suit. This paves the way towards a minor suit slam.

George provides a clear route to the club slam with his explanation of the next steps after the 3♣ minor suit Stayman. The advantages of 3♣ and 4♦ is that they do not limit us to game whereas 3NT and 5♦ do so.

Marks: 3♣=10; 4♦=10; 3NT=8
3♣=7; 5♦=5

Bidding Tip:

Having an agreement in this competitive position makes life easy for the partnership and incorporating minor suit Stayman can be one effective aid.

Question 4

Dealer North. Vul N/S. Pairs.

- ♠ 6
- ♥ Q63
- ♦ AK108762
- ♣ A9

W	N	E	S
	P	P	1♣ ¹
?			
¹ 1♣ = 3+			

Votes: 1♦=18; 5♦=1



This time, apart from one member, the panel are in full agreement that the best response is 1♦.

Micheál 1♦: This would seem to be the popular choice. We can follow up with a 3♦ rebid to show the playing strength. I can see little point in pre-empting a passed partner. Double would be totally wrong as partner would expect this to show both majors.

Luca 1♦: Happy to keep bidding diamonds later at whatever level. Not good enough for a double.

Peter P 1♦: Simple is best. My intention is to ask for a spade stop later.

Peter G 1♦: Too much defence to pre-empt, so I will take it slowly here.

Ciarán 1♦: Hopefully involve partner in the auction rather than guessing at some higher number of diamonds.

Sally 1♦: Seems that I have enough defence not to need to jump around.

Karel 1♦: If you bid 3♦, 3NT, 4♦ you might rail road the opponents into some level of makeable spades.

George 1♦: No need to do anything tricky here. I can bid more diamonds as needed.

Tim 1♦: 1♦ not 3NT (as I have been known for bidding like this) and hope that I can judge what to do on the next round of bidding.

Tom 1♦: Let's go low and learn from the vulnerable opponents' bidding. If I needed a swing I might be tempted to overcall 3NT but that was probably a younger version of Tom H.

Eric 1♦: At unfavourable I would bid 3♦, but at these colours, I would settle for 1♦ as game is still possible in diamonds, hearts or no trumps if East has a useful hand.

Rebecca 5♦: I found this the most challenging hand, with a number of possible options, including 1D, 3♦, 5♦ or even 3NT. In the end I opted for 5♦ as the most obvious way to prevent my opponents from finding their potential major suit fit. Whilst they may double, it is almost inconceivable that they will find a fit in this auction, and the favourable vulnerability helps.

		♠ 98753		
		♥ J87		
		♦ QJ		
		♣ T42		
♠ 6	N		E	♠ Q74
♥ Q63	W			♥ T95
♦ AKJT8763				♦ 543
♣ A9		S		♣ KJ73
		♠ AKJ2		
		♥ AK42		
		♦ 9		
		♣ Q865		

W	N	E	S
	P	P	1♣ ¹
?			
¹ 1♣ = 3+			
E/W contracts: 3NT (E); 4D; N/S contracts: 3S			

Summary

At first glance this hand looks like a simple overcall of 1♦, and although this bid was almost unanimous, several other options were considered by the panel before settling on the 1♦ overcall. The key factors considered were:

- ▶ Favourable vulnerability
- ▶ Possibility of game in diamonds, hearts or no trumps if East held suitable cards
- ▶ Waiting to see if opponents took more action

For these reasons jumping to 3NT was rejected at this early stage.

Note that 3NT can be made by East, 3♠ makes by N/S, whilst 5♦ loses 100 if doubled.

1♦ has the advantage of awaiting further information from partner or opponents before expressing your hand further.

Marks: 1♦=10; 5♦=7

Bidding Tip

When unsure of the likely final contract and needing more information, involve partner by keeping the bidding low, especially when you have further opportunities to show the shape of your hand.

Question 5

Dealer North. Vul All. Pairs.

♠ 10963
♥ 98
♦ K43
♣ QJ109

W	N	E	S
	1♥	P	4♥
4NT ¹	P	5♣	5♥
P	P	?	
¹ 4NT = 5-5 minors			

Votes: 6♣=11; Pass=8

A tight decision at pairs and at love all. If your side can make 10 tricks then bidding 6♣ will only cost 300, unless the opponents are in a beatable 5♥. Your minor suit cards are fine and it sounds as if partner may have one heart. Let us view the case for advancing to 6♣ which is the majority decision.

Tom 6♣: "These type of hands are a complete guess, but I have just too many points to go quietly. The 4♥ bidder never investigated slam, so now I am convinced they have six hearts and a short minor when they make the equal non vulnerable 5-level 'save'. I believe my worst outcome will be minus one when they are also minus one."

Peter G 6♣: "I feel 4♥ should have a fair amount of offensive strength at love all and expect 6C to be cheap or even making. 5♥ maybe one off too, so not 100% to bid again".

Ralph 6♣: "Might be wrong, but there is no way to know. You might turn +100 into a minus score. The big downside is, what do you do when the opponents bid 6H?".

Thomas 6♣: With a good double fit of points and length, I don't think the result can be much worse than minus one against minus one... but it could get much better if partner is 6-5 or even 6-6!

Peter P 6♣: This is a strange situation... has someone before me erred? Yes, I have some very good cards to build partner's suits and these are well placed... I was forced to bid the first time, this time it is



voluntary! Since North didn't bid 4NT then I assume my partner has a decent hand and their PASS of 5♥ was forcing. If I am bidding to make then South has misjudged this hand and should have left us in 5♣... I have to admit I am not sure on this one...

Sabine 6♣: Feels very normal, all my values are in the minors. Still it might not work out, 5♥ might be going down.

Irene 6♣: Zero defensive tricks and I'm sure on a bad day I may go two down against five making, but sometimes I have 12 tricks.

Roy 6♣: It can't be very expensive, and on a lucky day it might make.

George 6♣: Taking out insurance that both contracts make. We will have company.

Sally 6♣: Seems too suitable to pass or double.

Luca 6♣: Unclear what's making what so I will take out insurance.

Now let us see the case for the Pass....

Micheál Pass: Partner has pushed them up a level, so why punish such enterprise? A typical hand for partner would be ♠xxx, ♥-, ♦AQxxx, ♣AKxxx. We have three losers in diamonds on a spade lead, while we have chances of defeating 5♥.

Ciarán Pass: Very tempting to bid again with partner passing 5♥ - especially with no values in the majors. Against that, partner might have doubled 5♥ with extra shape, and I think losing 500 for 6♣X is at least as likely as going for 300 or less. Not to mention that 5♥ might not make.

Anna Pass: On a good day we might make 6♣ or 6♣ could be a good sacrifice but most likely I would be facing a decision what to do over 6♥. Shall we now bid 7♣?

Rory Pass: Happy to have pushed them to 5♥. To bid on would be highly speculative.

Karel Pass: 6♣ looks to be 3 off at least. Partner heard the 5♣ and 5♥ bids and if they had extra shape could have bid. If the opponents were vulnerable bidding on may have more merit. Also the opponents may be cold for 6♥.

Tim Pass: Here a lot depends on whether West is a very solid citizen or quite aggressive. Playing with an unknown partner two aphorisms apply: 'The 5-level belongs to the opponents' and 'Don't sacrifice on balanced hands.'

Rebecca Pass: The old adage of the 5-level belonging to the opponents can be wrong, but I will stick to it here. I have made my bid, partner has had the opportunity to bid on over 5♥ and has chosen to pass, and there is also the possibility that 6♥ may make, which means that pass seems like a good option.

Eric Pass: If I was going to bid six I would have made that guess over 4NT. While our cards are wonderful for a high club contract, the bad guys were guessing and I'm not going to assume they guess correctly.

			♠ J872
			♥ AQJ53
			♦ AT8
			♣ 2
♠ 5	N		♠ T963
♥ 2			♥ 98
♦ QJ752	W	E	♦ K43
♣ AK7543		S	♣ QJT9
			♠ AKQ4
			♥ KT874
			♦ 96
			♣ 86

W	N	E	S
	1♥	P	4♥
4NT ¹	P	5♣	5♥
P	P	?	

¹4NT = 5-5 minors
E/W contracts: 6C- 2
N/S contracts: 5H/S

Summary

This is an interesting hand in the tightness of the decision to be made. Arguments advanced for passing include:

- ▶ Partner has forced the opponents to the 5-level, so now leave well alone
- ▶ Partner has heard the bidding and passed 5♥
- ▶ Danger that you could push them to 6♥
- ▶ 5♥ might go off

Eric, despite passing, provides an additional perspective when he suggests that making the decision to jump to 6♣ over the 4NT bid means you have just the one guess to make rather than two should the opponents bid 5♥ over 5♣ as in the given sequence.

Information influencing the 6♣ bid includes:

- ▶ South's pre-emptive jump to 4♥ will contain long trumps and outside shortage, so partner's 4NT will likely hold only one heart when we already have two hearts
- ▶ East was forced to bid 5♣, but the quality of the minor suit holdings is unknown to West (hence Eric's point about the potential jump to 6♣)
- ▶ The minimal major suit holdings in the combined East/West hands suggests 5♥ is solid, but hopefully 12 tricks are beyond reach

As the cards lie bidding on loses 300 as against 450 so the bidders win by a nose.

Marks: 6♣=10; Pass=9

Bidding Tip

Ensure that when you employ the conventional 4NT overcall your shape and values mean that your resulting score, if doubled, is less than the score if opponents make their game contract.



Question 6

Dealer South. Vul E/W.

- ♠ 4
- ♥ 109752
- ♦ J10432
- ♣ A4

W	N	E	S
			P
P	2♣ ¹	P	2♦ ²
P	2NT ³	P	3♦ ⁴
P	3♥	P	?

¹2♣ = 23+; ²2♦ waiting; ³2NT = 23-24 balanced; ³3♦ transfer to ♥

Votes: 4♦=10; 3NT=8; 4♣=1

Again the bidding decisions fall mainly into two camps, one signing off in 3NT, and the slightly larger one continuing to show shape with the 4♦ bid.

Eric 4♦: Too many good fitting hands make it too pessimistic to guess that 3NT is the last making game. When ♠A32 ♥A2 ♦AKQ2 ♣KJ32, an unexceptional out of range 21 count makes an excellent 6♦, we can't worry too much about lack of high cards. If there is not a slam we can end safely in 4♥ or 5♦.

Thomas 4♦: I think there are still decent chances to make a slam at this stage. Also, even if partner doesn't have great cards for me, 4♥ can be bid, even with a doubleton, and I should be a huge favourite to make.

Anna 4♦: Assume it shows the second suit. If partner like hearts we might even make six.

Roy 4♦: Intending to pass 4♥ and cue bid 5♣ over 4♠.

Irene 4♦: If 3♥ doesn't promise three hearts, I bid 4♦. I want to find the best contract and that can be 5♦.

Luca 4♦: Opponents almost certainly going to lead spades against 3NT. 4♥ or 5♦ might be right here as well.

Ralph 4♦: If partner has something like ♠Q32, ♥AK, ♦AKQ3, ♣KQ32, 6♦ makes and 3NT could be down.

Sabine 4♦: We could easily make a slam here.

Tom 4♦: Looking for the best game with slam still a possibility. Will pass 4♥/4NT/5♦ from partner and bid 5♣ over 4♠.

Sally 4♦: Natural and at least a mild slam try.

Peter P 4♠: I want to play in hearts with 5-5 in the reds. If partner has ♠Axxx, ♥AKJ, ♦AKQ, ♣Kxx, or the like (♠AKxxx without the ♣K will do), I want to be in 6♥.

Micheál 3NT: I am not strong enough to bid 4♦ which is a natural slam try in my system. My hand would be materially stronger if my Ace was in a red suit.

Rory 3NT: At imps 4♦ has some appeal.

Tim 3NT: This is the system bid but one of my earlier partners would bid 4♥. 4♦ is too rich for me.

Ciarán 3NT: 5♦ or 6♦ might be the right spot, but at pairs with 28-30 points, I'll offer partner a choice between 3NT and 4♥.

Karel 3NT: Seems like a normal 3NT. Heart suit is rubbish. 4♦ should be a lot better. In theory 3♠ here should not be natural as with both majors we use Stayman/Puppet. We'll discuss it when the hand is over.

George 3NT: Very tempting to bid 4♦, and possibly correct, but we might not have enough points for a minor suit game, especially as they will be leading trumps. Also picture partner with a normal 5224, 23 count and we probably don't want to bypass 3NT.

Peter G 3NT: With 80% of my points in my short suits, I cannot justify 4♦ so I am forced to into 3NT as 4♥ is not an option".

Rebecca 3NT: In our partnership, a bid of 3♥ here shows a two card suit, as with a fit in hearts partner will cue bid instead. Even without this, it is a significant gamble to try to play in one of the red suits here. 6♦ will need significant luck in finding partner with exactly the right cards, and why would you want to play in 5♦ rather than 3NT? Over 3NT, if partner does bid on

to show a heart fit, then the hand gets more interesting, but until then 3NT looks good."

				♠AKJ2	
				♥AK8	
				♦AQ6	
				♣QJ7	
♠96		N			♠QT8753
♥J3					♥Q64
♦K7	W		E		♦985
♣KT96532				S	♣8
				♠4	
				♥109762	
				♦J10432	
				♣A4	

W	N	E	S
			P
P	2♣ ¹	P	2♦ ²
P	2NT ³	P	3♦ ⁴
P	3♥	P	?

¹2♣ = 23+; ²2♦ waiting; ³2NT = 23-24 balanced; ³3♦ transfer to ♥

N/S contracts: 6NT; 6D

Summary

This hand raises a number of key questions about systems and hand evaluation, with a number of panel members offering inputs on their systems.

If responses to 2NT follow those agreed over 1NT openings then Stayman (Puppet over 2NT to identify 5-card major), major and minor suit transfers, leaving a new suit after a major suit transfer as natural and confirming at least 5-5 shape with potential slam interest.

To allow for weak long major suits to be played at the 3-level, some partnerships do not play any super-accepts, others do so with an immediate cue bid (Peter P 4♣ cue).

On hand evaluation the singleton spade and the Ace of clubs suggest a suit contract rather than no trumps, and Luca raises worries about a spade lead in 3NT. Applying the losing trick count the North hand has five losers and the South hand eight losers, which suggests that the 5-level is the limit for the two hands. However, the cards lie favourably, and even 6NT makes. For those bidding out the shape of the hand there was still the safety net of stopping in 4NT should no red suit fit emerge.

Marks: 4♦=10; 4♣=9; 3NT=8



Bidding Tip

Where possible keep the options open for partner.

Question 7

Dealer West. Vul All. Pairs

- ♠ AQ6
- ♥ 8763
- ♦ Q105
- ♣ 875

W	N	E	S
1♦	P	1♥	P
1♠	P	1NT	P
2♠ ¹	P	?	

¹2♠ = 6-5 diamonds / spades

Votes: 4♠=10; 4♣=2; 4♥=2; 3♠=2; 4♦=1; 3♥=1; 3♣=1

Much more of a mixed bag this time, although a sound majority for a jump to 4♠.

Ciarán 4S: With all my values in partner's suits, this looks clear. I don't have enough to think about anything more given that partner rebid a non-forcing 1♠.

Peter G 4S: This time my points are all in the right place and we can't risk 3♣ being passed.

Rebecca 4S: I dislike 4333 hands, but I am still happy to go straight to game. All my points are useful to partner, and I know we only have a maximum of two losers in hearts and clubs, making 10+ tricks highly likely. 12 tricks is unlikely, as partner only bid a non-forcing 1♠ initially.

Ralph 4S: Partner did not jump to 3♦/3NT, therefore giving up on 6♦.

Sally 4S: Words fail me to describe that 1NT bid. What was wrong with 2♦ or even 3♦? Now I am absolutely huge and thinking of slam, but don't really have a bid to show that. If partner makes any other sort of move (but why should this happen since I don't think 2♠ was forcing?) I will bid 6♦.

Eric 4S: 5♦ might be safer but not worth the attention at pairs. This is such a huge hand that it merits something like an impossible 4♥ in case West has ♠Kxxxx, ♥-, ♦AKxxxx, ♣Ax, which is not good enough for 2♠ over 1♥.

Anna 4S: I have the right cards.

Peter P 4S: Yes I have a huge hand for partner with such helpful cards in spades/diamonds. If partner is ♠KJxxx, ♥A, ♦AKxxxx, ♣x, I would expect a reverse initially, so I think the hand has similar shape with no Ace in hearts or clubs. If the latter are held I expect further action over my jump to 4♠.

Tom 4S: I prefer 3♠ if it was forcing. I have a magical hand but could partner have a hand of ♠KJxxx, ♥A, ♦AKxxxx ♣x? (exact same hand as Peter P). Unlikely a non-forcing 1♠ would be bid with this hand, but anyway my hand expects to make game.

Micheál 4S: Close run decision between 4♠ and 5♦. My cards are fitting very well. The risk to a 4♠ contract is a 4-1 trump break while a 5♦ contract has the risk of two or three top losers and an opponent holding Jxxx in spades.

Tim 3S: Has to be forcing and forward going in any reasonable approach to bidding.

George 3S: Almost good enough to raise directly to 4♠. I admire those who do.

Thomas 4C: Hard to imagine a better hand for the auction. We can still be cold for slam if partner has an outside Ace, plus the King of spades and the Ace and King of diamonds. 4♣ is undiscussed but definitely shows a very good hand in the context, and can't be taken as a splinter, as the 1NT rebid implies a more balanced hand. By bidding 4♣, followed by 4♠, implies I have three top cards for partner (partner may picture the ♣A but nobody is perfect).

Luca 3C: Forcing. Give partner ♠Kxxxx, ♥A, ♦AKxxxx, ♣x, not a maximum for this bidding, and 6♠/♦ are good. No wastage so will keep the bidding going in case partner is interested, and if not plan to bid 4♠.

Karel 4C: Tough hand. ♠K and ♦AK and an outside Ace makes slam an excellent chance. It all depends on how good partner really is. My 1♥ bid may have robbed South of a bid. The opponents have 8+ clubs and neither found an

overall. All this suggests partner has extras and the opponents are flat. 3♦/♠ are non-forcing. I hate making up a bid at the table but 4♣ is an impossible bid and should by inference be game forcing with a double fit. I'm pretty sure I'll be the only one bidding this.

Sabine 4H: Not sure why I was so keen to bid 1NT with all values in partner's suits and no stoppers in the other suits. 4♥ now should show maximum for spades.

Roy 4H: Since I rebid 1NT this can't be natural and offers a choice between 4♠ and 5♦.

Irene 3H: Showing at least invitational values. Over 3♠ I raise to 4♠, and over 4♦ bid 4NT.

Rory 3 4♦: Hoping to hear partner cue bid a first-round control in hearts or clubs.

		♠KJ64		
		♥QJT52		
		♦76		
		♣J5		
♠T9532	N		E	♠AQ8
♥-	W			♥8763
♦AKJ943				♦QT5
♣AQ	S			♣874
		♠7		
		♥AK94		
		♦82		
		♣KT9832		

W	N	E	S
1♦	P	1♥	P
1♠	P	1NT	P
2♠ ¹	P	?	

¹2♠ = 6-5 diamonds / spades

E/W contracts: 6S; 7D

Summary

A number of questions are raised by this hand:

- ▶ Should East rebid 1NT with a flat 4333 or raise to 2♦?
- ▶ Would you jump to 2♠ with the poor spade suit in West's hand?
- ▶ Should 3♠ be stronger than a jump to 4♠, thus leaving more space for further exploration?
- ▶ If 3♣ is fourth suit forcing does 4♣ promise values in opener's two suits?



The panel found this a tough hand, with many appreciating the positive values of the East hand, but were somewhat constrained by the failure of West to make a forcing jump of 2♣.

The problem then was that if a raise to 3♣ was non-forcing, then is the only option left is 4♠?

Two possible options are:

- ▶ 3♣ is fourth suit forcing allowing space for opener to show extra values or sign off if minimum
- ▶ A new suit at the three level is forcing but unlike the fourth suit provides information rather than asks for information

On this specific hand the only unbid suit was clubs and Luca employed this as fourth suit forcing. This seems to be stronger than bidding one of the other suits held by opener 3♦ or 3♠.

Finally we have the creative bid of 4♣, which Karel and Thomas hoped it would convey vital assets in both of opener's suits.

Whichever ongoing bid was used at the end of the day the next move needed to come from opener, such as a cue bid of 5♣ if slam is to be bid. The earlier rebid of 1NT described the balanced nature of the hand, and now responder is working hard to express the wealth of values in the opener's two suits. Of the wide range of bids 3♣ and the unusual 4♣ perhaps come closer to attracting partner's slam interest.

Marks: 3♣=10; 4♣=9; other bids=8

Bidding Tip

To show extra values without jumping to game consider either fourth suit forcing to allow partner to describe the hand, or bid a new suit at the three level which is forcing and describes your hand further.

Question 8

Dealer South. Vul All.

- ♠ Q1097
- ♥ A9
- ♦ Q104
- ♣ AKQ5

W	N	E	S
			2♠ ¹
P	2NT ²	P	3♦ ³
P	?		

¹ 2♠ = 5431: 5 spades: 6-10
² 2NT = asks second suit
³ 3♦ = 4 diamonds

Votes: 4♠=17; 3♠=1; 3♥=1

Almost unanimous agreement on this final hand with the jump to 4♠ being the popular bid.

Rory 4♠: No losers in the rounded suits. With a maximum of 10 points opposite, 12 tricks would need the right cards and some luck.

Irene 4♠: There is no slam here for sure.

Ciaran 4♠: Clearly worth 4♠, and I don't have enough to expect that 6♠ is good. Unanimous?

Tom 4♠: Missing too many Jacks for slam. May need a club break as well on a heart lead against 6♠. When deciding to go for slam or not it sometimes helps to picture partner's worse/middle/best possible hands and see where slam is a good prospect. Partner may well have opened 1♠ with 10 points."

Thomas 4♠: I wouldn't try for slam here. I have the rounded suits covered but I need to lose only one trick in the pointed suits. The only cards my partner could have that would make slam a good bet are ♠AJ and ♦AJ, in which case slam's chances of success are close to 75%. But partner may have opened 1♠ with that.

Anna 4♠: I need too much from my partner for a slam. There is no space to have ♠AK and ♦K, or ♠AJ and ♦AK. Too many finesses. It is against the odds and five might not even be safe with a hand like ♠KJxxx, ♥xx, ♦Axxx, ♣xx.

Peter P 4♠: I don't like the look of this one. With most minimums there is no chance of slam and if partner is maximum it appears that I probably need to find the ♦J to make 6♠. I'll let it go and just play in game.

Karel 4♠: Assume as vulnerable the range is more likely to be 7-10. Even with a complete maximum of ♠AK and ♦K slam is on a finesse. AJ in both spades and diamonds gives us one of two finesses. Partner never has the ideal cards so I'm bidding a practical 4♠ which opposite some junk hands may not even make.

Peter G 4♠: I would have bid 4♠ straight away to give away less information. Here we have little interest in 6♠ and even 4♠ is tight opposite minimum hands.

Tim 4♠: While 3♠ should be forcing here, I don't want to risk it. Driving to slam is too risky: remember Bob Hamman's advice: 'Don't play me for the perfect hand - I never have it'.

George 3♠: if it is forcing and sets trumps. Otherwise 3♥. We have all the rounded suit cards covered. Slam is possible with as little as AJ in both hearts and clubs, and with ♦AK is a laydown."

			♠KJ64
			♥QJT52
			♦76
			♣J5
♠T9532	N	♠AQ8	
♥-	W	♥8763	
♦AKJ943	E	♦QT5	
♣AQ	S	♣874	
		♠7	
		♥AK94	
		♦82	
		♣KT9832	

W	N	E	S
			2♠ ¹
P	2NT ²	P	3♦ ³
P	?		

¹ 2♠ = 5431: 5 spades: 6-10
² 2NT = asks second suit
³ 3♦ = 4 diamonds

N/S contracts: 5S; 5D (S)



Summary

The 3♦ rebid clarifies the shape of the opening hand, but not the position within the 6-10 range. Tom offers advice on how to place partner's hand into three zones, worst, middle and best, and then examine whether or not partner could hold the right combination of key cards. Several members of the panel conducted this type of analysis and concluded that even the most perfect hand was unlikely. Tim's reference to the Bob Hamman comment (don't expect the perfect hand) is apt. The opening hand in the quiz is close to much of the analysis of the panel, but holding an extra Ace instead of a King the opening would much more likely have been 1♠.

Again the issue of whether or not 3♣ is forcing or non-forcing came up, but not to the extent of hand 7. Each partnership needs to agree an understanding on this issue, as there are points for each view. For example, in playing these weak 2-suited openings it might help after checking with 2NT, to then be able to sign off in three of the opening major if opener's second suit does not improve the fit.

Marks: 4♠=10; 3♠=8; 3♥=6

Bidding Tip

When evaluating your partner's bid use the 3-zone approach (worse/middle/best hand) to test out the likelihood of the relevant key cards being available to help reach the highest level contract.

Agree with partner on whether a jump to game in a major is weaker or stronger than a raise to the 3-level. For example, should the 3-level raise fit in with the principle of all new suits at the 3-level are forcing?

Summary of the Expert Panel Results

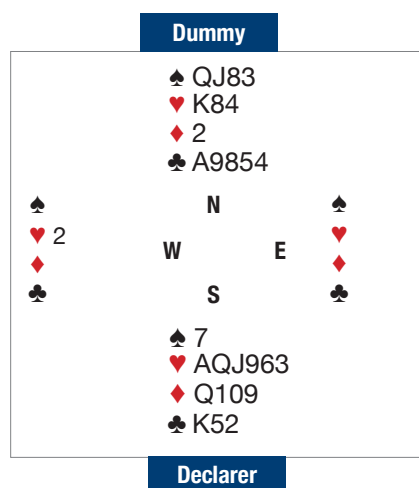
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
Anna Onishuk	10	10	10	10	9	10	8	10	77
Ciarán Coyne	10	10	8	10	9	8	8	10	73
Eric Kokish	10	10	8	10	9	10	8	10	75
9Luca Crone	10	7	5	10	10	10	10	10	72
George Jacobs	10	10	10	10	10	8	8	8	74
Irene Baroni	10	10	10	10	10	10	8	10	78
Karel De Raeymaeker	10	10	10	10	9	8	9	10	76
Micheál O'Briain	8	10	10	10	9	8	8	10	73
Peter Goodman	10	10	8	10	10	8	8	10	74
Peter Pigot	10	10	8	10	10	9	8	10	75
Ralph Katz	10	10	8	10	10	10	8	10	76
Rebecca Brown	10	10	8	7	9	8	8	10	70
Rory Timlin	10	10	8	10	9	8	8	10	73
Roy Welland	10	7	8	10	10	10	8	10	73
Sabine Auken	7	10	10	10	10	10	8	10	75
Sally Brock	10	10	10	10	10	10	8	6	74
Tim Bourke	10	10	10	10	9	8	8	10	75
Thomas Bessis	10	10	10	10	10	10	9	10	79
Tom Hanlon	10	10	8	10	10	10	8	10	76



Play Quiz 2 - Solutions and Results

Hand 1

Contract 4♥ by South on the lead of the ♥2. East has shown Spades and Diamonds. You win in dummy and play a diamond to the 9 and King. A heart is returned, East showing out. Plan the play.



Solution: You do best to win in hand and play the ♣K and duck a club. If they break you have four club tricks and six trumps. If on the ♣K West plays an honour, you play a second club, planning to finesse the 9. If East wins, clubs are 3-2 and you are home. If (as above) West has four clubs to two honours, he may insert an honour on the second round. If he does you win the Ace [East showing out] and play back the ♣9. West wins and does best to cash the ♠A. He can now force dummy to ruff a diamond with the third and last trump. Declarer cashes the ♣8, discarding his third diamond. He loses just a spade, a diamond and a club.

The plan to duck the second club involves a risk. If East, on winning the ducked club returns a diamond, you must ruff in dummy. But now you cannot get back to your hand to draw the last trump and finesse in clubs. You lose two diamonds, a spade and a club. So if East plays low on the first club and West produces an honour on the second, you should win and if South shows out, you could not have made 4♥ anyway.

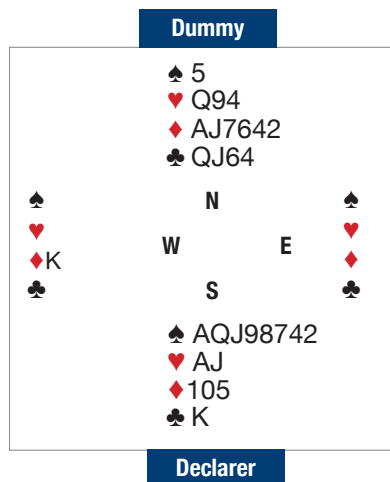
A final technical point, at trick one you should insert the ♥8. This allows you to preserve the King as a subsequent entry when clubs are 3-2 and West plays a third round of the suit, after cashing the ♠A.

All of which means there is no 100% line.

Marks: 7 for the recommended "best effort" line; 3 for spotting the technical points.

Hand 2

South deals, opens 4♠ and plays there. West leads ♦K. Plan the play.



Solution: The ♦A is your only entry to Dummy. How to use it? You can finesse in hearts or spades. A spade finesse, even if it wins, still leaves you with a spade loser if East has Kxx. A heart finesse, a straight 50% chance, delivers 10 tricks. If it wins you are home for the loss of a spade, a diamond and a club. (Note if either opponent has ♠K10xx you are down anyway).

You could win ♦A and play a club to the King. But now ♦Q and a trump beats you if either opponent has Kxx trumps. (Interesting to lead ♣Q, which might induce East, holding ♣A, to play low).

You could duck the opening lead, planning to finesse diamonds later and get out of your HJ or CK. If so, best defence is to continue diamonds, and you successfully finesse the Jack. Best play now is to finesse in trumps. If it wins, you cash the Ace. If the King comes down, you have eight spades and two red Aces. If the King does not fall doubleton, exit with the ♣K. Worst case scenario is East wins the ♠A and plays a heart. If the finesse loses you go down. Taking the spade finesse has extra chances above the straight heart finesse. And you see the benefit of retaining the ♦A in dummy rather than trying to cash it at trick 3.

As with Hand 1, no line is perfect.

Marks: To score full marks, all the above possibilities should be explored.



Hand 3

Contract 6♥. Lead ♣Q. You win the Ace and play two top trumps. LHO shows out on the second. What do you discard from dummy and why – and how can you make your contract?

Dummy		
	N	
♠	W	E
♥		♥
♦	S	♦
♣Q		♣
Declarer		

♠ AK84
♥ 8
♦ AK76
♣ A852

♠ 102
♥ AKQ10764
♦ 94
♣ 63

Solution: Best is to discard a club on the ♥K. This hand revolves around East's spade and diamond holdings. If he has 3-3, 4-2 or 2-4 distribution, there are two winning lines. One is to cash ♠AK and ruff a spade, then DA and lead the 4th spade. If East ruffs in, you over ruff and have 12 tricks. If instead he discards his second diamond, you ruff the spade and cross to the ♦K and lead a diamond, ruffing in hand. You now exit on your low club and you cannot be prevented from scoring the ♥Q and ♥10. You make five top tricks in dummy, two spade ruffs and one diamond ruff in hand, and the AKQ10 of trumps. You just lose a club. The second winning line is to play for two diamond ruffs rather than two spade ruffs, but otherwise the play is identical.

If you discard a spade or a diamond on the ♥K, you must begin by cashing the AK in the four card suit and ruff a small card in that suit. Cross to the Ace the other suit and ruff the fourth small card. Then cross to the King in the three card suit to ruff the small card in that suit. If East has not ruffed, you exit on a club and await two tricks with the ♥Q and ♥10. If East does ruff at any time you can over ruff and play the ♥Q, losing one club in the end.

What if East has at most 3-2 or 2-3 in spades and diamonds? On the fourth round of the suit that you play from dummy, he will discard from his doubleton suit and eventually ruff the A or K in that suit on second round.

So again there is no 100% line. Best answers will have spotted the above angles.

Hand 4

Contract 5♦ by South on the ♠Q lead. (East has shown 5-5 in the black suits) West wins and continues a spade. You ruff and cash a top diamond. East shows out. Plan the play.

Dummy		
	N	
♠Q	W	E
♥		♥
♦	S	♦
♣		♣
Declarer		

♠ 8432
♥ KQ
♦ 542
♣ AKQ4

♠ 5
♥ A1076
♦ AK10973
♣ 108

Solution: Play two top clubs, cash ♥KQ and ruff a spade. Cash the ♥A and if the Jack falls on your right cash the 10 and exit on ♦9. If it does not fall, ruff in dummy and play a diamond to your 9.

[Mea Culpa. This hand appeared in an article in the previous journal. In default, everyone scores 10 points. Ed.]

Leading Scores after Competition 2 [of 4]

Hugh McDermott	70
Martin Staunton	64
Maria Callinan	62



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