

# IRISH BRIDGE Journal

Autumn 2023

## Welcome

Hello everyone and welcome to the Autumn Journal, the fourth in this quarterly series, and thus completing our first yearly cycle. So I'll start by thanking you for reading it.



Enda Murphy, Editor

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I'll continue by thanking all our contributors, regular and occasional, for their excellent work. When I first became Editor, I worried that I'd have to spend hours wielding the red pen, but in truth the pen is suing me for constructive dismissal, breach of promise, malfeasance and misfeasance.

As August melted into September, we had the World Championships in Marrakech. Ireland did not perform as we, and they, had hoped. After a bright enough start, we fell off the pace. The Butler rankings can be a bit misleading, but Tom Hanlon and Hugh McGann, for so long our top performers, will for sure be disappointed to have finished below our other pairs – Carroll/Moran and Mesbur/Garvey.

The Championships were, to me, somewhat unsatisfactory. The Bermuda Bowl winners were "Switzerland" [the inverted commas drip with sarcasm]. The team sponsor is one Pierre Zimmermann. Pierre originally represented Monaco. He used his significant personal wealth to convince some of the world's top pairs to become Monegasque. Helgemo-Helness

and Fantoni-Nunes came on board and many titles were won. In time, F-N were outed as serial cheats, and Team Ireland were damaged at least twice by them (think 2006 Euros in Warsaw and 2012 Worlds in Lille). Pierre represents Switzerland these days, the land of his birth. He convinced three Poles and two Dutch to become Swiss. I'll not name them, if you don't mind.

I have no issue with the five newly minted "Swiss". They were offered life-changing amounts of money to adopt a flag of convenience. And let's be clear – all this was within the rules. And for balance, we could ask how many USA players over the years were real life nephews of their Uncle Sam, born on the fourth of July. But Pierre has taken it to an unprecedented extreme. Arsene Wenger famously coined the term "financial doping" to describe the lavish spending of teams like Chelsea and Manchester City. You either have a problem with that or you don't. I do.

Coming down off the high horse, the fourth-placed team was USA2. They included the pairing of Joe Grue and Brad Moss, who have joined our Bidding Panel thanks to the good offices of Tom



Hanlon. Their coach was our other distinguished panellist Thomas Bessis. The Panel has lost Rebecca O'Keefe, who's taking another sabbatical. I'm grateful to Rebecca for her contributions to the Journal and she can't return to the fold soon enough.

The Women's winners were, improbably, Israel. Now imagine you top the Round-Robin qualifying, nearly three matches clear of the third-placed team. Imagine too that your pairs finish 1, 2 and 4 in the Butlers, and you might just think you're in with a shout. Not only that, but you get to choose your quarter-final opponents. I'm sure that's how Poland felt. Yet they contrived to lose to Israel. Hard to fathom.

Very well done to our resident Junior bridge columnist, Luca Crone. In September, together with Matthew O'Farrell he won the Bridge Great Britain Open U-26 online pairs, for the Paul Porteous Trophy.

Our distinguished International TD, Fearghal O'Boyle, has laid down his pen after long years of contributing his wisdom to the Journal. Personally and on behalf of those who preceded me, I thank Fearghal for his consistently enlightening "How Would You Rule?" pieces. Fearghal's swansong in this issue is a typically incisive assessment of a recent Appeal case from America. His successor is Diarmuid Reddan, himself rapidly going places as a high-profile TD. Thanks Fearghal and welcome Diarmuid!

I must close on a sad note. At the time of going to press, we have lost David Jackson, whose bridge achievements were without parallel. He was one of our elite band of Grandmasters. He "wrote the book" regarding the captaincy of international squads during his long and distinguished tenure at the helm of "Team Ireland",

the most successful period in Irish bridge history. He also co-wrote "Better Balanced Bidding", a superbly argued superior system to the traditional "Milton Work" point count [Ace = 4 etc]. When I was documenting Ireland's great Silver Medal in the 2006 European Championships [beaten only by an Italian team containing the cheating Fantoni-Nunes pair], Jacko invited me to his home and could not have been more generous with his time and insights. I'm hoping to carry a fuller tribute to "Banzai" in the next issue. RIP, David.

**Enda Murphy**  
[editor@cbai.ie](mailto:editor@cbai.ie)

## David Jackson RIP



We were very sad to report that David Jackson passed away peacefully in Our Lady's Hospice, Harold's Cross, on Friday 3 November, after a long illness.

David was a top player in his own right, a grandmaster and a multiple national champion. But it was as Non-Playing Captain of the Irish Open team that he perhaps made his biggest mark on Irish bridge, revolutionising that role by bringing to it an analytical rigour and

discipline that, in combination with the emergence of a number of very talented younger players, heralded a very significant improvement in the performance and achievements of the team, culminating of course in the winning of the silver medal at the European Championships in Warsaw in 2006 – a result which, in hindsight, could very easily have been one place better, given that the victorious Italian team contained a pair subsequently convicted in the cheating scandals of the mid-2010s. All the players involved in that team, and his successor as NPC, Gráinne Barton, are always quick to acknowledge David's huge influence on their many successes.

By profession, David was a highly-regarded statistician, and his analytical mind and his passion for sports combined to create a

lifelong interest in sports betting and odds-making. He was also an easy and witty raconteur, whose victory speeches were always eagerly anticipated by those present, a rarity in any context. In addition, he was a successful bridge theorist and author, developing and expounding the banzai bidding system in conjunction with Ron Klinger in *Better Balanced Bidding: The Banzai Method*, the first book in 75 years to significantly update the fundamental hand evaluation system. He will be sadly missed by all his many bridge friends, especially those in the Regent Bridge Club, where he was a member of long standing. We send our sympathies to his wife Lynn, and family Ben, Sharon and Sam, Dave, Sandra, Max, Leo and Noa.

May he rest in peace.



# Results and Upcoming Fixtures

## National Results

### Duais an Uachtaráin – President's Prize (Limerick, 16/17 September)

- 1st BJ O'Brien  
& Derek O'Gorman
- 2nd Joan Kenny  
& Teresa Rigney
- 3rd Kate Daultrey  
& Sean Maguire
- 4th Carol-Ann Cummins  
& John Noonan

#### Best AM

Noel Bradfield & John Lyons

#### Best Intermediate

Margaret McCarthy & Declan Harte

### Spiro Cup – National Mixed Pairs (Templeogue, 21 October)

- 1st Noreen Pender  
& David Terry
- 2nd Siobhán Part & BJ O'Brien
- 3rd Kathleen Vaughan  
& Tom Gilligan
- 4th Maureen Pattinson  
& Bob Pattinson

#### Best RM

Evgenia Gladysheva & Luca Crone

#### Best AM

Bridget & George Ryan

### Coen Trophy – National Mixed Teams (Templeogue, 22 October)

- 1st Miriam McConville, Paul  
Porteous, Margo English,  
Fred Barry
- 2nd Evgenia Gladysheva,  
Luca Crone, Isabel Burke,  
Matthew O'Farrell
- 3rd LizAnn Doyle, Gordon  
Lessells, Kay Cussen, Denis  
Sheehan
- 4th Verna Brownlow, Geoff  
Robert, Deirdre Walsh,  
George Hayes

#### Best RM

Melissa Brady, Paddy McDermott,  
Brid & Sean Galligan

#### Best AM

Phedra Kingston, David Hoyne,  
Vicky Pigot, Eddie Payne

### Camrose (Limerick, 10-12 November)

#### Winners

Tom Hanlon, Conor Boland,  
Mark Moran, John Carroll,  
Ciarán Coyne, David Walsh

### Lady Milne Trials (Templeogue, 10-12 November)

#### Winners

*who will represent Ireland*

Joan Kenny, Jeannie Fitzgerald,  
Siobhan Part, Teresa Rigney, Gilda  
Pender and Hilary McDonagh  
(Dowling-Long)

#### Runners up

*who will represent CBAI*

Noreen Pender, Kathleen  
Vaughan, Anna Carr and  
Margaret Farren

### IBU Interprovincials (Cavan, 18-19 November)

#### Open Teams Winners

##### Munster

Ranald Milne, Kelan O'Connor,  
Maureen & Bob Pattinson, Cian  
Holland, Pat Quinn, Lucy & John  
Phelan, Gordon Lessells, Diarmuid  
Reddan, Derek O'Gorman and  
Tom McCarthy

#### Area Master Teams Winners Leinster

Eamon Martin Jnr, Pam  
Harrington, Jimmy Byrne, Gerry  
Ryan, Eoin & Mary Hodkinson,  
Tony Ward, Bill O'Hanlon,  
Rosalind O'Brien, Elaine  
Fitzpatrick, Rachel Connellan and  
Niamh Harty

#### Intermediate Teams Winners Leinster

Catherine Carabine, Deirdre  
Lonergan, Kevin Kennedy, Willie  
Redmond, Kerri Nolan, Aisling  
O'Grady, Pat Costello, Tom Reilly,  
Kevin McKevitt, Angela O'Neill,  
Helen Dredge, and Anne Hogan

## Upcoming Fixtures

Date	Event	Venue
<b>2023</b>		
Nov 24-26	Kilkenny Congress	Hotel Kilkenny
Dec 2-3	Regional Pairs Weekend	Various check venues
Dec 4-8	Celtic Nations Simultaneous Pairs Week	In Clubs
Dec 9-10	Master Pairs	Templeogue Bridge Centre
<b>2024</b>		
Jan 5-7	Camrose Trophy - Weekend 1	Wales
Jan 5-7	Waterford Congress	Tower Hotel, Waterford
Jan 13	Men's & Women's Pairs Championships	Westgrove Hotel, Clane
Jan 14	Men's & Women's Teams Championships	Westgrove Hotel, Clane
Jan 19-21	Cork Congress	Maryborough Hotel, Cork
Jan 19-21	IBU Open & Women's Trials. Weekend 1	Templeogue Bridge Centre
Jan 26-28	Ennis Congress	TBC
Jan 26-28	IBU Open & Women's Trials Weekend 2	Templeogue Bridge Centre
Feb 3-4	<b>NEW!</b> Confined Regional Masters Pairs & Teams	Templeogue Bridge Centre
Feb 6-8	Teltscher Trials 2024	Templeogue Bridge Centre
Feb 10-11	Holmes Wilson	Mount Wosley Hotel, Carlow
Feb 16-18	IBU Mixed Trials, Weekend 1	Templeogue Bridge Centre
Feb 16-18	Junior Camrose & Peggy Bayer Trophies	Northern Ireland
Feb 16-18	CBAI Novice & Intermediate Congress	Great National Hotel Ballykisteon
Feb 24-25	National Pairs Championships	Falls Hotel, Ennistymon



# Bidding Quiz 4

By Bob Pattinson



All eight hands are from live pairs events. Entries to [biddingquiz@cbaie](mailto:biddingquiz@cbaie) by 10th December 2023.

Good luck!

## Question 1

Dealer North. Vul N/S. Teams.

- ♠ 842
- ♥ A9865
- ♦ K8
- ♣ K53

W	N	E	S
	1♥	2♦	X
?			

## Question 2

Dealer East. Vul All. Teams.

- ♠ A4
- ♥ A
- ♦ Q83
- ♣ KQ98743

W	N	E	S
		1♦	P
2♣	P	2♦	P
?			

## Question 3

Dealer South. Vul N/S. Pairs.

- ♠ Q84
- ♥ 62
- ♦ AQ863
- ♣ AK9

W	N	E	S
			1♠
P	2♣	P	P
?			

## Question 4

Dealer South. Vul All. Teams.

- ♠ 53
- ♥ A86
- ♦ AK73
- ♣ QJ72

W	N	E	S
			P
P	2♠	?	

## Question 5

Dealer East. Vul All. Teams.

- ♠ KT965
- ♥ Q872
- ♦ A7
- ♣ 43

W	N	E	S
		2NT <sup>1</sup>	P
3♣ <sup>2</sup>	P	3NT	P
?			

<sup>1</sup> 2NT = 20-22; <sup>2</sup> 3♣ = Puppet Stayman

<sup>3</sup> 3NT = no 4 or 5-card Major

## Question 6

Dealer West. Vul All. Pairs

- ♠ K7
- ♥ KQ65
- ♦ AQ863
- ♣ A7

W	N	E	S
1♣ <sup>1</sup>	P	1♦	P
1♥	P	?	
<sup>1</sup> 1♣ = 3+			

## Question 7

Dealer South. Vul All. Teams.

- ♠ AQT632
- ♥ AT4
- ♦ 6
- ♣ T85

W	N	E	S
			P
1♥	P	1♠	P
3♥	P	?	

## Question 8

Dealer West. Vul E/W. Pairs

- ♠ KT7
- ♥ AKT972
- ♦ 2
- ♣ T84

W	N	E	S
1♥	P	1♠	2NT <sup>1</sup>
?			
<sup>1</sup> 5-5 minors			

## Entries to:

[biddingquiz@cbaie](mailto:biddingquiz@cbaie)

by 10th December 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 5-5 : either 6-10 or 15+	Direct cue = two highest suits 2NT = two lowest suits; 3♣ = two remaining suits
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 4

Tomás Roche



You are West as declarer, playing teams. What is your play strategy on each board?

## Board 1 Dealer North. Vul None.

♠ K65	N	♠ AJ742
♥ J104	W	♥ A75
♦ AK2	E	♦ 106
♣ A862	S	♣ J54

W	N	E	S
	P	P	P
1♣	P	1♠	P
1NT	P	3NT	All Pass

### The Play

North leads a low heart to South's king. A Heart is returned and the Jack is covered by the Queen and Ace. How do you plan the play?

## Board 3 Dealer South. Vul E/W.

♠ KJ9762	N	♠ A53
♥ 4	W	♥ AJ6
♦ J86	E	♦ Q73
♣ Q103	S	♣ AK64

W	N	E	S
			P
2♠	P	4♠	All Pass

### The Play

North leads a low heart against 4♠. How do you plan the play?

## Board 2 Dealer East. Vul N/S.

♠ 5	N	♠ J3
♥ K93	W	♥ QJ64
♦ AQ9763	E	♦ K82
♣ A82	S	♣ KJ42

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

### The Play

North begins with the ♠AK. How do you plan the play?

## Board 4 Dealer West. Vul All.

♠ A54	N	♠ K6
♥ AK73	W	♥ Q92
♦ AQ104	E	♦ KJ87
♣ Q6	S	♣ K952

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

### The Play

Playing 2 over 1, 2NT shows 15-20. 3♦ promises four-card support. North opens a trump against 6♦ and dummy's seven is covered by the nine. How do you plan the play?

### Entries to:

[playquiz@cba1.ie](mailto:playquiz@cba1.ie)

by 10th December 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



# My Bridge Journey Part 1

Gordon Lessells



**I was one of three brothers who were always very competitive. In 1963, I was living in Aberdeen and there was a Typhoid epidemic caused by Corned beef, which led to families being isolated. We discovered the Pan Book of Card Games and tried lots of the Card Games described, but not Bridge which required four people and seemed complicated.**

I learnt to play Whist and occasionally played in Whist drives. Two years later I went on a trip to Norway with the Scout troop of which I was a member. This involved an overnight boat trip from Newcastle to Oslo. That evening, after enjoying sumptuous food, some of our leaders played Bridge and I first saw the game being played. The following summer, a few of us spent our spare time painting the new Scout Hut that had been built. In the evenings we would visit the local hostelry and then go back to Cammie's house and play bridge. I was usually number five but gradually picked up the rudiments of the game. Cammie sadly passed away but one of that gang Derek MacLachlan still plays bridge in Peebles and I hope to play with him some time this year.

That was the start. In 1970, I went to Oxford to do a Masters degree and decided that I would join the Bridge Club. The Club met on a Friday Night in the North Oxford Bridge Club, home of the (in) famous Terence Reese. I arrived without a partner and did not get a game but there was a game of Rubber bridge going on in the other room at 1 old penny a hundred. I continued going along

on a Friday night, occasionally got a partner and other times played rubber bridge. Among those who played rubber bridge I remember a Winnie Ling, a fine player, who played every night of the week and a Professor Wilfrid Beckerman, economics advisor to Harold Wilson's government who found Stayman too complicated to play. Duplicate bridge was new to me. In Aberdeen we played rubber bridge. The aim in Rubber bridge is to win the best of three rubbers. To win a rubber you had to bid and make a game or make a combination of part scores which added to more than a hundred. At the end you counted up scores below the line and those above the line from overtricks and undertricks to determine who was the winner. It took me a while to understand duplicate bridge scoring. One night, I played and miraculously we came first. Buoyed with this success, we decided to play in a two session event the following Sunday and came decidedly last. I do remember discussing our system with my partner. The conversation went "If I open 1♠ then a double from you means .....". It was not a partnership to last.

In Oxford, I lived in Holywell Manor, a graduate Centre for Balliol College and St Annes. Richard Woolfson, who lived in the room next to mine, had played bridge in Glasgow and was familiar with many of the top Scottish players. Harry Smith a prominent Scottish Senior player was one of Richard's classmates at Glasgow University. A small group of the residents in our second year decided to take up bridge. Richard was the expert but

Gordon Cockburn another Scot, who went on to teach Classics to Martin Brady, was as enthusiastic as I. Every evening at 9.00pm we would gather in the Common Room and play rubber bridge. Such was the addictive power of the game we would often stay up till 2.00am playing. Another of the residents, John Maier, had won the British Universities Bridge Championships while a student at Nottingham University but had stopped playing and was concentrating on his D Phil in Chemistry. He occasionally passed by and observed our naïve attempts to play bridge. I met John again many years later playing in the Philip Morris Pairs in Italy. He was living in Switzerland and playing occasional bridge at a high level. I tried to persuade him to come and play in Ireland. He was prepared to do this provided he could fit in some golf. We almost played with him in the recent online Holmes-Wilson but he was playing an online league match one of the days. I hope he might make it over this year.

During my time in Oxford, I attended some mathematical conferences and found some fellow students interested in playing bridge in the evening. On one of those occasions, I remember playing with a Richard Hayden, a post graduate student at Cambridge. He was also a British Universities Bridge champion. Richard went on to become a distinguished Professor of Mathematics at Oxford University. Richard very politely pointed out after I had overcalled with a four card suit that one should have a five card suit to make an overcall. This was news to me. I had never read a bridge book at that stage in my bridge career.



My next step on my Journey took me to Glasgow. I shared an office with a chap Ken Lindsay who I had met playing bridge in Oxford. However, Ken's interests outside mathematics involved the search for a life partner and bridge was relegated to a sideline. Ken's search was successful as was his mathematical career but his bridge career came to an end. I heard about the Buchanan Club but never entered its portals. However, I used to get a regular game of rubber bridge in the Staff Club at lunchtime. One of the occasional players was David Levy, also a Chess player, who made a famous bet about when a computer would beat a human at Chess.

After fifteen months in Glasgow, I headed abroad to Benin City in Nigeria where I would stay for the next five and a half years. At that time Nigeria was beginning to benefit from the selling of oil which was found in the Niger delta. There were lots of foreign companies helping in the development of Nigeria's economy. In the Benin Club, there were quite a few expatriates who played bridge and on Wednesday there was a duplicate bridge competition. The main organizer of this, Professor Norman Smith, was in need of a partner and I was lucky enough to arrive at the right time. Among the other members of the Benin Club was Professor of Medicine, David Haddock from Liverpool and David Johnson, who was a Welsh Camrose Player. David who had played too much bridge as a student at Oxford and left without a degree. He sorted his life out and was now doing research for his PhD from University of Wales on birds living in the rain forest nearby. The four of us started a regular bridge evening on Mondays. That is where I learnt about bidding. The play of the cards, I had picked up over the years by observation, but never having read a bridge book my bidding was rudimentary.

At the Wednesday duplicate, there was fierce rivalry between Norman and myself and the two Davids. However, there were quite a few fine Indian and Pakistani players in the Club who also liked to play tubber bridge for money. At weekends you could often find a game of bridge by the swimming pool. On the Club Duplicate, I began to be involved in running the events and scoring. After a few years, we decided to organize a bridge event and invite players from nearby cities. Thus was created the first Nigerian Bridge Congress. I remember having to make a tricky ruling at this event. At the end of the hand one side claimed that the contract had been doubled and the other disagreed. Over to you, Fearghal! We had a team event but did not know about IMPS. Somehow we managed to identify winners.

In rubber bridge, double and redouble cards are used much more than in Duplicate bridge. In duplicate bridge one tends to remember tops from card play or bidding or defence. In rubber bridge, one remembers big penalties. Over the years, the personnel in our Monday night game changed as people came and went. One hand I remember well is when Steve (a Canadian) went 1NT X -7. He had a small chance at one stage of winning a trick but ended up with none. I'll describe a similar remarkable result later against me.

There were no Nigerian players playing bridge in the Club. However, there was a regular poker school which Norman Smith played in and quite a few Nigerians played poker. Eventually, one of the Nigerians was persuaded to take up the game. He was making progress but a private dispute with another member sadly led him to stop playing. In Benin City there was a Guinness Brewery with quite a few Irish expatriates working there. One couple, Alex and Effie Piggott, originally from Scotland decided to learn the game. When they

returned to Ireland they managed to join the Dun Laoghaire Bridge Club by subterfuge. Alex and Effie became popular members and Alex used to organize bridge trips abroad.

During my time in Nigeria, I would have two months leave at home and during that period I investigated the Duplicate Bridge scene in Aberdeen. I played in the Northern Arts Club and the Aberdeen Bridge Club. The Northern Arts Club was run by the father of Les Steel, the Scottish international. On one occasion a lady in her 80s asked me who I was. She told me that she used to play bridge with my father before he got married and he would fall asleep at the table! I discovered that a chap who lived across the road was a bridge player. This was Gibby Reid who was involved in the Phoenix Bridge Club. The son of the late Chris Higgins from Sligo was also a member. When he returned to Ireland, he helped to set up an annual match with the Regent Bridge Club. I occasionally was invited to participate in this event.

After five years in Nigeria, I returned home and was lucky enough to find a job in UCC. I tried to investigate bridge. I discovered a George Delafield, lecturer in psychology, who took me to Collins Barracks for a game of bridge on Wednesday night. I gradually learnt something about the bridge scene in Cork. At that time Rory Boland and Karl Cashen were Engineering students in UCC but had transcended the UCC bridge Club and were beginning to have impact on the national scene. Robert Horgan, a drop-out from the Commerce course as a result of bridge addiction, was running the UCC bridge Club. I helped out. We started to play Precision and made an effort to play Power Precision. I have a Waterford Glass sherry glass, the prize for winning an Open Pairs at the Kenmare Congress on the sole occasion that we played Power Precision.





I remember going to the Cork Congress in Mayfield School. I was told that I would have a partner for the Open Pairs on Friday night. I turned up and looked around. I saw a tall lady who looked as though she might be in charge. I went up to Ann Dillon and said "I'm Lessells". She still remembers this encounter. During that weekend, I got to know some of the stars of Irish bridge in the 1980s. Pat Walshe, Brian Dolan, Maurice Roche, Niall Tóibín, (the young guns), Paddy Kiely, Denis Dillon, Denis McGrath and Michael O'Connell (the old hands). In the Open Pairs, I was quizzed at one table about who I was and what I did. The lady said that her son was Professor of Maths in Dublin and another son was a priest in Nigeria. During that year in Cork, I remember playing in the Wexford Congress, Fermoy Congress and Clonmel Congress. I went up to play in the Kervick trophy in Cruises Hotel in Limerick. I was playing in a no trump contract. The tall lady on my left led ♣Q, I had Kxxx in dummy and xxx in my hand. I played low from both hands and the lady on my left continued smoothly with ♣J. Again I ducked. The ♣10 followed without a thought, and was again ducked. This was followed by the ♣A! When I moved to Limerick I was eventually able to put a name to the person who had fooled me so comprehensively. During my year in Cork, I played in Collins Barracks and played Friday night in the Cork Club. Raymond O'Leary was one of the prominent characters who played on Fridays and when I moved to Limerick he gave me a letter of recommendation to give to Michael Lynch.

End of Part One.

*[Gordon will reveal the identity of his tormentor in the next issue. Ed.]*

# Spiro Cup 2023

John Noonan



**The Spiro Cup was donated by Mabel Spiro, whose brother in law was married to the better known player, Elvina Spiro.**

Mabel's family business was IMCO Cleaners and Dyers. The Trophy was first played for in 1936. The most successful player to date is the late Ruth Giddings with eight wins, with several different partners. Up until 2003 it was played as the CBAI President's Prize as a Mixed Competition. In 2004 the President's Prize became Duais an Uachtarain and the Spiro was played in its present format of two sessions on Saturday, with the Coen Mixed Team of four played on the Sunday. In the ten years prior to the Covid Pandemic it attracted over 100 Pairs. 2022 was the first face to face renewal since the outbreak, attracting 70 Pairs. In 2023 we had 80 Pairs so hopefully we will be back at pre Pandemic numbers soon. There were some interesting hands.

**Session 1. Board 25  
Dealer North. Vul E/W.**

		♠K8			
		♥AKJ53			
		♦AQJT3			
		♣7			
♠AQT96	N		E	♠J2	
♥T84	W		S	♥Q76	
♦9				♦852	
♣AK53				♣QT964	
		♠7542			
		♥92			
		♦K764			
		♣J82			

Pat McDaid playing with Zrinka Kokot opened 1♥ and after two passes West bid 1♠. Pat now bid 3♦, and Zrinka knew this showed at least 5-5 in the red suits (Pat could have doubled or bid 2♦ with different hands). She kept the bidding open with 4♦. Pat visualised four+ diamonds to the King and at most two hearts in Zrinka's hand

and with the expected Spade lead bid 5♦ to earn a 95% score. Well judged.

**Session 2. Board 11  
Dealer South. Vul None.**

		♠T532			
		♥T7			
		♦9765			
		♣Q62			
♠KQ8	N		E	♠A76	
♥95	W		S	♥AKJ643	
♦43				♦AQJ	
♣AJT954				♣K	
		♠J94			
		♥Q82			
		♦KT82			
		♣873			

After a strong 2♣ opening by East and 3♣ response from West, E/W played in 6♥.

Kay Cussen (playing with Denis Sheehan) combined several chances to make 6♥. Winning the spade lead in hand, she played two top trumps, failing to bring down the Queen. Next came the ♠K. a spade to the King, ♠A discarding a diamond and a club ruff, establishing the suit. Kay now gave the defence their trump trick and claimed. The ♠Q was an entry to discard her other diamond on an established club. In this way, declarer combined the chances of felling the trump Queen and/or bringing down the ♠Q via a ruff. If both had failed, she could still fall back on the diamond finesse. This fine play earned an 81% score.

The winners were Noreen Pender (winning her first National Title) and Dave Terry who were 12th after the 1st Session. They were followed closely by Siobhán Part and B.J. O'Brien who came from 30th place after Session 1. In 3rd place came Kathleen Vaughan and Tom Gilligan. The Competition was directed in the usual efficient manner by Fearghal O'Boyle and Máiréad Basquille.

# Declan Byrne Bridge Online

**Declan Byrne Bridge students met recently for a weekend of social bridge at Fuchsia Lane Farm, Terryglass, Tipperary.**

Bridge was played in a converted hay barn which was an excellent location for a bridge club gathering. The spacious and well-lit playing area was equipped with a smart TV, wifi and comfortable tables and chairs for bridge. This charming venue, with its beautifully renovated self catering farmhouses, offers a unique and idyllic setting that combines the warmth of rustic elegance with the strategic thrill of bridge.

Declan will be running courses for bridge learners from Novice to Intermediate starting in late January 2024. For further information and details visit: [www.declanbyrne.ie](http://www.declanbyrne.ie)



Further information: [learnbridgeonline@gmail.com](mailto:learnbridgeonline@gmail.com)

[www.DeclanByrne.ie](http://www.DeclanByrne.ie)

**Next Courses Commence 22nd January 2024**

**Beginners Term 2 (The Next Step) - Monday 10:30am - 12:30pm**

**Improver (Level 1) Go further with better bidding - Monday 2:00pm - 4:00pm**

**Improver (Level 2) Intermediate - Tuesday 10:30am - 12:30pm**

All classes take place ONLINE Morning & Afternoon Only

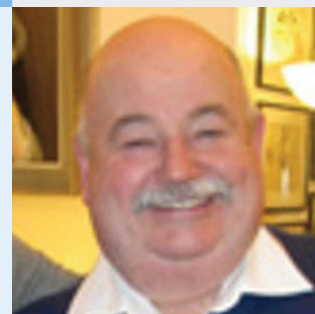
Course = 10 weeks | 2 hour lessons | €150 per person

All classes organised ONLINE using a combination of ZOOM & RealBridge



# Duais An Úachtaráin

BJ O'Brien



**This year's Duais was held at the Greenhills Hotel in Limerick, with CBAI President Gordon Lessells hosting the event in his home city. There were 66 pairs playing over three sessions with a new start time of 1pm on the Saturday.**

The Duais is the first major of the new bridge season and under the direction of the superb Diarmuid Reddan everything went off like clockwork, as it always does when Diarmuid is the bossman. The CEO of the CBAI, Dermot O'Brien, welcomed everyone and introduced Gordon to the players. Gordon recounted how bridge became his passion as a result of all the many friendships he found in the Limerick bridge playing community. *[Part 1 of Gordon's full story appears in this issue. Ed.]*

The very first board set the tone for an exciting weekend of bridge. You are in 6♥ and you have a singleton small in dummy opposite KQ109xxx. How do you play the suit for one loser? The winning [and correct] line is to play a heart to the 10. Right hand opponent held Jxx and lefty had Ax.

There were five Grandmasters in attendance. Two of them (Joan Kenny and Teresa Rigney) finished 2nd. A third, John Noonan, playing with Carol Ann Cummins was edged out of 3rd spot by Sean Maguire and Kate Daultry on the very last board. The winners were the holders - Grandmasters Derek O'Gorman and B.J. O'Brien who had three consistent sessions over 60%.

A couple of hands.

Dummy

		♠ J2			
		♥ AK76			
		♦ AJ65			
		♣ AQ5		You	
		N		♠ K96	
W		E		♥ J954	
				♦ 32	
		S		♣ 10432	

W	N	E	S
	1♦	P	1♠
P	2NT	P	4♠

Partner leads the ♣6. Declarer wins with the Ace and leads the ♠J from dummy. Do you cover or play small?

If you cover you lose out on a podium finish as declarer held:

♠ A1087543  
♥ 83  
♦ Q104  
♣ 8

and made all 13 tricks when the singleton ♠Q fell under the ♠A. The diamond finesse was right and you just play another spade towards the 10 8 for the marked finesse against the 9.

Derek O'Gorman judged this hand well to earn a complete top and help secure victory:

Hand 2.

		♠ A92			
		♥ 942			
		♦ Q74			
		♣ K542			
		N		♠ 87654	
♠ KQ		W		♥ A1073	
♥ 85		E		♦ A	
♦ 108532				♣ 1073	
♣ AQ86		S			
		♠ J103			
		♥ KQJ6			
		♦ KJ96			
		♣ J9			

East opened an Ekren 2♦ (weak with both majors). South (yours truly) doubled and West bid 2♥ (pass or correct). Derek (North) doubled to show values and East bid 2♠. I now overbid with 3♠ ("overbid" is being kind, Ed) and Derek was endplayed into bidding 3NT. Strangely, nobody else managed to get to game with 21 HCP and nary a five-card suit in sight!

East led a spade, Derek won the Ace and played a low diamond at trick two. The defence continued spades but the suit was blocked. West tried a low club towards Dummy's Jack, which was not a success, and nine tricks rolled home.

Sometimes getting busy in an auction, as E/W did here, can lead to opponents getting too high but sometimes the bridge gods can frown upon you and the cards allow the opponents to make a contract that nobody else will bid. *(I wonder what the bridge gods would have thought if West, on winning the ♠K, continued with CAQ, or CQ. Ed)*

A Great start to the bridge year.

*[Footnote: Inspired by the movie The Adjustment Bureau, starring Matt Damon and Emily Blunt, I'm formally proposing that CBAI set up a Result Adjustment Bureau. This body, which I'll chair myself, will hear appeals from players damaged by rogue results. The inaugural case is the hand above. I'm allowing E/W's result to stand, since the contract can be beaten. But I'm ADJUSTING N/S's result to 3NT-2. Diarmuid, would you kindly recalculate the scores? Thanks awfully. If we end up with new winners, so much the better. Ed.]*



# Magic Squeezes – Blockages

Rory Timlin



In this issue we look at squeeze hands where declarer has to deal with blockages in order to succeed.

## Questions:

### 1) Dealer South. Vul None. Teams.

North (Dummy)			
♠ J76			
♥ QJ			
♦ AKQ			
♣ 109532			
♠	N	E	♠
♥	W	E	♥
♦	W	E	♦
♣	S	S	♣
South (You)			
♠ AKQ108			
♥ K762			
♦ 9642			
♣ -			

South open 1♠ and gets to 6♣ after West overcalls 2♣. West leads ♣A. You ruff and lead a heart. West wins and plays another top club. Take it from here. (Trumps are 3/2. When diamonds are played, East plays ♦10, then ♦J.)

### 2) Dealer West. Vul E/W. Teams.

North (Dummy)			
♠ 6532			
♥ K754			
♦ 62			
♣ 973			
♠	N	E	♠
♥	W	E	♥
♦	W	E	♦
♣	S	S	♣
South (You)			
♠ AJ			
♥ AQJ			
♦ AKQJ107			
♣ AJ			

South plays in 6♦ against silent opponents. West leads ♠10, East playing ♠Q. Plan the play.

### 3) Dealer South. Vul N/S. Pairs.

North (Dummy)			
♠ KQ102			
♥ 5			
♦ AQ3			
♣ 97542			
♠ A9765	N	E	♠ J83
♥ 9743	W	E	♥ K8
♦ 98	W	E	♦ J10754
♣ K10	S	S	♣ QJ8
South (You)			
♠ 4			
♥ AQJ1062			
♦ K62			
♣ A63			

This is a double dummy problem, i.e. declarer can look at all four hands. You open 1♥ and end up in 4♥ after West overcalls 1♠ and East bids 2♣. ♦9 led. At Pairs, the target is 12 tricks. Over to you. (This is difficult).

### (4) Dealer West. Vul N/S. Pairs.

North (Dummy)			
♠ 95			
♥ KQ653			
♦ AK432			
♣ 5			
♠	N	E	♠
♥	W	E	♥
♦	W	E	♦
♣	S	S	♣
South (You)			
♠ A8			
♥ A10842			
♦ 6			
♣ AKQ43			

North opens 1♥, East overcalls 4♠, N/S bid to 6♥ and East bids 6♠! Now South bids 6NT and plays there. Opening lead ♦Q. Plan the play. As the play develops, East is void in hearts (discarding spades on heart leads) and West is void in spades (discarding ♦5 on first spade).

## Answers:

### 1) The full layout was:

North (Dummy)			
♠ J76			
♥ QJ			
♦ AKQ			
♣ 109532			
♠ 32	N	E	♠ 954
♥ A5	W	E	♥ 109843
♦ 8753	W	E	♦ J10
♣ AKQJ6	S	S	♣ 874
South (You)			
♠ AKQ108			
♥ K762			
♦ 9642			
♣ -			

In 6♣, you ruff the top club lead and play a heart. West wins and leads another top club. You ruff, cash ♥Q, play a trump to hand and ruff a low heart, West shedding a club. Noting that drawing trumps now will leave the diamonds blocked, you play diamonds from the top, hoping they are 3/3. But East plays ♦10 and ♦J on the first two diamonds. Now draw trumps, West and dummy discarding a club on the third round, leaving this position:

North (Dummy)			
♠ ---			
♥ --			
♦ Q			
♣ 109			
♠ --	N	E	♠ ---
♥ -	W	E	♥ 109
♦ 87	W	E	♦ --
♣ Q	S	S	♣ 8
South (You)			
♠ ---			
♥ K			
♦ 96			
♣ -			

Now lead ♥K and West is squeezed in the minors. (If he lets go a diamond, you unblock ♦Q.)

Note that you would have to risk a third top diamond before drawing trumps if East hadn't played ♦10 and ♦J on the first two rounds. This play is known as a Jettison Squeeze.



2) The full layout was:

			North (Dummy)					
			♠ 6532					
			♥ K754					
			♦ 62					
			♣ 973					
♠ 1098		N		♠ KQ74				
♥ 93				♥ 10862				
♦ 943	W		E	♦ 85				
♣ Q8642		S		♣ K105				
			♠ AJ					
			♥ AQJ					
			♦ AKQJ107					
			♣ AJ					
			South (You)					

Against 6♦, West leads ♠10 to the East's queen. There are 12 top winners, but a blockage in hearts is a problem. Outside of a 3/3 heart break, what other chances exist? Line 1, duck the lead to rectify the count and play for a simple squeeze in hearts and clubs if someone holds four+ hearts and both club honours (with obscure simple squeeze chance in hearts/spades). Or Line 2, Win the opening lead and play East for ♠K and four+ hearts. Line 2 is more likely. So win the lead and rattle off six rounds of diamonds, coming down to this six-card ending:

			North (Dummy)					
			♠ 6					
			♥ K754					
			♦ --					
			♣ 9					
♠ 9		N		♠ K				
♥ 93				♥ 10862				
♦ ---	W		E	♦ --				
♣ Q86		S		♣ K				
			♠ J					
			♥ AQJ					
			♦ ---					
			♣ AJ					
			South (You)					

Now cash ♣A, followed by ♥A, ♥Q and ♥J. If West follows suit three times in hearts, then overtake in dummy and hope for hearts 3/3. As the cards lie, West shows out in hearts. So duck the third heart in dummy and lead ♠J, forcing East to win and lead a heart to dummy at trick 13. This is a **Stepping Stone Squeeze**, in this case using East as a stepping stone at trick 12.

3) The full layout was:

			North (Dummy)					
			♠ KQ102					
			♥ 5					
			♦ AQ3					
			♣ 97542					
♠ A9765		N		♠ J83				
♥ 9743				♥ K8				
♦ 98	W		E	♦ J10754				
♣ K10		S		♣ QJ8				
			♠ 4					
			♥ AQJ1062					
			♦ K62					
			♣ A63					
			South (You)					

Contract 4♥ at Pairs. Playing double dummy, you must play specifically ♦Q and ♦6 (unblock) at trick one. Now finesse trumps and continue with trumps from the top, felling the King and drawing West's trumps, throwing three clubs from dummy as East throws two diamonds. This is the eight-card ending:

			North (Dummy)					
			♠ KQ102					
			♥ -					
			♦ A3					
			♣ 97					
♠ A9765		N		♠ J83				
♥ ---				♥ --				
♦ 8	W		E	♦ J10				
♣ K10		S		♣ QJ8				
			♠ 4					
			♥ 62					
			♦ K2					
			♣ A63					
			South (You)					

Now lead ♥6, letting go a club from dummy and East is squeezed. (a) If she throws a club, then lead a spade towards the king and West is forced to duck. Now revert to clubs, setting up trick 12 in clubs. (b) If she throws a spade, then lead a spade up. Again West has to duck. So win ♠K and lead ♠Q, felling ♠J and setting up ♠10 as the 12th trick. (c) If East lets go a diamond, then lead a spade up to the King (West must duck as before). Now ruff a spade, lead ♦K to the ace and lead ♠Q, felling ♠J and setting up ♠10. West will win ♠A and exit in clubs. But you win and lead ♦2 to dummy's ♦3 (note the farsighted diamond unblock at trick 1) and ♠10 is the 12th trick.

Playing single dummy, one might win trick one in hand and lead a spade to ♠K and ruff a spade. Now entries do not permit picking up trumps, pinning the spade and cashing the spade. One might even be tempted to play a spade to ♠10 at some stage. Either way, 12 tricks will not be made. 3NT by North will be held to 11 tricks unless a spade is led, which gives 12 tricks. The only lead to stop 12 tricks in hearts is a club.

(4) The full layout was:

			North (Dummy)					
			♠ 95					
			♥ KQ653					
			♦ AK432					
			♣ 5					
♠ ---		N		♠ KQJ1076432				
♥ J97				♥ ---				
♦ QJ1095	W		E	♦ 87				
♣ J10976		S		♣ 82				
			♠ A8					
			♥ A10842					
			♦ 6					
			♣ AKQ43					
			South (You)					

♦Q led against 6NT. There are 11 top tricks. What now? Line 1, win at trick one and play on clubs, hoping for a 4/3 break. But it looks like West is void in spades (on the bidding and the lack of a spade lead). West also has at most three hearts, so will likely be long in both minors. Line 2, duck the opening lead to rectify the count for a minor suit simple squeeze on West. The problem with this line is that a good defender will switch to clubs and destroy the communications for a squeeze. Line 3 (best line), win at trick one and play for a squeeze on West in the minors. Cash three top hearts, East discarding spades. In order to create the squeeze position, you must unblock ♥10 and ♥8 from hand and ♥6 (or ♥5) from dummy. Now cash ♠A and West, as expected, shows out, playing ♦5. This is the eight-card ending:



North (Dummy)			
♠	9		
♥	53		
♦	A432		
♣	5		
♠	---	N	♠ QJ1076
♥	---	W	♥ ---
♦	QJ10	E	♦ 7
♣	J10976	S	♣ 82
	♠ 8		
	♥ 42		
	♦ -		
	♣ AKQ43		
South (You)			

Now lead ♥2. If West plays a diamond, then win with ♥3 and play on diamonds from the top to set up a long diamond with ♥5 as entry, while if West plays a club, then win with ♥5 and play on clubs from the top to set up a long club with ♥4 as entry. 12 tricks made. This is a Seesaw Squeeze, with the seesaw in the little hearts.

Note that 7♥ is beaten on a spade lead, ruffed. Can anything go wrong in the above play in 6NT? Yes, if you misread West's distribution in the minors. 5/5 is most likely per se. And West might have opened a pre-empt holding 6/4 minors at favourable vul. So it seems best to play for 5/5.

## Book Review - Editor

### Bridge, A Love Story

by Zia Mahmood

Whether you've been playing the game for a long time or are a relative newcomer, you can scarcely have failed to be aware of the great Zia Mahmood.

In any sport, identification of the GOAT [Greatest of All Time] frequently engenders lively debate, yet in bridge it is nigh on impossible credibly to contend that Zia does not deserve that accolade. At once outrageously flamboyant, charismatic and technically brilliant, Zia has for decades now been the most publicly identifiable figurehead for our game, and he is owed an immense debt of gratitude. Bridge has needed Zia just as athletics needed Usain Bolt, football needed Messi, snooker needed Ronnie O'Sullivan and racing needed Frankie Dettori.

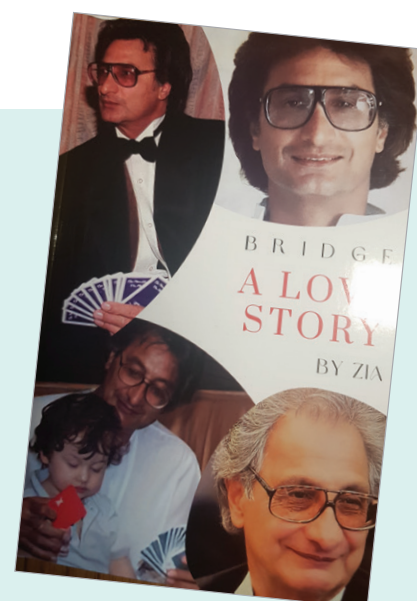
Britain's Andrew Robson, a regular partner, describes this book as Zia's magnum opus, and I could not agree more. The Foreword by world star Michael Rosenberg, says that he learned more from Zia in their time playing together than from any other five players put together – high praise indeed.

Multiple world champion Jeff Meckstroth, currently Zia's partner, observes "He's one of my favourite partners – when I play with him I don't have to play against him!"

With testimonials like that, you know you can't go far wrong. This book is a humdinger. Printed in soft cover, it's available via [cbai.ie](http://cbai.ie), but also Amazon and other bridge book outlets. This is the perfect Xmas present for anyone close to you who loves the game.

It comes as no surprise that the title of Chapter 1 (of 55) is "DOUBLE!" In the final stanza of the 2009 Bermuda Bowl (World Championships), Zia as East doubled North's diamond cuebid, holding a void. Would his partner (Bob Hamman), on lead against 6H (also doubled by Zia), lead a diamond from KJxxx or a club from KQJx? I will not spoil it for you, but I will say that Hamman's choice allowed the contract to make!

Readers of – ahem – a certain age will know of Rixi Markus, the formidable woman who won multiple titles representing Britain. It would be safe to say that Rixi took few prisoners – a soulmate perhaps of our own Ruth Giddings! So when you see a Chapter entitled "Rixi and the Sex Maniac", your



interest is bound to be piqued (or else you are clinically dead).

Distressingly but perhaps inevitably, Zia closes this wonderful book by posing the question "Time to Call it a Day?" The great man admits "I see the end of my bridge road approaching". He finds the most elegant of end notes, recalling that a critic of his once told a dinner gathering "Zia's life is a disgrace. He has never worked a day in his life. He is a gambler and a philanderer. He drinks too much and eats at overpriced restaurants. He is addicted to cards, especially bridge". Zia's riposte? "It's all true. I plead guilty on all charges. I have loved every moment".

This is a bridge book for the ages.

Enda Murphy  
Editor

# Paddy Paul Donovan - Irish Bridge Legend

Séamus Dowling



**Whenever old timers debated who was the all-time, greatest, Irish bridge player the name Paddy Paul Donovan invariably came up.**

Eóin O’Riordan, who played for Ireland in the 1960s said, ‘Donovan was the best of them all,’ and O’Riordan played long enough to meet our current greats at the table. Author and script writer Wesley Burrows (The Riordans, Glenroe), who also played for Ireland and who played with and against Donovan said: ‘Donovan never made a mistake.’ A high claim indeed! Pat Barry, himself among the best of his era, admired Donovan both as a player and a person. Another international, the late Risteárd de Barra, not one to lavish praise on fellow competitors, also considered him one of the best. He also noted Donovan’s lack of error at the table. ‘Big Paddy’ Walsh, as he was affectionately known around the Templeogue area of Dublin, to distinguish him from other players of the same name, told me that he had read that the legendary Italian player Giorgio Belladonna, when asked who was the best player he had ever faced at the table, had replied: ‘Paddy Donovan of Ireland.’ This may be apocryphal, but the anecdote illustrates the myth that grew around Paddy Paul Donovan.

Subjective assessment may be tainted by admiration, but where does one find the objective evidence of greatness? There are easy criteria: number of national championships won, number of appearances on the national team. Opinions of contemporaries (such as those above) should be duly respected. Donovan’s ability may be gauged by looking at the names of his regular partners



Paddy Paul Donovan, holding cup, with L to R: Des Purcell, Jack Kelly, Jimmy Bastow. 1952.

- Des Purcell, Eddie Barry, Jack Kelly among them - themselves all worthy of places among the all-time greats. Records of brilliant plays are revealing, maybe even definitive, but few hands played and recorded during that period are attributed to individuals. We have only one example of Paddy’s play - or rather his bidding - which is reproduced below. Statistically, his achievements are not hugely impressive: thirteen national championships, four Ireland caps in European championships, fourteen Camrose appearances. But, wherever he ranks in the hierarchy of great players, both anecdote and official record show him to have been a strong and unforgettable personality.

This is the only extant example of his prowess. Against the Netherlands in the European championships in Brighton in 1950 he judged well to ignore a 6-3 heart fit.

Dealer North. Vul N/S.

		♠Q73		
		♥A108743		
		♦3		
		♣643		
♠84		N		♠A10952
♥J5		W	E	♥96
♦K862				♦A1095
♣KJ1075		S		♣92
		♠KJ6		
		♥KQ2		
		♦QJ74		
		♣AQ8		
W	N	E	S	
				1NT
P	3♥	P		3NT
All Pass				

Eddie Barry’s game-forcing 3♥ response was aggressive, even opposite a 16-18 no-trump. In those days it was inconceivable for Donovan’s partner not to have a heart honour for the bid. (Transfers had not yet been introduced in 1950). Donovan judged well to play in the unbeatable 3NT, with the opening lead coming into his hand,



and all suits guarded. At the other table Des Purcell, East, led the ♣9 against North's 4♥. Declarer had to lose a spade, a diamond and two clubs for one down.

Despite his brilliance, which has never been questioned, O'Donovan had a defect as a player. Eóin O'Riordan, an admirer and friend, put it succinctly: 'He was hard on partners.' And his irascibility of temperament transferred into his dealings with others when he assumed a position of authority within the CBAI. Many who knew him spoke of his wit and charm but he was not universally popular. Mention of his name could evoke an emotive response. In London in 2003, I met Dermot Hunt, whose father, A. G. Hunt from Cavan, had been president of the CBAI in 1964/65. Hunt could not bring himself to mention Donovan's name: 'That mad man from Galway who took us out of the Camrose'. It was an unfair charge, since Donovan did not become an officer of the CBAI until seven months after the association had withdrawn from the home-international championship, but it was typical of the responses that mention of O'Donovan's name brought forth.

So, who was this man who evoked both adulation and antipathy? A native of Cork, he had a doctorate in chemistry and worked in both Galway and Dublin. Politically he was staunchly nationalist and a keen promoter of the Irish language. When secretary of the CBAI he introduced the Irish form of the title, Contract Bridge Association of Ireland: Comhlachas Cor Bheriste na hÉireann, which is still used today (see the title page of the Irish Bridge Diary, for example). Indeed his passion for the language – some would say his fanaticism – embroiled him in controversy from time to time. In 1953 he submitted the Irish version of team members' names to the Finnish organisers of the European championships.

He regarded using the native language of the country as normal. His tone could be derisively ironic and downright insulting. When the same team returned from Helsinki he wrote to the captain (in English) congratulating the team on their 'excellent performance.' They had finished third last and had not won a single match. Not the way to win friends and influence people! Minutes of CBAI meetings reveal clashes with many people. Donovan was a letter-of-the-law man, at least when he so chose. In 1954 Jack Kelly, Dick Belton, Des Purcell and Jimmy Bastow – all partners or team mates of his and indeed his friends – forgot to pay their annual subscriptions to the CBAI by the specified date. Donovan, as CBAI secretary, refused to let them play in the 1955 national Kelburne Cup competition, as technically they were not CBAI members. There may have been personal scores to settle – Belton had recently replaced Donovan on the team which had won a number of national titles – although contemporaries testified to PPD's lack of malice. It required a special general meeting and an executive meeting at which standing orders were suspended to allow the four to become members again. Incidentally, they went on to win the Kelburne that year!

What might be described as the clash of the titans occurred in 1958. Denis Jackson was now the secretary of the CBAI. In addition he was the country's leading tournament director. Like Donovan he was a man who liked to implement rules and sometimes to make rules so he could implement them. Donovan tried to use Marmic, a new Italian, strong-pass, bidding system. Jackson, despite the fact that there was no rule forbidding its use, refused to allow it. Donovan appealed, right up to CBAI executive but Jackson, who controlled the executive (as had Donovan before him), had his way.

The outcome was the outlawing of any system or convention not published in the English language. The rule continues to this day.

In many ways he seems to have been ahead of his time. Nearly half a century before the CBAI established a head office, Donovan saw the value of having one. During his term of office as secretary he rented office space, first in Seville Place and later in Aungier Street, Dublin. When he left office after four years the head office was discontinued and it was not until 1999 that the CBAI established another headquarters, this time a permanent one.

Although nationalist views such as those held by Donovan were behind the withdrawal of the Republic of Ireland from the Camrose Trophy tournament, it was during his time as CBAI secretary that negotiations between the CBAI and the Northern Bridge Union led to the formation of the Irish Bridge Union and Donovan was one of the chief negotiators. Unity of the country for World and European championships was achieved in 1955 but it was not until 1998 that the Republic, now simply called Ireland competed for the Camrose Trophy again.

Paddy Paul Donovan died suddenly in April 1977 following a game of rubber-bridge at the Regent Bridge Club in Dublin's Waterloo Road. With Ruth Giddings as partner and needing a part-score to win the rubber, the auction began: 1♥ from Ruth, 1♠ from Donovan. Ruth's rebid of 2♥ should have ended the auction, but Donovan insisted on playing the hand, and bid 2♠. He made the contract and went to the bar for a drink (non-alcoholic; he did not drink). Returning to Ruth's table laughing, he playfully teased her: 'Oh, I couldn't let Ruth play that hand.' His last words before he fell dead at her feet.



# Summer Escapades Junior bridge Update

Luca Crone



**Go West, young man! In July Matthew O'Farrell and I ventured to the summer NABC (North American Bridge Championships) in Chicago, Illinois.**

It was made possible by Thomas MacCormac and his American comrade, GS Jade Barrett, known to many Irish bridge players for his unorthodox bidding. Although he does bring the Wild West to his table, he is one of the most renowned bridge coaches in the US and currently ranked 25th in all time US master points.

The NABCs are a lot bigger than anything we are used to in Ireland. It is 11 days full of bridge with as many as 12 different tournaments at the one time. Over 3,500 travelled from all over the world to play. We were predominantly playing pairs games in preparation for the U26 European Pairs which were straight after. As we were new to ACBL (American Contract Bridge League) events, we had to get ranked. I never realised how hard it is to explain your bridge ability to someone when they have no idea what you mean when you say Master Pairs, Mixed Teams or even Holmes Wilson! There



A team of Irish Junior players is competing here in Chicago. They are pictured here with sponsors and coaches. (Front) Irish player Matthew O'Farrell, coach GS Jade Barrett and Daniel Hoestra; (center row) coaches Donna Lombardini and Karen Barrett; (back row) players Jason Doyle and Luca Crone.

is no direct equivalence with our Irish ranking either. The first day we played a two-session Regional Pairs, there weren't any big events on yet. We started nicely picking up some gold points (their version of national points) for a solid 55%. On a high, the next day we entered the 0-6,000 Life Master Pairs. It was a three-day event with half the field cut each day. We made it to the last day comfortably.

Here was a bidding test. All NV your partner opens 1♠, and you hold:

♠ A10764  
♥ J7643  
♦ A4  
♣ 2

## What do you bid?

Dealer South. Vul None.

			♠ A10764
			♥ J7643
			♦ A4
			♣ 2
♠ 2		N	♠ J5
♥ Q1052			♥ K98
♦ Q109752	W	E	♦ 8
♣ 98		S	♣ KQJ10754
			♠ KQ983
			♥ A
			♦ KJ63
			♣ A3

W	N	E	S
			1♠
	4♣ <sup>1</sup>		4NT
	5♠		6♦
	7♠		P

<sup>1</sup>Splinter; <sup>2</sup>RKCB;

<sup>3</sup>2 keycards with the ♠Q (5th trump = yes)

<sup>4</sup>3rd Round Diamond Control; <sup>5</sup>Yes

To those who joined me in bidding 4♣, well done, it certainly makes it easier to get there. It is common practice nowadays to play this with a range of 9-12.

**We got a write up in the bulletin for our concise but effective bidding on this board in the final.**

We were the only pair to find the grand. How would you bid it with your regular partner, and would you have found it in six bids?

We played a few more events with mixed success but our final event was the Red Ribbon Pairs, a two day event with the field cut in half after the first day. As it was a restricted event it meant we couldn't use our favourite bidding gadgets. We had to remove transfers over 1♣ and a few more enjoyable conventions we had. We were going to have to use more standard methods... how could we survive! Thankfully we only had one brain lapse in this regard.

## Don't save your partner

Now what would you do on this collection:

♠ K9642  
♥ J83  
♦ A10543  
♣ -

The bidding has gone:

W	N	E	S
			1♣
P	1♠	P	2♣
P	P	X	P
P	?		

Doesn't sound like great news and one could be forgiven for thinking surely another spot is playable. On this logic I decided to SOS XX, Matthew dutifully bidding 2♥, which was doubled and drifted one off.



## Dealer South. Vul Both.

♠K9642					
♥J83					
♦A10543					
♣-					
♠Q53	N		♠AJ1087		
♥1092	W	E	♥A65		
♦J2			♦Q976		
♣AQ532	S		♣J		
♠-					
♥KQ74					
♦K8					
♣K1098764					

3♣ was cold! Ouch, I'll know Matthew holds good club spots in future and not try to rescue him. We ended in an acceptable 17th place, and learned a lot from an intense 11 days. But we were headed for the Netherlands next morning. There's nothing like being awake for almost 35 hours to get you prepared for more bridge! The Championships was split in two parts, the Mixed/IMP pairs battled over the first two days and then the age stratified pairs (U16, U21, U26, U26W, U31) the following three days. I was playing in the Mixed Pairs with Isabel and Matthew was playing in the IMP pairs with Tom. David and Phedra also were playing in the Mixed Pairs.

## Give me your worst

How often do you play in the suit that your opponents have bid naturally?

As dealer (Nil All) you hold:

♠ A764  
♥ K972  
♦ A865  
♣ K

You open 1D and the bidding proceeds:

W	N	E	S
		1♦	1♥
X	1♠	P	?

Now what? I was a tad suspicious of the 1♠ bid (any psyche is possible at a table of juniors!). With X virtually guaranteeing spades, I knew it wouldn't stop there so I said I would pass for the meantime, besides is 2♣ definitely natural now?



Pictured(L-R): David Hoyne, Phedra Kingston, Matthew O'Farrell, Luca Crone, Tom Gorey & Isabel Burke

LHO bids 2♣ which gets passed around to you. Now what? I decided that 2♣ must be natural and likely scores better than defending 2♣. So I decided to test Isabel! 2♣ got passed out, phew.

Making 2♠ got us just over 80%. Most bid 1NT with the North hand, so playing in spades was essential to score better.

## Board 17. Dealer North. Vul None.

♠K1083					
♥65					
♦KJ10					
♣6532					
♠QJ92	N		♠A764		
♥83	W	E	♥K972		
♦Q72			♦A865		
♣AJ108	S		♣K		
♠5					
♥AKQ104					
♦943					
♣Q974					

Next on the agenda, the U26 pairs. Tom and Isabel were playing in the U26 as well, while David and Phedra played in the U21 pairs. The World Youth Teams were straight after the European Pairs, in the same location so many pairs were trying to minimise the amount of bridge they would be playing. As a result, more pairs joined for the second half of the championships. The field was considerably better in the U26 pairs than in the mixed.

It was two days of qualification with the top 18 pairs qualifying for the final. To stay above par would be a tough battle with many more experienced partnerships.

Unfortunately, none of us could do it. Maybe it was the tiredness finally setting in or perhaps that is what we like to tell ourselves.

Our last competition of a very long stint was the President's Cup. Everyone who didn't make it through to their respective finals was entered. We started off quite well with almost 59% in the first session, putting us in 8th. We had found our groove again.

## Go big or go home

Sometimes you must be prepared to go wrong to do right. Besides it was our last day of almost three weeks of bridge, we were allowed to have a bit of fun. Toward the end of the final session this board came along:

## Board 22. Dealer East. Vul E/W.

♠T2					
♥QJ9876					
♦1085					
♣92					
♠QJ974	N		♠A		
♥A1054	W	E	♥K		
♦K3			♦AJ97		
♣Q7	S		♣KJ106543		
♠K8653					
♥32					
♦Q642					
♣A8					

The bidding went as follows: [I was East]

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



Pictured (L-R): Fearghal O'Boyle, Klara Flanagan, Phedra Kingston, David Hoyne, Eve Connell, Aileen Armstrong, John Phelan (NPC), Martin Connell

We play transfers over 1♣ and over low level interference so Matthew could bid 2♦ to show 6+ hearts. Then the German North bid 4♠. I have a good hand, most likely the best. 4♠ is likely weak and pre-emptive. We could easily have game and if I pass, Matthew may well pass, taking me for a minimum. Passing was not an option. I'm not a fan of double, nothing is clear yet we could easily be making 5♣ vul vs 300 penalty

in 4♠x. I muscled up some courage and bid a pushy 5♣. It is normally profitable to give the opponents the last guess. This paid dividends here as when it came around to my RHO, she didn't know what to do. Grief could have been avoided had she shown a strong Spade raise initially, eg by bidding 2NT. With partner therefore in the dark, she bid 5♠ which I promptly doubled, thank you! This was two down for a complete top for us.

We had a strong finish that brought us to 6th - just missing out on a medal as the 2nd U26 pair.

An event-filled month of bridge to say the least. We had some successes but as always we plan to improve on this in the future.

*[Great stuff. Well done Luca and all our under-age team members. Junior Bridge looks to be in rude good health, and we need to keep it that way. Ed]*

## WELL PLAYED PHEDRA!

**The 18th World Youth Team Championships took place in July-August in Veldhoven. This deal was reported in the Bulletin by NPC John Phelan, and it featured excellent declarer play by Ireland's Phedra Kingston (just turned 17).**



Phedra Kingston

Phedra declared 6NT as North, on the ♥10 lead.

Diamonds were tested and good for four tricks, giving 11 on top. ♣K with East would allow a twelfth but East followed smoothly with a low club when Phedra opened the suit with the 9 from hand.

Deciding that West had the King, Phedra ran the 9 to West's 10. She later entered South and completed the intra-finesse by leading the Queen, catching the King and pinning East's Jack. Very well played.

*(The intra-finesse was first documented by Gabriel Chagas of Brazil, as part of the "Bold Bridge Tips" series, which ran from 1974 to 1994).*

			♠ AQ6
			♥ Q74
			♦ A843
			♣ A98
♠ J109752	N	♠ 843	
♥ J3		♥ 109865	
♦ 96	W	♦ J105	
♣ K107	S	♣ J2	
		♠ K	
		♥ AK2	
		♦ KQ72	
		♣ Q6543	



Phedra and David



# ACBL Appeals Rulings

Fearghal O'Boyle



Here we will be looking at a published Appeal Case from the ACBL (American Contract Bridge League). The ACBL has for many years published National Appeal Cases where they include the TD decision, the Appeal Committee (Reviewer) decision and afterwards they ask other expert players and Directors to comment on each case.

We will look at one such case here and hopefully highlight any interesting or instructional points – all with the benefit of hindsight of course.

This particular case is from Memphis 2019. The N/S players asked for a ruling. The Director gave a ruling. E/W appealed the ruling. The Appeals Committee (Reviewer) gave their ruling. Afterwards an expert panel gave their comments on the Director and Committee decisions and now with due acknowledgment and respect to everyone involved I am going to paraphrase, summarise, share and highlight the key points of the case.

Dealer xx. Vul All. Pairs

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

The bidding went as follows:

W	N	E	S
1♦	P	1♥	P
3♥	P	4NT <sup>1</sup>	P
5♦ <sup>2</sup>	P	5♠ <sup>3</sup>	P
6♥ <sup>4</sup>	P	7♥	All Pass

<sup>1</sup> 4NT was RKCB (1430);

<sup>2</sup> 5D showed 0 or 3 of the 5 keycards.

<sup>3</sup> 5S asked about HQ.

<sup>4</sup> 6H denied the HQ.

N/S said that the 6♥ bid was very slow.

Declarer made 7♥.

N/S called the TD to say that the 'slow' 6♥ might have influenced East's decision to bid the Grand Slam. North/South alleged that there had been a 6-8 second hesitation before the 6♥ bid. East/West strongly disputed that West broke tempo.

## The Director's Ruling:

Based on Law 16 (Unauthorized Information), the Director disallowed the 7♥ bid, and using Law 12C1E, adjusted the result to 6♥+1 by East.

## The Appeal:

E/W appealed the ruling, believing that the 6♥ bid had been in normal tempo (2-3 seconds), and so did not pass any unauthorised information to East, leaving East free to bid whatever he liked.

The Reviewer met with the players and confirmed the facts of the case. The West player insisted that he had not broken tempo, since he knew his agreements, and only took a couple of seconds to bid 6♥. He said that he played 5NT as denying the queen as well, but showing a better hand, and that he considered that call, but rejected it because he was not sure his partner would understand it as such.

The South player felt that the break in tempo had been about 7-8 seconds.

The Reviewer showed the auction through the 6♥ bid, along with the East hand, to six players and asked each one, "What does a 5-7 second pause before your partner's 6♥ bid suggest to you? Does it help you figure out what to do now?" All six players responded that they did not know what it suggested. Several offered that it was possible West was unsure of what their bids meant, since this was not a common auction. In any case, it did not suggest any particular action or actions to any of those polled.

The Reviewer, decided that the evidence supported the Director's conclusion that there was a reasonable likelihood that West had broken tempo before the 6♥ bid. Most telling, was his own statement where he described considering another call before choosing 6♥.

However, the Reviewer's poll made it appear that whatever hesitation there was, it did not demonstrably suggest bidding 7♥ over Pass. Law 16 reads, in part, "A player may not choose a call that is demonstrably suggested over another by unauthorized information..." The word "demonstrably" in this Law means that the suggestion should be clear and unambiguous. In this case, it was obviously unclear to the pollees what it suggested. Therefore, the Reviewer felt that there was no basis for adjusting the score, and he restored the table result of 7♥ by East.



## Summary:

The Director adjusted the table result from 7♥ made to 6♥+1 by East on the basis that West hesitated before bidding 6♥ and that the hesitation suggested bidding the Grand Slam over Passing while the Appeals Committee (Reviewer) restored the table result 7♥ bid and made.

It is not clear from the write up whether or not the Director consulted with other players but let's assume that he did. The process in these 'hesitation' cases is that we first of all find out if there was a 'hesitation'. Having established that there was a hesitation we then consult (poll) players of the same standard, playing the same system as East to see what they would have done after a normal speed 6♥. If East's peers all bid 7♥ then the table result stands but if some of them pass then the Director has to investigate the matter further. Again it is not clear from the write up if the Director investigated further or not.

There are some Directors who adopt the 'If it hesitates – shoot it' policy and while this is most certainly not what the Law says, it often leads to the correct ruling.

The process carried out by the Reviewer was much better. Having established that there was a 'hesitation', he then pointed out, that Law 16 (Unauthorised Information) requires that there be a 'logical alternative i.e. some East players who will pass 6♥ and there must also be a connection between the slow 6♥ and East's decision to bid 7♥. We can see that the Reviewer did a perfect job both in polling other East players and in then finding out from the pollees what information a 'slow' 6♥ bid might contain?

The Reviewer learned that while there was a logical alternative to bidding 7♥ (i.e. passing 6♥), the 'slow' 6♥ carried no information

and therefore did not suggest bidding 7♥. For that reason the Reviewer decided that the conditions to adjust the score under Law 16 had not been met and he over-ruled the Director and reinstated the table score of 7♥ made.

So which decision was the better decision – the Director's (6♥+1) or the Reviewer's (7♥)? To help us decide we had best listen to a few of the comments from the 'Expert Panel'.

## The Experts Comments:

**Jeff Goldsmith (ACBL Laws Commission):** *There is a very strong piece of evidence that there was a hesitation i.e. East's 7♥ bid. I suspect East imagined that West was 5-6 with the trump jack, in which case, bidding seven is reasonable. From East's perspective, what else could a BIT show? East's 7♥ bid just can't be based on anything other than UI, so I'd rule as the Director did.*

**Ton Kooijman (WBF Laws Commission):** *I am surprised that neither the TD nor Reviewer seemed interested in the question why East after hearing that the ♥Q was missing with a 4-4 suit bid the grand. This surprise leads to the second question: it takes at most three seconds to make the call denying the queen if that is available in the system, so what does a long hesitation mean then? Without a convincing answer to the contrary on the first question my logic tells me that East had UI and interpreted the hesitation as: 'he was not sure how to show or deny the queen'.*

**Rui Marques (WBF Chief TD):** *The write up is skimpy on details on the Director's decision process. Was there a poll conducted? Anyway, from West's statement to the reviewer the hesitation becomes clear, and the reason for it also. Maybe the Director failed to poll, but his decision in this case is the correct one.*

**Adam Wildavsky (WBF Laws Commission):** *Both East's hand and N/S's request for the TD are evidence that the call was out of tempo. We would all like to know why East bid 7♥ - it seems another failure of procedure not to have asked him. As I see it, the Reviewer's procedure was better than the TD's but the TD's ruling was better than the Reviewer's.*

**Kit Woolsey (World Class Player):** *The 5♠ bid asked for the HQ. Suppose West had, in fact, held the ♥Q, I think we would all be saying: West's huddle (as opposed to a quick 6♥ signoff) indicates that he has the ♥Q and is deciding how to show it. We would not allow East to be bidding 7♥.*

*The 6♥ call denies holding the ♥Q. So, on what basis did East bid 7♥? We know the answer. It was because he "knew" from the table action that his partner had the Queen, even though his partner had denied it. Even though he had misread the situation and then gotten lucky, it is apparent that his 7♥ call was based on UI. The cards speak. Even though those polled couldn't work out what the huddle meant, it is clear that East had worked it out.*

## Conclusion:

The expert panel are saying that the Director got the ruling right and that he was correct to roll the table result back to (6♥+1).

While it is very unusual to set aside the results of a poll, that seems to be what the expert panel are suggesting. They are saying that while the players polled might not have been able to work out what the slow 6♥ meant, this East player did figure it out.

I agree. Why did East bid 7♥? For sure, if West had not hesitated then East would not have bid 7♥ i.e. the only reason that East bid 7♥ was because West hesitated. So East has used unauthorised information and we 'adjust back to 6♥+1'.

# Bridge in Post-War Ireland (1949)

Editor



**On a recent routine visit to CBAI HQ, I met a team member as I exited. She was lugging a box of books upstairs. “People are just leaving these old editions in with us”, she told me.**

I could see that at the top of the pile was “The Irish Bridge Annual” (see photo). I told her I was unaware of such a publication, and she showed me (see photo) that it dated from 1949. Proprietors of the Donnybrook-based publication were Noel Byrne and Joseph O’Neill.

Being a sucker for this kind of thing, I “borrowed” the booklet and spent an agreeable couple of hours leafing through it. Fully 20 of the 80 pages were taken up by ads, sometimes two to a page (see Vamour ad herewith). These days Bridge in Ireland has many more players – whatever are we doing wrong in terms of attracting this kind of revenue?

Context is all-important. In 1949 my mother was 19 and my father 25. They had yet to meet. They may have been pre-occupied by the declaration that year of the new Republic of Ireland. Perhaps they bumped into each other at Croke Park, where 80,000 souls for reasons best known to themselves, gathered to collectively take the Pioneer Teetotaler Pledge. If you were in any doubt as to who was running the country at the time, dear friends, the answer is Archbishop John Charles

McQuaid, whose none-too-fragrant ring was routinely kissed by every denizen of Leinster House with ministerial aspirations. McQuaid masterminded a highly potent effort to herd Irish people back into the 19th century, where he so clearly felt they belonged, and could be suitably controlled.

In the real world, Harry S Truman was still in the White House. Orwell published the presciently dystopian 1984. NATO was formed. Chairman Mao proclaimed the People’s Republic of China, founded on Communist principles. RCA came up with the first ever colour TV. The first VW Beetle was produced.

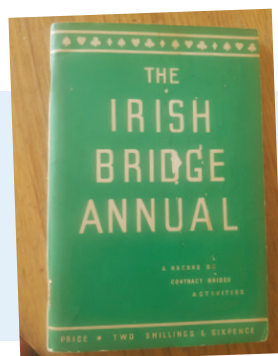
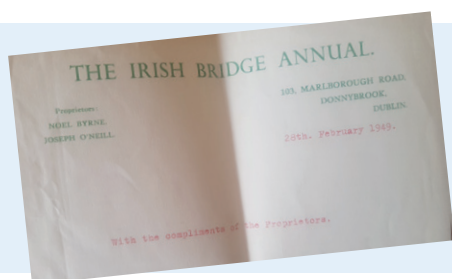
This, gentle reader, was the Ireland and the world which attended the production of the 1949 Irish Bridge Annual. A five-page article by Joseph O’Neill traces the history of CBAI from its 1931 establishment by Mrs Lambert. O’Neill estimated CBAI expenditure at a conservative £2,000 and threw down the gauntlet to a membership of 2,500 plus to fund it. Clearly, 20 pages of ads did not cut the mustard.

The Annual notes that the inaugural European Bridge Championships were held in The Hague. Ten countries took part, with Britain beating Sweden into second spot. Irish team names that resonate included McMenamin,

Burke, Egan and McLoone. Ireland also joined Wales at the bottom of 1949’s Camrose table. Matches were decided on differential aggregate points (so if you bid and made 3NT in one room for 600, while in the other room it was 1NT+2 for 150, you gained 450 points. There was no conversion to IMPs). The winning England team included Reese-Shapiro, who would in 1965 be the subject of cheating allegations in the World Championships.

The Annual reported separately on “Bridge in the Provinces” and “Bridge in the Metropolis”. Hmmmm. Down home in Wexford, the torchbearer was the formidable international player, Moreen McCarthy. Moreen was a force of nature who taught and organised so many players. She was kind enough to play with me a few times. On one hand we got a good score for playing 2♠ in a 4-3 fit. When I sought to rejoice, Moreen replied “Young man, 4-3 is NOT a fit!!!!” Busted.

Still showing the times that were in it, there was a 6-pager on Rubber Bridge Tactics. There were 18 following pages on the Laws of Duplicate Bridge. And at that point, the ads returned. O’Dearest (“for the rest of your life”). The Regent Bridge Club (then headquartered in Harcourt St). Ross’s hotel on Dun Laoghaire seafront “with a tradition of excellence and a reputation for its modern amenities”.



I think it was Mary Hopkin...."Those were the days my friend"...

Anyway, I'm indebted to our pre-eminent Bridge scribe and historian, Seamus Dowling, who shed light on this era...

The Irish Bridge Annual was produced, written and edited jointly by Joe O'Neill and Noel Byrne. I don't think it was an official CBAI publication although O'Neill and Byrne were central to CBAI organisation at the time and for many years besides.

There were definitely two issues published and there may have been three - 1948 to 1950.

Joe O'Neill played an important role in the early years of the CBAI. He was involved in the process that led to starting the Camrose competition 1937. I acquired a body of revealing correspondence of the time relating to the topic (retained by his widow Mairéad who gave it to her niece for safe keeping. George Ryan got it from her when I was researching CBAI history.

It is now in CBAI HQ). He made significant contributions to the development and promotion of the game from the 30s into the '50s, including doing live broadcasts of Camrose matches on Radio Éireann. He was bridge correspondent for the Irish Independent for many years, a role that was taken over by Mairéad after his death. She also was correspondent for the Irish Press.

Wow! Wouldn't it be great if those Camrose broadcasts survived?!

Editor



## Limerick Congress

Diarmuid Reddan

**The Limerick Congress was held in the Greenhill Hotel Ennis Road Limerick October 13th - 15th.**

CBAI President Gordon Lessells had the additional distinction of being Honorary Limerick Congress President for 2023.

Limerick Congress always tries to break new ground and is not afraid to try things with new events and start times etc

For a number of years now, rather than just have a Mixed Pairs on Friday, night they have a "Premier Pairs" where there are prizes for the Best Mixed Pair, Best Women's Pair and the Best Men's Pair. This allows all of the better pairs to compete with whatever partner they like on the Friday night and to compete at a high level.

Our thanks must go to Kay Cussen and the Lantern Bridge Club who contributed no fewer than seven pairs to the Novice event.

A number of years ago Limerick also changed the format of the Congress Pairs. It is the only one in the country run on a Swiss format with imp scoring converted to VPs. (In simple

terms - it's Teams scoring with no teammates!) This type of event is very popular as those who are doing well get to play against others who are doing as well and those doing badly get to play against others in the same position! This year, with the Rugby World Cup on, Limerick decided to start the Congress Pairs at 12 noon and be finished by 7.45pm to allow everyone to enjoy the match on the Big Screen (*pity about the result, Ed.*). This was a great success and even allowed those who wanted to play for just one day the opportunity to drive to the venue and return home that same day. Limerick are going to stick with this plan for next year also.

The winners of the Congress Pairs were Bernie Tynne and Freddie Langford (both Past Presidents of the Limerick Congress and the Limerick Bridge Club), and they took home the Skelly Salver.

The Intermediate Pairs were won by Philip Cretch and Anne Maria MacSweeney who I understand were winning their first Congress Intermediate event. They took home the Gordon Holmes Trophy.



CBAI President Gordon Lessells with Limerick Congress Teams winners (L-R): Derek O'Gorman, Dan MacIntosh, Louise Mithcel and B.J. O'Brien.

The Congress Teams is always a hotly contested affair with bragging rights to be had for the year as well as the fabulous Treaty Stone Silver Trophy. This year's winners were BJ O'Brien, Derek O'Gorman, Dan MacIntosh and Louise Mitchell. They were well beaten in two of their eight matches but the cream still rises to the top. It's a difficult trophy to retain however and the author of this article is already putting together his team for next year!

Thanks to all of those from Limerick who played and also of course to all of those who travelled - including our internationally renowned TD, Fearghal O'Boyle.

Roll on 2024!



# Club Focus

## Bray Bridge Club

Anne Stewart



**A type of bridge, initially thought of as a variant of whist, was played as early as the late 1870s. At that time, the notion of a contested auction did not exist and the dealer, who was always the declarer, decided to either play in a trump suit or in no-trump.**

Either of the opponents could double and either member of the declaring side could redouble, with doubling and redoubling continuing *ad infinitum*.

The principle of 'auction' bridge was introduced in 1905 along with the corresponding Auction Bridge Magazine (later Bridge Magazine), but it wasn't until 1926 that its now successor, 'contract' bridge, became established.

A contributor to the then magazine, a British team bridge player and poet laureate, Mrs. Edith Sefi, wrote a verse about the noteworthy name change from 'auction' to 'contract' bridge.

### Honours

*She played a lone 'hand' and the whole world was thrilled.*

*She 'bridged' all those miles, and her 'contract' fulfilled.*

*She had courage and skill and the coolness enough*

*To 'score' and to 'win' in despite of the 'rough'.*

*She deserves all her luck and her rise into fame.*

*For being a 'Trump' and entirely 'game'.*

*She's a 'Card', and her value we really can't place.*

*She's a 'Queen' right enough, but she's also an 'Ace'!*

Bray Bridge club, originally known as Galtrim (Bray) Bridge club, began in 1943 with early successes. It reached the inter-club championship semi-final in June 1946 – the draw was between Roscommon Bridge Club v Regent "B" team and Jewish Social "B" team v Galtrim (Bray) bridge club.

Its founding members, Mary Meservy, Rex Mackey, Hammer Byrne, Enda Boland, Jack Bailey, Billy McCann, Paddy McEvoy and John Brennan, are all now sadly deceased. Enda Boland is remembered as a great mentor to younger players and as well as directing and teaching bridge in Bray, he also founded the first Congress together with Roddy Connolly in 1960. He left the legacy of the 16-18 no-trump opening bid.

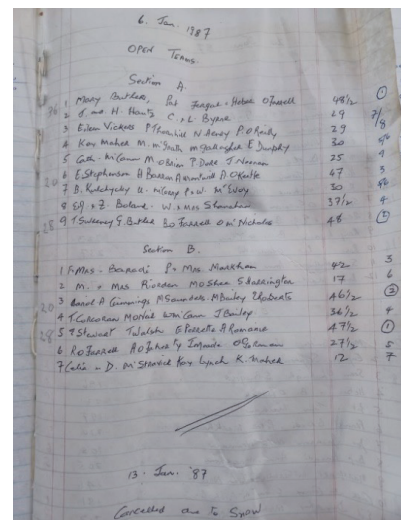
Hammer Byrne of H.J. Auctioneers, suggested to his fellow founders of Bray Bridge club, that there were two suitable and reasonably priced buildings in Bray which could be used for a bridge centre. One of them was located in Florence Terrace and the other in the now Hibernia Hotel. However, the year was 1943 and The Emergency (World War 11) was at its height and the opportunity to avail of these buildings was never capitalised on.

Bray Bridge club has led a nomadic existence ever since, moving locations within Bray more than fifteen times since its inception! It has operated from the Chamber of Commerce, the Bowling Green clubhouse, as well as a myriad of hotels including the International, the Wilton, the Esplanade, the Hibernian and the Martello. It is

currently located in the youth centre of the Holy Redeemer church. The reasons for moving so often were various, but mostly included rent increases, insufficient lighting and the inconvenience to the landlord of having to move tables in and out.

More recently and prior to Covid, Bray Bridge club organised several successful Congresses over an early September weekend; these took place in the Royal Hotel. Nevertheless, without a suitable and available venue in Bray in 2022, it was hosted by Dun Laoghaire bridge club and this year, Bray Congress didn't take place at all.

To this end, when a public consultation on the future use of the former heritage centre in Bray was announced earlier this year, Bray Bridge club, with the backing of the other five bridge clubs in Bray, submitted a proposal to Wicklow County Council to repurpose the heritage centre as a bridge centre, where all Bray clubs would have a permanent home and Bray would be able to host major tournaments and congresses once again.



Open Teams Scoresheet 6th January, 1987





The return to live bridge after such a long absence has been challenging. Membership has also dropped year on year, but the main issue is that only half the paid-up members play in the club on a regular basis and the continued absence of some of its top players, is stark. One third of the club's current membership are area masters and intermediate players, who are not as lucky as the previous cohort, as they have not yet been able to avail of the club's well-known mentoring programme.

Even so, Bray Bridge club nearly always features in prizes for national competitions and its members held the first four places in this year's Duais an Uachtairin 2023. Internationally, the European Open, Ladies, Senior and Mixed Championships held in Madeira in 2022 featured four teams of six players, of which seven players are members of Bray Bridge club.

Bray Bridge club also held a very successful summer league this year with more than 65 players taking part and it has also introduced an Autumn league in the hope of attracting more experienced players as well as top players back into the fold.

The resilience of Bray Bridge club shines through and in August of this year Gordon Lessells, President of the CBAI, helped us kick off a year of celebrations when he paid us a visit to celebrate its 80th birthday! Bray has a long history of attracting the best bridge players and John Noonan reminded us of a number of them who had also served as President of the CBAI – Enda Boland, Sonja Britton, Clare Pippett, Laur Sheeran and Rita McNamara.



*Michael Riordan making a presentation to Gordon Lessells in August 2023 with John Noonan, President Bray Bridge club.*

*Photo: Courtesy of Eleanor Callanan.*

## Out and About at the Congresses



**Drogheda Congress Mixed Pairs:** Bernie Bissett, Congress President with winners - Mary Kelly-Rogers, John O'Connor and CBAI President Gordon Lessells.



**Donegal Congress Teams:** Winners Dermot O'Brien, Anne Keating, Frances Kelly and Gerry McKenna.



**Limerick Congress Novice Pairs:** Winners Helen Mulcahy and Catherine Murphy.



**Drogheda Congress Novice Pairs:** Bernie Bissett Congress President with winners Eve Connell and Klara Flanagan.



**Drogheda Intermediate Pairs:** Nicola O'Dowd and Dara Voyles.

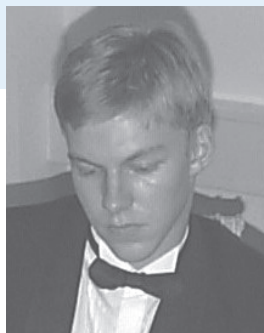


**Limerick Congress Novice Pairs:** Winners Helen Mulcahy and Catherine Murphy.



# When I was a Boye!

Regular column from the 2014 Spingold champion



## Boye's bridge

Don't forget to visualise your end position

By **BOYE BROGELAND**, FLEKKEFJORD NORWAY

**J**ULY 2007, and I'm in Nashville Tennessee, the cradle of country music. This is the location of the Spring Nationals where the Spingold is the most prestigious tournament. We have made the third round and need to strike the right cords to eliminate the Hennar-Welland team.

At the time of this event, Christal Hennar-Welland and Roy Welland are still together, and one of the best married bridge partnerships in the world. They can point to a particularly impressive record in the American championships over the previous few years. Christal had been partnering Michael Kamil supported by the Swedes Bertheau - Nyström and Italians Fantoni - Nunes. Roy had hired Björn Fallenius for a partner flanked by Zia - Rosenberg and Balicki - Zmudzinski. The budget for those two teams put together must have been close to \$200,000 per tournament. Roy (who also loves his wine) can afford it after many years as a successful options trader in New York.

About six months prior to this event, the rivalry between Christal and Roy came to an end, and they formed a new team together. Many thought that this team with two playing sponsors would be struggling amongst the world elite. However, they have confounded all such predictions and in the Spring Nationals made it all the way to the top in the Vanderbilt.

Christal's partner in this event is Antonio Sementa from Italy, one of the world's best. He is perhaps not (yet) as well known as the players on the Italian national team but he is at least as talented, something he proved when he won the Generali Individual in

Athens in 2000. He hasn't played regularly with a strong partner and most of his bridge has been sponsored by the wealthy Angelini.

As usual I'm playing in Rita Shugart's team. This is our second outing as a partnership as we are trying to repeat our success from the spring of 2006 when we reached the semi final of the Vanderbilt. Our nemesis on that occasion was Roy Welland whose behaviour at the table was not particularly pleasant as it appeared for much of the match, perhaps surprisingly, that he would be eliminated. The match turned into a bit of a grudge match and even a year later I feel that a little revenge would be quite tasty.

Since last year Roy has swapped his long standing partner Björn Fallenius for Chris Willenken who is my age and has long been one of the greatest talents in the USA. The professional support pair is Swedish, Frederic Wrang and Ulf Nilsson. I had expected a more established anchor-pair but the Swedes deserve this opportunity after coming third in the European open teams in Turkey the previous summer.

Rita and I play the first half against Christal and Sementa. They are particularly pleasant and also play well. A little too well as we fall behind straight away. Sementa fools me with a brilliant discard defending against 3NT. Had I instead focused on Christal's discards I would have worked out what was going on. That pains me.

A little later I get an opportunity in everyone's favourite contract:

♠ 9 5  
♥ K Q 7 6  
♦ 6  
♣ A K Q 9 7 3

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

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Sementa	Rita	Christal	Boye
pass	1♣	1♠	pass
2♥	3NT	all pass	1NT

Sementa leads the ♦10. There is a small chance that spades are blocked with West holding a singleton honour but for starters I need East to have ♦KQ to have any chance. In addition, clubs need to come in for six tricks. How should I approach this?

With the ♦KQ it is highly likely that Christal will place me with ♦AJ and switch if I duck her queen. If the defence then cashes ♠AK and ♥A before exiting in hearts I'll be in serious trouble. My ♦A (and winning spades) will be stranded, and dummy will concede a heart loser at trick 13. Even with clubs 2-2, giving me a ♣5 entry to my hand, I would have no route back to dummy's remaining clubs after I have cashed the spades.

I will therefore have to win the opening lead with the ♦A. Still, I won't ask for dummy to play until I've made a plan for the whole hand.

I cannot afford to go for the spades. The defence would then establish at least five tricks before I can come close to nine. Cashing the clubs can't be right either, because which three cards should I throw from hand? One spade and one diamond I can spare but the sixth club would create a suicide squeeze. Only hearts remain an option.

By starting with a heart to the king (if West wins, nine tricks are there) I quickly have eight tricks. Now it might work to play a spade off dummy, but the defence can counter by taking two spades and exiting in clubs. I won't be able to get to the clubs in dummy.

I'm getting close to a plan I can start to implement. To be sure, I check that I



have three cards I can throw on the clubs. Yes, that should be OK – after having a played a heart to the king, my second heart can be discarded.

Happy, I win the first trick with the  $\diamond A$ , play a heart to the king and start on the clubs. They are 2-2 and I continue indefatigably with four more rounds of clubs.

$\spadesuit$ 9 5	
$\heartsuit$ K Q 7 6	
$\diamond$ 6	
$\clubsuit$ A K Q 9 7 3	
$\spadesuit$ A 7	$\spadesuit$ K 8 4 3 2
$\heartsuit$ A 9 5 4 3	$\heartsuit$ J 8
$\diamond$ 10 9 4 2	$\diamond$ K Q 7 3
$\clubsuit$ 10 6	$\clubsuit$ J 8
$\spadesuit$ Q J 10 6	
$\heartsuit$ 10 2	
$\diamond$ A J 8 5	
$\clubsuit$ 5 4 2	

West throws three hearts and one diamond whilst East discards two spades and two diamonds. It's East's discards I need to watch closely as a position might arise where I need to know which cards she has retained. Since I discard after her all will be well as long as I keep count. In hand I retain  $\spadesuit QJ10$  and  $\diamond J8$ .

Then I play a spade off the table and believe I am in control:

$\spadesuit$ 9 5	
$\heartsuit$ Q 7 6	
$\diamond$ —	
$\clubsuit$ —	
$\spadesuit$ A 7	$\spadesuit$ K 8 4
$\heartsuit$ A	$\heartsuit$ J
$\diamond$ 9 4	$\diamond$ K
$\clubsuit$ —	$\clubsuit$ —
$\spadesuit$ Q J 10	
$\heartsuit$ —	
$\diamond$ J 8	
$\clubsuit$ —	

However, Christal and Sementa have seen something I have not appreciated.

When Christal puts up the  $\spadesuit K$  and plays her heart to her partner's ace I can feel blood rushing to my face. They have caught me in a defensive criss cross squeeze! I don't even need to see the opponents' cards – Sementa's broad grin is proof enough.

Did I take too long over the analysis? Did I make it too obvious to Christal that this was a contract that hung in

the balance? Would a second best or even third best plan have been better, if I had avoided taking more than 15-20 seconds of thinking time?

I have missed a key point – 3NT can be made against any defence! I cannot remember now if it was Sementa, a teammate or myself who discovered this. After playing a heart to the king (scoring my eighth trick) and cashing just two clubs, it is now safe to play on spades. With no clubs left in the defensive hands, they will quickly have to set up my ninth trick in either spades, hearts or diamonds. I can't be squeezed if I don't run my clubs.

Simple, right? No big change to the plan was required. The problem was that I did not picture the end position and consequently didn't think it was necessary to look any deeper.

One of the reasons I stumbled was that it didn't occur to me that the defence had communication in hearts. The fact that I was dealer, and West had had the opportunity to open a weak 2 $\heartsuit$ , got lost somewhere along the way. Instead of starting with the premise of a likely 5-2 heart break, I had immediately placed Sementa with six hearts.

It is quite amusing that an initial heart lead would have beaten the contract in practice! On the bidding, I would play low from dummy, expecting West to have the  $\heartsuit J$ .

The world is not fair and we lose the battle (against a better team it has to be said). The imp difference is too great for it to make any difference if I had made the two 3NT contracts for which I berated myself. This makes me a little less grumpy. I don't dwell as much on the wasted opportunities. It is much better for your good night's sleep to lose by a large margin rather than a small one!

Tip: Try to play out the contract in your head as many tricks ahead as you can. It is often possible to foresee an important end position early. Look for pitfalls ahead before playing to the first trick and do double check your analysis as you go, to avoid unpleasant surprises.  $\diamond\diamond$

## Andrew Robson



Andrew Robson

**Andrew Robson visited Milltown Golf Bridge Club In October, working with improvers over the course of a two-day clinic.**

A high-profile international for many years, Andrew has won World Junior and European Open team titles, in addition to major US Championship events. His most enduring partnership has been with A.R. (Tony) Forrester. Andrew was awarded an OBE in 2013 for services to Bridge and Charity.



Andrew at the two-day clinic in Milltown Golf Bridge Club.



# Uses of Double in Competitive Auctions

Peter Pigot



**Bridge is less than 100 years old and there are plenty of developing techniques that are slowly but surely becoming 'de rigueur'. The uses of 'double' have grown exponentially in the last 40 years.**

Some may remember back in the 1940s and 50s when the only use we had for double was for penalty or showing an opening bid, but along came the takeout double and eventually the one-level Sputnik double. Now we have a myriad of situations where double is the most descriptive bid available. Why is 'double' so popular today? Because it doesn't take up any SPACE!

Herewith are two common situations where double does the most accurate job! (there are loads more and I'll be covering two of them in the next issue of IBJ!)

## Situation 1. The Power Double

Dealer West. Vul All.

			♠ 2
			♥ AKJ1054
			♦ A76
			♣ A98
♠ AK1098	N	♠ QJ76	
♥ 76		♥ Q98	
♦ KQ98	W	♦ 1052	
♣ 76	S	♣ J43	
			♠ 543
			♥ 32
			♦ J43
			♣ KQ1052

West Opens 1♠ and North overcalls 2♥. Two-level overcalls need to be HIGHLY constructive, especially when Vulnerable.

In the Peter Pigot crib sheet North's bid show a hand with 5/6+ Hearts and 12-17HCP when VUL. East bids 2♠ and South Passes as does West, back to North.

I advocate the following:

- With a minimum and no extra shape...Pass
- With EXTRA shape but no extra value (7 cards, 6-5, 6-4 etc), BID
- With extra values or the upper end of your original bid, DOUBLE (this is NOT simply a take out double with a good hand - there are many hands when you might have a little length in their suit but with such extra value, you must do something).

Therefore on the given hand, North Doubles.

The bidding continues with 3♣ by South.

N/S are playing Lebensohl where a bid of 2NT by South over East's 2♠ would request North to bid 3♣ as South is probably going to show a bust hand that would like to rest in 3♣ or 3♦. However South has a decent hand on the bidding (i.e. having passed over 2♠) so can now bid a mildly constructive 3♣ in response to North's Double. North now reverts to his gorgeous Heart suit, happy that he has now shown his hand. With a doubleton Heart and his few High cards in the suits outside spades, i.e. building North's suits, South has a raise to 4♥.

In the play, East leads the ♠Q and West follows with the TEN (Suit Preference for Diamonds - see last issue!) so East switches to the ♦2. Declarer wins West's Eight with the Ace, cashes the ♥AK and plays on Clubs. When East

follows to three clubs, i.e. is unable to ruff, declarer can play a fourth club throwing a diamond as East now ruffs. Losing just a Diamond, a Spade and a Heart for 620.

## Situation 2. Negative Double

Required Values

- 1♣ - 1H - double = 6+ points
- 1♣ - 1S - double = 8+
- 1♣ - 2S - double = 10+
- 1♣ - 3S - double = 12+

Be Careful with Shape ... A negative double shows the other two suits but should NOT be all that distributional, i.e. 5-5, especially at the lower levels. When the bidding goes 1♠ - 2♣ - ? and you hold... ♠J2 ♥AQJ65, ♦K1065, ♣32 you have NO need to double, you simply bid a FORCING 2♥. Remember DOUBLES can be PASSED and I don't want to be a DEFENDER holding a distributional two-suiter!

Here is an excellent example from a Lady Milne match against England a few years ago. How would you have fared out as East?

Dealer West. Vul All.

			♠ 3
			♥ AQJ5
			♦ K9742
			♣ 543
♠ AJ95	N	♠ K84	
♥ 9743		♥ 62	
♦ A6	W	♦ QJ853	
♣ AJ8	S	♣ KQ6	
			♠ Q10762
			♥ K108
			♦ 10
			♣ 10972



E/W were playing a strong NT and five-card majors. West, for the Republic of Ireland, opened 1♣ and Nevena Senior for England decided to bid 1♥ with the North hand. [Overcalling with just four cards is unusual, but if the suit is really good it has the advantage of directing the opening lead]. East simply bid a FORCING 2♦ and South a normal looking 2♥. Over to West... REMEMBER THIS... we bid with extra length or a good fit, we double with extra values and we PASS with minimum hands. Therefore West simply passes as does North... What would you bid as East?

East has the VALUES opposite an opening bid to play at the THREE-level - 10+HCP. Their original bid of 2♦ showed five+ diamonds and was forcing for one round. At the table East bid 3♣ and E/W eventually played in 5♣ going FOUR down, losing 15 IMPs!

When you are in this sort of situation and feel you need to make a bid and aren't sure what bid to make... nine times out of ten, the bid is DOUBLE. East has a clear double suggesting a balanced (ish) hand with the values for the three-level or better. West also has a balanced hand and should be thinking of defending (don't forget, balanced hands defend well!).

At the table the bidding should have been 1♣-[1♥]-2♦-[2♥]-P-[P]-X- All Pass!

When we have the clear balance of High Card power, usually the best lead is a TRUMP. On a trump lead and further trump leads, declarer can only make four heart tricks, a diamond and a diamond ruff - thus losing 500!

See [www.bridgewebs.com/peterpigotbridge/](http://www.bridgewebs.com/peterpigotbridge/) for details on Friday morning on-line Classes for this level of player.

## BricABrock

Sally Brock



*Sally Brock is one of the most successful women in world bridge history. Her achievements include five Women's European Team titles, two Venice Cups [Women's World Teams], two Olympiad Teams and three UK Gold Cup wins.*

**There were several interesting points on this deal from the world championships:**

**Dealer North. Vul All.**

		♠ A1054		
		♥ Q83		
		♦ K94		
		♣ 976		
♠ 92	N	♠ QJ63		
♥ KJ654	W	♥ 972		
♦ Q62	E	♦ J8		
♣ J108	S	♣ A543		
		♠ K87		
		♥ A10		
		♦ A10753		
		♣ KQ2		

After the straightforward auction of 1NT – 3NT, South is declarer after a low heart lead. The trouble is that you need to knock out both a diamond and the ♣A in order to get nine tricks, and if hearts are 5-3 the opponents will be able to set up three winners in the suit to go with those two outside tricks. So, what is your best chance of making your game? I won the ♥10, crossed to the ♦K and played a club. When East ducked I could concede a diamond and was home. I had a little glimmer of hope that our team-mates would defend better and we might gain.

Not so. In the other room, declarer did not seem to appreciate the problem and simply led a diamond to the king, a diamond to the ace and another diamond. The first trick had gone: five of hearts, three, seven, ten. West was afraid that

East had only two hearts and that if she led another one it would give declarer an extra heart trick. So she switched and declarer made an overtrick.

In these type of situations when you have two or three small cards in partner's suit, it is important to tell partner how many you have at trick one. How can it matter, in trick-taking terms, whether you play the two or the nine? Playing normal signals you should play low with an odd number and high with an even number.

# A Novice's Tale *[continued]*

Nicola O'Dowd



## Nicola finishes out the 2022/2023 season

**January 2023 sees me excited for the Bridge season ahead and discovering team competitions.**

Dara Voyles and I entered the Cairnduff Intermediate Open Pairs held on 2nd January 2023 at the Regent Bridge Club. We were delighted to come 3rd. First place was Naomi Mooney and Jennifer Hughes, and second place was Paul Clinch and Jeremy James. Well done to both pairs.

As a COVID-era bridge learner, what I really noticed was that the local clubs around me, including Trim Bridge Club, have Beginners/Novices gearing up to play in clubs and competitions after starting their lessons in Sept 2022. At the beginning of this season, I saw a lot of emphasis on encouraging Novices and organising Novice competitions. The CBAI and bridge teachers appeared to be actively promoting Novices to participate. There were Novice competitions held at venues such as The Regent, Drogheda, and Templeogue, to name a few.

Meeting and chatting with six pairs of Novices down in Cork at the Intermediate & Novice Congress in Feb 2023 they told me it was both nerve-racking and exciting for them. Unfortunately, there weren't enough novice pairs to organise a separate novice competition, but there were prizes awarded for the Best Novice in the Inter B sections.

In my opinion, the turning point for this trend was the Malahide

Congress. Taking place from the 3rd to the 5th of March 2023 at The Grand Hotel Malahide, it attracted a significant number of Novices and Intermediate B players and featured its own Novice section on Friday night. I hoped that this would continue throughout the season.

My Mum and I had the luck with us and won the Intermediate B pairs on Friday evening.

Based on Tom Hanlon's recommendation in the CBAI newsletter, I put a team together to participate in the intermediate team league at the Regent Bridge Club. This league took place once a month from October to February. It was well-organised and a fantastic experience. The winning team was Mary Kane, Fiona McGoldrick, Marjorie and Max McNeill, Jim Manning, and Aisling O'Grady.

Our team managed to secure fourth place. I learned how to do team scoring and realised that, similar to using a calculator at work, my brain didn't work as quickly when it came to manual scoring, mainly because I was used to using Bridgemate devices or tablets.

I then formed a team to participate in the IBU O'Connor Trophy - Intercounty Intermediate Teams, which took place at the Cavan Crystal Hotel in March 2023. This event was over three sessions, and I thoroughly enjoyed it. It provided an opportunity to meet and chat with other teams, share laughs, and, of course, the competition.

Our team consisted of myself, Niamh Feeney, Sandra Peden and Linda Walsh. A total of seven teams participated - two from Meath, two from Donegal, two from Cavan, and one from Dublin.



Nicola and her mum Ena - winners of the Intermediate B pairs at the Malahide Congress 2023.



Over the three sessions, our team bid a mini slam three times, and we were the only pair to do so. Out of those bids, only one of them worked out successfully.

After the games, I asked a couple of Masters whether we should be bidding slams in team events. The responses were mixed. One person told me that with intermediate players, it's generally safer to stick to game contracts. Another person mentioned that they were always advised to bid game or slam if they had even the slightest smell of it.

The response I found most interesting came from a Master who said that if you are vulnerable, and think you can make it go for it and bid the slam, but if you are not vulnerable, play it safe and avoid the risk. If you miss game or slam and you are not vulnerable you only lose 250pts but if you are vulnerable and miss slam you lose 480 points.

This is the opposite of what you would do at pairs. If you take the risk and it pays off vulnerable, you can earn IMPs and create a significant swing. If you are not vulnerable, the point swing won't be as substantial. *(This is about right. 4♠ vul making is 620 vul 170 i.e. 10 IMPs in. Minus one is -100 vul -140 i.e. five IMPs out. Non-vul it is plus 6 or minus 5. So you should stretch to bid vul games, but there's no obligation to punt non-vul games. The same logic applied to slams says you need to be pretty confident they'll make. Ed.)*

We won the first Session but were overtaken by the Donegal Team (Barry and Michael McMenamin, Carmel Callinagh and Tony Carr) Cavan moved up to 2nd - Josephine Brady, Kathleen Gibbons, Maria Geelan and Frances Daly. We took 3rd place. It was a great couple of days and great fun.

Opinions on team competitions vary, with some loving them and others not liking them at all. However, I believe that some of the dislike may come from an incomplete understanding of the

scoring systems. In my experience, as you get used to the scoring, the appreciation for team competitions tends to grow. One aspect that my Mum doesn't particularly enjoy is the inability to see the contracts that each pair played after each board.

What I love about teams is that it only matters how your teammates do at their table not what everyone else in the room scores. It is also very important to have a team that do not hold it against you if you have a bad board and lose the match. We are all doing our best, if we make a mistake it is not on purpose. If you feel that you are letting your team down you will not enjoy your game.

Dara Voyles, Paul Dunne, Maria Rusu, my Mum and I participated in the Mid-Leinster Region Cunningham league. We played on Realbridge, representing my home club - Declan Byrne Bridge. Since Maria is an A2 player, our team had to play up in the A2 category, while the rest of us were B1 players. The league was well-organised, and we thoroughly enjoyed the experience. One of Declan's Novice teams (Colette Kavanagh, Ailbhe Gallagher, Inez Heenan and Annmaire O'Donnell), won the Novice league. We were thrilled to win the A2 league, by just one point.

The scoring on Realbridge differed from the Regent league as it was automatically done. I found it an interesting experience and it left me longing for more.

Ailbhe Gallagher was also on the Novice Team that won the Fanagan League in the South Dublin region. Her teammates were Hilary Rowan, Fiona Murphy and Jacinta Shannon. Maybe I am not the only one that got a taste and liking for team competitions.

Our next event was the National Inter B Pairs held at the Falls Hotel in Ennistymon on April 1st and 2nd. The venue was excellent, and the staff were incredibly helpful.

Everything ran smoothly. It was fascinating to witness the behind-the-scenes organisation, definitely something I am now very interested in learning more about. Watch this space!!!

It was great to meet all the new bridge acquaintances I had made over the past two years. We enjoyed the chats, the laughs, and discussing the hands.

Congratulations to Christine Heath and Kathryn Ryan from the Eastern Region of CBAI for winning the Civil Service Cup. Congratulations also to Dara Voyles and Paul Dunne for securing second prize.

After qualifying with the Mid-Leinster Region on Realbridge for the National teams, our team (myself, my Mum Ena, Dara Voyles, and Paul Dunne), headed to Portlaoise for the Tierney Trophy. The Cavan Team (Melissa Brady, Kathleen McCabe, Mary Maguire, and Brid Campbell-McManus), represented the North Eastern Region and impressively held on to 1st place throughout, deservingly claiming the trophy.

I noticed that while the number of Novice pairs participating in the congresses had increased over the season, there was only one Novice team present. Hopefully, more novices will recognise the enjoyment and excitement that team competitions offer and be encouraged to participate in them.

From January 2023 to May 2023, team events became the focus of my bridge journey. Initially, I was hesitant to enter the Cooper Cup (National Confined Teams Championship) as I thought it was only for A players and Masters, and my team, consisting of Ena, Dara, and myself, were still B1 players. However, the fear of missing out eventually got the better of me, and we decided to enter. Joining us was Maria Rusu, an A2, and together we really enjoyed it. There were 43 tables.



Ian Kilroy, Niall Kilroy, Tony Ward, and Bill O'Hanlon emerged as the winners of the Cooper Cup. Paul Clinch, Bobby Browne, Liz Sherlock and Mia Delaney were Best Intermediate A. Our team was shocked and delighted to finish as runners-up in the As right behind Paul and his team!

The 4FunTeams finished off our Bridge Season. I had never competed in it before but thought it was a great idea. It took place in Westmanstown Sports & Conference Centre on the 20th of May. The idea is it introduces less experienced players, particularly Novices, to team-of-four events in a fun and enjoyable atmosphere. It also allows them to benefit from the guidance and expertise of their more experienced partners.

This year there were 29 teams. Seemingly in previous years there was a prize for best dressed. I took to Amazon when I heard this and ordered four Tabards for our team to wear. I was met with some resistance I must add, but we had great fun and a great day. It was very well run and great value giving you six hours of bridge and your dinner. We all had to use a basic Acrol system, no weak twos and no negative doubles.

Congratulations to the winners Mary Reid, Orla Duffy, Helen Ahern and Marian Smyth from Dublin North. Well done to a face familiar to me now – the Cavan team coming 2nd (Paddy Mc Dermot, Mykola Mits, Sinead McCann and Melissa Brady).

I made lots of mistakes and I'm still not sure how we should have bid this hand. As East would you open 1♠, 2NT or (as I did) 2♣? I figured with a four loser hand I was better off with 2♣. But as we discussed afterwards this is game forcing. Partner could have 0 points. So on reflection I think I should have opened 2NT. Then Dara would bid 3NT. [Put me down for 1♠. 2♣ isn't game forcing. Ed.]

**Board 2/15. Dealer South. Vul N/S.**

		♠Q8			
		♥644			
		♦J1054			
		♣QJ964			
♠97		N		♠AK643	
♥J82		W		♥AK103	
♦KQ62		E		♦A	
♣10873		S		♣K52	
				♠J1052	
				♥Q975	
				♦9873	
				♣A	

Playing against Michael Gowie and Ian Kingston, this next hand cost us a big swing, but I thought my penalty double was worth it at the time. We should have put Michael down but we did not. Should I have chosen a different lead?

**Board 9. Dealer North. Vul E/W.**

			♠A84		
			♥1097642		
			♦K106		
			♣Q		
♠Q10653		N		♠97	
♥5		W		♥AQJ	
♦94		E		♦AQJ852	
♣J9762		S		♣K3	
				♠KJ2	
				♥K83	
				♦73	
				♣A10854	

The bidding went as follows:

W	N	E	S
	P	1♦	X
P	1♥	2♦	2♥
P	3♥	X	All Pass

I led the ♠9.

It went downhill from there! [That lead should beat it. East can play trumps to deny a diamond ruff. Ed.]

I look forward to the 23/24 season - I might even meet you at the table!



Declan Byrne, Ailbhe Gallagher, Nicola O'Dowd and Dara Voyles at the 4FUNTeams Final in May 2023.



# Baby Steps in Bridge

Melissa Brady



**It was quite a surprise to me when I received an email from Dermot O'Brien, CEO of CBAI, saying I had been suggested as someone who might write an article for the Journal.**

Nobody in my family plays cards but I love them. I'll play any game. My introduction to Bridge happened purely by chance. I was at Whist one night and was sitting beside Mary Maguire who was giving out about a Bridge hand she had played the previous night. The more Mary talked about it the more it appealed to me. I then asked her where I could attend some lessons. She pointed across the room at Paddy McDermott and told me there's your man, ask him. It took a couple of weeks before I ended up sitting beside him so when I did, I took my chance to ask about some lessons. He told me he gave them on a Friday morning in Cavan town. With my work that did not suit me, so I asked if he gave any evening lessons, and he said unfortunately not. Later on that night at half time, Paddy came back to me and asked me if I was serious when I said I wanted to learn how to play. He handed me a piece of paper with the very basics of Bridge written on it - points in the deck, the value of the honours, the ranking of the suits, 1NT 12 to 14 and told me to pick an evening to come over to his house so that he and his wife Carmel could teach me how to play. Every Monday evening from late March to the end of April I'd have a lesson and then he took me to a club as his guest for the first time. I really must thank Paddy and Carmel for the chance they took in giving up their free time to teach me especially when there was no

guarantee that I would take to Bridge or be any good at it.

After completing my lessons, I played all summer in both Cavan Bridge Club and Crannóg. I joined both in September and played with absolutely anyone who would suffer me. I was floating about the place to fill in if anyone needed a partner as I had yet to secure a regular one for myself. I really enjoyed my first few months at Bridge, then Covid 19 arrived. I feared I would forget what I had learned. A friend suggested we try bridge online and I decided to create a BBO account. I really enjoyed it. I contacted Paddy and invited him to join online. When we realised Covid was not going away quickly, he agreed. We played most evenings with two others at our own table. Paddy continued to teach us with tips on how our play could improve. When the virtual clubs started up, we played in Cavan, Drogheda, Navan, Phoenix and many others quite frequently. It was fantastic playing with him regularly as we developed a real understanding and were able to read what the other person was doing.

Late 2021 and now it was time to get back to the real table. We had a committee meeting in Cavan Bridge Club and I was asked to take charge of the computer and the tablets. I still did not have a partner for live Bridge at this time. Paddy agreed to play with me for the year. I really fell on my feet there! We did well and achieved some good, consistent results. We won the Captain's prize in our first year of partnership. That year I also attended my first Congress in Drogheda. I played with Sinead

McCann in the Intermediate Bs and we couldn't quite believe it when we won the Glynis Kay Perpetual Cup. My first piece of bridge silverware! I was delighted.

Through 2022 I was really starting to sink my teeth into Bridge. I was eager to learn more and improve my game. That September I looked for a partner for Wednesday nights and again fell on my feet when Anna Shalvey agreed to play with me. Anna was a higher grade than me, so I put forward a team of myself, Sinead, Mary and Kathleen McCabe for the National B Teams in Templeogue. Our team finished 3rd. That Christmas I was named Player Of The Year in Cavan Bridge Club - narrowly pipping Paddy to the post! He missed one or two nights where I managed to scrape a 2nd or 3rd place finish in his absence, putting me slightly ahead of him on the leaderboard.

In 2023 I began taking Bridge more seriously. I tried to attend as many events as I could. I asked Mary Maguire to play with me in the national Inter B pairs [Civil Service Cup]. She reluctantly agreed! We headed off to Ennistymon and had a fabulous time. We started the first session very nervy finishing in 16th place. We really pulled ourselves together and came 2nd in the second session and won the third session. These results gave us an overall finish of 3rd place. It was a tight competition with a minute 0.64% separating 1st, 2nd and 3rd place. Now to talk about the hand that, in my opinion, cost us the win.



## Dealer North. Vul All.

		♠K109865		
		♥86		
		♦J		
		♣764		
♠J4	N		E	♠A2
♥Q54	W			♥AK10972
♦5432				♦1086
♣9852	S			♣Q10
		♠Q73		
		♥J3		
		♦AKQ97		
		♣AK3		

I was North and East opened 1♥. Mary doubled and West passed. I have six spades, so I bid 1♠. East bid 2♥ and Mary bid 3♦. Having only one diamond I repeated my spades. East bid 4♥, Mary 4♠ and I'm doubled. I get the lead of the ♥A. When dummy goes down Mary has a hand of 19 points. Between my hand and Mary's, we are missing ♠AJ. He follows the Ace with K♥. I add my points to dummy's and assume my LHO has Ace and Jack of trumps. I eventually got into my hand and decided to play the ♠10. I decided to let it run as my logic told me my LHO had Ace and Jack and another. Bad logic. What comes up on my right-hand side only the ♠J. I'd blown it. I went down one doubled. A bottom. Had I made it, it would have been an outright top. I know I'd have played it differently had I not been doubled. I have looked at that hand many times and see so many different ways to play it. If I only had the sense to put up the ♠Q from my hand and he doesn't beat it, then I see the Jack fall and I make my 4♠X which would have pushed us into first place. Mary has forgiven me; I'm still working on forgiving myself for that bad move. It was our first national pairs competition, and we were delighted we did so well as we travelled without much expectation. The biggest success was getting Mary to admit she enjoyed herself, so I booked her there and then for next year's regional qualifiers.

I decided to put a team together for the regional teams. The team consisted of Kathleen Mc Cabe, Mary Maguire, Bríd Campbell-Mc Manus and myself. After winning that, we headed to Portlaoise. When the tournament began, we retained first place all day. When I woke up the next morning the shoe was on the other foot as it was me who was feeling the nerves for a change and not the other three ladies. I put the nerves down to the fact that we had nowhere to go only down and everyone else could overtake us. The third session felt like it lasted forever. At one stage the scores stopped going up on the projector for a few rounds and when they came back up, we had dropped to second place but by some miracle we pulled it back in the last two rounds and won the Tierney Trophy! We were ecstatic to win it. We won 9 of the 10 matches that weekend. Pretty good going in my book!

One of the men from the Dublin South team, who we had much fun and laughter with, said to me "Think of it this way. You've gone out of the Bs on top with a national title. Now you go back to being small fish in a big pond." How right he is. We had a celebratory cup of tea and hit the road back home to Cavan as three of us were playing in a competition later that night. You'd think we had an addiction. Perhaps we do!! As a result of winning the teams we were asked to play in the Sonya Britton this past August in Belfast. The CBAI emerged victorious over the NIBU on that occasion.

I'm enjoying my bridge so much that Anna and I joined Navan Bridge Club on a Tuesday night this September so now I'm playing four nights a week. I think joining a new club was a good move. We learned some new conventions and a new discard system over the summer and it's good to get out to practice them.

We got our membership cards at the start of September and while mine is now a lovely shade of blue I feel like I haven't earned it experience wise. I have been playing for 4.5 years and haven't an ounce of the experience of players of my grade who've been around the circuit longer. I firmly believe in getting out there and playing against people who are better than me so that I might learn something and be able to improve. I fully expect to take a beating in the A competitions for the first few years but that will toughen us up and hopefully make better players of us.

Just last night I received word from the secretary of the NIBU that my team has been selected to play for Ulster in the Interprovincials so I'm looking forward to that and Duais An Uachtarain also. I've drawn up a list of competitions I'd like to go to this coming year and have asked my partners and teammates for their availabilities. I'm hoping to attend as many as I can.

*Editor's Note.*

*Thanks Melissa for an extremely enlightening exposition of your Bridge journey thus far! We need a lot more like you. I don't know how many active Whist circles there are, but it would seem logical for CBAI to target them for conversion to Bridge. Kudos to Paddy and Carmel for going out of their way to recruit Melissa to Bridge.*

*In relation to the "costly" hand Melissa cites, yes it was rough luck. East was nuts to bid to 4♥ solo, and a sharp double would have given it what it deserved – minus 500 and a big fat duck. East's double of 4♠ was equally enterprising/deranged, and it's galling for sure to pay off to it. What goes around comes around – I am fully sure that East will have his wings clipped ere long.*



# Shillelaghs At The Ready!

Editor



**The Irish Times Bridge Column is a syndicated production by the leading American player, Steve Becker.**

The October 9th issue featured a hand from the 1972 Olympiad, where Ireland registered an enterprising gain. Becker noted that Ireland had had an indifferent start, leaving them 28th of 39 contestants. A superb run of form then saw Ireland win 13 matches in a row and end up 12th.

Becker included the following deal as evidence of the recovery. He gave no names, merely saying it occurred in the match against Britain.

Vul E/W.

			♠K82
			♥K73
			♦AQ8
			♣K876
♠AJ53	N	♠Q109764	
♥AJ84	W	♥10652	
♦94	E	♦6	
♣AJ4	S	♣Q10	
			♠-
			♥Q9
			♦KJ107532
			♣9532

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

Becker reported that West led the SA, unfortunate for sure. Declarer could ruff, draw two rounds of trumps and lead the H9. This was a classic "Morton's Fork". If West [known to have the Ace], took it, there would be two club discards on the SK and HQ. If instead West played low, HK would win, HQ would be pitched on SK, and leading twice towards the CK would restrict Declarer's losers to two.

I'm indebted to Ireland's Bridge historian, Séamus Dowling, for elaborating and clarifying. North was Nick Fitzgibbon, gaining his first cap. South was the eponymous Risteárd De Barra, a highly gifted player. It should be said for context that back in 1972, doubled non-vul contracts went up in increments of 200. So 4 down was minus 700 and 5 was 900, versus 800 and 1100 today. Even so, it takes flair and imagination to back in with 5D, and Risteárd most certainly had both in abundance. Seamus further advises that the deal occurred against Venezuela, not GB.

Becker closed his report by observing that 5DX was made "without the use of a shillelagh!"

Faith and begorrah, there may have been leprechauns involved!! Sure and begob, aren't national stereotypes only wonderful, at all at all? May the road rise to meet you, Mr Becker, and may all your sons be bishops. #MAGA. #DrainTheSwamp. #StopTheSteal.

Back in the real world, pure happenstance dictated that I should have come across a book by Risteárd just a couple of weeks ago on a visit to CBAI HQ (see picture).

It ran to 128 pages and was published in 1980, retailing at £2.50. I was fortunate enough to watch Risteárd in action several times in Trials. Technically he was outstanding. Séamus is pretty sure that Peter Pigot (Senior) reported this hand at the time.

Steve Becker's column is always instructive, and generally well researched. On this occasion, I felt it fell short.



## Well Done Huey!

Many congratulations to Huey Daly, who was recently awarded with his Grade A Certificate, on the basis of his performance at the EBL Tournament Directors' Workshop in Riga, Latvia. Huey thus joins Fearghal O'Boyle, Diarmuid Reddan, and John Phelan as an internationally-recognised TD – a great achievement for Ireland and a tribute to Fearghal's unofficial mentoring programme, from which many of our TDs have benefited. Huey is seen receiving his certificate from Head Examiner Dimitris Ballas.





# Play Quiz 3 - Solutions and Results

## Hand 1 Dealer North. Vul E/W.

	♠ K872		
	♥ 93		
	♦ K10743		
	♣ 96		
♠ A104	N	♠ J653	
♥ AQJ52	W	♥ 84	E
♦ AQ		♦ 95	
♣ J74	S	♣ KQ1083	
	♠ Q9		
	♥ K1073		
	♦ J863		
	♣ A52		

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

North leads the ♦4 to the ♦JQ. North and South will follow with low cards on the first round of Clubs.

### The Play

A low club to the queen is allowed to win. As declarer will need a second trick from hearts even if the clubs can be brought in, he finesses the ♥Q while in dummy. When this holds, he leads the ♣J and overtakes. If the ace has still not appeared, declarer takes another finesse in hearts. The advantage of these manoeuvres appears when the ♣A is held up and South holds ♥K10xx. With the aid of two finesses, West can arrive at four heart tricks, one spade, two diamonds and two clubs.

## Hand 2 Dealer East. Vul ALL.

	♠ KQ6		
	♥ 10973		
	♦ 84		
	♣ K73		
♠ AJ9	N	♠ 10	
♥ AQ85	W	♥ J4	E
♦ J63		♦ AKQ9752	
♣ AQ6	S	♣ 842	
	♠ 87542		
	♥ K62		
	♦ 10		
	♣ J1095		

W	N	E	S
		3NT	P
4♦ <sup>1</sup>	P	4♠	P
6♦	All Pass		All Pass

<sup>1</sup>4♦ = Asks for shortage

North makes the safe lead of a trump against 6♦, South playing the 10. The lead of the ♥J from dummy, will be covered by South with the ♥K.

### The Play

Win with the king in dummy and lead the ♥J which is covered by the ♥K and ♥A. Now the contract is guaranteed barring a ruff on the next heart. Declarer cashes the ♥Q and ruffs a low heart with a high trump, returns to the ♦J and ruffs the last heart. Then declarer leads the ♠10 from dummy. If South covers the Ace wins and the Jack is led. If North covers that you ruff and now the ♠9 is your 12th trick. If instead North wins when you run ♠10, he must lead back into ♣AQ or ♠AJ.

**Hand 3** Dealer South. Vul None.

	♠ K Q 5		
	♥ 1098654		
	♦ 102		
	♣ J7		
♠ A1072	N	♠ J84	
♥ AKJ	W	♥ 732	E
♦ K		♦ AQJ62	
♣ AQ853	S	♣ K6	
	♠ 9 6 3		
	♥ Q		
	♦ 197543		
	♣ 10942		

W	N	E	S
			P
1♣	2♥ <sup>1</sup>	3♦	P
6NT	All Pass		All Pass

<sup>1</sup>2♥ = 6-card suit, 6-10 points

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

**The Play**

It would be an error to cash the ♦K and cross to the ♣K to run the diamonds. Suppose the diamonds are 5-2 and the defender with the long diamonds has four clubs. Then when you seek to clear the clubs this defender will have a diamond to cash. The safety play is to cash the ♦K and then duck the first round of clubs. So long as the clubs are not worse than 4-2 you cannot fail to make four clubs, four diamonds and four tricks in the majors.

**Hand 4** Dealer West. Vul N/S.

	♠ A		
	♥ Q J 10 4		
	♦ J 8 7		
	♣ K 9 5 3 2		
♠ K109752	N	♠ 863	
♥ K6	W	♥ A743	E
♦ Q105		♦ K76	
♣ 76	S	♣ AQJ	
	♠ Q J 4		
	♥ 9 8 5		
	♦ A 9 3 2		
	♣ 10 8 4		

W	N	E	S
			P
2♣	P	2NT	P
3♦ <sup>1</sup>	P	4♠	All Pass

<sup>1</sup>3♦ = Feature in ♦, ♥x or better

North leads a ♥Q against 4♣. On the first lead of trumps from dummy, South will play the 4.

**The Play**

Declarer wins with the king in hand and leads a low club to dummy's jack. If the club finesse is right, West can afford to lose two tricks in trumps. So, on the lead of a trump from dummy, when South plays the four, West should finesse the nine. If this loses to the jack or queen he can return to dummy for the next spade lead. This play saves the contract when North has a singleton ace. If the club finesse loses, West has to play trumps for one loser by playing a trump to the king, hoping South has a doubleton ace.

**Readers' Scores**

After three rounds of four, Hugh MacDermott [NM] leads on 95 from Martin Staunton [AM] on 89. Maria Callinan leads Intermediates on 77.

Almost everyone scored full marks on Board 1. Most entrants found the endplay on Board 2, with any line needing the Club finesse scoring half marks [5/10]. Board 3 proved challenging – after unblocking the ♦K no declarer found the line of ducking a club. On Board 4 everyone played trumps correctly but nobody saw the need to take the Club finesse first.

Keep the entries coming!

**Leading Scores after  
Competition 3 [of 4]**

Hugh McDermott (MN)	<b>95</b>
Martin Staunton (MA)	<b>89</b>
Maria Callinan (Inter)	<b>77</b>



# Bidding Quiz 3 - Results - Bob Pattinson

All hands from live pairs events.

## Question 1

Dealer East. Vul All.

♠ A10873  
♥ K10  
♦ 863  
♣ 863

W	N	E	S
		P	1♣ <sup>1</sup>
P	1♠	P	3♣
P	?		
<sup>1</sup> 1♣ = 3+			

**Votes:** 3♦=5; 3♥=4; 4♣=3; 3NT=2; 3♠=1

This first hand provided some challenge to the panel based upon the five different rebids made and also some of their comments on how tough the various choices were. It is worth noting the number of panel members offering a second choice of bid if playing teams. The importance of protecting the ♥K in a no trump contract influenced a couple to a direct 3NT bid, whereas others were seeking potential three card spade support or evaluating the prospects of a club slam.

**Peter G 3♦:** Seems the most flexible bid in pairs as 3NT or 6♣ are both in the equation here.

**Anna 3♦:** It should be forcing. My hand is quite good, with even a spade or club slam possible.

**Tom 3♦:** Creating a force and allows partner to show spade support or bid 3NT. My AKK with doubleton heart make slam a possibility.

**Joe 3♦:** Playing teams 4♣ would be my choice.

**Peter P 3♦:** A simple check back looking for three cards in spades. (Playing 1♣: 1S : 2♣ as Gazilli showing extra values, allows for the jump rebid of 3♣ to be weaker than normal, such as xx Qxx, Ax AQxxxx, thus confirming no slam interest).

**Micheál 3♥:** Partner has denied four hearts and now I want to show where my values are. The final contract may be 3NT, 5♣ or 6♣.

**Ciaran 3♥:** Tough hand. 3NT, 4♣ or 5♣ could be our spot, so not keen to bypass 3NT. I'll bid where my values are rather than 3♦ on three low.

**Sabine 3♥:** Very tough. Slam is possible, but partner needs perfect cards. I will be content with 3NT if partner bids it. At teams I would be more inclined to bid 4♣, as 5♣ is likely on.

**Luca 3♥:** Not necessary natural but showing a stronger game force, allowing partner to bid 3♠ holding three. We could be wide open in diamonds if I bid 3NT, but will reluctantly pass if partner rebids 3NT, as my heart stopper will be wrong sided.

**Rory 4♣:** Forcing. Sets the suit and makes the way for cue bids or key card asks. With some partners I play 4♣ as Roman Key Card Blackwood (1430 responses).

**Roy 4♣:** Forcing.

**Brad 4♣:** Forcing.

**Karel 3NT:** Initially I thought 3♦/♥ but partner doesn't have four hearts so protecting the ♥K becomes important. Surely partner has some diamond honours. Although partner may have three card spade support a practical 3NT seems best. 6♣? Problem is if you bypass 3NT you will have to bid 6♣ regardless. At teams I try 3♥.

**George: 3NT:** Bid the most likely game to make. Partner may have three spades but does not have four hearts as there was no reverse. As the opponents have at least eight hearts it is more important to protect ♥K.

**Sally 3♠:** I don't have a decent stop (one that will play facing a singleton in either red suit). If partner can't bid 3NT over 3♠ I don't think we belong there.

		♠AT873		
		♥KT		
		♦863		
		♣K43		
♠K5		N		♠Q963
♥Q97432	W		E	♥KQT
♦JT75				♦Q42
♣9		S		♣Q8
		♠J9		
		♥A		
		♦AK9		
		♣AJT7652		

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

## Summary

A number of themes emerge from this hand, confirming that it offers some challenge to the panel:

- ▶ Should this hand be limited to 3NT or should a club slam be explored?
- ▶ If 3NT is the final destination should this be bid now in order to protect the ♥K?
- ▶ Keeping the bidding low with 3♦/♥ allows for a spade fit to be found at the three-level or 3NT to be found, still leaving a possible slam to be explored.

On balance the 3♣ and the 3NT bids are more likely to discourage opener from seeking a club slam, but in fairness the strong values in the opening hand may still bring a 4♣ key card rebid over both of these bids. 3♠ may imply a six card suit as 3♦/♥ offer opportunities for opener to show three card support.

The advantage of either 3♦/♥ is that plenty of space is left for confirming a spade fit, signing off in 3NT or taking further action to explore a slam in clubs. Naturally partnerships need agreements about the different meanings of 3♦ and 3♥. The former works as a conventional check back as suggested by Peter P (as long as this is agreed in your system),



but offers no information on the red suit values. But the 3♥ bid, as Micheál explains, does this effectively, simultaneously denying a diamond stop but confirming a heart stop. However, both red suit bids allow for a potential spade fit to be found at the three-level, allowing partner to make the next move.

The direct 4♣ raise confirms the strong club fit and makes it easier for opener to seek further information on controls by cue bidding, as noted by Rory, but it raises bidding one level higher.

**Marks:** 3♦=10; 3♥=10; 4♣=9; 3NT=8; 3♠=7

### Bidding Tip:

1. Partnerships need agreements after opener makes a strong jump rebid in the opening suit.
2. Showing 3+ trump support provides a clear picture for partner to take further action when slam looks a real possibility.
3. Keeping the bidding below 3NT works well in seeking more information rather than providing information like the 4♣ bid does.

## Question 2

Dealer South. Vul N/S.

♠ A53  
♥ J  
♦ AQJ9  
♣ AKQ96

W	N	E	S
			1♣ <sup>1</sup>
P	1♠	P	2♦
P	2♦	P	?
<sup>1</sup> 1♣ = 3+			

**Votes:** 3♠=12; 4NT=2; 3♥=1

Much closer agreement on this second hand, with 3♠ as the popular choice as it confirms the 5431 shape of the hand.

**Karel 3♠:** Surely a unanimous bid, showing the shape of the hand and game forcing. 3♦ is game forcing, else use Lebensohl 2NT puppet to 3♣ and then 3♦ is weak.

**Rory 3♠:** Is game forcing, showing spade strength (not a shortage cue bid in partner's suit) and paves the way for Roman key card Blackwood in an agreed trump suit (spades or diamonds).

**Sabine 3♠:** Seems like an obvious bid perfectly describing my shape.

**Ciaran 3♠:** Most play 3♦ here as unlimited, so 3♠ is pretty clear now whatever our agreement.

**Peter G 3♠:** Will make one further move if partner bids 3NT.

**Sally 3♠:** Looks to be the right bid for now.

**Tom 3♠:** Bidding out my shape, but do not intend passing 3NT. I have a monster hand.

**Anna 3♠:** Should describe my 3145 distribution. If partner has a suitable hand could easily be a slam in ♠/♦.

**Roy 3♠:** 4NT is reasonable but maybe it is better to bid 3♠ (assuming that implies short hearts). Then after bidding RCK partner with two key cards will bid the grand slam if I invite with 4NT.

**Peter P 4NT:** Since 3♦ is positive all I may need for the grand is ♠Kxxx, ♥Axx, ♦Kxxx, ♣xx. Therefore ask for key cards, and after 5♥ response (two without the Queen), ask in spades with 5♠. Holding King and Queen, shown in steps, I can now count 12 or 13 tricks. Bidding 4♥ splinter might have the wrong hand doing the asking, so I'll avoid that option.

**George 4NT:** We have so much great information that all we have do to is make sure we are not off two key cards. Partner is obliged to have at least four of your second suit, and usually five as 2♦ rebid does not promise a full suit, but at least 19 points. Slam looks extremely likely. Even if partner has bad spades you might pitch them

on clubs. The minimum would be: ♠Qxxx, ♥Axx, ♦Kxxx, ♣xx.

**Luca 3♥:** Playing Lebensohl 2NT means 3♦ is game forcing with support. 3♥ is a cue to prompt 3♠ from partner, then followed by key card.

				♠Q942		
				♥AKQ		
				♦T754		
				♣T9		
♠8		N			♠KJT75	
♥986432		W		E	♥T75	
♦82					♦K63	
♣J543				S	♣72	
					♠A53	
					♥J	
					♦AQJ9	
					♣AKQ97	

W	N	E	S
			1♣ <sup>1</sup>
P	1♠	P	2♦
P	3♦	P	?
<sup>1</sup> 1♣ = 3+			

### Summary

Although 13 tricks stem from a successful diamond finesse, a small slam should be the target contract. All panellists assume that the 2♦ reverse is game forcing and 3♦ shows four card support. Two different approaches are taken by the panel on the next step:

- (1) Slow: bid out shape with 3♠
- (2) Fast: employ Roman Blackwood to check on key cards.

Anna and Karel make a strong case for 3♠ based on describing shape before checking on key cards. However, Peter P and George equally express logical reasons for taking the fast route of Blackwood, setting out likely hands when slam is cold. However, the 3♠ bidders may follow up partner's response with key card later, so the adage "two bids are better than one" edges a close decision. Luca's 3♥ needs partnership agreement as a splinter, with most players using a jump bid to differentiate a splinter in this sequence.

**Marks:** 3♠=10; 4NT=9; 3♥=7



### Bidding Tip:

1. Bidding out shape is very effective for identifying the best potential contract, especially in game.
2. When the fit is strong and slam looks to be close it may be best to use key card directly if lower cue bids will be less effective.

### Question 3

Dealer West. Vul All.

- ♠ 10
- ♥ AJ852
- ♦ AQ104
- ♣ J95

W	N	E	S
1NT	P	2♦ <sup>1</sup>	P
3♥ <sup>2</sup>	P	?	

<sup>1</sup>2♦ = transfer to ♥;  
<sup>2</sup>3♥ = 16-17: 4 good ♥

Votes: 3♠=15

This time the panel are unanimous in bidding 3♠.

**Luca 3♠:** Cue, let's see what partner can contribute.

**Peter G 3♠:** Good potential here if partner co-operates.

**Sabine 3♠:** Really would be nice to play a scheme to show shortage here. Then 3♠ would be totally obvious. It's possible we belong in a slam in a 4-4 diamond fit instead of a 5-4 heart fit. If partner co-operates I will try and suggest diamonds later.

**Peter P 3♠:** I need to cue spades to start the process to find out the club position. If partner is ♠AKJ, ♥KQxx, ♦Kxx, ♣xxx and I hear 4♦, denying a club control, then even 4♥ is the limit. However, if partner is ♠Axx, ♥KQxx, ♦Kxx, ♣A10x, then slam is a very good shot.

**Tom 3♠:** Slam try with short spades for me, it makes sense that 3NT is balanced and suit bids are shortage.

**George 3♠:** I will co-operate with a slam try. Over 4♣ I will bid 4♦, otherwise retreat to 4♥.

**Roy 3♠:** If partner bids 4♣, I'll go 4♦ and pass 4♥, and if partner bids past 4♥, I'll try 5NT for pick a slam.

**Micheál 3♠:** Slam may be cold if partner holds a hand such as: ♠xxx, ♥KQxx, ♦Kx, ♣AKxx.

**Sally 3♠:** Shortage with 3NT as no shortage.

		♠QJ632		
		♥T		
		♦65		
		♣KQ862		
♠A954	N		♠T	
♥KQ73	W	E	♥AJ852	
♦K73			♦AQT4	
♣AT	S		♣J95	
		♠K87		
		♥964		
		♦J982		
		♣743		

W	N	E	S
1NT	P	2♦ <sup>1</sup>	P
3♥ <sup>2</sup>	P	?	

<sup>1</sup>2♦ = transfer to ♥;  
<sup>2</sup>3♥ = 16-17: 4 good ♥

### Summary

All the panel agree that in this sequence 3♠ shows a first or second round control. This helps to improve opener's hand as at least two rounds of control in spades are ensured. Sabine makes a constructive suggestion that it would help if 3♠ was always shortage here. Sally states that 3NT shows no shortage, therefore 3♠ is shortage. Tom has no doubts that suit bids are shortage and 3NT balanced. Every member took 3♠ as a cue of some sort.

Marks: 3♠=10

### Bidding Tip:

After 1NT openings and super accept of a major suit transfer it is advantageous to play a suit rebid by responder as shortage and 3NT as balanced.

### Question 4

Dealer West. Vul E/W.

- ♠ Q98764
- ♥ 4
- ♦ AKQ42
- ♣ J

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

Votes: 2♦=13; 3♦=1; 4♠=1

Almost unanimous on this hand to simply bid out the shape, as aptly outlined by both Micheál and George.

**Sabine 2♦:** Showing the second suit.

**Peter G 2♦:** I expect it is partner that has the hearts so I don't need to rebid 2♠.

**Micheál 2♦:** Shows distribution and a limited hand. Key is whether partner has a fit in one of my suits. When partner bids a suit my extra distribution can be shown.

**Tom 2♦:** Start with a gentle bid, we can get more excited if partner supports and we have a fit.

**Anna 2♦:** Can't really pass, as I don't want to double. Then I would have to bid 2♦ and this would not describe my hand.

**George 2♦:** No need for heroics here. The bidding isn't over. I may be able to show my full 6-5 or more importantly, determine if we have a misfit early, and get out safely.

**Peter P 3♦:** This should show a 6-5 two suiter with moderate values. Partner is unlikely to have three spades, but if the ♥A and ♠K are held then 4♠ has chances.

**Luca 4♠:** Put the pressure on. I don't want to give away any unnecessary information, and this contract will make some of the time.





♠ KJ52			
♥ KQT9			
♦ 8765			
♣ 3			
♠ Q98764	N	♠ A3	
♥ 4	W	♥ A876	
♦ AKQ42	E	♦ JT	
♣ J	S	♣ T9742	
♠ T			
♥ J532			
♦ 93			
♣ AKQ865			

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

**Summary**

The forcing 1NT over an opening major implies less than three card support, unless a flat 4333 shape, and often is made on hands with only one or even no trump support. So taking the bidding steady and bidding out shape allows for misfits to be identified early and to keep the bidding low. This is the approach taken by the majority. Peter P makes a reasonable case for the jump bid in diamonds, as bidding may still stop below game. Luca's leap to 4♠ "to put the pressure on" seems a little wild when holding the top-ranking suit. Whilst 4♠ is on with this hand the other panellists will have got there via a slower but less risky route.

**Marks:** 2♦=10; 3♦=8; 4♠=7

**Bidding Tip**

Bid out your shape at the lowest level leave space for partner to continue the conversation about the best landing spot.

**Question 5**

Dealer North. Vul All.

♠ J
♥ 98
♦ AKQ10862
♣ J86

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

**Votes:** 4♦=12; 4♥=2; 5♦=1

Every panel member advanced the bidding on this hand, a strong majority showing the strong diamond holding at the four-level, and two bidding 4♥.

**Peter P 4♦:** I have a diamond suit, lead diamonds against 4♠ (or 6♠), if you like to defend, or bid on over 4♠ if that suits too. The fact that I have intervened at this level in a forcing auction at equal vulnerability should describe the hand I have.

**Ciaran 4♦:** I'll pass 4♥ if partner rebids them. A direct 4♥ could be right but would miss a good slam opposite: ♠Axx, ♥AKQxxx, ♦xxx ♣x

**Anna 4♦:** I'll start with that, should be forcing. I have two hearts, so can't be bad.

**Rory 4♦:** There will be further action.

**Sabine 4♦:** It's forcing, so can't see a good reason not to bid with such a good suit.

**Tom 4♦:** If we belong in hearts partner will bid 4♥. Give partner 4531 shape and hearts will be a disaster on a force. We cannot ignore this massive suit.

**Karel 4♦:** 4♣ usually will have some tolerance for spades. If partner removes to 4♥, fine.

**Luca 4♦:** 4♣ must have some spade tolerance. I am hoping partner will bid 4♥ with six, knowing I have some heart tolerance, otherwise give 5♦ a go. The club position is not ideal but I can't pass.

**George 4♦:** If we get passed out, or partner bids 4♥, or we wind up in defence, that is ok. Anything else is a guess. Bidding 5♦ might be a disaster as North leads a stiff club through partner's Kxx.

**Micheál 4♦:** Difficult bidding hand, but I must show my suit and assist partner's bidding.

**Peter G 4♥:** I do not expect the auction to stop here, and I will follow with 5♦.

**Roy 4♥:** I will bid 5♦ over 4♠.

**Sally 5D:** For me 4♦ would show a heart fit and 5♦ sounds a better description of what I have.

♠ KQT752			
♥ J			
♦ J74			
♣ 742			
♠ J	N	♠ A943	
♥ 98	W	♥ KQT754	
♦ AKQT862	E	♦ 953	
♣ J85	S	♣ -	
♠ 86			
♥ A632			
♦ -			
♣ AKQT963			

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

**Summary**

4♦ confirms where the main values of the hand lie, it is forcing, and heart support can still be given as the bidding develops or stops in 4♥. The singleton spade and three clubs look useful (partner is likely to be short in clubs). Bidding 4♥ and ignoring the diamond suit could be made with a much weaker hand. All bids lead to at least game.

**Marks:** 4♦=10; 4♥=8; 5♦=7

**Bidding Tip**

If you can describe your hand and still have a second chance then take it.

**Question 6**

Dealer South. Vul N/S.

♠ AQ43
♥ A3
♦ 109874
♣ 86

W	N	E	S
			3♣
3♥	?		

**Votes:** 4♣=8; Pass=4; 3NT=3

This hand has produced three different approaches, bidding 3NT, passing, and the majority making a non-forcing raise.



**Sally 4♣:** At unfavourable vulnerability, in my opinion, partner should be within two tricks of the contract. Assuming the spade finesse is right (probably 70% or so) there should be ten tricks. I would expect to beat 4♥ (although there is no certainty at all). Although 4♣ is not invitational, I am at unfavourable vulnerability so partner can surely bid up with some hands.

**George 4♣:** Not 3NT with only one stopper. Partner can easily have KQJTxxx and a side ♦K and a stiff to bid at this vulnerability. We do not have enough tricks to make 5♣. Not going to pass as the game belongs to the bidders. Maybe we push them to 4♥ and they go down. 4♣ is just right.

**Ciaran 4♣:** Not clear we'll beat 3♥ and this should not be far away. Must push them to 4♥.

**Sabine 4♣:** At this vulnerability partner could have the right hand for 3NT, but it is a big gamble. If 3NT is right the opponents will probably bid 4♥ anyway, so we might as well bid 4♣ now.

**Peter G 4♣:** Won't be easy for them to double for one off, and we have a great chance of beating 4♥ if they take a push.

**Roy 4♣:** Then pass 4♥. If partner has great clubs and three hearts and they don't lead (or switch to) a trump, and the spade finesse is on side, then I apologise for missing the game.

**Tom 4♣:** Partner has opened first in hand vulnerable versus non, and so will have a good suit. We need to compete to give us a chance to get to 5♣ if partner has extra shape. Minus 140 instead of plus 130 is what we are playing for, with game an outside chance. There could be game on both ways.

**Micheál Pass:** 3NT would be an optimistic bid hoping that partner has a running suit.

**Luca Pass:** I can't see any alternative.

**Anna 3NT:** If partner has AK to 7 or AQJ there is a good chance to make it. If it's doubled I can always bid 4♣. Partner opened vulnerable.

**Karel 3NT:** It might make as the suit should be decent vulnerable. If the suit is poor partner can rebid 4♣ over my 3NT. 3NT may prevent East bidding 4♥. If I pass 3♥, 4♣ might still be on.

**Peter P. 3NT:** You never know your luck! Red against green partner Should have a decent suit...you'd hope. If so you are in with a decent shot to make 3NT.

		♠AQ43			
		♥A3			
		♦T9874			
		♣86			
♠K5		N		♠JT9762	
♥KJ98765		W		♥T2	
♦AJ6		E		♦KQ	
♣2		S		♣K73	
		♠8			
		♥Q4			
		♦532			
		♣AQJ10954			

W	N	E	S
			3♣
3♥	?		

## Summary

The case for making the raise to 4♣ is outlined in some detail:

- ▶ Partner is vulnerable and should have seven tricks
- ▶ ♠A, ♠Q, and ♥A offer three more tricks so 4♣ is safe
- ▶ 3NT looks to be a gamble with poor diamonds
- ▶ 4♥ by opponents should produce a plus score for NS

Reasons advanced for bidding 3NT are:

- ▶ Vulnerable partner will have a decent seven card suit
- ▶ If doubled we can escape to 4♣
- ▶ If opener has weaker clubs they can take out into 4♣
- ▶ Luck (works on this hand)

Those passing could not see a plus score if they bid on.

**Marks:** 4♣=10; 3NT=9; Pass=7

## Bidding Tip

In pairs getting a plus score is often positive, and in tight situations balancing risks need to be calculated, in this instance 4♣ being the safest choice (even though 3NT makes).

## Question 7

Dealer North. Vul All.

♠ 2  
♥ 7  
♦ AJ9852  
♣ AQJ102

W	N	E	S
	1♣ <sup>1</sup>	X	?
1♣ = 3+			

**Votes:** 1♦=8; XX= ; 5♣=2; 2♣=1; 3♥=1; 3♠=1

Another difficult one-level auction where there are plenty of choices available. The majority make the 1♦ response, with a further five different approaches.

**Ciaran 1♦:** Hoping to learn more.

**Brad 1♦:** Afraid if partner is 3-3 in the minors we might need to play diamonds.

**Sabine 1♦:** Just read Zia's new book! This is a "walking the dog" hand. Alternatively I would bid 4NT showing both minors if I could.

**Micheál 1♦:** Start bidding your suits and keep at it the next opportunity.

**Luca 1♦:** 2♦ is likely a fit jump but non forcing. Splintering doesn't tell partner where my values lie. I will bid diamonds and then clubs until we reach game. Redouble would deny a fit.

**Rory 1♦:** Later bid clubs.

**Sally 1♦:** Not sure of my methods I'm afraid but I think most would dictate a 1♦ response.

**George XX:** It may be tough to fight off the barrage of majors that are coming, but jumping to 5♣ is a blind guess. Let's show a good hand, great club support, and either show or repress the diamonds, depending on how the bidding goes. They could



easily get to game off four aces, or we could have a laydown slam. Nice and easy here even though we have the wrong suits. We sure have a lot of them though.

**Peter G XX:** Expect to be at the five-level at some stage.

**Roy 2♠:** Then jump in diamonds. If partner has some support and some key cards (and or short clubs) we might make slam.

**Karel 3♥:** Good hand so many options. Clearly going to at least 5♣. Slam possibilities are there though. If I bid 1♦ it may go 4M and two passes? Redouble doesn't agree clubs. 3♥ splinter gets a decent amount of information over.

**Anna 3♠:** Assuming it's a splinter. I would like to put my partner in the picture. I prefer 3♠ rather than 3♥ as it takes more space.

**Peter P 5♣:** Bit of a PUNT.....where are you Mr Goodman? (Peter G has on-line title of petepunt) I am a big believer in "hitting the money" when I can. They have at least one good major suit fit, although a little short of high cards. 5♣ might entice left hand opponent to bid on, which I will double with my two aces if partner passes.

**Tom 5♣:** A bit agricultural but with 1-1 in the majors I want to put on maximum pressure. OK we might miss a slam but I need a lot and after the double it is less likely.

		♠KT76			
		♥AQ92			
		♦K			
		♣K853			
♠J843	N		♠AQ96		
♥J75			♥A8543		
♦74	W	E	♦QT63		
♣9764		S	♣-		
			♠2		
			♥7		
			♦AJ9852		
			♣AQJT2		

W	N	E	S
	1♣ <sup>1</sup>	X	?
<sup>1</sup> 1♣ = 3+			

### Summary

Whilst there are six suggested bids, there is full agreement that there is a long way to go before bidding ends, and it will be ending at least in game. Awareness of potential interference from opponents in the majors is raised, and how best to deal with this is discussed. If game is seen as the limit of the hand should 5♣ be the most direct route? There is some disagreement about the meaning of redouble in this Sequence. Is it showing general values or is it more like a negative double, denying clubs and showing tolerance for other suits, especially the majors? (though East has already bid such a hand). More than half the panel opt for bidding diamonds, planning to show club support later.

If XX shows strong values, including the possibility of club support, then this may help later in the bidding. Sabine's suggestion of playing 4NT to show a strong two suited minor would fit the bill if part of your system. After the takeout double the major suit splinter bids should be understood if a single jump to a major suit is a strong and not a weak single major. 2♣ shows trump support and allows space to show the second suit of diamonds. 5♣ may prevent reaching a better game or slam contract on the one hand, and on the other puts pressure on the opponents.

**Marks:** 1♦=10; XX=9; 5♣=9; 3♥=8; 3♠=8; 2♣= 8

### Bidding Tip

It is worth having partnership agreements on how to proceed in this one-level situation, regarding the meaning of the re-double and of splinter bids and jump overcalls. In this instance a simple 1♦ overcall seems to offer a clear starting point for what may be a sequence of bids until game or slam is reached.

### Question 8

Dealer East. Vul N/S.

- ♠ Q10
- ♥ A9875
- ♦ K852
- ♣ J2

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

**Votes:** 3♠ = 11; 4S = 41

**Micheál 3♠:** Inviting partner to bid 4♠ if above minimum. My hand is maximum for a 1NT bid. Give partner a hand like: ♠AKxxxx, ♥x, ♦AQxx, ♣xx and a vulnerable game is odds on.

**Rory 3♠:** Invitational: maximum points, spade fit, useful cards, some distribution.

**Karel 3S:** Three big cards for partner so surely worth inviting vulnerable.

**George 3♠:** Could be unanimous. We have at least eight spades.

**Ciaran 3♠:** Partner could have opened 2♠ if minimum, so should be full value.

**Luca 3♠:** Would have been nice to be playing Gazzilli here to know the exact range, nonetheless game could easily be on.

**Tom 3♠:** I have great cards, two trump honours, an outside A+K, and a side doubleton. (second choice 4♠)

**Peter G 3♠:** Maybe pass more sensible in pairs, but do like my K/A/Q.

**Anna 3♠:** As partner opened in fourth seat I expect to see a decent hand. I have all the cards for playing in a spade contract. Even tempting to bid 4♠.

**Sally 4♠:** First thoughts, 3♠, but partner would open 2♠ in fourth seat with about 10-13, so should be well into the 14-15 range for this action. I hate invitations. Partner can never judge when they fit.

**Roy 4♠:** Partner could have opened 2♠ in fourth seat with 10-13, so this should be stronger, I'm not going to risk 4♠.

**Sabine 4♠:** Partner should be 14-16, otherwise would have opened 2♠ in last seat.



**Peter P 4♠:** Q10 to build partner's suit, a certain trick with the ♥A, a decent chance of a trick with the ♦K and a possible club ruff. With ♠AKxxxx, ♥xx, ♦Qx, ♣K10X we have chances.

♠AJ8643 ♥J3 ♦AJ ♣A73			
♠K9	N	♠752	
♥Q42	W	♥KT6	
♦QT76	E	♦943	
♣KT95	S	♣Q864	
♠QT ♥A9875 ♦K852 ♣J2			
W	N	E	S
		P	P
P	1♠	P	1NT <sup>1</sup>
P	2♠ <sup>2</sup>	P	?
<sup>1</sup> 1NT = 6-10: F1 <sup>2</sup> 2♠ = 6+			

## Summary

This hand raises an interesting question of whether a fourth seat opening hand with a six card major should open with one of the major with 14+, and with only 10-13 open two of the six card major? Certainly the panel expect the 1♠ opening to have extra values, so why not change the two-level opening to 10-13? The expectation of extra values, plus useful cards in the South hand, persuade the majority vote for an invitational raise to 4♠, and the remaining members going straight to 4♠ based on the fact that a weaker 2♠ opening was not employed. As the 10-13 range was not part of the system the 3♠ bidders edge the scores. Although 12 tricks are available the cards need to lie most favourably, and East will certainly raise 3♠ to 4♠.

**Marks:** 3♠ = 10; 4♠ = 9

## Bidding Tip

Opening the bidding after three passes should have decent values, so there is a real benefit in opening six card majors with 10-13. Well done to Ciaran Coyne for scoring a perfect 80, edging Sabine Auken's 79.

## Summary of the Expert Panel Results

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
Sabine Auken	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	9	79
Sally Brock	7	10	10	10	7	10	10	9	73
Luca Crone	10	7	10	7	10	7	10	10	71
Ciaran Coyne	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	80
Karek De Raeymaecker	8	10	10	10	10	9	8	10	75
Brad Moss	9	10	10	10	8	10	10	10	77
Peter Goodman	10	10	10	10	10	8	9	10	77
Joe Grue	10	10	10	10	10	7	10	10	77
Tom Hanlon	10	10	10	10	10	10	9	9	78
George Jacobs	8	9	10	10	10	10	9	10	76
Micheál O'Briain	10	10	10	10	10	7	10	10	77
Anna Onishuk	9	10	10	10	10	9	8	10	76
Peter Pigot	10	9	10	8	10	9	8	10	74
Rory Timlin	9	10	10	10	10	7	10	10	76
Roy Welland	9	10	10	10	8	10	9	9	75



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