

# IRISH BRIDGE Journal

Winter 2023/2024

## Welcome

Hello everyone and I hope 2024 is a fulfilling year for you, at and away from the table.



Enda Murphy, Editor

You'll be relieved to hear that I couldn't find my soapbox for this issue, so for once my Editorial is rant-free.

As you know, Luca Crone is our resident chronicler of Junior Bridge happenings. He's also the Convenor of the CBAI Youth Committee. For this issue, Luca has conducted a brief survey of our current crop of Juniors, focusing on how they were first exposed to the game. There are interesting implications for the ongoing quest to attract and retain younger players.

There's a tweak to our Play Quiz format. Tomás Roche has decided to show the deals and the solutions for the same set of problems in the same issue, rather than have readers wait until the next issue to find the solutions. This is a sensible move. So this issue, you'll see the solutions to the most recent set of problems [last issue], plus the problems and solutions for this issue.

[The Bidding Quiz is a different proposition, as we need to give our distinguished panelists time to consider and respond to the problems – not to mention giving Bob Pattinson time to write his always instructive summaries!]

We've had the first Camrose weekend. Ireland lie third, behind the two English squads. 69 VPs leads, from 60 and 58. In fact, Ireland were in danger of getting too far behind until a whopping 60-IMP win over England in the last match brought us back into contention. As they say – "near enough if good enough".

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## You make the news!

The Journal wants to hear from your Club!!

Send a photo and caption of a noteworthy event.

Be the next Club to be profiled in our "Club Focus" feature.

Contact [editor@cbaie.ie](mailto:editor@cbaie.ie)

Over in the US, readers may be aware that they run three National Championships [NABCs] each year. In recent years, top players from all over the world have been involved, making them even harder to win. Traditionally, the three “majors” have been the Vanderbilt, Spingold and Reisinger team championships. The final 2023 event was held in November in Atlanta. The relatively new team event, the Soloway, featured all the top teams. Yet the Reisinger only had 10 tables. I think this is significant because the Reisinger is BAM [board-a-match], and as such one of the very few championships in that format. I’ve always felt our own schedule could usefully incorporate one.

If it is now to be de-emphasised, more’s the pity. At least it was won by a team containing Norberto Bocchi, one of the good guys in my book. Forza Norby!

Ireland’s Tom Hanlon was telling me that in the last 10 NABCs he’s been in six quarterfinals and a semi – his point being that he’s overdue a win! My final observation, having watched many of the latter stage matches last year, is that for my money the Brad Moss – Joe Grue pairing is the best America has right now. Both are members of our Bidding Panel.

The IBU Open Trials produced a nail-biting finish, and Nick FitzGibbon recounts the decisive deal. I didn’t see much of the Women’s event, but

it seemed odd to play a whole weekend just to cut six teams to four, without a carryover. Once again, a number of top names did not feature.

Oh yes – there’s a big surprise in Melissa Brady’s piece this issue. You’ll have to read it for yourself, but Melissa has not yet gotten over the shock!

In closing, let me invite all readers to contact me with views and suggestions to improve the Journal. Also send in pictures of noteworthy events in your locale. And if you’d like your club to be featured [we look to feature one club in each issue] – just let me know.

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

## “Ah yes, I remember it well!” [or not]

**For a number of years now, my daughters and my wife have taken singular delight in pouncing on my increasingly fallible memory. The girls are merciless, telling me I went gaga years ago. My wife, bless her, is more diplomatic – you don’t even feel the stiletto going between your ribs.**

I prefer to say that I have a highly selective memory. Name any year since 1968 and I’ll give you the Derby winner, owner, trainer, jockey and SP. Give me any hit song from the past 50 years and I’ll tell you exactly what I was doing that year. What the women in my life fail to understand is that THAT is what really matters. So what if I cannot reliably inform you as to what I did the day before yesterday, or what I have agreed to do next week?

Recently I was reminded of a happy memory from a few years ago that had slipped into the recesses, but once prompted, flew back to me. I was at the [dining] table with Tomás Roche, your Play Quiz correspondent. He reminded me of a board from the Wexford Congress Pairs of many years ago. Playing together against Michael McLoughlin and Heidi Lillis, Tomás opened 3NT, showing a long solid Minor. I tanked for quite a while, because I had a huge hand.

I was trying to remember if he was allowed to have an outside King – and if so, how I could ask which suit it was in. Eventually I bid 7♣. Michael led a spade and Tomás tabled AKQ8753 in clubs and out. I won ♠A in hand, cashed ♠K and ruffed a spade in dummy. I then called for ♣A. Tomás later told me “I was wondering why you had to ruff a spade in dummy to start trumps”. The reason soon came to light. I was void in Clubs!! I had concluded that if all he had was seven solid clubs and no outside King, 7NT was out of the question since I had no entry to his hand. Clubs were 3-3 and I claimed. Michael’s face was a study, but his demeanour never changed.

I’m not sure whether this board bolsters my case or that of my female persecutors. And I don’t care. And here’s something I will NOT forget – I must get Tomás to give me his definition of a solid suit!

**Editor**

# Play Quiz 5

Tomás Roche



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

## Board 1 Dealer North. Vul None.

♠ K104	N	♠ 6
♥ QJ1064	W	♥ A8752
♦ Q6	E	♦ 842
♣ AQ5	S	♣ KJ73

W	N	E	S
	P	P	P
1♥	X	4♥	All Pass

### The Play

North leads the ♦K and follows with ♦A and another. How do you plan the play?

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

♠ K72	N	♠ A10
♥ J65	W	♥ A103
♦ KQ43	E	♦ 9652
♣ 652	S	♣ AK73

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

### The Play

South opens a low spade against 2NT and declarer's ♠10 wins the trick. How do you plan the play?

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

♠ KJ9764	N	♠ AQ85
♥ 5	W	♥ A10742
♦ A10862	E	♦ K4
♣ 7	S	♣ A9

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

<sup>1</sup> 5♦ = 0 or 3 key cards;  
<sup>2</sup> 6♦ = queen of agreed suit (spades) and ♦K

### The Play

North leads the ♣K against 7♠. How do you plan the play?

## Board 4 Dealer West. Vul All.

♠ AKJ8753	N	♠ 642
♥ A	W	♥ J73
♦ AQ	E	♦ 865
♣ K72	S	♣ AJ54

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

<sup>1</sup> 5♠ = 1 or 4 key cards;  
<sup>2</sup> 5♠ = denies queen of agreed suit (spades)

### The Play

North leads a heart against 6♠. All follow to the ♠A. How do you plan the play?

# Bidding Quiz 5

By Bob Pattinson



All eight hands are from live pairs events. Entries to [biddingquiz@cbaire.com](mailto:biddingquiz@cbaire.com) by 7th April 2024.

Good luck!

## Question 1

Dealer South. Vul 1 E/W. Pairs.

- ♠ AQ52
- ♥ AKJ83
- ♦ Q1042
- ♣ -

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

<sup>1</sup> 2♣ = Game forcing

## Question 2

Dealer East. Vul E/W. Teams.

- ♠ A10952
- ♥ 6
- ♦ Q76
- ♣ Q652

W	N	E	S
		1♦	P
1♠	2♥	X <sup>1</sup>	4♥
?			

<sup>1</sup> X = support double showing 3 spades

## Question 3

Dealer North. Vul All. Pairs.

- ♠ 986
- ♥ A7
- ♦ KQ754
- ♣ J62

W	N	E	S
	1♥	1♠	P
?			

## Question 4

Dealer East. Vul All. Teams.

- ♠ A
- ♥ J8764
- ♦ Q52
- ♣ Q853

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

<sup>1</sup> 1NT = F1: 6-11: < 3 spades;  
<sup>2</sup> 3♦ = 16+ : 5-5

## Question 5

Dealer North. Vul All. Teams.

- ♠ A6
- ♥ K4
- ♦ QJT965
- ♣ Q64

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

<sup>1</sup> 2♣ = Game forcing

## Question 6

Dealer East. Vul E/W. Pairs

- ♠ KJ4
- ♥ AQJ52
- ♦ A8
- ♣ A62

W	N	E	S
		3♦	4♠
?			

## Question 7

Dealer North. Vul All. Teams.

- ♠ JT76
- ♥ T942
- ♦ AK
- ♣ 984

W	N	E	S
	1♠	2NT <sup>1</sup>	?

<sup>1</sup> 2NT = Minors 5-5: 7-11 points

## Question 8

Dealer West. Vul E/W. Pairs

- ♠ 98642
- ♥ AK
- ♦ Q
- ♣ K6543

W	N	E	S
1♦	?		

### Entries to:

[biddingquiz@cbaire.com](mailto:biddingquiz@cbaire.com)  
by 7th April 2024

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

- Novice/Intermediate
- 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 5M and 4+ clubs  
2NT = 17-19 balanced : other bids game forcing

## Responses to 1nt Opening (15-17)

2♣ = non-promissory Stayman

2♦/♥/♠/NT = transfers

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

## Two-Level Suit Opening Bids

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

## Three/Four-Level Opening Bids

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

## Opening Side Action over Interference

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

## Intervening Bidding

Bid	Meaning
1NT overcall	16-18
Weak jump overcalls	6-10
Two suited overcalls	Direct cue = two highest suits 2NT = two lowest suits; 3♣ = two remaining suits
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.



# CBAI News

Dermot O'Brien



**We are well into the 2023/2024 season at this stage, and I am happy to report that the recovery of the Association after Covid is continuing satisfactorily.**

Membership numbers are up again on the previous year – ultimately perhaps by as much as 5% once all the late affiliations currently being submitted have been processed. And attendances at our major events are continuing to grow. A couple of weeks ago, we had 109 tables in Tullow for the Holmes Wilson, which is not far off the all-time peak for that venue, and last weekend Gordon Lessells and the North Munster committee ran a very successful Novice & Intermediate Congress in Ballykisteen, with good numbers attending. So we can be hopeful, I think, that all grades are now returning to active competitions, provided the proposition is attractive. Kudos to both hotels for doing a great job – player feedback has been almost universally very positive.

The international calendar is in full swing too. Our juniors did us proud in the Junior Camrose (Under-26s) and Peggy Bayer (Under-21s) Trophies in Belfast last weekend, finishing a very solid second to the victorious English team in each event. Some of our junior players, notably Luca Crone, Matthew O'Farrell, and Isabel Burke, have also been doing very well in our own open competitions, as you'll read elsewhere in the Journal. So there's plenty to be optimistic about from our junior players. If only there were a few more of them!

As I write, our Open team is preparing for the second weekend of the Camrose Trophy, lying third after the first weekend, and with an outside chance of winning if they

can put together a great second weekend. Our teams for the Lady Milne and Teltscher Trophies have been selected; Ireland is hosting the former this year, in CityNorth Hotel in Gormanstown on 19-21 April, and you'll be very welcome along to watch some high-quality bridge ... or to give a hand with the organisation if you are so minded. The trials to select the various teams to represent the IBU in the European Championships in Herning, Denmark, in the summer, and in the World Bridge Games in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in the autumn, are also ongoing. We'll be able to list all our representatives in full next time around.

I'm pleased to report we have a new sponsor this season, in the form of AL Homecare, which, as its name suggests provides affordable assistance packages for those in need who would prefer to continue to live at home than to enter institutional accommodation. You'll see their advert elsewhere in the Journal. The firm has very kindly sponsored both the Master Pairs and the Holmes Wilson Trophy this season, for which we are very grateful, and we hope that this might be the beginning of a lasting relationship. If any of your family or friends are in need of this kind of service, please consider AL Homecare for their needs. I recently did a **Facebook "chat"** with their Managing Director, Tom Quinlan, which gave me the opportunity to say a little about bridge, and the Association, and promote us to their customer base. You can watch it by clicking the link [here](#).

The remaining "open" (i.e. non-qualifier) events this season are the various congresses, all of which deserve your support, the Lambert and Cooper Cups (confined to Area Masters) in Templeogue on

27-28 April, the JJ Murphy National Novice Championship in the same venue on 27 April, and, of course, the 4Fun Teams in Westmanstown on 25 May. Your regional committee will be organizing teams for the this last event – a team must consist of one Master (Regional or below), one Intermediate A, one Intermediate B, and one Novice – so if you are interested in playing, please let your Regional Secretary know. You'll find the full calendar [here](#):

I recently attended the bi-annual European Bridge League Officers' Seminars, which on this occasion were held in Dubrovnik (I am representing the IBU rather than the CBAI in this forum). It was good to learn from discussions with my European counterparts that Ireland appears to be doing as well as any of them post-covid. An interesting development from the meetings is that two largest bridge federations in Europe, France and the Netherlands, who have been working together informally for a while to pool their resources on several issues, are offering to extend that working group to include others as well.

The advertisement for AL Homecare features a circular logo with a stylized bird and the text 'alh Affordable Live-In Homecare'. Below the logo is a photograph of an elderly woman sitting at a table, with a younger woman standing behind her. Below this is a screenshot of a Facebook live chat session. The chat shows a video feed of Tom Quinlan, the Managing Director of AL Homecare, and a text-based conversation with Dermot O'Brien, CEO of CBAI. The chat interface includes a timestamp of 18:06:24:41 and interaction icons for Like, Comment, and Share.

Tom Quinlan, AL Homecare on Facebook chat with Dermot O'Brien, CEO, CBAI

We happily signed up on behalf of the IBU and will keep you informed of developments. Their work thus far has mainly revolved around junior bridge, but there are surely major opportunities in relation to marketing and promotion, attracting new players, working on a proposition to win sponsorship, etc. if we can work alongside bigger and better-resourced bridge organisations.

The meetings also discussed methods for recruiting new players to bridge, a necessity for every federation worldwide.

Lots of complicated ideas were suggested, but I was struck by a very simple one that one delegate raised. If each of our current members could persuade one friend to take up bridge, then even if only half of them stuck the course and joined a club afterwards, we'd increase our membership by 50%! Please do whatever you can to promote our great game and encourage your friends and family to take it up.

Finally, in another exciting development, we have been approached by a producer planning a documentary film on bridge in Ireland. They have funding for the film, and plan to show it at various festivals over the summer. Their interest is in the PEOPLE that make up bridge rather than the history or technical aspects of the game, and they have asked us to bring it to our members' attention. The aim is to capture the entire gamut of bridge players – young and old, male and female, competitive and social, urban and rural. They are especially interested in hearing from people who feel that bridge has had an impact on their lives in some way. If you have a bridge story to tell, and would consider being interviewed for the film, please contact the Casting Producer, Milly McLaughlin, at [milly.mclaughlin@gmail.com](mailto:milly.mclaughlin@gmail.com), and tell her I sent you. I can't tell you how excited I am about this film. If it is done well, it will represent a fantastic promotional vehicle for bridge in Ireland, one that would be well beyond the resources of the CBAI to fund off its own bat.

So all in all, after a few difficult years it looks as if we have reason to be more optimistic now about the future of bridge in Ireland. Thank you for your continuing support, and, as ever, if you have ideas for other promotional or developmental activities that the Association should be considering, please let me know.



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Dermot O'Brien, CEO, CBAI and Eileen Corbett, AL Homecare with Gordon Lessells, President CBAI at the opening of the Holmes Wilson 2024.

# Results and Upcoming Fixtures

## National Results

### Master Pairs (Templeogue, 9-10 December)

- 1st John Carroll & Mark Moran
- 2nd Conor Boland & Tom Hanlon
- 3rd Pádraig Ó Briain & Micheál Ó Briain
- 4th Nick FitzGibbon & Adam Mesbur

### Men's & Women's Pairs & Teams (Clane, 13-14 January)

**Revington Cup (Men's Pairs)**  
Dan McIntosh & Peter Goodman

**Jackson Cup (Women's Pairs)**  
Mary Kelly-Rogers & Anne Fitzpatrick

**Geraldine Trophy (Men's Teams)**  
Wojciech Gorcycza, Ronan McMaugh, Marcin Rudzinski, Claudiu Dima

**McMenamin Bowl (Women's Teams)**  
Joan Kenny, Jeannie Fitzgerald, Teresa Rigney, Siobhan Part

### Confined Regional Masters Pairs (Templeogue, 3-4 February)

Niall & Ian Kilroy

### Confined Regional Masters Teams (Templeogue 3-4 February)

Joan Donnellan, Una Flynn, John Kiernan, Olive Kilbane

### Holmes Wilson Cup - 11/12 Feb

- 1st Mark Moran, Tom Hanlon, Adam Mesbur, Nick FitzGibbon
- 2nd Karel De Raeymaeker, Anna Onishuk, Kelan O'Connor, Conor Boland
- 3rd Dan McIntosh, Peter Goodman, Luca Crone, Matthew O'Farrell
- 4th Wojciech Gorcycza, Isabel Burke, Marcin Rudzinski, Michelle Moloney



Nick FitzGibbon, Adam Mesbur, Mark Moran and Tom Hanlon with CBAI President Gordon Lessells on winning the Holmes Wilson 2024.

### Novice & Intermediate Congress (Ballykisteen, 10-11 February)

**Jim Fitzgerald Trophy (Mixed Pairs)**  
Mary Madigan & Mossy Stack

**New Ireland Trophy (Intermediate A Pairs)**  
Melissa Brady & Anna Shalvey

**Kervick Trophy (Intermediate B Pairs)**  
Kevin O'Dwyer & Sean Houston

**Waterford Crystal Trophy (Novice Pairs)**  
Louise McKenna & Fionnuala Burke

**JJ Kiely Trophy (Intermediate Teams)**  
Margaret McCarthy, Maureen Mary Bourke

### National Pairs Competiton (Ennistymon, 24-25 February)

**Davidson Trophy (Open Pairs):**  
Joan Kenny & Enda Glynn

**Laird Trophy (Inter A Pairs)**  
Patsy Hanbury & Patsy O'Donoghue

**Civil Service Cup (Inter B Pairs)**  
Marian Keane & Jean Carberry

## Upcoming Fixtures

Date	Event	Venue
<b>2024</b>		
Mar 1-3	Camrose Trophy, Weekend 2	England
Mar 1-3	Malahide Bridge Congress	Grand Hotel Malahide
Mar 4	CBAI Sims Pairs Week	Check Local clubs
Mar 8-10	IBU Mixed Trials, Weekend 2	Templeogue Bridge Centre
Mar 9-10	IBU Burke & O'Connor Trophies	Cavan Crystal Hotel
Mar 12-14	IBU Senior Trials	La Mon Hotel, Belfast
Mar 22-23	Clonmel Congress	Talbot Hotel (Clonmel Park)
Mar 23-24	National Teams Championships	Loughrea Hotel & Spa
Mar 29-Apr 01	Galway Congress	Clybaun Hotel
Apr 5-7	Tralee International Congress	The Rose Hotel, Tralee
Apr 13-14	Moylan Cup	Malahide Bridge Centre
Apr 15-21	European Winter Transnational Games	Alpe D'huez, France
Apr 16-18	IBU Seniors' Congress	Cavan Crystal Hotel
Apr 19-20	Lady Milne Trophy	City North Hotel, Gormanstown
Apr 27	JJ Murphy Trophy	Templeogue Bridge Centre
Apr 27	Lambert Cup	Templeogue Bridge Centre
Apr 28	Cooper Cup	Templeogue Bridge Centre
11 May	IBU Club Pairs	TBC
25 May	4Fun Teams	Westmanstown
25-26 May	IBU Egan Trophy	La Mon Hotel, Belfast



# Farewell Jacko

Adam Mesbur, Nick FitzGibbon and BJ O'Brien

**[We lost David "Banzai" Jackson back in November. Adam Mesbur, Nick FitzGibbon and BJ O'Brien have collaborated to capture some indelible memories. Ed.]**

Adam leads off with the form in the book. "David won the Holmes Wilson 10 times (2016, 1995, 1994, 1982, 1981, 1980, 1979, 1978, 1977, 1976 – he and I were the only constants in the seven-in-a-row team). He also won the Geraldine 10 times, the Davidson twice, and the Spiro, Revington, and Master Pairs once each. And in IBU competitions, his victories were twice in the Kelburne, Burke, and Egan, and once in the Senior Teams. That makes 32 national titles overall, to go along with one Camrose cap, five European caps, and five Teltcher caps. That is before you go on to consider, as well as his multiple NPC appearances and successes. Overall, a record without parallel in our game".

BJ O'Brien was a frequent partner. He was also a wingman in David's determined, and typically systematic, efforts to adjust Paddy Power's earnings sharply downward!

"It is very difficult neatly to encapsulate my associations with David 'Banzai' Jackson. I was privileged to witness at first hand his passion for bridge, his enduring success in devising ways of outsmarting the bookmaking community (a profession he was extremely well acquainted with) and his love of adventure in visiting places that were normally only accessible via "boreens" (roads where large tufts of grass were more prominent than the concrete they grew out of).



Jacko and I played bridge together for more years than I care to remember. We had our ups and downs but remained friends throughout. Once in the Duais an Úachtaráin, we went into the third session with a commanding lead only for me to have a nightmare game. David did not say a cross word, for which I was very grateful [if a little shocked].

In company with Adam Mesbur and Nick FitzGibbon we managed to win the Holmes Wilson in 2016. David as captain (David was always captain when it came to team events) made the winning speech and had his audience in fits of laughter as he described how there was life left in the old dogs yet.

We travelled away a good deal but after I chose a particular restaurant in Wroclaw, Poland I was never allowed to choose another dining establishment again. My selection offended several of David's "Suitable Dining for Bridge Players" principles.

David had a reputation of being very slow at the table - I think one of the more successful things that I accomplished with him was to speed up his game. It probably did not help with our results but it did my blood pressure no end of good. Invariably when he did take his time, he found the correct solution.

On his passing, a large number of his bridge playing peers contacted me. They all described David as being "a legend of the game" and an iconic figure within it".

Nick recalls "David has been a powerful influence on me and many others in the world of bridge. Adam and I started playing on his team in the 70's and enjoyed a never repeated run of success in the Holmes Wilson and Geraldine trophies. His greatest impact had its genesis in 1980 when he captained the Open team at the World Team Olympiad in Valkenburg. This was when the term Banzai originated, which I introduced to describe extremely aggressive pre-empts. David was happy to adopt the word for his own nickname at times. But it was not until the 2000s that he took on the captaincy of the team every year and introduced a professional approach with many innovations to maximise the team's chances of success. He also fought the bridge authorities to get better treatment and fairer trials for selecting the team. David spearheaded a run of Camrose wins, as well as the prestigious Lederer Trophy, and these were a sign of bigger things to come. One of the Camrose wins actually involved David stepping up from NPC to PC! We'd had a bereavement and an illness in the squad, but David partnered Tommy Garvey as a scratch pairing to get us over the line.

The silver medal in the 2006 European Championships was our big win, but the gold-winning Italian team contained a cheating pair. In 2012 in Lille we finished fourth in the World Open Team Championships, although in all conscience we should have been promoted to the silver

medal by the spineless World Bridge Federation after we lost the semifinal and the playoff for third place to two teams who had cheating pairs.

The team was always well served by David's incisive research, which saw him spending much time systematically researching our prospective opponents beforehand and keeping us in order at the event.

The more that life is made easier for the team away from the bridge table, the more energy is left to the players for concentrating on their game. The role of a captain cannot be overestimated in doing this. For many years I regarded a captain as someone who put in the line-ups and not much more. I've known a captain who held the European record for blood alcohol content while driving, and organised 86 bottles of spirits to be shipped with the team for the event, a captain who in his report to the IBU attributed the team's poor performance in part to excess drinking when five of the six players hardly drank at all, a captain who was nearly expelled from a World Championship for losing his cool with an official, a captain who directed an Irish supporter to play in the closed room, thinking he was on the team, a captain who did his best to lose all the printed

opponents' systems in the airport on the way, and several captains who rotated pairs in and out on a preordained rota system. David Jackson was the first person to tackle the job professionally, and the results of the Irish team during his reign from 2003 until 2012 showed it. Five quarter final or fifth place finishes in European and World Transnational events, silver in the 2006 Europeans, quarter finalist in the World Team Olympiad 2004 having headed one of the four qualifying groups, semi-finalist in this event [renamed the World Mind Games] in 2012.

Of course with his statistical abilities he also made waves in the world of sports betting, notably causing hurried revisions in the Tote rules worldwide when he exploited a loophole in place betting at the races. He also participated in the syndicate that won the Lotto by buying tickets for nearly every combination possible when the jackpot was big and a guaranteed payout was offered for match four numbers. His grasp of probabilities was helpful for the bridge team when he was able to give realistic and significant chances of Ireland beating even the best teams on occasion, which was not obvious and an important confidence boost. He also spent many hours analysing the players

on the other teams before a big event using the WBF database of their playing records. He organised a bridge player and sports psychologist Betty Cody to prepare the team mentally for success. Diet was also on his mind, as he believed that heavy meals were not conducive to mental alertness. To this end he sometimes brought us to vegetarian restaurants and banned black pudding for breakfast, a bone of contention with some of the team though it became a humorous reference in the end.

David broke new theoretical ground regarding point count card valuation in a book co-authored with Ron Klinger titled 'Better Balanced Bidding'. In short, he advocated 5 for an Ace down to 1 for a Ten. Adam and I adopted it.

David made an immense contribution to our game".

*["Better Balanced Bidding" is available via CBAI, as is "Silver For Ireland", the story of that breakthrough European medal in 2006. Ed.]*



(c) Paul J Scannell, August 2006

David with the Irish Open Team with Italian Team Members in August 2006.

# When I was a Boye!

New column from the 2007 Bermuda Bowl winner

## Boye's bridge

White House invitation teams 2007

By **BOYE BROGELAND**, FLEKKEFJORD NORWAY



**I**N SEPTEMBER 2006 I received an exciting email from the Spaniard Juan Carlos Ventin. He invited me to play in his Spanish-Italian-Argentinian team (perhaps the term 'group' would be more appropriate since eight people were involved). As he is an extremely pleasant guy and there were no issues about playing fees I didn't need any time to consider whether to accept. Our debut would be the White House International in Amsterdam 2007.

When it became clear a few weeks later that my partner in Amsterdam was to be Massimo Lanzarotti, who had been banned from playing with his partner Burati after the cheating scandal at the European championships in Tenerife 2005, I started to have mixed feelings. My opinion of him was only based on a few meetings at the table but I had never thought of him as a particularly sympathetic individual.

Already during our training sessions on BBO I got a different picture of Massimo. He was open, pleasant and much easier to get on with than I had previously believed. The chemistry at the green table in Amsterdam was also good, despite the difference in Italian and Norwegian bidding styles. For example, in the land of the wooden clogs 4NT was never to be Blackwood when a minor was agreed, whereas here in the North we're definitely asking for aces. Luckily we mostly avoided any accidents.

The game actually went so well that we had reached the semi finals. Now we were to meet the home team, Orange, represented by Sjoert Brink, Bas Drijver, Huub Bertens and Ton

Bakkeren. After 14 of the 28 hands we were leading 44-19 but the Dutch came back strongly in the second half. When I picked up this hand as South, neither side vulnerable, I was afraid that our lead had shrunk to 10 or 15 imps.

♠ A 9 6 3    ♥ A K J 8 4    ♦ —    ♣ J 6 4 3

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Bakkeren	Lanzarotti	Bertens	Brogeland
		pass	1♥
pass	2♦	pass	2♥
pass	4♥	all pass	

An easy hand for me to bid as I play that 2♠ over 2♦ here shows reversing values, even playing 2/1. Unfortunately there is not much information to be had from the opponents' bidding, except that East did not have an opening bid.

Bakkeren leads the ♣K and a useful looking dummy hits the table:

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

♠ A 9 6 3  
♥ A K J 8 4  
♦ —  
♣ J 6 4 3

I see no reason to duck the opening lead (after all it is not impossible that West has found an inspired lead from king-doubleton) but the plan for the rest if the play is not obvious. I take my time before playing the ace to the first trick.

I only have two obvious losers, one in each of the black suits, but there are many potential pitfalls en route to ten tricks. There are only four tricks on top in the side suits, and with clubs the

only realistic source of extra tricks I'll probably need five trump tricks. How do I achieve this whilst minimising the chances of the opposition taking four tricks? I wonder if it isn't best to win the ♣A, cash the ♦AK for club discards (to avoid club ruffs) and then play a spade off the table.

Not many seconds have passed when I call "ace, please". It comes as a bit of surprise to discover that dummy is not on lead at trick two. East has ruffed the ace and quick as a flash Huub Bertens plays the ♥5. It's time for another plan! If you play low and West produces the queen you've gone off before taking a single trick! But, who would switch to a trump from two or three small in this position? A quick spade trick by partner is all East needs to beat the contract. Isn't it more likely that East is trying to give you the impression that he doesn't hold the ♥Q?

It's always tough to make these decisions. I spend a fair amount of time making up my mind and become more and more convinced that I should trust my instincts. I therefore play low on the trump switch and now it's West's turn to show out and discard a club. A cold shiver goes down my arms and back, almost a reflex reaction I have when I've made the right choice in a difficult situation. After all, we're playing for a place in the final of one of the strongest invitation events in the world. "No, Bertens, you don't fool me that easily," I say self-satisfied to myself.

At trick two you're in dummy with the ♥7, the position being:

♠ J 5  
♥ 10 3  
♦ A K 10 9 5  
♣ 10 5

♠ A 9 6 3  
♥ A K J 8  
♦ —  
♣ J 6 4

I appear to need a spade ruff in order to come to ten tricks. However, the problem is that if West wins the lead he can cash the ♣Q and give partner a



club ruff. The odds are that the spade honours are divided (75%) so things don't look too promising. How about throwing two clubs on the top diamonds and then playing a spade towards the nine? Then I'll make provided East doesn't hold ♠K10x, ♠Q10x or ♠KQx. If West has any of these holdings I get to ruff a spade and take the heart finesse for ten tricks.

I'm increasingly pleased with this plan. Juan Carlos Ventin, Phampa to his friends, sure has spent his money wisely. Not many would have come up with this plan of mine.

Berten plays the queen when the ♠5 is led from dummy. I win with the ace and play another spade to the jack and king, while West signals a three card holding in the suit. Bertens obviously continues with a trump which I win in hand with the jack. Although I can now see that East has both spade honours I am still optimistic. I am quickly

brought down to earth when it turns out that the whole hand looks like this:

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

Huub Bertens has tortured me for as long as possible by playing the queen on the first round of spades. With both honours there was clearly never any point in looking for a spade entry in partner's hand!

We lose the match by six lousyimps and also lose the playoff for bronze against France by 59 to 45.

In the post mortem after the match I still maintain that my line is with the odds, even considering that West might have overcalled 2♣ with a spade honour. I really feel that the "card gods" were not playing on my team on this hand. But suddenly I see it: My line was virtually zero percent!

Almost, anyway. If West holds an honour in spades he can win and continue with a small club for East to ruff and play a heart. The only lie that allows me to make legitimately is ♠KQ10 with East.

You might be wondering how it feels to throw away a place in the final on my debut with team Ventin? Bizarrely, making or going off in 4♥ on this hand would not have affected the match result. At the other table the Dutch made 4♥ redoubled!

Tip: Don't play bridge when you're too "high" or "low" – it can affect your judgment. Your brain works best when you're sober and concentrating. ♦♦

AUSTRALIAN BRIDGE, August 2014



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## Out and About...

### Confined Regional Masters Weekend Winners - Templeogue



**Confined Regional Masters Teams:** Joan Donnellan, Una Flynn, John Kiernan, Olive Kilbane



**Confined Regional Masters Pairs:** Niall & Ian Kilroy

### Novice and Intermediate Congress Weekend Winners - Ballykisteen, Co Tipperary



**Kervick Trophy Inter B Pairs:** Kevin O'Dwyer & Sean Houston



**New Ireland Trophy Inter A Pairs:** Melissa Brady & Anna Shalvey



**Waterford Crystal Novice Pairs:** Louise McKenna & Fionnuala Burke



**JJ Keily Intermediate Teams:** Margaret McCarthy, Maureen Mary Bourke

### National Pairs Weekend Winners - Ennistymon



**Davidson Winners Open Pairs:** Joan Kenny & Enda Glynn



**Civil Service Trophy Inter B Pairs:** Marian Keane & Jean Carberry



**Laird Trophy Inter B Pairs:** Patsy Hanbury & Patsy O'Donoghue



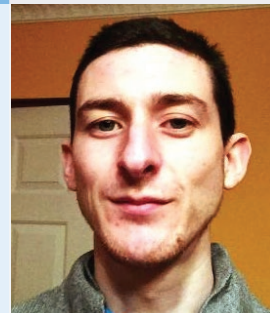
### Lederer Winners 2024

Congratulations to Team IRELAND - Mark Moran, John Carroll, Adam Mesbur, Nick FitzGibbon, Tom Hanlon, and NPC Grainne Barton, with the addition of Frederic Volcker of France, who won the prestigious Lederer Trophy in London.

**Report to come in the next issue**

# A Bridge to Excellence: "The Tralee International Bridge Congress 2024"

Kelan O'Connor



As a passionate ambassador of bridge in Ireland, it's my privilege to invite you to the Tralee International Bridge Congress 2024 at the The Rose Hotel from Friday April 5th to Sunday April 7th 2024.

Set against the backdrop of Tralee's picturesque landscapes, this event promises to be a grand symphony of skill, strategy, and camaraderie.

## Why Tralee?

Tralee, a gem in the heart of County Kerry, is more than just a venue; it's a retreat where the beauty of nature meets the thrill of bridge. The Rose Hotel, our chosen venue, exemplifies the best of Irish hospitality, blending luxury with the warmth of a home away from home. Tralee's rich history and vibrant culture offer a perfect respite from the intensity of the game, ensuring that your experience is both stimulating and relaxing.

## Hotel Accommodation

To enhance your experience, The Rose Hotel offers special accommodation packages for Congress participants. We've arranged for a "Bridge Package" that combines comfort and convenience, making your stay both enjoyable and affordable.

**For Bookings: Call 066 7199100 (Ask For "Bridge Package")**

## For the Bridge Enthusiast

Whether you're a seasoned player or new to the world of bridge, the Tralee International Bridge Congress is tailored to cater to all levels of experience and expertise. Our diverse programme includes events like Gala Pairs, Intermediate B & Novice Pairs, Open Pairs, Congress Pairs, and Team competitions, each designed to challenge and invigorate participants.

## A Welcoming Community of Bridge Players

The Tralee International Bridge Congress 2024 is an embodiment of our commitment to a welcoming and inclusive bridge environment. We embrace players of all abilities, from novices to seasoned veterans, providing a platform where everyone can play, learn, and grow together. Our event is a testament to the spirit of inclusivity that lies at the heart of bridge – a game for everyone.

## Learning and Growth

The Congress is not just a competition; it's a learning hub. Engage in insightful discussions with peers, learn from the strategies of top players, and immerse yourself in the evolving dynamics of bridge. This is a unique opportunity to elevate your game, broaden your network, and partake in the rich tradition of Irish bridge.

**Tralee International Bridge Congress**

Dates: April 5th –7th 2024  
(Fri-Sun)  
at  
**The Rose Hotel Tralee**  
★★★★

Congress Contact Details & Entries:

Please send Full Name & CBAI Number to:  
Nicky Fitzgibbon 0667185471  
tralee@bridgeireland.com

Programme of Events

**Friday 5th April 2024**  
7:15pm: Official Opening  
7:30pm: Gala Pairs - €15 Per Person  
7:30pm: Intermediate B & Novice Pairs - €10 Per Person

**Saturday 6th April 2024**  
11.00am: Grand Master Donal Garvey will hold a discussion about the previous night's hands.

1:30pm: Open Pairs - €12.50 Per Person  
1:45pm: Congress Pairs (2 Sessions) - €25 Per Person  
Intermediate Pairs (2 Sessions) - €25 Per Person  
7:15pm: Novice Pairs - €10 Per Person  
7:30pm: Open Pairs - €12.50 Per Person

**Sunday 7th April 2024**  
11:00am: Congress & Intermediate Teams (Extended Session) - €25 Per Person  
1:00pm: Open Pairs - €12.50 Per Person

Hotel Accommodation Rates

**OPTION ONE:**  
(Two Nights Bed & Breakfast with Dinner on Saturday)

- Early Booker up to 31st Dec 2023: €163 pps / €225 Single Rate
- After 31st Dec 2023: €173 pps / €235 Single Rate

**OPTION TWO:**  
(Saturday Bed & Breakfast with Dinner)

- Early Booker up to 31st Dec 2023: €103 pps / €142 Single Rate
- After 31st Dec 2023: €113 pps / €152 Single Rate

Hotel Contact Phone Number 066 7199100  
Ask For "Bridge Package"

Sponsors

Presidents

CBAI National President Gordon Lessells	North Munster President Liam Lynch	Tralee Congress President Kelan O'Connor
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## Showcase of Bridge Talent

As your Congress President, I extend a special invitation to players who strive for excellence in their game. The Congress is a showcase of talent where aspiring players can measure their skills in a competitive yet supportive environment. This is a place to witness high-standard play, gain new perspectives, and be inspired.

## Why Participate?

- ▶ **Competitive Excellence:** Challenge yourself against some of the finest players in the country and beyond.
- ▶ **Camaraderie and Networking:** Build lasting relationships with fellow bridge enthusiasts from diverse backgrounds.
- ▶ **Learning Opportunities:** Gain insights from interactions with top players and through observing high-level play.
- ▶ **Scenic Beauty and Comfort:** Enjoy the exquisite surroundings and luxury accommodations of The Rose Hotel.
- ▶ **Cultural Experience:** Immerse yourself in the rich cultural tapestry of Tralee and County Kerry.

## Special Guests and Highlights

We are honoured to host esteemed guests such as CBAI National President Gordon Lessells and North Munster President Liam Lynch. As the Congress President, I look forward to welcoming you personally and ensuring that your experience is memorable. Expect engaging sessions, challenging competitions, and moments that will enrich your bridge journey.

## Conclusion: Your Bridge to Unforgettable Memories

The Tralee International Bridge Congress 2024 is more than just a tournament; it's a celebration of the spirit of bridge. It's an invitation to be part of a community that values skill, strategy, and fellowship. Join us in making this event a landmark in the history of Irish bridge. We eagerly await your presence and participation in what promises to be an unforgettable experience.

Let's meet at the table, where every hand is a new story, and every game is a step towards greatness.

**For full information please visit [Bridgelreland.com](http://Bridgelreland.com)**

# Help North Munster Support the Lifeboats!



**The North Munster region is running a new initiative this year. As a fun and useful close to the normal bridge season they have decided to organise a President's Charity day.**

The event will be held on Sunday May 19th in the Tralee Bridge Centre – which conveniently is located immediately beside Casement Station, the rail and bus station for Tralee. It is envisaged that this event will be an annual one and will be held in the President's home area. The 23/24 President is Liam Lynch of the 71 Club in Tralee and he has nominated the RNLI as his chosen charity.

The Lifeboat is an integral part of the community in Fenit and the majority of its volunteers are from the immediate area. They come from every part of society and are united by a common goal of saving lives at sea. Every crewmember is a volunteer and they require extensive training and equipment before they are allowed on their first 'shout'.

A 'shout' is their jargon for a lifeboat call. The main lifeboat in Fenit is a Trent Class called the Robert Hywel Jones Williams and is named in honour of the donor whose bequest funded its cost. There is also a small inshore Class D Lifeboat – Lizzie - called after the Carry On actress Liz Fraser whose legacy funded the boat. It costs hundreds of thousands to run this service and there are many seamen both professional and recreational who owe their lives to the dedication of the RNLI and its volunteers. All money raised locally stays with the local lifeboat and it is a cause which is well worth supporting.

**Entries to [hardimantom@gmail.com](mailto:hardimantom@gmail.com) or 087 1262620.**

In the same vein as our President's Charity day, we eagerly anticipate welcoming you to the upcoming live, face-to-face bridge congresses in Tralee 5th-7th April and Clonmel 22nd -24th March These congresses are splendid opportunities to gather, compete and enjoy the camaraderie that only in-person play brings.

# Major Raises in Competition

Peter Pigot



Once upon a time in the land of BBB (before bidding boxes) suit raises were in line with 1934 ACOL - raises to two level 6-9, three level 10-11 and four level 12-15. To show the strong or weak side of these bids, (mostly unintentional) players would use voice inflection, a bass Bflat or a treble highC to signify the type of hand they held (or didn't hold, as the case may be). All of us old enough to remember this era, might do so with a smile.

[Yes Peter, the old 1♥-2 and a half♥ raise!! Ed].

Along the way, through the 20th century, a few new ideas for raises were born. One was the concept of jumping to game with five trumps and a shortage and not much. There was also the "Swiss" convention - a response of 4♣ and 4♦ showing a set number of Aces, a decent hand and trump support.

The most famous was the Jacoby raise to 2NT showing a GF raise in partner's major. The "old" idea that 2NT showed a balanced 11-12 was unceremoniously dumped.

IN COMPETITION however here are my recommendations...

There are **THREE** types of raises in competition that are in common use by all top players today. **Trump Raises, Play Raises and Constructive Raises.** (There is a fourth called a Mixed Raise which is somewhere between a trump raise and a constructive raise and I have one more in my armoury... a Courtesy Raise... but these are another days work.)

## 1 Trump Raise

When we support our partner by bidding the trump suit in competition (in this case, without also) 1♠-P-3♠ or 1♠-P-4♠, we are showing a hand with trumps and VERY little defence.

## 2 Play Raise

We have a hand with trump support and a shortage, a SPLINTER (i.e. with moderate values elsewhere) or we have a FIT JUMP (i.e. Trump support and a long side suit source of tricks)

## 3 Constructive Raise

When you have a hand with trump support plus decent values outside the suit, i.e. Good Defence and support.

[WITHOUT COMPETITION ... I recommend the following; use 2NT as a raise with a game going hand +, Bergen Raises for four-card support, cues for three-card support (1♥-P-2♠, or 1♠-P-3♥)]

## Trump Raise

Dealer North. Vul N/S.

		♠ 3			
		♥ KQJ432			
		♦ 73			
		♣ AKQJ			
♠ KQ98	N		E	♠ AJ7654	
♥ 7	W		E	♥ 8	
♦ 982				♦ AK43	
♣ 109843	S			♣ 72	
		♠ 102			
		♥ A10965			
		♦ QJ106			
		♣ 65			

W	N	E	S
	1♥	1♠	1♥
3♠ <sup>1</sup>	4♣	P	P
X	All Pass		

<sup>1</sup> Trump Raise

North opens 1♥ and East overcalls 1♠, South will bid 2♥ and West 3♠ to show a TRUMP raise and NO defence. North probably bids 4♣ (not GERBER!!.. He's off playing with the fairies!), over to East. Partner has no defence and four cards in spades, therefore we have only THREE tricks against 4♥ and 4♠ will make nine, or even 10, on a lucky day. East has an easy 4♠ bid putting N/S on the spot. South will Pass and North should Double seeing THREE quick losers at the five level. Note how the, I have no defence 3♠ bid, made life so much easier for East.

## Play Raise

Dealer North. Vul All.

		♠ 873			
		♥ KQJ652			
		♦ KJ4			
		♣ A			
♠ KJ106	N		E	♠ AQ954	
♥ 8	W		E	♥ 43	
♦ 1032				♦ 76	
♣ J9543	S			♣ KQ87	
		♠ 2			
		♥ A1097			
		♦ AQ985			
		♣ 1063			

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

<sup>1</sup> Fit Jump

North opens 1♥ and East overcalls 1♠, over to South. From a PLAY perspective South has a fabulous hand... trumps, controls and a source of tricks. The bid to show this hand is a 'fit jump' showing four-card support to an honour and a suit of AJxxx or better.



At Game All, West now bids 3♠, a trump raise of four cards, over to North. Partner nearly certainly has ♥Axxx and ♦AQxxx and a singleton spade. However a voluntary bid of 5♥ in a contested auction is a GADGET to ask partner if they have a control in the opponents suit. With a singleton spade, South pushes on to 6♥ (nine times out of 10 I'd say South will have a singleton spade on this bidding but no harm to ask). NOTE how easy it was for North to count the tricks with this fit jump bid, i.e. six Hearts, five diamonds and the ♣A.

### Constructive Raise

Dealer North. Vul None.

		♠2			
		♥AKJ98			
		♦QJ76			
		♣K103			
♠KJ65		N		♠AQ8742	
♥7		W	E	♥1065	
♦A52				♦643	
♣97542		S		♣6	
		♠109			
		♥Q432			
		♦K109			
		♣AQJ8			

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

<sup>1</sup> Constructive Raise; <sup>2</sup> Forcing

North opens 1♥ and East pre-empt 2♠ to show a six card suit, 6-10 HCP, and very little defence. South wheels out his gadget cue bidding 3♠ to say he has opening values +, decent defence AND

heart support. West bids 4♠ as we all would. Should North bid, Pass or Double? The bid of 3♠ has set up a 'FORCING PASS' position for N/S. The rules for first seat after West bids 4♠ are thus ...

1. With a balanced hand or with trump trick(s) in Spades, Double;
2. With extra shape and not looking at three quick losers... BID; and;
3. Uncertainty (i.e. A little shape)... Pass.

When a Pass comes back to South they know that North cannot have spade tricks and will NOT be balanced. Therefore North has a Spade singleton and all his/her good cards are in Hearts, Diamonds and Clubs. South thus bids 5♥. If South held the ♠K instead of the ♦K South would Double. Note... After the 3♠ bid from South and 4♠ from West, the bidding is NOT allowed to go Pass, Pass, Pass... Either North or South MUST Double or bid!!

## The Beautiful Game

In his recently published memoir, the great Zia Mahmoud documented this hand.

After this bidding sequence, you wind up in 4♥ as South...

W	N	E	S (you)
1♦	X	2♦	2♥
P	4♥	All Pass	

West leads ♦A and you see....

		♠AKQ10			
		♥K1072			
		♦54			
		♣AKJ			
		N			
		W	E		
		S			
		♠7642			
		♥QJ963			
		♦82			
		♣53			

East plays ♦Q under the Ace, promising ♦J. West switches to ♠J. Oh-Oh!! A moment ago you were seeing four spades four hearts and two clubs for an easy make, but ♠J looks an obvious singleton. West is planning to win his ♥A, underlead his ♦K to East's ♦J, and get a spade ruff to defeat 4♥.

Is there anything you can do to counter this? As Zia says, if you're an expert player you'll play ♣AKJ and discard your remaining diamond, letting West win his presumed ♣Q. Now West will not be able to put East on lead with ♦J in order to get his spade ruff, and your contract is safe.

Not quite how things turned out!!

		♠AKQ10			
		♥K1072			
		♦54			
		♣AKJ			
♠J53		N		♠98	
♥A		W	E	♥854	
♦AK973				♦QJ106	
♣Q742		S		♣10986	
		♠7642			
		♥QJ963			
		♦82			
		♣53			

West wins his ♣Q and returns a spade [the one he couldn't have!!]. You win and play a trump. West wins and plays his remaining spade for East to ruff. One down - you lose a club, a diamond, a trump and a spade ruff. And all the while, the contract was cold!!

# Intermediate Tales

Nicola O'Dowd



**As our Bridge season finished in May 2023, as planned, during the summer, my mum and I had the opportunity to travel to various bridge clubs, as most clubs open during the summer to non-members. One was Navan Summer Bridge.**

It was really enjoyable and had great table numbers. Maybe the wet weather in July contributed to this. We also travelled to the Regent Bridge Club and Mullingar Bridge Centre. It was great to play in person a couple of times a week during the summer and it was a real treat meeting and chatting to different faces but all with Bridge in common.

In Trim we have two clubs, but during the summer we just run one and call it Trim Summer Bridge. We were very lucky this summer to secure Knightsbrook Hotel as the venue for our summer bridge. Starting off in June 2023 our summer bridge began with 11 tables, quickly we found it increasing to between 20 and 22 tables for the rest of the summer. I found myself having to learn how to deal boards, run movements and two and three section events to cater for this, which I found both challenging and rewarding. The support available from our own committee members, other clubs and TDs was fantastic. Finishing the Summer Bridge in August we ran a Charity night in aid of Meath River Rescue and drew 30 tables.

I really enjoyed doing TD for such a large event and have come to appreciate the tips and advice I had received from the TDs organising the events around the country that I had attended. I found myself mostly answering calls where

scores were entered in error or boards played in the wrong order. I certainly was not bored during the evening and did not regret not playing myself. I felt a little overwhelmed and afraid that it would all go wrong, but thanks to all the help from the committee and some players, it ran smoothly and it was great to see the bridge community coming together for a worthy cause and ending the summer bridge season on such a positive note.

In September 2023 I was upgraded to Intermediate A1 - I was delighted as was my bridge teacher, Declan Byrne. After all it was his time and patience that managed to get me from beginner to Inter A1 in two and half years. *[Congrats and well done! Ed.]*

To mark the occasion we decided to play in the Duais an Uachtaráin (President's Prize), hosted by CBAI President Gordon Lessells. This three session competition was held in the Greenhills Hotel in Limerick.

66 pairs played, all grades were represented. I certainly found it a great learning experience playing against some of Ireland's best bridge players that I had only read about. We even got to play against grand masters BJ O'Brien and Derek O'Gorman (see photo) who were the overall winners after three sessions. *[I've played with BJ for 46 years, but am never likely to confuse him with Ireland's best players. Ed.]*

The standout hand was bid and played against us by Lucy Phelan and Margaret Cunningham. Most pairs played it in 6♣ or 6NT making 13 tricks. Only four pairs made it to 7♣ so needless to say it was a not a good score for us.

Board 18. Dealer East. Vul N/S.

		♠ J	
		♥ Q98632	
		♦ J874	
		♣ 108	
♠ K5		N	♠ AT64
♥ AJ7		W	♥ -
♦ KQ3		E	♦ A95
♣ AQJ96		S	♣ K75432
		♠ Q98732	
		♥ K1054	
		♦ 1062	
		♣ -	

W	N	E	S
		1♣	P
2♣	P	1♣	P
4NT	P	5♦	P
7♣	All Pass		

Lucy was kind enough to explain their bidding to me:

- 1♣ - Can be three never two.
- 2♣ - Inverted minor bid. It shows at least five clubs, no four-card major and 10+ points. It is forcing.
- 3♣ - This shows a genuine club suit and an unbalanced hand. If partner was rebidding 1NT she would have rebid 2NT to show 12-14 balanced (the usual hand). So now showing shape and clubs. Still minimum.
- 4NT - Key card Blackwood in clubs. A bit agricultural but with 20 HCP I'm probably safe. I could have cue bid but didn't want to risk any misunderstandings. I'm looking for a grand slam now.
- 5♦ - 3 or 0 key cards. Can she have zero? No. If she is missing all three that's 11 HCP. Plus my 20 it means she would have opened with nine HCP. Unlikely. So I bid 7♣.

Lucy went on to say she thought briefly about 7NT. But opposite

an unbalanced hand there may be a need for ruffs and didn't ask for kings as only the ♥K was outstanding. Lucy said she was relying on partner's hand being unbalanced and can count 11 tricks on top and the other two will have to be ruffs.

The key bid in this auction was partners 3♣. Nice.

As I prepare my calendar for the season ahead, I realise there is so much choice for every type of bridge player. The thing about bridge is that if you want, you can just learn the basics and play at home or play it at much more advanced levels, it's still the same game. Winning is fun but you can also learn a lot wherever you play.

The CBAI calendar is on the website and then each region share their calendar of events too. It is great to see the variety of options available for the different types of players. There are those who play frequently, booking every event they can; there are those who simply want a social weekend or two away for some fun and bridge; and of course there are the competitive players. Let's not forget those who enjoy playing at their local club every week and participating in local competitions such as President's or Captain's prizes, and various cups that are exclusive to the club members.

The Spiro Cup took place on the 21st of October in Templeogue Bridge Centre. A National Mixed Pairs Championship which is exclusively open to Master and Intermediate A grades only. 80 Pairs competed in this two session event but only five Intermediate A Pairs seized the opportunity. I'm not sure why this was all that entered. Playing against Masters can be intimidating, but in my opinion the experience always proves immensely valuable. More often than not the opponents make you feel welcome and offer encouragement and advice.

I feel it is so important to get over the fear of making a fool of myself and I really appreciate the tips and advice playing against masters. Similar to novices beginning to play in clubs where they are full of nerves, intermediates often feel anxious and nervous playing above their grade. Encouraging intermediates to participate in national competitions and congresses, just as novices are urged to play in local clubs, is essential.

Occasionally partners can get annoyed at each other, maybe one did not follow a suit after getting a signal for example, and whenever opponents argue the toss intensely or passionately it may make you uncomfortable and possibly intimidated. It's important to recognise that it's a dynamic within "their" bridge partnership and not a personal matter for us.

Manners are always appreciated at a bridge table. At club nights you sit and talk about the weather or the kids or whatever the topic of conversation is on the night. At the national competitions as your opponents arrive at the table you introduce yourself and your partner and explain your system. However, there are instances when opponents may still be engrossed in a heated discussion from the previous round, leading to lapses in manners. Many intermediates express discomfort in such situations, as the expected etiquette may be overlooked amidst ongoing debates.

Hopefully as the year goes on more Intermediate As will take advantage of playing in the Master and As national competitions and likewise see Intermediate Bs and Novices playing in the competitions above their level.

I am told the numbers are still down compared to pre-covid. I believe that players at every level should actively encourage others to join in and relish the game. Collectively we must ensure that

bridge brings people together giving a positive and enjoyable experience for all participants.

My original partner, Dara Voyles, now also an A1 reminds me "If you are not winning, you are learning" and I had a feeling that was exactly what would happen as we prepared to enter competitions with other As and Masters in the 2023/2024 season.

In the Spiro Cup Dara and I finished just under 50% so we were very happy with that out of 80 pairs we were 41st. Every time we compete, it contributes to our growth and ability in the game.

The hand that I really messed up on was board 15 in the second session, and was a real example of advice I received from opponent and National Master Máiréad Haugh in the discussion afterwards.

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

		♠AKQJ8	
		♥KQ976	
		♦8	
		♣J10	
♠1076	N		♠4
♥J4	W	E	♥A8
♦J72			♦AKQ10954
♣76432	S		♣AKQ
		♠9532	
		♥10532	
		♦63	
		♣985	

W	N	E	S
	1♠	X	P
2♣	2♥	5♣	All Pass

Máiréad opened 1♠ as North and I doubled, Justin Corfield passed.

Dara then bid 2♣ and North rebid 2♥. Feeling the pressure of inexperience and nerves, I deviated from what I had learned and succumbed to panic. Despite holding 22 points, a singleton spade and the ♥A along with support for Dara's clubs (even if he had a minimal number of clubs and no points,) I bid 5♣. Definitely a lapse in strategic thinking, and definitely influenced by the intensity of the situation.



♠A lead and continuation defeated 5♣. As Mairead pointed out afterwards I should have bid my diamonds. Most played in 5♦ but a few made it to 6♦. Following Mairead's advice, I made a conscious effort to let go of my error and move forward. *[Yes - Double and then introduce a new suit at the 3-level is 100% forcing. Ed].*

In the words of Randy Pausch "We cannot change the cards we are dealt, just how we play the hand."

My mum and I travelled to a lot of the congresses around the country, from Donegal to Limerick. We had super laughs and it's fantastic meeting and chatting afterwards with everyone.

The regional pairs took place on the first weekend in December. These events are qualifiers for the national finals for all grades apart from novice and as such are amongst the most important competitions in the regional calendar.

Ena and I entered in Mid Leinster region and while we did not qualify, we were thrilled that Dara Voyles and Paul Dunne won and qualified for the Nationals in Ennistymon in February.

Finishing off the 2023 year I was delighted to win the Captain's Prize in my local Trim Bridge Club. I was surprised to see Ex-Captain Angela Kelliher take the microphone. To my delight, she shared a limerick that she had written herself specifically about me, making the moment even more special and nostalgic - see below.

As I expected, as a newly upgraded A player I had no congress, regional or national wins from September to December 2023 but learned so much from playing in all the competitions. I still play online a couple of times a week as

well as face-to-face in my local clubs and I have to say I enjoy every single game, and am looking forward to 2024 in the world of bridge.



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# Cutting My Teeth

Melissa Brady



**[Melissa continues to document her odyssey through the Bridge ranks]**

It's safe to say that if there was a game of Bridge at the opening of an envelope I'd be there!

Like many, I missed out on all of the Novice and most of the B competitions I would have been eligible to play in due to Covid so I intend to make up for all those lost opportunities now! If I have a willing partner and/or teammates, you'll be sure to see me at most of the competitions over the coming year.

Up first was Duais an Uachtarain. Sinéad McCann and I were a last minute entry into the competition. See below.

**Board 15. Dealer East. Vul None.**

		♠102			
		♥86			
		♦KJ1073			
		♣AK105			
♠AK9543	N	♠QJ			
♥Q7	W	♥10954	E		
♦62		♦Q9			
♣743	S	♣QJ962			
		♠876			
		♥AKJ32			
		♦A854			
		♣8			

I found myself in 5♦ against Liam Gaynor and David Redmond. Bidding went 1♥, 2♠ (weak), 3♦, 4♦, 5♦. Naturally enough I got the lead of the ♠Q followed by the Jack which my RHO overtook with his King and returned the Ace. RHO has made a weak jump overcall with AK to 6, so would be supermax if holding ♦Q. So I put up my King of trump and I let the Jack run and it won. I made my contract getting 86%. I've run into Liam at a few Congresses and events since

Limerick and he always greets me as 'the lady who ruffs high'. I get a good laugh from it. *[Liam's a gent - we won the Regent League many moons ago. Ed.]*

My first Congress of the season was Drogheda. They were celebrating their 30th year. I played in the Inter A pairs with Anna Shalvey. Mary Maguire and Kathleen McCabe completed our lineup for the teams. Anna and I were delighted to take home the Brigid Sherman and Michael Crawley Perpetual Cup in the Intermediate A Pairs competition and we managed a second place finish in the teams also. The hand that stood out the most from that weekend was board 3 in the first session.

**Dealer South. Vul E/W.**

		♠A95			
		♥KJ96			
		♦84			
		♣AQ98			
♠10732	N	♠KQJ86			
♥A108	W	♥Q4	E		
♦J109		♦AK3			
♣J105	S	♣K62			
		♠4			
		♥7532			
		♦Q7652			
		♣743			

North opened a weak 1NT, my partner doubled, South passed, and I with my six points bid 2♠. To my surprise my partner bid 4♠ and I knew my work was cut out for me. Dummy goes down and I add my 6 to its 18 and give the benefit of 13 for the NT opening. All those together gave a total of 37 points accounted for. I get the lead of the ♥6. With Qx on the table I go the Queen straight away. It won and I took the opportunity to plant a seed of doubt by throwing my 10

on it. My plan was to make my ♠10 an entry because as you can see the ♥A is the only way into my own hand. I see nine tricks and no way to create a 10th as I'm already 99.9% convinced that South holds the ♦Q. I expect to go down one. I played the ♠K and the ♠Q but North didn't take her Ace either time, so I stopped playing them as South showed out on the second lead. I accepted my fate of minus one as I have to lose the ♠A, ♠AQ and the ♦Q if it's in South's hand. I played the ♥4 to the Ace and then the ♦J which I let run. South won with the Queen and came back a club. Believing my LHO held AQ I put the 10 on it and North all but confirmed my suspicion by playing the Ace. She played back a diamond giving me no free trick. Ace won so I played the King. North showed out of diamonds and didn't use her Ace to ruff. We all know she wanted two of my trump for one of hers so I obliged wondering what she might do with the return. With four cards left I played a low spade from the dummy putting North back on lead. She played the club back to me presumably not wanting me to ruff her ♥K and discard a losing club from my hand. I let it run to the 10, ruffed the ♥8, played the Jack of trump and the ♠K won the last trick. A return of the ♥K instead of the club would have put me down! Perhaps dumping the ♥10 on the opening lead convinced North not to play back the King thinking she would give me a ruff and discard? Who knows? All I know is it was a lucky escape! *[Well played! Ed.]*

Next up was Donegal which I must say was my favourite Congress of the year. Congratulations and well done to all the Congress committee

on a wonderfully organised event. They really left no stone unturned and every single person I spoke to had only positive things to say about it. Getting a few tips and some notes from Gay Keaveney was fantastic - now we just need to learn them and put them into practice. I enjoyed everything about Donegal even though it was one of those weekends where everything I did went wrong. However, I am already looking forward to returning this year.

I was speaking with a friend about the Spiro and Coen weekend. She knew I had entered the Spiro with Paddy McDermott and asked if I was putting together a team for the Coen. I told her that I didn't have another pair I could ask as men who would play are in short supply in our clubs. After I got off the phone to her, FOMO (fear of missing out) kicked in. I rang Paddy and asked if he was free on Sunday also. He said he was so the hunt began for another pair to complete the team. I suggested we ask Seán and Bríd Galligan. Seán was a past colleague of Paddy's and we had gotten to know them through playing online in Phoenix Virtual Club. We were delighted when Seán got back to us saying they would play. It turned out to be a good last-minute decision to enter as we won the Best Regional Masters prize. One thing that struck me about the weekend was the lack of familiar faces. Not too many intermediate players turned out for the competitions and I'm not entirely sure why. I genuinely believe that the only way to improve your game is to go out and play against people who are better than you, take the hard knocks but don't let the losses or bad percentages deter you. Instead learn from them. Come back tougher and more prepared the next time. Playing against Masters can be daunting but I relish it. There's no need to fear them, you'll even find that most of them are friendly and will offer words of

support and advice. I encourage everyone to get out of their comfort zone. That weekend was a real baptism of fire. I took many hard blows but learned so much from it and that meant more than the prize. I was exposed to many new conventions and players who were encouraging and helpful. One pair even suggested some books to read so I've ordered both and am currently reading Zia Mahmood: Bridge A Love Story and I'm waiting on another one of his to arrive. [See Footnote!! Ed]

The Interregionals were held in the Cavan Crystal Hotel, our own backyard meaning we didn't have to travel far for a game of bridge for a change! A huge thank you to Nuala Mooney of the NIBU for selecting us to play for Ulster. The team consisted of myself, Anna, Mary and Kathleen. This was our first time playing in this tournament and I speak for the whole team when I say we thoroughly enjoyed it. We got to meet some lovely people including Margaret Farren and Anna Carr who were more than helpful explaining the Butler scoring to us after some of our Ulster teammates told us we were in first place after the first session. Speaking of Margaret and Anna, congratulations to them on winning their first Irish cap where they will be playing in the Lady Milne as part of the CBAI team and best of luck to them for the event in April! One board that stood out was board 22 in the third session.

**Dealer East. Vul E/W.**

		♠ 105		
		♥ K96		
		♦ K106		
		♣ 109653		
♠ KQ43	N		♠ 862	
♥ 10			♥ Q75	
♦ A8532	W	E	♦ QJ74	
♣ Q42		S	♣ KJ7	
		♠ AJ97		
		♥ AJ8432		
		♦ 9		
		♣ A8		

I opened 1♥, LHO overcalled 2♦, Anna bid 2♥, 3♦ from RHO and I bid 4♥ with the hope that she would have the higher of the 6-9 points she promised. Since both of my opponents were in agreement with diamonds I got the lead of the Ace - brilliant. It made my King a winner and gave me the ability to dump my losing club. After winning the King I played to the ♣A and followed that with a low heart to the King. RHO played the 10 so now I was very aware that the trumps might not break for me and I abandoned playing for the drop. I played a low club and ruffed it in hand. I now played the ♠A and low to the ♠10, West went up her Queen. She returned a club which I again ruffed. I now played the ♠9 to dummy trying to trick West into thinking her partner had the Jack. Success! I then played the Jack which West covered with her King and I ruffed with the 9 to take out East's Queen of trump. I should have played the ♠10 from dummy and let it run when I got in with the King of trumps though. It would have been safer.

In my last article I mentioned that I had booked Mary Maguire for our Regional Pairs competition as soon as last year's national pairs event was over. Unfortunately, Mary was unavailable to play with me on the weekend of our regional qualifiers so I asked Anna if she would. That resulted in us winning the McGuirk Cup for the North Eastern Regional Intermediate As. We were thrilled and are very much looking forward to the National Finals which are being held in The Falls Hotel in Ennistymon.

One hand that sticks out was Board 2 in the second session.

Dealer East. Vul N/S.

♠AQ			
♥854			
♦3			
♣KQJ9752			
♠K10	N		♠J6543
♥AJ6	W	E	♥973
♦AKQ8762			♦1094
♣A	S		♣106
			♠9872
			♥KQ102
			♦J5
			♣843

I pick up a hand with 21 HCP, and a length in diamonds. I toyed with the idea of opening a gambling 3NT as I can afford to take the lead of a spade into my ♠K10 and hope the diamonds break. To me, bridge is a game of discipline and my number one rule while playing is don't lie to your partner which I would have been doing had I opened 3NT so I opened 2♣ instead (20-22) and my LHO overcalled 3♣ my partner passed as did my RHO. I felt my hand was too good for 3♦ and now decided to say 3NT hoping the diamonds would fall. Partner takes it out to 4♠ and it goes down one.

What would you have opened? And how would you have dealt with the 3♣ overcall? Would you have taken the 4♠ out to 4NT? I felt it would have been risky to do so. If you see me at any of the weekend events be sure to let me know what I should have done!

*[Gambling 3NT is so-called because opener has at most a King outside their solid minor, so not suitable here. 2♣ is correct, as is 3NT next time. We'll draw the veil of charity over 4♠. Ed.]*

[Footnote: I told Zia that Melissa was reading and enjoying his books. He immediately sent her this message:

*Hi Melissa ...*

*Heard u are a great player with great taste (you like my book!) Please keep it up and always remember ... A couple of drinks may not be the best for your game ... but they are good for the soul!*

*Best regards*

*Zia*

*Not only the GOAT, but a really classy guy. Ed.]*



# Bric-A-Brock

Sally Brock

**What would you open with this collection first in hand at favourable vulnerability?**

♠ 7
♥ AKJ1096
♦ 65
♣ 9653

1♥, 2♥, 3♥ and 4♥ all had their supporters. Put me with the 3♥ brigade.

In the VuGraph match between Hungary and Australia there was one vote for 1♥, and one for 4♥. 4♥ made ten tricks in both rooms, but where the opening bid was 4♥ it was doubled.

In France v Canada in the women's event, a 2♥ opening led to West overcalling 3♦ where she played, down two. The 3♥ opening by the French in the other room led to West doubling and eventually being doubled in 3♠ and going for 500.

The reason I like 3♥ is that it gives the opponents enough rope to hang themselves! Generally speaking, if you pre-empt to the four-level in a major, or the five-level in a minor, the opponents will just double you and take what is coming. The two-level allows them too much room, but the three-level can simply give them the room to go wrong.

Our auction was:

W	N	E	S
3♥	X	P	3♠
P	4♠	X	All Pass

This was the full deal:

♠QJ43			
♥43			
♦KQ10982			
♣A			
♠7	N		♠AK102
♥AKJ1096	W	E	♥7
♦65			♦A743
♣9653	S		♣KQ82
			♠9865
			♥Q852
			♦J
			♣J1074

It was carnage. Declarer might perhaps have done better, but the final damage was 1100 to us and a 12 IMP gain.



# IBU Interprovincials

Enda Glynn



## The Open, Area Master and Intermediate A Interprovincials took place in the Cavan Crystal Hotel on November 18th and 19th under the splendid direction of Fearghal O'Boyle and Máiréad Basquille.

The venue was ideal and there was a great atmosphere the entire weekend. Munster won the Open competition for the first time since 1992 and Leinster won the Area Master and Inter A competitions. Some interesting hands came up in all sessions.

### Board 5 - 3rd Session - Match 7 Dealer North. Vul N/S.

♠ -			
♥ A965432			
♦ A432			
♣ 85			
♠ AJ8743	N	♠ Q	
♥ 8	W	♥ QJ10	E
♦ 97		♦ Q1065	
♣ AQ62	S	♣ KJ1097	
♠ K109652			
♥ K7			
♦ KJ8			
♣ 43			

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

Connacht's 19-year-old Salthill native, Isabel Burke, was the star of this auction. Initially she passed her partner's 3♥ opening. But she came alive in subsequent bidding. She doubled 3♠ and 3NT for penalties but when opponents retreated to 4♣, with her poor club holding, she decided to take her chances by bidding the vulnerable heart game. E/W were a little perplexed by all the bidding and tagged on a penalty double. There was little to

the play after East led the ♠Q. A ruffing finesse in spades was the 10th trick after taking a successful diamond finesse in the later play. Plus 790 is usually a good result!

At the other table, a commendably disciplined North did not at any stage enter the bidding. Over East's opening bid 1♠ South bid 2♠. West passed and after a lengthy delay North also passed. Des Deery often said "a pause is better than a double any day of the week". East was unsure of what was the best course of action and decided to pass. That contract drifted three off and the board was worth 14 imps to Connacht.

### Board 5 - 2nd Session - Match 7 Dealer North. Vul N/S.

♠ Q643			
♥ Q92			
♦ AK			
♣ 10852			
♠ 95	N	♠ KJ107	
♥ J7653	W	♥ 1084	E
♦ QJ104		♦ 9632	
♣ J6	S	♣ 97	
♠ A82			
♥ AK			
♦ 875			
♣ AKQ43			

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

<sup>1</sup> Many partnerships like to play Puppet Stayman. If used on this hand N/S are likely to play in 3NT or an unsuccessful 6NT. Advocates of Puppet apparently prefer to play in a five three major fit where ten tricks are required. With such fits 3NT will often play well and it is

frequently easier to make nine tricks than ten. Partnerships who use the Baron Convention (bidding suits upwards) will fare well on this hand. 3♣ asks partner to bid his suits upwards.

- <sup>2</sup> 3NT in response shows at least four Clubs and no other four card suit.
- <sup>3</sup> 4♣ is Roman Keycard Blackwood.
- <sup>4</sup> 4♦ shows one or four key cards (in this instance obviously four).
- <sup>5</sup> 4♥ asks about the queen of trumps and
- <sup>6</sup> 5♥ shows the trump queen and the ♥K.

6♣ is the final contract and is an easy make. Some pairs played in 3NT and made 11 tricks. Other pairs extended themselves to an unsuccessful 6NT. Maybe it is time to retire Puppet and replace it with Baron. The Baron convention is particularly successful in identifying minor suit slams.

### Board 20 - 1st Session - Match 7 Dealer South. Vul All.

♠ AJ3			
♥ A7			
♦ AQ10643			
♣ K9			
♠ 105	N	♠ 742	
♥ KJ1092	W	♥ 8543	E
♦ KJ97		♦ 8	
♣ 75	S	♣ QJ643	
♠ KQ986			
♥ Q6			
♦ 52			
♣ A1082			

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

This was an interesting spade slam and good bidding is required not to advance to the seven level. Most partnerships played in 6♠. This was how Paul Scannell and Gay Keaveney bid the hand for Connacht. Playing two over one 2♦ was game forcing with diamonds. The 3♠ bid by North was a strong bid (4♠ would show a minimum). The 4NT bid elicited 5♠ from South. North's 5NT bid guaranteed all the key cards and the trump queen and asked South to bid the grand slam if he had extra values or a useful ♦K. South declined the invitation and landed safely in 6♠. Unfortunately, I over extended and put my partner into 7♠. She drew three rounds of trumps ending in hand and successfully finessed ♦Q. However, the four-one diamond split meant that South was a trick short. If the diamonds had divided three-two with the finesse succeeding there are 13 tricks. The unlikely play of a diamond to the ten early will succeed in this hand. Unfortunately, for us, we were the only pair to bid to the seven-level and we lost 15 imps.

**Board 28 - 3rd Session**  
**Dealer West. Vul N/S.**

		♠ 10753			
		♥ QJ1086			
		♦ J92			
		♣ 4			
♠ AKQ8	N	♠ 96			
♥ K7	W	♥ A94			
♦ K7	E	♦ A1085			
♣ 10973	S	♣ K652			
		♠ J2			
		♥ 532			
		♦ Q643			
		♣ AQJ8			

W	N	E	S
1♠	P	2NT	P
3NT	All Pass		

Ranald Milne, playing for Munster, judged the lie of the cards exceptionally well to bring home 3NT. South led a low diamond. Ranald won in dummy and played four rounds of spades discarding a club and a heart. South discarded a diamond and a heart (which seemed innocuous but turned out to be fatal). On winning the fourth spade North switched to the ♥Q. Ranald won in dummy and cashed his last spade throwing a club. He followed with a diamond to hand and cashed the ♥A. He now exited on a diamond. South won with the Queen and was forced to open the club suit giving declarer his ninth trick. If South jettisons his ♦Q under the Ace, North can win the diamond exit. His winning hearts can now be cashed and declarer will only have eight tricks. 3NT failed at eight of the 12 tables.

**Board 13 - 3rd Session**  
**Dealer West. Vul All.**

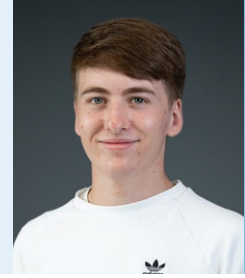
		♠ 1085			
		♥ Q543			
		♦ A1032			
		♣ Q6			
♠ AKJ2	N	♠ Q4			
♥ 7	W	♥ AJ102			
♦ Q76	E	♦ K5			
♣ AKJ102	S	♣ 87543			
		♠ 9763			
		♥ K986			
		♦ J984			
		♣ 9			

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

Teresa Rigney and Liz Ann Doyle bid a good 6♣ in the second last round against Connacht and gained 12 imps. 3♣ was constructive indicating a forward move. 2NT (Lebensohl) would show a weak hand and a bid of 3NT would indicate enough points for game opposite a reverse. 4♣ was Roman Key card Blackwood and with a ten-card club fit 6♣ was a great contract. In the Open Series Teresa and Liz were the only pair to bid a slam. The other pairs landed in 3NT or 5♣. In the Area Masters section, no pair bid a slam. In the Inter A category one pair 6NT which was allowed to make. Teresa and Liz Ann were the only successful 6♣ bidders in the 36 playings of the board.

# Junior bridge

Luca Crone



**What is the future of Irish bridge? It is widely known that the bridge population is aging and those that were one of the youngest in their club 30 years ago, remain some of the youngest today [Tell me about it! Ed].**

Evidently, this is worrying for the longevity of the game. But what can be done to lower this age profile and why aren't more young people playing?

This is a multi-faceted problem. In my capacity as Convenor of the CBAI Junior Committee, and a Junior international myself, I thought it might be instructive to poll the existing Junior cohort.

So I posed these two questions to some of our Irish Juniors (junior being under 26)

1. **How did you start bridge?**
2. **What do you like about bridge that keeps you playing?**

The following juniors kindly gave their thoughts:

Sheila Walsh aged 25 from Dundalk  
Denise Walsh aged 22 from Dundalk  
Matthew O'Farrell aged 21 from Dublin  
Isabel Burke aged 19 from Galway  
David Hoyne aged 18 from Kilkenny  
Klara Flanagan aged 17 from Dundalk  
Eve Connell aged 16 from Meath

This is what they had to say on the first question:

## “How did you start Bridge?”:

### Sheila:

*My late dad, Ken, played bridge and volunteered in his spare time at the school bridge club in St. Vincent's, Dundalk. When I was 11, I got injured playing Gaelic football and had to sit out of matches for a while. Dad brought me in with him one day so I would stop moping over gaelic.*

### Isabel:

*I've always loved playing cards - from snap to 25 and everything in between. When my granny Clare Burke suggested I took up bridge, I wasn't too keen to begin with but I went to classes with my mum and I enjoyed it from the very start*

### Matthew:

*I started bridge when my grandmother and her sister taught my sister, some second cousins and I how to play. It was a casual game on a Sunday afternoon for a couple of hours and was a good way of being introduced to the game. As we went on gradually I was gifted some books and began to enjoy the game more and more. Eventually my grandmother and mother began playing with me at our local tennis club on a Monday evening which again was a good way to assimilate into the bridge world. Eventually by happenstance one evening, one of the pairs we were playing against did some work for the CBAI and knew Dermot and Paul Porteous. Luckily again it turned out the CBAI was running a bridge camp for juniors the next week in Kings Hospital. The fortuitous timing meant I was able to attend and it was a great introduction to junior bridge. Being able to meet other junior players (something I had presumed to be a fiction) as well as the people who very selflessly devote huge amounts of their time to supporting and coaching aspiring young players.*

### Denise:

*I was first acquainted with the world of bridge through my dear father Ken, who has since passed away. My secondary school also had a bridge club which was an additional force in my taking up of the game.*

### David:

*I started bridge in secondary school in 1st year due to it being mandatory to have to do an after school activity on our half day. Bridge was the one that sounded the most interesting as it was described as a mathematical card game and I had loved maths in primary school so I thought I would like it*

### Klara:

*I only started bridge because my school happened to have a bridge club that I went to in first year. I had no idea what bridge was and I just joined because I thought we'd be playing loads of card games, but then they started teaching bridge and I thought it was an intriguing game. Around the same time I was in the library and I found a book called The Cardturner by Louis Sachar. I had started reading it and realised it was all about bridge. It was a novel but at the start of every chapter it taught you about bridge; basic things like finesses and bidding. I don't even remember what the story of the book was about but the book really opened my eyes into what bridge is all about and how interesting it all gets. With this realisation I had about the game I kept going every week in school and really enjoyed it, and now I'm here today!*

### Eve:

*I learned how to play bridge originally from my dad. I only learnt the most basic rules and we would just play at home occasionally. Then over the Covid-19 lock down I joined a club online with him. This was a very good place to learn more conventions as we could easily look over the hands afterwards and he could give me tips and advice, there was also less pressure and stress when making a mistake, as the opposition weren't actually sitting right beside me!*



The responses split into two categories, learning from school or through a relative. Matthew and Isabel were both encouraged by their grandmother, while Eve, Sheila and Denise were all coached by their dad. Sheila & Denise got the hybrid version by also being a part of their secondary school bridge club.

David and Klara learned during lunch time at their school's bridge club, both of which were aided by current junior coaches. Another approach taken has been to teach mini bridge in transition year, which is how I came across the game.

After speaking with the junior coaches, they say this make up has changed over the past 10 years, where all juniors once came through schools. They see the future of the game being in relatives becoming that introductory step.

The second question was:

**“Why do you keep playing bridge?”**

We often hear the mental benefits cited, as well as the social aspect. But do these factors apply to and entice young people? This is what the Juniors had to say:

**Sheila:**

*Definitely the banter. Nothing better than when you and p are "on fire" and "Double, Double, Double" all around you. I live for the chaotic Junior Camrose/Peggy Bayer bios, the debates at dinner and being slagged by other juniors for my "aggressive" stats on Lovebridge or dodgy bids on Karel's training zooms. Being delulu is the solulu :-)  
[I think I may have been delulu once when I was very young, but it's all a bit hazy. Ed.]*

**Isabel:**

*I love how there's so much to learn after every game. Hearing everyone's different views and opinions after is very interesting. I also really like the grading system and constantly improving over time*

**Klara:**

*The best thing about bridge for me is how it's never the same. I love how every hand is different and how you're never playing the same thing twice. Thats the main thing that keeps me playing*

**Denise:**

*Doing well in bridge (though infrequent for me) holds a uniquely exhilarating charm. Additionally, Bridge has helped me forge numerous connections and friendships throughout the years, particularly during my time in school*

**Eve:**

*I like that there is always something new to learn, you get to meet new people and it is great fun!*

**David:**  
*I like bridge and keep playing for two reasons. Firstly I like the card game and how it plays as well as the complexity of the game overall. There is so much to think about in every board and always something to learn from or improve on which makes the game feel fresh and fun to play even through I've been playing for roughly 6 years now. Secondly I really enjoy getting to meet all my bridge friends and other players from the different teams like the Scottish, English, and, Northern Ireland who I only get to see and talk to once or twice a year. For me it's what makes going to all the international championships and putting in hours of play time only to get decimated worth it all*

**Matthew:**  
*As for what keeps me playing and interested that would probably be a combination of two factors. The first is that bridge can be an extremely rewarding game. It's one where you can really see your progression and improvement but bridge is still a game that can be played and enjoyed at any level. The second factor would be the fortunate opportunities that I have been awarded by being able to travel abroad to play and meet juniors from other countries and make new friends that way*

This question seemed more difficult to answer and thus got shorter responses. Unanimously, the social aspect is still important for young people. In fact when I asked some of the players at DCU bridge club, they all asserted that getting to meet new people and make friends at the table is an integral part of why they continue to play. The unique nature of each hand fascinates some while competition fuels others.



Peggy Bayer team Under-21s, Klara Flanagan, Eve Connell, Isabel Burke, Tom Gorey, David Hoyne, Ben Oroc, with NPC Margaret Murphy.

Historically, we lose a lot of players in the transition from junior to adult. Is it work taking over? Other important milestones in life to attend to? Who knows and how can the transition be eased? I asked some of the recently aged out juniors, still on the scene, why they continue.

**This is what Conor Boland, Michael Donnelly and Wayne Somerville had to say:-**

**Conor:**

*I think what kept me playing was the great opportunities I had to play with top Irish players, as once I started tasting success it was hard to stop chasing it!*

**Michael:**

*If I were Michael Jordan, I'd be in my MLB era right now, so I'm not playing much bridge. But rest assured I'll be back in the NBA soon. But the social aspect, the fact it's an exercise for the mind, and the friends I've made would be the main part. Having been out in the working world a few years now I can see very clearly how bridge has made me a more mature person. It helps you stay calm under pressure, use all the information available to you, and to learn how to be creative when you need a miracle - that's how I know I'll be back, I'll need to resharpen those skills eventually.*

**Wayne:**

*I am a competitive person in nature. While playing as a junior, I had developed enough confidence in my game that I could take anyone on. On my final year as a junior I was part of the winning Premier 1 team in the NIBU. Even if I don't necessarily expect to win, I felt I could always at least make it a good competitive match. Playing in adult environments, people were usually welcoming (and thankfully the "it's so nice to see young people playing" malarkey only lasts so long - please don't remind me I'm one of the very few young players out there)*

The overarching theme looks to be the enduring allure of success. If you've had some before the "graduation" you have built up the confidence and desire to continue playing when you outgrow the term "junior".

Overall, some thought-provoking points from the views of our juniors. I hope you gained some food for thought!



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# Master Pairs

Editor

**December 2022 saw the latest renewal of this super event. A bumper entry of 107 pairs confirmed its elite standing in the calendar.**

The winners were Mark Moran and John Carroll, who were unbeaten in their twelve matches. It was Mark's second win and John's sixth. In second place came Tom Hanlon and Conor Boland. Two big wins in their closing matches propelled Micheál and Pádraig Ó'Briain into third spot, edging out defending champions Nick FitzGibbon and Adam Mesbur.

Seán Maguire and John Moyles produced an excellent 7th place finish to secure them the National Masters' prize. Adrienne and Martin Purdy lifted the Regional Masters' prize, while Róisín and Willie O'Gorman bagged the Area Masters' award.

CBAI CEO Dermot O'Brien used the event to mark the formal launch of a new sponsorship arrangement with ALH [Affordable Live-in Homecare], whose MD, Tom Quinlan, was on hand to describe his company's offering and to present the prizes. We must always seek to support our sponsors, so over to you!

The winners recovered from an expensive setback in their very first match, where they bid 7♠ vulnerable off the cashing ♦A [which was duly cashed]. That cost 13 IMPs. The pivotal encounter came in Round 7 where they defeated the runners-up 12.6 to 7.4, which paved the way for a comfortable 17 VP margin of final victory.



CBAI President Gordon Lessells presenting the Master Pairs Trophy to winners John Carroll and Mark Moran, with Tom Quinlan, representing the sponsors, AL Homecare.

The final session is always the most engrossing because all the prizes are on the line and the strongest pairs play each other.

This was Board 2:

**Dealer East. Vul N/S.**

		♠KJ983			
		♥K83			
		♦AK964			
		♣-			
♠A542	N		E	♠6	
♥974	W			♥AJ2	
♦Q875				♦3	
♣43	S			♣AKQJ10652	
		♠Q107			
		♥Q1065			
		♦J102			
		♣987			

As you can see, N/S are cold for 5♠ [650] and E/W have a profitable save in 6♣x, which costs just 300 [the par result]. Yet only one pair played in 6♣ [undoubled and only minus one!] across 53 tables. And symmetrically, only one pair played in Spades at all – step forward Marie James and Fiona O'Gorman! They made 5♠ doubled for an excellent 14 IMP gain.

Board 21 was a black suit shoot-out:

**Dealer North. Vul N/S.**

		♠AJ109865			
		♥KJ10			
		♦874			
		♣-			
♠K	N		E	♠Q3	
♥72	W			♥Q843	
♦10				♦AQ962	
♣AK10985432	S			♣J	
		♠742			
		♥A965			
		♦KJ53			
		♣76			

The results are hard to credit. At 31 [count them!] tables, West made 11 tricks in clubs, despite the ♠A lead. North failed to appreciate the danger of allowing West to pitch a heart loser on ♠Q. One pair – Peeter Brehov & Kate Daultrey, made 6♣. No, I don't know either. Just two pairs played in 5♠ – well done to John Phelan & Diarmuid Reddan [who played there doubled], and to Margaret McConville & Sheila Williams.

Well done to lead TD Fearghal O'Boyle, ably supported by his team.



# Magic Squeezes - Compound Squeeze

Rory Timlin



In this issue we introduce the **Compound Squeeze** in various forms. Compound Squeeze is a collective term to cover a wide range of squeeze plays which don't fall into categories covered in earlier articles such as Simple, Double, Triple, Criss-Cross, Trump Squeezes. In some cases, a Compound Squeeze may fall in to more than one of the above categories.

### Questions:

(1) Teams. Dealer West. Vul N/S.

♠ Q643 ♥ KJ86 ♦ QJ2 ♣ 87	N W      E S ♠ AJ2 ♥ Q1092 ♦ A954 ♣ A10
-----------------------------------	---

South plays in 4♥ after West opens 3♣. West leads ♣K. You win and run ♥10 to East's ace. Back comes ♣2 to West's jack. West exits in trumps, all following. You win in hand and play a low trump to the jack, East discarding ♠5. You now lead ♦Q, K, A, 7. Take it from here.

(2) Pairs. Dealer South. Vul E/W.

♠ QJ543 ♥ KQ2 ♦ 7 ♣ AQJ10	N W      E S ♠ K972 ♥ AJ74 ♦ AQJ ♣ K6
------------------------------------	---

At Pairs, South wisely converts 6♠ to 6NT. West leads ♥10. Plan the play.

(3) Pairs. Dealer North. Vul All.

♠ - ♥ 6542 ♦ Q10653 ♣ 10874	N W      E S ♠ - ♥ AKQJ987 ♦ KJ2 ♣ AJ3
--------------------------------------	--

West opens 3♣ and East bids 4♠. Undaunted you get to 6♥. West leads ♠K. This gives you a lifeline. Plan the play.

(4) Teams. Dealer North. Vul None.

♠ 743 ♥ AK32 ♦ Q52 ♣ AK2	N W      E S ♠ Q ♥ J10 ♦ AJ86 ♣ Q87643
-----------------------------------	--

After West overcalls showing a Major two-suiter and East raises spades, South falls in love with his hand and bids to 6♣. Opening lead ♠A followed by ♠K, East playing hi-lo to show four spades. Plan the play.

### Answers:

(1) The full layout was:

♠ Q643 ♥ KJ86 ♦ QJ2 ♣ 87	N W      E S ♠ AJ2 ♥ Q1092 ♦ A954 ♣ A10	♠ K10975 ♥ A3 ♦ K1086 ♣ 62
-----------------------------------	---	-------------------------------------

In 4♥, the play starts club, trump, club, trump, trump. East discards a spade on the 3rd trump. Now ♦Q is covered by K, A. What now? West has 10 cards in clubs and hearts, so East has nine cards in the other two suits, likely five spades and four clubs. You could now continue diamonds to set up an extra diamond trick, but that is only nine tricks. Better play is to lead the last trump to dummy, in order to pressurise East. This is the ending:

♠ 8 ♥ - ♦ 3 ♣ Q9543	N W      E S ♠ AJ2 ♥ Q ♦ 954 ♣ -	♠ K1097 ♥ - ♦ 1086 ♣
------------------------------	--	-------------------------------

If East lets go a spade, then a spade to the jack followed by ace and another spade endplays East to give you a third diamond trick and the long spade is the 10th trick.

A diamond discard by East is on the last trump is no good either, as now you play on diamonds for a similar result. 4♥ made. There is no lead or defence to stop the contract on this layout.

**(2) The full layout was:**

		♠QJ543		
		♥KQ2		
		♦7		
		♣AQJ10		
♠A1086	N	♠-		
♥1095	W	♥876		
♦K96	E	♦1085432		
♣852	S	♣9743		
		♠K972		
		♥AJ74		
		♦AQJ		
		♣K6		

In 6NT, we see that it is laydown unless East is void in spades. So win the heart lead in dummy, come to hand in clubs and lead a spade up. West must duck and ♠J scores, East discarding a diamond. Now cash the other top heart in dummy. Assuming East follows suit, run the hearts, letting go a spade from dummy. Now run two more rounds of clubs, letting go ♦J from hand. West cannot let go a spade. If West started with five clubs and two hearts and has held on to two clubs, then he is now void in diamonds and a diamond finesse yields 12 tricks. In the more likely cases below where West now has 0 or 1 club in his last five cards, cash the last club, playing ♦Q from hand. This is the ending:

		♠Q54		
		♥-		
		♦7		
		♣J		
♠A108	N	♠-		
♥-	W	♥Irrelevant		
♦Kx (or xx)	E	♦Irrelevant		
♣-	S	♣		
		♠K97		
		♥-		
		♦AQ		
		♣-		

West is forced to discard a diamond (or follow to the fourth round of clubs) and is known to have three spades and a diamond.

Now play a diamond to the ace and lead ♠K to endplay West in spades.

If West started with five hearts, then East will show out on the second heart. Now West is known to have nine Major suit cards. So cash four rounds of clubs and West is squeezed as above. Also, if anyone started with a void in hearts or clubs, it is just a matter of counting the distribution and squeezing West as above.

The important thing on this hand is to see that 6NT is cold by simply counting the hand, rather than banking all on a diamond finesse. Note also that 6♠ is not hopeless when West has four trumps and can still be made on certain layouts.

**(3) The full layout was:**

		♠-		
		♥6542		
		♦Q10653		
		♣10874		
♠KQJ9862	N	♠A107543		
♥-	W	♥103		
♦94	E	♦A87		
♣K962	S	♣Q5		
		♠-		
		♥AKQJ987		
		♦KJ2		
		♣AJ3		

So where do you ruff the spade lead? It seems natural to ruff in dummy and let go a club from hand. But this destroys one of the later options. How about ruffing in hand and letting go a minor suit card from dummy. Again this destroys a long suit threat in dummy. So ruff in both hands! Then draw trumps in two rounds, West discarding two spades. Now lead ♦K and defence must duck. Then lead ♦J. When West follows low, overtake with ♦Q and East ducks again perforce (on the bidding East is likely to hold ♦A). Now lead a club towards the jack. The defence are fixed and cannot prevent further access to dummy. 12 tricks made.

It takes a double dummy club lead to beat the contract. See over.

**(4) The full layout was:**

		♠743		
		♥AK32		
		♦Q52		
		♣AK2		
♠AKJ52	N	♠10986		
♥Q9865	W	♥74		
♦93	E	♦K1074		
♣9	S	♣J105		
		♠Q		
		♥J10		
		♦AJ86		
		♣Q87643		

This is a slimline 6♣. Declarer was Andrew Dyson, playing for England with Glyn Liggins in the friendly Corn Cairdis match in 1995 between the CBAI and the EBU. He ruffed at trick two, led ♥10 and ran it when West didn't cover, led a trump to dummy and led ♦Q, covered by ♦K and ♦A. Now he ran all the trumps and this was the ending when the last trump was led:

		♠74		
		♥AK3		
		♦5		
		♣-		
♠J	N	♠10		
♥Q98	W	♥4		
♦9	E	♦1074		
♣-	S	♣-		
		♠-		
		♥J		
		♦J86		
		♣4		

On the last trump, West is squeezed. He must hold ♦9 to guard against a diamond finesse and he must hold three hearts. So he lets go his last spade. Dummy's small heart is discarded. Now the top hearts are cashed and East is squeezed in spades/diamonds. Slam made, a true brilliancy. A Double Guard Squeeze.

Could the defence do better? Yes, if West covers the first heart with the queen, then the contract is doomed.

# My Bridge Journey Part 2

Gordon Lessells



**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 Toibin, (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 K xxx 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, following without a thought, 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.

I arrived in Limerick in September 1981 to take up a job at the National Institute of Higher Education (Limerick), later the University of Limerick. I would stay there until my retirement in 2014. On my first day, I met Mark Burke, who turned out to be a bridge player who suggested I go to the Bridge Centre in William Street that Monday evening. The Hazel Bridge Club was run by Vera Gould and Lou Dundon. That first night, I kibitzed. I met Ted Motherway, who I later discovered was a Double Dummy Champion. I watched Aidan and Ena Cleary and had a faint recollection of playing against them in the Clonmel Congress earlier in the year. I also met Pat Liston who was Mark's regular partner. I learned that I could not play on Wednesday night. You had to be invited to join the 99 Club. I could apply for membership of the Limerick Bridge Club and that was successful.

Three days after arriving in Limerick, I received a knock on the door and Bob Pattinson (a lecturer in Personnel Management) with an office three doors away from mine, introduced himself. He was very much into team of four bridge and wondered if I would be the fourth on his team along with Mark Burke and Pat Liston. Bob at that time had other interests such as marathon running. He got me running occasionally at lunchtime but I never got beyond a 10K. When we had a spare moment we would do the bidding quiz in Bridge Magazine. On my second week, I went back to the Hazel Bridge Club. I came to one table

and was quizzed about who I was and what I did. I had a feeling of déjà vu. This was the same lady who I had met in the Open pairs at the Cork Congress. I now knew who her son was, Michael Hayes, Professor of Maths in UCD. Later, I played against the player who had fooled me in the Kervick Trophy, Kay Jenkins. Not long after arriving in Limerick, the Limerick Congress came along. The Venue was Cruises Hotel. The Tournament Director was Michael Lynch with Stephen Cleary running the Open Pairs. On the Saturday night there was music compered by John Power. I began to get to know some of the top players from Munster. There were some fine players from Thurles, Bill Dowling, Joe Barry and Bill Cashen, Pat Barry and Pauline Fullam from Newcastle West, Bill Horgan from Tralee. Batt O'Keeffe and Billy Murphy from Nenagh, John Coman from Tipperary to name a few. There were no computers in those days and my skills at scoring got me in to the TD scene.

Eventually, I got invited to join the 99 Bridge Club. You paid your money when you went in to Charlie Ewart, the Treasurer, and he would assign you a starting position. Moira Quaid and Monica Kavanagh at table 2 and Michel and Marjory Lynch at table 3 were the toughest obstacles you had to face but later you would face Mary Heffernan and Mary Duggan. There would be no result at the end of the night. The result would be announced before the Tea Break the next week. A number of players apart from myself were trying to break into the top rank of Limerick Bridge. Brid Kirby and Marie Hanrahan, Noel and Angela Hickey, Michael



and Marlene O'Connor (playing Precision) Ann Power and Helen Keane were the keenest.

In those days before the spread of Congresses to all parts of Munster, the biggest competition was the Thomond Cup. Every Club would run a team of four competition to decide which team represented their Club at the Thomond Cup which would be held in early December. My first breakthrough into the top rank came when our team, Bob, Mark, Pat and myself won the Thomond Cup three years running, the first occasion being on home soil in Cruises Hotel. My memory is winning £60 on that first occasion which was the largest prize money I had ever won.

In 1983, the Geraldine Trophy (Mens Teams) was held in Limerick and our team was set to play in this event but Mark contracted Hepatitis and was out of action. I was advised by Ena Cleary to ring Des Houlihan as he might have a partner for me. As it happened, Des was discussing the acquirement of the Clare Community Bridge Centre with Chris McNerney who had recently returned to his home County of Clare. Chris was free to play at the weekend. I played with him while Bob played with Pat. We were in contention and had to sit out the last round. Unfortunately Terry Walsh's team won their last match to relegate us to second place. However, later that year I won my first National Title winning the New Ireland Trophy partnered by Pat Liston in the Bloomfield House Hotel in Mullingar directed by Pa O'Flaherty.

Team of four matches at that time were part of the Kelburne Cup qualification. Even after winning the Regional play-off you had another qualification to reduce the number of teams to eight. One year we had won through to this final play-off. Nobody gave us a chance. We were due to play Gay Keaveney, Rory Timlin, Eddie Fitzgerald and Michael McDonagh

who were just back from winning a medal in the EEC championships. The match was hosted by Pat Quinn in Clarecastle. The match went like a dream all our games made whereas everything went wrong for the Galway Team. We emerged after 32 boards with a margin of more than 100 imps. Unfortunately, we couldn't match that performance in the Kelburne final.

When Bob Pattinson moved to a job in the UK, I played a bit more with Mark winning the Revington Cup in 1989. Mark then got married, had a family and cut down on his bridge activities. I played a bit with Pat McCarthy and Chris McNerney especially in Congresses in Munster. My first Congress win came with Justin Spratt at the Torc Congress. In the second Session, I asked for Aces, Justin showed one more than he had and I bid 7NT. My right hand opponent was so delighted with this contract and promptly tabled the Ace that Justin did not have. At this stage I called the TD and forbid the lead of that suit. I was able to wrap up 13 tricks in the other suits for my contact and a 100% score. Luck often plays a big part in success at the game of Bridge.

I became the secretary of the Limerick Bridge Club. We ran a Summer League which attracted players from Nenagh, Scariiff, Ennis, Kilkee, Newcastle West, Tipperary and Clonmel. Computers had by now become prevalent in the scoring of bridge and Diarmuid Reddan emerged as a mastermind in writing scoring programmes. I had qualified as a National Tournament Director and acted as TD for several National events such as the Lambert/Cooper Cup, Kelburne Cup and ran the Youghal Congress for a number of years.

I joined the Shannon Bridge Club which met on Tuesday nights. I played occasionally with Chris McNerney. At some stage I was asked to be President. I now

needed a regular partner. I asked Robert Knight (a former student) if he would play with me in Shannon on Tuesday's rather than on the occasional Monday. He assented. A few years later he got married to Lynne Morton and moved to Letterkenny. I then started playing with Anne Hynes who had been Lynne's bridge partner. One memorable hand occurred in the Shannon Bridge Club with Chris who preempted. With a good hand and a long suit I asked for Aces and bid 6NT. We had lots of tricks in our two suits but unfortunately one of the other suits was led through my Kx. The defenders cashed their tricks in that suit and switched to their other suit. We ended up with a score of 6NT -12. How many players can match that? Chris was a great Congress goer. I often provided a lift to him and his partner, Ann Power, when I was not playing with him. The conversation on the way home was not focused on bridge but ranged over the main political issues of the day.

In National events I started playing more with Aidan and Ena Cleary and Des Houlihan. One of the most enjoyable events at that time was the Burke Trophy and there was fierce competition in the Limerick area to qualify to play in this event. I won the Burke in 1987 on a team of five with the Cleary's Mark and Pat. I played only on Sunday as Aidan had to attend an ESB training course in preparation for working abroad. The team had led all the way in the first two sessions. In one memorable match against Mr Monty [Rosenberg] there was a swing of more than 4000 on one board. On the Sunday I remember putting Ena in to a delicate 7♠ contract which she made. The other table had played in 5♣ going down. It took till 2002 and 2004 for my next two wins in the Burke, once representing Clare and once Limerick City. In 2003 and 2005, two completely different Limerick teams won the Burke Trophy.

In 1998, I played with Ena Cleary in the Limerick Pairs, which qualified for the Regional Pairs which qualified for the Davidson Cup. We had one of those streaks that come along occasionally and we won all three events beating Tom Hanlon and John Cunningham down to second place. We are playing again this year. I had another National success with Jeannie Fitzgerald, teamed with Aidan and Ena at the Coen Trophy in 2004. This year I was close to repeating that with LizAnn Doyle, Denis Sheehan and Kay Cussen but got passed out in the last match.

After the Burke Trophy, the Interprovincials was always my favourite competition. The highlight for many years was the speeches at the end of the event with the losing Captains stressing the social nature of the event in contrast to the winning Captain. These speeches were always followed by an invitation to Mr Monty to display his wit. Winning the Thomond Cup or the Munster Pairs were two ways of getting on the Munster Team in those early days. However, many of the players thought that there was a better way of selection. Pat Walshe, the best player in Ireland at the time, and qualified to play for Munster from his birth was never selected. At the end of the 90-91 season Regional AGMS in North Munster and South Munster agreed that a Captain should be appointed who would have complete power to select the Munster team and we had the right man to take on this role, Des Houlihan.

Des chose a team all of whom were members of the Limerick Bridge Club apart from Rory Boland and Pat Walshe. The plan worked and Munster won the Interpros for the first time since 1964. The youngest member of that team, Diarmuid Reddan, would be the captain of the victorious team on the next occasion when I was on a winning Munster team in 2023.

After being elected as Secretary of Limerick Bridge Club, I progressed to the Regional Committee as Novice and Intermediate Secretary and later Regional Secretary. Those responsibilities led to involvement with the CBAI administration. Martin Hayes and Johnny Kiely were prominent members of the North Munster Regional Committee. At one meeting of the Executive Committee I was proposed as a Council Member of the Irish Bridge Union and have remained on that Committee to date. I did serve as Joint Secretary/Treasurer of the Irish Bridge Union taking over from Tomás Roche and passing on the baton to Martin Brady. This position gave me the opportunity to play on CBAI Official teams. I played in several Corn Cairdis events in Ireland and England as well as in the Sonya Britton Trophy often with Rita Cassidy when she was CBAI Hon Secretary.

On my retirement, Rose O'Brien thought I needed something to keep me busy and proposed me as Treasurer of the Monument Bridge Centre following in the footsteps of Gerry Fulham and Michael Holmes.

This way I get to know the new bridge players by demanding their Annual Subscription fee and keeps me busy for the first two months of the year.

Over the years, I have played bridge abroad in the Philip Morris European Pairs, the European Team Championships on the Senior Team in Warsaw and Pau and in Geneva, Lille and Ostend in the European Open Championships. I played with Mark Burke, Pat Liston, Pat McCarthy, Aidan Cleary, Sean O'Lubaigh, Des Houlihan, Dolores Gilliland and Mary Kelly-Rogers. I cannot report any great success but we always had a good time. I remember playing against Omar Sharif, Benito Garozzo, chatting to Zia Mahmood and while in Warsaw I was able to record on camera the moment when the Irish Open Team realized that they had won the Silver Medal.

Over the years I've played with many bridge partners. Among those not mentioned I should add four from County Clare, Michael Boyce, Danny Liddy, Paul Barrett and Enda Glynn with whom I have had some success. In the latest part of my bridge journey, I had the opportunity to apply for the position of CBAI President. Covid came to put an obstacle in the way but with the help of ZOOM we were able to hold an election meeting at which I was chosen as President-Elect. The installation was delayed but it meant that at the Duais an Uachtarain, I had finally got over the 1000 National Point barrier to become a Grand Master.

*[Thanks Gordon - what a memory! Ed.]*

# Revington Cup 2024

Gay Keaveney



The 2024 renewal attracted a field of 42 pairs. Peter Goodman/Dan McIntosh ran out clear winners on 66%, from Tom Hanlon/Conor Boland on 60%. Martin Jones and I came in 11th. These hands were the most interesting, I thought.

Dealer South. Vul E/W.

		♠ AKQJ107		
		♥ 752		
		♦ 82		
		♣ Q10		
♠ 2	N		♠ 843	
♥ A10			♥ J9864	
♦ AKJ95	W	E	♦ Q743	
♣ AJ653		S	♣ 2	
			♠ 965	
			♥ KQ3	
			♦ 106	
			♣ K9874	

West opens 1♦, N overcalls 1♠ and most Easts will raise Diamonds according to their system (2♦ or 3♦) and some will make a takeout double showing their heart suit. Obviously you should not do this without a diamond fit to retreat to. West will now bid clubs probably 3♣ over South's 2♠ bid and North will bid 3♠. If East does not bid 4♦ West will bid 4♣ and over East's 4♦ West will bid 5♦. It is important that you try and set up the heart suit before you draw trumps by playing ♥A10 immediately and use dummy's entries then only to ruff one round of hearts and set them up. Just four pairs bid 5♦, scoring 37 out of 40 matchpoints.

Dealer West. Vul N/S.

		♠ J932		
		♥ 9		
		♦ AKJ62		
		♣ Q105		
♠ -	N		♠ K87	
♥ 8763			♥ AJ542	
♦ Q7543	W	E	♦ 9	
♣ AK64		S	♣ 9872	
			♠ AQ10654	
			♥ KQ10	
			♦ 108	
			♣ J3	

Most tables played this hand in 4♠ making 10 tricks. However E/W have a good sacrifice in 5♥, going three off or 5♣ going two off, doubled costing 500 or 300. Five pairs sacrificed in 5♥, nobody got to 5♣.

Dealer South. Vul E/W.

		♠ AQ86		
		♥ AQ983		
		♦ 763		
		♣ K		
♠ -	N		♠ K1072	
♥ 1065			♥ K74	
♦ 4	W	E	♦ KQJ8	
♣ QJ10987642		S	♣ A5	
			♠ J9543	
			♥ J2	
			♦ A10952	
			♣ 3	

Here North opens 1♥ and East will overcall 1NT. South at many tables bid 2♠. Obviously if you had a system to show spades and a minor over the intervening 1NT it would be a more comfortable bid to make. West will now bid 2NT (Lebensohl) if he thinks his hand is not a game going hand demanding a 3♣ bid from partner indicating he has a non-game going hand and a long suit. North will compete with 3♠ and passed back to West he will

bid 4♣ probably the final resting spot. I must admit I would bid a direct 5♣ with the West nine-card suit. It will never be beaten as the only lead to beat it is a small heart under leading your Ace. If you lead Ace and other heart you have no entry to enjoy your winning ♥Q once the ♦A is knocked out. This lead will never be found. (Except online ha ha!) The top score went to the E/W pair who declarer 3NT from East, making +1 after the ♥J lead. Declarer must have recited the Rosary before cashing ♣A!

Dealer West. Vul All.

		♠ AK62		
		♥ K98532		
		♦ --		
		♣ Q87		
♠ J10985	N		♠ Q3	
♥ -			♥ QJ4	
♦ J108652	W	E	♦ AQ93	
♣ 92		S	♣ K543	
			♠ 74	
			♥ A1076	
			♦ K74	
			♣ AJ106	

North opens 1♥ and East will pass as he has not a suitable hand to make a takeout double. South has a game going raise to 4♥. Depending on your methods you can show this. Most Norths passed the final bid of 4♥ because for slam to make you need a doubleton spade in South hand and also good clubs. However when you see the N/S cards slam is a good contract. If hearts divide 2/2 then it is cold. With them breaking 3/1 you just need the club finesse to work. It was only bid four times in the tournament (including against yours truly).



# Geraldine Teams 2024

Derek O’Gorman



The Geraldine Teams Trophy was held in the Westgrove Hotel, Clane, Co Kildare. This is a one day 48 board national mens’ team event.

28 teams participated with Marcin Rudzinski, Claudiu Dima, Wojciech Gorczyca and Ronan McMaugh running out winners. In second came Peter Goodman, Dan McIntosh, Micheál and Pádraig Ó’Brian. The event was well run by TDs Brian Lawlor and Huey Daly.

**Here was Board 1:**

Dealer North. Vul None.

				♠Q9643				
				♥KQ754				
				♦K97				
				♣-				
♠K		N		♠1072				
♥AJ1098				♥6				
♦J8532	W		E	♦AQ106				
♣64		S		♣AKQ92				
				♠AJ85				
				♥32				
				♦4				
				♣J108753				

W	N	E	S
	1♠	2♣	2♠
X <sup>1</sup>	P	3♦	3♠
4♦	P	5♦	All Pass

<sup>1</sup> Competitive double showing other 2 suits (H and D)

The play went as follows:

**Trick 1:** Heart lead by South won in dummy with the Ace

**Trick 2:** Diamond to the 10

**Trick 3:** Spade to the K, won by South

**Trick 4:** Heart back, ruffed by East

**Trick 5:** Spade ruff

**Trick 6:** Diamond to the Q

**Trick 7:** ♠A, ruffed by North with ♦K

**Trick 8:** Spade from North ruffed in dummy with ♦8

East can now claim the rest of the tricks by running hearts and ruffing out North’s ♥K, and the remaining trump is an entry

**Result: 11 tricks and +400.**

At the other table, N/S were allowed to play in 4♠-1 for -50, so an eight imp gain.

This hand shows the importance of competitive doubles, and also of not taking out all trumps too early.

**Another hand of interest was Board 18 of the second session.**

Dealer East. Vul N/S.

				♠942				
				♥A				
				♦A7				
				♣KQJ10843				
♠K86		N		♠J5				
♥1075				♥KQJ9643				
♦J1083	W		E	♦Q4				
♣A92		S		♣65				
				♠AQ1073				
				♥82				
				♦K9652				
				♣7				

W	N	E	S
		3♥	P
4♥	All Pass		

East played in 4♥ and managed to only go one off for a score of -50.

At the other table, 4♠ made 650 so + 12 imps.

Some people play Non Leaping Michaels so a bid of a minor at the four-level shows at least 5/5 in the minor bid and the other major. This would have allowed N/S to get to 4♠.

In any case North could also have bid 5♣ over 4♥ with eight playing tricks in his hand. 5♣ also makes.

# Trials and Tribulations

## IBU Open Trials

Editor



**The IBU Open Trials took place over the weekend of January 19th – 21st at CBAI HQ. The stakes were high – the winning team would represent Ireland at the European Championships in Denmark in June, and also at the World Bridge Games in Buenos Aires in October.**

Somewhat surprisingly, just four teams entered, and opted for a semi-final and final format. Both semis went much as expected, with the Moran team [Mark Moran, John Carroll, Nick FitzGibbon, Adam Mesbur, Tom Hanlon, Conor Boland] and the DeRaeymaeker team [Karel DeRaeymaeker, Anna Onishuk, Kelan O'Connor, Gay Keaveney, Peter Goodman, Dan McIntosh] coming through with relative ease. It was noteworthy that the Junior partnership of Luca Crone and Mathew O'Farrell played on the losing Pigot team, because this kind of experience prepares you for the future.

The final was a very close-run thing. DeRaemaeker led throughout the first four of the five 16-board stanzas. Going into the fourth stanza, they led by 17 IMPs. By the time board 16 hit the table, the lead was down to four. This was the deal:

Dealer West. Vul E/W.

		♠ 8		
		♥ K9853		
		♦ QJ1076		
		♣ K8		
♠ KJ10976	N		♠ A3	
♥ Q	W		♥ A1042	
♦ 9	E		♦ 8543	
♣ 109763	S		♣ AQ5	
		♠ Q542		
		♥ J76		
		♦ AK2		
		♣ J42		

Conor Boland opened 2♣ as West, Tom Hanlon asked with 2NT, 3♠ showed a minimum and Tom opted for 3NT. There are many layouts where nine tricks are easier than 10, but this wasn't one of them, and 3NT was fortunate to be just two down after a heart lead. In the other room, 4♠ made. That was 13 IMPs to DeRaeymaeker, restoring the lead to 17 going into the final stanza.

With five boards remaining, the lead was down to 3 IMPs. Board 12 proved crucial.

Dealer West. Vul N/S.

				♠ QJ63
				♥ A932
				♦ 3
				♣ 8742
♠ AK854		N		♠ 1092
♥ -		W	E	♥ KQJ106
♦ J1082				♦ AK765
♣ KQJ10			S	♣ -
				♠ 7
				♥ 8754
				♦ Q94
				♣ A9653

Anna and Karel bid these to 5♠, which was doomed by the trump break, the diamond split and both aces being offside. Down one. Looking on, I thought it was very easy to get too high.

At the other table, Nick FitzGibbon takes up the tale. "After an auction where Adam [East] showed the red suits over my 1♠ opening, then cuebid 5♣ over my diamond support, we reached 6♦. Peter Goodman led ♣A. Adam ruffed and played ♦AK. A spade to the Ace was followed by ♣K pitching a spade, then ♠K. Peter ruffed and returned a club – a heart would have been fatal. The club provided an extra entry to dummy, so Adam

ruffed a spade, a heart and the fourth round of spades. Dummy was now high".

That was 14 IMPs to Moran. Just 3 IMPs changed hands over the last three boards and after a titanic struggle, Moran prevailed by 12 IMPs. A very tough loss to take, but the runners-up served notice [assuming they stay together] that future Open trials are going to be much more competitive than heretofore.

Well done to the winners, and good luck in both upcoming events.

# Play Quiz 4 - Solutions and Results

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

## Hand 1 Dealer North. Vul None.

		♠ Q1083		
		♥ Q983		
		♦ Q74		
		♣ 93		
♠ K65	N		♠ AJ742	
♥ J104	W	E	♥ A75	
♦ AK2			♦ 106	
♣ A862	S		♣ J54	
		♠ 9		
		♥ K 6 2		
		♦ J9853		
		♣ KQ107		

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

### Lead

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?

### The Play

West needs only four tricks now from the spades. He should play low to the king and duck the next round if North follows suit, ensuring four tricks. It would be right to duck even if North played the queen on the second round, as this might be a clever false card from Q 10 x.

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

		♠ AK96		
		♥ A1085		
		♦ 4		
		♣ 10765		
♠ 5	N		♠ J3	
♥ K93	W	E	♥ QJ64	
♦ AQ9763			♦ K82	
♣ A82	S		♣ KJ42	
		♠ Q108742		
		♥ 72		
		♦ J105		
		♣ Q9		

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		

### Lead

North begins with the ♠A and ♠K. How do you plan the play?

### The Play

West ruffs and leads a diamond to the king, the standard safety play to cater for J10xx in the South hand. If North shows out, play a trump from dummy winning cheaply in hand followed by a low heart to dummy's queen to lead a third round of trumps. Assuming no trump loser, West needs only to bring down the ten of hearts, or to find the hearts 3-3, and if these chances fail there is still the club finesse. After drawing the last trump, declarer lays down the ♥K. North will win the ace and probably exit with the ♥10 which West will win with the jack in dummy. If South shows out in hearts, declarer comes back to hand with the ♣A s to play the last trump. If North is left with the control in hearts and originally had four clubs, there will be a 'show-up squeeze' enabling declarer to pick up South's doubleton ♣Q.



**Hand 3** Dealer South. Vul E/W.

	♠ 10 ♥ K9732 ♦ A104 ♣ J852	
♠ KJ9762	N	♠ A53
♥ 4	W	♥ AJ6
♦ J86	E	♦ Q73
♣ Q103	S	♣ AK64
♠ Q 8 4 ♥ Q1085 ♦ K952 ♣ 97		

W	N	E	S
			P
2♠	P	4♠	All Pass

**Lead**

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

**The Play**

Declarer's best line is to take the ♥A and ruff a heart with the ♠6, cross to the ♠A (using the seven) and ruff the last heart with the ♠9. Then play a club to the king and lead the ♠3 putting in the jack if South follows with a low trump. If North is able to win, the best he can do is return a club into the Q10. West cashes the two clubs, leads the two of spades to dummy's five, and discards a diamond on the ace of clubs.

**Hand 4** Dealer West. Vul All.

	♠ Q10832 ♥ 4 ♦ 6532 ♣ AJ3	
♠ A54	N	♠ K6
♥ AK73	W	♥ Q92
♦ AQ104	E	♦ KJ87
♣ Q6	S	♣ K952
♠ J97 ♥ J10865 ♦ 9 ♣ 10874		

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

**Lead**

North opens a trump against 6♦ and dummy's seven is covered by the nine. How do you plan the play?

**The Play**

West wins and leads the ♣Q from hand. Say the opponents take this trick with the ace and lead another trump (a spade switch will be won with the ace). Declarer can now play on reverse dummy lines, a club to the king, ruff a club, a heart to the queen for a second club ruff and cross over to the ♠K to draw the trumps with dummy's ♦KJ.

# Play Quiz 5 - Solutions and Results

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

## Board 1 Dealer North. Vul None.

				♠ A973				
				♥ 93				
				♦ AK105				
				♣ 108				
♠ K104		N		♠ 6				
♥ QJ1064	W		E	♥ A8752				
♦ Q6				♦ 842				
♣ AQ5		S		♣ KJ73				
				♠ QJ852				
				♥ K				
				♦ J973				
				♣ 964				

W	N	E	S
	P	P	P
1♥	X	4♥	All Pass

### Lead:

North leads the ♦K and follows with ace and another. How do you plan the play?

### The Play

After ruffing the third round of diamonds, declarer should now lead the ♠K, to smoke out the ace. If North turns up with the ♠A in addition to the top diamonds, he cannot have ♥K [he passed originally], so you play ♥A and are rewarded when South's King falls singleton.

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

				♠ -				
				♥ Q93				
				♦ J973				
				♣ KQ10765				
♠ KJ9764		N		♠ AQ85				
♥ 5	W		E	♥ A10742				
♦ A10862				♦ K4				
♣ 7		S		♣ A9				
				♠ 1042				
				♥ KJ86				
				♦ Q5				
				♣ J842				

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

<sup>1</sup> 5♦ = 0 or 3 key cards;

<sup>2</sup> 6♦ = queen of agreed suit (spades) and ♦K

### Lead:

North leads the club king against 7♠. How do you plan the play?

### The Play

If declarer lays down the ♠A (or ♠Q) at trick two, North will show out and as South has a doubleton diamond alongside his 10, 4, 2 of trumps, declarer will be unable to ruff twice and establish the long diamond.

The safe play, easy to miss in the flush of triumph at reaching the grand slam, is to lead a low spade to the jack. Then if South has the three trumps and the doubleton diamond, declarer can ruff twice with the ace and queen; no problem arises if North has three trumps and the doubleton diamond.



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

				♠ 9854					
				♥ Q872					
				♦ A					
				♣ QJ94					
♠ K72		N		♠ A10					
♥ J65		W	E	♥ A103					
♦ KQ43				♦ 9652					
♣ 652		S		♣ AK73					
				♠ QJ63					
				♥ K94					
				♦ J1087					
				♣ 106					

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

**Lead**

South opens a low spade against 2NT and declarer's ♠10 wins the trick. How do you plan the play?

**The Play**

After this fortunate beginning East needs only two tricks from diamonds and can afford one of the game's lesser known safety plays: he ducks the first round of diamonds in both hands, a play that saves the vital trick when North has a singleton ace. Whatever happens on the first diamond, West will always be able to develop two tricks when the suit is breaking 3-2 or when South holds A10xx.

**Board 4** Dealer West. Vul All.

				♠ Q9					
				♥ K862					
				♦ KJ2					
				♣ 10863					
♠ AKJ8753		N		♠ 642					
♥ A		W	E	♥ J73					
♦ AQ				♦ 865					
♣ K72		S		♣ AJ54					
				♠ 10					
				♥ Q10954					
				♦ 109743					
				♣ Q96					

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

<sup>1</sup> 5♣ = 1 or 4 key cards;  
<sup>2</sup> 5♠ = denies queen of agreed suit (spades)

**Lead**

North leads a heart against 6♠. All follow to the ♠A. How do you plan the play?

**The Play**

West draws the outstanding trump and follows with ace, king and a third club towards the J5. Whenever clubs are 3-3, or North has the queen, or South has Qx, the contract will be safe without the diamond finesse.



# Bidding Quiz 4 - Results - Bob Pattinson

All hands from live pairs events.

## Question 1

Dealer North. Vul N/S. Teams.

- ♠ 842
- ♥ A9865
- ♦ K8
- ♣ K53

W	N	E	S
	1♥	2♦	X
?			

**Votes:** XX=12; 3♦=1; Pass=1

A comfortable majority votes for XX, with some using this bid to show general values, others attaching a more precise.

### Let us start with the generalists

**Ciaran: XX:** To show cards.

**George: XX:** I have a 10 count with no clear direction. I am happy to put this down as dummy in diamonds or no trumps.

**Tom: XX:** Gets my points across and I don't know what our best spot is yet.

**Roy: XX:** Nice points, no full fit. 3♦ would be an underbid.

**Peter P: XX:** If you like to play in 2♦XX go ahead. If you have a slightly off-centre overcall with only five diamonds but decent values, a potential penalty is looming for N/S. XX keeps the pressure on.

**Karel: XX:** Letting partner know I have values and quite happy to play in diamonds.

### Now for the more precise definitions of the XX.

**Luca: XX:** I believe this is called Rosenkranz, showing a doubleton with one high honour in partner's suit and good values.

**Anna: XX:** Shows some strength, some high honour in partner's suit, but denies three card support.

**Rory: XX:** Showing a top diamond honour, typically Ax or Kx.

**Sally: XX:** Implies a top diamond and some values.

**Thomas: XX:** Showing values (8-9 hcp) with exactly two diamonds.

### Finally we have two other options:

**Peter G: 3♦:** Not clear if this our hand or theirs and much depends on partner's heart holding to defend 3♠/4♣. Pass is a very reasonable alternative.

**Micheál: Pass:** I see no good reason to bid with only Kx in diamonds. Let us see where the opponents finish up their bidding.

Dealer North. Vul N/S. Teams.

		♠ KQ5		
		♥ KQJT3		
		♦ 106		
		♣ 982		
♠ 842	N		E	♠ J2
♥ A9865	W			♥ 75
♦ K8				♦ AQ9432
♣ K53		S		♣ QJ4
		♠ AT963		
		♥ 2		
		♦ J75		
		♣ AT76		

W	N	E	S
	1♥	2♦	X
?			

N/S contract: 2S=110;  
E/W contract: 3D=110;

## Summary

This is a tricky hand, with all contributors making valid points. Pass still allows further action depending on how things develop, but partner is left in the dark on your useful values. 3♦ shows support but may be showing less strength. The general XX is quite flexible, whereas the Rosenkranz XX is more specific and offers lead direction if opponents win the auction.

As the cards lie 3♦ takes the pressure from North, whereas Pass and XX both "keeps the pressure on" as Peter

P notes. If South bids 3♠ it loses 100 (too tight for double at teams), and 3♦ gains 110. XX combines flexibility with diamond support so works out best, with Pass edging 3♦.

**Marks:** XX=10; Pass=8; 3♦=7

## Bidding Tip:

The Rosenkranz redouble by advancer confirms a top honour in intervenor's suit, leaving a direct raise of the suit to deny the top honour but some support. Can also be used over responder's raise of the opening bid to confirm a trump raise with a top honour such as 1♥: 2♣: 2♥: X, leaving 3♣ raise as denying the top honour.

## Question 2

Dealer East. Vul All. Teams.

- ♠ A4
- ♥ A
- ♦ Q83
- ♣ KQ98743

W	N	E	S
		1♦	P
2♣	P	2♦	P
?			

**Votes:** 3♣=7; 3♦=3; 4♦=1; 4NT=1; 2♥=1; 3♥=1

A much wider choice here where the early foundations for a potential slam are being laid. As 2♣ over 1♦ is game forcing the next responses are either painting a picture of the 2♣ hand or asking for more information about the opening hand. If seeking the latter, then the Bourke Relay of bidding the next suit up following a rebid of the opening suit, allows most room for exploration, with Karel the sole practitioner of this helpful convention.

The case for repeating the seven card club suit reflects the view of the majority of the panel, as they can later show the diamond support.

**Sally: 3♣:** A seven suiter is not to be sniffed at. Clubs could easily be a better denomination than diamonds.

**Rory: 3♣:** System is 2♣ is game forcing, and we can revert to diamonds later if necessary.

**Peter P: 3♣:** Is the better description and over the possible 3NT bid 4♦, showing that support and slamming. Other options of 3♦ or 3♥ less descriptive.

**Thomas: 3♣:** Plan to bid 4♦ on my next bid.

**Peter G: 3♣:** Not a big fan of a unilateral 6♦, and consulting partner too much doesn't always help, but here I need to emphasise the clubs. Can later revert to 4♦ and let partner get Blackwood on the table if necessary.

**Micheál: 3♣:** Follow up by supporting diamonds as we have decent diamond support and a minor suit slam is likely to be the final contract.

**Tom: 3♣:** Have to show my suit as that is where we may be heading. I will support diamonds at next turn. Partner can still have Axxx in diamonds where we will struggle, with 7NT cold.

**The other options tend to centre on diamonds.**

**Ciaran: 4NT:** Partner should have six diamonds, so key card Blackwood now. The alternative is 3♦ agreeing the suit, but partner's next bid might help the defence pick the better major to lead, and I'll just be bidding key card next anyway.

**Luca: 3♦:** Let's keep it low and see what partner can contribute. 2♦ should show six, with 2M showing shape. I don't want partner to undervalue ♥K by bidding 3♥.

**George: 3♦:** We could easily have a grand. Over 3NT I'll bid 4♣. Won't let partner stop short of slam.

**Anna: 3♥:** This should be a splinter for diamonds as 2♥ would have been forcing (Bourke Rely), and it confirms at least three card

support for diamonds. I am quite happy we are going to make a slam, but if my partner holds ♦AK and ♣A I would like to take my chances in 7. There is no rush to bid 4NT yet. Even if partner has a void in clubs but some other goodies we can still make 7.

**Roy: 4♦:** Key card in diamonds on the assumption that partner would have bid a four card major if holding a lousy diamond suit.

**Karel: 2♥:** I believe in expert circles agreed as artificial and forcing, so a subsequent 3♦ is then forcing.

Dealer East. Vul All. Teams.

			♠KJ873
			♥T854
			♦6
			♣AT6
♠A4	N		♠Q96
♥A			♥K96
♦Q83	W	E	♦AKJT72
♣KQ98743			♣J
			♠T52
			♥QJ732
			♦954
			♣52

W	N	E	S
		1♦	P
2♣	P	2♦	P
?			

E/W contract: 6NT(W)=990; 6D(W)=920; 6C=920;

**Summary**

With such a strong hand all of the panel envisaged a slam, most likely in a minor suit, but possibly in NT too, even at grand slam level. Two assumptions were made about the 2♦ rebid. Firstly, that the suit contained six cards, otherwise a four card major would have been rebid. Secondly the quality of the diamonds would be good. At this point the panel adopted two different approaches, the majority rebidding clubs first to emphasise their prime asset, later planning to show diamond support. Other panel members made a more direct approach to agree diamonds and employ Blackwood, or begin cue bidding in support of diamonds.

Although both approaches would culminate in a minor slam, only West makes 6♦ on a spade lead and a duck of the ♣J due to the 3-1 trump break. Rebidding clubs first had two bites of the cherry, but would the 7-1 fit be preferred to 6-3? Also would South always lead a spade against 6♦?

**Marks:** 3♣=10; 2♥=10; 3♥=9; 3♦=9; 4♦=9; 4NT=9

**Bidding Tip:**

1. Note how the Bourke Relay of the forcing 2♥ (after a rebid of opener's suit next suit is forcing) offers maximum bidding space for exploring shape.
2. When opener doesn't rebid a four card major over 3♣ then the diamonds must be a decent six card suit.
3. Showing the long clubs first, then later diamonds, offers two chances rather than one.

**Question 3**

Dealer South. Vul N/S. Pairs.

- ♠ Q84
- ♥ 62
- ♦ AQ863
- ♣ AK9

W	N	E	S
			1♠
P	2♠	P	P
?			

**Votes:** 3♦=10; Pass=4

The favourable vulnerability persuades the majority to intervene over an agreed major suit fit. Several note that they would have overcalled earlier with 1NT despite the poor major suit holdings.

**Tom: 3♦:** Not going quietly in pairs at favourable vulnerability when their trumps are breaking well. Double is a close second option, as we may belong in clubs, but don't want partner to bid 3♥. In pairs get them up a level.

**Rory: 3♦:** Letting them play in an eight card major suit fit at the two level at pairs is a losing policy, so get in there, even vulnerable with a five card suit and a good hand. Partner will have some values and is short in spades, so very likely there is a decent fit. It may push them too high.

**Thomas: 3♦:** I would have called 1NT the first time. I now balance 3♦, as partner seems to hold two spades. I hope I can catch a diamond fit. Non vulnerable in pairs I think it worth a shot.

**Roy: 3♦:** If partner can provide ♣Q and ♦J I'll be down one against minus 110 for 2♠.

**Sally: 3♦:** Could be a disaster but looks normal at pairs.

**Luca: 3♦:** I would have overcalled 1NT on my last turn. Now I have a bit of a problem, but since it is pairs I'll guess to bid 3♦ and hope for the best.

**Micheál: 3♦:** Partner is likely to be short in spades so it is worth competing non vulnerable.

**Anna: 3♦:** I would like to compete but would have bid 1NT on the first round.

**George: 3♦:** Should have overcalled 1NT earlier and maybe too late to catch up now.

**Karel: 3♦:** On the basis partner has 11 cards outside spades 3♦ seems in order. Would have overcalled 1NT or 2♦ earlier.

**Now for the Passers, some would have overcalled earlier.**

**Peter G: Pass:** These are bad cards for bidding now. I may have bid 1NT in the first place but we are gambling a lot for a diamond fit to score well then.

**Ciaran: Pass:** And hope to make plus. If I was getting involved 1NT on the last round was my best shot.

**Peter P: Pass:** I would have overcalled 1NT earlier with the ♦K likely in opener's hand. To make eight + tricks in 1NT I would need xx Axxxx J10X xxx. Now 2NT would be a minor two suiter.

I might have four tricks in my hand against 2♠, and only need a decent card in partner's hand to knock 2♠ for plus 100, but might need a lot of luck to make 3♦.

Dealer South: Vul N/S: Pairs

		♠A63		
		♥J983		
		♦92		
		♣J632		
♠Q84		N		♠5
♥62		W	E	♥QT754
♦AQ863				♦KJ4
♣AK9		S		♣Q754
		♠KJT972		
		♥AK		
		♦T75		
		♣T8		

W	N	E	S
			1♠
P	2♠	P	P
?			
E/W contracts: 3H=140; 4D=130; N/S contract: 2S=110;			

### Summary

Whilst many would have opened earlier the current problem is what action to take now. As Karel highlights, partner has 11 cards outside spades so there must be a fit somewhere. The majority bid of 3♦ looks to be safest, whereas Pass looks to be too conservative, especially if 1NT was first choice as an overcall. Note that the latter would produce a transfer to 2♥, scoring a superior 140 to the 130 available in diamonds.

**Marks:** 3♦=10; Pass=8;

### Bidding Tip:

If you take a conservative view not to overcall 1NT you must step in if a second chance arises to compete for the contract, especially when partner is marked with plenty of cards in the unbid suits. Don't sell out at the two-level if you can avoid it.

## Question 4

Dealer South. Vul All. Teams.

- ♠ 53
- ♥ A86
- ♦ AK73
- ♣ QJ72

W	N	E	S
			P
P	2♠	?	

**Votes:** X=13; Pass=1

If North holds a top of the range 10 count there are at least 16 points shared between the remaining two hands, so with tolerance for the remaining suits some action needs to be taken, and double looks just the job.

**Sally: X:** I don't like having only three hearts but I think the risk of bidding is less than the risk of passing.

**Roy: X:** I don't like having only three hearts, and minimal values, but with only two spades, it's a lot of pressure on partner to come up with a bid holding three, and it could easily be our hand.

**Tom: X:** I don't have four hearts but that doesn't stop me. Partner's ♥KQxxx and ♣K makes game a shot. If partner passes I have a great hand for defence.

**Rory: X:** Well worth a takeout double.

**Luca: X:** I don't have four hearts but it is the most flexible bid. I know partner is a passed hand but a flat 10 count with five hearts has a play for game.

**Peter G: Pass:** I appreciate it is a bidders' game and my cards are pretty pure but partner is a passed hand, and I can see too many 3♥ -1 v 3♠ -1 probabilities if partner can't get to three of a minor.



Dealer South. Vul All. Teams.

		♠ KQT876	
		♥ K4	
		♦ J65	
		♣ T9	
♠ A94	N	♠ 54	
♥ T32	W	♥ A86	
♦ QT4	E	♦ AK73	
♣ K853	S	♣ QJ72	
		♠ J2	
		♥ QJ975	
		♦ 982	
		♣ A64	

W	N	E	S
			P
P	2♠	?	

E/W contracts: 3C=110; 3D=110  
N/S contract: 2S -1=50

### Summary

Whilst holding only three hearts, the compensating values of three controls and a doubleton spade justify a flexible double here, especially when partner may still hold up to 10 points.

Marks: X=10; Pass=7

### Bidding Tip

The take out double is a flexible piece of kit and you don't always require a four card major with 4432 shape as long as the overall values of the hand are sound. As with the previous problem, selling out at the two-level loses more often than it wins.

### 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

Votes: Pass=11; 4♠=2; 4♥=1

Playing standard puppet Stayman somewhat limits responder's opportunities for bidding 5-4 major suit hands, as exemplified here. Moreover, with 2NT being 20-22 facing nine points the push for a slam is at the margins. The two hands fit together perfectly but the need to change the system is clear cut. The strong majority for pass is partially due to the limitations of the system.

Rory: Pass: Many play 3♠ to show five spades and four hearts.

Sally: Pass: Not quite sure about the meaning of 3NT. Is it a doubleton spade? Don't think we have quite enough for a forward move.

Tom: Pass: I would have made a try if partner had shown a major but without a clear fit and with a maximum of 31 points I will settle for game.

Thomas: Pass: Can I play a different system?

Luca: Pass: This is a problem hand for puppet being able to show five spades and four hearts. I play a direct 3NT as five spades and four hearts, and 3♠ as a transfer to 3NT or various minor slam tries. It works well as long as you remember! We have extra values so 3NT should be a safe spot. I won't make a guess to try to bid 4♠ now.

George: Pass: Very bad system in use as we could easily miss a spade fit. We have so many extra points that 3NT is well secured. Trying for a slam is ill judged.

Peter P: Pass: If I bid 4♦ I could find out whether we have a 5-3 spade fit I am going to pass this out as I think slam is unlikely.

Karel: Pass: No fit, only nine points. Quantitative 4NT? Nah!

Ciaran: Pass: We have at most 31 points and I don't have a way to ask partner about their spades since that's the key to making a slam. In some partnerships I play a version of puppet where partner

could show exactly three spades with fewer than four hearts, which would help on this hand.

Peter G: Pass: The Americans can bid this via 3♣, 3♦, 3♥ to show five spades and four hearts, but never try to look for possible slams after 2NT openings. Just probable slams. If 3NT shows three spades and two or three hearts I am better placed to consider moving.

Micheál: 4♠: In my partnership 3NT shows three spades and denies four hearts. 4♠ is to play. Slam needs a maximum from partner.

Brad: 4♠: Usually play 4♥ as a transfer to 4♠, but if not available then 4♠.

Anna: 4♥: This should show four hearts and five spades. I doubt that we can make a slam, but know we can play in a 5-2 fit. This seems a safe option as we would not be exposed in any suit.

Dealer East. Vul All. Teams.

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

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

E/W contracts: 7NT=1520; 7S=1510; 7H=1510; 7D=1440

### Summary

Two key points with this hand are firstly the consensus that the maximum of 31 points is insufficient for seeking a slam unless a strong suit fit is found. Although 13 tricks are there in four contracts, this requires a 3-3 heart break and/or finding the ♠Q.

The second key point is the problem of puppet Stayman when responder holds 5-4 in the majors. Several suggestions have made by panel members to remedy the weaknesses. Partnerships can agree to play one of these, or develop their own variations. Puppet covers finding four or five card majors effectively, but not the less frequent 5-4 major suit combinations held by responder.

**Marks:** Pass=10; 4♥/♠=8

### Bidding Tip

A simple extension to puppet Stayman is to play 3♠ over 2NT as 5-4 in spades and hearts, and with five hearts and four spades to transfer to hearts via 3♦, and then play 3♠ as a transfer sign off to 3NT, and bid 3NT over 3♥ as showing four spades. As Luca notes you just need to remember the system!

### Question 6

**Dealer West. Vul All. Pairs**

- ♠ K7
- ♥ KQ65
- ♦ AQ865
- ♣ A7

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

**Votes:** 1♠=12; 2♠=1; 3♥=1

This is a relatively easy hand to clarify the meaning of fourth suit forcing, whereby the 1♠ rebid simply requests opener to bid out the shape and strength of their hand.

**Rory: 1♠:** Fourth suit forcing and game forcing. Bid hearts next to set the suit, and probe for small or grand slam.

**Micheál: 1♠:** Fourth suit and game forcing. Follow up with heart support and then 4NT key card Blackwood.

**Peter P: 1♠:** Dying to be in a slam but need to know the spade position.

**Tom: 1♠:** Fourth suit forcing. Let's find out partner's shape first. Then set hearts and cue bid and key card.

**Peter G: 1♠:** A lot depends upon agreement as 2♠ can sometimes show this hand. Either way we need to create a force, and be aware that we are pin-pointing a spade lead very often.

**George: 2♠:** I would like to bid 3♥ to show a slam try but not sure that system is on. I will bid hearts at my first opportunity.

**Brad: 3♥:** game forcing

**Dealer West. Vul All. Pairs**

		♠ T983	
		♥ J9	
		♦ KT2	
		♣ Q532	
♠ A654	N		♠ K2
♥ A742	W	E	♥ KQ65
♦ 9			♦ AQ865
♣ KT64	S		♣ A7
		♠ QJ2	
		♥ T83	
		♦ J743	
		♣ J98	

W	N	E	S
1♠ <sup>1</sup>	P	1♦	P
1♥	P	?	
<sup>1</sup> 1♠ = 3+			
E/W contracts: 7H = 1520; 5NT = 460; 4S = 420; 5D = 400; 5C = 400			

### Summary

All agreed game forcing and to slam try later in hearts.

**Marks:** 1♠ and 2♠=10; 3♥=8

### Bidding Tip

Agree to play FSF at the lowest level in order to maximise bidding space.

### Question 7

**Dealer South. Vul All. Teams.**

- ♠ AQT632
- ♥ AT4
- ♦ 6
- ♣ T85

W	N	E	S
			P
1♥	P	1♠	P
3♥	P	?	

**Votes:** 4♦=8; 3♠=4; 4NT=1; 4♠=1

**George: 4♦:** Cue bidding along the way to 4♥ and denying a club control.

**Tom: 4♦:** I like to play this as a cue for hearts (some might play as natural), and I am worth it and pin point my hand for partner, with no club control. As little as Kx KQJxxx xxx Ax makes a slam. Partner could have more values but a worse suiting hand, but after 4♦ is now in a position to judge the hand.

**Roy: 4♦:** Intended as a heart cue. I can't be looking for support in a secondary minor suit after partner's 3♥ (would just raise hearts or bid 3♠).

**Luca: 4♦:** Cue bid could be all partner needs to hear.

**Thomas: 4♦:** Cue bid with implicit heart fit. Bidding 4♠ natural and forcing only creates confusion afterwards.

**Rory: 3♠:** Difficult problem. Heart fit, possible double major fit. We are in the slam zone (using the losing trick count we have seven losers and partner has five or six losers, so 24-12.5 = 11.5 winners). Maybe 5♥ next. Even if we've a double fit, hearts may be the best trump suit to protect partner's club holding.

**Sally: 3♠:** See what happens. If partner rebids 3NT I'll convert to 4♥, or if partner cues for spades I can cue too, and later use RKCB.

**Micheál: 3♠:** It is difficult to make a suitable slam try in hearts without going beyond 4♥. I will bid 3♠ now and follow up with 4♥ to show heart support and slam interest.

**Karel: 3♠:** I'd love to bid 4♦ to agree hearts but I suspect there is a good case for 4♦ as natural (see Roy's point why this is not the case. BP). 3♠ is forcing which is my bid, intending to bid 4♥ next so partner can upgrade ♠Kx and downgrade x or void.

**Anna: 4♣:** I have no good plan as to what to do next! But I would like to know that 3♠ is forcing. Which it is probably not. But it might stop the opposition from leading clubs.

**Ciaran: 4NT:** A bit too good for 4♥. Partner is favourite to have a club control, so I'll try 4NT and at least it will be clear what trumps are. It would be nice if 4♦ was unambiguously a cue for hearts, but it is not.

Dealer South. Vul All. Teams.

♠K54					
♥65					
♦KT874					
♣J42					
♠J7	N			♠AQT532	
♥KQJ987	W	E		♥AT4	
♦AJ				♦6	
♣AQ7		S		♣T85	
				♠98	
				♥32	
				♦Q9532	
				♣K963	

W	N	E	S
			P
1♥	P	1♠	P
3♥	P	?	
E/W contracts: 6NT=990; 6S=980; 6H=980			

**Summary**

The advantage of the 4♦ bid is that it informs partner of three key features in responder's hand:

- ▶ Heart support
- ▶ Diamond control
- ▶ No club control

Once a major suit fit is found it is less confusing if a new suit is a cue bid supporting the opening strong major suit. In this hand East's spade suit is natural but there is more than enough support for partner's six card heart suit with ♥AT4, so 4♦ is logically a cue for hearts, denying

a club control. Without heart support then 3♠ should be game forcing, looking for an alternative spot. Rory's point about the losing trick count confirms the slam potential.

**Marks:** 4♦=10; 4NT=8; 3♠=8; 4♣=6

**Bidding Tip**

Agree with partner on forcing bids and cue bids so that there is clear understanding in critical auctions.

**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			

**Votes:** Pass=10; 3♥=4

With seven losers and three useful spades it is tempting to make a further call over 2NT, but partner's strength is unknown at this point, and it is red against green, hence the majority choice of pass by the panel.

**George: Pass:** Unclear what is right here. Let's wait and see what partner does. Of course we could be waiting a long time over four or five of a minor!

**Karel: Pass:** Double here is not a support double, which only apply to two level suit overcalls. If partner can bid again over the probable 3♦ great. If not we may have avoided a disaster.

**Thomas: Pass:** Although it is a very pleasant one, I don't think I'm supposed to double here with only a 10 count after I have opened. But it could definitely work out. If partner comes in again with a X over a 3♣ or 3♦ bid, I'll cue bid at the four level to show a good hand (in the context) with six hearts and three spades.

**Sally: Pass:** I expect to get another chance.

**Micheál: Pass:** This limits my hand. I can show my distribution on the next round of bidding, by doubling North's bid of 3♦ for takeout. If North bids 3♣ I will pass again as a fit seems unlikely given that my partner probably holds diamonds.

**Peter G: Pass:** This suggests that I don't have a bid, which I don't. I presume that partner has paid the entry fee and is entitled to get involved if having a bid!!

**Luca: Pass:** I am content partner will compete if we need to.

**Anna: Pass:** So many things can go wrong if we try to play the hand. Partner might have no hearts, and I get doubled. Partner may have only four spades. I can always see what I can do on the next round of bidding. 2NT is very unlikely to be passed.

**Rory: Pass:** Close between pass and 3♥.

**Ciaran: 3♥:** Not ideal, but with the partial spade fit, it looks like a hand to play if possible, and pass suggests a weak no trump hand which this is not.

**Roy: 3♥:** It's not perfect with my three good spades, but at least I'm not promising a big hand, and my heart pips are good. It would be nice if double was support, but we don't play that way. It would also nice to try 3♦ but we have no agreement, and it probably wouldn't make partner vert happy, especially with a minimum hand.

**Peter P: 3♥:** Yes I'm bidding again with my six hearts and ♠K107 but more of a self courtesy raise (no extra values) since I have a number of techniques available to me to show more strength: 3♣/3♦/X etc.

**Tom: 3♥:** (Or a support X if we play it). Going big at these colours. But North might also be going big in a minor. The good hearts (109) offer me some protection, as do my spades. If I'm doubled in a voice of thunder I will run to 3♠. [We use bidding

boxes Tom!!] If our support double went to this level that would be an option even if partner will expect more help. Maybe 3♣/♦ here should be about having or not having 6-3 in the majors.

Dealer West. Vul E/W. Pairs

♠ Q9854 ♥ J5 ♦ QJ97 ♣ A7			
♠ KT7	N	♠ AJ632	
♥ AKT972	W	♥ Q83	E
♦ 2		♦ A4	
♣ T84	S	♣ J65	
♠ – ♥ 64 ♦ KT8652 ♣ KQ932			
W	N	E	S
1♥	P	1♠	2NT <sup>1</sup>
?			
<sup>1</sup> 5-5 minors			
E/W contracts: 2NT=120; 2S=110; 2H=110 N/S contracts: 4D=130; 3C=110			

### Summary

The gypsy’s warning arises on this hand with the potentially bad breaks in the majors when South shows at least 10 cards in the minors. Although the West hand has useful shape with only 10 points, partner may be weak and balanced, so pass seems the wiser option. Applying the support double to the conventional 2NT with 5-5 in the minors seems a reasonable step.

**Marks:** Pass=10; 3♥=9

### Bidding Tip

1. When opponents show two long suits with their conventional bids beware of bad breaks in the other two suits.
2. Consider support doubles over the conventional 2NT overcall.

### Summary of the Expert Panel Results

Well done to Thomas Bessis who registered a maximum 80, and kudos to Luca Crone [our resident chronicler of the Junior scene] for his excellent 79.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
Thomas Bessis	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	<b>80</b>
Sally Brock	10	10	10	10	10	10	8	10	<b>78</b>
Luca Crone	10	9	10	10	10	10	10	10	<b>79</b>
Ciaran Coyne	10	9	8	10	10	10	8	9	<b>74</b>
Karel De Raeymaeker	10	10	10	10	10	10	8	10	<b>78</b>
Brad Moss	10	9	10	10	8	8	10	10	<b>75</b>
Peter Goodman	7	10	8	7	10	10	10	10	<b>72</b>
Tom Hanlon	10	9	8	10	10	10	10	9	<b>76</b>
George Jacobs	10	9	10	10	10	10	10	10	<b>79</b>
Micheál O’Briain	10	10	10	10	8	10	8	10	<b>76</b>
Anna Onishuk	10	9	10	10	8	10	6	10	<b>73</b>
Peter Pigot	8	10	8	10	10	10	10	9	<b>75</b>
Rory Timlin	10	10	10	10	10	10	8	10	<b>78</b>
Roy Welland	10	9	10	10	10	10	10	9	<b>78</b>



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