



Palmetto Pre-Empts



South Carolina Unit 160 of the American Contract Bridge League

April to June, 2006

A Play Problem For South

North

♠ AK2

♥ AKJ965

♦ 8

♣ AK6

South (You)

♠ 9843

♥ 72

♦ AKQ754

♣ J

You are declarer in 6♦ on the lead of the five of spades. You get two hints: (1) Six hearts cannot be made. (2) Six diamonds can be made but diamonds are 4-2. Plan the play. Solution on page 2.

Solution Inside

Ziemer, Hughes, Fendrick and Roberts Do it Again

The District 7 Flight A (Under 5000) Grand National Teams Championship was won by repeat partnerships of Greenville's **Jeff Ziemer** and **Hugh Hughes** playing with teammates **Greg Roberts** (Aiken) and **Robert Fendrick** (Marietta).

The players also won the right to represent the District in the National finals at the Summer nationals in Chicago.

These same players won the District Finals last year as well, and then went on to the nationals and won the national championship.

We expect hands and more bridge details from the players for our next PP issue.

Carolina Teams Score Well In District GNT Playoffs

In the Flight A District 7 Championship, the Championship division (unlimited masterpoints) was won by an experienced Atlanta based squad which beat out two mixed Carolina teams each of which has won this event before.

In each of the four sections, the top team will have its expenses partly defrayed by the District.

Open Results:

1. Patricia Tucker and Kevin Collins, and Jack and Claudia Feagin (Atlanta).
2. Happoldt Neuffer and Lucas Lebioda (Columbia), and Jerry Helms and Robert Bitterman (Charlotte).
3. Wayne Hollingsworth (Irmo) and Richard Brown (Easley), Hugh Brown (McCormick) and Warren Roberts (Flat Rock NC), and Richard Potter (Black Mt, NC).
4. Kevin Wilson (TN), Tom Charmichael (Kennesaw), Ron and Linda Smith (TN).

In Flight B (0-2000), a young TN squad won but several Carolina players were on the other top teams.

Flight B Results:

1. Brad Vander Zande, David Shepler, Jared and Jeremy Fournier (TN).
2. Robert Coleman, Louis Gangarosa, O. Gordon Lien, Varghese George (Augusta) and Rajan Iyer (Aiken).
- 3/4. Mike and Jon Rice (NC), Ed Foran, Nicholas Hammond (GA).
- 3/4. G. Grooms and Elizabeth Grooms (Taylors), and Reece and Johanna Blackwell (Greenville).

In Flight C, a Georgia team won, but three Carolina teams were close behind.

Flight C Results:

1. Siva Jayarnan, Richard Starr, Allison Milhem, Andy McKinnon (GA).

2. Craig De Almeida, James Cunningham, Jeff Puckett, David Williams (NC).
 3/4. Michael and Elizabeth McGuffey, Margaret Lindquist, Michael Zimmerman (NC)
 3/4. Jo Remy (Toga City), Dorothy Floyd (Ft. Mill), Frances Campbell, Peg Hardy (Charlotte).

A Play Problem For South, Con't

North

♠ AK2
 ♥ AKJ965
 ♦ 8
 ♣ AK6

South (You)

♠ 9843
 ♥ 72
 ♦ AKQ754
 ♣ J

You are declarer in 6♦ on the lead of the five of spades.

When this hand was dealt in the top bracket of a Regional Knock Out, both teams suffered defeat, one in 6H, the other in 6NT. Both hearts and diamonds split badly. With the heart 4-1 offside with East, and with Jxxx in diamonds with West, 6H and 6NT were impossible. But 6D is makeable.

First, a bad solution. Win the opening lead and try hearts at once, planning to ruff the 3rd round. Down, since the second heart gets ruffed, and on the spade return, there are not enough entries to establish hearts.

The next bad line. Win the lead and play 3 rounds of diamonds immediately. (RHO shows out on the 3rd diamond.) Now try hearts, and again, the second heart gets ruffed and another spade is led, down one.

The next bad line. Lead 4 rounds of trumps. West returns a second spade. You play two rounds of hearts and ruff a heart. Now you play a club to dummy and ruff a second heart with your last diamond. The hearts are good *but you don't have another entry* so as to return to dummy.

The winning play is hard to spot. At trick two, cash one high heart. Now lead three rounds of diamonds. Finally, lead the second heart. West cannot ruff (profitably). So the heart king wins and you can ruff the 3rd round of hearts. It does West no good to overruff. Lead a club to dummy and ruff a 4th heart. If West overruffs, he can not prevent you from going to dummy with a spade and enjoying the last two hearts. If West declines to overruff, just exit your last trump. West is out of red cards and dummy has two high black cards and two high hearts.

The solution lets you use hearts as the extra needed entry to dummy. And of course, one should play this way even without the hints.

The Carolina Cup Sectional Camden, SC, May 11-15, 2006

A tough group of 117 players battled for 350 masterpoints, and 104 of them won some points.

Along the way:

1st in Open pairs:

1. James Blackwell (Awendaw) and Martin Johnson (Folly Beach)
2. Richard Guarneri (Charleston) and Charles Davis (Lilburn, GA)
3. Mark and Susanne McLaughlin (Charleston)
4. Hap Neuffer (Col.) and Alice Moore (Hopkins)

Sunday Swiss:

First: Richard Guarneri, Charles Davis, Mark and Susanne McLaughlin.

2nd Joyce Hampton (Blythwood), Lucas Lebioda (Columbia), Jerry Helms (Charlotte) and Bill Wisdom (Salisbury)

3. Larry and Ellen Allen (Summerville), Joyce Nichols and Tom Rutledge (Charleston)

1st B : Gwen Beckman, Lillian Hopkins (Col.) Marjorie Edens (Lexington), Alice Moore (Hopkins).

Top Master Point Winners:

1. Mark and Susanne McLaughlin (16.33)
3. Alice Moore (10.53)
4. Charles Davis and Rich Guarneri (10.50)

299 Leaders

1. William Chartwood , Columbia (4.35)
2. Phillip Maxson, Batesburg (4.20)
3. Janice Ripley, Lexington (2.67).

SC Players Lead in Savannah

Larry and Ellen Allen of Summerville score 28.63 masterpoints to top the lists in the March sectional in Savannah. **Martin Johnson and James Blackwell** were 5/6 with 20.99 points. **Jim Hawkes and Anne Rahtjen** were 9/10 with 12 points.

The Allens with their Florida teammates Bill and Barbara McCallon of St. Augustine won the Swiss, while Rahtjen, Hawkes, Johnson and Blackwell were second.

Remember: unit160bridge.org

The url in the headline is our Unit 160's new web site. Opened in December, it has the current PP and will archive PP and other data.

It can hold your club's records. Have your club manager contact the webmaster for an upload of appropriate software. Then, to find out how you (and everyone else) did last Tuesday, just log in and click.

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An Old Partnership By Spencer Hurd

I was looking forward to a Top Bracket Regional KO event recently. My partner and I were college friends who hadn't played since 1964. He was still into "Standard American" while I have moved on to "Two-Over-One." A lot of e-mail preceded the Regional.

In the first event we played, we were the 5th and 6th players on a strong Six-Bagger. We came in at the

half in a "Three-Way", a KO match pitting three teams against each other (two six board halves, with two teams advancing). We were down six IMPs and ahead 5 IMPs at halftime when we replaced a first string pair. Needless to say we were nervous. Good teammates are reliable solid experienced and know each other well. None of this applied to us. Here is the first hand of that afternoon, a 22-point slam.

North (Pard)

♠ AJT754

♥ T987

♦ 8

♣ A6

South (Me)

♠ 9

♥ AQ642

♦ A754

♣ K85

Both Vul Small spade lead against South's 6H.

Our auction (opponents silent):

South	North
1H	2NT
3S	4C
4D	4H
4NT	5H
6H	P

I have never seen a Jacoby 2NT bid (game force in hearts) on a nine count with a side six card major. How original. If I show a weak hand, partner is ready to sign off calmly in 4H. My 3S bid showed a singleton or void, and we both bid side aces. He signed off in 4H (usually means heart weakness) having bid his cards pretty fully, but they seemed to me to fit well, and I went on to slam.

The lead was a small spade. It would not have helped to know that at the other table, the result was plus 650 to NS, game with an overtrick.

I won the spade ace, ruffed a spade, led ace and another diamond ruffing in dummy. I led a third spade, and, oops, East pitched a club. (I should have played three rounds of clubs first.) Oh, well, I was able to ruff a second diamond and now turned to clubs. The club ace held and I led a second club from dummy. East followed and I won the king. I led my 3rd club and ruffed with the trump nine. An overruff and a trump return would defeat me even if I guess hearts right. Fortunately East had 4 clubs and had to follow suit as dummy ruffed the third round.

On the 4th spade, East shed a diamond and I trumped with my 3rd small trump. Only three cards left. I had the ♥AQ, ♦7. Dummy had two spades and the heart 10. There are four missing trumps somewhere. I led my

last diamond and West on my left paused – and I knew I was home. He finally played the trump jack, winning but had to lead into my AQ at the end. East on my right had started with ♠xx, ♥Kx, ♦KJxxx, ♣Jxxx.

This was a nice gain, and we won this match by about 5 imps and lost the other by about 10. I still don't know whether we caught one team from behind or kept our relative spots. But we made it into the next round since one team won both matches.

Round Two is called the Money Round. This is because the winner makes it to the round of four teams and gets a considerable number of master points. This time we played at the start. We were down a little at the half (we had a great round) but our biggest gain was on a missed slam – by our opponents

LHO	RHO
1C	1D
1H	1S
2NT	3NT.

Making 490.

Our teammates started with

West	East
1C	1D
2NT	...

And got to 6NT.

The difference is critical. Our expert opponents had a lapse due to tiredness. Even on a six-bagger, one gets tired at the end of the week. The first auction should show a strong NT strength hand which is for some reason not suitable for opening 1NT (usually because of shortness somewhere). Our teammates had a shaky round, but the slam made up for most of it.

At the half and were down about 5 imps. The line ups changed at both tables. We next played 12 hands against two of my favorite opponents, Larry and Ellen Allen of Summerville. They are relentless in the pursuit of every trick, defended with borrowed spots, and are willing to double if you stray to indecent levels. My partner had said he wanted to play some “good bridge” for a change. This was our chance. We defended 11 of the 12 hands. Our one contract was an easy normal game making. We defended well, in fact, and won a small number of imps. They had a gain on a hand where Ellen made 170 but our pair bid to a poor game and didn't find the play Ellen made, losing another 6 imps instead of gaining 9. The biggest gain was an unsound slam our teammates bid which luckily made. We eked out small win and made it to the money round. Alas, our luck ran out, no marginal slams to pull us through. We played the dreaded Poles (a very pleasant professional team consisting mostly of Poland's national champs), and had a great set of 12 hands, but were down 5 at the half. We were pulled but the first string lost by 20 (a 20% slam swing again – this one they bid and made – had it gone down, we would have won)

But and old partnership was resurrected.

		North (Pard)	
		♠ AJT754	
		♥ T987	
		♦ 8	
		♣ A6	
West	♠ KQ32	East	
	♥ J3	♠ 86	
	♦ Q96	♥ K5	
	♣ QT92	♦ KJT32	
		♣ J743	
		South (Me)	
		♠ 9	
		♥ AQ642	
		♦ A754	
		♣ K85	
Both Vul		The full hand for our slam.	

Another Last Round Story By Spencer Hurd

The last round in a Regional Sunday Swiss often sees a lot of dramatic action when the top teams play each other. Mark and Susanne McLaughlin, Jim Hawkes and myself (all of Charleston), were undefeated going onto the 7th and final round at a recent regional. At our table was a national expert (West) and his client (East). The first hand was one of seven tremendous struggles. I caught a psyche.

		North (Pard)	
		♠ T5	
		♥ KQ65	
		♦ K8	
		♣ AJT76	
West	♠ Q4	East	
	♥ J	♠ AKJ76	
	♦ JT97643	♥ 974	
	♣ 852	♦ Q2	
		♣ Q94	
		South (Me)	
		♠ 9432	
		♥ AT832	
		♦ A5	
		♣ K3	
NS Vulnerable, West Dealer			

Our auction:

West	North	East	South (me)
1NT	Dbl	2H	P
2S	P	3NT	Dbl
4D	P	4S	Dbl
P	P	P	

The 1NT was apparently 15-17, and Pard's double showed an overcall in some suit and 13+ high card points. East transferred and I expected to bid 2NT later ("Please bid your suit, Partner.")

But I was surprised when East went to game. Opener had 15+ points, partner had 13+ points, I had 11 points (39 points so far) and RHO had enough to get to 3NT. You don't have to be a mathematician (and I am one) to figure this one out. I doubled 3NT and West ran to his real suit.

You don't see this kind of psyche as much as you used to. We have all gotten rather staid and are not up to the psychological battle anymore. Having psyched once, we will now worry about all West's bids. It made me nostalgic for my college days.

Anyway, West should have passed 2H. It is undoubled and he can run to 3D if doubled. Probably we will get to 4H, but who knows...

And the client, East, still didn't get it (but 4D revealed the psyche to us). East ran to 4S and West wisely quit bidding.

Partner led a high heart and continued them. I was dismayed at trick two to see West ruff this trick. Fortunately there was nothing better to do for West than to lead a high diamond. Partner hopped with his king and cashed a club and led another club. I won, cashed a diamond, and returned a trump. West won his queen, but was awkwardly placed. He needed to get to dummy and pull trumps. He led a medium diamond and partner, bless him, ruffed with his now blank ten of spades. (Otherwise he pitches a loser in dummy and I ruff the loser with a natural trick.) Declarer overruffed in dummy but my spade 9 was promoted by the uppercut. We had him down 800 and 5imps. The winning margin was 4imps (the extra undertrick we got via Jim's uppercut). Some victories are sweeter than others.

Falling In Love At The Table By Spencer Hurd

Sometimes a player falls in love at the table ... with his or her hand. Here is a case in point related to me by Charleston Ace..

In a KO match his opponents were NS and he was East. His partner was Eddie the Duke. Here was the auction (all four players were vulnerable).

Ace	Eddie
-----	-------

North	East	South	West
Pass	Pass	1C	Pass
1NT	Dbl	Pass	2S
Dbl	Pass	3C	Pass
3NT	all pass		

"What did North double on," I asked.

"As Eddie says, *Hands are for wimps, just give me the auction!*" Ace told me. I never did get all the hands.

"The auction tells it all," said Ace. "East opened in 3rd seat with 1C, and North, as we see later, fell in love with his 10 points. His 1NT should be 9-10 points (else bid a 4-card suit or raise clubs). I doubled to show the majors, a risky bid, but since South didn't redouble, I knew I was okay. (Later Eddie told me Ace was 5-5 in the majors with a stiff ace of clubs.) North never noticed his partner didn't redouble (which might show a sound 14 points or more with some stuff in the majors and an interest in doubling). Eddie bid 2S and that was going to be okay by me."

I wondered if North had passed a chunky 4-card holding in spades.

"No way," Ace assured me. "No vulnerable player in flight A would bid that way. How could he explain to his teammates that he missed the easy 4S contract that might have been there (1NT would be passed by South on many hands that would raise spades). No, he only had AT of spades."

I wondered at the advisability of doubling a part score atimps on a 2-card holding. "Exactly right, Old Timer," Ace said. (Ace is older than me but younger in spirit.)

In Flight A, most partnerships guarantee a trump stack (defined as 4 cards here) for a double of a part score at IMPs. Anything else is very rare. Note that North was willing to pay off at 6 to 1 if 2S doubled made a game, minus 670 if wrong against just minus 110, and plus 200 if right instead of plus 100.

North's partner expressed the view that a double was unrealistic. He bid 3C. It became reasonable to play South for a 6-card club suit (else South could run to 2NT, say), but Ace estimated at the time that South had 11-12 points. North wasn't calm enough to estimate anything at that point. His "top" had been taken away (he had forgotten that there are no tops at IMP play).

North bid his same ten points a third time when he called 3NT. In the end, dummy had a spade trick, and North got 5 club tricks and two spades. He might have set up a diamond but there was no time. His -200 didn't look too good compared to his teammates -110 against 3C. A loss of 7imps instead of a quiet push in 3C.

Matchpoints is really a different game.

Another Richard Brown Hand

Here is another hand from SC Hall of Fame member Richard Brown of Easley, SC. This one from the recent Charlotte Sectional. It is a story of quiet careful thought when once again, fate (or partner) has placed him in an apparently hopeless position. We do not have an audio recording of Richard's usual droll presentation, but Richard's partner introduces the situation and the editor concludes with the rest of the play.

		North (Pard)	
		♠ T84	
		♥ 865	
		♦ T932	
		♣ K43	
West		East	
♠K65		♠Q9	
♥AK43		♥QJ972	
♦74		♦KJ65	
♣8765		♣J2	
		South (Richard)	
		♠ AJ732	
		♥ T	
		♦ AQ8	
		♣ AQT9	
Swiss Teams, NS Vul, South dealer			

Comments by partner A.Nonymust of S'burg.:

"Richard opened 1S, pass to me (north). For some reason I was born hating to pass. I like interfering with the opponents... making my bidding here defensive in nature. Assuming partner has 11-13 hcp, the opponents may very well have a game. Anyway I bid 1NT and after that I couldn't keep partner from bidding game....

Jerry Helms was in my seat at the other table and said "I never considered bidding 1NT with my hand".

[Editor: I don't have to ASK JERRY about this opinion, but in defense of the extreme, many strong pairs, when playing IMPs, do not pass partner's opening 1-level bids of 1♥ or 1♠ holding an ace or a king and 3-card or better support (unless the opponent intervenes). They respond and get out when they can. There are good reasons for their attitude. Similarly, holding, say ♠T8743 ♥87 ♦K62 ♣97, they would respond 1S to an opening of 1D or 1C.]

1S - 1NT (forcing)

2D - 2S [still ok for me]

3H – 3S [please quit bidding partner]

4S – P [uncomfortably waiting to show Dan Fowler and Bill Wisdom.. as well as Richard... my wonderful hand]"

The play is reconstructed by the editor: a heart lead and continuation ruffed. The jack of spades is led from hand! This goes to East who leads another heart, ruffed by the ace. Declarer leads a low trump and West rises with the king (Richard notices the nine dropping – his ten in dummy and 7 in hand are both high.)

Now West has an awful dilemma: which minor suit to lead. Also, Richard knows West had the AK of hearts and K of spades. Surely East has the missing diamonds (else West would have bid over 1S). And if West has the ♦K, there is nothing to be done anyway. Saving worry, West leads the ♦7. [Otherwise, Richard has two entries to dummy in order to finesse in diamonds.] Richard wins the king with his ace. Still a worry about that diamond jack, but leading a diamond 7 from J7 or J7x is odd. Richard pulled the last trump with dummy's ten and led another diamond. When the eight held, Richard's hand was high.

This hand brought victory in the match and in the event.

Board 28 of the Last Quarter of the 2006 Spingold Finals

– by Bill Barkley

On Sunday night, July 23, I enjoyed watching the last 24 hands of the Spingold finals [at the Chicago ACBL Nationals] using the Vugraph capability of BridgeBase. The hand below was interesting to me, and I invite you to consider what you would have played if you had been at the table.

The Auction

North	East	South	West
1D	P	1S	P
2C	P	2H	P
2NT	P	3NT	all pass

North was Eric Rodwell and South was Jeff Meckstroth.

It has been a gritty match with neither team able to take a commanding lead. You entered the 4th quarter of 16 boards with an 8 IMP lead, but based on the preceding results, the match is probably still undecided. There are five boards remaining. On this hand you have heard the auction above. All four suits have been bid and N-S have climbed slowly to 3NT. They are vulnerable. Your Pard leads the 5 of Hearts; Declarer covers

with the 6 and it is your play. You don't know it, but when the last board is completed and you compare scores, you will find that your play to trick one will either win or lose the match. WHAT DO YOU PLAY? You hold:

♠932 ♥K92 ♦T43 ♣J86.

Dummy on your right has:

♠KQ874 ♥AJ64 ♦72 ♣A2.

No pressure at all! You take a very long time to consider Pard's and Declarer's likely distributions and honor cards -- and, then, finally make your play. No peeking.

North (Rodwell)

♠ 10

♥ 87

♦ AKJ96

♣ QT95

West - Versace

♠ A932

♥ K92

♦ T43

♣ J86

East - Lauria

♠ J65

♥ QT5

♦ Q85

♣ K743

South - Meckstroth

♠ KQ874

♥ AJ64

♦ 72

♣ A2

After Lauria's lead of the 5 of Hearts Versace thought forever. There were more than 8,000 people on-line kibitzing the play and there were many comments. Those comments dealt with the fact that the Italian pair playing at the other table will open a hand with a distribution of 2-2-5-4 (2245) and 10-13 points with a bid of 2 Diamonds. Would Rodwell have tried to match that bid with a sub-par opener and only have 4 Diamonds? Rodwell did not jump to 3NT over 2 Hearts. How weak was he? How many hearts did Lauria have -- 3 or 4 or, even, 5? Nonetheless, I don't recall that a single kibitzer predicted that Lauria would play the King of Hearts instead of the 9. But he did! Perhaps consistent with that play, he then shifted to a small diamond. Rodwell put in the 9 of Diamonds which forced the Queen. Lauria, probably in desperation, shifted to the Jack of Spades, covered, and ducked. With the Heart Jack finesse working and the defensive hearts 3-3, Rodwell had nine tricks and he took them.

The Kibitzers noted that the lead of Ten of Hearts would have made West's play at trick one automatic. **Would you have made that lead? Would you have even considered it?**

Strangely enough, just a few hands earlier Rodwell, on defense against a 5 Diamond contract, in an almost identical situation, played the King instead of the 9 (or T?). He had the KTX of Diamonds behind the AQ and his partner held the JX, so the contract was set. He was the luckier of the two defenders.

At the other the table North had indeed opened 2 Diamonds. South ended up in 3NT. West (I think Soloway) led the 2 of Hearts and the defenders could not go wrong.

South won the Ace of Hearts and, at trick two the played a small club to the Ten. That generated three club tricks, but when the Queen of Diamonds was wrong, the defenders set the contract.

The vulnerable game swing gave the Meckwell/Hamway pairs a 19 IMP lead going into the last board. A vulnerable slam swing to the Italians was not enough to overcome the swing created on the hand described above.

There were many potential slam hands in this quarter. Both teams bid 6 Hearts down two. Both teams got to 6 Clubs. And Lauria-Versace got to 6 Spades on the last hand. With a single change in results on many hands there would have been a different winner in this match. It seems that is the case whenever these pairs play against one another. One of the Kibitzers noted how many important matches Lauria has lost -- and by such small margins.

I really didn't understand the play of the King. It seemed to me that the only time it is going to win is when North had a singleton heart: a distribution, perhaps, of 2-1-5-5. Holding four spades, it would seem that the actual singleton spade is much more likely. And in that case a shift to a diamond is not particularly attractive.

But the East-West pair are the defending Bermuda Bowl Champions, were playing in the Spingold Finals, and I was sitting home kibitzing. Two things that I am sure of: (1) Versace thought long enough to consider things that wouldn't even enter my mind and (2) he is well aware of the opening lead tendencies of Lauria.

Betty and Bettye Tops In the District 7 STAC

Betty Burt of North Myrtle Beach and **Bettye Mitchell** of Charleston were the highest scoring South Carolinians in the June 12-18 STAC sponsored by District 7. Betty had 19.01 silver points to her credit and Bettye scored 18.89 points. Just another fraction behind was **Jane Gerstenberger** of Aiken with 18.41 points.

We will point out that Bettye was the highest scoring 299-er in the entire district!

Schatz and Hurd Are New Diamond LMs

Congratulations to Marvin Schatz of Hilton Head and to Spencer Hurd of Charleston. Both went over 5000 points recently and have become Diamond Life Masters.

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