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THE BRIDGE BULLETIN

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FROM THE CHAIR

It is very hard to think of anything new to write as we have not been able to see our members live for so many months. It is now Lockdown Level 1 and there are fewer restrictions but in my mind extreme care and caution still need to be taken. Who knows if the statistics we hear are correct but a huge number of infections are reported daily and our death total from COVID-19 is in excess of 17 000. Our recovery rate is high which is most encouraging. Unfortunately we have lost some GBU members this year but I don't believe COVID-19 was the reason and I know personally of members who have had the Virus and recovered. It seems social distancing and the wearing of masks when out are two important aspects of controlling this whole pandemic.



As regards bridge, BBO remains an excellent option. If you have not discovered it yet, investigate right away. I have a squash friend who reckons he could join a social game now (having never learned to play bridge) and be reasonable just from following all the bridge stuff on BBO. I have friends who resisted it for many months but who have recently taken to it. Remember you need not be competitive but can just play socially in a four or Teams. Teams is definitely enjoying a revival online. It can be played at your own level and any number of boards played to suit the time available. I have made bridge friends in other countries and if you have no-one to play with, just pick up a partner or engage a robot!

I have taken the opportunity to look in bridge books myself and learn some new conventions. I play some live social bridge, in a foursome with a few friends. We are lucky indeed that we can at least pursue our passion while in the throes of this pandemic.

I know I speak for many GBU members, who live alone as I do, when I say BBO has been a lifesaver for so many of us! Something to do which keeps our minds active!

Keep safe everyone.

Yours in bridge,

Deirdre Ingersent



Deirdre Ingersent

FROM THE EDITOR

Online bridge, with thanks to BBO and our local facilitators, has been the mental and spiritual saviour of so many of us. I have been very impressed at the way in which "ordinary" bridge players have done extraordinary things, starting their own online "clubs" on BBO, mainly playing teams, and all organised so professionally.

One of the beauties of the online platform is that it allows one to partner a friend or relative in another city or even another country in a way that "live" bridge just could not do.

But there are limitations, even on BBO. For example, I don't know if you have heard that the robots all got together and signed a petition stating that they would no longer partner certain South African players on the following grounds:

- they play too slowly and bot circuits are designed to react quickly; so slow play causes the bots intolerable stress leading to temporary break-downs and eventually to permanent malfunction;
- they bid and play so badly and bot circuits are designed according to logic and the rules, and too much deviation from these also causes the bots the type of stress that leads to further break-downs and eventually to total system collapse.



Yes, this is I!

So, if you want to play with a robot and your request is refused, you will know why!

I have also noticed that playing online allows one to vent frustrations in a way that you just could not do when playing at a table with live partners and opponents. After effing and blinding because she did not return a spade, only a mild "Needed a spade" appears on the chat line. And maybe that's for the best!

Keep well and keep playing bridge!

Stephen Rosenberg



LEADING FROM A DOG

by Richard Pavlicek

Outside of a dog, bridge is a man's best friend.

Inside of a dog, it's too dark to play bridge.

As West, you are on lead against 3 NT. Your hand may be a dog, but only a doggone fool would come unleashed. Choosing the best lead could win some tasty biscuits, I mean *IMPs*!

Your dog of a hand: ♠ 8 6...♥ J 9 3 2...♦ Q 5 4 3...♣ A T 2!

And the bidding:



West	North	East	South
P	P	P	2NT
P	3NT	P	P
P			

So what do you lead?

Have a go at it, and then compare your response to Richard's Results on page 6.



THE BRIDGE LOUNGE

by Jeff Sapire

MISSING GAME!

It's very annoying to play a hand in a part-score when there are easy 10 or 11 tricks available. When this hand arose in a recent event, quite a few pairs missed the (simple?) game.

Dir.: S Vul.: NS	♠ Q ♥ A86 ♦ JT94 ♣ AK974	
♠ A7654 ♥ Q2 ♦ 853 ♣ 532		♠ 83 ♥ K7 ♦ AKQ762 ♣ Q6
	♠ KJT92 ♥ JT9543 ♦ --- ♣ T8	

In 4♥, there's very little to the play of the hand. On a diamond lead, you ruff and then run the ♥J, which loses to the king.

Whether you were planning to finesse trumps again or play for the drop next, the issue resolves itself when the queen appears, so you give up a spade and claim one of the easiest 11 tricks you have come across.

It's reaching this nineteen point game that's the problem, so let's have a closer look at how the auction could go.

North has a clear 1♣ opening, and East has the first decision – double or 1♦? It's quite a good hand, but not good enough to double and then bid, so let's go with the overcall of 1♦. Now comes the big question – what should

South respond? If he decides to bid 1♥ the partnership should get it right now, because North must raise to 2♥ even with only 3 card support (whether or not West raises to 2♦, which he should). It's quite safe to do this with side shortage and is much better than rebidding the 5 card club suit. Over a 2♥ raise, South's enormous shape is enough to go straight to game (6-5 come alive!), hoping for a little bit here and there. So success for the 1♥ bidders - but is it correct?

Though it's normally right to bid a 6 card suit before a 5 card suit, there are other considerations here. After 1♥ what if partner rebids 2♣? You cannot introduce spades now, as that would be a reverse, showing about 12 or so points, and a 5-3 spade could be lost. Furthermore, after a diamond raise by West and a pass by partner, you could be in the same boat.

I have no doubt that 1♣ is the proper response over 1♦, with the intention of bidding hearts next. True, it does distort the shape slightly, but at least you get to showing both majors. The trouble, and I hate to say it, is that 1♣ will almost certainly cause game to be missed. Presuming West raises diamonds, there is now no way that NS are going to get together in hearts.

Bridge can be a cruel game at times, but one has to be objective – sometimes the better action does not get its just reward!

About the Author

Jeff Sapire, a top-class bridge-player in his own right, has represented South Africa. He teaches all levels – beginner, intermediate and advanced. To find out more about his well-structured and informative lessons, contact him on jeffshirl@telkomsa.net, or phone him on 011 486 1495 or 082 551 2526.



THE PAVLICEK PAGE

NO. 5 ~ THE MISSING QUEEN

The diagrammed deal is from a duplicate game at the Fort Lauderdale Bridge Club. Almost all North-South pairs reached the normal four-heart contract, usually after the bidding shown. The problem was how to play the trump suit. It is generally correct to finesse for a queen when you have a combined holding of *eight* cards or fewer in the suit. Sometimes you will have a *two-way* finesse, where you can finesse against either opponent, and there are some useful rules and myths about which way to go. It takes a knowledgeable player to separate the facts from the fiction.



One thing is certain: you can't play correctly looking only at a single suit; you must consider the deal as a whole and choose the play that offers the best chance to make the contract.

Dlr: South
Vul: NS

♠ 7 6 4 3
♥ A 7 5
♦ 9 6 4
♣ K 4 3

♠ K Q 8 2
♥ Q 8 4
♦ J 8 7 5
♣ J 8

N
W E
S

♠ A T 9 5
♥ 6 3
♦ Q T 2
♣ T 9 7 6

♠ J
♥ K J T 9 2
♦ A K 3
♣ A Q 5 2

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
P	2♥	P	1♥
P	P	P	4♥

The opening lead was the spade king, followed by a second spade which South ruffed. One player now led the jack of hearts and let it ride. Success! This allowed West's heart queen to be captured, and the rest was easy. Declarer won five heart tricks, two diamonds and three clubs. At best this could be described as a lucky guess. Declarer's play was like a coin toss; half the time he would win and half the time he would lose.

At another table, South, a slightly stronger player, realized that with a two-way finesse it is better to win the top honour in the *shorter* hand first. Therefore, a trump was led to dummy's ace followed by a finesse against East. Disaster! West won the queen of hearts and simply returned his last trump. The end result was only nine tricks for declarer — down one.

Remember, it is often said that the queen always lies over the jack. So, which way would *you* have finessed in the trump suit? The correct answer is *neither way*. Experienced players at the Club saw the danger of losing a trump finesse; the contract would then depend on a 3-3 club break, which was well against the odds. Instead, all that was required to succeed was a 3-2 trump break, which was a heavy favourite. If the queen of hearts did not fall, declarer could benefit by ruffing with the remaining trump in dummy. Maybe the queen is held by the opponent who tries to look innocent. The correct technique is to cash both top trumps, ending in dummy. When both opponents follow your contract is assured. Ruff a spade; cross to the club king; ruff the last spade, and cash the top clubs. West ruffs the third club, but dummy still has a trump, and the only remaining trick you will lose is a diamond. Well played! No finesses! Note that the proper play would also gain if the missing clubs divided 3-3. In that event, South could *discard a diamond* on the fourth club, then a diamond could be ruffed in dummy for an overtrick.

About the author.

Richard Pavlicek (born 1945) is an American bridge player, teacher, and writer from Ft. Lauderdale who has accumulated more than 6,000 master-points. He is a Grand Life Master of the American Contract Bridge League and World International Master of the World Bridge Federation.



SID'S QUIZ

"A LITTLE BIT OF MAGIC"

Dir.: S Vul.: None	♠ Q9762 ♥ 4 ♦ J74 ♣ Q964		
♠ AT53 ♥ AKT96 ♦ A2 ♣ J2		♠ K84 ♥ QJ72 ♦ QT63 ♣ A8	
	♠ J ♥ 853 ♦ K985 ♣ KT753		
WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			P
1♥	P	3♦ ¹	P
4♥	P	P	P

¹Bergen – 11/12 pts., 4-card support

The lead is the ♠Q, taken by the Ace. Trumps are then drawn in 3. Ten tricks is easy, but this is Master Points! How do you make 11? First, have a go at it yourself. **Then, look at Sid's Solution directly below.**

About the author.

As a player Sid Ismail achieved

Grandmaster status but later made the transition from playing high-level bridge games to officiating them as one of the very few

Tournament Directors with

Grandmaster status anywhere in the world. He is now involved in

many other aspects of the game as a teacher and lecturer, bridge webmaster, Vugraph commentator, and BBO ID-host. If this is not enough, Sid owns a



bridge club in Benoni where he is a player, administrator and the Tournament Director!



SID'S SOLUTION "A LITTLE BIT OF MAGIC"



At trick 5, cash the ♠K; then at trick 6, concede a club. Whoever wins it will be end-played and your eleventh trick will materialize as if by magic!

ABSOLUTELY TRUE STORY

In a beginner's class, there was a lady who, when playing a hand, was afraid to lead any suit that didn't have an ace. Finally, she had to lead from a KJ combination and was petrified. Her teacher explained to her that if she thought the ace was to her left, to play the king and if she thought the ace was to her right, to play the jack. She was still petrified to play either one. The teacher said: "Play whichever one you want, but just tell me what you are hoping for." "O.K., I'll play the king." "And what are you hoping for?" "I'm hoping they'll make a mistake."

BY THE NUMBERS

The fourth in a series of five instructive articles by Mel Colchamiro "THE RULE OF 17"

"Whether or not to try for a game-level contract when Partner has opened the bidding with a weak 2-bid: if the number of high-card points in your hand plus the number of cards you hold in Partner's suit equals 17, or more, bid Game."

In general, conventional wisdom is that since Opener holds 11-14 HCPs, Partner should hold no fewer than 15 HCPs to even consider the possibility that a Game-level contract is possible.

Example: You are South and Partner has opened 2♣. Should you, holding the following, try for game or not?

- 5, KJ5, KQ7532, AQ7. You hold 15 HCPs. You hold 1-card in Partner's suit. 15 HCPs + 1-card in Partner's bid suit = 16. Mel's "Rule of 17" is, here, *not* satisfied so Pass.
- K8, AQ84, A832, QJ6. You hold 16 HCPs. You hold 2-cards in Partner's suit. 16 HCPs + 2-cards in Partner's bid suit = 18. Mel's "Rule of 17" is satisfied, so try for game!
- K, Q98, A9653, AQ32. With 15 HCP and 1 spade = 16, Pass.
- AQ32, KQ98, 63, A32 - With 15 HCP and 4 spades = 19, bid 4♣
- QT96, KQJ9, A63, A4 - With 16 HCP and 4 spades = 20, bid 2NT. After Partner bids 3♥, showing the heart feature, bid 4NT, Roman Keycard Blackwood. If this reveals enough keycards bid 6♣, else 5♣

About the author.

Mel Colchamiro describes himself as a professional teacher, player, writer, author of best-selling "How You Can Play Bridge Like an Expert (without having to be one)" and of ACBL Bulletin column "Claim with Colchamiro."; ACBL Bulletin panellist "It's Your Call."; proud 80% game winner in Nov. 2009 – 42% in afternoon, 38% at night!



RICHARD'S RESULTS

"LEADING FROM A DOG"

This hand was played in the 1999 Spingold Final, Beatty vs Nickell:



3 NT by South	♠ 7 5 4		
	♥ T 8 6		
	♦ T 8		
	♣ K J 8 5 4		
♠ 8 6		♠ K T 9 3	
♥ J 9 3 2		♥ A Q 4	
♦ Q 5 4 3		♦ 7 6 2	
♣ A T 2		♣ 9 6 3	
	♠ A Q J 2		
	♥ K 7 5		
	♦ A K J 9		
West leads	♣ Q 7		

On lead were two great American players. Sitting West, Billy Eisenberg led the ♥2. Down 2, +200. Richard Freeman led the ♦3. Made 3NT, for minus 600! Even looking at all four hands, **what would you have led?**

WAS THE MOTHER SUPERIOR?

By David Bird



The Mother Superior

"You have to tailor your bidding in these events" declared the Mother Superior, taking her seat and addressing the Abbot. "You realize that Hugo? It's always worth bidding any thin game or even slam because you know there'll be some way to make it." The Abbot declined to agree with this assessment. Why risk a complete bottom by bidding some light-weight 6♣ that few would attempt elsewhere? If you did manage to find the exotic intended route to twelve tricks, you would also have scored well for 4♣ +2.



The Abbot

There was little sense in risking complete bottoms, particularly when master points would be awarded at several times the normal club rate. Not that they

were of much interest to a Grandmaster such as himself, of course!

The first round saw the welcome arrival of Brothers Aelred and Michael. "I realize that you don't have a very high regard for my defence" said Brother Aelred, taking his seat "but I've recently been studying the book '20 Golden Rules for Defence in Bridge'". "A worthy tome, I'm sure" replied the Abbot. "I can't say that I've heard of it." "It's by an American expert, Philomena Shaffer" Brother Aelred continued. "According to the back cover, she's one of the top bridge teachers in Detroit." The Abbot nodded politely. Goodness me, had Brother Aelred actually paid good money for such a useless production?

This was the first board they played:

Dir. E		♠ A763		
Vul. Both		♥ A52		
		♦ A92		
		♣ A54		
♠ Q2			♠ 8	
♥ J9864			♥ T3	
♦ KQJ3			♦ 84	
♣ 82			♣ KQJT9764	
		♠ KJT954		
		♥ KQ7		
		♦ T65		
		♣ 3		
West	North	East	South	
Brother Michael	The Abbot	Brother Aelred	Mother Superior	
		3♣	3♣	
P	6♣	P	P	
P				

Brother Michael led the ♣2 against the rapidly bid small slam, and the Abbot laid out three spot cards in spades, followed by two in each of the other three suits. The Mother Superior smiled tolerantly. "No doubt your last four cards will be somewhat more useful Hugo" she said. With the air of a conjuror, the Abbot inserted an Ace into each of his suits! No one showed the slightest indication of being amused and the Mother Superior called for dummy's ♣A. A low trump to the King was followed by a trump to the Ace, Brother Aelred discarding a club. When declarer ruffed a club in her hand, West discarded a diamond. Now, how could she avoid two diamond losers? East had started with nine cards in the black suits. If he followed to three rounds of hearts, he could hold

Dir. E		♠ 76		
Vul. Both		♥ A		
		♦ A92		
		♣ 5		
♠ ---			♠ ---	
♥ J98			♥ ---	
♦ KQJ3			♦ 84	
♣ ---			♣ KQJT9	
		♠ JT9		
		♥ 7		
		♦ T65		
		♣ ---		

only a singleton diamond. She could strip this card and then throw East in with a third round of clubs, forcing a ruff-and-discard. The ♥K and ♥Q were played next, leaving the diagramed seven-card end position.

Next came the ♥7 to the Ace, East discarding a diamond. The ♦A followed from dummy, East following suit and coming down to his top clubs. The ♣5 threw Brother Aelred in; with only clubs left, he was forced to yield a ruff-

Commented [SR1]:



St. Titus Monastery

and-sluff thus giving declarer her small slam! *“Not the best of defences”* she observed. *“If you threw one of your clubs, keeping a small diamond, I go down!”* Brother Aelred looked on uncomprehendingly. *“That can’t be right”* he replied. *“I was reading one of Philomena’s Golden Rules in bed just last night: keep winners and discard losers. She was quite insistent about it.”* *“A very sensible rule”* added Brother Michael. *“I’d like to borrow the book some time, if I may”* *“Yes, I’ve nearly finished it”* said Brother Aelred. *“On the deal we just played, of course all my clubs were winners at the end.”* The Abbot looked apologetically across the table. After such hopeless

wittering, what a poor image the Reverend Mother must have of bridge at St. Titus. He could only hope that it

was memories of his own inspired bidding that she took back with her. A few rounds later, the Abbot faced his usual partner. Brother Xavier realised that the Abbot had little choice but to partner his valued guest. Still, it had not been his idea of fun, having to endure the occasional player, Brother Bernard, two weeks in a row. The players drew the hands shown on the right. Brother Xavier led the **♦T**, the Mother Superior winning with the Ace. When she played the two top trumps, a loser in the suit emerged. She paused to digest the implications of this. No entry to dummy was available. If Clubs were 4-1, she might even go down. A few moments later, the Mother Superior had cashed the **♥A**, the **♦K** and the **♣A**. She then exited with a trump. Brother Bernard won with the Queen and cashed the **♦Q**. He then had to lead the **♥K**. Declarer ruffed in her hand and exited with the **♣6**. If both defenders followed to the second Club, the suit would be 3-2 and the game would be home. As the cards lay, Brother Xavier won with the **♣8** and saw his partner show out. The Reverend Mother displayed her cards. *“The rest are mine”*, she said. *“What happens to your Club loser?”* demanded Brother Bernard. *“My partner is not going to return a Club, now that you’ve shown him how the suit lies.”*

Back at St Hilda’s Convent, the Mother Superior rarely encountered such ignorance of the game. Still, it was hardly this man’s fault if he was bone-headed. *“It’s not easy to see, perhaps,”* she replied. *“But if your partner returns a heart instead, I will ruff in the dummy and discard my **♣J**.”* Brother Bernard looked across the table. *“I much prefer all the deals to be played out,”* he said. *“Are you happy with declarer’s claim, partner?”* *“Of course,”* replied an embarrassed Brother Xavier. *“The Reverend Mother played it well.”* *“It was a close decision, really,”* declared the Mother Superior. *“If the Club Queen was doubleton, I’d be throwing away an overtrick. Xavier would doubtless have led a singleton Club, so a 4-1 club break wasn’t particularly likely.”* The Abbot inspected the score sheet, liking what he saw. *“It’s a good one for us,”* he reported. *“Several declarers went down.”* *“Maybe it’s more difficult on another opening lead,”* muttered Brother Bernard, who was not exactly overjoyed by his new partnership either.

About the Author. David Lyster Bird, (born 29 March 1946), is a British bridge writer with more than 130 bridge books to his name. He was born in London and is bridge correspondent for the *Mail on Sunday* and the *London Evening Standard*. He contributes regularly to many magazines, including *Bridge Plus*, *English Bridge*, *Bridge Magazine* and the *ACBL Bridge Bulletin*. He has been a co-author of books with some of the world’s leading players or writers, including Terence Reese, Ron Klinger, Tony Forrester and Omar Sharif. His series of humorous bridge stories featuring the monks of the St Titus monastery has run continuously in *Bridge Magazine* for 30 years; many of them have subsequently been collected in book form.



Dir. S	♠ 7642		
Vul. Both	♥ Q5		
	♦ 763		
	♣ 7532		
♠ 5		♠ QJ3	
♥ T8432		♥ KJ976	
♦ T98		♦ QJ54	
♣ QT84		♣ 9	
	♠ AKT98		
	♥ A		
	♦ AK2		
	♣ AKJ6		
West	North	East	South
Brother Xavier	The Abbot	Brother Bernard	Mother Superior
P	2♦	P	2♣
P	4♣		

SVEN WRITES

The fourth in a series of articles highlighting modern bidding, play and defence by Sven-Åke Bjerregaard

"DEFENSES AGAINST A WEAK 2 OPENING"

You should just treat a weak 2 opening as if the opponent had simply opened on the 1-level:

- Double is for Take-Out, meaning you can accept or support any other suit; alternatively, double if you have 17+ HCP.
- A bid of 2NT should be natural 15-18 HCP, and you would continue as if you had opened 2 NT.
- If you overcall on the 3-level you should have an opening hand and preferably a 6-card suit or a strong 5-card suit; I don't recommend that you bid a weak suit.

Since the bidding starts on the 2-level there is no room for Partner to separate a good hand from a bad hand; he has to bid; therefore a convention called Lebensohl should be used:

- If you double and Partner has a weak hand (or some strong hands), he should bid 2NT, meaning: *Bid 3C, I either want to play in 3♣ or in another suit lower than the opened suit.* If you bid directly on the 3-level it shows invitational values.
For example, (2♠) – D – (P) – 2NT = bid 3♣; I am weak with a suit to play on the 3-level.

When they open 2♠ a special *gadget* is used:

(2♠) – D – (P) – 2NT

(P) – 3♣ – (P) – 3♠ = I have Hearts but no stopper in Spades.

Had your Partner bid 3NT instead of 3♠, he is telling you that he has 4 Hearts and a Spade stopper. If you want to be in game but don't have a Spade stopper you directly bid 2♠ asking for a stopper.

There are also other *gadgets* you can use over a weak 2:

- If you have a 2-suiter, a convention called *Leaping Michaels* is used; if you jump to 4 in a minor you show 5-5 with that minor and the other Major.
- Another convention you could use is a direct cue-bid asking for a stopper; this can also be used as showing 5-5 in minors and a good hand. You can also use it to show 5-5 with the other Major or an unknown minor.

Just agree with your Partner what to use.

Over a Multi-2-Diamond, I would defend like this:

- Double means a balanced 13+ HCP with at least 3-3 in Majors, or any 17+ hand.
- If you are short in a Major, wait until they show it and then Double.
- 2NT = 15-18 HCP balanced, then continue as if you opened 2NT
- A jump overcall in a Major to the 3-level should show a strong hand with a 6-card suit.
- A jump to 4♣ or 4♦ shows 5-5 in the minor and unknown Major; Partner's response of 4 in a Major = Pass or Correct.
- If you double and next bid 2 in a Major, your Partner's Double is a *Responsive Double*, meaning "*Balanced with Values*".
- If Partner passes and you double again its Take-Out and extras! The Lebensohl convention is now used.
- If the bidding goes (2♦)-P-(2 of a Major) then a Double is Take-Out of the suit bid.
- If you overcall 3♣ or 3♦ over the 2♦ opening bid, your Partner's 3 of a Major is *natural* or shows a stopper.

About the author.



Sven-Åke Bjerregaard was born in Sweden some 67 years' ago but has lived in Strand in the Cape Town area since 2011. He has had considerable international success with his regular partner Anders Morath, including a World Cup silver for Seniors. Sven-Åke is married to Gunilla (also a keen bridge-player) and they have two children. Other than bridge, he plays a lot of golf! To improve one's bridge game, he recommends playing a lot against opposition that are better than you are!

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

"THE MICHAELS CUE-BID"

researched and edited by Stephen Rosenberg

The Michaels' cue-bid, a conventional bid first devised by Michael Michaels of Miami Beach, FL, it is an over-caller's cue-bid in opponent's opening suit and is normally used to show a two-suited hand with at least five cards in each suit and eight or more points.

After the opponents have opened at the one-level, the over-caller bids the same suit at the two-level; the two normal cases are:

1. Over an opponent's minor opening, a cue-bid shows both majors. For example, 1♠ – 2♣ shows hearts and spades.
2. Over an opponent's major opening, a cue-bid shows the other major and a minor suit. For example, 1♠ – 2♣ shows hearts and either clubs or diamonds. Partner can make a 2NT relay bid to request partner to bid his minor suit.

Partnerships who have incorporated Michaels cue-bids amongst their agreements usually also play the unusual notrump convention.

Point count requirements vary and are a matter of partnership agreement. It is commonly agreed that a Michaels' cue-bid is constructive and should be made on hands that hold the prospect of winning the auction; hand emphasis is on trick-taking capability suggesting for suits containing most of the HCP and having good texture, particularly at unfavourable vulnerability. With less than eight points, Michaels is not recommended - the chances of winning the auction are small and gives the opponents too much information. Bidders expecting to make, or sacrifice, can use basic Michaels at all point ranges with eight or more. In a common variant, known as Mini-Maxi Michaels, candidate hands are classed into three ranges and Michaels is applied more selectively:

- Weak - 8 to 12 points: use Michaels
- Intermediate - 13 to 15 points: do not use Michaels, bid the higher suit followed by the lower
- Strong - 16 or more points: use Michaels

Initially, partner should assume a weak hand by the Michaels' bidder; with a strong hand, the Michaels' bidder will follow with a second non-forced call. Responses to the Michaels' cue-bid include:

- A preference bid
- A jump preference bid (usually pre-emptive)
- A cue-bid of opener's suit, which is a game or slam try
- A new suit, non-forcing
- 2NT; when the cue-bid is in a major suit, asks partner to name his minor suit
- 3NT is to play
- 4♠ serves the same purpose as 2NT in competitive auctions when 2NT is no longer available. 4NT serves the same purpose as 2NT when 2NT and 4♠ are not available.

The Michaels' bidder would re-bid as follows:

- With 12 or fewer, pass or raise; raise is not invitational, it shows 6/5 or better and is optional and pre-emptive
- With 16 or more, bid a new suit inviting game

In the Netherlands, a particular modification is growing in popularity; over opponent's opening, a cue-bid shows a major and a minor unbid suit. The 2NT overcall is then used to show both majors (after a minor suit opening) and both minors (after a major suit opening). This approach allows all three two suiters in the three unbid suits to be indicated.

Compared to standard Michaels, the disadvantage is that after an opposing minor suit opening, one cannot introduce a two suiter in the majors at the two-level. Also, the cue-bid invariably leaves one of both suits unspecified.

A variant often referred to as *upper cue-bid* is popular in Germany. In this treatment a cue-bid shows the highest unbid suit and another unspecified suit. Together with the unusual notrump convention to indicate the lower of the two unbid suits, this approach allows all two suiters in the three unbid suits to be indicated. Compared to standard Michaels, the disadvantage is that after an opposing minor suit opening, one cannot describe a two suiter in the majors in one bid.

Also, Michaels' cue-bid variants exist that remove any ambiguity on what the second suit is. An example is the *hi-hi cue-bid* that over opponent's opening invariably shows the highest unbid suits. Together with the unusual notrump convention to indicate the lower of the two unbid suits, this *hi-hi* cue-bid allows two out of the three possible two suiters in the unbid suits to be specified in one single bid. A drawback of this method is that the *hi-hi* cue-bid does not cater for two-suiters in the highest and lowest unbid suits.

The opening side may defend against a Michaels' cue-bid or any other conventional two-suited overcall with the Unusual vs. Unusual convention. This defence assigns conventional meanings to a double and to cue-bids of the suits shown by the two-suited overcall.

Lest we forget what Phase 5 lockdown was all about!

DESTINATION HOME: LOCKDOWN DAY 22

by Sarita Mathur, 17th April 2020

Where is the destination, place for recreation,
Sunny skies blue?
Perfect place for me and you.
Time for creation, dreams coming true,
Visualization, realization,
Food, travel, adventure,
Family,
Playing bridge.
Nostalgia, peace, calm and quiet,
Joyful Heart.
Time to roam.
That perfect place is definitely Home.



About the author.

Sarita Mathur is a Durban-based bridge player and established author, having already had books of her poetry published. She writes in the well-established free verse format that dates back to the early Greek poets. The critique on Amazon of her most recent book "Once Again Love – Reconnecting with the Heart" includes the following: "*author Sarita Mathur introduces readers to the joy of a life filled with love through a whimsical mixture of poetry and prose at times heart-breaking.*"

THE GREATEST PLAYER

by Phillip Alder

Who is the best player of all time? Three Italians figure prominently in the voting. Giorgio Belladonna, Pietro Forquet and Benito Garozzo who learned the basics from an Ely Culbertson book. His game improved in Egypt, where he lived from 1948-1950 and 1951-1954.

He was born on 5 September 1927. He won 13 world championship titles with the Italian Blue Team, starting in 1961 when he was added as a last-minute substitute for the Bermuda Bowl team. 1961 was Garozzo's first exposure to a strong-club system, yet they won the Bermuda Bowl! Forquet and Garozzo eventually won 10 world team titles together. After the retirement of the Blue Team, Garozzo formed a wonderful partnership with Belladonna.

Garozzo is renowned for imaginative card-play, and especially when defending, he has produced many beautiful false-cards, as in this deal.



Benito Garozzo

Dlr. S	♠ AT83	
Vul. Both	♥ J7	
	♦ A	
	♣ AKJ742	
♠ K4		♠ 7652
♥ 92		♥ K65
♦ KQT4		♦ 987653
♣ T9863		♣ ---
	♠ QJ9	
	♥ AQT843	
	♦ J2	
	♣ Q5	

West	North	East	South
			1♥
P	3♣	P	3♥
P	3♣	P	4♥
P	4NT	P	5♦
P	5NT	P	6♣
P	6♥	P	P
P			

After winning the lead of the ♦K with dummy's ace, you want to avoid losing a trick in each red suit. It is reasonable to play a heart to the queen at trick two. If the finesse loses, there's a trump in the dummy to ruff a diamond return. And on say, a spade switch, you can presumably draw trumps and take discards on dummy's clubs. Fine, but when South led dummy's hearts seven, East smoothly played the king! As it was a pair event. South thought he could now win a valuable overtrick. So, he played a trump to dummy's jack, then tried to return to hand with a club. Garozzo ruffed and led a diamond to his partner's queen for one down. Incredible!



About the author.

Phillip Alder was a columnist for The New York Times and a syndicated columnist for 22 years with United Feature Syndicate. His bridge column appeared in over 200 papers worldwide. He has also helped to produce the Daily Bulletins at various WBF Championships and is a member of the WBF Youth Committee. Alder is the Associate Editor of The Bridge World magazine.

A ROSE BY ANY OTHER NAME

Two married couples of a certain age who regularly played bridge together were playing one week and took a break between hands. The wives went to the kitchen to get refreshments and the following conversation took place back at the bridge table. George: "You know Harvey, you're doing much better this week as far as remembering what's trumps, who played what and everything" Harvey: "Yea, George, I took one of those memory courses" George: "Really, which one did you take?" Harvey: "Let me think... ahah a red flower ... ah... ah.... It had thorns" George: "A rose?" Harvey: "That's it!" says George, yelling into kitchen! "Hey Rose, what was the name of that memory course I took?"

The New York Times

WHAT'S THE BETTER FIT? 4-4 OR 5-3?

by Phillip Alder, Feb. 20, 2011

The last paragraph of Saturday's column generated a few queries. When is a 4-4 fit better than a 5-3, and vice versa? The best analysis of trump fits was written by Albert H. Morehead, the original bridge columnist for The New York Times, in his excellent 1964 book, "Morehead on Bidding." Morehead gives three times when 4-4 is superior to 5-3:

1. A deal that requires one or more ruffing tricks to fulfil its contract.
 2. A deal that has ample trick-winning power but a possible shortage of controls; then you are usually gaining discards from the long side suit.
 3. When both dummy and declarer have weak side suits that can be stopped only by ruffing.
- Those cover most deals, but the 5-3 should be preferred on these rare occasions:
1. When the two hands have an abundance of winners in the other two suits.
 2. When the 5-3 fit is very strong, the 4-4 fit is weak, and trumps losers are the main or only concern.

For example:

Morehead gives the diagrammed deal as an example of this last point. It was played in a seven-table expert event. Three pairs went down in five spades, losing two spades and one heart, and three went down two in six spades. Strangely, the result for the seventh pair is not given.

One pair's bidding is shown here. This was in the days before Roman Key Card Blackwood, but it is a "rule" of regular Blackwood that you should use it only when you are confident that your side has the values for a slam and you are just checking that the opponents do not have two aces. You must be willing to bid six even if an ace is missing. If you are not, either settle for game or make a control-bid (cue-bid) suggesting a slam to partner. (If North-South had been using Roman Key Card Blackwood, South would have also learned that the spade queen was missing.)

Morehead goes on to point out that after using Blackwood, South should have continued with six clubs, offering a choice of slams, which North would have been happy to pass. Note that six clubs is laydown, declarer taking two spades,

Dir. S		♠ K852	
Vul. None		♥ KQJ7	
		♦ A5	
		♣ JT7	
♠ QT94			♠ J
♥ T652			♥ A943
♦ J86			♦ Q9742
♣ 83			♣ 642
		♠ A763	
		♥ 8	
		♦ KT3	
		♣ AKQ95	
West	North	East	South
P	1♥	P	1♠
P	4♣	P	4NT
P	5♦	P	5♠
P	P	P	

Lead: 6♦

two hearts, two diamonds, five clubs and one diamond ruff in the dummy. As Morehead concludes, six spades is no play whatever the layout, but six clubs will usually survive even a 5-0 trump split.

About the author.
See page 12.



Phillip Alder



About the Author.

Charles M. Schulz (1922-2000), American, was a very keen bridge player and as the creator of "Peanuts" and its many off shoots, was the most influential cartoonist of his era.



S A W B A "THE CORONA EDITION 2020"



Val Bloom

As we have now been officially notified by the SABF that Clubs will not be opening this year, we are indeed fortunate to be able to continue enjoy playing on BBO. This is especially relevant to those who are playing in SAWBA "The Corona Edition 2020". Thanks to the wonderful efforts of Bev Hewitt, Trish Crosse, Jenny Gautschi, Peta Balderston, Lotte Sorensen and of course our hardworking, magnificent Rob Stephens, this event will take place online from 8 – 16 October. To all the participants, good luck and enjoy! About 80 pairs from all round South Africa, plus a few international entrants have registered. The Pairs' qualifiers will be played on Saturday 10th October and the finals on the Sunday. The next week, 12th-16th October is devoted to the Teams' event. If you are not playing, or as a man who is interested in bridge, you can follow the play as a *kibitzer* on BBO. Incidentally, we believe that no robots are permitted in this tournament as their testosterone levels are higher even than those of Caster Semenya, and they refuse to take the necessary

female hormones to bring them into line with the international norms. Oh well; once a bot, always a bot!

Val Bloom and Stephen Rosenberg

SIX OR SEVEN?

by Thomas Andrews

(Thomas Andrews is a good American club player and an informed and enthusiastic writer on our game; he writes mainly for Beginner to Intermediate players. Ed)

Dir. N Vul. NS	♠ AK32 ♥ T ♦ Q63 ♣ JT54		
♠ QJ9754 ♥ 94 ♦ JT ♣ AQ2		♠ 8 ♥ K876532 ♦ 8 ♣ 9863	
	♠ T ♥ AQJ ♦ AK97542 ♣ K7		
West	North	East	South
	P	3♥	X
P	4♠	P	5♦
P	6♦	P	P
P			

West leads a heart to East's king and your ace. You have gotten to a satisfying slam. You have 12 top tricks, can you find a way to take the 13th?

At first, you might think to try to ruff good the spades. Play ♣A, ruff a spade, ruff a heart, ruff a spade, then take the ♦A-Q. If spades are splitting 4-3 and diamonds 2-1, you make an overtrick.

There is a slight risk in this line. If spades are 4-3 and diamonds a 3-0 with the long diamond in the hand with the three-card spade suit, you may never be able to cash your second top spade without someone ruffing. This is only a slight risk, because East would have to be void in clubs to hold three spades and three diamonds. Wouldn't West lead the ♣A if he had seven of them, looking for partner's ruff? West might be holding three spades and three diamonds, but that would have East opening with three spades also.

But why take the risk? There is a squeeze option on this hand. Indeed, as the cards lie, it is the only way to make the overtrick. If West has five or more spades and the ♣A, as he has here, you can squeeze him on

the run of the red suit winners.

I did not see the squeeze on this hand, even though I was kibitzing double dummy. Someone had to point it out to me. This was a pattern recognition problem. If South had held a doubleton spade and the stiff ♣K, I certainly would have seen it, but for some reason I did not see the king as a threat card in the K-7 holding.

East makes things only slightly more difficult for you if he ducks the heart. Then you have to ruff a heart before you draw trumps. This can be done at no risk, however.

OUT OF HAND

by Bill Buttle

About the author.

Bill Buttle (1941-2020) was a Canadian-born American dentist, bridge-player and cartoonist who delighted in lampooning the game and its players. His collection of cartoons "Out of Hand" has appeared in many bridge publications and have been collected into a book.



"First time I've treated a bidding accident!"

THE GREAT LADIES

3. SABINE AUKEN

researched and edited by Stephen Rosenberg



Sabine Auken is renowned as a great bridge champion, ambassador of the game, and author of the popular book *"I Love This Game"*. Sabine is not your typical bridge personality. She grew up in Germany and obtained a degree in Finance and Business Administration. After graduating, she packed her diploma, her passport, and the determination to soon own a credit card and boarded the first available flight to the United States to start trading stock options on the Chicago Board Options Exchange.

After 4½ years of life in the fast lane, personal reasons called her to Denmark. She was lucky to survive a bank job interview conducted completely in Danish, having lived in the country for only 3 months (apparently, the language of banking is universal!). After a few years marketing interest rate derivatives, she then obtained a fundraising position at a charity organization and then a marketing position at Denmark's first ethical investment fund. Now, she is retired from the business world but not from work, spending much of her non-bridge time skiing, running (45 min/day), and swimming.

Although she has many accomplishments to her name, her most cherished ones are her sons Jens Christian (25) and Maximilian (21), who aspire to become great basketball players. In the evenings she likes inviting friends over for dinner and cooking a good meal, so her sons can grow faster (there never seem to be any leftovers, no matter how many pounds of beef hit the table!) Last week, both of her sons took home national titles in their respective divisions, making Mom immensely proud.

Among her bridge triumphs Sabine counts two Venice Cup titles (partnering Daniela von Arnim) and one World Mixed Team title (partnering Zia Mahmood). But nothing can trump her recent Vanderbilt victory. Having come from a strong club canapé system partnering Daniela, she now uses a 1♣-covers-all-balanced-hands-outside-the-NT-range approach partnering Roy Welland and is slowly getting used to the fact that 5-4-3-1 doesn't always have to be unbalanced!



JUST ONE WISH!

A bridge duffer was polishing a lamp and... Pooff! Out popped a genie who said, "I will grant you just one wish." The duffer unfolded a map of the Middle East and said, "Let all of these countries live in peace and harmony. You've got to be kidding! I'm only a genie." The duffer thought for a while and then suggested, "OK, then make me a winning bridge player" "Hmmm" the genie pondered, "Let me see that map again!"

