

# WESTERN CAPE BRIDGE UNION NEWSLETTER



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## Message from the Editor

Dear Bridge Players

We have had a lovely, balmy autumn in Cape Town with winter slowly creeping in. It has not been a wet May and let's hope that the winter rains will shortly arrive in good measure so that we do not face a similar drought-stricken summer that we witnessed in 2017 / 2018. And, of course, what better way to spend a cold winter than around the bridge table!

In this issue of the WCBU newsletter, Tim Cope presents us with the first of a series on *Pre-emptive Bids* and this topic will be explored in depth over a number of newsletters; while Diniar Minwalla continues his series on *Defence*, focusing on the importance of signaling. Kathryn Herz and Eckhard Böhlke give valuable guidelines on *Duplicate Pairs Strategy* and this topic, too, will be fleshed out over numerous instalments. Sven-Åke Bjerregaard has a slightly different perspective on major suit raises and the *Jacoby 2NT* (called Svencoby), which may be of interest to a number of bridge players.

There is also an interesting article about a 98 year old in Cape Town who continues to play duplicate bridge on a regular basis; and another on a disastrous session with Mrs Bennett. There are, of course, other articles and items of news, including the African Zonals in Morocco in June where five members of the Open Team are from Cape Town. We wish the teams all the best!

Our sincere thanks to our contributors for their edifying articles and to Warwick Wealth for their support of bridge in Cape Town.

Happy reading!

*Shirley Kaminer*

## **President's Message**

Dear fellow Bridge Players,

In this increasingly distracting digital world, fewer people are playing bridge and the game itself is threatened with extinction unless we can recruit a new generation of players.

“I’ve heard it all before and why should I care?”

If these thoughts crossed your mind, then please give this Newsletter to somebody else – it’s not intended for you.

On the other hand, if you are feeling even the teeniest bit offended by the suggestion that you might not care, that is fantastic news; music to our ears; mission accomplished, or at least in part. It means we have found you; we have struck a chord; we are talking; and together, we might just be able to make a difference.

As a result of Shirley Kaminer’s hard work, this Newsletter now reaches about 1,000 bridge-players at over 40 clubs throughout the Western Cape. In addition, under the capable, watchful eye of Kitty Cruise, we are now teaching bridge weekly to about 100 pupils at twelve schools in the greater Cape Town area. But there’s a lot more we would like to do and, with your help, maybe we can achieve it.

Money is always tight, but we – the Western Cape Bridge Union (its members and committee) – have the know-how, expertise, passion and commitment to work with you. We may even be able to assist you to obtain government funding for suitable, worthy initiatives.

So, if you are thinking of starting a bridge club, teaching after-hours at schools, or simply offering lessons to friends and family members, share your thoughts, tell us what you need and we will do our best to support you.

In the words of English Bridge Player David Burn – “If you keep bridge alive, it will do the same for you”.

In closing, please join me in wishing our South African teams all the best in the bi-annual Africa Zonal Championships which take place from 7-14 June in Morocco. It will be a fantastic experience for one and all and we look forward to hearing all about it on your return.

See you at the tables.

Best wishes,

*Steve Bunker*

## The World of Pre-empts – Part 1

*by Tim Cope*

*Note from Editor: Tim has compiled a very comprehensive article on Pre-empts. In order to do it justice – in other words, allowing readers to absorb the content in smaller segments – this aspect of bidding will be developed over a number of issues. This June newsletter contains Part 1 of the series.*

When we pre-empt, we are basically going to war with our opposition. We are saying we have a long suit, generally fairly weak in high card points, and we are trying to cramp the space available to the opposition so that if the hand belongs to them, we have left them little room to have a constructive or informative auction. The less room to maneuver that they have, the more likely they might make a mistake or misjudge the hand.

By pre-empting we are potentially making life difficult for two opponents who, whilst they sit at your table, are the enemy - after the game you can be friends again. But not for now! True, you sometimes make life difficult for your partner but, let us be honest, there are two opponents you can upset and only one partner, so the odds are in your favour.

In this series of articles, we shall look at what a **standard** system of pre-empts might look like – as a partnership you might agree to vary some of these methods and introduce some more curve-balls. And once we have completed that exercise, we shall also look at the best and simplest methods of defence against pre-empts.

### Four-level pre-empts

Let us start at the top and work our way downwards.

Opening 4 of a major is super-aggressive and will mean that the opponents will have to consider starting their auction at the 5 level. But we also need to keep partner in the loop as best as possible, as sometimes we may have a fair hand for opening 4H or 4S and sometimes we will want it to be purely a destructive weapon. For this reason, we allow ourselves two ways of opening 4 of a major:

- a) A 4H or 4S opening is purely destructive. It follows the rule of 2 and 3, by which we are saying that if we are vulnerable and partner gives us virtually nothing, we might expect to go two down when vulnerable, whilst if we are non-vulnerable, we might expect to go three down opposite a valueless partner. Normally it would show an 8-card suit (as opposed to a three level pre-empt which would be a 7-card suit), but we are allowed to use our judgment and upgrade certain hands with subsidiary distribution into a four level pre-empt. The one thing that such a bid should guarantee is no outside defensive values, otherwise it would be tough for partner to assess whether to sacrifice or not if the opposition interfere.

So, I would be happy to open both these hands with a 4S opening:

S KJ10xxxxx	or	S KQJ10xxx
H x		H x
D xx		D J109x
C xx		C x

The first has the standard 8 card suit and no defence, the second has only a 7 card suit slightly superior in quality but with a side 4 card suit that gives us a lower loser count – it therefore makes this high-level pre-emptive action worthwhile.

It will be unlikely that partner will want to advance the auction (except perhaps as a sacrifice) opposite such an opening, but if they have a very good hand, they should have two methods available to them:

- 1) They can use Keycard Blackwood
- 2) They can make what I describe as a 1-under cue-bid if they are looking for a control in a specific suit by cue-bidding one under the suit in which they are looking for a control

An example of this second type might be:

S Ax  
H Qxxxx  
D AKQ  
C AKx

If I had this hand and my partner opened 4S, I would bid 5D (one below the heart suit) asking partner for a heart control (basically a shortage, as the opening bid in general denies outside high cards). If they then had a singleton heart, they can bid 6S and on the rare occasion they have a void they can bid 5H to show first round control. Without a control they would sign off in 5S.

#### b) NAMYATS

Sometimes with a long suit and a stronger hand it pays to advance the level of the auction immediately to the four level – again this is destructive to the opponents. Here we use a convention called NAMYATS (Stayman spelled backwards) and also known as South African Texas which was developed by Max Sapire, one of the doyennes of local bridge from yesteryear.

Here a 4C opening is a transfer to 4H, and a 4D opening is a transfer to 4S. The hand type that it shows is either:

- 1) A completely solid suit, usually of 8 cards with no outside values (again can occasionally be 7 with some outside distribution); or
- 2) A suit that will be a maximum of one loser with an outside Ace

So, both of these hands would qualify for a 4C opening bid:

S x	or	S x
H AKQJxxxx		H AQJ10xxxx
D xx		D AX
C xx		C xx

Normally partner will just accept the transfer, but on the odd occasion they may have slam interest. In these rare cases, they can bid the step response – between the 4C and the normal 4H bid there is a step response of 4D, and between the 4D and normal 4S response there is a step response of 4H.

These step responses ask partner to bid a shortage or a control if held. With no shortage, partner will sign off in 4 of the major. With a shortage or control they will bid their lowest (most economical) control, after which further cue-bidding can take place.

#### Summary:

- a) 4H or 4S as an opening bid is purely pre-emptive
- b) 4C or 4D show a good 4H or 4S opener respectively

#### Quiz 1

What would you open on the following hands?

- a) S KQJ9xxxx H xxx D x C x
- b) S AQJ10xxxx H Ax D x C xx
- c) S AQJ10xxxx H Ax D x C Kx

#### Quiz 2

How would you respond on the following hands?

- a) Partner opens 4S and you hold S Ax H AKQxxx D Ax C xxx
- b) Partner opens 4C and you hold S xxxx H x D AKQx C AKQx
- c) Partner opens 4D and you hold S Kx H AKQJx D Axx C xxx

*After you have completed the quizzes, look at the answers and explanations towards the end of the newsletter.*

## The infamous Mrs Bennett

*There is a well-known story about the infamous Mrs Bennett, with minor variations in some of the details in the re-telling . . .*

In Kansas City, Kansas, in the year 1931, Mr Bennett was playing with his wife as his partner against Mr and Mrs Hoffmann. The couple had had some serious communication problems that day and they were uttering some rude remarks in public about the bidding and playing abilities of each other in derogatory words. Then came the fateful hand when Mr Bennett bid One Spade, the Left Hand Opponent overcalled with Two Diamonds, and Mrs Bennett raised to Four Spades. Mr Bennett did not make the Contract, and Mrs Bennett could not hold her tongue. She became so enraged that she seemed hysterical. Mr Bennett reached across the table, slapped her several times, as witnesses reported. Mrs Bennett went into her mother's bedroom, retrieved the family automatic weapon, returned to the game room, and pointed the weapon at her husband. Mr Bennett raced toward the bathroom and slammed the door behind him. But Mrs Bennett fired shots which went through the wooden door and killed Mr Bennett.

It seems that Mr Bennett could have made the contract of Four Spades after all, according to Mr Ely Culbertson, a bridge expert, who later analysed the cards.

[www.bridgeguys.com](http://www.bridgeguys.com)

*Comment from the Editor:*

*The moral(s) of the story . . .*

- *Take time to plan the play of the hand when dummy comes down in order to avoid disaster!*
- *Be kind to your partner*



And what happened to Mrs Bennett?

Following a sensational trial, with contradictory witness statements about the events prior to the shooting (and also the actual shooting), she was acquitted of murder when the jury decided that her Colt .32 might, as she claimed, have fired accidentally – albeit four times!

## SIGNALS IN DEFENCE

*by Diniar Minwalla*

In the previous issues, we discussed various lines of defence, and several tools that we had at our disposal to assist us in making the right choices. We also saw how counting points, tricks and distribution helped us to arrive at a successful line of defence. In this article, we shall examine the different kinds of defensive **signals** that we can employ to assist us in successfully defending a bridge hand. Every sound partnership must develop and agree on an effective system of signaling during defence. Essentially, defensive signals are a means of talking to your partner during the defence of a bridge hand. They allow the partnership to exchange useful information which guides the partnership to the correct line of defence.

There are 3 kinds of signals that a partnership can employ while defending a bridge hand. These are as follows:

1. An **ATTITUDE** signal which gives an indication to your partner about your holding in the suit, and whether you would welcome a continuation of the suit.
2. A **COUNT** signal, which gives an indication on the number of cards held in the suit, as opposed to the quality of the high cards held.
3. A **SUIT PREFERENCE** signal, which says nothing about the suit in which the signal is given, but instead directs partner's attention to one of 2 other suits

The most important point about developing an effective signaling system is to discuss and agree with your partner as to when to use attitude signals and when to use count signals (suit preference signals apply in much less frequent circumstances). The most common way of using attitude and count signals is to show **attitude** when your **partner** starts to the trick with an honour, and **count** when the trick has been started either by **declarer** or by **dummy**.

We shall examine **attitude signals** in a bit more detail in this issue and look at count signals in the next issue.

When your partner leads a small card and dummy also plays small, you will try and win the trick or play a high card to force a high card from declarer. In this situation, the card you play does not pass any attitude signal. On the other hand, when your partner leads an honour (ace, king or queen), you will have the opportunity to signal encouragement or discouragement. You must firstly agree with your partner as to which card you would use to signal encouragement or discouragement.

The 3 common ways are:

1. Standard signals - signal with a high card to encourage and a low one to discourage.
2. Upside down signals - signal with a low card to encourage or a high one to discourage.
3. Odd/Even signals- signal with an odd card to encourage and an even card to discourage.

If you elect to play the third method, it is important always to follow suit in tempo even when you do not hold the necessary odd or even card.

You may choose any one of the above methods. (You will also use encouraging/discouraging signals when you are discarding for the first time.)

Below are some of the scenarios where you would use encouraging or discouraging signals. Remember that you should use these signals judiciously and not instinctively simply because you hold a good card in the suit that has been led. Good defence is not about how quickly you win tricks, but rather a long-term plan to generate as many tricks as possible from the 13 tricks that are available, or very often simply enough tricks to defeat the contract.

### **Defending against a suit contract**

1. Partner leads an honour - say the king from king queen and dummy plays low. If you fancy a continuation, you can pass an encouraging signal, usually when you have either of the adjacent honours - in this case, the ace or the jack. Similarly, if partner leads the queen (from QJ), you can encourage when you are in possession of either the king or the ten. If your partner leads the ace (from AK), you can encourage either when you are in possession of the queen, or you have a doubleton and want partner to play the suit so that you can ruff the 3<sup>rd</sup> round. (NB: Never encourage a ruff with a doubleton when your partner leads the king, as if you do so, he will expect you to have the ace or the jack.)

2. When partner leads a small card and dummy wins the trick, you can encourage when you are in possession of a high card and want the suit to be continued at the next opportunity.  
e.g. Partner leads a small heart and dummy wins the ace. If you hold the king, you can pass an encouraging signal.

As always, you will use your attitude signals carefully so that the signal is not detrimental to the full defence of the hand. Some pointers in this direction are as follows:

1. The card that you use for signaling should not weaken your holding in the suit as a result of using that card to pass the signal. In other words, do not use a card to signal which might cost you a trick at a later stage.
2. When your partner leads an honour and you hold a useful honour card yourself, it is not compulsory for you to pass an encouraging signal, particularly when you would prefer your partner to switch to another suit which might prove more beneficial to the defence in the long run.

### **Defending against a notrump contract**

1. Partner leads an honour. You should encourage if you have either of the adjacent honours accompanied by 2 or more cards. If you have a doubleton honour, you should normally unblock.

e.g. Partner leads the king (usually from KQJ or KQT)) and you have JXX or AXX. You should encourage and partner should know that he can safely continue the suit with a small card. If you have a doubleton honour, however, then you should normally unblock.

e.g. Partner leads the king and you have JX. You should unblock to let your partner know that you hold this card.

2. Partner leads a small card and the trick is won by dummy.

e.g. Consider this scenario: Partner leads the 4<sup>th</sup> best card and dummy comes down with Qx, and wins the trick with the queen. Holding Jxx, you should encourage, suggesting that partner



can continue the suit on gaining the lead if he started with a suit headed by the king. If his suit was headed by AT instead, he will try and reach you in another suit, for you to play the suit that was led, in order to trap declarer's king. Your signal in these situations is not a command but a simple indication that you can provide some assistance in the suit if required.

**Discarding**

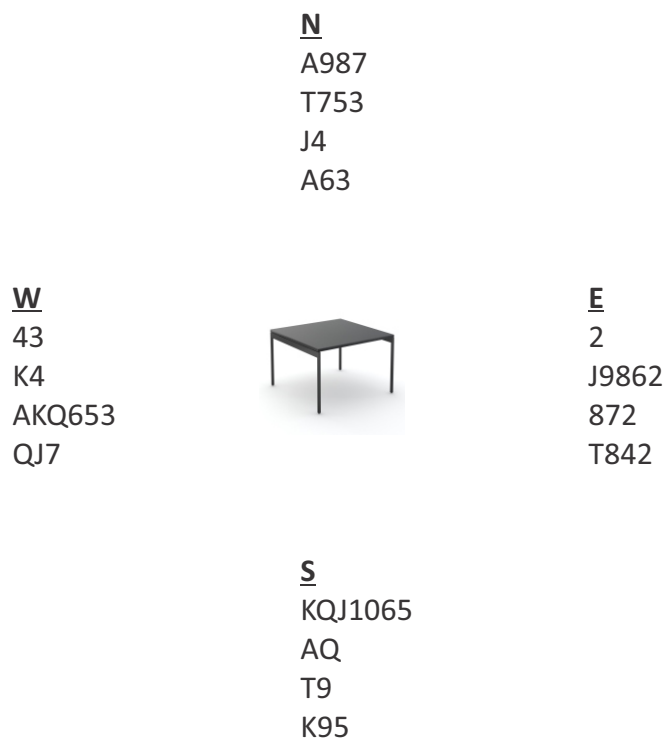
Encouraging/ discouraging signals should also be used when making your first discard. You should probably employ the same method for encouraging/discouraging as the one you have chosen from the three alternatives described earlier (easier to remember).

**Some pointers:**

1. Signal as clearly as possible, trying to avoid any ambiguity.
2. When discarding, do not signal with a card that may later cause you to lose a trick.
3. Remember that the first priority when discarding is to ensure that that you do not weaken your holding in the suit, and ranks ahead of encouragement/ discouragement, as well as ahead of hanging on to established winners.

In conclusion, remember that partner's attitude signal should never be interpreted as a command, but rather as the best suggestion from the cards that he can see. Even with partner's signal, you will always have a part to play in deciding whether to follow the signal given by partner, or to use your own initiative in arriving at the best defensive strategy.

To illustrate the above: See how an attitude signal from partner, coupled with a bit of imagination from your side helps to find the successful defence to the under-mentioned hand.



The bidding:

S	W	N	E
1S	2D	3S	P
4S	P	P	P

Playing standard signals (high=encouraging), you lead the ace of diamonds and partner contributes the 2. You continue with the king of diamonds and all follow. Hoping to establish a club trick to go with your (presumed) trick with the king of hearts, you switch to the Q of clubs. Declarer wins the King and your partner contributes the 8. Declarer now draws trumps and plays ace of clubs and a small club, and you are on lead with the jack. Or are you? If you are, you have handed declarer the contract, as you now have to lead into his AQ of hearts or concede a ruff and discard. How did you interpret partner's 8 of clubs? Playing standard signals, this is a high card and therefore encouraging. Remember that when you lead an honour, partner can encourage with either of the adjacent honors (in this case the king or the ten). Since declarer produced the king, partner must have the ten. Therefore, to avoid being end played to lead away from your king of hearts, you should jettison the jack of clubs on dummy's ace, allowing your partner to win the next club with the ten. Partner now leads a heart through declarer's AQ and the contract is defeated.

### Things never heard at a Bridge Club . . . . .

- This club's playing area is always at the right temperature – never too hot or too cold.
- I've had lots of points all evening.
- Great! A three board sit out.
- No matter which direction we sit, the cards always go our way.
- I always hear what the Director says.

### Western Cape Pairs Tournament – March 2019

The Western Cape Pairs Tournament was held at the Bridge Centre, Green Point in March 2019 and comprised of four sessions spread across two Sundays. There was a good turnout of participants – 38 pairs - and the tournament ran very smoothly.



Gail and Selwyn Gersowsky were the winners of the A section, followed closely by the runners-up, Tim Cope and Andrew Cruise. Graham Spolander and Gary Taylor came 1<sup>st</sup> in the B section, with Eileen Mestern and Pat Reid in 2<sup>nd</sup> place. A special prize was given to James Smith and John van Niekerk, who did not have enough SABF master points to be graded in the A section, but who came 7<sup>th</sup> overall. Congratulations to one and all!



## 98 year old plays at Tableview Bridge Club

Rita Blum, aged 98, is the oldest member at Tableview Bridge Club. She plays duplicate every Monday and is a fine bridge player who, together with her partner, won a bridge session a few weeks ago.

Rita is in the picture on the right with Elaine Edwards, Chairman of Tableview Bridge Club, who sent the following information:

Rita was born in London on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1921 and has lived in South Africa and the UK. She has 2 children, 5 grandchildren, 13 great-grandchildren and 1 great-great grandson! She started playing at our club in 2015.



A short history of Tableview Bridge Club: Started in 1997 by 26 enthusiastic players, four of whom are still active members. Originally rubber and BONE sessions were held on Monday and Wednesday afternoons respectively, but in 2017 we dropped the Wednesday sessions and now play duplicate on Mondays. We play at the clubhouse of Norton Square Senior Village which is in Short Street in Table View. At present we have 36 members, but interest is growing and we hope to increase our membership.

I just thought I'd put out the challenge to see if any other club in the Western Cape could produce an older player!

### **No mistakes**

I was matched up with another player when I showed up without a partner. All through the match, whenever I made a mistake, he would say "No Man is perfect". Later I found out that his name was Norman.

## Somerset West Bridge4Hospice

The fourth annual charity bridge drive in aid of Helderberg Hospice is planned for **Monday 10 June 2019 at Erinvale Golf Club, Somerset West** and players from neighbouring clubs are cordially invited to join us for the occasion. To accommodate out-of-towners the event will start at 10am and end with a tasty light lunch, finishing by 2.30 pm so everyone can get home in good time.

There will be duplicate bridge sections for pairs, managed by a non-playing tournament director, with rubber/social bridge played in a separate room. Raffle tickets will be on sale for some lovely prizes and all proceeds go to Helderberg Hospice.

Tickets will cost R200 per head. Payment can be paid by EFT in advance or in cash on the day. If you are interested or would like more information, kindly email [bridge4hospice@gmail.com](mailto:bridge4hospice@gmail.com) or message Beverley on 076 762 2340.

## Strategy at Matchpointed Pairs Tournaments

### Part 1: Introduction

*by Kathryn Herz & Eckhard Böhlke*

#### I. Matchpoints vs Teams

Considering the strategic approach to different types of Bridge tournaments, Matchpoints is by far the most complex and difficult.

At **Matchpoints**, your result for each board is calculated by comparing your score with that of all the other pairs who have played in your direction. You are awarded two matchpoints for each pair you outscore and one for each pair you tie. Your result is derived from the sum of your matchpoints as a percentage of all the matchpoints awarded. A difference as small as 10 score points may result in a top score! For example, ten tricks in no-trumps scoring 430 vs. ten tricks played in a major suit contract for 420 will usually give you a huge plus at Matchpoints. Whether you outscore another pair by 10 or by 1100 points does not make any difference – you still win only two matchpoints.

Playing **Teams** is easy by comparison since it is all about scoring more points than the opponents, the higher the difference the better. At Teams, a difference of only ten points is not even accounted for!

As a result, playing Matchpoints requires even more thinking and concentration. It is not just about making (or breaking) a contract, bidding a game or slam or not, but scoring higher than the rest of the field holding our cards. Every trick counts! The “opponents” are in fact not just the pair you are playing, but all the other pairs sitting in your direction at the other tables. To define the objective of a hand, you must gauge what the rest of the field will do on that deal. The assumed objective may even vary during the course of the play, as you find out about the distribution. Furthermore, considering the actions of the field affects all aspects of the game, i.e. bidding, declarer play and defence.

#### II. Quiz: Examples of Matchpoint Strategy

Let us look at three examples to demonstrate some of the principles of Matchpoints strategy (and compare it to Teams). Please try to answer the following questions before reading the answers below.

##### 1. Bidding:

What is your (vulnerable) rebid as responder after 1♦-1♥, 2♣-? holding ♠65♥Q8654♦62♣AQJ4?

##### 2. Declarer Play:

You play 3NT - all vulnerable - holding ♠A10♥J109654♦KJ3♣A10 opposite ♠8764♥KQ8♦A4♣K765 (yes, you reached 3NT!). You win the lead of ♣queen and drive out ♥ace. The opponents switch to ♠. How many tricks do you try to make? How do you play?

##### 3. Defensive Play:

You hear the unopposed bidding of your opponents sitting NS, South being the dealer:

1♠-2NT\*, 4♠\*\* (\*game force ♠; \*\*minimum, no singleton)

Partner West leads the ♥queen.

North puts this dummy down: ♠AJ102♥83♦1087♣AQJ8

Your East hand is ♠73♥A754♦AK5♣5432. How many tricks do you try to make? How do you defend?

## Answers to the Quiz:

### 1. Bidding

What is your vulnerable rebid as responder after 1♦-1♥, 2♣-? holding ♠65♥Q8654♦62♣AQJ4?

- At Teams:  
You would invite game bidding 3♣ since partner could have up to 17 points. You do not want to miss a vulnerable game.
- At Matchpoints:  
We think that Pass is advisable. Why? You might miss a marginal game. However, the bidding could easily go overboard if partner followed 3NT holding a hand such as ♠KQ7♥7♦AK1054♣K652. You follow the *general principle* of Matchpoints game bidding: *Do not bid marginal games, you need at least a 50% chance of success.*

### 2. Declarer Play:

Your (vulnerable) bidding was 1♥-1♠, 1NT-3NT. You are in the wrong contract. Both players probably tried to be clever: Opener did not show his sixth ♥ and responder did not show his 3-card ♥ support. However, it is too late to change the bidding.

N
♠8764
♥KQ8
♦A4
♣K765

S
♠A10
♥J109654
♦KJ3
♣A10

You win the lead of ♣queen and drive out ♥ace. The opponents switch to ♠. How many tricks do you try to make? How do you play?

- At Teams:  
Quite easy. You have been lucky enough not to get a ♠lead. You take 10 tricks (five in ♥, one in ♠, two in ♦, and two in ♣) and lose only 1 IMP (+630 vs. +650).
- At Matchpoints:  
Obviously the field will play in 4♥ making 11 tricks. You are in a **very unfavourable contract**. Despite the lucky lead you still see only 10 tricks, which would result in a very bad score. The only chance for an eleventh trick is to finesse in ♦. If the finesse wins you will score +660 giving you a top against the normal +650. If the finesse loses you will probably even go down. At first glance it seems stupid to risk your contract when you have 10 sure tricks. However, -100 (one down) compared with +630 (already being a near bottom compared to the normal score of +650) will be only slightly worse. So you go for the top following the sound *principle* (not just at Matchpoints): *When you have virtually nothing to lose it would be silly not to grab the opportunity for a top!*



### 3. Defensive Play

You hear the unopposed bidding of your opponents sitting NS, South being the dealer:

1♠-2NT\*, 4♠\*\* (\*game force ♠; \*\*minimum, no singleton)

Partner West leads the ♥ queen.

North puts this dummy down: ♠AJ102♥83♦1087♣AQJ8

Your East hand is ♠73♥A754♦AK5♣5432

How many tricks do you try to make? How do you defend?

#### ▪ At Teams:

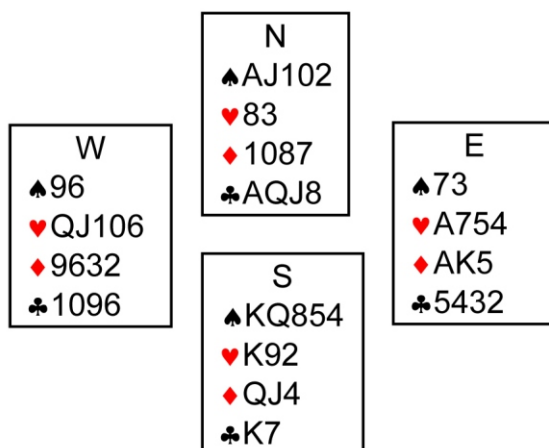
You try to beat the contract (if this leads to overtricks it does not matter). Clearly winning the ♥ ace and switching to ♦ 5 is best. Why? Declarer seems to have at least 10 tricks if you duck the lead: five ♠tricks, four ♣tricks and ♥king. So you have to hope for three tricks in diamonds, partner West holding ♦Jxxx (or even better ♦Qxxx); declarer will most probably misguess by playing low.

South: ♠KQ854♥K92♦Q94♣K7 and West: ♠96♥QJ106♦J632♣1096.

#### ▪ At Matchpoints:

It is clearly right to win the ♥ ace and to switch to diamonds, but to which diamond? The opponents are in a **normal contract** and the **lead** is most probably **normal** as well. So leading a low diamond at trick two will only gain if declarer has exactly ♦Qxx(x). However, there are more diamond holdings when a low diamond would give away an overtrick: ♦QJx, ♦QJ, ♦Qx, ♦Q (in each of these cases declarer would play an honour if you led ♦5 at trick two).

Assuming the hands are distributed like this:



Playing a low diamond would lead to 12 tricks for NS (discarding two diamonds on dummy's ♣suit) and a terrible score for EW. Since NS are in a normal contract and overtricks are just as important as undertricks, you have to go with the odds and cash ♦ ace and king meaning 10 tricks for NS.

### III. Points to remember

- At Matchpoints the magnitude of a scoring difference is irrelevant. **All that counts is how many of the pairs holding our cards we outscore or tie.**
- It may seem difficult to **estimate** accurately **what the rest of the field will be doing on a hand**, but it is important to try to make that estimate. If you have to choose between alternative

actions, consider the possible consequences of these alternatives and compare them with likely results at other tables.

- Therefore: **For EACH hand you play or defend, set yourself an objective as to how many tricks you want to achieve.** Revise your objective during the course of play if necessary.
- At Matchpoints, do not try to score a top at every hand. If you **avoid disasters (bottoms)**, tops will look after themselves. More often than not you will receive presents from your opponents, do not return them.
- At Matchpoints your overall strategy should be one of **conservatism bidding in the game and slam zones as well as in play and defence.** (*Do not bid marginal games, you need at least a 50% chance of success.*) **It is in the part-score zone that aggression really pays off.** However, do not deliberately underbid. If you think that game will have a fair chance you must bid it, as most of the other pairs will.
- If you have bid a **normal promising contract** and reckon the lead to be normal as well, it is worthwhile looking for opportunities to score overtricks – even if you have to take a small risk. In a **very unfavourable contract** when you have virtually nothing to lose grab any opportunity for a top - even risking a complete bottom (a small trade-off to a certain bad score)!

#### **IV. Contributions to Future WCBU Newsletters**

“Strategy at Matchpointed Pairs Tournaments” includes a plethora of topics, which cannot possibly be covered within the scope of one newsletter article. We will therefore divide the subject matter into a number of sections, trying to cover the most relevant in a series of contributions to this newsletter. Future issues will include constructive, competitive and defensive bidding, declarer play and defence. We will highlight some specific topics such as Matchpoint doubles, aggressive pre-empts, fierce competition in part-score auctions etc.

#### **V. Literature:**

In the rich bridge literature you do not find many books covering Matchpoint Bridge. We recommend: Kit Woolsey: Matchpoints, 1982 (second edition 2015)



## Online Declarer Practice

*Eckhard Böhlke brought my attention to an insertion in one of the issues of the New Online Bridge Magazine, which he thought would be of interest to Cape Town bridge players:*

If you are looking to improve your declarer play, one of the best options currently available is to pay a visit to: <http://www.bridgebase.com/v3/?bridgmaster=y&cb=lljt5KarR>

There you will find Bridgmaster 2000, a wonderful piece of software that affords you the opportunity to test yourself against a variety of problems at five different skill levels. It definitely has the potential to improve your speed and quality of thinking at the table.

The program, which was a great commercial success, was created by Canadian Fred Gitelman and is now available to everyone free of charge. Every one of the constructed deals illustrates a technical point. Taking the correct line will lead to your making the contract, but if you make a mistake the program will exploit your error and ensure the contract fails. At the end of each deal you can listen to (or read) an explanation that explains the correct line and the thought process behind it.

*Note from Editor: This is truly an excellent program for improving declarer play at all levels, from beginners through to expert and world class. But beware – it is highly addictive!*

## Forthcoming Events

Sunday 30 June	Alliance Open Pairs (Bridge Centre)
Friday 12 – Friday 19 July	SABF Congress (Durban)
Sunday 28 July	Bay Open Pairs (Bridge Centre)
Friday 9 – Sunday 11 August	KZN Mini-Congress
Sunday 4 August & Sunday 18 August	WCBU Teams Championships (Bridge Centre)
Friday 30 August – Sunday 1 September	P E Mini-Congress
Sunday 8 September	Youth Bridge Open Day (WPCC Bowling Clubhouse)
Friday 13 – Sunday 15 September	SABF BBO Inter-provincials

***Note:** Dates are taken from SABF and regional calendars and are correct at time of going to press, but may be subject to change.*



## Major Suit Raises

*by Sven-Åke Bjerregaard*

*Note from Editor: Sven offers us another perspective on major suit raises and the Jacoby NT – the Swedish way!*

If your partner opens 1 Major and you have 3+ card support, I recommend that you show support immediately. If you have an agreed trump suit, it's a matter of how high you want to go, which is more important than giving information about side suits.

I normally use these raises:

1M - 2M	5-10 points, 3-card support
1M - 3M	4-7 points with 4-card support. Should be alerted as pre-emptive
1M – 3C	8-11 points “Bergen raise”, 4-card support, says nothing about clubs Opener can bid 3D asking for maximum raise.
1M – 3D	11-12 points “Bergen raise” 3-card support, says nothing about diamonds
1M -	3S, 4C, 4D, 4H = Void in bid suit, 10+ points, 4-card support

### Svencoby

1M – 2 NT at least 3 card support, game force

1M	2NT
3C	= Minimum, about 11-13 points
3D	= Extras, no shortage, 14+ points
3H	= Extras, short in clubs
3S	= Extras, short in D
3NT	= Extras, short in other Major
4C or 4D	= Void
4H	= Void in other Major

If opener shows a minimum hand and you can see no chance of slam, just bid game. No information is revealed.

If you are still interested in slam if Opener has minimum, you proceed like this:

1M	2NT	
3C	3D	Asking for singleton
	3M	Asking for cue-bid
	New suit	Showing own singleton
	3NT	Suggestion to play, 13-15 balanced

If you have a hand with slam interest and a suit with only spot cards, you ask for a singleton; if you have a hand with a singleton and ruffing values, normally 4 card support, you show your singleton.

If they interfere, I use 2NT as at least invitational. The 3M bid if Opener shows a minimum is then non-forcing.

I also use this if partner opens a weak 2 Major. This would be invitational since a raise to 3M would be pre-emptive.

If they overcall after 2NT, I use pass = denies a singleton in overcalled suit. A bid therefore shows a singleton in the overcalled suit.

## **African Zonal Championships**

The 2019 African Zonal Championships will be held in Casablanca, Morocco from 7 – 14 June. A number of teams from African countries compete in different sections and the winning countries represent the continent at the World Bridge Championships later in the year.

The SA Open Team will have five players from Cape Town – Andrew Cruise, Brian Pincus, Robert Sulcas, Malcolm Siegel and Anton der Kinderen, with Hennie Fick from Johannesburg. We wish them all the best!

## **Bridge Tables**

If anyone requires a new bridge table or would like to have their own bridge table serviced, there is a company in Cape Town that handles this professionally. Please email the editor for the contact details.

### **A post mortem as enjoyed by most married bridge partners**



**“You know why I’m livid! You went to bed with an ace!”**

## **Library at Bridge Centre**

A reminder that there is a bridge library in the room where the bar is situated at the Bridge Centre. Jane Bodin very kindly set up this resource for bridge players on behalf of the WCBU a few years ago and we would be delighted if it was used frequently!

It works on the honour system: a bridge player can take one book at a time and when it is returned, another book may be taken out. The length of time to have the book is not restricted – it can be a few weeks or a few months, but we would appreciate the return of the books within a reasonable space of time.

## Answers to Tim's quizzes on 4 level pre-empts:

### Quiz 1

What would you open on the following hands?

- a) S KQJ9xxxx H xxx D x C x
- b) S AQJ10xxxx H Ax D x C xx
- c) S AQJ10xxxx H Ax D x C Kx

### Answers

- a) 4S – perfect for a 4 level pre-empt – you may not make it if partner has nothing, but then the opposition probably have the whole suitcase and may find the hand tough to bid
- b) 4D – perfect for a NAMYATS opening – a one loser suit and a side Ace
- c) 1S – too strong for NAMYATS – we have the one loser suit and a side ace but we also have an extra KC and we control every suit – whilst NAMYATS is strong, it is still pre-emptive in nature and we have too good a hand to pre-empt

### Quiz 2

How would you respond on the following hands?

- a) Partner opens 4S and you hold S Ax H AKQxxx D Ax C xxx
- b) Partner opens 4C and you hold S xxxx H x D AKQx C AKQx
- c) Partner opens 4D and you hold S Kx H AKQJx D Axx C xxx

### Answers

- a) 5H – the one under cue-bid – since spades is not the suit that we are looking for partner to hold a shortage, we respond with a one under cue bid – and hearts is one under clubs if you think of the suits being in a circular frame – we hope that partner has a club singleton and can bid 6S
- b) 4D – we hope again that partner has a spade shortage so we can bid 6H – bidding the relay step asks partner to bid a shortage if held – if they show any shortage other than spades we will sign off in 5H
- c) 7NT – Partner has opened with a NAMYATS bid – since we know they do not have a solid suit, we know they have a side Ace – which from our hand must be in clubs – so it is easy to count 13 tricks in NT – important when we are playing pairs

### Mobile Phones . . .

Judy, Trudy and Meg wanted to play in the Mixed Pairs, so they went to the Director beforehand. He greeted them warmly but warns, "We have *one rule* here: No mobile phones!"

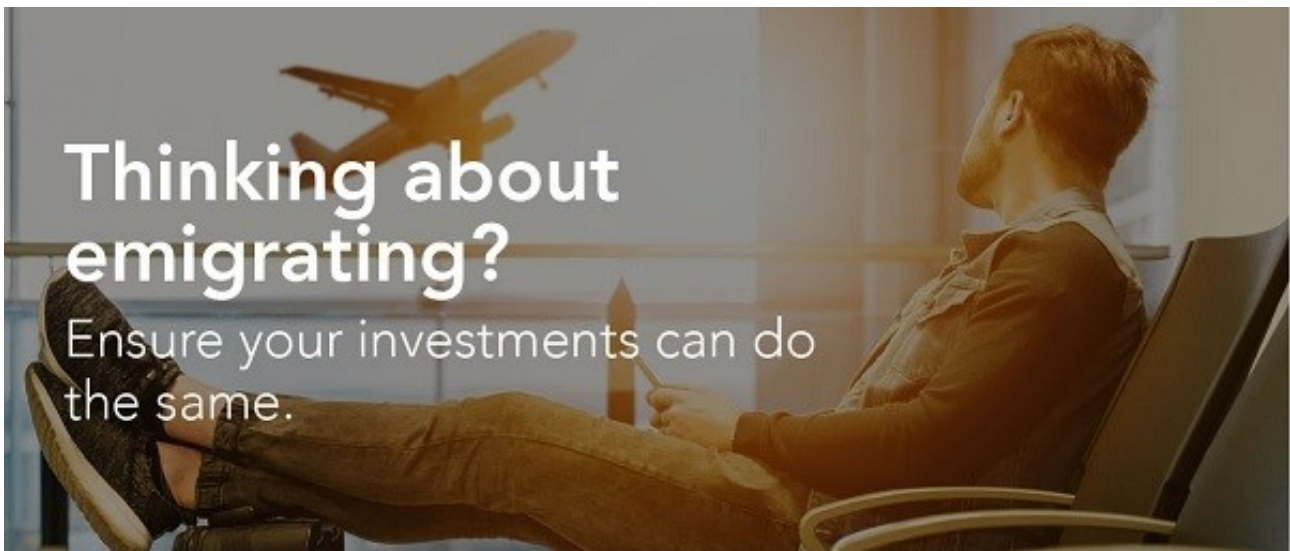
Sure enough, before another word could be spoken, Judy's phone rings, and the Director says, "Sorry, Judy. For that I must pair you with Joe, the worst male bridge player of all time."

A few minutes later Trudy's phone chimes, and the Director says, "Too bad, Trudy. Your partner will be Sam, who is about as hopeless as they come."

Meanwhile, Meg waits patiently for almost an hour with her phone carefully turned off. Finally, the Director walks over with Zia Mahmoud and says, "Congratulations, Meg! Your partner is the world's best player."

Meg is awestruck as she turns to Zia, "I can't believe it! What could I have done to deserve a partner as great as you?"

"I don't know what happened to you," grumbled Zia, "but my damn phone went off!"



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