

# THE BRIDGE BULLETIN

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## FROM THE CHAIR

The question I am most often asked at the moment is when are we going to be able to re-open our live bridge clubs? The GBU will be guided by the SABF in this matter and the answer is in all probability the new year. Will vaccination certificates be mandatory? In all probability – yes. As organisers, our main concern is that we want live bridge to be safe. The age of our participants is known to make it worse for an individual if he/she should contract COVID. It's played in an indoor area, in close proximity to one another, with not much ventilation. We want to be responsible and not start a 'super-spreader'.

I had the pleasure of having lunch recently – live, outdoors and socially distances, with Sugar Rhodes who has the distinction of playing more than any other Gauteng player in The Links' events. On the day of their 1000<sup>th</sup> Celebration Bridge Event held recently, she had played 850 times, with a variety of partners, and if no one is available she picks up a robot! She is 85 years old (but one would

never think it!), so every day she plays morning and afternoon at an online 'The Links' event. Her story, in her own words, as to why she plays so much bridge goes like this:

"Having owned and run, hands on, a game lodge (which means full time work 7 days a week, 365 days a year) until I turned 80 and sadly became a widow after 58 years of marriage, I turned to tennis, golf and bridge to fill my days, naturally with a spot of charity thrown in. I then survived cancer, but that ruled out the sport, so it was bridge, bridge, and more bridge! I always led a very busy, blessed and active life and would love to do so still, but happily I can still exercise my brain!"

I know of many other players in their 80s, and indeed some are even in their 90s, still playing bridge, and many persevered with learning BBO and/or RealBridge when COVID struck. Fantastic! I admire you all and to steal the words of the very popular Strictly Come Dancing T.V. programme, Keep Playing!

Also, please keep Sunday, December 5<sup>th</sup> free! I am giving you advance notice of a Quickie (one day only!) End-of-Year Red Point Pairs Event which the GBU will be staging. Open to all, BBO format, R200 per pair and organized by our own super-efficient Robert Stephens. A poster advertising it on email and WhatsApp groups will be brought out nearer the time.

Yours in bridge,



Deirdre Ingersent

If you have news or articles you'd like to see featured in future issues of The Bridge Bulletin, please send them to the editor at nicky@chasingdreamspublishing.com

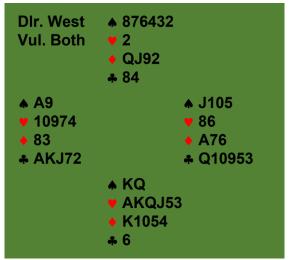


## THE BRIDGE LOUNGE

by **Jeff Sapire** 

In suit contracts, trump control is a vital part of good declarer play. On some hands, even a long, strong trump suit sometimes needs to be carefully handled, especially when there is a lot of outside work.

When North tabled the dummy in today's hand, he felt a little uneasy about the trump support, but he had no idea how important his little two of trumps was. His partner, sad to say, did not appreciate its real value.



West North East South

1 ♣ P 2 ♣ 4 ♥

All Pass

Opening Lead: C 🌲

### Bidding:

After East had raised clubs, South's options were either to double, or take a shot at the heart game. With slam most unlikely against the opposition bidding, he chose the practical route of bidding the long, solid hearts; the less you tell your opponents on these hands, the better.

Play:

The defence led and continued clubs, which declarer had to ruff, as there were three losers off the top. He now started drawing trumps, but with the 4-2 split he found himself with only one trump remaining. He now played on diamonds, but east won and continued clubs, forcing out his last trump. With only nine tricks (six hearts and three diamonds), declarer cashed the winning diamonds and played the king of spades, but West kept the ace of spades and a club at the end, getting the last two tricks, for one down.

Declarer should have left that precious little two of hearts in the dummy a bit longer, while he established a spade trick. At trick three, the correct line is a high spade. If it holds, declarer draws trumps and plays on diamonds – making six trumps, three diamonds and a spade. If West takes the ace of spades, there is no danger. He can lead a third round of clubs, but dummy's tiny two of trumps can take the ruff, leaving declarer's trumps intact. And if West leads anything else, declarer wins, draws trumps, and then plays on diamonds, as before.

#### About the Author:

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



# **NOVICE'S CORNER**

# The Importance of Shape

by Lisa Adamson

One of the most difficult aspects for bridge novices to master is the idea of working as a team. It is not about MY hand but it is about OUR hands and how well they go together.

In Standard American we open 5-card Hearts and Spades, so it is easy for partner to put 5 and 3 (in their hand) together to make the 8 required for a feasible trump suit. Even a 1 Diamond opener is informative enough for partner to form a picture of the hand.

If partner has 4 Diamonds and a weak hand, he'll bid 2D to raise the level of bidding for the opposition. If he has 4 diamonds and a stronger hand he could bid his next 4 card suit "up the line", intending to subside into 2D if a fit in the majors is not found.

But what does a 1C opener tell you? As far as points go, with a balanced hand it could be 12 - 14 or 18 - 19, but the length of suits is uncertain.

Here is where a picture of shape is important. I teach my beginners that, as partner, they must bid their 4 card suits "up the line", i.e. Diamonds then Hearts then Spades. This must be done regardless

of the quality of the suit (number of honor cards) as opener is more interested in the number of cards in the suit you bid.

★ K J 9 4
 With this hand, it is correct to bid 1D. This leaves opener the opportunity to show a 4 card major, or to bid NT.

◆ 10 8 7 4◆ Q 9

I watched my protegees, Bud and Rosebud, bid the following hands on BBO recently:

Rosebud	Bud	Bidding			
♠ K 10 7	<b>♠</b> A Q 9 6	$1^{4}$	P	1♠	P
♥ A K J 10 ♦ Q 6	♥97 ◆J975	2♥	P	2♠	P
<b>♣</b> J864	<b>♣</b> Q32	3♠	P	4♠	All Pass

After Rosebud opened 14, Bud opted to show his spades as they looked so nice. Rosebud on the other hand thought her Hearts were magnificent so bid 2H. Now Bud was in a pickle. He knew the H bid showed 4 cards as it had not been opened initially so he decided to repeat his spades. Rosebud now took him for 5 cards in spades, and invited with 34. The fish took the bait and bid 44. Opposition Queens and Kings did not lie favourably. Down 2.

(I'm sure you're thinking, "What terrible bidding", but remember they are novices.)

But if the bidding went:

Here Rosebud had a better picture of the hand: 6 Diamonds, 7 Spades and hopefully 6/7 Clubs and 6/7 Hearts, a fairly flat distribution! NT was a logical bid.

2NT making.

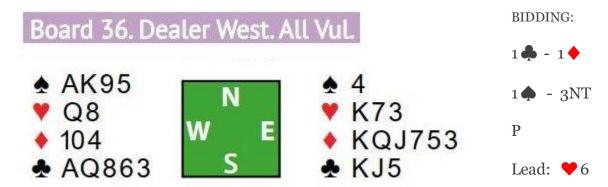
#### About the Author

Lisa Adamson has been teaching bridge since 2017, concentrating mainly on beginners and helping "rusty" players find their way into the game again. Many of these players now belong to clubs and are playing confidently on BBO and RealBridge.



by Sid Ismail

This hand comes from the recent All Africa Championships. Tunisia were E-W at this table.



Declarer tried the ♥Q from dummy and it held! He counts 2 spade tricks, 1 heart (just won), and 5 clubs (4-1 or 3-2 break). That gives 8 tricks.

QUIZ: How would you continue?

#### About the Author:

Sid Ismail runs pairs tournaments on BBO every Wednesday and Friday at 14hoo. For more information, contact him on 082 411 9900 or visit <a href="www.elsid.co.za">www.elsid.co.za</a>. SABF Masterpoints can be earned!



# TIMING IS EVERYTHING

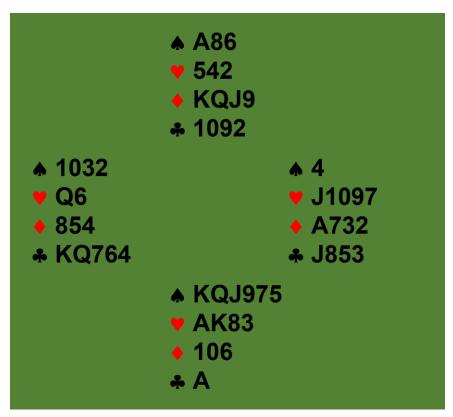
Researched by **Deirdre Ingersent** 

Being in the right place at the right time is as important in bridge as in other areas of life. You want to be in the right hand at the right time. You also want to be in the right contract from the right side, playing the suits and cards in the right order too.

It is often considered wise to draw trumps and then setup a side suit. There are occasions however, where it is vital to set up your side suit before you draw trumps. The three questions to ask in this case are:

- 1. Do you need the trumps as an entry to the side suit?
- 2. Do you need to retain trumps in the short hand to prevent loss of trump control in the long hand?
- 3. Do you need trump entries to take needed finesses in the side suit?

## EXAMPLE 1 – Keeping an entry in dummy:



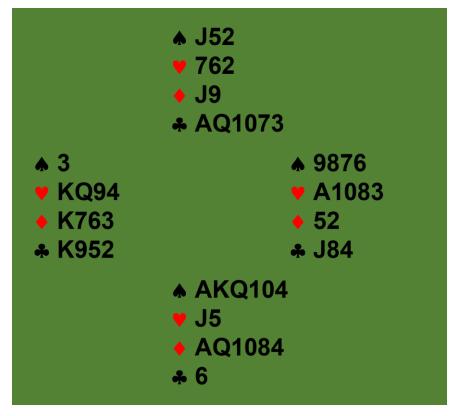
**Contract:** 6 **\Phi** by South

# Opening Lead: K 🌲

South wins opening lead with his singleton club Ace. Next, he draws two rounds of trumps with K and Q, leaving Ace in dummy. When the suit doesn't break, declarer stops drawing trumps and concentrates on setting up the diamond suit.

East holds off to the 2<sup>nd</sup> round, then wins with his Ace and returns another diamond, on which declarer discards a losing heart. Declarer now plays dummy's Ace of trumps and discards his last heart loser on the set up diamond.

# **EXAMPLE 2 – Keeping trump control:**



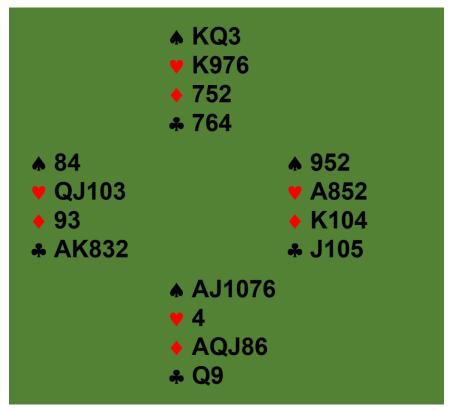
**Contract:** 4 ♠ by South

# **Opening Lead:** K♥

Three rounds of hearts are played, declarer ruffing the third, reducing South's hand to four trumps. Declarer cannot afford to draw trumps. Now declarer starts on the diamond suit. He leads small to J ◆ and back to his hand, overtaking 9 with 10 and West wins with his king. Declarer notices East played 5,2 (high, low) so two cards. West continues with a diamond which dummy trumps with J ♠. Declarer now draws remaining trumps and easily gets the rest with his established diamonds.

If declarer had drawn two rounds of trumps and then started diamonds, he could have ruffed the third round with J •, but couldn't get back to his hand. He might try A • and ruff a club, but then he would have only one trump left to his opponents' two. The contract would have gone down.

# **EXAMPLE 3 – Keeping extra trump entries for repeating finesses:**



**Contract:** 4 **•** by South

# Opening Lead: K ♣

South bid spades and hearts en route to a 4 ♠ contract. West played his A,K ♠ for two tricks and then switched to Q ♥. Won by East – the heart return was ruffed. Declarer now plays Ace trumps and a small trump to Queen. A diamond is led from dummy's hand and when East plays low, J is inserted for a successful finesse. Declarer now draws opponents' last trump by playing to king in dummy. Another diamond led from dummy and he finesses to queen. This wins and now contract is made.

P.S. It is important to study the hands well as declarer and not play too fast to the first trick as the whole hand strategy need to be clearly thought out from the start.



# THE KEY TO A SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIP

Submitted by Roz Bernstein

When Deirdre asked me to write an article as to what advice I would give to up and coming players, my thoughts went back all those years to all the enjoyment the game has given me.

Bridge was not a word in my vocabulary until I met my late husband Michael who told me he was a good bridge player!

I realised then my only option was to learn the game or else become a bridge widow! It is one of the best decisions I have made.

Bridge is a complex game becoming more so as you progress. The game you played as a beginner, bears little resemblance to your later game.

You need to decide on your bridge aspirations: Do you want to be a social player, a club player or a tournament player?

There are no wrong decisions.

Having identified your aspirations as a tournament player the next decision is with whom to embark on your journey.

In this article I have decided to focus on partnership, and the importance of establishing a successful and compatible partnership.

Remember, bridge is like war, but with only 10% of the risk. Your partner is the only person in the room not trying to "do you in". While your partner does not have to be your best friend, you have to be compatible and enjoy the time in the trenches and at the table.

There are a couple of unwritten rules that will assist in the forming of a successful partnership:

- 1. Treat your partner with respect and as an equal. Offer encouragement when necessary.
- 2. Tolerate your partner's errors. Bridge is a game of errors (your partner is going to have to tolerate your errors).
- 3. Own up to your errors.
- 4. Conduct post-mortems away from the table.
- 5. Show a united front at the table. The played hand is scored and no discussions are going to revive the "patient".
- 6. Treat your partner with the same grace, whether you win or lose. Most importantly at the table, nobody should be able to read your "bridge face".
- 7. Deal with disasters, nobody goes for 1700 on purpose.
- 8. Play each new board on its own merit as if it was board 1 of the tournament.
- 9. Never punish your partner for previous mistakes or even ones in this particular hand. Assume your partner has got it right.
- 10. Remember, we are playing bridge because we enjoy the game!

It is exceptionally rewarding to develop a partnership, learning new systems, debating what you give, by incorporating new bids and working on defences. Over time you develop a sense of your partner's style of bidding and play. Is your partner ultra aggressive or very conservative? If you and your partner have a good understanding, you will be able to anticipate how your partner will react to a bid or follow the line of defence. Knowing that your partner will inevitably make the bid, you at least want to hear, what is your response. This needs to be planned before reaching for the bidding box.

Time at the table is invaluable, but time away from the table equally as important. You need to be able to discuss and disagree and have a mechanism to resolve the disagreements – this is usually an experienced third party. Remember it is more important that the partnership develop, than whether you are right.

Not all partners will have the same aspirations as you, and rather than sour a friendship (if you have different goals), move on from the partnership. Ultimately, if you can find a partner with whom you are compatible in your aspirations and ethos, nurture the partnership. The most important feature of

any successful partnership is communication, both at and away from the table. The rewards of building a partnership are immense. The more time and effort expended, the greater the reward. The greater the success, the more personal satisfaction. Ultimately you want to have fun as well, but know, the more success you want the harder you and your partner have to work.

So make certain as you embark on your bridge journey that you have across the table a friend, who shares your goals, ethos, work ability, endurance and sense of humour. Ultimately, you want to enjoy the game, and finding a compatible partner is the first step.

#### About the Author:

A top player, Roz Bernstein has represented South Africa on a number of occasions and is a long-standing member of the SABF Committee.



# **THE GREYVILLE 2021**

Submitted by **Peter Bircher** 

## Sunday, Hand 14\*

South declares in 4 hearts after North had bid spades and diamonds\*

Q864 73

▲ KJ54

You are West and lead a diamond, won in dummy with the ace.

Declarer cashes A-K-Q of spades discarding a diamond on the 3rd round. He then cashes the A-K of trumps and then the jack, East showing out. In with the queen of trumps you must decide what card to lead next.

Declarer has shown up with precisely 6 hearts, 2 spades and at least 2 diamonds. What are his other 3 cards? You watched declarer pitch a diamond,

so assume he has no more leaving him with 3 clubs.

Looking at the two top spades in dummy you decide you must to try to take out the remaining entry to dummy before his trump is removed, so lead a small club, but declarer, aware that he needs the ace of clubs, allows it to run around to his queen.

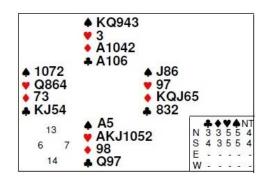
He draws the remaining trump and hops over to dummy with the ace of clubs to access the good spades, making 12.

However the double-dummy analysis says that declarer should be held to 11. What went wrong with the defence?

Go back to trick 8 where you were attempting to take out declarer's access to dummy.

You had the right idea but chose the wrong card.

What card will achieve the task?



There is a coup named after American steam ship Merrimac, which was sunk during the Spanish—American War in 1898 in Santiago de Cuba in an attempt to bottle up the Spanish fleet.

The King of clubs would have been the coup de grâce taking out the only entry to the good spades prematurely.

Despite being presented with a club trick if he takes the King with the ace he cannot dispose of his remaining club as the spade will be trumped by West, holding declarer to 11.

\* Hand swung 90° for convenience

#### About the Author:

Peter Bircher is a top bridge player, having represented South Africa on a number of occasions.



## A BIT OF NONSENSE

Devised by **Deirdre Ingersent** 

Start with a personal document and in four moves by adding one letter each time, you should arrive at a card game we all love!

(The record for doing this currently stands at just five seconds!)



"You wouldn't have made it if you had played it right."

- GHG, June 5, 1948



# **PUZZLE SOLUTIONS**

## SID'S QUIZ



♦ A962 ♣ 1097 • AK95

♥ Q8 ♦ 104 ♣ AQ863



★ 10732♥ A 109642♦ 8

♣ 42

Ghodhbane of Tunisia tried a deceptive ◆ 10 at trick 2. If North is napping or the diamond ace is with South he would run for home.

But North was wide awake!

He dropped the ♥J at trick 1;

He shot up with the diamond ace at trick 2 and returned a heart.

Both of these actions were necessary to secure a 13 IMP swing!

North was our own Hennie Fick! Well defended!

## A BIT OF NONSENSE:

ID

**RID** 

**RIDE** 

BRIDE

**BRIDGE**