



By John Swanson
Lancaster, California

Panel regulars this month are: Californians Ed Davis, Seal Beach; Mike Savage, Signal Hill; Eddie Kantar, Santa Monica; Wafik Abdou, Bakersfield; and Fred Hamilton, Palm Desert. In addition we have two bridge luminaries from outside the US. Roland Wald, from Denmark, is now teaching bridge in London. He is the originator of vugraph commentary on BBO. At the time this is being written the bidding and play, with commentary, is being presented from as many as 16 tables at a time from the World Championships in Bali, Indonesia. It's a remarkable service to the bridge community provided by BBO, with assistance of a number of volunteers. Unfortunately Roland felt obligated to withhold his commenting expertise from the event in protest of the World Bridge Federation selection of Indonesia as the host country. Two Israeli teams have not been able to compete because of diplomatic troubles between Indonesia and Israel. Roland believes, as I do, that the WBF must select sites that offer all of its member nations a chance to compete. Our other special guest is Eric Kokish of Toronto. In addition to achieving fame as a member of Canada's international teams he has also served as coach of teams from other countries. Eric is a teacher and consultant to many of the best pairs in the world and is responsible for several significant conventions. The problems he and the other panel members have to contend with are from hither and yonder.

Problem 1.

North/South vulnerable, IMP scoring
You are South holding:

♠64 ♥AKJ5 ♦84 ♣AK854

South	West	North	East
??			3♦

Master Solvers Panel

Davis: 3♥. Partner and RHO have about 20 HCP between them. If they are split about evenly, we rate to have a vulnerable game which we are likely to miss if I pass. Partner rates to have three or more hearts and a 3♥ bid gives us the best chance to find the right game. If we belong in spades, I will hear 3♣ from partner over 3♥.

Double is too likely to get us to spades on an inadequate fit and 4♣ bypasses one of our likely games (3NT), and makes it difficult to find our other most likely game (4♥). I would pass only if there were no bonus for reaching game.

Savage: 3♥. Of the possible imperfect bids, I like 3♥ on a robust four-card suit best and double second, as they both maintain the possibility of playing 3NT. Then comes Pass, then 4♣. At least Pass doesn't get you beyond a possible 3NT which 4♣ does (and is a club or two short with a weakish suit).

Kantar: 3♥. I hope my voice doesn't crack. Don't want to miss 3NT. Of course, Marshall would have just bid 3NT to save time.

Wald: 3♥. Nasty problem. I must get in, but even if 4♣ is natural (some may play it as non-leaping Michaels), I don't like to bid it, as 3NT is a possible contract. I can't double without spades, so the lesser evil must be 3♥. I teach my students not to overcall on four-card suits, so please don't tell them that I just did. If this goes horribly wrong, say after Pass, 4♥, Pass, Pass, Double and I go for -800 or more, I am ready to apologize. "Sorry partner, I had the ♦8 among my hearts when I overcalled."

Abdou: Double, flawed but best of the bad choices. I will correct 3♣ to 4♣ and reluctantly will have to guess over 4♣. Unlikely pard will balance if I pass; he may have three diamonds or not enough HCP to bid.

Kokish: Pass. I have no quarrel with the gambling 3♥, but would not double without spade support and only moderate strength. Neither would I bid 4♣, which bypasses 3NT, overstates clubs and understates hearts. I will reopen with 4♥ if West

raises to 4♦ as partner will have a shot at playing me for a second suit rather than a weaker hand. As all actions are imperfect and passing needn't end the auction, I'm going to pass without regret.

J.S.: The possibility of passing a preempt, then backing in after a raise to show a four-card major with a longer minor has been discussed here before. I believe that is a reasonable agreement, but in exchange one must give up passing with a long suit with the hope of bidding it later.

Hamilton: Pass. Good problem! Not the right shape to bid and a bit much to pass. The only bid one might make is 3♥ on the four-card suit, but that could lead to a horrible result. Double is out with two small spades and 4♣ is far-fetched. As I see it, that leaves pass as the only reasonable action. One's problem may not be over as if partner bids we may have another one. Still, because bidding looks very dangerous, put me down for a passer. I do have a partner over there!

J.S.: The panel offers good arguments for and against the various unattractive calls. As Fred remarked, this hand has too much to pass and the wrong shape to bid. I have a strong recollection that Bobby Wolff has commented more than once that the Dallas Aces found that overcalling a four-card suit at the two-level was a loser. One should expect that the losing nature of such an action would extend to the three-level. My first choice would be to double, allowing for a heart, notrump, or club contract while risking an unwelcome spade bid. An advantage is that on a good day partner will convert to penalties by passing.

Savage: (continued): Bidding 3♥ or doubling should get you to 7♥, the contract at the other table (although they didn't have to contend with a scraggly 3♦ opening preempt). You might still get there after a pass, but at our table South overcalled 4♣, got a 4♥ bid from partner, and then passed. Should South have raised 4♥ to 5♥? And what should North bid after 4♣, holding: ♠AKxx ♥Q98xxx ♦AQ ♣x? It's very embarrassing to just be in game and immediately claim all 13 tricks!

J.S.: Take the panel's advice, Mike: South shouldn't overcall 4♣. But maybe the best advice is for your teammates to start opening scraggly 3♦ bids.

Problem 2.

Neither side vulnerable, IMP scoring
You are South holding:

♠Q8652 ♥K94 ♦86 ♣A52

South	West	North	East
		1♣	3♦

Kokish: Double, then 3♣ over 3♥, but only because of the club support. Much easier playing weak notrumps, my fave* method, because for his reopening double opener will have a good balanced hand, a fit for my major, or long clubs.

J.S.: *Canadian for "favorite."

Savage: Double. Clear in my opinion, but what to do over a 3♥ rebid by partner is not. I would probably pass 3♥ but raise 3♣ to 4♣. Passing 3♥ might miss a 4♥ or 4♣ game, but bidding 3♣ or 4♥ without a clear eight-card fit is just too dangerous for me (besides, wouldn't 3♣ show a better suit?)

Abdou: Double, and bid spades over 3♥ (could be a three-card suit if pard is stuck). I will pass a jump to 4♥ (at least four cards in hearts) holding honor third, a doubleton and a club fit.

Wald: Double. I'm a little light, but I think I must act. Bidding 3♣ is out of the question, because it's game-forcing and because my suit is anemic. Double keeps all options open. My plan is to pass 3♥ and 4♣, raise 3♣. The winning action, however, could easily be to pass, hoping that partner can reopen with double. Then I will bid 4♣, knowing that we have at least an eight-card fit. And if he can't reopen, it's unlikely that we missed a game.

Hamilton: Double. Just a tad too much to pass, again the problem is not yet over. Pass is a close second choice, and if someone ran 5,000 hands and said pass is the long run winner, I would not be surprised!

Kantar: Pass. I've used up all my courage on the previous problem.



LAS VEGAS REGIONAL

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Color Codes: PAIRS = ● SWISS = ● KNOCKOUTS* (KOs) = ● * KO events may be handicapped DIRECTOR IN CHARGE: Gary Zeiger

MONDAY - JANUARY 20	9:00A	10:00A	1:15P	3:00P	7:00P
Stratified Charity Swiss Teams			●		
Stratified Charity Pairs			●		
0-300 Charity Stratified Pairs			●		
Monday-Tuesday KOs (1st of 4 Sessions)					●
Stratified Evening Side Game (1st of 6 Single Sessions)					●
0-300 Non LM PAIRS					●

NOTE: ALL Monday Games are Single Sessions (EXCEPT KOs)

TUESDAY - JANUARY 21	9:00A	10:00A	1:15P	3:00P	7:00P
Stratified Swiss Teams (Single Session)	●				
Stratified AM Side Game (1st of 5 Single Sessions)					●
0-300 Stratified Pairs (3 Single Sessions)			●		●
Monday-Tuesday KOs (2nd, 3rd & Final Sessions)			●		●
Stratified Pairs (2 Sessions)			●		●
Tuesday-Wednesday KOs (1st & 2nd of 4 Sessions)			●		●
Stratified GOLD Pairs (0-100/350/750) (2 Sessions)			●		●
Stratified Pairs (0-2500/2500+) (2 Sessions)			●		●
Stratified Afternoon Side Game (1st of 5 Single Sessions)			●		●
Stratified Evening Side Game (2nd of 6 Single Sessions)					●
Stratified Swiss Teams (Single Session)					●

WEDNESDAY - JANUARY 22	9:00A	10:00A	1:15P	3:00P	7:00P
Stratified Swiss Teams (Wed-Thurs 1st of 2 Sessions)	●				
Stratified AM Side Game (2nd of 5 Single Sessions)					●
0-300 Stratified Pairs (3 Single Sessions)			●		●
Stratified Pairs (2 Sessions)			●		●
Tuesday-Wednesday KOs (3rd & 4th of 4 Sessions)			●		●
Wednesday-Thursday KOs (1st & 2nd of 4 Sessions)			●		●
Stratified GOLD Pairs (0-100/350/750) (2 Sessions)			●		●
Stratified Pairs (0-2500 / 2500+) (2 Sessions)			●		●
Stratified Afternoon Side Game (2nd of 5 Single Sessions)			●		●
Stratified Evening Side Game (3rd of 6 Single Sessions)					●
Stratified Swiss Teams (Single Session)					●

THURSDAY - JANUARY 23	9:00A	10:00A	1:15P	3:00P	7:00P
Stratified Swiss Teams (Wed-Thurs 2nd/Final Session)	●				
Stratified AM Side Game (3rd of 5 Single Sessions)					●
0-300 Stratified Pairs (3 Single Sessions)			●		●
Stratified Pairs (2 Sessions)			●		●
Wednesday-Thursday KOs (3rd & 4th of 4 Sessions)			●		●

THURSDAY - JANUARY 23 (CONTINUED)	9:00A	10:00A	1:15P	3:00P	7:00P
Thursday-Friday KOs (1st & 2nd of 4 Sessions)					●
Stratified GOLD Pairs (0-100/350/750) (2 Sessions)					●
Stratified Pairs (0-2500/2500+) (2 Sessions)					●
Stratified Afternoon Side Game (3rd of 5 Single Sessions)					●
Stratified Evening Side Game (4th of 6 Single Sessions)					●
Stratified Swiss Teams (Single Session)					●

FRIDAY - JANUARY 24	9:00A	10:00A	1:15P	3:00P	7:00P
Friday-Saturday Morning Compact KOs (1st Session)					●
Stratified AM Side Game (4th of 5 Single Sessions)					●
0-300 Stratified Pairs (3 Single Sessions)			●		●
Stratified Pairs (2 Sessions)			●		●
Thursday-Friday KOs (3rd & 4th of 4 Sessions)			●		●
Friday-Saturday KOs (1st & 2nd of 4 Sessions)			●		●
Stratified GOLD Pairs (0-100/350/750) (2 Sessions)			●		●
Stratified Pairs (0-2500/2500+) (2 Sessions)			●		●
Stratified Afternoon Side Game (4th of 5 Single Sessions)			●		●
Stratified Evening Side Game (5th of 6 Single Sessions)					●
Board-A-Match (Single Session)					●

SATURDAY - JANUARY 25	9:00A	10:00A	1:15P	3:00P	7:00P
Friday-Saturday Morning Compact KOs-2nd/Final Session)					●
Stratified Swiss Teams (Single Session)					●
Stratified Morning Side Game (5th & Final Session)					●
0-300 Stratified Pairs (3 Single Sessions)			●		●
Stratified Pairs (2 Sessions)			●		●
Friday-Saturday KOs (3rd & 4th of 4 Sessions)			●		●
Saturday Compact KOs (2 Sessions)			●		●
Stratified GOLD Pairs (0-100/350/750) (2 Sessions)			●		●
Stratified Pairs (0-2500/2500+) (2 Sessions)			●		●
Stratified Afternoon Side Game (5th of 5 Single Sessions)			●		●
Stratified Evening Side Game (6th of 6 Single Sessions)					●
Stratified Swiss Teams (Single Session)					●

SUNDAY - JANUARY 26	9:00A	10:00A	1:15P	3:00P	7:00P
Stratified FAST Pairs (Planned Finish by 4PM-Play Through)					●
0-300 Swiss Teams (Single Session)					●
Bracketed B Swiss Teams (Play Through)					●
FLIGHT A/X Swiss Teams (Play Through)					●

NOTE: It is intended that all Swiss Teams will finish by 5:15 pm

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