



By John Swanson
Mission Viejo, Calif.

Welcome to this month's panel: Jerry Gaer, who has been the leading player and teacher in the Phoenix area for as long as I care to remember; Jim Tritt, the leading light in Fresno for almost as long; Rose Meltzer, who was won multiple national team titles plus the 2001 Bermuda Bowl and the Senior Bowl in both 2005 and 2007. Also contributing is Jan Janitschke who has been a bridge star since his youth, winning several national titles. However, Jan may well be best remembered in the bridge world for his comment to partner who produced a most disappointing dummy, "Where was the hand you held during the bidding." My partner of olden times, Richard Walsh, treated me to a non-verbal inquiry of the same nature on more than one occasion. After dummy was exposed he might lean over and peer underneath several cards, as if looking for ones that were missing. And finally, we have one who needs no introduction - Eddie Kantar. If you have ever played the game of bridge you know who Eddie is. I hope that you have heard him educate and entertain as a bridge teacher. If not, you have surely read more than one of his books. If he can now solve these bidding problems correctly his career will be complete.

Problem 1.

None vul, matchpoint scoring

♠7♥A10876532♦3♣AQ6

North	East	South	West
1♠	Dbl	?	

What's your plan?

J.S.: This is a surprise. One usually has four of the other major for a takeout double but your length suggests that might not be the case here.

Janitschke: Redouble. My plan is to get to 4♥, either by bidding it immediately (assuming it's not a splinter), or by redoubling and then bidding it.

J.S.: I believe that most experienced bidders use 4♥ here as a splinter bid (Showing a short holding with for-card spade support so I am putting you down for redouble).

Tritt: Redouble, then bid hearts. This is the only way to make a forcing bid in hearts after the double. 1♠ redoubled should make; if partner doubles 2♦ or 3♦, I will bid hearts, forcing; if partner doubles 2♣ I will sit; if they somehow bid 2♥, I will fall to my knees in thanks before doubling; if they bid 1NT, I will bid 2♥, which should still be forcing after the redouble. I would not want to double 1NT because of the risk of a quick winner followed by five diamond tricks for the opponents.

J.S.: I think we can ignore that bit of fantasy about the opponents playing in 2♥. Jim's main point is that if one redoubles and then bids a new suit it is forcing.

Meltzer: 2♦. Kyle and I can actually transfer to hearts by bidding 2♦, and then I can bid 4♥... who cares about hearts splitting? I have eight of them! And the doubler doesn't have to hold four. Let the opponents try to set me. Otherwise I would redouble and hope for the best!

J.S.: I like to use transfers after second seat takeout doubles also. There's frequently a lead advantage by keeping the doubler on lead. Here the immediate transfer eliminates the necessity of redoubling on a hand you have no interest in defending and little interest in partner's suit.

Gaer: 2♥, planning to keep bidding them up to the four level. I am willing to play 4♥ even against the expected four in the doubler's hand, but if I redouble first, if the bidding gets too high in a hurry partner won't let me play. A direct 4♥ bid is a splinter; partner will think they have twelve hearts and will keep bidding spades. He certainly has a lot of them. This way partner should get the message that I don't need hearts from him. I don't want him to finally outbid me.

Kantar: My plan is to redouble and then jump in hearts. This is when the suffering figures to start.

J.S.: The only anguish is deciding on the

first call. Partner is going to jump in spades and as long as you don't get unnecessarily insistent on hearts, the final contract will be a winning 4♠.

Problem 2.

North/South vul, IMP scoring

♠53♥AK1095♦A3♣K1064

South	West	North	East
1♥	1♠	Pass	2♥
Pass	2♣	3♣	Pass
?			

J.S.: This is a remarkably fine hand in support of clubs. What is the weakest holding partner would have for his unexpected entry into the live auction?

Meltzer: 4♣. I'll give partner a gentle boost, he/she can't have much of a hand which makes 5C unlikely.

J.S.: Not much of a hand is needed to make eleven tricks in clubs an excellent bet. For example:

Tritt: 4♣. We could still have game opposite as little as ♠xxx♥xx♦xx♣Axxxx so I feel I need to invite. Additionally, I will bid 4♣ if the opponents compete to 3♣, so I might as well bid it now. Hopefully, partner will realize that I am raising on controls, so a hand with secondary values, such as ♠xxx♥x♦KQx♣QJxxxx, will not be deemed an acceptance.

Janitschke: 5♣. Just AJxxxx of clubs and out gives me a shot.

J.S.: Really, the club ace is the critical card. Even the club jack is window dressing. Without the club ace partner will need the unlikely spade ace, or at least the spade king and enough in diamonds to keep the defenders at bay in that suit while the long heart(s) is established.

Kantar: 4♣. This contract should be safe and 5♣ could easily be on if partner has the club ace and the diamond king or even the diamond queen-jack. If partner only had clubs, he should have bid 3♣, preemptive.

J.S.: Partner doesn't need that extra stuff is he holds the club ace and only four red cards. A better question than my original "What does partner need for 3♣?" is "What does partner need to accept a 4♣ invitational raise?"

Gaer: 3♣, on the off chance that partner has something like ♠Kx♥xx♦xxx♣Axxxx. If not, if he retreats to 4♣ we should be okay no matter what he has.

J.S.: I think 3♣ confuses the issue with 3NT so very unlikely. But I'm not certain we have managed to unravel any bidding mysteries anyway. For the record, I bid 5♣ at the table and partner had cards I would not bring into the house - they would have gone directly to the garbage can.

Problem 3.

None vul, IMP scoring

♠842♥87♦Q642♣A653

North	East	South	West
2♣	2♣	Pass*	Pass
3♥	Pass	?	
*4+ HCP			

Meltzer: 4♥. Not much else is appealing, happy to bid 5♣ over 4♣ if partner cue bids.

Janitschke: 4♥. What else?

J.S.: There always seems to be something else.

Gaer: 4♣. Partner likely has a solid suit, so I will cue bid in support.

Kantar: 3♣. Looking for 3NT or a possible second suit. The problem is: will partner know what I am doing?

I think most partners will - 3♣ should be a kind of waiting bid. Restricting it to heart slam interest with spade control gives up way too much flexibility.

Tritt: 3♣. My first thought was 4♥, since I have heart tolerance and a pretty normal hand for the pass. However, we could have a minor suit slam which may be missed if partner does not see a reason to move over 4♥. Partner could have, for example: ♠x, ♥AKQ10x♦AKxx♣KQx or ♠x, ♥AKQ10x♦AKxxx♣Kx. If partner bids 3NT or 4♥, I will sit. If 4♣ I will raise to 5♣. If 4♦, I will bid 6♦. I would like to try 5♣ as a cue for diamonds, but am concerned it could be read as a cue for hearts.

J.S.: In deference to the non-3♣ bidders

Master Solvers Panel

we must ask how partner would continue with something like: ♠xx♥AKQJxx♦AK♣QJ. I think 5♥ is correct (you are looking at three losers). However, one can imagine partner going overboard if there has been no discussion of the merits of 3♣ as non-committal.

Problem 4.

East/West vul, IMP scoring

♠K7♥8432♦KQ♣Q10752

East	South	West	North
1♥	Pass	Pass	2♠
Pass	?		

Kantar: 4♠. This must be a trap. It looks so obvious. (Did I fall in?)

J.S.: In my view you did, but there is comfort in that perhaps the remainder of the bridge world is in full support.

Janitschke: 4♠. Don't most play this 2♠ call as a pretty good hand, e.g., ♠AQJxxx♥x♦Axx♣Kxx?

Gaer: 4♠. What else?

J.S.: Stay tuned.

Meltzer: 4♠, especially at IMP scoring.

Tritt: 4♠. Partner has shown an intermediate hand with six or more spades. Game in spades looks odds-on, but can there be a slam if partner has the right hand? If he has a stiff heart, he will need AQ(J)xxx of spades, plus the ace of diamonds and the ace-king of clubs - a hand too strong for an intermediate jump in spades. It looks as though the only hand with play for slam would be a hand with a heart void, no-loser spades, a minor suit ace and the club king - plus perhaps the right minor suit jack. Even that hand seems to me too strong for an intermediate jump. So I will just bid game in spades.

J.S.: The idea is not that slam is possible but to allow partner to bid 3NT. A 3♥ bid by you is a strong spade raise, not a request for partner to bid 3NT with a heart stopper - you did not bid over 1♥. If partner does bid 3NT you can be reasonably certain that it will be the best game. (Would partner try 3NT with: ♠AQJxxx♥Kx♦Jxx♣Kx? Maybe so, but you are far from a lock in 4♠ opposite that hand.) If partner bids a quiet 3S you can still raise to game. Perhaps I am too influenced by the actual deal, partner holding: ♠AQJ1092♥AK♦876♣J3 (hearts were 6-1).

Presidents' Comments



Jerry Fleming
2009 ACBL President

In addition to the many wonderful tournaments and organizers we have in the area covered by the Western Conference, we have a pair of extraordinary volunteers who deserve any and all accolades passed their way. Ken Monzingo from San Diego (District 22) and Bonnie Bagley from Colorado Springs (District 17) have been instrumental in managing two extremely successful NABCs during the past 17 months. Those are the Las Vegas and San Diego tournaments. None of us can imagine all the work that goes into the making of a successful NABC, but Ken and Bonnie have "been there and done that," not once but twice - three times if you count their efforts in Denver a few short years ago.

On behalf of the ACBL and the ACBL Board of Directors, I thank both Ken and Bonnie for all they have done for ACBL and its community of bridge players. You've made me proud and have enhanced the image of the league and what it represents.

Thanks To Some Special Volunteers

On behalf of the board, I would like to issue our thanks to the following District 22 members who contributed countless hours of their time and talents so that everyone in attendance at the San Diego Nationals could enjoy Peter Rank's production of the bridge musical "My Fair (Little Old) Lady." In alphabetical order, they are:

Problem 5.

None vul, IMP scoring

♠AKJ82♥6♦AJ875♣A8

East	South	West	North
2♥	?		

Tritt: 4♦ (assuming Roman jumps apply). I am willing to play at the four-level because of the advantage of showing the five-five distribution in one bid, which will help partner's decision making. Obviously, I could go for a number, but it won't be the first time that has happened and I think the risk is outweighed by the long term gains of showing the two-suiter. Not playing Roman jumps, I would just bid 2♠. The stiff heart suggests the auction will not die - unless perhaps it should die - and I may get the chance to double hearts later, correcting clubs to diamonds (unless partner jumps to 5♣, which I will pass).

Meltzer: 4♦ showing diamonds and spades if you have that understanding. Otherwise double; just bidding 2♠ is too weak a bid.

Janitschke: 4♦. Showing at least five spades and five diamonds and is intended as forcing. Yes, I'm a little light, but this is preferable to (1) bidding (and playing) 2♠ opposite, say, ♠xx♥Qxxx♦Kxxx♣Kxx, or doubling and trying to sort this hand out later.

Gaer: 4♦. I play Roman Jumps, so this shows a good hand with five plus spades and five plus diamonds. This is the exact hand the convention was invented for.

Kantar: 4♦. Why I play Leaping Michaels. Nevertheless, I have an uneasy feeling about this bid. John, couldn't you have given me, an old friend, the diamond ten?

[**J.S.:** Both Leaping Michaels (showing the suit bid and the other major) and Roman Jumps (showing the suit bid and the next higher - not including the opponent's suit) would use 4♦ here.] Eddie suspects that this is not the right hand for 4♦ and I do also. The diamond suit is a bit shabby, the defense is too good relative to the offense, and the hand is quite suitable to play in notrump or clubs in addition to the pointed suits. I favor the simple 2♠ overcall, well prepared for a takeout double should West compete. I don't know if I have converted anyone to my view but at least I was spared a "What else?"

Anita Burgis, Letha Couch, Cheryl Fosdick, Bill Grant, Lori Hamm, Julie Halliday, Joel Hoersch, Sam Jordan, Mary Scott Knoll, Sheila Latus, Nate McCay, Greg Michaels, Judy Rimer and Virginia Wolford.

In addition, I am told that four other members of the cast and crew - David Andrews, Melani Bruce, David A. Clark and Diana Halliday - at this time are connected to bridge only through family or long-time friendship. We hope that they will heed Eliza Bidlittle's observation when she sang "I Could Have Played All Night" - "... And now I know / Why bridge is so exciting ..."

Thanks again, and come join us at the tables!



Rich DeMartino
2010 ACBL President

Hi Everyone:

I'm pleased to report that the ACBL will be offering a free service to all clubs to have results posted on the ACBL website within minutes after the end of the game. I understand that instructions will be released to all club owners within the next few days. We certainly hope that providing this new service will benefit the clubs who choose to use the service (it will be optional) and we also anticipate that having club results available so quickly will be a benefit to our players.

[*Editor's Note: President Fleming is scheduled to pass the gavel on to incoming President DeMartino at the just concluded Palm Springs Regional. The tradition, as always, will be attended by several former ACBL Presidents*]