



By John Swanson
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This month's problems are from "Famous Bidding Decisions," a collection of bidding situations culled from top-level play. The authors, Terence Reese and David Bird, offered five possible calls for each hand, then presented their analysis and awarded a point score of 1 to 5 for each of these calls. There are 60 hands in the book, but because bidding has improved so much over the years and the auctions given are littered with previous bad bids, it was not easy to find five problems for our panel. Many of the deals are from international play, so I decided that we should have an international panel. At the recent National tournament in Washington, D.C. I imposed on the following bridge stars to shed light on these problems.

Tim Bourke is one of the best players in Australia. You may not recognize the name because due to an injury he retired from active play a few years back. His bridge activity has been primarily devoted to forming the world's greatest collection of bridge writing: books, magazine, pamphlets - and he's read them all. He has authored or co-authored several bridge books. He wasn't in D.C. to play, he was researching bridge publications at the Library of Congress. Tim also collects and composes bridge problems. As an ironic note, considering the source of these problems, Tim has supplied many of the hands for David Bird's 'Abbot' bridge books.

Adam Zmudzinski (together with partner Cezary Balicki) form the best of the many outstanding bridge pairs from Poland. They travel across the globe to play bridge - not occasionally, but seemingly each week. I saw Adam at the Monterey Regional last year - he had been in Moscow the week before playing the World Golash Bridge Championship ... winning, of course. Adam's system of choice is the Polish Club, but he is attuned to some of the difficulties bidding with Standard Ameri-

can.

Huub Bertens (with partner Ton Bakkeren) are one of a group of five or six pairs in the Netherlands who are paid (yes, paid) by Dutch bridge and government organizations to practice their partnerships against each other every Friday. Their national team is selected each year from this group. Their most recent big win was the Yeh Bros Cup held in Australia, garnering the \$70,000 prize. Their system is similar to our five-card majors, but they have many useful adjuncts.

John Mohan's bridge achievements include winning five Vanderbilts, a Spingold, Blue Ribbon Pairs, LM Pairs, and about a dozen other National events. Internationally, John has won national events in Japan and South Africa, and Gold for the Senior Bowl and Transnational Mixed teams. He has an additional qualification for this international panel: he and his wife Magy live in Mexico City.

Given the talent and experience of this panel, I will take added pleasure from criticizing any call with which I disagree.

Problem 1.

N/S vulnerable, IMP scoring
As South, you hold

♠A5432 ♥J43 ♦53 ♣A65

East	South	West	North
5♣	Pass	Pass	Dbl
Pass	?		

JS: This hand is from an international par contest. Reese and Bird gave my choice, pass, a zero. I regard their proposed call, 6♣, as lunacy. May I have some support from the panel, please?

Bourke: Pass. 5♣ seems too much of a guess to warrant trying it. Also, we should defeat 5♣ in comfort.

Mohan: Pass. I assume that this is an opening lead problem: I will try ace of trump, because I hate to lose aces! (Seriously, I should be able to extract maximum after seeing dummy.) The expected result is +500 or +800 when you are mak-

ing, and +300 or +500 when you are in jeopardy at 5♣.

Bertens: Pass. We have a firm agreement about this one, since we play pure penalty doubles if opponents open at the 5 level. It's more often you have a 5-4-3-1 or something like that with a couple of aces than a pure takeout double. I have no clue if we can make anything at all, but I am very sure we can beat 5♣. Another advantage of playing double as we do is that if you bid partner does not have to be afraid that it is because he doubled, but because you really have something to tell. So bidding at the 5 level is for us almost like invitational for a slam. This hand doesn't come even close, but there could be a good slam.

JS: Yes, partner could have enough to make slam a good bet. That is why 5♣ has to be considered.

Zmudzinski: 5♣. Should mean something. Partner can raise. Double is passable with moderate values or a flat hand.

JS: To me 5♣ would be much more attractive if I held good spades spots, and would be my choice if the other ace was in a red suit, where it would support partner's secondary honors.

In the contest, opening bidder was 0-0-4-9 (!) and partner held: ♠KQ1076, ♥AKQ, ♦AKQ2, ♣3. Wasn't that a useful holding opposite a 6♣ call? Even so, 7♣ fails from partner's side after a club ruff, and to make 7NT you must finesse the spade ten on the first round of the suit to successfully execute a squeeze.

Problem 2.

None vul, IMP scoring
As South, you hold

♠762 ♥A108 ♦A10853 ♣106

East	South	West	North
Pass	Pass	1♥	Dbl
Pass	2♦	2♥	3♦
3♥	?		

JS: You have at least an ace more than partner might expect for a simple 2♦ response to the takeout double. But in view of

the opponents' limited calls partner is going to infer some high cards in your hand and is entitled to raise with not much more than his original values, assuming it includes four diamonds and a singleton heart. On the flip side, he could hold significant extra values. Is there a way to know?

Bertens: Double. We play 2NT as good-bad here, so the 3♦ bid shows a (very) strong hand. I have the wrong holding for 3NT; I would bid that with the ♥K, or ♥QJ. The ace makes my hand too strong. But giving up on 3NT is too difficult for me. If partner bids 3♣ I will bid 3NT and on any other bid from him I will cue bid my heart ace before calling 5♦.

JS: Good-bad 2NT is the use of 2NT as artificial in many competitive auctions to indicate a hand with limited values. Thus, an immediate suit bid is a very good hand. This is same concept as the Lebensohl convention used when opponents interfere with your 1NT opening bid. (In fact, I would like to get rid of the 'good-bad' designation and always call an artificial, competitive 2NT Lebensohl.)

Mohan: Double. The only sensible game try; otherwise just bid 5♦ and see if you can make it. Partner would have to hold a very specific hand to make 3NT and not 5♦.

JS: Some kind of game try is in order regardless of the strength of partner's 3♦ call. Double is certainly the most flexible. Partner should not guess that you hold ♥QJ109 and an ace (with such a hand you would have responded 1NT initially). If you are not comfortable with double, then 3♣ or 4♣ should announce game interest.

Zmudzinski: 3NT. My 2♦ didn't promise any values. I think 3NT is not a final verdict. With a hand suitable for a suit contract (eg. 4-1-4-4 or 4-3-1-5 distributions) partner can bid 4♦. Partner should know that I do not have six diamonds and two aces, otherwise I would bid 3♦ immediately.

Bourke: 5♦. I was about to pass, but then I saw that I had two red aces opposite a partner who should be short in hearts with most

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Saturday, Oct. 24- Stratified Open & 199'er pairs 9:00 AM, 1:30 PM & 7:00 PM; Single Sessions
KOKOPELLI Bracketed Knockout - 9:00 AM, 1:30 PM, & 7:00 PM; (3 ROUNDS)
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Sunday, Oct. 25 - SWISS Teams - Double Session - 10:00 A.M.

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Tournament Chair:
Darryl Helton
928-284-9245
marshahelt@aol.com

Partnership Chairs:
Fran Edmond 928-445-7716 - franedmond@webtv.net
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