



Cambs & Hunts Bridge



Newsletter Number 24

31 December 1999

Editors: **Chris Jagger**, 2 Wycliffe Road, Cambridge CB1 3JD, Tel: 01223-526586 and
Jonathan Mestel, 180 Queen's Gate, London SW7 2BZ, Tel: 01223-329671.

E-mail: ajm8@cam.ac.uk or cnj10@dpmmms.cam.ac.uk

Unofficial web page: <http://members.aol.com/gilescw/chcba.html>

The next newsletter is scheduled to appear on **30th April**. Please try to get copy to us no later than **15th April**. All contributions welcome!



The County is now on the hunt for a new County Secretary – talk to Eryl Howard or any of the County committee if interested.

Do you know anybody interested in learning bridge? The new 'Bridge for All' scheme is a nationally accredited scheme which guarantees quality materials, teaching, and consistency from one area to another. Why not encourage a friend to sign up for your local 'Bridge for All' class.

There was never a better time than now to pay your EBU subs by Direct Debit, ensuring it is processed smoothly and automatically, year after year. Contact the EBU for further details.

We hear of a successful joint venture in Darlington. Three clubs have joined together to buy new shared premises. Whilst each club is going to retain control and its individuality, gone are the days of hunting for venues, putting out bridge tables, waiting until next week to see to see the scores, collecting keys. Come are the days of the on site bars, instant computer scoring, sharing of resources, more adequate playing space, availability for extra events. Isn't it time that Cambridge had its own bridge venue?!



In this issue Ann Curtin confesses a recent vice, while a letter from England international Alan Mould improves on the analysis of last Newsletter. Chris Jagger discusses when 4NT is and isn't Blackwood, and how to bid over a 1NT overcall. He also presents a hand illustrating some techniques of card-placing. Jonathan Mestel proposes a competition to find the best bidding system in 'four card bridge.' There is the usual round-up of news and events.



THE VICE SQUEEZE *by Ann Curtin*

This article is to give encouragement to all those average players, like me, who do their best, but find that the finer points of declarer play are often elusive. Occasionally, for whatever reasons, the adrenaline is flowing, you have a clear picture of the hand and play it really well. Your partner doesn't notice but fortunately you are playing against a most friendly and lively Australian who is so interested in the hand, and so impressed by your play, he decides to write it up for the **Australian Bridge Magazine**. Here is his article:

False Impressions *by Michael Courtney*

Bridge books and articles tend to give one or two utterly false impressions. The first is that the winning line is something like a miracle, only approachable by divine inspiration. The second is that the expert unerringly finds the correct line. Here I give a problem, from my own recent play, that confute both of these extreme views.

Try to solve it, certainly, but when you read the answer remember these two points:

Firstly, that finding the winning answer required only care and particularly, arithmetic. Secondly, that a so-called-expert failed to find the solution on the deal. Believe me, 'cause I was that "expert" ... Cover the West and South hands if you want to follow my problem.

	♠ 95							
	♥ K863							
	♦ K1072							
	♣ Q109							
♠ KQ62	<table style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> </table>		N		W	S	E	♠ 873
	N							
W	S	E						
♥ 9		♥ Q1072						
♦ QJ65		♦ A83						
♣ 7642		♣ A85						
	♠ AJ104							
	♥ AJ54							
	♦ 94							
	♣ KJ3							

Margaret	John	Michael	Ann
P		P	1NT
all pass			

This deal is from a Swiss Teams. Partner, Margaret Courtney, leads ♠2, dummy plays low and your seven draws the ten. Declarer continues with a heart to dummy's king and a heart to her jack. Partner discards ♣4. Now declarer advances ♣J, partner plays ♣2 and declarer plays ♣9 from dummy.

Partner's failure to make a takeout bid, her choice of a fourth-highest ♠2 lead and the count signals in clubs, combine to say it all: Partner has a 4-1-4-4 shape. So declarer is 4-4-2-3.

You win ♣A and return ♠8, and it goes ♠6, ♠Q, ♠9.

Partner now exits with a low diamond. This is a tad odd given dummy's holding. Partner probably holds QJxx, and is playing us for the nine. When you slot the eight over dummy's deuce, declarer wins the nine.

Declarer now plays ♣6 to dummy's ten and continues with a low heart. When you follow, declarer ducks.

What is happening in this picture?

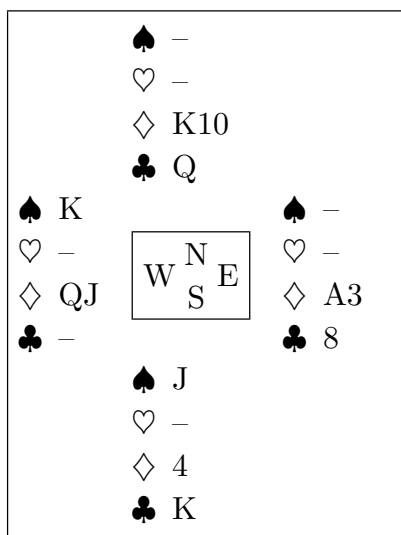
Clearly you won't beat the contract. Overtricks at IMP scoring, however, are of great

importance (in spite of popular myth to the contrary).

How do you play to take as many tricks as possible for your side?

It is important. We (the Courtneys with Vivian & Tony Priday) lost this match by 1 IMP to nil and that was 9-11 in Victory Points. This was certainly (as many Australians will attest) the lowest IMP turnover match I have ever played.

The whole hand is more or less known. Did you lazily return a spade? If you did, declarer won the ace and cashed her winners. Partner was vice-squeezed on the last of these:



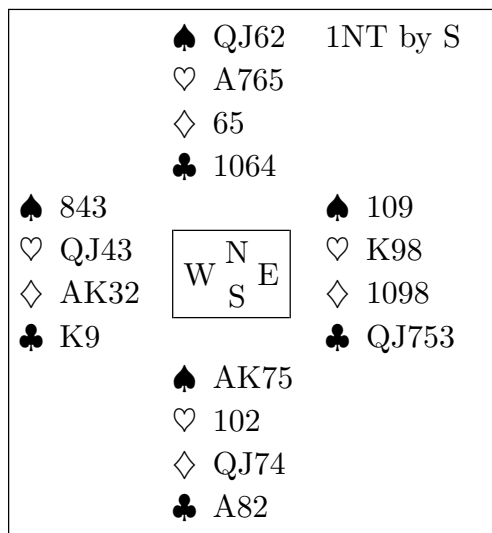
On the play of ♣K West must part with a diamond honour lest ♠J score. A diamond play now produces a ninth trick from dummy's ten.

This is an example of the vice squeeze, introduced to the world by Terence Reese in *The Expert Game*, written around 1960.

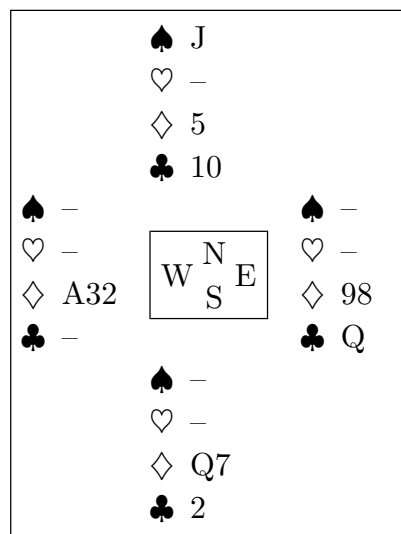
Declarer played well and deliberately to effect this rare coup - it was the point of ducking the third heart. Even so, you could have kept her to eight tricks! How? By cashing ♦A before exiting with any card but a diamond. That was easy, because you knew her shape, so you knew declarer had no entry to dummy. Even without knowing the ending you and I should have got this right.



Addendum by JM: I accidentally played a vice squeeze once:



I won the ♥3 lead in dummy and led a club to the 8 and 9, mainly to encourage them to lead diamonds. A heart to the K was followed by ♦10 to the J and K, and West cashed two more hearts on which I threw a spade and a diamond. West now exited with the ♣K. I won and cashed 4 spades on the last of which the position was:



East is forced to throw a diamond and the 7 comes into its own.

I couldn't honestly say I'd foreseen the end-position at trick 1...

Card Reading *by* Chris Jagger

Playing a bridge hand is all about detective work. Even before dummy goes down, we should have many clues about opponents hands, and once we see the opening lead, nearly the whole hand may unfold.

Love all	♠ A104	Dealer
	♥ J105	North
	♦ AK42	
	♣ A62	
♠ J2		♠ K8
♥ AQ43	W N	♥ K962
♦ QJ8	W S E	♦ 7653
♣ K1053		♣ QJ8
	♠ Q97653	
	♥ 87	
	♦ 109	
	♣ 974	

North	East	South	West
1♦	P	P	1NT
P	P	2♠	all pass

The auction has been very revealing. West has shown 11-14 points with a balanced hand, giving East 8-11 points, and, judging by his painless pass, probably not an eleven count. One would guess that neither defender has a five card heart suit – there has been plenty of chance of bidding it, either as an overcall, or transferring out of 1NT. The lead of the ♣3 indicates that the clubs are 4-3, although we don't know which hand has the four. The diamonds are also likely to be 4-3, as with five West would have surely preferred to let opponents play in that suit as trumps, and with as few as two he would presumably have made a take out double or overcall.

Thus far we are guessing that West has 12-14 points, East 8-10 points, the hearts are 4-4, the clubs and diamonds 4-3. Thus the spades are no worse than 3-1.

What about the actual position of the high cards? It seems likely that West holds at least one diamond honour. He doesn't have KQ or QJ of clubs, as he would not have underled them against a suit contract. He would probably lead a heart holding the AK or KQ, so those holdings are less likely too.

So far we have only seen dummy and the opening lead, and fortunately we can still find out more by playing the hand. Whilst it would be foolish to put too much faith in our analysis so far, it certainly seems as if there is no danger of any of our tricks being ruffed, so we do not need to play trumps yet. Indeed, with a certain four outside losers, we merely need to avoid losing more than one trump trick, so it would be wise to find out more information before we tackle the trump suit.

We duck the lead to the jack, and the ♣Q is returned. After winning the ace, we exit with a club to the nine and West's king. He switches to the ♦Q to the ace. We run the ♥J, East playing low and West winning with the ♥Q. We are now in a very good position to count the hand. We know about all the club honours, and it would seem as though West has ♦QJ. I don't think East would duck with ♥AK, so it looks like West has one of those too.

By now I'm guessing that West has ?? AQxx QJx K10xx. Possibly the hearts are only KQxx, and possibly he has one fewer club or heart and an extra diamond or spade. Either way, he has at least eleven points so far, and ♠KJx would give him more than a fourteen count. It now seems safe to play ace and another spade for eight tricks.

The full hand was much as we anticipated. Don't tell me you'd have made the contract half an hour ago! As the cards lie, you probably would!



Letter to the editors:

Dear Editors,

It strikes me that you give people far too powerful hands when they are making 7NT in the “help” situations (Newsletter 23). Look at all that distribution! So useful in no trumps.

It is perfectly possible to make 7NT with much more balanced hands, e.g.

	♠ 975	7NT by S	
	♥ 98765		
	♦ 97		
	♣ 876		
♠ AKQJ10864			♠ -
♥ AK			♥ QJ10
♦ -			♦ AKQJ1086
♣ AKQ			♣ J109
	♠ 32		
	♥ 432		
	♦ 5432		
	♣ 5432		

South opens 7NT which floats. West makes the Attitude lead of a low spade and North cashes three spades and two diamonds. East-West take the opportunity to signal profusely in hearts. The hearts are then run and East-West have plenty of time to take care of their clubs. Lucky North had such a good hand for South!

I wanted to produce a solution where South has the worst possible hand (432, 432, 432, 5432) and North still has a Yarborough, but I

cannot find one. The best I can do is:

	♠ 86	7NT by S	
	♥ 8765		
	♦ 86		
	♣ 109876		
♠ AKQJ10975			♠ -
♥ AKQ			♥ QJ10
♦ -			♦ AKQJ10975
♣ AK			♣ QJ
	♠ 432		
	♥ 432		
	♦ 432		
	♣ 5432		

Can you improve on this?

Alan Mould, Manchester.

Ed: Well well. Who would have guessed that the readership of C & H Newsletter included players so distant and so exalted!? So that's how Gold Cup winners prepare for their matches... Thanks to Alan for his correction.



The man who locked himself in dummy



(Webster).



RESULTS ROUNDUP

In the **County Knockout** there have been a record 22 entries. Results so far from the Preliminary Round TAHSEEN bt CURTIN, PAL bt MAY, ASHE bt RILEY, KEEVASH bt JONES, COPPING bt SHAW. Into Round one, we have LARLHAM bt COPPING, and LAST bt MAN.

The **Newmarket Swiss Teams** was won by Ann Curtin, Tapan Pal, Peter Shawdon and John Turner.

In the **Eastern Counties League** against Herts the A team won 8-4, the B team lost 0-12 and the C team 2-10.

The A team now has 28VPs from 4 matches and is in second place, 1VP behind Essex. The B team has 19 from 4 and is 5th, while the C team has 16 from 4 and lies 6th.

In the **South Cambs League**, Cottenham, Saffron Walden, and Thursday are tying with 3 wins each, although Thursday have played more games.

In the **Tollemache Qualifying Round**, the County (Barden, Jagger, Kendrick, Linfield, Mestel, Warren, Wightwick, Young) finished second in its group after a nail-biting finish, to qualify for the fourth time in five years. They qualified on a split tie, exacting revenge for their worst recent result, when they lost on a split tie. Apparently this makes Cambs the most consistent county in the country! NPC Chris Larlham is especially to be congratulated on this achievement, for the calm manner in which he stoically recorded disasters while keeping tempers low, and factually observing "We can still do it!"

Other results:

Young and Roberts came 3rd in the **Two Stars Final** at **Bournemouth**, whilst Woodruff was in a team coming third in the Multiple teams, and Kendrick 5th.

Jagger, Jagger, Linfield and Young got through to the last eight of the **Hubert Phillips** competition.

Woodruff was in a team reaching the final of the **National Men's Teams**, whilst Jagger reached the semifinal of the **Women's Teams**.

In the **Year End Congress**, Michael Ashe won the Charity Pairs. Giles Woodruff and Chris Jagger were 2nd in the main pairs, while Catherine Jagger was 2nd in the women's pairs. John Young and the Jagers came 2nd in the Swiss teams.

Around the clubs:

Cambridge Club: The Marie Johnson Trophy was won by Jagger, Jagger, Wightwick and Young, whilst the May Pamplin Swiss Teams was won by Jagger, Jagger, Linfield, Mestel and Woodruff.



