

Victorian Bridge Association Bulletin

March 2012

Editor: Bill Jacobs

COMPETITIVE BIDDING QUIZ

Try this bidding quiz, separately to your favourite partner ... then compare your choices. You are sitting North-South.

1.	West	North	East	South
	1♥	1♠	2♣	D'ble

What is double?

2.	West	North	East	South
	Pass	1♦ 3♥	2♦	3♦

2♦ shows the majors. What does 3♥ mean?

3.	West	North	East	South
	D'ble	2NT ?	Pass	3♣

North has various options: pass, bid, redouble. Do you know what they show?

4.	West	North	East	South
	D'ble	1NT ?	Pass	2♥

Same question. Assuming South has shown spades, and West has doubled to show hearts, what should North do?

5.	West	North	East	South
	Pass	1♦ D'ble	1♠ Red'ble	Pass Pass

What is South saying, if anything?

6.	West	North	East	South
	D'ble	1♠ ?	2♦	4♦

Once again, North has some options. Can you assign meanings to Pass, Redouble, 4♥ and 4♠?

7.	West	North	East	South
	1♦	D'ble	1♠	D'ble

What is South's double? Penalties? Takeout? Would your answer be different if East had *jumped* to 2♠?

8.	West	North	East	South
		2♣	2♠	?

Assuming North's opening is strong and artificial, what meanings apply to South's next bid?

9.	West	North	East	South
		1♥	D'ble	2♣

Is 2♣ forcing or non-forcing? What would a 3♣ bid mean instead?

10.	West	North	East	South
	3♥ Pass	D'ble 4♥	Pass	4♦

What's North doing? Is he cue-bidding towards a diamond slam? Or has he got some other contract in mind?

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FOR STARTERS
Bill Jacobs

With everyone vulnerable, you hold:

♠ A842 ♥ AJ95 ♦ 6 ♣ KJ92

As dealer, you open 1♣, and your left-hand opponent overcalls 2♦: a weak jump overcall suggesting a 6-card suit and less than opening values.

Both your partner and your right-hand opponent pass this, leaving you to decide what to do in this auction:

West	North	East	South
<i>Partner</i>		<i>You</i>	
		1♣	2♦
Pass	Pass	?	

Do you keep the bidding alive, or pass out 2♦?

It would be rather timid to sell out to 2♦, and you have an appropriate bid available: a takeout double.

Shortness in the opponent's suit is a good indicator that you should not sell out to the opposition at a low level. If partner has a 4-card suit outside of diamonds, then you have an 8-card fit to bid to; and if he doesn't, then he has at least 4 diamonds, and perhaps you can defend successfully in 2♦ doubled.

If partner has some rubbish 3343 hand (4 diamonds), then maybe your side is in trouble – but this is relatively unlikely. Bidding often involves some measure of risk, and if you take the attitude that you should pass out 2♦ because "maybe we can't make anything or defeat 2♦" then you are going to lose in the long run.

You double 2♦, and the bidding continues:

West	North	East	South
<i>Partner</i>		<i>You</i>	
		1♣	2♦
Pass	Pass	D'ble	Pass
2♥	3♦	?	

Now what?

Now you can pass with a clear conscience. You have pushed them up a level, and any further move by your side is up to partner.

No one has anything else to say, so 3♦ is the final contract. Partner leads ♥7, and you see:

Dir: East
Vul: All

♠ KQJ10
♥ K3
♦ 10873
♣ A87

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ A842
♥ AJ95
♦ 6
♣ KJ92

On partner's ♥7, declarer plays the ♥3 from dummy. What do you do?

Since partner bid 2♥, you can assume he has length in that suit. This means he has probably led his 4th best heart.

Now that's interesting, because looking at your and dummy's hearts, there are only three hearts higher than the 7 that are out there: the queen, 10 and 8. If partner has truly led his 4th best heart, then he has all the higher hearts that are missing, and therefore declarer cannot beat the ♥7.

What does that suggest you do?

You can let partner win his ♥7. This may surprise him a bit, but you hope he will soon realise that a club shift may be helpful.

Here is the full deal:

Dir: East
Vul: All

♠ 753
♥ Q1087
♦ K4
♣ 10543

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ A842
♥ AJ95
♦ 6
♣ KJ92

♠ 96
♥ 642
♦ AQJ952
♣ Q6

The club shift has to come from partner: declarer must let you win your ♣K, and will lose five tricks in all: two hearts, and one in each other suit. If you had won the first heart trick, you could not attack clubs, and declarer would have the time to play the spades and discard his club loser.

Points to remember:

- Shortage in the opponents' suit is usually an indicator that you should not give up the bidding too low. Look for ways to re-enter the auction: often a takeout double is best, because it gives partner the option of playing for penalties.
- The arithmetic of 4th best leads can sometimes be very useful. In this example, only three higher cards were unseen to you: so partner had to have them!



THE TWELFTH TRICK

Dealer: S ♠ 7
 Vul: N/S ♥ A8632
 IMPs ♦ 9865
 ♣ KJ2

N
S

♠ A53
 ♥ K5
 ♦ AQ
 ♣ A108764

West	North	East	South
			1♣
Pass	1♥	Pass	3♣
Pass	4♠	Pass	4NT
Pass	5♥	Pass	6♣
Pass	Pass	Pass	

West leads ♣3. Plan the play

Solution on page 7.



SETTING TRICK - PROBLEMS

Problem 1:

Dlr: West ♠ K1095
 Vul: nil ♥ A65
 ♦ 3
 ♣ AK954

♠ Q8643	N	
♥ J87	W	E
♦ Q72	S	
♣ J8		

West	North	East	South
Pass	2♦*	3♦	4♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

* Precision: 3 suits, short diamonds

For some good reason, you start with ♣J, partner signalling even. This runs to declarer's ♣Q. Next comes ♥Q, which runs to partner's ♥K. Back comes another low club, and declarer's ♣10 wins. Now declarer plays ♥9.

Can you see a defence?

Problem 2:

Dlr: North ♠ Q2
 Vul: All ♥ KJ102
 ♦ 984
 ♣ AKQJ

♠ A874	N	
♥ -	W	E
♦ AKJ1053	S	
♣ 1073		

West	North	East	South
	1NT*	3♦	4♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

* 15-17 HCP

Partner's lead is ♦2, low from three presumably, and your ♦K wins, South contributing ♦7.

How do you assess your prospects and what is your next card?

Solutions on page 7.



SYSTEM MUSINGS
Bill Jacobs

Earlier in this series, I presented this table:

	% of auctions	Average IMP swing
Non-competitive	44%	3.4
Competitive	56%	5.2

If this data is to be believed, discussing competitive auctions with your partner might be just as valuable as agreeing basic non-competitive system.

The quiz presented on page 1 presents a stern test of competitive system. Only the most finely tuned of partnerships will independently agree on the answers. There are no absolute right or wrong answers: a "right" answer is one which is the same as your partner's.

Here are some suggested answers, which at least may serve as a discussion point with your partner.

1. West North East South
 1♥ 1♠ 2♣ D'ble
 What is double?

There's not a lot of mileage in a penalty double here. The opponents have not exactly gone out on a limb. But a takeout double with only one unbid suit also seems strange.

A possible meaning is for this double to show at least 5 cards in the fourth suit (diamonds here), whilst including some tolerance, typically a doubleton, for your partner's suit. This is called a "Snapdragon" double.

2. West North East South
 Pass 1♦ 2♦ 3♦
 3♥
 2♦ shows the majors. What does 3♥ mean?

You need to sort out the stopper situation for 3NT, with the opponents having shown two suits. It doesn't matter much what you play here ... whether a double shows a heart stopper and asks for a spade stopper, or vice

versa ... just as long as you agree with partner.

3. West North East South
 D'ble 2NT Pass 3♣
 ?
 North has various options: pass, bid, redouble. Do you know what they show?

Again, there's no magic right answer, only partnership agreement. Here's one possible scheme for when Stayman-type bids are doubled:

- Redouble: shows 4+ clubs, suggesting we play right here – that will teach your opponents!
 Pass: denies a club stopper ... partner redoubles to force you to respond to Stayman
 Bid: Your normal response to 3♣, but including a club stopper

4. West North East South
 D'ble 1NT Pass 2♥
 ?
 Same question. Assuming South has shown spades, and West has doubled to show hearts, what should North do?

This is common practice:

- Redouble: maximum, with spade support
 Pass: no spade support
 2♠: minimum with spade support

5. West North East South
 Pass 1♦ 1♠ Pass
 D'ble Red'ble Pass
 What is South showing, if anything?

Does South want to defend 1♠ redoubled? Perhaps he was planning to pass the double. Or does South have nothing to say, and wants partner to bid naturally?

My rule is that you play this pass as penalties if the passer is sitting *over* the player that has shown the suit, but is neutral (expecting partner to bid) if under the suit. For example, in this auction:

5a.	West	North	East	South
		1♦	1♠	D'ble
	Red'ble	?		

North's pass would be saying nothing ... perhaps he has some 3343 shape with no spade stopper ... because he is sitting *under* the spade bidder. North is very very unlikely to have started with a penalty pass of 1♠ doubled.

6.	West	North	East	South
		1♠	2♦	4♦
	D'ble	?		

Once again, North has some options. Can you assign meanings to Pass, Redouble, 4♥ and 4♠?

This is an important class of auction. When an artificial bid is doubled, there are so many choices. Here's one possible scheme:

- Pass: nothing to say, but interested in slam
- Redouble: 1st round control in diamonds
- 4♥: cue-bid – denies 1st round control in diamonds
- 4♠: no interest in slam

The rule that a fast exit to our agreed suit shows no interest in higher contracts is one that has many applications: for example:

6a.	West	North	East	South
	1♦	1♠	Pass	2♦
	D'ble	?		

In this auction, South's 2♦ might be a "cue-raise": spade support in a decent hand. When West doubles this, North can bid 2♠ to say: "thanks but no thanks: I have a very minimum overcall". Any other bid, such as pass or redouble, shows interest in higher things.

7.	West	North	East	South
	1♦	D'ble	1♠	D'ble

What is South's double? Penalties? Takeout? Would your answer be different if East had jumped to 2♠?

This just needs agreement. Any agreement works, as long as it exists!

8.	West	North	East	South
		2♣	2♠	?

Assuming North's opening is strong and artificial, what meanings apply to South's next bid?

Again there is no right or wrong. Some top partnerships play that a double here by responder shows extreme weakness, about 0-4 points. Any other bid, including pass, shows some values.

9.	West	North	East	South
		1♥	D'ble	2♣

Is 2♣ forcing or non-forcing? What would a 3♣ bid mean instead?

Classically, 2♣ is a non-forcing bid here, all stronger hands starting with a redouble. But many partnerships allow themselves to ignore the double, and retain original meanings to all responses (although you can still have the redouble in place to try to catch the opponents).

10.	West	North	East	South
	3♥	D'ble	Pass	4♦
	Pass	4♥		

What's North doing? Is he cue-bidding towards a diamond slam? Or has he got some other contract in mind?

This is a messy auction. Doubler could have:
 A. ♠ AKQx ♥ A ♦ AQxx ♣ QJxx
 where he wants to try 6♦ if partner can control the club suit.

But he could equally have:
 B. ♠ AKQx ♥ x ♦ Jxx ♣ AKJxx
 just trying to search for the best game.

What to do? Many years ago, American Ed Manfield came up with an answer to this dilemma: the Choice of Games Cue-bid. His concept was that you couldn't solve the problem of Hand A ... a cue-bid won't necessarily get you to the right level in diamonds. He suggested just taking your best chance with hand A: 5♦ or 6♦ or perhaps Blackwood. The cue-bid, when no suit had been agreed, was reserved for giving a choice of games: exactly what you need for Hand B.

PANACHE - XVII
Ben Thompson

Bill Jacobs and I were invited to play in the 17th NEC Cup in Japan last month. Headlining the field were last year's NEC Cup and Bermuda Bowl champions, Louk Verhees and Ricco van Prooijen. Let's look at Verhees, sitting South, in action against a strong Bulgarian team featuring some Bermuda Bowl bronze medallists in the quarter finals.

Dir: West		♠ J832					
Vul: N/S		♥ J62					
		♦ KJ9					
		♣ A94					
♠ 96		N		♠ Q54			
♥ 1097		W	E	♥ K8543			
♦ Q10754				♦ A6			
♣ K75		S		♣ J108			
				♠ AK107			
				♥ AQ			
				♦ 832			
				♣ Q632			

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	1♥	D'ble
2♥	D'ble	Pass	2♠
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Even though we've got 25 highs between us, 4♠ is only a moderate game, with holes in every suit. Still, if you're going to win a lot of tournaments, you're going to have to make these sorts of games on a regular basis.

Verhees got the ♥10 lead, run around to his queen. He's in heaps of trouble if spades are 4-1 and in some trouble if the ♠Q is offside. He's not blessed with a major source of tricks outside, and he doesn't have big control issues, so the first order of business is to draw trumps.

Verhees therefore cashed ♠A, and crossed to ♣A to play a spade to the 10. When everyone followed low, he drew the last trump. Crossing to ♣A opens up the club suit but remember that he doesn't have anywhere to park any club losers, so he's either going to have to fiddle round for an endplay (hard to arrange when dummy has a 3rd heart) or just cross his fingers and hope for ♣K onside.

Now Verhees played a diamond to the 9, which was very successful but not immediately obvious. His reasoning was beautifully simple. If the ♣K is onside, then he can afford 2 diamond losers. If the ♣K is offside, then he needs to play diamonds for one loser. West is very unlikely to have ♦AQ to go with ♣K on the auction, so the best play for one diamond loser **on the assumption that ♣K is off** is to play for ♦Q10 onside. Bingo!

In the other room, the Bulgarians played 3NT, which has even more problems than 4♠. It failed when declarer could not see through the backs of the cards.

In the other 3 matches, only one other pair bid a game – unfortunately our team mates in 3NT going a couple off.

Expert aside: Our opponents, Iliev and Hristov from the other Bulgarian team, ground to a halt in 2♠. Hristov only made 8 tricks. In pairs I would have liked that score. At teams, I hated it. At pairs, if your opponents miss a marginal game, but make a trick fewer than the field, you beat most of the pairs in a partscore plus any pair that bids and makes a game. At teams, I expected our team mates to be in game, and I knew the layout made it difficult to make.

The takeaway

When you're playing a hand with a lot of options, don't just assume the key honour (here, the ♣K) is well placed. Ask yourself what layouts are possible (or likely) on the bidding and play to date. Then ask yourself what you need to play for if the key honour is UN-favourable.

Bridge for beginners with Jeff Fust
At the Theodor Herzl Club

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Babi 0417 593 101

SETTING TRICK – SOLUTIONS
Ian McCance

Problem 1

Dlr: West	♠ K1095										
Vul: nil	♥ A65										
	♦ 3										
	♣ AK954										
♠ Q8643	<table style="margin: 0 auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px 10px;">N</td><td></td><td style="padding: 2px 10px;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px 10px;">W</td><td></td><td style="padding: 2px 10px;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px 10px;">S</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>	N		E	W		E	S			♠ AJ
N		E									
W		E									
S											
♥ J87		♥ K									
♦ Q72		♦ AK10954									
♣ J8		♣ 7632									
	♠ 72										
	♥ Q109432										
	♦ J86										
	♣ Q10										

Declarer must have 6 hearts to leap to 4 missing the top 4 honours. There is consequently no chance that your ♥J will score a trick - having finessed once he will finesse again. (Not to do so I have seen described as "coup de sausage" but can find no reference). So your ♥J is dead and the only question is whether you should cover ♥9. Clearly if you don't, declarer will be able to draw trumps and enjoy those clubs. If you cover he will be stuck in dummy unless he holds ♠A, in which case there is no hope for the defence.

Problem 2

Dlr: North	♠ Q2										
Vul: All	♥ KJ102										
	♦ 984										
	♣ AKQJ										
♠ 65	<table style="margin: 0 auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px 10px;">N</td><td></td><td style="padding: 2px 10px;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px 10px;">W</td><td></td><td style="padding: 2px 10px;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px 10px;">S</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>	N		E	W		E	S			♠ A874
N		E									
W		E									
S											
♥ 98643		♥ -									
♦ Q62		♦ AKJ1053									
♣ 852		♣ 1073									
	♠ KJ1093										
	♥ AQ75										
	♦ 7										
	♣ 964										

Even with 7 spades declarer is likely to hold ♥A, which leaves partner with no useful cards other than ♦Q. You have to hope that declarer has not got 7 or even 6 spades, but 5. If so you will be able to run the forcing defence. The right answer is to continue a diamond.

RECENT RESULTS

Ramsden Handicap

- 1 E. Samuel – R. Livingston
- 2 P. Knightley – D. Middleton
- 3 L. Anderson – K. Anderson

Open Interstate Butler – Stage 1

North/South

- 1 K. Anderson – J. Howard
- 2 D. Morgan – B. Wein
- 3 L. Gold – S. Hinge

East/West

- 1 P. Corrigan – L. Hickman
- 2 F. Beale – R. van Riel
- 3 N. Ewart – B. Howe



THE TWELFTH TRICK
Bill Jacobs

Dealer: S	♠ 7										
Vul: N/S	♥ A8632										
IMPs	♦ 9865										
	♣ KJ2										
♠ KJ42	<table style="margin: 0 auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px 10px;">N</td><td></td><td style="padding: 2px 10px;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px 10px;">W</td><td></td><td style="padding: 2px 10px;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px 10px;">S</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>	N		E	W		E	S			♠ Q10986
N		E									
W		E									
S											
♥ J9		♥ Q1074									
♦ KJ43		♦ 1072									
♣ 953		♣ Q									
	♠ A53										
	♥ K5										
	♦ AQ										
	♣ A108764										

Don't fall into the trap of taking the "free" trump finesse at trick 1. That finesse is not free at all – it's very expensive: in fact it costs you the contract.

Win the club **king** at trick 1, and go about your business of ruffing the two losing spades. If you play low from dummy at trick 1, then the queen forces your ace, and after ruffing two spades, West's ♣9 becomes a trick.

It's very unlikely, on this lead, that either defender has Qxx in clubs – but if that is the case, then there's nothing you can do about it: you have a trump loser and will need the diamond finesse to work.

**INTERVIEW WITH ERIC MURRAY AND
SAMI KEHELA**



Eric Murray and Sami Kehela

The most famous and well-credentialed of all Canadian bridge partnerships was the pairing of Sami Kehela and Eric Murray. What made this pair so interesting was the wildly different approaches the two players had to the game. Eric Murray speaks on this:

"Sami was a chess player, I was a poker player: it was an interesting combination. Sami's bids could be relied upon and mine could not, and that's what made the partnership work.

"I had a tendency to psyche, which means that I didn't have the values for whatever it was I was doing. In a match against Italy, Giorgio Belladonna on my right opened the bidding with 1♦, and I doubled. His partner, Avarelli, redoubled, and Sami bid something or other, and they wound up in 5♦.



I-r: Kehela, Belladonna, kibitzer, Murray, Avarelli

"When the dummy came down, Belladonna rolled his eyes unhappily, because he could see they should be in 6♦, because slam needed only one of two finesses: both finesses being taken into Sami's hand. But Sami had the two cards, and all you could make is 5♦.

"After the hand, Belladonna said with a big grin: 'oh, I smell psyche: I know Murray, so bid only 5♦ - I know the cards are bad-placed!'

"So that was fine ... our teammates wound up in 6♦ down 1, and Belladonna played 5♦ making, because of my psyche. A few boards later, the bidding goes Pass, Pass to me, and at that point, the vu-graph commentators were speculating that we would lose on this board, because 7NT was cold for our opponents, and our teammates had only reached 6NT. So I had six hearts to the queen and out, and I opened 1♥, because I know the Italians have this good system. And Avarelli on my left bid 3NT, Sami passed, and Belladonna thought and thought and passed.

"So instead of reaching 7NT, they played 3NT making 7, because of my psyche. At this point, Kehela leaned over to Belladonna and says: 'what's the matter Giorgio - nose not working so well now?'

And here is Sami Kehela's take on the partnership:

"The reason our partnership actually survived all these years was this: we were conflicting personalities at the table. He was a mover, he did things, he created things. He didn't mind looking foolish - he didn't mind taking chances and falling flat on his face, losing lots of points. I on the other hand was the complete opposite: I tried to play without making errors. I wasn't trying to win any points, only trying to avoid losing them.

"Because of the different philosophies, we meshed well, because if we were both movers, it wouldn't have worked so well."

What is the moral of these interviews? Perhaps that opposites can attract and create a winning combination.



Vu-Graph quotes from Edgar Kaplan

"North doubled 4♥ to tell himself what to lead."

"He has left himself no flexibility. He can no longer go down."