

Play problems (page 6): solutions

1. Discard a club on the second heart rather than ruff it. You have four potential losers (one heart, two diamonds, and a club). If the ♦A is on your right you can hold your diamond losers to one. By discarding a club initially you give yourself an extra chance that clubs are 3-3. Suppose you get a trump switch (best) at trick three. Draw two rounds of trumps, then play A, K and a third club ruffing it. If clubs have divided, discard two diamonds on the established clubs, exit with your ♦K and ruff the return. If clubs don't divide go to dummy with a trump and lead up your ♦K.

2. Your best chance is to discard a club on the third heart. You had a club loser anyway and this play retains control if trumps are 4-2. Now if trumps divide 3-3 you can test clubs (ruff the third round and see if they have divided). If clubs don't divide you will look to diamonds for your tenth trick. By that time you will know how many spades and clubs each opponent began with and will have a fair idea about their hearts. You may be able to judge whether to play for 3-3 diamonds or four diamonds on your right.

3. Don't play your ♥A on the first trick! It might get ruffed. Ruff the heart continuation, draw trumps, discard your losing club on ♥A and claim.

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New Zealand Bridge Congress

The recently held annual congress was attended by several members who all performed with great distinction. John and Sharon Mosley were representing Otago-Southland in the rubber bridge competition; they made it all the way to the final which was won narrowly by the Central Districts pair. In similar vein Tamsin Meaney and Kaye Wilson were part of the Otago-Southland intermediate team; the team also reached the final and lost, also narrowly, to Auckland. Congratulations to all four. And best congratulations of all to Tamsin who won, by a clear margin, the New Zealand intermediate pairs playing with Betty Turnbull of Queenstown.

What is a cue bid?

There's no easy answer since "cue bid" is a term that is used in a host of different bidding situations. One of these is where a partnership has shown strong combined values, a trump fit, and is exploring whether to bid a slam. Then suit bids generally show first or second round control in that suit, and this phase of an auction is called cue bidding. I shall write about this next month. All other uses of the term "cue bid" involve your partnership bidding the opponents' suit.

The Newsletters of February 2003 and August 2003 contained articles on Unassuming cue bids and Michaels cue bids but this month I shall discuss cue bids where you have opened the bidding with a suit, your left hand opponent has overcalled a suit, and your partner bids the opponent's suit. For example: 1♥ - 1♠ - 2♠

Obviously forcing of course, but what does it mean? And the answer is "it all depends ...".

Coping with interference when you have the balance of power is one of the hardest areas of bidding and it will pay you to discuss with your partner what you should do. You must decide what this sort of cue bid means *in the context of all your other options*.

Some possibilities that may start you thinking along the right lines are

The Newsletter

This is my 20th edition of the club's Newsletter. In this issue I referred to two previous issues and this caused me to consider whether it would be useful to reproduce past issues on the internet and index them properly. Please let me know whether you like that idea (tell me in person or write to mike@cs.otago.ac.nz).

Humour

A successful business man becomes disenchanted with the stress of the fast life in the big city and decides to retire. He takes his savings and purchases a large ranch in the middle of nowhere in Montana. After a couple of months of enjoying the solitude he hears the drumming of hoofbeats outside his cabin. Grabbing his rifle he challenges the man riding up on the horse. "Hold it neighbour" the man says, " I'm your neighbour, I have a ranch only 6 miles from here, and I want to invite you to a Welcome Party I'm throwing for you next Saturday. There's going to be music, dancing, hugging, kissing, drinking, fighting.... We'll have a great time". Not wanting to be unneighbourly the new rancher lowers the rifle and asks " How should I dress?" " Aw, don't matter" replied the neighbour, "Only gonna be the two of us".

Play problems

What is the best line for West to make their contract in these hands?

1. Contract 4♠; lead ♥A followed by ♥K

♠ K T 9 8 7 5	♠ A Q J 2
♥ 9	♥ Q T
♦ K T 7	♦ 3 2
♣ 8 3 2	♣ A K 6 5 4

2. Contract 4♠; lead ♥A followed by ♥K and ♥J

♠ K Q J 2	♠ A T 3
♥ 9 8	♥ T 3 2
♦ K T 9 3	♦ A Q 2
♣ A 5 2	♣ K 6 4 3

3. Contract 6♠; lead ♥K

♠ K Q J 9 8 7 5	♠ A 2
♥ T	♥ A 5 4 3 2
♦ A K	♦ 2
♣ 8 3 2	♣ A K 6 5 4

1. The cue bid shows a limit raise (or better) in partner's suit. In that case 1♥ - 1♠ - 3♥ will *not* be a limit raise; and you could play it as a pre-emptive raise. This treatment is a bit like an unassuming cue bid.

2. The cue bid shows heart support and a game going hand of 13-15 HCP. I think this is a poor treatment because a sequence such as

1♥ - 1♠ - 2♣ - P

2♥ - P - 4♥

presumably shows the same thing (as if there was no interference).

3. The cue bid shows heart support and slam aspirations. Now the opener can simply rebid her suit (or no trumps) with a weak hand; but new suits will show a little extra and first round control.

4. The cue bid shows *any* good hand. That may seem a bit imprecise but the advantage is that if you *don't* make the cue bid it shows a weak hand and is not forcing (so 1♥ - 1♠ - 2♣ would show a weak hand with clubs).

Discuss with your partner how you will cope with opponents' interference. Rather than being put off, think more that they have given you another type of bid to use:- don't waste it by using it for a hand that you can describe in another way.

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Voluptua encourages Randy

Voluptua was still under the misapprehension that Randy's former ardour toward her had cooled. Actually the reverse was true and Randy's intentions towards her were not what in former times would have been called honourable. But the poor fellow still thought he had to win her back by becoming a brilliant bridge player. A chance came when, with Frieda and Gordon departing for a romantic weekend *a deux*, the young folk were left to play together in the Taieri graded pairs. Evidently some pre-tournament discussion was needed and the subject of carding signals came up. "How will I know that you are encouraging me, Voluptua?" asked Randy. He bit his tongue too late as this question came out but Voluptua was amused by his discomfort. "I'll show you my honours" she giggled. Randy was too embarrassed to take the subject further and they turned up for their first club night practice with no agreement at all on discards and signals. On the first board Randy (West) led the ♣A against the opponent's 4♥ contract. Voluptua felt that it would be right to encourage the young man but didn't know which of her honours to play. Eventually she parted with the ♣Q and the spotlight now passed to Randy. "Surely" he thought "Voluptua would only waste the ♣Q if it

♠ A K 3 2
♥ 8 5
♦ 8 7 6
♣ T 9 8 5

♠ 8 5 4
♥ 4 3
♦ A 3 2
♣ A K 4 3 2

♠ 9 7 6
♥ T 9 2
♦ Q J T 5 4
♣ Q J

♠ Q J T
♥ A K Q J 7 6
♦ K 9
♣ 7 6

was a singleton" so, hoping for a ruff, he led a low club. He was somewhat surprised when Voluptua produced the ♣J but her return of the ♦Q led to a one trick defeat of the contract. Since most other defenders had begun with both ♣A and ♣K, after which the contract could not be defeated, Randy and Voluptua got a near top. Unawares, the two had conducted a defence that would have been found only by an expert pair. Playing the Queen on the lead of the Ace *promises the Jack*. Partner can then safely underlead their King if he feels that the next lead should come from the other hand. In such a situation an expert West would lead their lowest club to suggest a return of the lower ranking of the remaining suits.