

Lead Problem Solutions

Problem 1. The bidding indicates that North probably has a singleton or void in clubs, and otherwise a balanced hand. So there is no danger that losers are going to be discarded a long suit in dummy. So there is no urgency to make an attacking lead; that rules out clubs or hearts. Choosing between spades and diamonds is more delicate. However, spades appears to be a suit that the opponents have locked up, whereas partner may hold an honour card in diamonds. So don't lead a diamond - you may save the opponents a guess if you do.

Problem 2. Here's a strange thing: you have an opening hand and the opponents have bid to slam. Obviously they have great hearts but, if they have another long suit, it must be clubs (don't lead clubs then, in case you solve any problem for them in clubs). There is no way that leading the Ace of hearts will cut down ruffs. That leads spades or diamonds. Of these, spades is the more risky (your suit is broken; what if declarer has the queen and dummy the ace). So lead diamonds but which? A low diamond may let them score their ten, so lead Q♦ or J♦. You might decide that partner's part in this defence is going to be marginal so there is something to be said for J♦ (muddying the card reading for everyone).

News Letter 2005

Taieri Bridge Club

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Tournaments

The charity tournament on 30 July was an outstanding success with 27 tables and raising \$1000 for the cancer hospice. The winners were Joan Somerville and Pat Dixon of the Otago club. Our graded tournament on 20 August had 15 tables, somewhat down from recent years most likely because there have been a large number of recent local tournaments. It was won by Donna Ruwhiu (Taieri) and Patricia Haden (Otago). Both tournaments were run with clockwork precision and thanks are due to all who gave of their time.

Contributed humour

When the husband finally died his wife put the usual death notice in the paper, but added that he died of gonorrhea. A friend of the family phoned and complained bitterly, "You know very well that he died of diarrhea, not gonorrhea." Replied the widow, "Of course I know he died of diarrhea, but I thought it would be better for posterity to remember him as a great lover rather than the big shit he always was."

Lead us not into temptation

The lead problems this month are taken from Australian team championships.

1. West to lead from

♠ 7 6; ♥ K J 2; ♦ 8 4; ♣ A 8 5 4 3 2

Auction:	West	North	East	South
	-	-	Pass	Pass
	3♣	DbI	Pass	4♠
	Pass	6♠	All pass	

You may be surprised by West's decision to preempt 3♣ with ratty 6 card suit (he was vulnerable). But preempts at the top level are frequently on 6 carders in third position especially

2. West to lead from

♠ K J 8 7 6; ♥ A; ♦ Q J 9 8 7 2; ♣ T

Auction:	West	North	East	South
	-	-	Pass	Pass
	1♠	1NT ¹	2♠	3♥
	Pass	6♥	All pass	

¹ 16-19 HCP.

Again, you might be surprised by West's choice: to open his 5 card suit rather than his 6 card suit. West decided that the auction might become competitive with the opponents bidding hearts; if so, outbidding the opponents in spades is a better prospect than outbidding them in diamonds.

POLE: "I got proof."

LAWYER: "What kind of proof?"

POLE: "She going to poison me. She buy a bottle at drugstore and put on shelf in bathroom. I can read, and it say, 'Polish Remover'".

For beginning players

1. Try to remember the bidding.
2. Try to count trumps as they are played, so that you know when they are all out; once you've mastered that have a go at counting another suit.
3. Usually, when playing a suit where you have all top cards except the ace, first play high cards from the hand with fewer cards of that suit.
4. If you wonder whether you should double a suit contract (for penalty) think whether declarer is in for a nasty surprise in trumps; double on aces (not queens and jacks) in side suits.
5. When you open the bidding, anticipate various responses your partner might make and have your rebid planned.
6. Cultivate the habit of watching what small cards your partner is playing; she may be signalling various things about her hand.
7. Try to make sense of any conventions you play; have an idea about why they are as they are.
8. Even at the darkest hour, never give up!

POLISH DIVORCE

A Polish man moved to the USA and married an American girl. Although his English was far from perfect, they got along very well until one day he rushed into a lawyer's office and asked him if he could arrange a divorce for him - "very quick."

The lawyer said that the speed for getting a divorce would depend on the circumstances, and asked him the following questions:

LAWYER: "Have you any grounds?"

POLE: "JA, JA, acre and half and nice little home."

LAWYER: "No, I mean what is the foundation of this case?"

POLE: "It made of concrete."

LAWYER: "Does either of you have a real grudge?"

POLE: "No, we have carport, and not need one."

LAWYER: "I mean, What are your relations like?"

POLE: "All my relations still in Poland."

LAWYER: "Any infidelity in your marriage?"

POLE: "Ja, we have hi-fidelity stereo set and good DVD player."

LAWYER: "Does your wife beat you up?"

POLE: "No, I always up before her."

LAWYER: "Is your wife a nagger?"

POLE: "No, she white."

LAWYER: "WHY do you want this divorce?"

POLE: "She going to kill me."

LAWYER: "What makes you think that?"

Decisions, decisions

You, South, hold

♠ A K J 7 3; ♥ A 2; ♦ void; ♣ A Q 9 8 3 2

and decide to open a game forcing (artificial) 2♣.

Your pesky left-hand opponent overcalls 4♥, and your serene partner bids 5♦. Your right-hand opponent must be your friend because she passes. What should you do?

Most likely you will try (as I did) 6♣. Then my left-hand opponent (oh, so pesky) doubled! The bidding came round to me. What would do?

If you passed, good for you: your partner exceeded herself by possessing

♠ Q; ♥ 4 3; ♦ A 9 6 5 4 3 2; ♣ K 7 6

and 6♣ doubled made for a huge score.

Sadly, this is not a tale of one of my triumphs because, fearing a club stack on my left, I removed to 6♠. This was duly doubled, trumps broke 7-0 (!!)

and I was down 4.

Unlucky? In retrospect, no; all the signs for a bad spade break were there. Left-hand opponent had lots of hearts (7 at least from her bid), a fair number of clubs (from her double), and some diamonds (otherwise, right-hand opponent would have likely doubled 5♦); therefore precious few spades.

Easy to be wise after the event, but how it hurt at the time!

The new member

As a warm winter was giving way to a warm spring the club received a rather odd letter:

"Dear Secretary of the Taieri Bridge Club
It is my honour to be in communication with you and to beg that, owing to my impending relocation to Mosgiel from a few miles south of your esteemed establishment, you might countenance an application from me to plight my unworthy destiny in alignment with yours, in short, to join your club.
Yours respectfully
Sinclair Whitlands"

The club's committee had never received a letter quite like it and were unsure how to act. Eventually, Frieda made the suggestion that Mr Whitlands might partner her for one game, and she could assess whether he was a bridge player or lunatic (the club not recognising these categories might overlap).

Thus, one Wednesday night at the end of August, Frieda found herself greeting a figure who seemed not to have marked the passing of Queen Victoria. Impeccably attired, razor-sharp creases in his trousers, Sinclair Whitlands would have looked at home in the stately home of a duchess.

His bridge skills seemed more up to date but still Frieda had to explain that, nowadays at Taieri, the weak no trump held sway.

Frieda's anxieties were somewhat set to rest when Mr Whitlands declared 3NT as South after the following auction:

W	N	E	S
		1♥	1NT
P	3NT	All pass	

A little to everyone's surprise West led K♥ and Frieda anxiously displayed her dummy

♠ 5 4
♥ A 3 2
♦ A T 9 8 6 3
♣ 8 7

♠ A K 3 2
♥ Q 6 4
♦ K Q
♣ Q J T 3

With impassive gravity Mr Whitlands played low on the first trick! It then didn't matter what West led next. Mr Whitlands was soon able to play K♦, then Q♦ which he overtook with dummy's ace, force out the J♦, and still have the A♥ entry for the long diamonds.

As Frieda afterwards noted, had Sinclair greedily taken the A♥ at trick one there would have been no way to establish the diamonds and the contract would have failed.