

I/N News ... especially for you!

An opening Three-Bid, called a **preempt**, shows:

- A good, long suit (6 or 7 cards, with at least two honors).
- No ace or king in any other suit.
- No 4-card major (especially if partner is not yet a passed hand).

Always consider the vulnerability. If you're vulnerable (your side has made a game), the penalties for not making your contract are much higher. Open a **vulnerable** Three-Bid only if you have strong 7-card suit. Example hands:

♠973 ♥3 ♦KQJ942 ♣Q43 -- Open 3D (but pass if you're vulnerable).

♠AKJ10743 ♥5 ♦8654 ♣8 -- Open 3S at any vulnerability. If you're white vs. red, consider opening 4S.

♠A6 ♥J943 ♦Void ♣KJ86432 -- Pass. You have too much strength outside your suit to open 3C, which would make it almost impossible to find a heart fit if you have one. This hand may be easier to describe later (with an overcall, or a response to partner's opening bid).

♠AKJ10763 ♥82 ♦QJ54 ♣Void -- Open 4S. This has too much playing strength for 3S.

♠K84 ♥AK108654 ♦86 ♣4 -- Open 1H. This hand is too strong for a 3-bid.

Once you make a 3-Bid, you've described your hand. You shouldn't bid again unless partner makes a forcing bid.

The only ways partner can force are by bidding a new suit, by cuebidding the opponent's suit, or by asking for aces.

Responding to a Three-Bid: If partner opens a Three-Bid, it's up to you to place the contract. With a weak hand and no fit, you pass. With a stronger hand, don't count just points -- what's important is the **number of tricks** you can take. Consider the vulnerability and try to visualize partner's hand, then count your potential tricks.

A bid of game in partner's suit or notrump (3H-4H or 3D-3NT) shows a strong playing hand with a fit & quick tricks

A new suit response (3C-3S) shows a strong hand and a good, usually 6+-card suit. Partner won't have 4-card support (even 3-card support is unlikely), so don't suggest a new suit unless you have a very good one.

A simple raise below game (3C-4C) shows a trump fit, but no interest in game. You may raise to put pressure on the opponents, to compete for the contract or to sacrifice. A raise does **not** invite partner to bid again.

The Sacrifice: A Three-Bid can be valuable when you want to "steal" the hand with a sacrifice. If the opponents bid game, you bid higher in partner's suit, hoping to get a smaller minus score.

For a sacrifice to be profitable, your hand must be weak enough in high cards to be sure the opponents can make a game while also strong enough for you to be sure you won't be set more than two (sometimes three) tricks.

The best time for a sacrifice is when you are **not** vulnerable and the opponents are.

At the Table: You are not vulnerable. Partner opens 3S and the opponent on your right passes. What is your bid?

♠J87 ♥9 ♦AK72 ♣AJ1054

4S. Your spade support will help partner take at least 5 (or as many as 7) trump tricks, plus your three top tricks in the minor suits. It's also likely that he can score one or two more tricks by trumping hearts in your hand or setting up your clubs.

♠86 ♥KQJ5 ♦KJ65 ♣AJ3

Pass. This hand has more points than the previous example, but much less playing strength. You know partner has no outside aces or kings, so you may have at least three side-suit losers (or perhaps five!), as well as a possible spade loser or two.

♠J982 ♥4 ♦A10432 ♣876

4S. You have no real hopes of making this contract, but your excellent spade support and singleton heart guarantee that partner won't go down very many tricks. You know the opponents are short in spades and that they can surely make at least 4H or 5C (or even 3NT) if you let them bid it. Your 4S bid is an "advance" sacrifice -- it uses up bidding space before the opponents can find their contract. And if partner holds a hand such as ♠AKxxxx ♥xxx ♦xx ♣x, you'll even make your game.

You are vulnerable. Partner opens 3C and the opponent on your right passes. What is your bid?

♠AJ8 ♥A53 ♦Q1054 ♣A92

3NT. Partner is vulnerable, so he should have a good 7-card suit (you have the ace and jack, so he must have at least the ♠KQ). You can therefore count 9 tricks -- 7 clubs and 2 aces -- and you have a "stopper" in diamonds if the opponents lead that suit.

Opening 3-Level Preempts by Karen Walker

Minor-suit games are generally to be avoided; but not minor-suits. Because there is little practical difference (except at matchpoint duplicate) between a 40 and a 60 part-score (both are easily converted into game if the next deal belongs to you), it pays to play the safest part-score rather than the highest scoring. After 1♥-1♠-1 NT, all the following hands should remove to 2♦.

Hand (i)	Hand(ii)	Hand(iii)
♠ J 7 5 3 2 ♥ 8 ♦ K Q 10 2 ♣ 9 7 6	♠ Q J 10 2 ♥ 8 ♦ O 9 5 4 2 ♣ J 9 6	♠ K 7 5 3 2 ♥ 8 ♦ J 9 5 4 2 ♣ Q 6

Note that this bid is a weakness take-out, all game-going hands jumping to the three-level (the identical principle as responding to a 1 NT opener).

North Deals	♠ Q 4	
N-S Vul	♥ A K 6 5 2	
	♦ Q 10 8	
	♣ A 8 4	
♠ A 8 6		♠ J 10 9
♥ Q J 10 9		♥ 7 4 3
♦ K 6 3		♦ A 7
♣ K 10 3		♣ J 9 7 5 2
		♠ K 7 5 3 2
		♥ 8
		♦ J 9 5 4 2
		♣ Q 6

What happened

West	North	East	South
	1♥	Pass	1♠
Pass ¹	1 NT ²	Pass	Pass ³
Pass			

1. A 1 NT overcall in this dangerous sandwich position shows a very good 15-19.
2. 15-16.
3. Mistake. Must rescue.

1 NT by North started poorly when ♣5 went to ♣Q and West's ♣K. Declarer won ♠A at Trick Three (best) and led ♦Q. East won ♦A, cashed ♠J9, and switched to ♥7 (best). Declarer won ♥K and led ♦10 but West ducked his ♦K. Next declarer tried ♠Q but West won ♠A and led a second heart (setting up two winners in the suit). All declarer could do was win ♥A and lead to ♠K. Down two.

What should have happened

West	North	East	South
	1♥	Pass	1♠
Pass	1 N	Pass	2♦ ¹
Pass	Pass ²	Pass	

1. Correct - weakness take-out.
2. Preferring diamonds to spades.

2♦ handles nicely. Dummy wins West's ♥Q with ♥K and leads ♠Q. The best the defence can do is to win the first or, say, second spade and play ♦A, ♦K and a third trump. Win in hand and concede a third spade, claiming the rest with two long spades (thanks to the 3-3 split), the club loser going on dummy's second top heart. Nine tricks and part-score plus one.

If you remember just one thing... Avoid minor-suit games but not minor-suit part-scores.

Minor Suits by Andy Robson

Andrew Robson is a highly accomplished bridge professional, writer and teacher. From his home in the United Kingdom, Robson is the bridge columnist for The Times and Country Life. Andy was born on January 5, 1964 in Chester, United Kingdom



Robson, continued on page 3

More Robson...

Sacrificing

Sacrificing means bidding over the opponents, expecting to fail. You hope that either you will be cheaper than the opposing making (game) contract; or your opponents bid one more and go down.

Players generally over-sacrifice, often committing the crime of taking two bites of the cherry. Sacrificing does not generally pay because if you are left to play (doubled, of course), your bid will only gain if all these factors occur:

- i) You are cheaper than the value of their game
- ii) They were making their game. Plus (at Duplicate Pairs and Teams):
- iii) The other pair(s) holding their cards have bid (and made) game.

Top players hate to make late sacrifices: the opponents have no sensible option other than to double. Advance sacrifices are much better – because now there is a good chance the opponents will bid on (eg 5 ♠ over 5 ♦). And now your sacrifice bid can never lose. It will break even if 5 ♠ makes; and gain handsomely when 5 ♠ is one down.

Exercise: Here are three auctions. Give a mark out of ten for the tactical nous of West's 5 ♦ bid in the following auctions:

Auction one

West	North	East	South
	1 ♥	2 ♦	2 ♥
3 ♦	4 ♥	Pass	Pass
5 ♦			

Auction two

West	North	East	South
		4 ♦	Pass
Pass	4 ♠	Pass	Pass
5 ♦			

Auction three

West	North	East	South
	1 ♥	2 ♦	2 ♠
5 ♦			

Answers to Quiz (no peeking!)

Robson, continued on page 4

Exercise: Here are three auctions. Give a mark out of ten for the tactical nous of West's 5 ♦ bid in the following auctions:

Auction one

West	North	East	South
	1 ♥	2 ♦	2 ♠
3 ♦	4 ♥	Pass	Pass
5 ♦			

Zero. You have taken the dreaded two bites of the cherry. If you intended bidding to 5 ♦, you should have bid it first time.

Auction two

West	North	East	South
		4 ♦	Pass
Pass	4 ♠	Pass	Pass
5 ♦			

Three. Understandable (you hoped 4 might buy the contract), but you're now regretting that you didn't raise to 5 immediately, cutting out North's 4 ♠ bid.

Auction three

West	North	East	South
	1 ♥	2 ♦	2 ♠
3 ♦	4 ♥	Pass	Pass
5 ♦			

Auction three: Ten. Classic advance sacrifice, hoping North, with as yet undisclosed spade support will go 5 ♠. Now your 5 ♦ bid can't lose.

What do you want to win

The chess player's motto - "When you have found a good move, see if you can find a better one" is equally applicable to bridge. Here West's defence was theoretically sound - he had made a clear signal to partner. But East, as partners can be, was blind or ignorant, and the contract was allowed to make. East's fault? Yes - but only in part. West had an idiot-proof way to defeat the contract. Cover up East and South's hand and see if you can find it.

South Deals	♠ J 8 7 6	
E-W Vul	♥ Q J 10	
	♦ K Q 6	
	♣ K Q 6	
♠ 4		♠ Q
♥ A K 8 4 3		♥ 9 2
♦ A 8 7 4		♦ J 9 5 3 2
♣ 10 8 7		♣ J 9 5 3 2
		♠ A K 10 9 5 3 2
		♥ 7 6 5
		♦ 10
		♣ A 4

West	North	East	South
			1 ♠
Pass	4 ♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			

4 ♠ by South

West led ♥A and East remembered to signal with ♥9 to encourage a continuation. West duly played ♥K and carefully led ♥8 to the third trick - a "suit-preference signal" for partner - after trumping - to return the higher ranking of the other suits - here ♦s. If West had wanted a ♣ return, he'd lead his lowest ♥ to the third trick. Such signals are most useful in trumping situations - but only if partner is aware of them. Evidently this East was not, for after much agonising and mental coin-tossing, East returned ♣3. Declarer gratefully won ♣A, led ♠A, and cashed dummy's ♣KQ discarding ♦10. Contract made.

West criticised East for failing to obey the suit-preference signal, but West had an idiot-proof defence - he should simply have cashed ♦A before leading the third ♥ for East to trump.

ANDREW'S TIP: A victorious defence is better than a victorious post-mortem!



While we don't win money,
We do win fame.
We like to see
In lights, our name!

We do win gold...
In points, that's said...
We also win platinum,
Black points and red!

Why play bridge? By Karen Walker

With so many activities competing for your leisure time, why invest your energy into learning a game as complex as bridge?

Why bridge instead of computer games, poker, chess, golf?

If you're wondering if bridge is for you -- or if you've always wanted to learn but have been afraid it's too difficult -- here are some of the reasons why millions of people around the world are hooked on this fascinating game.

Bridge can be a lifelong pursuit. It takes only rudimentary knowledge to begin playing and enjoying bridge, but as any player will tell you, this is not a game for those who demand instant gratification. Learning to play well takes time and effort, and the game is impossible to master. But that's precisely why bridge is so popular, and why it's called "the game for a lifetime". No matter how many years you play, you'll always find new challenges, and the learning process will never end. Bridge also caters to all physical conditions and disabilities, so players can actively pursue their pastime throughout their entire lives.

Bridge will never bore you. The game can be exciting, challenging, frustrating and humbling, but it will never be boring. There are more than 750 trillion possible hands, so you'll see something new every time you play. It's actually a fast-paced game, too. Each hand takes just five to ten minutes to play before you move on to the next deal and a new challenge.

Bridge stimulates the brain. Bridge is one of the best ways to practice the "use it or lose it" advice for maintaining mental sharpness in older age. Research has shown that regular bridge playing improves reasoning skills and long- and short-term memory. You'll feel the neurons firing not only while you play, but long after. Many players say that hours after a bridge game, they still feel mentally alert and energized, similar to the "high" that long-distance runners experience after a race.

Bridge exercises both sides of your brain. Bridge is one of the few games that stimulates both the left and right sides of your brain. Every time you play, you use -- and improve -- your skills in communication, logic, math, memory, visualization and psychology. It's a unique type of mental workout that is both relaxing and invigorating, and that can't be duplicated by other leisure or work-related activities.

Bridge can improve your physical health. Research has shown that a game of bridge can even boost your immune system. By stimulating the brain cortex, bridge-playing activity produces higher numbers of the white blood cells that fight disease. Other studies have found that people who play bridge regularly are 2½ times less likely to develop Alzheimer's disease.

Bridge is social. A game of bridge involves communication and cooperation with your partner and interaction with your opponents. There's a special camaraderie among bridge players that develops from the social setting and the game's emphasis on teamwork, ethics and sportsmanship. And if you play duplicate bridge, you can find new friends and partners at more than 3300 bridge clubs throughout North America.

Bridge is a bargain. All you need for a bridge game is a deck of cards and three other people. You don't have to leave your home, and if you have a computer, you don't even need the cards or the people. You can play and practice on your own with bridge software, or you can join in live games with thousands of players from around the world at one of the free online bridge clubs. You can also enter games at your local duplicate club, where you'll enjoy a three-hour session of bridge for less than the cost of a movie.

Bridge is fun. Of all the reasons to learn the game, the most important is that it's just fun to play. It offers the suspense of poker, the cerebral qualities of chess and the excitement of athletic sports, all in a sociable setting where you're a participant, not just a spectator. Every session allows you to test yourself and experience the feeling of accomplishment when you find a successful bid or play.

That's what keeps people coming back to the bridge table, and it's why bridge will always be the world's most popular card game.

Winter

Find and circle all of the Winter related words that are hidden in the grid.
The remaining letters spell a Japanese proverb.

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L S O S E K A L F W O N S E L C I C I N
L E Y C E K R A I M N D D R A Z Z I L B
A S C A W V K A I O E C I K C A L B R D
B W A R D R O T E S N O W S H O V E L C
W E R F A I T L C W A F I R E P L A C E
O A N P I E L I G E R N H E A D B A N D
N T I S N C P O L S Y E S E T A K S S W
S S V S N M E T H K E A D N D F R N E M
T H A M Y O S F S C K T N N O L O H A R
Y I L L R A W E I O C W O E U W O G S W
E R O S C O R S W S O I I B B G M C O I
S T E W A I T S H L H V T O O S N A N N
N K O P T M O S P O G I A S T G O O N D
D N I W P L T W T O E R N C O E G U L C
S E O I S I O S N W D S R G A R E A P H
E N L T N N L G I F R E E Z E T F L N I
S R I S S G G S M R O N B O O D I K S L
T C F I R E W O O D H A I L S T O O B L
E H S S T N A P I K S C H P A C T I N K
    
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BLACK ICE
BLIZZARD
BOOTS
CARNIVAL
CHRISTMAS
COLD
EGG NOG
FIREPLACE
FIREWOOD
FOG
FREEZE
FROST
GLOVES

HAIL
HEADBAND
HIBERNATION
HOCKEY
HOLIDAYS
ICE FISHING
ICICLES
KNIT CAP
LONG UNDERWEAR
MITTENS
OLYMPICS
PARKA
SCARF

SEASON
SKATES
SKI DOO
SKI PANTS
SKIING
SLED
SLEET
SLIPPERY
SNOW CASTLE
SNOW PLOW
SNOW SHOVEL
SNOW TIRES
SNOWBALL

SNOWBOARD
SNOWFLAKE
SNOWMAN
SNOWSHOES
SOLSTICE
SOUP
STEW
STORM
SWEATSHIRT
TOBOGGAN
VACATION
WIND CHILL
WOOL SOCKS



Why play bridge?
Here's a reason.
It's warm inside,
Whatever season!!

Give Me a Hand!

(continued on page 8)

Dealer North. EW Vul.

♠ 8 6 5 3
♥ A K 7 2
♦ A K J 10
♣ 5

♠ J 10
♥ Q 10 4 3
♦ 8 6 3
♣ Q J 8 4

♠ 9 7 2
♥ J 8 6
♦ Q 9 5
♣ K 10 6 3

♠ A K Q 4
♥ 9 5
♦ 7 4 2
♣ A 9 7 2

West	North	East	South
—	1♦	Pass	1♠
Pass	4♣ ¹	Pass	5♣
Pass	5♦	Pass	6♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

1. Splinter, agreeing spades

West led the jack of trumps and declarer was slightly disappointed by the rather threadbare dummy: four clubs was a bit of an overbid. However, that was in the past and his job was to make twelve tricks, not to complain about the auction.

Declarer saw that he needed trumps to be 3-2 and to have some luck in the red suits to make his contract. However, there were real transportation difficulties between the two hands. If the diamond finesse was successful, only one club ruff was needed, but if it were offside, two club ruffs would be necessary. Furthermore, if declarer took a diamond finesse at trick two and it lost he would no longer have the entries to take two club ruffs.

Declarer then considered the question, "What if I gave up on the diamond finesse?" The only issue was that while he could ruff two clubs, his only entry back to hand after the second ruff would be with a heart ruff.

After some thought, declarer decided the second approach was more appealing. He took the first trick with queen of trumps, then cashed ace of clubs and ruffed a club. The next card he called for surprised everyone at the table, particularly East: it was dummy's ten of diamonds. East took this with the queen and

exited with a trump. After winning this in hand with the king declarer ruffed another club. There was only one way back to hand, in hearts, so declarer cashed the ace-king of hearts and ruffed a heart. As that passed off successfully, declarer drew the last trump with the ace while throwing dummy's remaining heart. This left dummy with just the three high diamonds to cash.

Dealer West. EW Vul.

♠ K 2
♥ K 10 9
♦ K J 6 2
♣ K 8 6 5

♠ A J 9 6 4
♥ A 7
♦ A 10 9 7
♣ J 3

♠ 8 7
♥ 8 5 4 3 2
♦ 5
♣ 10 9 7 4 2

♠ Q 10 5 3
♥ Q J 6
♦ Q 8 4 3
♣ A Q

West	North	East	South
1♠	Double	Pass	3NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

West led a fourth-highest the six of spades against three notrump. As only 14 high-card points were in the defensive hands, declarer saw that it was all but certain that West held all three of the missing aces. Declarer was about to play low from dummy when he saw that if he did so, West would grab the first round of diamonds to play the ace-jack of spades and he would have only eight tricks before he had to lead a heart. Then West would take the ace of hearts immediately and cash two spade winners for a one-trick set.

So, declarer called for dummy's king of spades. He then crossed to hand to lead a low diamond towards dummy. As the cards lay, if West rose with the ace and played on spades declarer would be safe as he would still have a spade stopper when the time came to develop a trick in hearts.

In practice, West played a low diamond on the first round and dummy's jack won the trick. Dummy's king of hearts came next. West took this with his ace and returned a heart to declarer's queen. Next, declarer

cashed the ace of clubs and then led a second low diamond to dummy's king. The 4=1 diamond break was a disappointment but not a real problem. Declarer just cashed the king of clubs and the jack of hearts for his seventh and eighth tricks. All that remained was to lead a low diamond from hand. West took the ten and ace of diamonds but then had to give declarer his ninth trick by leading away from his ace of spades.

Dealer South. Both Vul.

		♠ 8 6	
		♥ 6 3	
		♦ J 10 9 5	
		♣ J 8 6 5 2	
♠ J 9 4 2		♠ —	
9 2		♥ J 10 8 7 4	
♦ Q 4 3		♦ A K 7 6	
♣ A K 7 3		♣ Q 10 9 4	
		♠ A K Q 10 7 5 3	
		♥ A K Q 5	
		♦ 8 2	
		♣ —	

West	North	East	South
—	—	—	2♣
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♠
Pass	3♣ ¹	Pass	3♥
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

1. Double negative

West led the ace of clubs. Declarer ruffed, then played the ace of trumps. East's discard was a nasty shock and now declarer had to try and ruff a heart in dummy. He cashed the ace and king of hearts and then led the five. West ruffed this with the nine of trumps then crossed to East's hand with a diamond to the king. After ruffing the heart continuation with the jack of trumps, West exited with a diamond to East's ace to set four spades by one trick.

As ever, North was not sympathetic to declarer's cries of bad luck. "You should have discarded a diamond at trick one. Your aim should have been to surrender the two diamond losers early. If the defenders played a club at trick two, you should pitch a second diamond. If an unlikely heart shift came at trick two, you should win, cash the ace of trumps and, seeing the suit was 4=0, play a second diamond. If instead, the defenders continue with two rounds of diamonds, they would be doing your work for you in getting rid of those pesky diamonds. After gaining the lead at trick three, you would cash the ace of trumps and when East showed out, play the ace, king and five of hearts. Then it would not matter whether West ruffed in with the nine of trumps or discarded: if he trumped the five of hearts with the nine he would no longer have an entry

to East's hand to obtain a second heart ruff. All you would lose would be a trump and two diamonds."

"As the cards lay you could have recovered at trick three by playing a diamond," North continued. "However that risks going down when hearts are 4-3 and diamonds are 2=5 and East can play a diamond winner on the third round of the suit. That layout would see the defenders make either two trumps or a trump and a heart."

Dealer West. Both Vul.

		♠ 8 3	
		♥ A Q 7 6	
		♦ 9 7 5 4 2	
		♣ Q 7	
♠ K 7		♠ 4	
♥ 9 5 3		♥ K J 10 8 4	
♦ K Q J 10		♦ 8 6 3	
♣ A 9 4 3		♣ K 10 8 5	
		♠ A Q J 10 9 6 5 2	
		♥ 2	
		♦ A	
		♣ J 6 2	

West	North	East	South
1♦	Pass	1♥	4♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

West led the king of diamonds to declarer's bare ace. Declarer saw that he needed to do one of four things: (i) make a second heart trick, or (ii) make a club trick, or (iii) ruff a club in the dummy, or (iv) play the trumps for no losers. The questions were, (a) which of these alternatives to attempt and (b) how to achieve one of them as safely as possible. As it appeared from the bidding that both the heart and trump finesses might well fail, declarer turned his attention to clubs. Playing a low club from hand would succeed if West had started with ace and king of clubs, but that also seemed an unlikely proposition.

It was then that declarer saw that this was a simple avoidance play problem. He had to keep East off lead when the club ace and king were split to prevent the defence from playing two rounds of trumps. So he crossed to dummy with the ace of hearts and led the seven of clubs from the table. If East had played the ace or king of clubs this would have allowed declarer to develop a club trick. In practice, East played a low club and declarer contributed the jack, which West took with the ace. As West could not lead a trump without sacrificing his trick in the suit, he opted to try and cash a diamond. Declarer ruffed, then played the two of clubs to dummy's queen and East's king. East exited with the expected trump but it was too late. Declarer rose with the ace of trumps and ruffed the six of clubs in dummy. Declarer now claimed, conceding a trick to the king of trumps.

Some suit combinations allow you to create extra tricks by capturing the opponent's honors. You can do this by trying a **finesse** in a suit where you have one or more, but not all, of the high honors. When you finesse, you play the suit as if a certain opponent had one or more of the honors you're missing.

To run a finesse, first try to visualize where you need a missing honor to be. Then lead the suit **through** the opponent you hope has the honor (arrange for him to be **second** to play to the trick). Depending on which card he plays, choose a card from the third hand (yours or dummy's) that isn't the highest card in the suit, but which will win if second-hand has the honor you're trying to trap.

Keep in mind that your opponents will usually follow two defensive card-play rules:

- **Second-hand low** -- If you lead a small card from your hand or dummy, the next hand to play to the trick (your opponent) will play a low card from most holdings.
- **Cover an honor with an honor** -- If you lead an honor from your hand or dummy, the next hand to play to the trick will usually cover with a higher honor if he has one.

Finding Queens:

- **If you have 8 or fewer total cards in a suit**, you should finesse to trap a missing Queen. A Queen will **not** usually drop if you cash Ace-king.
- **If you have 9+ cards in a suit**, you should usually play for the drop instead of finessing. Since the defenders have only 4 cards in the suit, their Queen is likely to fall if you cash Ace-king.

Finding Kings:

- **If you have 10 or fewer cards in a suit**, you should try a finesse to trap a missing King. A King will **not** usually fall under the Ace unless you have an 11-card fit.

♣ Common Suit Combinations -- How to finesse ♣

(DUMMY) AQ5 432 (YOU)	With this combination, you have one winner and two losers unless your left-hand opponent (LHO) holds the King. Lead the 2 from your hand and, if LHO follows with a low card, play dummy's Queen. This type of simple finesse will win 50% of the time.
K32 654	You can also finesse for an Ace. Play LHO for that card by leading from your hand toward dummy's K32. If your LHO follows low -- and he almost always will when he holds the Ace -- play dummy's King. If your right-hand opponent (RHO) has the Ace, you never had a chance to win a trick in this suit.
A432 QJ109	If LHO has the King, finessing will win four tricks. Lead the Queen and if LHO plays low, "let it ride" by playing low from dummy. If the Queen wins, repeat the finesse by leading the Jack.
A432 QJ65	This is different than the example above because you don't have the 10 to back up your QJ. If LHO has the King, you can't gain a trick by leading the Queen (LHO will cover your Queen with the King and you'll lose to the 10 later). You have to lose at least one trick and hope to take three. Your best play for three tricks is to cash the ace and lead dummy's 2 toward your QJ6. If RHO plays small, play your Queen. If LHO wins the King, the suit has broken 3-2 and you'll have three tricks. If your Queen wins and LHO shows out on the second trick (RHO started with K1098 and now has K10), go back to dummy and lead low again toward the J6 remaining in your hand.

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AJ32 K654	<p>In an 8-card fit, the Queen will not usually fall if you cash the Ace and King, so plan to finesse LHO for the Queen.</p> <p>Cash the King first (in case the Queen drops singleton), then lead low toward the AJ3 left in dummy. If LHO plays low, play dummy's Jack.</p> <p>This line of play will win slightly more than 50% of the time.</p>
AJ32 K1054	<p>This suit offers a two-way finesse because you hold the Jack and ten. Decide (or guess) which defender is more likely to hold the Queen.</p> <p>If you think LHO has the Queen, cash the King, then lead toward dummy's AJ3 and play the Jack if LHO follows low.</p> <p>If you think RHO has the Queen, cash the Ace, then lead toward your K105 and play the 10 if RHO follows low.</p>
A432 J1098	<p>You can try a double finesse when you're missing two honors. Here, you hope to lose only one trick by playing LHO for one or both missing honors.</p> <p>Lead the Jack. If LHO plays the King or Queen, win with the Ace and then lose just one trick to the remaining high honor.</p> <p>If you lead the Jack and LHO plays low, play low from dummy and let RHO win his Queen or King. You can now finesse LHO for the remaining honor by running the 10.</p> <p>This play of finessing twice will win three tricks 75% of the time.</p>
AQ32 10987	<p>This is a double finesse like the example above, but you're missing the Jack and King (instead of the Queen and King).</p> <p>Lead the 10 and let it ride, then repeat by leading the 9. If LHO holds both the King and the Jack, you'll win all four tricks. If LHO has either one of these honors, you'll win three tricks.</p>
K432 J1098	<p>This is another double finesse, but it offers an extra trick only if LHO has the Queen.</p> <p>Lead the Jack and let it ride. If this wins or if RHO wins the Ace, you'll know you've trapped LHO's Queen. Repeat the finesse by leading the ten and letting it ride.</p> <p>This play will win three tricks 50% of the time.</p>
A432 Q765	<p>Since you don't have the Jack and 10 to back up your Queen, you can't trap the King if LHO has it. If you lead the Queen, LHO will "cover an honor with an honor" to force the Ace and you'll lose at least two tricks to the Jack and 10 (or perhaps three tricks to the J109 if the suit breaks 4-1).</p> <p>Instead, you must hope RHO has the King and will win it as you play small cards.</p> <p>Cash dummy's Ace, then lead the 2 towards your Q76. If RHO plays low, play the Queen. (Note that RHO won't always "fly" with his King, especially if this is the trump suit).</p>
A432 Q1065	<p>This is similar to the combination above, but holding the 10 gives you another option.</p> <p>If you think RHO has the King (because of a clue from the bidding or previous tricks), play the suit as above -- cash the Ace and lead the 2 toward your Q106, playing the Queen if RHO follows low.</p> <p>If you think LHO has the King, you can finesse RHO for the Jack. Cash the Ace and lead toward your Q106. If RHO plays low, play the 10.</p> <p>If in doubt, choose this option (Ace, then low to the 10); this will succeed when RHO holds Jxx or KJxx.</p>

Central States Regional December 11-14, 2023 Temple Beth-El 3610 Dundee Road, Northbrook, IL

Monday, December 11

10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.
2-Session Open Pairs
2-Session Gold Rush Pairs
2-Single Session 0-5 Pairs

Tuesday, December 12

10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.
2-Session Open Pairs
2-Session Gold Rush Pairs
2-Single Session 0-5 Pairs

Wednesday, December 13

10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.
2-Session Open Pairs
2-Session Gold Rush Pairs
2-Single Session 0-5 Pairs

Thursday, December 14

10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.
2-Session Open Swiss Team Game
2-Session Gold Rush Swiss Team Game
2-Single Session 0-5 Swiss Team Game*

*If insufficient number of teams, games will be combined with the Gold Rush Swiss



Masterpoint Averaging when possible

Stratification: A:3000+; B: 1500-3000; C: 0-1500
Gold Rush Stratification: 0-100; 100-300; 300-750

Single session entries accepted for pair events

Tournament Chair: Betsy Downs
loverofbeagles@gmail.com
312-952-2557

Partnership Chair: Jan Churchwell
jan8242@gmail.com

**ALERT: Proof of Vaccination is
required for play**

Please bring "proof" ... hardcopy or electronic!

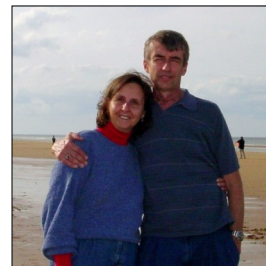
Note: We are no longer snail mailing any issues of this newsletter. Snail mail has become cost prohibitive. The newsletters are available online only at the District 13 website.

To access the site and find the newsletters, go to:

<http://acbl-district13.org/ArticlesAndNewsletters.htm>

Newsletters at this address go back to 2001.

You can read them, print them, and enjoy them from there.



Karen Walker is a National Champion who lives in Champaign, Illinois. She is the editor of the D8 newsletter and the chairman of the annual Champaign Regional.

Karen serves on the ACBL Disciplinary Committee, writes a regular column for the ACBL monthly bulletin, and is a great volunteer in the organization.

**A432
Q1098**

You have the same honors as in the previous two examples, but your 1098 allows you to run another type of double finesse.

The best way to play this suit for three winners is to lead the Queen. If LHO covers with his King, you'll win the Ace and lose only one trick to the Jack.

If you lead the Queen and LHO plays low, play low from dummy. If RHO wins your Queen with the King, take a second finesse -- play LHO for the Jack by leading the 10 towards the A43 and letting it ride.

Like other double finesses, this line of play will succeed 75% of the time. It loses two tricks only when RHO has both the King and Jack.

**K432
Q1065**

When you're missing the Ace and Jack, you'll sometimes have to finesse for the Jack on the second round of the suit.

Lead low from your hand and play dummy's King if LHO plays low. Whether RHO plays low or wins the King with the Ace, the Jack is not likely to drop on the next trick when your fit is 8 or fewer cards.

For the second lead of the suit, start in dummy and lead the 2 toward your Q106. If RHO plays small, play your 10.

Note: For simplicity, all of the above examples show combinations where you and dummy have equal length in the suit. Most of the recommendations still apply in similar layouts where you have shorter or longer fits, unequal suit lengths and/or "spot" cards that are in different hands.

For example, for the combination of A432 opposite Q1098, you can try the same double finesse (leading the queen first) if the cards are divided Q2 opposite A10987, or Q102 opposite A98.

**Walker,
continued from page 10**

District 13 2023/2024 Grand National Teams

Saturday, February 24, 2024, 11:00 and TBA & Sunday, February 25, 2024, 11:00 and TBA

Renaissance Chicago Glenview Suites, 1400 Milwaukee Avenue, Glenview, IL
Telephone: (847) 803-9800 Bridge Rate: \$104+tax by February 9, 2024

The Championship Flight, Flight A, and Flight B events will take place over four sessions and will be concluded in a single weekend.

Flight C will be a two-session Swiss Team event played to conclusion on Sunday only.

There will be no competition among flights. Players must choose the flight in which they plan to play.

Flight	Masterpoints	Club Qualifying
Championship	Unlimited	Determined by Unit
Flight A	Fewer than 6000 points	Determined by Unit
Flight B	Fewer than 2500 points	Determined by Unit
Flight C	Non Life Master and fewer than 500 points	Determined by Unit

Flight eligibility is established by ACBL's September 2023 masterpoint cycle. This information was produced on August 6, 2023 in Horn Lake, MS. Masterpoints won after this cycle will not impact flight eligibility for these events.

Players must reside in District 13. Each member of the team must be a paid member in good standing with the ACBL. Club qualifying games are permitted at Unit discretion but are not required at any level of competition. A Flight B or C team may qualify under the rules of any Unit where a plurality of team members reside.

In addition, players who are currently, or have ever been in the past, members of another bridge organization, whether domestic (e.g., American Bridge Association) or foreign (e.g., Polski Związek Brydza Sportowego), must submit information on their past and/or current ranking in that organization. Submissions must be in writing (email is fine) and must be received by the District GNT Coordinator or District 13 Director at the time of registration for the event. The information submitted may be used to assign a conversion to ACBL masterpoints for purposes of verifying flight eligibility.

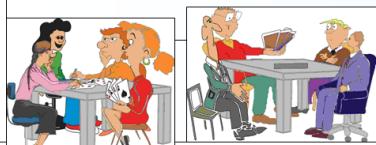
****An entry in the CHAMPIONSHIP Flight is a commitment to play in the National Final. Entries in lower flights may play to conclusion before declaring intent. We understand your reluctance to commit in advance.****

GNT Coordinator:

Suzi Subeck
847-509-0311 **stansubeck@prodigy.net**

One team will qualify in Championship and Fl. A
 In the event that there are 8 or more teams in the District Final of Flight B &/or C, that flight or flights will qualify the 2 top teams.

Any teams representing D13 at the National Event will receive a stipend paid at or just after the NABC.



Registration:

PRE-REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED FOR THIS EVENT.

All teams wishing to enter must provide notification by noon on February 18, 2024 by contacting:

Suzi Subeck, District 13 Director, (847)-509-0311 Home, (708) 927-6819 Cell, stansubeck@prodigy.net, or by registering on line at <http://bridgeinchicago.com> when it is available

Entering teams must have a written confirmation either by email or letter. No team without such a written confirmation should assume that entry has been verified. It is important to know in advance the teams enter. Captains should bring the confirmation with them to the site and be prepared to present it when purchasing an entry.

Proof of Covid Vaccination Is Required!
Hard Copy or Electronic is OK!