

# Cambs & Hunts Bridge

Number 43, May 2006

## News

An excellent season in the ECL league saw the Cambs & Hunts C Team pip Hertfordshire to victory by one VP.

Bridge problem-solving has spotlighted on Cambridge, with Julian Wightwick, closely followed by Jonathan Mestel, winning an online contest for defensive plays, beating over 1,000 contestants worldwide.

Despite a second Lady Milne victory for Catherine Jagger, the editors are again disappointed to have no article from her – maybe they will have more success in persuading her to write one after she represents the England Ladies in her first European Championship this summer in Warsaw.

## In this issue...

John Liebeschuetz writes on some problem hands from the Manchester Congress, while nearer to home Peter Grice reports on the county's New Players Tournament.

Also in this bumper issue, David Carmichael rounds up the C team's ECL victory and Julian Wightwick analyses two of the problems from Richard Pavlicek's web competitions.

The regular column on bidding tips features negative doubles, and the laws and ethics column introduces the incoming system of announcements – just when we thought we were getting used to the old alerting rules! Plus plenty of news from Around the Clubs as many annual competitions come to an end ahead of AGMs.

Aunt Agony (and the editors) would like to thank everyone who has contributed to this issue, especially as the editors allowed her a newsletter off as a result.

Visit the county's website at

**<http://www.cambsbridge.org.uk>**

- information on bridge clubs
- this and previous newsletters
- details of competitions and results
- discuss how you should have bid or played tricky hands on the new discussion board

Please send items for the website to  
**David Allen** on [david@djallen.org.uk](mailto:david@djallen.org.uk)

The next newsletter is scheduled to be published in October.

Please send in news, letters and hands no later than 15<sup>th</sup> September.  
All contributions welcome!

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## C Team Success by David Carmichael

In the 2005/06 Eastern Counties League the A Team finished 3rd, the B Team finished 2nd and the C team finished in 1st place. These bare facts do not do justice to the drama and excitement of it all!

In spite of being a small County Association, we field an A Team of exceptional quality. They are very cerebral and sometimes there is peace and quiet from their end of the room while they think great thoughts, then a bit of discussion about whether a contract will make or not, then they throw in the cards and get on to the next board. Well, maybe not, but they always seem to get to the tea and sandwiches first.

The B Team players face the twin problems of trying to break into the A Team (they have really no chance if all the stars turn out), and fighting off challenges from the rising stars of the C Team (if anyone knows who they are, please advise Team Captain). Poor things, they are on a hiding to nothing, but they bear up well and give a good account of themselves.

The C Team players are of course the true Bridge players, the fanatics who never quite get it right but who turn up with great optimism and delusions of adequacy on every possible occasion. There was even greater optimism than usual on March 5th for the final match of the season v Essex at home, holding a big lead in the league – only an unthinkable 18–2 defeat could deny us success. No problem! The Essex players however had not read the script and were not susceptible to bribes. They won the first set of 8 boards by 63 IMPs, well on the way to a 20–0 defeat for us. Rudyard Kipling and ‘If’ came to mind as we contemplated a long afternoon before we could get to

the pub to drown our sorrows. The Captain had a word with us and told us to pull our fingers out. Well, he didn’t say that exactly, he’s much too polite, but that was the message in a nutshell. Fortunately, the team rallied and we managed to talk the opposition off their game a little so we clawed our way back to a 3–17 defeat, but that was enough to guarantee winning the league.

After a bad start, when the wretched opposition had the temerity to make a slam against us on the very first board, your writer suffered the raised eyebrows of team mates and the ignominy of being just about the only declarer in the room who, as South, could not make 4♥ on the second board:

	♠ J	
	♥ Q1084	
	♦ KJ97	
	♣ 7643	
♠ A963	N W E S	♠ Q874
♥ 93		♥ 52
♦ A1042		♦ Q865
♣ Q108		♣ K52
	♠ K1052	
	♥ AKJ76	
	♦ 3	
	♣ AJ9	

I got ♣8 as the opening lead to the K and A and could see instantly that I was in trouble (very perceptive of me!). Was this a brilliant lead, or just a lucky one? What would you have led? I led my small diamond at trick two, somehow hoping that I could set up a diamond trick on which to discard a club before they cashed the setting tricks. East played low without the slightest hesitation, therefore she may have the Q but not the A.

OK, I can go down now whatever I play, but if West doesn't know what to make of the opening lead, he might not return clubs and I might still get a loser away on the ♦K. Hope springs eternal amongst the C Team players! So I

played the ♦J of course. I'm still fed up about it!

Thanks are due to Captain Chris Larlham for all his great work in managing the team, the logistics, and scoring, and in fact doing everything.

## Bidding Tips by Chris Jagger

### Introducing Negative Doubles

A negative double (or Sputnik double) is a double of an overcall that is not intended for penalties, but carries one of several meanings. The exact nature of the double varies from partnership to partnership, but we shall consider here the most common treatments being used.

The double shows a fairly balanced hand, unlimited in terms of strength, with 6+ points if at the one level, 8+ at the two level, 10+ at higher levels. It denies a fit for partner's major, though could have a minor suit fit. One of the most frequent errors that people make is to use the negative double too often – if you have another bid available, use it. If not, then it might be a time for a negative double.

Some examples after it starts 1♣-1♠ – have a go and then consult the answers below.

1. ♠KJ10xx ♥Axx ♦xxxx ♣x
2. ♠xx ♥Qxxx ♦KJxx ♣xxx
3. ♠Q10xx ♥xx ♦KJxx ♣Qxx
4. ♠Kx ♥AKxx ♦AKJx ♣Kxx
5. ♠Kxx ♥xxx ♦Qxx ♣Kxxx
6. ♠xx ♥Kxxx ♦QJxxx ♣Kx
7. ♠xx ♥AKxx ♦KQJxx ♣xx
8. ♠xxx ♥KQJxxx ♦Kxx ♣x
9. ♠xxx ♥QJxxxx ♦Kxx ♣x

1. ♠KJ10xx ♥Axx ♦xxxx ♣x  
Pass, hoping partner can reopen with a double for you to pass for penalties.

2. ♠xx ♥Qxxx ♦KJxx ♣xxx  
Double, 6+ points and support for both suits.

3. ♠Q10xx ♥xx ♦KJxx ♣Qxx  
Bid 1NT (do not wait for partner to reopen with a double, and then bid 1NT, as this shows a weaker hand, remember to bid now!).

4. ♠Kx ♥AKxx ♦AKJx ♣Kxx  
Double. 21 points is not too much for a negative double – try to find a fit first, and you can shoot for the stars later.

5. ♠Kxx ♥xxx ♦Qxx ♣Kxxx  
Bid 2♣ – a negative double should only be for when you have no obvious bid.

6. ♠xx ♥Kxxx ♦QJxxx ♣Kx  
Double.

7. ♠xx ♥AKxx ♦KQJxx ♣xx  
Bid 2♦, and hope to introduce the heart suit later in the auction.

8. ♠xxx ♥KQJxxx ♦Kxx ♣x  
Bid 2♥ – don't double when you can bid a suit.

9. ♠xxx ♥QJxxxx ♦Kxx ♣x  
Double – without the strength for 2♥, you must start with a double and then later convert partner's bid to hearts. Thus the auction 1♣-1♠-X-P, 2♣-P-2♥ is weak with long hearts.

## Specific double sequences

There are various interpretations as to suit lengths that people play, though the modern treatment is to specifically show unbid majors (which is probably the best method, and certainly the easiest to play). Thus:

1♣-1♦-X = 4-4 majors. (Will be exactly 4-4 in the majors unless weak.)

1♣-1♥-X = 4 spades. (With 5 spades, you would simply bid 1♠. Note some would play that the double implies 4-4 in the other two suits, spades and diamonds here, and others would say that it could also be a hand without 4 spades, but with long diamonds, too weak for 2♦.)

1♣-1♠-X = 4 hearts. (Could have longer hearts if up to a 9 count, ie too weak to bid 2♥.)

1♠-2♦-X = The same.

1♠-2♥-X = Not very specific.

1♠-3♦-X = In principle 4 hearts, but as the bidding gets higher, the meanings become more imprecise, as there are more hands that you haven't got a suitable bid for, and thus wish to use a double.

Generally speaking, hands with a five card suit (either the major or a minor suit) should start off by bidding that suit, unless they are not strong enough when they can start with a double. A common mistake is to think that the following sequence is forcing, when in fact it follows that it must be weak:

1♣-1♥-X-P, 2♣-P-2♦ = Weak hand, typically with exactly four spades, and 5 or more diamonds (with a stronger hand with 5 diamonds you would start off with 2♦).

Note that some people prefer to reverse this, so that all direct bids (eg 1♦-1♠-2♥) are not forcing, and stronger hands

must start with a double, in which case the previous sequence would show a forcing hand with diamonds, not showing or denying a heart suit (there are good reasons as to why this is not a good idea, but we shall not go into those here).

## Advanced tips on Neg. Doubles

With 4423 shape, after 1♣-2♦, double light – if you pass you will be faced with a difficult choice when partner reopens with a double – both choosing a suit and the level to play at.

With a good suit but weak, pass and then bid, or with a better suit bid anyway, even if weak, in order to get into the auction. For example, with xxx xx xx AQJ10xx bid 2♣ after 1♥-1♠, even if you would normally have responded 1NT to 1♥ with this hand.

## EBU Subscriptions 2006

Subscriptions of £19.00 were due on April 1st, reminders were sent out with the February magazine. and will be collected from Direct Debit members automatically.

Non DD members can sign up for DD by completing the back of their reminder form, or should pay the EBU asap. They can pay online, over the phone or by sending a cheque with their renewal slip to:-

English Bridge Union, Broadfields, Bicester Road, Aylesbury, HP19 8AZ

New members can register online at [www.ebu.co.uk](http://www.ebu.co.uk) or phone the EBU on 01296 317201.

Full membership is £19.00  
(Under 25s £5.50, Under 17s £2.50).

Further enquiries to Penny Riley, Cambs & Hunts Membership Secretary. Tel. 01223 246908 or email [penny.riley@ntlworld.com](mailto:penny.riley@ntlworld.com)

## New Players Tournament by Peter Grice

The New Players Tournament is a great event for less experienced players to take their first step from club bridge into larger tournaments. It is a very friendly and enjoyable day, and many pairs – my partner Ruth and myself included – have competed several times. With 12 tables the format is 18 boards before lunch and a further 18 in the afternoon.



In any competition a good start is essential, and we were lucky that our first three boards were easy to bid and straightforward to play. Things became more interesting later on but we seemed to cope fairly well and were delighted to find ourselves 2nd at the halfway point.

The second session didn't go quite as well. I misplayed one contract and failed to bid an obvious game in the next. My partner did what all good partners should – just smiled and said, "Never mind, we'll do better on the next board." And so we did. Of several "interesting" boards through the day, no. 15 from the second session stood out.

N	E	S	W
		P	2♠
3♦	3♠	4♦	4♠
5♦	P	P	P

N/S vul	♠ A75										
Dealer S	♥ —										
	♦ KJ10875										
	♣ AJ102										
♠ KQJ10943	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ 86
	N										
W		E									
	S										
♥ KJ8		♥ 97542									
♦ —		♦ A632									
♣ Q75		♣ K9									
		♠ 2									
		♥ AQ1063									
		♦ Q94									
		♣ 8643									

After a competitive auction I declared a vulnerable 5♦. Bidding this might be described as 'well- judged', 'brave' or 'foolish', and maybe a few other terms too. Certainly there was no mention of diamonds in David Carmichael's otherwise insightful hand commentary. (Maybe Auntie could comment? [Auntie is somewhat baffled by the 2♠ opener – still trying to decide if it was meant to be weak or strong – but aside from that the auction looks reasonable and it seems quite possible that 5♦ might be reached after a 1♠ opening too.]) After the first round of bidding, with both sides supporting, I thought that with my ♠Axx and ♥ void (and presumably Ruth short in spades) I was in with a chance. I don't recall details of the play but lost just a club and ♦A.

In the end Ruth and I were lucky to finish just ahead of Peter and Pauline Bramworth with David Hubbard and Richard Colledge in third.

This was a most enjoyable tournament, run by Gladys Gittins with David Carmichael doing the scoring and hand commentaries. I'm sure all the "New Players" would join me in thanking Gladys and David for giving up their time so that others can enjoy their bridge, such people are a great asset for the county.

## Problems from the Manchester Congress

by John Liebeschuetz

The Manchester Congress produced some interesting hands – try the following two before reading on.

♠ 93 ♥ AQ104 ♦ A96 ♣ Q765	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>N</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>W</td> <td>E</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>S</td> </tr> </table>	N			W	E				S	♠ AQJ87542 ♥ 3 ♦ Q3 ♣ A3
N											
W	E										
		S									

You reach 6♠ played by South. The lead is the ♦J, ducked in dummy, and won by East's K. Plan the play.

Dealer S All vul	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>N</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>W</td> <td>E</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>S</td> </tr> </table>	N			W	E				S	♠ 1032 ♥ J ♦ AJ985 ♣ 8654
N											
W	E										
		S									
♠ AJ98654 ♥ K72 ♦ 7 ♣ J10											

LHO overcalls your 3♠ opener with 4♥ and that ends the auction. Pard leads the ♠Q to your A and small from declarer. Plan the defence.

### Giving ruff and discards can be good for your bridge

If that isn't a controversial statement I don't know what is. We would normally cut our right arms off before giving a ruff and sluff in defence! However there are some situations where it is absolutely the right thing to do. A good time to watch for this play

is when declarer is working with a 4-4 fit and has poor communications between the two hands. It can't be too uncommon a situation because two examples came up at the Manchester Congress.

Dealer N Love all	♠ J ♥ K ♦ 7 ♣ KJ84										
♠ — ♥ J10 ♦ — ♣ AQ752	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>N</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>W</td> <td>E</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>S</td> </tr> </table>	N			W	E				S	♠ — ♥ Q5 ♦ 954 ♣ 103
N											
W	E										
		S									
♠ Q987 ♥ — ♦ J ♣ 96											

West declares in hearts, needing all but two of the remaining tricks. He exits with a trump to North. Now North's safest exit is in fact, you've guessed it, a spade. If he returns a diamond or a low club then declarer can set up the diamond suit; and a lead of the ♣J is taken by the Q and now a low club puts North in again. Guess what, leading a spade and giving a ruff and discard is the way out once more because a club lead goes up to declarer's A7 tenace.

In this example declarer can always make his trumps separately anyway, and in such cases giving the ruff and discard will rarely cost. However there are also examples where declarer cannot make the trumps separately and yet the play is still right.

The classic example is that below.

Diamonds are trumps (why should the majors have all the fun??) and West is thrown in. A heart lead gives a ruff and discard but it does declarer no good and the defence still comes to its club trick.

	♠ —											
	♥ —											
	♦ x											
	♣ xxxx											
♠ — ♥ Kx ♦ — ♣ Qxx	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		immaterial	
	N											
W		E										
	S											
	♠ —											
	♥ —											
	♦ x											
	♣ AKJx											

A rather unusual variation on this theme came up later in the congress. We actually managed to get the defence right on this one.

Dealer N												
EW Vul	♠ 864											
	♥ Q1054											
	♦ A9											
	♣ J942											
♠ 107 ♥ 63 ♦ K854 ♣ 108763	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ K932 ♥ AKJ ♦ QJ632 ♣ 5	
	N											
W		E										
	S											
	♠ AQJ5											
	♥ 9872											
	♦ 107											
	♣ AKQ											

East opened 1♦, South doubled and somehow ended up declaring 3♥ after some pushing by us. The diamond lead was ducked to the J and a diamond returned to the A. A club to declarer's hand (an immediate spade finesse is best) was followed by a heart to 10 and J. Two further rounds of hearts followed from East and now the key point was reached. A spade exit would have allowed declarer to finesse, unblock clubs, cross in hearts to cash ♣J, and take a second spade finesse.

The actual diamond return wrecked this plan. Despite apparently giving away an extra trump trick this play defeats the contract as declarer cannot now both finesse in spades and enjoy dummy's extra club trick.

## Solutions to the problems

Congress weekends always turn up some great hands, which is some consolation if you come back with no silverware or filthy lucre to show. How did you get on with the two problems given earlier?

	♠ 93											
	♥ AQ104											
	♦ A96											
	♣ Q765											
♠ — ♥ J9852 ♦ J1087 ♣ J942	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ K106 ♥ K76 ♦ K542 ♣ K108	
	N											
W		E										
	S											
	♠ AQJ87542											
	♥ 3											
	♦ Q3											
	♣ A3											

Here your contract clearly depends on picking up the ♠K, with your club loser going on the ♦A. The odds favour crossing to dummy and finessing in spades but if you haven't thrown the ♦Q under the K at trick one you are going down. This allows you to finesse the ♦9 against North's almost marked 10 to give you a second entry to dummy and you need that so you can take the spade finesse twice. This play also gains if East starts with Kx in both pointed suits because you are able to draw two rounds of trumps before having to cash the ♦A. Luckily our opponents missed this tricky play.

Dealer S												
All vul	♠ Q											
	♥ 8543											
	♦ 10632											
	♣ K732											
♠ K7 ♥ AQ1096 ♦ KQ4 ♣ AQ9	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ 1032 ♥ J ♦ AJ985 ♣ 8654	
	N											
W		E										
	S											
	♠ AJ98654											
	♥ K72											
	♦ 7											
	♣ J10											

Partner is marked with the singleton ♠Q and the automatic thing to do is to collect the spade ruff (as I did). However is it right?

Well, if declarer has something like ♠K7 ♥AQT965 ♦432 ♣AK, then yes it is. In the actual case, however, declarer was able to win partner's return, cross to dummy and lead ♥J to the Q. Ace and another heart and it was

now easy. In fact a club lead through declarer at trick two works best. You will eventually get in with the ♥K. Now partner gets the spade ruff and is able to cash a club trick to boot.

It's a close thing but perhaps when considering all the hand types declarer could have, the club switch works more often than the spade continuation.

## Laws and Ethics – Announcements by Chris Jagger

The Laws and Ethics committee are in the final stages of putting together new regulations regarding alerting rules, and also introducing announcements. In this addition we will give an introduction to what announcements are, and in the next edition we will consider the rules for announcements once they have been finalised.

Announcements are in use in the USA and some other countries, and simply involve announcing the meaning of certain bids to the opponents. For example, when your partner opens 1NT, you would say '12-14', or whatever range it was that you were playing. Similarly you would announce 2♣ as being Stayman, or perhaps 2♦ as being a transfer bid.

If you open 1♣ your partner would make no announcement if it was simply natural, would announce as 'Short Club (could be two)' if it is short (though the EBU are likely to regard 1♣ as being natural not short if it promises at least three cards in the suit), or Precision Club, depending on what you play.

The EBU are in the process of defining exactly which bids need to be announced, and the hope is that it will be a simple, easy-to-remember rule.

**Pros:** The idea of announcements is to simplify and speed up much of the game, making sure everyone knows what is going on without the need for players to ask about bids that they are likely to want to know about. It should also lessen the potential for players to gain advantage from the questions their partners ask. Currently players are expected to ask the meaning of a bid only if they need to know the answer at that stage of the auction. Does that mean that with an 18 count you simply double 1NT as you do not care how strong it is, but that with a 15 count you ask because perhaps you will double a weak no trump but not a strong one?

**Cons:** The main disadvantages are extra rules for people to know, and more potential for players to alert their partners to situations where they have forgotten the system. For example, suppose you opened 1NT with 15 points, your partner announced it as 12-14, and raised you to 2NT. If you thought you were playing 15-17, you would refuse the invite, but having been alerted to the fact that it is 12-14, you would clearly like to raise. Ethically you should not raise, but in practice many would, and would claim they knew the system but had simply



‘downgraded’ their hand, or miscounted their points, both of which would be perfectly plausible explanations. This is one of the reasons why it is only fairly simple situations

that are to be announced – it is expected that most people do actually know what range of no trump they play without a reminder from their partner!

## Contests on the Web by Julian Wightwick

Have you found Richard Pavlicek’s website?

[www.rpbridge.net/rppc.htm](http://www.rpbridge.net/rppc.htm)

He runs a monthly online multiple-choice contest, alternating between play and bidding.

I recommend the play contests in particular. These alternate between declarer play and defence, so every four months there is a contest on defensive play and declarer play. Each of these play contests consists of six, fine, hard problems.

Jonathan Mestel and I regularly attempt these play contests. Jonathan, of course, is an expert at problem solving and in 1997 won the World Chess Problem Championships. He sometimes seems able to short-circuit the problem-solving process by deducing the cunning intent of the problem setter. Jonathan scored a brilliant 60 out of 60 in the December contest, but came only 19th because he submitted his answers late in the month.

I, on the other hand, find them hard, tend to run out of energy part way through the analysis, and fall for the obvious solution. Six problems are often enough to send me to sleep every night for a whole month, and, sadly, my sleeping subconscious doesn’t seem motivated to help. My best score was 58 in that December contest, and that was my 22nd bi-monthly entry to these things.

So the February contest

[www.rpbridge.net/cgi-bin/rppc.pl?8x65](http://www.rpbridge.net/cgi-bin/rppc.pl?8x65)

was particularly satisfying because – fanfare – I won! First out of 1053 participants! I also find it pleasing that my winning score, 57, was the lowest ever. Jonathan scored 57 as well, but submitted his answers a day later, so came second. Ha! The remaining 1051 participants scored 56 or lower.

How could this have happened?

Consider problem 6: IMPs

N	E (You)	S	W
1♦	P	1♠	P
2♦	P	6NT	All Pass

All vul  
Dealer N

♠	Q4
♥	K3
♦	AQJ982
♣	985

♠	J72
♥	109853
♦	K7
♣	1074

	N	
W		E
	S	

Partner leads the ♦6, and dummy plays the queen (South will play the 3). Your defence?

- (A) Win ♦K; lead ♠J
- (B) Win ♦K; lead ♠2
- (C) Win ♦K; lead ♥10
- (D) Win ♦K; lead ♦7
- (E) Win ♦K; lead ♣4
- (F) Duck smoothly

We don't seem to have a problem yet, right? Win  $\spadesuit K$  and switch to a club. But this is a problem, and there are five other options, so there must be more to it.

Could South have  $\spadesuit AK10x$   $\heartsuit AQJ$   $\diamond 10x$   $\clubsuit KQJx$ ? In that case, we'd better cash partner's  $\clubsuit A$ . That's enough values for slam, but wouldn't South have used Blackwood? Then again, we already know that he's missing two "Aces", as in the A and K of diamonds, so perhaps this South has forgotten about Blackwood. It turns out that in Richard's "Standard" bidding system, he uses simple Blackwood, but not Roman Keycard Blackwood, so we are meant to deduce that partner can't have  $\clubsuit A$ . If partner has only the  $\clubsuit K$ , there's no urgency to lead a club.

The key to this hand is partner's diamond lead. It's unusual to lead dummy's suit, so we can deduce that he led a diamond to avoid leading from an honour in another suit. A layout like the following is predictable:

	$\spadesuit Q4$ $\heartsuit K4$ $\diamond AQJ982$ $\clubsuit 985$										
$\spadesuit K853$ $\heartsuit J76$ $\diamond 654$ $\clubsuit Q62$	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		$\spadesuit J72$ $\heartsuit 109853$ $\diamond K7$ $\clubsuit 1074$
	N										
W		E									
	S										
	$\spadesuit A1096$ $\heartsuit AQ2$ $\diamond 103$ $\clubsuit AKJ3$										

Declarer can make the same deduction about the lead, so if we return a club he will win the  $\clubsuit A$ , cash three hearts, the  $\spadesuit A$  (Vienna coup) and run diamonds to reach this ending (see next column) with dummy on lead. The last diamond then squeezes West.

	$\spadesuit Q$ $\heartsuit -$ $\diamond 2$ $\clubsuit 9$										
$\spadesuit K$ $\heartsuit -$ $\diamond -$ $\clubsuit Q6$	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		$\spadesuit J$ $\heartsuit -$ $\diamond -$ $\clubsuit 107$
	N										
W		E									
	S										
	$\spadesuit 10$ $\heartsuit -$ $\diamond -$ $\clubsuit KJ$										

The answer is to return a diamond (Option D), which cuts communication to dummy. Now declarer is unable to cash his third heart before running diamonds, and there is no squeeze.

Jonathan worked all this out, and scored up his 10/10. I, on the other hand, didn't think that declarer would shoot 6NT with only an 18 count, anyway didn't work out the squeeze, and returned a wooden club in case he had gone berserk. For this, I got a rather generous 7/10.

Working backwards, problem 5: IMPs

N	E	S	W (You)
		1 $\clubsuit$	X
XX	1 $\heartsuit$	5 $\clubsuit$	All Pass

N/S vul Dealer S	$\spadesuit A43$ $\heartsuit J1092$ $\diamond J842$ $\clubsuit A9$										
$\spadesuit KQ108$ $\heartsuit Q853$ $\diamond AKQ9$ $\clubsuit 2$	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		
	N										
W		E									
	S										

You lead the  $\diamond K$ , partner plays the three, and South the six.

Your next lead? (A)  $\spadesuit K$ ; (B)  $\spadesuit Q$ ; (C)  $\heartsuit 8$ ; (D)  $\heartsuit 3$ ; (E)  $\diamond A$ ; (F)  $\clubsuit 2$ .

Declarer must have a lot of clubs to bid so much at this vulnerability, and

surely the singleton ♥A to give him an opening bid rather an opening preempt. Partner gives attitude on all honour leads, so we don't know whether a second diamond will cash.

The intended problem hand was:

	♠ A43		
	♥ J1092		
	♦ J842		
	♣ A9		
♠ KQ108		N	♠ 976
♥ Q853		W	♥ K764
♦ AKQ9		E	♦ 10753
♣ 2		S	♣ 84
	♠ J52		
	♥ A		
	♦ 6		
	♣ KQJ107653		

On this one, if we try to cash a second diamond, declarer can unblock the ♥A and establish a heart trick with a loser-on-loser play and ruffing finesse. The ♠K switch doesn't work, because declarer can duck that and make on a spade–diamond squeeze. The answer is to switch to the trump, taking out an entry from dummy.

Jonathan worked this out and found the trump switch, as did all the other expert solvers. I spotted the squeeze, but not the loser-on-loser play in the heart suit, so woodenly continued diamonds. Perhaps you can see a pattern emerging in Jonathan's and my answers.

However, suppose instead the hand is:

	♠ A43		
	♥ J1092		
	♦ J842		
	♣ A9		
♠ KQ108		N	♠ 9762
♥ Q853		W	♥ K764
♦ AKQ9		E	♦ 1053
♣ 2		S	♣ 84
	♠ J5		
	♥ A		
	♦ 76		
	♣ KQJ107653		

In that case – and this is the quirk that allowed my glorious victory – Richard noticed that his problem was flawed.

Now, if you switch to that clever trump, declarer just runs trumps to get to this ending:

N/S vul	♠ A4		
Dealer S	♥ —		
	♦ J8		
	♣ —		
♠ KQ		N	♠ 97
♥ —		W	♥ K7
♦ AQ		E	♦ —
♣ —		S	♣ —
	♠ J5		
	♥ —		
	♦ 7		
	♣ 5		

The last club squeezes us without the count. On this construction we must continue diamonds or switch to ♠K.

Richard calculates that the two hands are equally likely, but another factor makes a trump shift worse. In the second hand, a trump shift is immediately fatal regardless of South's club holding, while in the first example, the ♦A costs nothing if East has ♣10 or any club honour to prevent the nine from being an entry. Hence my wooden diamond continuation scored 10/10, and Jonathan and the other experts got only 7/10.

On the first four problems, Jonathan and I both scored full marks. Why not go to the web site and try to match us?

Many thanks to Richard Pavlicek, for sending me to sleep all those nights and for giving me permission to plagiarise his hands and some of his analysis. These two examples show his quizzes in an unfair light. Even the problem 6 is perhaps slightly flawed by the failure to use RKCB. Normally his play problems are very clean, and a joy either to solve and/or to read about the following month.

## Results round-up

### National competitions

Rod Oakford, Sue Oakford, Victor Milman & Nadia Stelmashenko came 5th in the National Swiss Teams.

Sheila Parker & Catherine Curtis finished 3rd in the National Women's Pairs. Chris Jagger & Ian Pagan were 6th in the Men's Pairs.

Catherine Jagger finished second in the National Women's Teams, losing the final by 2 IMPs.

Mike Seaver & Iain Watson came 2nd in the Life Masters' Pairs. Nadia Stelmashenko & Sue Oakford were 5th.

Ian Pagan won the Kettering heat of the National Pairs, with Paul Fegarty & Catherine Curtis second. Five other county players qualified for the final: Roger Gibbons (5th), Rod Oakford & Don McFarlane (12th) and Nadia Stelmashenko & Victor Milman (14th).

Then in the National Final Ian Pagan finished second, Rod Oakford & Don McFarlane finished 15th and Roger Gibbons finished 16th.

Catherine Jagger played on the England team that retained the Lady Milne in Northern Ireland. She has also been selected for the England women's team in the European Championships in Warsaw in August.

All three Cambridge University teams are safely through to the quarter-finals of the inter-university Portland Bowl.

Oxford beat Cambridge in both the Varsity Match and the Undergraduate Varsity Match.

Two Under-19 Cambridgeshire players played on the Central East Region team that won the South of England round of the G W Arnott Davidson Trophy.

Four pairs qualified from the regional heat of the Under-19 pairs for the National Final:

1. Stephen Jones & Jonathon Dilorenzo
2. James Gadsden & Alex Parsons-Mills
3. Damian & Martin Bell
4. Kieran Tilley & Arthur Wolstenholme

Kieran and Arthur then finished second in the National Final in London on Good Friday.

Cambridge 'B' lost to the 77 Club 'A' in the fifth round of the NICKO. Meanwhile, Cambridge 'A' beat Spencefield 'A' to reach the sixth round.

### Eastern Counties League

The county scored 11-9, 18-2 and 6-14 against Suffolk; 13-7, 11-9 and 19-1 against the University; 13-7, 4-16 and 16-4 against Hertfordshire; and 11-9, 2-18 and 3-17 against Essex.

Full results for the year:

#### A Division

1. Norfolk with 102 VPs
2. Bedfordshire with 83 VPs
3. Hertfordshire with 81 VPs
4. Cambs & Hunts with 79 VPs

#### B Division

1. Norfolk with 95 VPs
2. Hertfordshire with 81 VPs
3. University with 80 VPs
4. Suffolk with 74 VPs
5. Cambs & Hunts with 65 VPs

#### C Division

1. Cambs & Hunts with 90 VPs
2. Hertfordshire with 89 VPs
3. Northants with 82 VPs
4. Norfolk with 81 VPs

## ECL Dates

2nd July v Northants (H)  
 9th July v Beds (A)  
 15th October v Suffolk (H)  
 12th November v Herts (A)  
 14th January v Essex (A)  
 TBA v University (H)

### County Pairs Final

1. Sheila Parker & Julian Wightwick
2. Jonathan Mestel & Rod Oakford
3. Roger & Margaret Chaplin
4. Paul Fegarty & Catherine Curtis
5. Penny & Ken Riley
6. Chris Larlham & John Constable
7. Kevin Smith & Joanne Caldwell
8. Jenny Jacobsberg & Peter Last
9. Matt May & Niel Pimblett
10. David Man & Ken Jackson

### County Individual Final

1. Chris Larlham
2. Mike Tedham
3. Dave Harrison
4. Ted Shaw
5. Fred Allen
6. Tom Waites
7. Peter Jackson
8. Eric Lancaster
9. Derek Green
10. Joy Holman

### New Players Tournament

1. Peter Grice & Ruth Katz
2. Peter & Pauline Bramworth
3. David Hubbard & Richard Colledge
4. Bill & Sue Sutton
5. Lazlo David & Pat Fletcher
6. Barbara Wood & Mary Doyle
7. Sandra & Richard Quartemaine
8. Jayne Curry & Sabine Muehlemeyer
9. Chris & Julia Smith
10. Margaret & Gordon Crabbe

### County Knockout

In Round 2

ABEL beat CARMICHAEL  
 LAST beat MAN

In the Quarter-Finals

PARKER beat ABEL  
 JAGGER beat LAST  
 LARLHAM beat JACOBSBERG  
 YERGER beat DE VRIES

In the Semi-Finals

PARKER beat JAGGER  
 LARLHAM beat YERGER

### County Knockout Plate

In Round 1

MAN beat JONES  
 LAWRENCE beat KENNEY  
 FOLEY beat BULL

In the Quarter-Finals

MAN beat LAWRENCE  
 FOLEY beat HARRISON  
 COPPING beat RICHER  
 MAY beat OAKFORD

In the Semi-Finals

MAY beat COPPING

### Cambs & Hunts Bridge League

Current standings:

#	Division 1	P	W	L	D	VPs	Ave
1	Cambridge 1	6	5	1	0	73	12.2
2	Ely 1	5	3	2	0	62	12.4
3	North Cambridge 1	5	3	2	0	58	11.6
4	Huntingdon 1	6	3	3	0	57	9.5
5	University 1	5	2	3	0	55	11.0

#	Division 2	P	W	L	D	VPs	Ave
1	Saffron Walden 2	5	4	0	1	66	13.2
2	Thursday 2	5	3	2	0	55	11.0
3	Cambridge 4	4	2	2	0	41	10.3

#	Division 3	P	W	L	D	VPs	Ave
1	Cambridge 3	7	5	2	0	81	11.6
2	Huntingdon 3	6	4	2	0	78	13.0
3	Royston 1	6	2	3	1	56	9.3
4	Crafts Hill	5	3	2	0	52	10.4
5	Balsham 2	5	2	3	0	47	9.4

## Around the Clubs

### Balsham

Pearl's Plate was won by Ken Winterbottom & Tim Burns.

Gwen's Plate was won by David Waldman.

David's Challenge Cup was won by David Richer, David Waldman, Jane Woodhouse & Colin Campbell.

The President's Cup was won by Sheila & Eric Lancaster.

The Margaret Jude Rose Bowl was won by Vera Donert & Fred Allen.

### Blinco

The Frank Weatherhead Cup was won by Fred Allen & Vera Donert.

### Cambridge

The Marie Johnson Salver was won by David Carmichael, William Tunstall-Pedoe, Roger Courtney & Robin Cambery.

The Wraight Cup Swiss Pairs was won by Mike Seaver & Peter Bhagat.

The Thomas Kirkby Mixed Pairs was won by Rod & Sue Oakford.

The Club Pairs was won by Eryl Howard & Eric Campbell.

The Spring Equinox handicap pairs was won by Sheila Parker & John Liebeschuetz.

The Collis Plate Teams League was won by Sheila Parker, Rod Oakford, Don McFarlane, John Liebeschuetz, Jonathan Mestel & Julian Wightwick.

The Cradock Trophy was won by Eryl Howard.

The Jacobs Shield Butler Pairs was won by Paul Fegarty & Catherine Curtis.

### Cottenham

Lorraine Waters won the Club Individual Championship by over 9%.

The Championship Pairs was won by Peter Morgan & Mike Seaver.

The March Handicap Pairs for the Evans Handicap Cup was won by Queenie Band & Mary Waters.

The David Haddock Cup was won by Alan Ashment.

### Huntingdon

The Club Championship Teams was won by Vi Carpenter, Mary Pope, Chitz Perera & Linda Ledwidge.

Malcolm Anderson, Roger Farrington, Pauline Baily & Mike Neverton won the Stuart Morton Random Teams.

The Club Pairs Championship was won by Peter Somerfield & Derek Oxbrow.

The Club Plate was won by Jillian Challinor & Anne Theakston.

### North Cambridge

The Club Handicap Pairs resulted in a tie between Bernard Buckley & Lorraine Waters and Peter Morgan & Frank Padgett.

The Winter Pairs was won by David Carmichael & Eryl Howard.

### Thursday

The President's Shield was won by Austin Bevan.

The St John Championship was won by Julie Robinson & Shirley Rainbow.

The Mackenzie Trophy was won by Angela & Roy Newman.

The Swan Shields were won by David Man & Ken Jackson.