

# BRIDGE

Number One Hundred and Thirty-Six

April 2014

## Bernard Magee's Acol Bidding Quiz

You are West in the auctions below, playing 'Standard Acol' with a weak no-trump (12-14 points) and 4-card majors.

### 1. Dealer West. Love All.

♠ 4 2  
♥ 6 5 4  
♦ AK 8 7 6  
♣ K Q 7



West	North	East	South
?			

### 2. Dealer East. Love All.

♠ K 8 6 5  
♥ Q 6 5 2  
♦ 10 8 6 3  
♣ 2



West	North	East	South
?		1♣	Pass

### 3. Dealer East. N/S Game.

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



West	North	East	South
?		1♣	Pass

Answers on page 6

### 4. Dealer East. Love All.

♠ A 7 3  
♥ K Q 8 7  
♦ Q J 4 3  
♣ 7 6



West	North	East	South
2♣	Pass	2♥	Pass
?		1NT	Pass

### 5. Dealer East. Love All.

♠ A 2  
♥ K Q J  
♦ Q J 8 4  
♣ Q J 10 5



West	North	East	South
?		3♣	Pass

### 6. Dealer West. Love All.

♠ K Q 4 2  
♥ 4 2  
♦ 7 2  
♣ AK 8 7 6



West	North	East	South
1♣	1♣	Dbl*	Pass
?			

\*Negative double: for take-out

Answers on page 9

### 7. Dealer West. Game All.

♠ J 2  
♥ 7  
♦ 9 8 3  
♣ AK 10 9 8 7 3



West	North	East	South
3♣	3♥	Dbl*	Pass
?			*Penalty

### 8. Dealer West. Love All.

♠ 4 3  
♥ AK 8 7 6  
♦ 6  
♣ AQJ 5 4



West	North	East	South
1♥	1♣	2♥	3♣
?			

### 9. Dealer West. E/W Game.

♠ K Q 5 4  
♥ K 2  
♦ K 7  
♣ AJ 10 8 4



West	North	East	South
1♣	1♣	Pass	Pass
?			

Answers on page 11

### 10. Dealer North. N/S Game.

♠ A 8 7 6 5  
♥ 3 2  
♦ 7 6  
♣ A Q 4 2



West	North	East	South
?	3♥	Dbl	Pass

### 11. Dealer East. N/S Game.

♠ K 2  
♥ AJ 10 9  
♦ 9 8 7  
♣ K 8 3 2



West	North	East	South
?		1♣	2♥

### 12. Dealer South. Love All.

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



West	North	East	South
Pass	2♣	Pass	Pass
?			1♣

Answers on page 13



**NEW VOYAGE WITH BERNARD MAGEE**



# CRUISE TO CLASSICAL GREECE & BYZANTIUM

**13-day cruise-tour departs July 30, 2014**

DATE	PORT	ARRIVE	DEPART
JUL 30	Fly to <b>ISTANBUL</b> Turkey Transfer to Aegean Odyssey		10.00pm
JUL 31	Cruising the Dardanelles and past Mount Athos		
AUG 1	<b>THESSALONIKA</b> Greece	6.00am	7.00pm
AUG 2	<b>VOLOS (Meteora)</b> Greece	7.00am	7.00pm
AUG 3	<b>PATMOS</b> Greek Islands	1.00pm	7.00pm
AUG 4	<b>PIRAEUS (Athens)</b> Greece	8.00am	7.00pm
AUG 5	<b>GYTHION (Sparta &amp; Mystra)</b> Greece	7.00am	1.30pm
AUG 6	<b>PREVEZA (Arta)</b> Greece	8.30am	6.00pm
AUG 7	<b>CORFU</b> Greek Islands	midnight	2.00pm
AUG 8	<b>DUBROVNIK</b> Croatia Cruise the islands of Hvar and Korcula	8.00am	2.00pm
AUG 9	<b>RAVENNA</b> Italy	1.00pm	midnight
AUG 10	<b>VENICE</b> Italy	8.00am	overnight
AUG 11	<b>VENICE</b> Italy Disembark Aegean Odyssey and transfer to Venice Airport for flight home		

Join Bernard Magee on this unforgettable summer bridge voyage from Istanbul to Venice

**Departs July 30, 2014**

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# BRIDGE

Ryden Grange, Knaphill,  
Surrey GU21 2TH

☎ 01483 489961

bridge@mrbridge.co.uk

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All correspondence should be addressed to Mr Bridge.  
Please make sure that all letters and e-mails carry full  
postal addresses and telephone numbers.

# CHARITY EVENTS

## MAY

- 2 **FRIENDS OF GIRLGUIDING**  
**OXFORDSHIRE**  
Eynsham Village Hall.  
10 for 10.30am. £15.  
Bridget Walton  
☎ 01993 702934  
bridgetmwalton@aol.com
- 8 **BURGHLEY ROTARY CHARITIES**  
Stamford Bridge Club.  
1.45 for 2.00pm. £8.00.  
Alan Kinch  
☎ 01780 444276
- 15 **HUDDERSFIELD PENNINE**  
**ROTARY CLUB**  
Outlane Golf Club.  
12 for 12.30. £48.00 per table.  
Rtn Sam Smith  
☎ 01924 492540  
samuelsmith396  
@btinternet.com
- 16 **MS THERAPY CENTRE**  
Huntingdon, Cambs. £14.00.  
Hemingford Abbots Village  
Hall. 10.00 for 10.30am.  
Jenny Lea  
☎ 01480 455810

## JUNE

- 13 **ST MARY'S CHURCH**  
Eaton Socon, St Neots.  
10.00 for 10.30am. £13.50.  
Malcolm Howarth  
☎ 01480 212910

## JULY

- 3 **HUDDERSFIELD PENNINE**  
**ROTARY CLUB**  
Outlane Golf Club.  
12 for 12.30. £48.00 per table.  
Rtn Sam Smith  
☎ 01924 492540  
samuelsmith396  
@btinternet.com
- 11 **GREAT BARFORD CHURCH**  
Village Hall, Great Barford.  
10.00 for 10.30am. £13.50.  
Derek Fordham  
☎ 01234 870324

## AUGUST

- 15 **ST IVES DAY CARE CENTRE**  
Hemingford Abbots Village  
Hall. 10 for 10.30am. £13.50.  
Don Moorman  
☎ 01480 463444

E-mail your charity events:  
maggie@mrbridge.co.uk

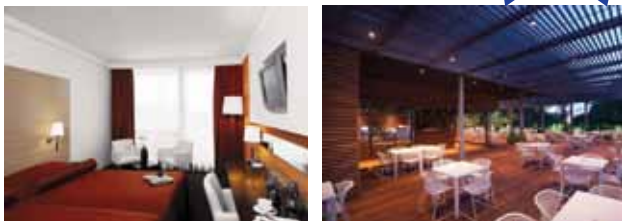
# CROATIA

7-21 May 2014

**BERNARD MAGEE**  
and his supporting team

**HOTEL EDEN**  
**ROVINJ**

From  
**£1399**  
sharing



**Rovinj** is situated on the western coast of Istria in Croatia, the largest peninsula on the Adriatic coastline, a one hour drive from Trieste, 2.5 hours from Zagreb. Boasting a rich, natural and cultural heritage with beautiful landmarks such as the old town, the Golden Cape Park Forest, protected islands and coastal area, Rovinj has many loyal visitors from all parts of the globe and has developed into a popular tourist destination.

The climate is warm and semi-dry, with more than four months a year without wind. Such a mild microclimate is characteristic only to Mali Lošinj and the Brijuni archipelago. There are 134 sunny days in a year, which makes Rovinj the third sunniest spot in the Adriatic. At the same time, it is the least cloudy place.

**Hotel Eden** is wedged right between a peninsula covered by a one hundred year old park forest and a quiet cove. The old city centre of Rovinj is just a 20 minute walk away.

**Rooms:** All rooms are equipped with a direct phone line, LCD SAT TV, mini-bar, safe, bathtub or shower, toilet, hair dryer, balcony, air conditioning/heating. Suites are available, details on application.

**Singles:** There is a sole occupancy supplement of £10 per room per night. If you are a single bridge player, please do not worry about being on your own. We will always be able to find you a partner and you can always have a game. As well as there being other singles in the same situation as yourself, there is the Mr Bridge team who will be happy to partner you if required.

**Entertainment and excursions:** In the hotel, an evening programme of entertainment with live music and dance shows is available for those not wanting to play bridge. During the day and planned around the bridge programme there will be excursions to Venice, Pula, Postjona Caves and Opatija to name just a few.

**Beaches & Pools:** The playful curves of the pool offer refreshment in the summer with a salty breeze coming from the natural stone and pebble beach only a few steps away. The vast outdoor pool will cool you down after a day of lounging in the freely available deck chairs. There is an indoor pool for invigorating laps or afternoon refreshments. Swirl the aches away with massaging water currents in one of the hotel's whirlpools.

Terms and conditions apply.

Packaged with and bookings by Tunisia First ATOL 5933.

Details of the bridge programme ☎ 01483 489961

## CROATIA



Bernard Magee is going to this lovely country, 7-21 May, £1399 half board, £10 per night single supplement. See the adjacent advertisement.

Yes, I know it is short notice and there will be a smaller group than usual but to some that is a bonus.

### TRY ONE AND SEE

I have not managed, thus far, to properly describe Bernard's *Better Bridge* interactive CD. Bernard has used some of his very best hands for these worked illustrations. He and Johannes Leber have spent hundreds of hours making it as good as it is.

So let me try to explain just once more, the content of this helpful CD. It covers six separate subjects.

- **Identifying and Bidding Slams**
- **Ruffing for Extra Tricks**
- **Making the Most of High Cards**
- **Competitive Auctions**
- **Doubled Contracts**
- **Play and Defence in INT**

These six headings were Bernard's first filmed series of *Better Bridge* with Bernard Magee DVDs. The very ones that are being cleared out at a

greatly reduced price due to water damage to their over-wrappings. £30 for the set of six.

It is Bernard at his absolute best and the hands used for illustration are some of the most suitable from his considerable portfolio.

This CD has twenty hands for each of the six subjects. These provide supervised play for those who have watched and studied the lecture on their television or computer screen.

It also works as a stand-alone product, especially for those who have enjoyed his tutorial CDs and want more of his hands to play and explanations to listen to.

I am offering this unique product at £35, reduced from £69 as a spring special.

### GOFFIES STAMPS



If you want to save on postage, especially as postal rates go up again this month, try Clive Goff's discounted stamp service. Value supplied in two stamps, combined to make up the 53p 2nd class rate, 2nd class to you at 44p. 1st class 62p, still only 50p to you. Available in lots of 100. ☎ 0208 422 4906.

### JUST DUPLICATE

I am still committed to the promotion of my Just Duplicate Bridge Events. The Clifton Park Hotel, Lytham St Annes, is a newly added venue. They are all full board and include a traditional Sunday Roast. See page 22. ▶

## Q PLUS HANDS

This month's numbers are listed below. I am preparing a full list which I will try to incorporate into next month's issue.

1711-04 4691-09 5795-12

## DENHAM EVENTS

The fifth in the series of these six-part filmed events, starring Bernard Magee, is scheduled for Denham Grove next January. Three night's full board, six lectures, six sessions of supervised play. £399 per person, see the advert on page 7. An experience that you will never forget and something you should be part of once in a lifetime.



Bernard Magee, will host both the Twixmas and New Year's Eve Events at Denham Grove this year. Be sure to book early.

## PICK 'N' MIX

All three series of six DVDs are listed on page 10 with thumbnail descriptions of their content. Playing time is an average of 90 minutes. The wonderful thing about a tutorial DVD is that viewers have a permanent record which they can re-visit over and over again. Individual DVDs, £25 each. Boxed sets of six, £100. Pick and mix. Six for only £105 including postage.

## BLUE BRIDGE

See Readers Letters on pages 24 and 25.

## CLUB INSURANCE

Members need to be sure their club is covered by insurance for small losses of cash and their club equipment as well as public liability. Just over £63 for a twelve month period for a club of up to 100 members. There are over five hundred clubs in my scheme enjoying peace of mind. There is a new contact at managing brokers, Moore Stephens. Ring Tom Harvey ☎ 0207 515 5270.

It is the unexpected that you need to have covered.

## EXTRA CRUISE

Bernard Magee will be travelling on Aegean Odyssey, flying to Istanbul on the 30 July. The ship then sails across the Aegean around Athens and into the Adriatic, visiting Dubrovnik on its way to Venice. Do join the party.

## VOYAGER

Good news. We have a new bridge room onboard m.v. Voyager, picture below. I am able to recommend readers to book with real confidence. Have a look at the advert on the back page. If a cruise takes your fancy, give my office a ring and we will send you the 2014/2015 brochure. ☎ 01483 489961.



There are now no bridge supplements for those booking any of our cruises or overseas holidays, so no excuses for not booking with Mr Bridge as we can match all prices.

All good wishes,

**Mr Bridge**

# BRIDGE

Make sure you don't miss your favourite monthly articles by taking out an annual subscription.

- Acol Bidding Quiz & Answers Bernard Magee
- Ask Julian Pottage
- Julian's FAQs
- Misleading Cases as reported by our court correspondent
- Ask David Stevenson
- David's FAQs
- Mary's First Lesson
- Helpful Conventions and Related Quiz
- Defence Quiz
- Tales from Sherwood Forest by David Bird
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**SPECIAL  
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twelve monthly issues.**

See mail order form on page 7.

## 2014 FESTIVE SEASON EVENTS

**Denham Grove**  
Near Uxbridge, UB9 5DU



**Christmas**  
**23-27 December £495**  
**Just Duplicate Bridge**

**Twixmas**  
**27-29 December £245**  
**Seminar Event**

**New Year**  
**29 Dec - 2 Jan £445**  
**Seminar Event**

**The Olde Barn**  
Marston, Lincs NG32 2HT



**Christmas**  
**23-27 December £495**  
**Just Duplicate Bridge**

**Twixmas**  
**27-29 December £215**  
**Seminar Event**

**New Year**  
**29 Dec - 1 Jan £345**  
**Seminar Event**

**Back to Back bookings**  
**save £50 per booking.**

Booking Form on page 8.

# Answers to Bernard Magee's Bidding Quizzes 1-3 on the Cover

### 1. Dealer West. Love All.

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

West North East South  
?

#### 1NT.

If you are playing a weak no-trump, then you should open hands that fit in to the shape and range with 1NT. Do not worry about the weak suits, part of the power of the weak no-trump is its pre-emptive nature. Looking at your hand, there is a good chance that your opponents might be able to make a contract in one of the majors, and so it turns out.

However, your 1NT opener will make it difficult for them to find their contract. You may well go off in 1NT, but -50 or -100 scores better than -110 for 2♣ making.

### 2. Dealer East. Love All.

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

West North East South  
? 1♣ Pass

#### 1♦.

With 5 HCP, you do not have to respond, but with just a singleton in your partner's suit, the chances of improving the final contract by responding are quite high. As long as your partner does not rebid

clubs, you will probably end up better off. However, if you are going to respond you need to leave all options open, which means responding in your lowest four-card suit: 1♦. This allows your partner to rebid a four-card major if he has one, but more importantly it allows him to support diamonds if he can. Here, he will bid 2♦ which will finish the auction. If you choose a 1♥ or 1♠ response, then your partner has little choice but to rebid 2♣, which leaves you in a poor contract.

### 3. Dealer East. N/S Game.

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

West North East South  
? 1♠ Pass

#### 4♠.

When you have support for your partner's major and a weak hand, then you must raise his suit. I have a simple rule when responding to one of a major: if I have fewer than 11 points, five-card support and a singleton, then I raise to game: to make or to save. The idea is that if you cannot make game then your opponents may well be able to. It is the weight of trumps that tips in your favour. So often when you have a big fit, your opponents will too. By jumping to 4♠ directly, you keep the opponents out. The losing trick count would suggest just 3♠, but bidding boldly when non-vulnerable in these situations tends to work best.

On this hand, both sides might be able to make game, but North-South will have little chance to try. ■

# BERNARD MAGEE at Denham Grove

Near Uxbridge,  
Bucks, UB9 5DG.

## 9-12 January 2015

### £399

Friday - Monday

### £369

Friday - Sunday

## full board

Limited places for  
Thursday night available.  
£45pp single,  
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## Topics

### DAY 1

- Take-Out Doubles
- Defending Against INT

### DAY 2

- Defence as Partner of the Leader
- Strong Opening Bids

### DAY 3

- Suit Establishment
- Competitive (Aggressive) Bidding

6 seminar sessions  
with Bernard<sup>1</sup>

6 sessions of  
supervised play<sup>2</sup>

Contact Mr Bridge to  
book your place or  
for further details:

☎ 01483 489961

<sup>1</sup>Filmed <sup>2</sup>Not with Bernard Magee

# Mr Bridge MAIL ORDER

## PLAY SOFTWARE

QPlus 11 **NEW** £92.00 .....  
QPlus Trade-in £49.00 .....  
QPlus 10 (S/Hand) £50.00 .....  
Bridge Baron 24 **NEW** £69.00 .....  
Bridge Baron  
Trade-in for 24 £35.00 .....

## TUTORIAL SOFTWARE

Begin Bridge - Acol £66.00 .....  
Acol Bidding £66.00 .....  
Advanced  
Acol Bidding £96.00 .....  
Declarer Play £76.00 .....  
Advanced  
Declarer Play £81.00 .....  
Defence £76.00 .....  
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Strong No-Trump £89.00 .....  
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Bernard Magee, Special  
Spring Offer £35.00 .....

### Bundleware Offer

Any two CDs £140.00 .....

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Bridge Players £7.00 .....  
10 Commandments for  
Duplicate Players £7.00 .....  
25 Road Traffic Signs for  
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We Are Survivors £7.00 .....

## TUTORIAL DVDs

**2011 Series - £25 each**  
Ruffing for Extra Tricks .....  
Competitive Auctions .....  
Making the  
Most of High Cards .....  
Identifying &  
Bidding Slams .....  
Play & Defence of  
1NT Contracts .....  
Doubling & Defence  
to Doubled Contracts .....  
All 6 DVDs  
as a boxed set £100.00 .....

### 2012 Series - £25 each

Leads .....  
Losing Trick Count .....  
Making a Plan as Declarer .....  
Responding to 1NT .....  
Signals & Discards .....  
Endplays .....  
All 6 DVDs  
as a boxed set £100.00 .....

### 2013 Series - £25 each

Hand Evaluation .....  
Pre-Emptying .....  
Splinter & Cue-Bids .....  
Avoidance .....  
Pairs Play & Defence .....  
Thinking Defence .....  
All 6 DVDs  
as a boxed set £100.00 .....

### PICK 'N' MIX

Any 6 DVDs £105.00 .....

## NOVELTIES

Mr Bridge  
Torch Pen (boxed) £5.00 .....  
Mr Bridge Pound for Life  
Keyring £5.00 .....

## BOOKS

Duplicate Bridge Rules  
Simplified £5.95 .....  
Better Hand Evaluation  
Bernard Magee £14.00 .....  
Tips for Better Bridge  
Bernard Magee £14.00 .....  
Robin Hood's Bridge Memoirs  
David Bird £12.00 .....  
Bridge Adventures of Robin  
Hood - David Bird £12.00 .....

## MR BRIDGE DIARIES for 2014

Red £6.95 .....  
Navy £6.95 .....  
Club Prices 10 for £35 .....  
**Luxury Kidrell Covers  
& ball-point pen:**  
Ruby Red £14.95 .....  
Bottle Green £14.95 .....  
Club Prices 10 for £90 .....

## SUBS (Introductory Rates)

12 Months £20.00 .....  
24 Months £35.00 .....  
36 Months £50.00 .....

### 12 Months Overseas:

Europe £50.00 .....  
Outside Europe £95.00 .....

Prices are inclusive of VAT and postage to UK mainland.

I enclose a cheque for £.....

Mr/Mrs/Miss .....

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# Answers to Bernard Magee's Bidding Quizzes 4-6 on the Cover

## 4. Dealer East. Love All.

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

West	North	East	South
		1NT	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♥	Pass
?			

**3♥.** There is a phrase that suggests that two opening hands should make a game together, but there is one exception. Two weak no-trump hands do not necessarily add up to game: if they are minimum and flat, the potential can be less than the total point count. In terms of the losing trick count, the weak no-trump holds all of the weak hands, usually with 7-8 losers, but, as shown here they can be even weaker. With a 7-loser hand, you should invite game by bidding 3♥. Your partner would pass this invitation. With 13 HCP and a 4333 shape, there is little chance of game making.

## 5. Dealer East. Love All.

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

West	North	East	South
		3♣	Pass
?			

**Pass.** Your partner has opened with a pre-empt: showing a seven-card suit and 5-9 points. You are usually told that

you need 16 points to raise to game. However, not all of your points will be valuable. Your partner will have three relatively short suits, so it is aces and kings that are going to be useful. By the time your clubs and diamonds are established, your partner will be left with only trumps. When responding to a pre-empt, you are looking for about four high card tricks to raise to game, hoping that your partner has six from his suit. Your partner has his six, but you have only two, so even 3♣ might have gone off, had your partner had two clubs and two diamonds. 3NT works OK on this hand, just one off, but if your partner had held the same spades headed by the queen, you would have really struggled: unlikely to be able to reach his lovely spades.

## 6. Dealer West. Love All.

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

West	North	East	South
1♣	1♠	Dbl*	Pass
?			

\*Negative double: for take-out

**2♣.** The negative double in this auction shows a hand that would have responded 1♥ (promising at least four cards in the unbid major). You should respond to it in precisely the same way in which you would respond to 1♥. This means that a 1NT rebid still shows a strong hand (15-17 points). Your spades are not good enough to pass for penalties, so your only choice left is to rebid 2♣, which finishes the auction. ■

## Better Hand Evaluation

Bernard Magee

### Introduction

*Better Hand Evaluation* is aimed at helping readers to add greater accuracy to their bidding. It deals with auctions in which you and your partner, against silent opponents, can describe your hands fully to each other and, by evaluating them accurately, find the best final contract. The emphasis of all good, accurate bidding is on hand evaluation.

There are two general types of auction: a) a fit is found and b) no fit is found.

When you do not have a fit, you are aiming to describe the strength of your hand as soon as possible, most often using no-trump bids. This book begins by discussing balanced hand bidding in Acol, as it is very important that both members of a partnership have an accurate knowledge of how to show hands of different strengths.

When a fit is found, there is much re-evaluation of the hand to be done; point count, though still important, needs to be evaluated together with distribution. The best way of reaching an accurate assessment is to use the Losing Trick Count; this is an important method of hand evaluation and takes up a number of chapters.

Finally, we move on to different forms of evaluation including game tries and splinter bids. You can never know enough methods of hand evaluation; the more you learn, the better you get at judging your hand.

Although the Losing Trick Count is used more easily in tandem with your partner, a large proportion of the ideas in this book can be used by an individual. For example, evaluating your hand to be worth an extra point is going to help anyone you partner – as long as you get it right.

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# Answers to Bernard Magee's Bidding Quizzes 7-9 on the Cover

## 7. Dealer West. Game All.

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

West	North	East	South
3♣	3♥	Db!*	Pass
?			*Penalty

**Pass.** You opened with a pre-empt, showing a weak hand with a seven card club suit: a beautiful description of your hand. Whenever one hand is perfectly described, the partner takes control of the auction: doubles are for penalties. It is very rare that the pre-emptor should make another bid.

Here, East can tell that 3♥ doubled is the best contract, so he doubles and will be pleased to find the ♣A-K in your hand. 3♥ will be two or three off: 500 or 800 when there is no game on.

## 8. Dealer West. Love All.

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

West	North	East	South
1♥	1♠	2♥	3♠
?			

**4♣.** Bidding 4♥ would be correct, if that was going to be the last bid of the auction, but be realistic, do you expect 4♥ to be passed out?

Predicting the auction is important: you need to decide whether to bid to 5♥ or not and it is much better to make a

decision as a partnership rather than an individual. One of the main reasons for bidding to the five-level is when you have a double fit, so if you have the chance to show a second suit, then take it. After you bid 4♣, you can leave the final decision up to your partner. If he has a fit with both of your suits, then he will bid on to 5♥, which is the case here. 5♥ will go one off, but with your opponents having a double fit too, they will probably make 4♣, so 5♥ is an excellent sacrifice.

## 9. Dealer West. E/W Game.

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

West	North	East	South
1♣	1♠	Pass	Pass
?			

**Pass.** Your partner has not mustered a response and you have length in your opponents' suit. Generally, if your partner is short in their suit, he would have been able to make some kind of response if he had the strength too, so he is likely to be relatively weak. Your two bidding options are 1NT and 2♣, but are they particularly desirable? With few entries to your partner's hand, it will not be easy to play. Also, bear in mind that your spades are not well placed. Note the vulnerability: one off will be 100 and might be too much. 1♠ might scrape home, but -80 will not be too bad a score.

It is important to compete aggressively when you think your opponents have a fit, but when you suspect that they do not, then leaving them where they are can be the best policy. ■

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# Answers to Bernard Magee's Bidding Quizzes 10-12 on the Cover

## 10. Dealer North. N/S Game.

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

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
?	3♥	Dbl	Pass

**4♠.** North opens with a pre-emptive 3♥: showing 5-9 points and a seven-card heart suit. Your partner doubles: this is a take-out double asking you to bid your best suit.

3♣ looks like the obvious bid, but remember that you are forced to respond, so a 3♣ bid can show zero points. You have 10 HCP and a five-card spade suit. Your partner should have a good opening hand with at least three spades, or if he is borderline he should have four spades. With such a good fit, you should go for game.

If you bid 3♣, your partner will pass: he has a minimum hand and has suggested his spade holding already. Remember, when responding to a take-out double, that a response at the lowest level can show no strength at all.

## 11. Dealer East. N/S Game.

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

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
?		1♠	2♥

**Pass.** It looks like an obvious 2NT bid: 11 HCP and a good heart stopper, then your partner raises to 3NT and you make 400 points. However, bear in mind the number of times your opponents' overcalls have upset your bidding: here,

there is an opportunity to punish them for their interference.

The vulnerability is in your favour: against North-South. If you can double South in 2♥, you are sure of a very healthy score. However, it is not as easy as just doubling straightaway: most players play this double for take-out. Your partner would probably rebid 3♣ and, once again, you will finish in 3NT.

The only way to reach the best contract is to pass. To make game, your partner has to have a better than minimum hand, along with this he will be short in hearts, so, when the auction comes around to him, he will surely make a take-out double. All that remains is for you to pass and wait for your top score to roll in. 2♥ doubled might well go three off, for +800, but two off is enough to beat the score for game.

## 12. Dealer South. Love All.

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

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
Pass	2♠	Pass	1♠
?			Pass

**2NT.** Playing duplicate pairs (your usual game) it is so important to compete for

every hand. When your opponents have shown a fit and passed at the 2-level, it is almost always correct to try to compete for the hand by bidding over them. The reason this is true is because, if you make your contract, clearly you will have done well, but perhaps more crucially, if you go off, you still get a better score. -50 or -100 will be better than allowing 2♠ to make (-110).

Sometimes it is very difficult to compete because of the way the points are divided. The problem you have is that although you are short in spades, you are also short in hearts: if you double for take-out, your partner is sure to respond 3♥, which will be no good at all.

Many of you will not have come across the idea of overcalling 2NT for take-out. However, with neither of your partnership having bid and you having passed on the first round, surely it cannot be a natural bid?

With 20 points you would have bid first time round, so the bid can be used as a take-out bid, but suggesting the minors rather than including hearts. This allows your side to find 3♦, which you should be able to make for +110 rather than -110.

This is not quite the Unusual 2NT, which would be a direct 2NT overcall showing 5-5 in the minors.

Second best to 2NT would be 3♣, but on this occasion that would not work so well. However, it is so important to compete for this hand and your job is to find the best way to do it. ■

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# The Sheriff's Invitation

The Sheriff of Nottingham was entertaining Lord and Lady Biscotte to dinner in the castle.

As a social gathering, it was a tiresome affair. The sole purpose was the high-stake rubber game that would follow. Henri Biscotte had more money than he could possibly spend. It made good sense to divert some of it to better use.

'Some more of this excellent Spanish wine?' said the Sheriff, refilling Lord Biscotte's glass.

Sir Guy of Gisburne, who was captain of the guard and the Sheriff's bridge partner, moved his own empty glass forward. The Sheriff glared at him. Gisburne played an up-and-down game at the best of times. This red wine was the most intoxicating blend produced by the Treviana monks. If Gisburne thought he'd get a single drop more before the big game, he was mistaken.

Not long afterwards, the four players took their seats in a small chamber illuminated by wall-mounted braziers. The Sheriff noted with approval that Lord Biscotte seemed half asleep already.

A heavy win in this game would be a fair recompense for enduring the Biscottes' boring conversation. So what if Lady Biscotte's niece, Donatienne, had recently given birth to twins? Who could possibly be interested in tittle-tattle of that sort?

The first rubber opened with this deal:

**Dealer South. Love All.**

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Guy of Gisburne</i>	<i>Lady Biscotte</i>	<i>The Sheriff</i>	<i>Lord Biscotte</i>
2♦	3♠	Pass	4♣
All Pass			

Gisburne led the ♦K and the richly-garbed Lady Biscotte laid out her cards. 'I nearly gave you 4♠, Henri,' she said. 'With Sir Guy bidding so strongly, I count 5 points for each ace. They are more likely to stand over the king.'

The Sheriff winced at this absurd utterance. They might well have bid too high. If Gisburne had chosen this moment to give declarer a life-line with his ill-timed opening lead, he would hear about it later.

Lord Biscotte won with the ♦A, noting the fall of East's ♦J. He drew trumps in two rounds, the Sheriff

grimacing at the 2-2 break.

'Just what we needed, Alphonsine,' said Lord Biscotte.

The elderly declarer played the king and ace of hearts and ruffed dummy's last heart. He then cashed the ♣A to leave this position:

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

With a flourish, Lord Biscotte tossed a low club onto the table. The Sheriff won the trick and could not return a heart, since this would give a ruff-and-discard. When he returned a club instead, Gisburne won the trick and had to play a diamond. His ♦Q was the defenders' third trick but Lord Biscotte then faced his ♦10, claiming the contract.

'Beautiful bidding and beautiful play,' declared Lady Biscotte. 'Without the diamond overcall, I would have bid just two spades. We would miss a cold game!' ▶

The Sheriff's mouth fell open. 'Cold game?' he said. 'Without my partner's foolish opening lead there were four certain losers.'



'But, my Lord, what would you have me lead?' protested Gisburne.

'Bleating like a sheep makes you look even more ridiculous,' admonished the Sheriff. 'Next time, think before you make your lead.'

During the next hour, the Sheriff was able to display his mastery against the modest opponents. He had restocked his coffers to the extent of some 150 guineas when this deal arose:

**Dealer West. N/S Game.**

♠ A K 6  
♥ Void  
♦ A 8 3 2  
♣ A K 10 9 7 2

♠ 4 2  
♥ A J 10 9 3 2  
♦ Q J 10  
♣ J 4

♠ 9 8 3  
♥ K Q 7  
♦ K 9 6  
♣ Q 8 6 5

♠ Q J 10 7 5  
♥ 8 6 5 4  
♦ 7 5 4  
♣ 3

West	North	East	South
Lord Biscotte	Guy of Gisburne	Lady Biscotte	The Sheriff
2♥	Dbl	3♥	4♠
Pass	6♠	All Pass	

Lord Biscotte opened with a Feeble 2♥, a method that was becoming quite popular. The Sheriff's eyes blazed when he was raised to 6♠. Did his foolish partner not realise that 4♠ was already an overbid? It was bid in the hope of profiting from some foolish defence. Lord Biscotte led the ♦Q and

down went the dummy. The Sheriff was forced to admit that Gisburne had his bid, for once. Now, what was the best way to play the slam?

A 3-3 club break would allow five club tricks to be established. Adding five trumps and the ♦A would bring the total to eleven. It would not be possible to add a heart ruff to the pile. He could not then draw trumps ending in the dummy, to enjoy the good clubs.

The Sheriff spotted a chance. He leaned forward and played a low diamond on the first trick. When Lord Biscotte continued with another diamond, he won with the ace and played a trump to his queen. He continued with the ace and king of clubs, throwing a diamond. The ♣J fell from West and the Sheriff ruffed a diamond in his hand, the suit breaking 3-3. Excellent. When he returned to dummy with the ♠K, all the players held six cards. Since no hearts had been played, West's Feeble Two meant that all his cards were hearts. The Sheriff took a confident ruffing finesse with the ♣10-9, returning to dummy with a trump to score the long clubs and the thirteenth diamond.

Lord and Lady Biscotte were ready to retire to the guest bedroom, but the Sheriff insisted on a further rubber.

Both sides had scored a game when this big deal arose:

**Dealer East. Game All.**

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

♠ Void  
♥ 8 7 5 2  
♦ J 10 6 4  
♣ 10 9 8 6 2

♠ J 9 7 5  
♥ K Q J 10 9 4  
♦ 5  
♣ J 3

♠ A K Q 4 3 2  
♥ 3  
♦ A K Q 8 2  
♣ Q

West	North	East	South
Lord Biscotte	Guy of Gisburne	Lady Biscotte	The Sheriff
5♥	6♠	2♥	4♠
		All Pass	

The Sheriff won the heart lead and ruffed a heart in his hand. He sat back in his chair when West showed out on the first trump. By the Saints! What had he done to deserve that?

He continued with the ♣Q, followed by two top diamonds. Lady Biscotte, who was struggling to keep her eyes open, decided to ruff. A glint of triumph came into the Sheriff's eyes. Hah! That was a mistake if ever he'd seen one. The old dear, bless her, should have thrown her last club. The Sheriff won the ♣J return in dummy and played dummy's remaining club winner, ruffed by East and overruffed. He was then able to draw the last trump and ruff a diamond with dummy's ♠10.

'A very successful evening, my Lord,' said Gisburne, when the visitors had left the room. 'I make it 137 guineas each.'

The Sheriff raised an eyebrow. 'You want half, after my masterful play and your half-witted efforts throughout the session?'

'Er... well, if not half, what do you suggest, my Lord?'

'You must owe me at least 50 guineas, after your second-rate contribution,' thundered the Sheriff. 'You can count yourself lucky if I overlook the matter!'



# Deals and Dealing

Rubber bridge (or Chicago) is best played with two packs of cards, traditionally with different coloured backs and, while a player is dealing, his partner shuffles the other pack. The cards are dealt one at a time, clockwise, into four piles, beginning with the player on dealer's left and ending with dealer. Partner shuffles the pack and puts it on his right. When the hand is over, the next dealer finds the pack on his left and passes it to his right to be cut: his opponent takes the top half off towards the dealer and dealer puts the other half on top and deals. That is what should happen, though players are quite casual about it, especially the rules for cutting. For the deals to be fair, a riffle shuffle should be employed and at least five shuffles done: in practice no-one ever does this and players often use the overhand shuffle, which is practically useless. As a result, the hands tend to be quite flat at rubber bridge.

At duplicate, the boards are dealt at the start. Some players think you should deal each board when you come to it and some players think it matters who deals which board, but they are wrong. All boards are dealt at the start of a session by whoever picks the board up. There are no rules about who shuffles and cuts, though a member of each side should be present when the dealing occurs. The same problems about shuffling occur as at rubber bridge: players do not shuffle enough and do not use proper shuffling procedures. Remember, there should be at least five riffle shuffles.

An interesting question is how the dealing should be done. Of course, many players deal as in rubber, but that is not necessary. As long as the cards finish in four piles and consecutive cards do not go into the same pile, then the deal is legal. It is usually easiest to

put the four piles in a line in front of you, especially when more than one board is being dealt at a time. Some players deal into the four piles (call them A B C D) from left to right then right to left so the cards go into piles thus: A B C D D C B A A B C D D C B etc. That is not permitted because consecutive cards go into the end piles.

Some players deal into five piles (call them A B C D E) but from left to right only (or in a circle) so the cards go into piles thus: A B C D E A B C D E A B C ... When they run out of cards they pick up the fifth pile, and deal that into the four piles starting next to where they finished. That is perfectly legal. Another way is to go left to right then back into five piles, but only putting one in the end pile, thus: A B C D E D C B A B C D E D C ... They then put the two end piles together and that (surprisingly) means there are four piles of 13 cards each. Personally, I favour this approach which seems quickest, easiest and is perfectly legal.

Once the four piles are obtained, they are put in the board by the player dealing them. It does not matter into which pocket or which board they go. While there will always be traditionalists who deal them as at rubber bridge these new ways tend to be easier and quicker and should be encouraged.

Many clubs and nearly all events now use computer-dealt cards. These have three big advantages over dealing by hand. First, there is less hassle and players can get down to playing without having to deal. Second, the hands are fairer. Third, there are copies of the hands at the end – and, in many clubs, copies of the hands appear on the internet as well.

The first and third advantages are obvious enough and I doubt that many people disagree, but there are some people who do not think they are

fairer. In what way are they fairer? If you study the game at all, you will find there are many probabilities. For example, should you play for a suit break or a finesse? A finesse is a 50% chance, so what is the chance of a suit break? A 3-3 break is about 36% but a 3-2 break is 68%. Is this what actually happens? If you play with computer-dealt hands, then these probabilities will definitely occur in the long run, but with hands dealt at the table the hands are flatter and 3-3 breaks are more likely than the odds suggest.

In the early days of computer-dealt hands, there were some accidents with unfair deals, but nowadays that does not happen. Some players are still suspicious of computer-dealt hands and they point out that in a particular session there seemed to be too many freak hands, or too many singleton kings, or all the high cards seemed to be in one direction. What they forget is the same applies with hand-dealt cards, just that people do not remember. Also, the strange sessions are usually not as strange as people think: most players in clubs seem to think they get less than their fair share of high cards every time they play.

Bridge is a game of many disciplines, but they include technique and judgement, which are based on assessing odds and risks and those are based on expected probabilities. With computer dealt hands, the probabilities are correct, but not with hand dealt ones. Why not? It comes down to the shuffling. Computers pick cards at random, or very, very nearly, which is equivalent to perfect or near-perfect shuffling. But players do not shuffle perfectly, as explained above. If everyone did at least five riffle shuffles, then hands dealt at the table would have near-perfect probabilities, but it will never happen. ■