

55. The bid and the beautiful

By *Ron Klinger*

After 24 boards in the 36-board final of the Alt Invitational, held in April and organized by bid72, bridge 24 and netbridgeonline, together with BBO (Bridge Base Online), **De Botton** (Janet de Botton, Thomas Charlsen, Jason Hackett, Thor Erik Hoftaniska, Alexander Hydes, Artur Malinowski) led **Street** (Paul Street, Kamel Fergani, Nicolas L'Ecuyer, Ron Pachtman, Fred Pollack, Piotr Zatorski) by 52 Imps to 29. **DE BOTTON** won Session 3 by 25-10 and the match by 77-39.

With South the dealer, neither side vulnerable, and with the opponents passing throughout, how would you and partner bid these cards:

North
♠ 8
♥ AJ98
♦ A6
♣ KQ8763

South
♠ A9643
♥ KQ1063
♦ 102
♣ A

This auction is reasonable:

North	South
	1♠
2♣	2♥
3♥ ⁽¹⁾	3♠-cue-bid
4NT	5♣ ⁽²⁾
5♦ ⁽³⁾	5NT ⁽⁴⁾
7♥	Pass

- (1) Forcing, stronger than 4♥
- (2) 0 or 3 key cards
- (3) Do you have the ♥Q?
- (4) Yes, but no outside kings.

See *A Good Game of Modern Bridge* for modern slam bidding techniques.

STREET North-South:

North	South
	1♠
2♣	2♥
3♥ ⁽¹⁾	3NT ⁽²⁾
4♣ ⁽³⁾	4♠ ⁽⁴⁾
4NT	5♦ ⁽⁵⁾
5♠ ⁽⁶⁾	6♣ ⁽⁷⁾
7♥	Pass

- (1) Forcing, stronger than 4♥
- (2) Mild slam interest
- (3) Cue-bid, strong slam interest
- (4) Cue-bid
- (5) 0 or 3 key cards
- (6) Do you have ♥Q?
- (7) Yes

This one is a bit better:

North	South
	1♠
2♣	2♥
3♥ ⁽¹⁾	4♣ ⁽²⁾
4♠ ⁽³⁾	4NT ⁽⁴⁾
5♣ ⁽⁵⁾	5♥ ⁽⁶⁾
7♥	Pass

- (1) Forcing, stronger than 4♥
- (2) Control in spades and in clubs
- (3) Asking for key cards for hearts
- (4) 0 or 3 key cards
- (5) Do you have the ♥Q?
- (6) Yes. (5♦ would be 'No'.)

DE BOTTON North-South:

North	South
	1♠
2NT ⁽¹⁾	3♥
4♦ ⁽²⁾	4NT
5♥ ⁽³⁾	5NT ⁽⁴⁾
7♥	Pass

- (1) Strong hand, shows clubs
- (2) Cue-bid, agreeing hearts
- (3) Two key cards, no ♥Q
- (4) No key cards are missing

Dealer South : Nil vulnerable

	North	
	♠ 8	
	♥ AJ98	
	♦ A6	
	♣ KQ8763	
West		East
♠ 107		♠ KQJ52
♥ 52		♥ 74
♦ K8743		♦ QJ95
♣ J952		♣ 104
	South	
	♠ A9643	
	♥ KQ1063	
	♦ 102	
	♣ A	

With trumps 2-2 and clubs 4-2, there was nothing to the play. Both Wests led a trump. The easy line is to win the heart, cash the ♣A, cross to dummy with a trump and lead a low club, ruffing. Then claim 13 tricks.

2. With South the dealer, only East-West vulnerable, and with the opponents passing throughout, how would you and partner bid these cards:

North
♠ AJ87
♥ 1076
♦ A962
♣ A6
South
♠ K93
♥ Q
♦ KQ1053
♣ KJ95

This is sensible:

North	South
	1♦
1♠	2♠
2NT ⁽¹⁾	3♣
5♦	Pass

- (1) How many spades do you have?
(2) 3 spades, 4 clubs and 5 diamonds

With a minimum, unbalanced opening, it is preferable to raise to 2♠ at once, even with just three trumps. With a weak hand, 6-9 (10) points, responder passes and hopefully succeeds. If responder has prospects for game, responder asks with 2NT. Bidding 3♣ (weak) or 4♣ (stronger) show four trumps. Any other bid shows only three spades. South's 3♣ denies four spades and shows the shape of the hand. Since South is marked with a minimum opening and shortage in hearts, North jumps to 5♦, clearly the best spot on the hand.

If you bid 1♦ : 1♠, 2♣ and responder bids 2♦ or 3♣ next, you are showing more than your hand is worth by giving delayed spade support now.

Session 3: Board 27

South dealer : East-West vulnerable

	North	
	♠ AJ87	
	♥ 1076	
	♦ A962	
	♣ A6	
West		East
♠ --		♠ Q106542
♥ J985432		♥ AK
♦ J87		♦ 4
♣ 1043		♣ Q872
	South	
	♠ K93	
	♥ Q	
	♦ KQ1053	
	♣ KJ95	

STREET North-South:

North	South
	1♦
1♠	2♠
2NT ⁽¹⁾	3♦ ⁽²⁾
5♦	Pass

(1) Asking for spade length
(2) 5+ diamonds, 3 spades only

DE BOTTON North-South:

North	South
	1♦
1♠	2♠
2NT ⁽¹⁾	3♣ ⁽²⁾
5♦	Pass

(1) Asking for spade length
(2) 3 spades, 5+ diamonds, 4 clubs

Note: Both Souths raised to 2♠. The play was identical at both tables. West led a heart. East won and returned a spade, ♠9 from South. West ruffed and brought back a heart. South ruffed and drew trumps, +400, no swing.

Problems for Tomorrow:

1. West dealer : East-West vulnerable

North
 ♠ Q5
 ♥ AQJ
 ♦ J109764
 ♣ 72

South
 ♠ KJ73
 ♥ 98
 ♦ AK32
 ♣ A94

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♦	2♣	Dble ⁽¹⁾
3♣	Pass	Pass	Dble ⁽¹⁾
Pass	3♦	Pass	3NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

(1) For takeout

1. West leads the ♣5: two – king – four
2. East returns the ♣J: nine – six – seven
3. East plays the ♣10: - ace – queen – ♥J
4. South plays the ♦A: eight – four – five
5. South plays the ♦K: queen – six – ♥7 (playing high-encourage)

How would you continue as South?

2. South dealer : Nil vulnerable

North

♠ J102

♥ A4

♦ A1098

♣ J1064

South

♠ AKQ863

♥ 93

♦ 54

♣ K85

West	North	East	South
2♥	3♥ ⁽¹⁾	4♥	1♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	4♠

(1) Limit or stronger spade raise

1. West leads the ♦K: ace – seven - four
2. ♠J
3. ♠2 to ♠K, all follow
4. ♦5: jack – eight – three
5. West switches to the ♥K: ace – two – three
6. ♦9: six – ♥9 – ♦Q
7. West continues with the ♥6: four – queen – ♠A
8. South plays ♠6: ♥7 – ♠10 – ♥5
9. ♦10: - ♥10 – ♣5 – ♣2
10. ♣J: two . . .

Which club should West play from hand?

Why not phone or email your bridge partners and compare your answers and your reasoning?

It is unbecoming for young men to utter maxims (Aristotle)