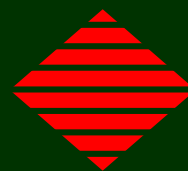
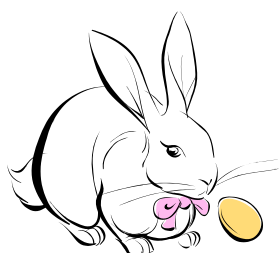


RUFFIAN



The electronic newsletter for students from the EBU studying using the Bridge for All scheme

**Welcome to the Spring 2015 edition of the online Ruffian
The EBU's bridge students' newsletter**



All change!

The Ruffian is now produced by English Bridge Education & Development, (EBED), the national charity for the promotion and development of bridge

Real about us at www.ebedcio.org.uk and how we're working to bring players into the wonderful world of duplicate bridge

EBED Contacts:

Lisa Miller – Education Coordinator, English Bridge Education & Development. Contact Lisa on 01296 317217 or lisa@ebu.co.uk for all help regarding “*Bridge for All*” and EBUTA

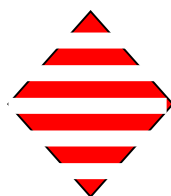
Simon Barb –Education & Development Manager, EBED. Contact Simon on 01296 317218 or at simon@ebu.co.uk for all other matters relating to bridge education

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BRIDGE for ALL



What's it to you?

If you think you know this story, you might consider skipping to the next article, but please don't. Things don't always develop as we expect them to – a fact just as true at the bridge table as it is in life.

As a teenager, I was very keen on Mathematics and through a mixture of hard work and a certain degree of aptitude (in the usual 90:10 ratio) I found myself in the top class for my final two years coming up to A levels. There I was taught by a Mr Davis – a patient and methodical teacher, which is probably precisely what you should have for A-level Mathematics.

Each week, the class worked industriously but without great joy, at our task, slowly chipping away at the syllabus. We took notes, handed in our assignments (actually we called it “prep” which gives you some idea of how many years ago it was) and generally slogged away, as was expected of us.

And then, at the end of the first term, I am sure it was halfway through the final lesson, Mr Davis unexpectedly put down his chalk, and started to relate to us the story of the English Mathematician, G H Hardy, visiting the impoverished and ailing Indian Mathematician, Ramanujan, in hospital.

Neatly side-stepping the exact nature of the relationship between these single two men of very different backgrounds, it was explained that – in an effort to make small talk – Ramanujan enquired of Hardy the number of the taxi which had brought him to the infirmary. “1729” replied Hardy “a dull and unexceptional number” (but clearly not so unexceptional that Hardy had not remembered it).

“Quite the contrary” replied the Indian, “it is the smallest number which can be expressed as the sum of two cubes in two different ways”. Mr Davis stopped and smiled.

There was a silence in the classroom.

It then collectively dawned upon us very slowly that this was Mr Davis telling a joke. We all laughed politely. The class continued.

The next term, Mr Davis midway through the final lesson of term, stopped again. The chalk dust in the classroom slowly started to settle, as he turned towards the class, a faint smile on his lips. “I must tell you the story of the great Cambridge mathematician G H Hardy visiting his friend Ramanujan in hospital”. There was a stunned silence from the room.

And he told us EXACTLY the same story. But this time, we were waiting for the punchline and laughed politely at the end, no pause.

Come the summer term of the first year, again during the final class of term. Mr Davis stopped mid-flow through an explanation of partial differential equations. “A digression” he started. There was a titter at the back of the room. By the time the story was completed, we were all laughing quite heartily. Mr Davis nodded his appreciation.

And so it went on. By the time it came to our last class coming up to A levels. We were waiting.

“We have a few minutes left before I release you” said Mr Davis “Just time to tell you a short story”. We all bit our tongues.

“The brilliant Cambridge Mathematician G H Hardy.....” It was all too much. Holding in our laughter, we had to put our heads face-down against the desks. At the mention of 1729, someone let out a guffaw, and the class dissolved in hysterics.

Mr Davis, I swear to this day, had no idea what was going on.

We all derive our own special unique pleasure from bridge. For some, it is a way to share a few hours with friends in a common pursuit, for others it provides a form of intellectual stimulation and self-challenge, for yet others it provides a path to excellence, achievement and reward. For an increasing number, bridge provides a backcloth for travel and, maybe, adventure. What a wonderful game!

In this Ruffian I am trying to try to explore the magic of the game. I hope that within the articles you read, you too will find something which appeals and which you can share with like-minded friends. Write to me – tell me what the game means to you.

Just don't mention 1729.

From: Hugh
Sent: 28 February 2015 18:18
To: Simon
Subject: 1998 Standard English Acol



Dear Simon,

I have recently completed some bridge lessons and am now playing Improvers Sessions at Eastbourne Bridge Club.

As I was starting lessons, I was told the lessons are based on Standard or Modern English 1998 Acol. I have purchased the red and then the green book from the EBU Education department.

I hear, however, there are changes afoot to the Acol Bidding System. I cannot find any books which specify The Standard 1998 Acol Bidding System. I am confused as to what book(s) to buy about the so-called Standard 1998 English Acol Bidding system because of these changes. For example, Weak Twos were rejected by the 1998 system but now Weak twos are very popular. What should I do?

In addition to the above, bidding guides are allowed for Thursday afternoon improvers. Again I am now confused as to which one to buy. Can you give me any specific or general advice?

Many thanks,

Hugh Norris

From: Simon
To: Hugh
Date: Mon, 2 Mar 2015 12:30:44

Hugh

I am pleased that you are enjoying your bridge at the Eastbourne Bridge Club.

In 1998, the English Bridge Union employed the bridge expert and writer, Sandra Landy, to write a standardised national teaching program for bridge. In order to be able to teach a standardised program, we needed a standardised system, and out of that were born what we called "Bridge for All" and "Standard English Acol".

This was a very good thing in many ways – and over the past decade hundreds of teachers and thousands of students have benefitted from the introduction of BfA and Standard English Acol.

We did however fail to bring into our fold a number of very good teachers who had developed their own methods and systems.....and you have been playing bridge long enough to realise that what may have seemed standard 15 years ago, is very far from standard today.

After much discussion internally, we have therefore decided that we will not call our system "Standard English Acol" any longer – we will instead call it "Bridge for All Acol" and you can find the system file for it right here in the middle of the following webpage:

<http://www.ebu.co.uk/laws-and-ethics/convention-cards>

You'll actually see on the page that there's a Foundation Level and a Level 2 version – which gives you a further insight as to why we were keen to stop using the term “standard”.

Now, as you rightly point out, one of the issues we have had with this system is the issue of Weak 2's vs Strong 2's. Some teachers teach both, some teachers teach only Weak 2's, or only Strong 2's. They are all very passionate about their methods. Diversity is the cradle for new ideas, so we certainly don't want to dampen their enthusiasm.

I would however say to you that if you want to be a competitive player at your local duplicate club, you will need to learn and understand weak 2's. The best way to achieve this is by actually playing them. If after having tried this method for a while, you feel that you are missing out, go back, by all means, to strong 2's – but I bet you won't!

That said, if you only play Rubber Bridge or Chicago – you could probably get away without really understanding weak 2's to the same degree.



My recommendation about books is perhaps a little unorthodox. The EBU publishes an excellent range of Really Easy Books, which are all very well-written and thoroughly worthwhile – but they are best suited to people who love moderately dense texts without a lot of humour. For me on the other hand, I like books with lots of humour, but which go easy on my brain as far as things to learn or memorise. What would I know? Well, I am a Life Master, but who's to argue with the idea that if I had read more “serious” books and done a lot less laughing, I might by now be a Grand Master.

So, you can buy any of the Really Easy books with confidence and know that reading them will improve your game. If you feel reasonably confident about your card play, the best book may be “Really Easy Competitive Bidding” because if you are going to do well at duplicate, you must learn which risks you can't afford not to take! <https://www.ebu.co.uk/shop/really-easy>

The two books, which I consider that every bridge player should read are:

Bridge in the Menagerie by Victor Mollo

Right through the Pack by Robert Darvas

*“Success at bridge, in fact,
depends less on winning, than on
extracting the last ounce of
pleasure from losing.”*
Victor Mollo

There are however literally hundreds of bridge books available, and you can find an excellent selection of new and second-hand books online. If you want something special or unusual, try contacting EBUTA member, Gordon Bickley (gordonarf@aol.com), who sells a range of out-of-print books. We also have a superb bridge library here at Aylesbury with scores of shelves packed with classic titles – by all means, come by one day and peruse (by appointment only, please!)

Generally, the idea of learning about bidding is to watch what others do, try copying their methods for a while, and then, if you feel that you need help, look it up on the web.

<http://www.ebedcio.org.uk/node/37> provides a list of useful sites, which will get you started.

I hope that this is useful. Please let me know how you get on.

Simon

Goulash (goō'lāsh', -lāsh')

('gu:læʃ)

n



1. A rich stew, originating in Hungary, made of beef, lamb, or veal highly seasoned with paprika
2. A method of dealing in threes and fours without first shuffling the cards, to produce freak hands

[Collins English Dictionary – Complete and Unabridged](#) © HarperCollins Publishers

Those of you who have entered the world of duplicate bridge without an apprenticeship at Rubber Bridge may not be familiar with the bridge term 'goulash', which translates the idea of dollops of meat and sauce into cards being dealt in a particular fashion.

A goulash is dealt after a hand is passed out – and sometimes, such as at London's exclusive Portland Club, also in preference to playing out a 1NT contract, it being considered beneath one's dignity when playing for high stakes to have to scratch around for seven tricks when something much more tasty is in the offering. At duplicate, 1NT contracts can be a delicious rare meat with the contract delicately and deliciously poised between success and failure; at Rubber Bridge, this is offal.



By virtue of the way they are dealt (see definition above), goulash deals are known for producing wild distributions and equally wild results.

The goulash deal below was reported in the Guardian newspaper a few years ago by Zia Mahmood, (pictured left), one of the world's top professional players.

<p>♠A952 ♥1098652 ♦K102 ♣-</p> <p>♠Q4 ♠KJ108763 ♥A ♥KQJ ♦Q ♦- ♣AKJ987543 ♣Q106</p> <p>♠- ♥743 ♦AJ9876543 ♣2</p>		<p>Board 10 : Dealer East : All vulnerable</p> <table><tr><th><i>West</i></th><th><i>North</i></th><th><i>East</i></th><th><i>South</i></th></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td>1♠</td><td>5♦</td></tr><tr><td>6♣</td><td>6♦</td><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td></tr><tr><td>Dbl</td><td>All Pass</td><td></td><td></td></tr></table>				<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>			1♠	5♦	6♣	6♦	Pass	Pass	Dbl	All Pass		
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>																		
		1♠	5♦																		
6♣	6♦	Pass	Pass																		
Dbl	All Pass																				

This kind of bidding is about par for the course when you deal a goulash. West's double at the end is a bit gratuitous, but, after all, money is money, and it would seem discourteous to partner not to double.

There is a slight technical point that you might want to note here.

Did you see that East passed over 6D?

Well, in one sense this is obvious – after all, East hasn’t got any sure defence to a 6D contract. However, in top level bridge, **the pass actually invited his partner to bid a grand slam in the agreed suit and showed a first round control (an ace or a void) in diamonds**. With a diamond singleton and believing that his partner’s bid of 6C was genuine - in other words showed a good hand and was not a wild sacrifice against opponents 5D pre-emptive bid (following the general rule that it’s not a good idea to sacrifice against opponents’ sacrifice) – he would have doubled.



How crazy is that kind of bidding agreement? Well, you’ll see when we get to the end of this article!

Anyway, the final contract was 6D doubled and now West had to find an opening lead.

As we noted before, West “knew” that this contract was going to go down anyway, and so, being a thoroughly well brought up person, he led his partner’s suit. **(This is generally a good idea for partnership harmony)**.

Unfortunately, in this case, the lead was...a disaster. Declarer won on table with the ♠A, throwing a heart from his own hand, drew the outstanding trumps with ♦A, ruffed his club in dummy and then ruffed a spade back to hand.

He next played a heart and West won with his singleton ace, but now had only clubs left.

With both dummy and declarer being void in clubs, this meant that he had no choice but to concede a ruff and discard – declarer ruffed in dummy and threw away his remaining losing heart from hand. All declarer now had left was winning diamonds, so 6♦ doubled duly made.

So that’s a goulash – but of course things like that never happen in “real life”, by which I mean in the finals of big duplicate competitions when all the cards are random dealt by computer.

Or do they?

This a deal from the last stanza (set of boards) of the final of Vanderbilt Knockout Teams Competition played in Dallas, USA in Spring 2014

<p>♠ KJ8642 ♥ J1096 ♦ 9 ♣ 106</p> <p>♠ 10 ♠ 7 ♥ AQ ♥ K875432 ♦ AKQJ10832 ♦ 74 ♣ 72 ♣ K83</p> <p>♠ AQ953 ♥ - ♦ 65 ♣ AQJ954</p>		<p>Board 58 : Dealer East : All vulnerable</p> <table><tr><th><i>West</i></th><th><i>North</i></th><th><i>East</i></th><th><i>South</i></th></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td>Pass</td><td>1♣</td></tr><tr><td>Dbl</td><td>1♠</td><td>4♥</td><td>4♠</td></tr><tr><td>5♦</td><td>5♠</td><td>Pass</td><td>6♠</td></tr><tr><td>7♦</td><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td><td>7♠</td></tr><tr><td>All Pass</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr></table>				<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>			Pass	1♣	Dbl	1♠	4♥	4♠	5♦	5♠	Pass	6♠	7♦	Pass	Pass	7♠	All Pass			
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>																										
		Pass	1♣																										
Dbl	1♠	4♥	4♠																										
5♦	5♠	Pass	6♠																										
7♦	Pass	Pass	7♠																										
All Pass																													



East-West were the Norwegian duo of Tor Helness and Geir Helgemo, among the top ten players in the world. North-South were Bobby Levin and Steve Weinstein, (pictured left) stalwarts of the US national team, but now playing for an ambitious sponsor, “Nick” Nickell.

Let’s look at the bidding. East passed initially – his hand lacks the texture (suit quality) for a vulnerable three level pre-empt – so South kicked off proceedings with a gentle 1♣ – his longest suit. West held a monster hand with ten playing tricks - too good for an overcall - and plainly unsuitable for a pre-empt

when slam might be possible if partner held the right 8-count (♥KJx and ♣A for example) - so he started with a double. North now bid 1♠ - all peaceful so far.

Opposite his partner’s take-out double, East now made the value bid of 4♥, hoping to buy the contract. South, however, had other ideas: with five-card support for his partner’s suit and only four losers, he made an underbid of 4♠, expecting further bidding action and hoping to buy the contract by a slow approach.

West, possibly thinking along much the same lines as South, bid 5♦, and North who felt that his hand had improved in the auction (the bidding had marked South with at most a singleton heart) rightly felt that he did not want to defend, and bid 5♠ - the contract might make, it might go one off, but it wouldn’t lead to a silly result.

East, considering that he had already described his hand in the bidding, now passed, and South, who had somewhat underbid his hand on the previous round made a fine bid of 6♠. I am not sure that he felt confident that this would make – but if the opponents led a heart – who knows?

West took out insurance (protected himself from recording a score which was going to be too big in the minus column) by bidding 7♦ -and it was North’s moment to make the most fateful bid of the event (and perhaps of his career). He PASSED.

Now, do you remember what I wrote way back in this article about passing and top experts. To you and me, pass means “I have nothing to say” – but to top experts this pass showed a first round control (void or ace of diamonds) and invited his partner to bid 7♠.....and that’s exactly what South did.

The spotlight finally moved round to East to find an opening lead. He “knew” from the bidding that North had a void diamond – in fact everyone knew that North had a void diamond (except for North, that is) – so he led a heart (exactly as South had foreseen). Declarer ruffed in dummy, drew the opponents’ trumps with a spade to the king and took the club finesse. On the run of the clubs he was able to ditch his remaining losing hearts and the diamond which everybody knew that he didn’t have!

Following the deal there was a lot of debate in bridge circles regarding Steve Weinstein’s pass. Was it a bluff? Had he forgotten the system in all the excitement? Did the convention apply in those circumstances? The jury’s still out – but with that deal the Vanderbilt was won by the Nickell team!

From which we learn:

Rule : Always lead your partners suit in defence – except when it’s the wrong thing to do



Do you dare?

It's the end of the session, and you pick up the hand record, perhaps peering over the scorer's shoulder as you make your way to the exit.

A balance between curiosity and the need to rebuild self-esteem finds us some time later, sipping our coffee, aforesaid sheet on the table in front of us and asking: where did we go wrong – or perhaps, for a select few, how could we have done even better?

The hand records show the theoretical maximum number of tricks available to each side depending on the denomination of the final contract. A few hard-hearted clubs produce sheets, which even spell out the so-called “par result”. Ouch!

“It claims that we could have made twelve tricks in spades but that means that we would have had to take a finesse of the eight at trick one”.

“But if only the seven had been in the North hand” you say.

Wouldn't it be brilliant if this kind of assertion could be put to the test with a simple click of the mouse?! Well it can!

Deep Finesse is an interactive hand analyser that lets you examine play lines of any bridge deal. You do not compete against Deep Finesse; rather, it is a tool to help promote better understanding of the game.

Deep Finesse comes with an intuitive and easy-to-use graphical interface. Its real novelty is in the way the program presents information and how deals are investigated. By simply clicking on cards, you choose which lines of play to explore. At each turn, Deep Finesse clearly shows which cards are winning plays and which are losing. Deep Finesse is unbiased about offense or defence - it always finds and labels the best cards for each player in turn.

Have you ever questioned or not quite followed the analysis in the hand records, or in the write-up accompanying the event? Did you ever fail in a contract you sense could have been made but aren't quite sure? Deep Finesse is a **must** for people wanting to improve their play and defence.

Didn't understand how that expert squeezed you out of a trick on board 10. Relive the moment card by card and see whether you could have escaped and how.

“My play at trick seven didn't let through the contract, declarer could still have made it via an endplay” True or false?

The patience of Job and the logic of Spock. Play long and prosper

Easy to use, download it for free from <http://www.deepfinesse.com/dfentry.html>

FULVIO IN ACTION!

I had the great pleasure of kibitzing (watching), Fulvio Fantoni, the World Bridge Federation's highest ranked player, at the wonderful Night of the Stars event <http://www.nightofthestars.org.uk/> held in late February at the Royal Hospital for Neuro-disability in Putney. Fulvio and many other top stars from home and abroad generously offer their services free for the evening, with the pleasure of playing with them in partnership auctioned for the benefit of a group of worthwhile causes. The 2015 event raised an astonishing £50,000, and I have no doubt that Terry Hewitt with her team of dedicated volunteers will do even better in 2016!

The event itself is run on familiar duplicate pairs lines – it is not your absolute score that matters, but your score relative to other pairs holding the same cards.



(pictured: Fulvio Fantoni sharing a joke with Ben Green)

Now, here is Fulvio in action as declarer in a humble part-score contract: (deal rotated for convenience)

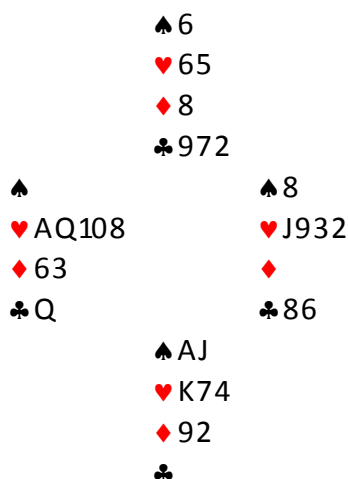
<p> ♠ K96 ♥ 65 ♦ 854 ♣ AJ972 </p>		Board 15 : Dealer South : Love all			
		West	North	East	South
		DbI	2♠	All Pass	1♠
♠ 76 ♥ AQ108 ♦ AJ63 ♣ Q105	♠ 1083 ♥ J932 ♦ Q7 ♣ K863				
♠ AQJ42 ♥ K74 ♦ K1092 ♣ 4					

West got the defence off to a good start by leading a trump, Fulvio playing the nine from dummy, and when East covered with the ten, winning in hand with ♠Q.

A small spade to dummy's king was followed by a low diamond off the table, on which East hopped up unexpectedly with the queen, duly covered by king and ace. Having no more spades, and being uncertain of the diamond position, West tried a low club, won by dummy's ace.

A second low diamond followed to the seven, ten and knave. West, perhaps thinking that declarer had started with six spades and not realising that she could give her partner a diamond ruff, continued with the ♣10, covered by knave and king - and ruffed by declarer.

This was now the position facing declarer, having taken four tricks:



Although the defence has not taken a diamond ruff, there still appeared to be no more than eight tricks available. Indeed East could be allowed to take the diamond ruff, but the trick would be returned because the third round of hearts could now be ruffed in dummy.

At this point, with the contract "in the bag", most of us would draw the outstanding trump, lead a small diamond to dummy's eight and lead a heart towards the king, hoping that the heart ace was onside. Even if the heart ace proved to be offside, we would still come to eight tricks via five spades, one club and two diamonds – but not Fulvio. He knew from the bidding that the heart ace was held in the West hand. After all, East had already shown up with ♣K and ♦Q but had not bid in response to his partner's take-out double – no room for another ace!

So what did Fulvio do next? He cashed both his last trumps of course!

Now this might seem a crazy thing to do. The diamonds are blocked and he has no way back to hand, but let's see what happened.

West now had to find two discards. The first discard was easy enough – a heart – but what next? The winning club seemed out of the question and West was naturally reluctant to throw another heart from the tenace holding over the king. She dreamed that declarer might lead a diamond to dummy's eight and then lead a heart to the king – allowing the defence to win, and take the remaining tricks. So, with total equanimity, she threw one of her "useless" diamonds. It didn't seem to matter: at worst declarer would now cash two diamonds, but he would finish in hand and have to lead away from ♥K, giving up three hearts at the end.

Now Fulvio pounced! A low diamond to dummy's eight extracted West's remaining card in the suit, and a club (!!) was led from dummy with a heart being discarded from hand! West won perforce with the queen – but now found herself end-played – she had to lead a heart away from the ace, allowing declarer to make the heart king and giving him an entry for the master diamond after all!

Needless to say, 2♠ making with an overtrick was an excellent matchpoint result for NS.

You'll have noticed that even if West had thrown a second heart in that end position, declarer would still have made his contract, again after leading a diamond to dummy eight.

We are all hoping to see Fulvio back in action in England this October for the Champion's Cup to be held in November at Horwood House near Milton Keynes!



The Grosvenor Gambit

According to Wikipedia, The Grosvenor Gambit is a psychological play, in which the opponent is purposely given the chance to gain one or more tricks, and often even to make the contract, but to do so he must play for his opponents to have acted illogically or incorrectly.

A classic example would be a situation where you hold Q109 over dummy's J8. Declarer leads the knave from dummy and you play the ten, rather than covering with your honour. Declarer will of course not play you for having the queen (to do so would be to assume that you were behaving totally irrationally). When he subsequently finds that he could (perhaps) have made an extra trick (or even his contract) by making this bizarre assumption, the realisation totally puts him off his stride, upsets his mental balance and he messes up on some subsequent deal.

When beginners (unintentionally, of course) do this to experts, the effect can be emotionally devastating, even leading to murderous thoughts. See <http://www.bridgebum.com/grosvenor.php> for the original (fictitious) story.

A beautiful example came up during the 47th European Bridge Team Championships held in 2004, at Malmö, Sweden during the match between Scotland and Wales.

<div>♠AK6</div> <div>♥KJ106</div> <div>♦K</div> <div>♣K10987</div> <div>♠J1073</div> <div>♥87542</div> <div>♦J5</div> <div>♣64</div> <div>♠Q8</div> <div>♥3</div> <div>♦Q1086432</div> <div>♣AQ5</div> <div>♠9542</div> <div>♥AQ9</div> <div>♦A97</div> <div>♣J32</div>	<div>Board 11 : Dealer South : Love all</div> <table><tr><th><i>West</i></th><th><i>North</i></th><th><i>East</i></th><th><i>South</i></th></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>Pass</td></tr><tr><td>Pass</td><td>1NT (1)</td><td>3♦</td><td>3NT</td></tr><tr><td>All Pass</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr></table> <div>(1) Although this 15-17 1NT opening with a singleton seems a little off-centre, it has the advantage of defining the point count accurately.</div>	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>				Pass	Pass	1NT (1)	3♦	3NT	All Pass			
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>														
			Pass														
Pass	1NT (1)	3♦	3NT														
All Pass																	

South might have doubled Three Diamonds, but then there would have been no story. East led a diamond to the first trick, and declarer won with the king, crossed to dummy with a heart and took a club finesse.

Now if East had just won this "normally" with the queen, declarer would have been unable to make more than eight tricks, but East won with the ACE and played a second diamond.

Now declarer could have cashed out for his contract, but of course, the ♣Q was "marked" in West's hand. It would have been totally illogical for East to have played the ace if he held the queen.

With this thought, declarer won the diamond in dummy and ran the jack of clubs with an air of confidence.

The look on his face when this lost to the queen apparently would have made a Gorgon proud!

THE HUBERT PHILLIPS BOWL (or Even Homer Nods)



The mixed teams-of-four championships of England is an ideal tournament for new players to the game of duplicate from rubber or Chicago bridge.

Scoring is by aggregate with honours counting. Matches are played on the full pivot principle such that one plays one-third of the match with each of one's teammates as a partner.

Matches are of 30 boards, up to and including the quarter-final, except that 24- or 27-board matches may be played in Rounds 1–3 by mutual agreement. A Plate competition was added to this event in 2012 in order to ensure that all non-seeded teams play at least two matches.

Sociable, entertaining and unpredictable! This is the event where two years ago my team-mates (both Premier Life Masters) managed to go **eight off doubled and vulnerable in 2♠** to concede a penalty of 2300!!

How on could something like that happen? Easy! See Page 15 for the answer

To enter any of our events, or to find out more information, please contact Peter Jordan or Dawn Mertens at the EBU Competitions Department (Tel: 01296 317203/219) - <http://www.ebu.co.uk/competitions/hubert-phillips-bowl>



After your evening or afternoon of bridge, you will (perhaps) pick up the hand records and review what happened – and what might have happened. (I'll write about that in another article) – but you may also have met or heard experienced bridge players who – amazingly - can remember not just one deal but the whole evenings deals. They'll recall the bidding, the cards and the play apparently effortlessly. How do they do it?

If you haven't done so already, you should read the Goulash! article elsewhere in this issue of the Ruffian. I hope you enjoyed it. What about that first goulash hand? Think about that for a moment, and how you would tell the story to a bridge-playing friend. If you were on Twitter you'd be allowed to write about this in 140 characters but suppose that you were allowed no more than five words (plus the contract) - that's it! What four words would you choose?

Anyway, back to the subject of this article: memorisation of cards. Well, as with many mental "tricks", part of this comes down to practice: the more you do it, the better you get. Struggling to remember, making mistakes and then correcting them is part of that process (as with learning a language). Part of what you're seeing is also a bit of deception: these mind-magicians are not remembering many different things, they are remembering the totality of the deal (play, bidding, defence, result, score) and then deconstructing it into its elements. This is a more complex process, but because they have done it many times, they can do it very fast, so you're not aware of the logical processes and calculations going on in their head.

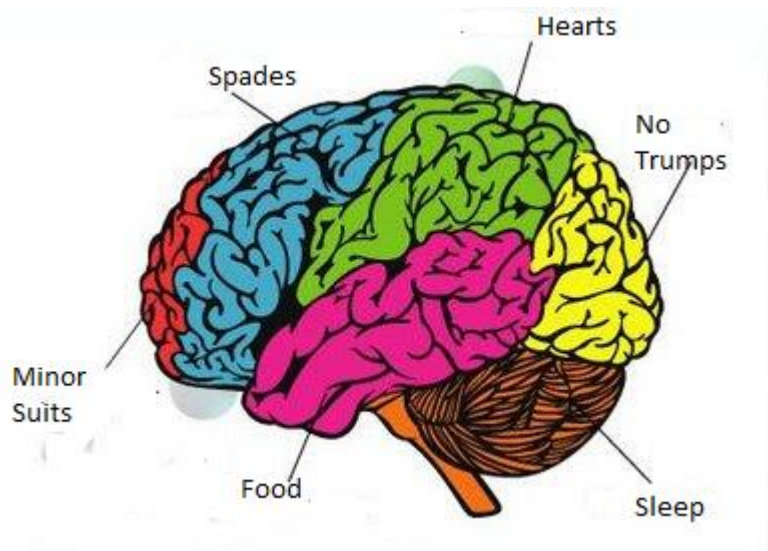
Before I explain to you how this is done, a little bit more background – and then I am going to take through the steps so that you too can develop this capacity.

Bridge is not the only example where these mind-boggling feats of memory are demonstrated. Actually, you do it all the time. When we look at a person's face, we don't think of their eyes, their hair, their nose, their mouth - ok, maybe you do about some people, but I'm talking in general here – you picture them holistically in context and then, if you are forced – by a policeman perhaps – to describe that person to someone else, you pull those physical elements apart, or deconstruct it. That can be remarkably hard – and yet we have no difficulty in recognising someone from a photograph, perhaps having only seen his or her image for a few seconds.

Top chess players similarly are able to remember board positions from games played weeks, months or years ago.

But give those same chess players an impossible board position to memorise, where perhaps there are three kings on the board and three white bishops, or perhaps the pieces are grouped or placed in technically illegal places – and they are no better than the man in the street at retaining this data in their minds.

What is happening here?



Well, every deal tells a story and what you need to focus on is that story. In the chessboard analogy, an experienced chess player can see how the play has developed to bring about a particular scenario with positional advantages, territorial control, threats and possible future developments – and it is terms of those abstract elements that he remembers the board. He doesn't remember the precise positions of all the individual pieces as such – he can see the state of the game as a whole. Then if asked, he can work back from that overview to deduce the position of the pieces and recreate the board...

So, we're back at the issue of how to tell a story in four words. To do this let's go back to that goulash deal. Imagine that you're at the bar a week or two later with the expert who played the deal and some friends. You ask the expert to tell the story of the deal to the assembled company.

"Which deal was that?" says the expert

"You know, the **6D doubled** contract after the **goulash** deal. They **led** the **wrong** card and the contract **made** via an **endplay**"

"Ah, yes" say the expert, mentally doing somersaults.

What's he thinking? Perhaps something on the lines of::

Goulash = freaky distribution, hands with (far) fewer points made the contract

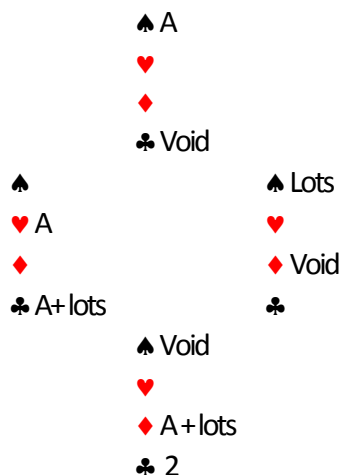
Six diamonds doubled made = sacrifice bid in competition, missing two aces

Led the wrong card = contract could have been defeated

Endplay = throw-in, perhaps to avoid a guess or maybe to concede a ruff and discard

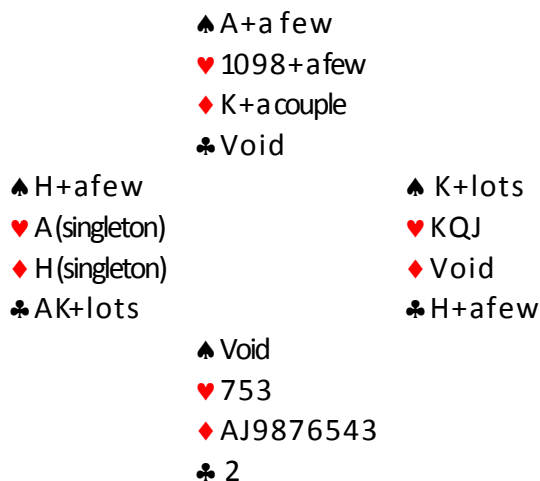
With that prompting, he'll next try to visualise the bidding and place the key cards starting with the aces and the voids. Why don't you try to perform the same recall on a blank piece of paper before turning the page? Don't give up too quickly – you can award yourself a score out of 7 (one point for each void or ace correctly placed).

So maybe you came up with something like:



The expert will have recalled the bidding in outline: East opened with Spades, he made a pre-emptive over call in diamonds, West bid clubs, North bid diamonds, East passed, West doubled.

Next he'll add the singletons and deuces (experts love watching deuces), maybe add the kings and any sequences which caught his attention at the time: (here H = honour card)



Did you also remember that North started life with the other three deuces?



Now he'll bring in the endplay story. West led a spade and was subsequently endplayed in hearts, so there must have been an elimination of West's spades and diamonds as well as South's clubs. That will allow him to reformulate the rough sequence of play after the opening spade lead was won by dummy, allowing him to ditch one of those pesky hearts. Outstanding trump drawn, club ruff, spade ruff, or maybe spade ruffed high, trump to dummy's king, spade ruff, club ruff.....he may not be exactly sure – but he does recall the elimination of West's exit cards in spades – did he start with two or three initially: can't recall. Next came the heart, endplaying West and forcing the ruff and discard (of the second losing heart).

The cards of interest to the play having been placed (maybe nine cards in total, and not all of them precisely and in any case a lot less than 52). He'll now fill in the rest of the deal from the top down. Perhaps ending with something like this on the back of the bar mat

	♠ A932	
	♥ 1098642	
	♦ K102	
	♣	
♠ Q5		♠ KJ108764
♥ A		♥ KQJ
♦ Q		♦
♣ AKJ987654		♣ Q103
	♠	
	♥ 753	
	♦ AJ9876543	
	♣ 2	

Now, you're not going to argue with him over a few intermediate spot cards, are you?

Of course, not all deals are as spectacular as this one, or as easy to "recreate". In the next issue of the Ruffian, I'll explain more about the expert's shorthand memory code.

In the meantime, why not read more about the how experts recall chess positions at:

<http://theinvisiblegorilla.com/blog/2012/02/15/how-experts-recall-chess-positions/>

or watch the video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rWuJqCwfjjc>

♣ ♦ ♥ ♠ ♣ ♦ ♥ ♠ ♣ ♦ ♥ ♠ ♣ ♦ ♥ ♠

Hubert Phillips Bowl Solution – How to concede 2300 in 2♠ doubled

Player one: 2♦ (alerted) – this was a **conventional bid** which showed a weak two in either major suit



Player two; Double (**holding a very strong hand with five spades**)

Player three: 2♠ (alerted) – this was a **conventional bid** which said: if your weak two is in hearts, bid on. If your weak two is in spades, this is high enough!

Player four : Double (**also holding a very strong hand with five spades**)

Player one : Pass (alerted) – this was a lapse in concentration of the first order, since he did in fact hold a weak two in hearts!

Player two : Pass – rubbing his hands. Why aren't we playing for money?

Player three : Pass – well, if partner has a weak two in spades, he should be happy that I have two of them.

The play did not take long. After the opening lead, dummy went down, exposing the (ahem) misunderstanding, and pretty soon the opponents drew trumps and cashed their side suit winners. They were able to discard their losing hearts along the way and thus took all thirteen tricks. At the other table, we had bid our non-vulnerable small slam in spades, totally unaware of the carnage occurring in the next room.

Entries for this year's competition should be submitted by mid-April (see p12)

12th Really Easy Summer Congress at Brighton

First Step – Monday 17th to Wednesday 19th August

Next Step – Tuesday 18th to Thursday 20th August



The **First Step** will be expected to play a basic Acol system and playing sessions will be between 15 and 21 boards. There will be an instructional session on Monday afternoon. On the Tuesday there will be an instructional session in the morning, followed by a play session in the afternoon. The evening is free for informal play or independent relaxation. There will a further play session: a Swiss pairs event starting on Wednesday morning. You will probably still be in your first year of learning or be part way through the second year. You may have had some experience of a supervised bridge session at the club, but are probably not a regular club player yet.

For the **Next Step event** students will be able to use their own familiar system and more boards will be played – 21 to 24 boards per session. The emphasis will be more on play and there will only be one instruction session for this group. You will probably have been playing at a local club for a few months but may not have tried a County or EBU event before.



Both events are priced at only £50 for the bridge, but players have to make their own arrangements regarding accommodation and refreshments.

You can make your entry by ringing Peter or Dawn in the EBU Competitions Department – 01296 317203/219.

You can book rooms at the Metropole Hotel by ringing 01273 775432 and choose Group Bookings from the menu. Then mention Brighton Summer Meeting. You may find you can get better rates by booking directly online. The 2015 reserved rates are: Midweek £74 single, £147 double. The reserved rates are subject to availability.

	Novices & students	Next step
Monday 17th	2.00pm – 4.00pm Lesson 4.00pm Free time 7.30pm – 10.30pm Play session 1	
Tuesday 18th	10am – 12:00pm Lesson 12:00 pm Free time 2.30pm Play session 2 5.30pm Free time 7.30-10.30 Free evening or gentle play	2.30pm Play session 1 5.30pm Free time 7.30pm -10.30pm Play session 2
Wednesday 19th	10.30am Play session 3 – Swiss Pairs 3.30pm Final results and departure (1 hour lunch break 12.30 – 1.30)	10.30am Play session 3 – Swiss Pairs 3.30pm Free time 7.30pm -10.30pm Play session 4
Thursday 20th		10am Lecture 11.30am Free time 1.30pm Play session 5 5.00pm Final results and departure

To make reservations for accommodation in Brighton (other than the Metropole) contact the EBU Accommodation booking service, operated by Bridge Overseas, on Freephone 0800 0346 246
<http://www.ebu.co.uk/competitions/abs>

For helpful advice on your visit to Brighton, and to the Congress, visit the EBU website
<http://www.ebu.co.uk/competitions/brighton-really-easy-congress> and the linked pages, which will be regularly updated as the congress approaches.



Really Easy Break Spring 2014

Days Hotel Marsham Court, Bournemouth
26th to 28th June 2015

These weekend house parties are for more experienced newer players, with up to 5 years' experience.

There will be an optional instructional session on Saturday morning but otherwise the emphasis is on play.



The hotel package consists of two night dinner, bed & breakfast with a sandwich lunch on Sunday.

The hotel package is £133 per person. Supplements may apply for single occupancy, sea views, or sea view & balcony rooms. Note: a deposit may be required to secure your reservation.

To take advantage of this package please book directly with the Days Hotel. Please telephone them on 01202 446644 or complete and return this booking form to the hotel

<http://www.ebu.co.uk/documents/competitions/entry-forms/2015/really-easy-summer-accommodation.pdf>

Further information on this and other EBU Really Easy events is available at

<http://www.ebu.co.uk/documents/competitions/entry-forms/2015/really-easy-summer.pdf>

The bridge fee of £50 per person is payable to the EBU in the usual way.

*Please note that it is not possible to entertain non-residential guests at this event.
There is a limit of 36 places available. There are a limited number of single occupancy rooms.*

**All our events use duplimated boards with hand records
and the latest Bridgemate technology for scoring.
Final results are displayed within minutes of the final table finishing.**

***You can make your entry for either event by ringing Peter or Dawn in the
EBU Competitions Department – 01296 317203/219***

BIDDING CHALLENGE

How would you and your favourite partner bid this deal which came up at the recent Young Bridge Challenge held at Loughborough Grammar School, won for the sixth time by Haberdasher's Aske's Boys' School?

		North V	
		♠ A K 10 7	
		♥ A 7 5 3	
		♦ 2	
		♣ Q 7 4 2	
West INV	Board	East D INV	
♠ 9 5	2	♠ Q 4 2	
♥ K J 9 2		♥ Q 10 8 6	
♦ 6 5 3		♦ J 7	
♣ 9 8 5 3		♣ K J 10 6	
D = DEALER V = VULNERABLE INV = NOT VUL		HCPs	
South V			
♠ J 8 6 3			
♥ 4			
♦ A K Q 10 9 8 4			
♣ A			

With 27 points between the North South hands, game should certainly be reached, but which game, and how about slam?

With such a high quality diamond suit in the South hand and eight playing tricks, it would be tempting to open a strong two in that suit – and if you did, it might then well be hard to avoid playing game in no trumps. This is what happened at ten of the seventeen tables.

With the favourable lie of the diamond suit, eleven tricks were available – although six of the declarers made all thirteen tricks. On the run of the diamonds, East had to find five discards, and erroneously throwing a spade allowed declarer to make four tricks in that suit.

3NT was far from being an ideal contract – if the diamond suit had been distributed so that declarer had to lose a trick to ♦ Jxxx with either defender, game in no trumps might well have failed on a club lead which removes dummy's entry to the long cards in the suit.

What about spades? We know that a four-four fit will often produce an "extra" trick and ten tricks in spades (+620) is a better score than nine tricks in no trumps (+600). The bidding might go:

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

- (1) Preparing to bid his suits "up the line"
- (2) With seven beautiful diamonds, these are worth emphasising in preference to introducing the slightly anaemic spades
- (3) Holding three quick winners and generally poor intermediates, there is no rush to bid no trumps
- (4) Has to "own up" to the spade support

As the cards lie, small slam in spades is easy. Declarer wins the opening lead, cashes two top trumps and, leaving the ♠Q outstanding, sets about the diamonds. The defender with the top trump can ruff in at any time but South has a ruffing entry back to hand to cash the remaining long cards in the suit - on which he can throw North's losing hearts and clubs. At Loughborough, no one played in spades and indeed, if the spades were to break badly (say 4-1 or 5-0) – which will happen about one third of the time - the spade slam might well fail.

At four of the tables, North South played in diamonds. This was better – it would take very bad luck indeed for five diamonds to fail – at worst, you have a loser in trumps and a loser in spades, so eleven tricks are secure. In fact, there is about a 90% chance of twelve tricks and a 25% chance of all thirteen tricks (for those of you who like percentages). Here's a possible sequence:

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1♦
Pass	1♥ (1)	Pass	1♠
Pass	4♠ (2)	Pass	6♦ (3)
Pass	Pass	Pass	

- (1) Preparing to bid his suits "up the line"
- (2) He has the values for game here
- (3) South's hand is worth a slam bid following North's strong raise of spades. The hand will surely play as well in diamonds as in spades.

Scores: 6♦ (10) 6♠ (7) 4♠ (5) 5♦ (4) 3NT (3)

JUNIOR 'TEACH-IN' WEEKEND

to be held at Loughborough University Campus August 28-30th 2015

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MEET THE EXPERTS

Main Event will be for the G W Arnott-Davidson TROPHY

BIDDING CHALLENGE

The programme in outline:

- Arrive Friday late afternoon to meet before dinner at 6pm
- Participants split into six groups, each with expert tuition. Bridge starts Friday evening, and continues, with a few breaks to catch your breath, until Sunday afternoon (but there's time on Saturday afternoon for sporting and recreational activity, including tennis, swimming and rounders).

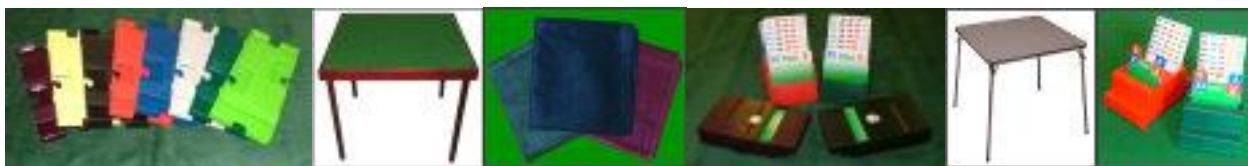
Further information and application forms available online through
www.ebedcio.org.uk

Or from: Lisa Miller ☎ 01296 317217 or email lisa@ebu.co.uk

** includes early-bird discount of £20

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Available from the EBU Bridge Shop



Pellisier tables - folding wood tables

798mm square; Mahogany coloured frame; folding for easy stacking

Club tables - folding plastic tables

Black with metal legs; top 34 inches square

Corded velvet table covers - Green, wine or blue

Bidding boxes, set of four - Red or green

Bidding buddies, set of four – Red, green or dark blue

Card holder (semi-circular, sits on the table)

Plastic card holder (circular, hand held, set of 4: red, green, yellow, blue)

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Black Jack cards Large figures for easy reading (Min. order 2 packs)

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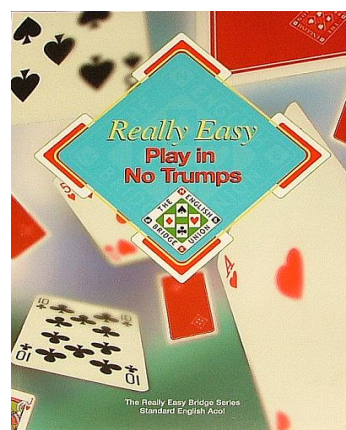
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20% member discount on a wide range of books including Master Bridge, Batsford, Chess & Bridge and Really Easy Series