

In *DE LUCA* vs *BLOOM*, Martin Bloom – Nigel Rosendorff, Stephen Bock – Les Grewcock, *DE LUCA* led 61-47 at halfway and 84-73 with 16 boards to go. Thanks in part to this deal *BLOOM* won Session 4 by 41-25 and the match by 114-109.

Board. 54, North deals, NS vulnerable

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

North deals, NS vulnerable

West	North	East	South
Januszke	Grewcock	Zollo	Bock
	Pass	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♣	Pass	2NT ²
Pass	3♦ ³	Pass	3NT ⁴
All Pass			

1. 15-17
2. Maximum, no five-card major
3. Do you have a major?
4. No

West led ♦A, ♦K and a third diamond. South played a heart and had nine tricks, +600. At the other table, after the auction in the problem on the previous page, De Luca, North, bid 4♥, all pass. Bloom led ♦8 and ruffed the third diamond. North still had two trump losers, two down, -200, 13 IMPs to *BLOOM*.

Over 3♥ North can bid 3♠ if that shows values in spades and South would rebid 3NT to win the match. A better version of 2♣ Checkback also works. Opener bids 2♦ if minimum, higher if maximum. Over 2♣, South can bid 2♥, North 2♠ and again NS will end in 3NT.

The second Repechage match was between *HAVAS* and *LORENTZ*, (see picture of team on page 18), Gabi Lorentz – Stephen Burgess, Robert Krochmalik – Paul Lavings, Bill Haughie – Ron Klinger. *LORENTZ* won the match by 136-102 [34-14, 41-32, 42-23, 19-33].

To be continued in next issue

Ed: Different boards were used in the head-to-head matches. From a journalistic point of view, I would like to voice my opinion in adding to the view that identical boards could and should have been used at concurrent stages of the event if at all possible.

The Mental Game

by Kim Frazer

Dealing with Time Pressure

Match anxiety or match pressure has differing degrees of influence on different people. Some players are completely immune, whilst others fold under pressure.



One disastrous example I saw occurred when a shooter in the Olympic Final shot on the wrong target, scoring a zero and losing the gold medal in the process. Incredibly, four years later, the same shooter was in the same position, and did the same thing, missing the target altogether when he accidentally touched his trigger and fired too early! The Olympics are widely considered to be the biggest pressure cooker in sport, and many athletes often stumble on the biggest stage due to match pressure. It is hard to attribute this shooter's error to anything but match pressure.

Studies have shown that when a player in an activity is overly anxious, they can make errors they would not normally make. One area that can contribute to match anxiety is when play is slow and the time limit for the match is approaching the end. We have all been at tables where players rush to try and finish so as to complete all of the boards for the set. After all, you paid your money for a certain number of boards, so you absolutely have to finish, don't you? Often this haste will create a very bad result on one board because the players don't take their 'normal' amount of time to bid or play. Sometimes it doesn't make much difference to the result. For example, if the board missed is flat across the field, both pairs will get an average and no harm is done. However, if it is one of those boards that is going to swing the round your way, you are going to be pretty annoyed if you miss the board, and it costs you a place. Even worse - imagine you are playing teams and head back for score up where your teammates say something like "We had a good set". As you go through the score up, you find the board you missed is the one your teammates scored +1100 on! Of course it could swing the other way - but I am usually not that lucky!

In my shooting competitions, failing to finish in time meant you lost the match - your score would never be high enough to make up for the missed shot(s). I feel generally it is better not to reach the point where you are worried about whether you have enough time left.

Some players are just slower than others, and whilst it's true that there are some players who are very considered and thoughtful in their play, many times it is often

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Dos and Donts at the table

DOS

- Be at the table about five minutes before the scheduled match time to give yourself time to look at the opponents' system card, and discuss any specific methods required with your partner;
- Consider when is the best time to write down the contract and score for the board;
- Make a note on the back of your scoresheet if you want to discuss something with your partner to remind you to do it after the round;
- Have all your required items ready with you (e.g. system card, pen, spectacles, drink).
- Make the director aware mid-way through the round if your opponents are inordinately slow (you may be entitled to compensation if your table doesn't finish);
- Claim when you can, rather than playing out every card.

DON'TS

- Discuss the hand just played in between boards.
- Look at the results from boards at other tables in the Bridgmate (you can't change the result & it won't help your play)

the slowest players that are the last ones to sit down at the table after the movement is called. These players are off making a coffee, or in the bathroom or fussing around somewhere. They get to the table, then find they don't have their pen, or their glasses or they left their system card at the last table. They fuss about looking at your system card. Then they decide to have a chat about what defence they will employ against your multi twos, or some other slightly unfamiliar convention. The clock shows the match has already been running for over five minutes before they take their cards out of the board and think about an opening bid.

Five minutes might not seem like much, but in an eight board round it can make quite a difference to the overall match time. This pair who arrived late might be quite quick players, but it turns out their opponents are very methodical, taking time before each bid and card played. Any surprise the table doesn't complete all their boards?

Then there are the players who insist on discussing hands between boards, who take forever to write down the contract before making the opening lead, or who review the results, or who have other mannerisms, all of which slow down the play. At club duplicate, pairs will often look at the Bridgmate or traveller to see what other pairs have done for a particular board, or to try and figure out what contract they should have been in. All of this might add to some players enjoyment of the game, but it isn't particularly good bridge etiquette,

and it slows down the game enormously - often making it difficult to finish the round.

You can and should call the director if the opponents are excessively slow or arrive more than a few minutes late to the table. You can also ask opponents who post-mortem, or review results to discuss/review the hands later at the end of play. However, managing the opponents is always trickier than managing your own actions, so make sure you are not engaging in any of the "time wasting" activities mentioned in this article, have a plan for managing match time, and maintain good table protocols. Getting through your matches 'in tempo' will ensure you don't get stressed out when time is running low for the round, and assist you with playing all your boards at the desired level.

Bridge in the 21st Century



Responding to 1NT

Do you sometimes feel that life is passing you by? The 1NT opening has changed a lot in the last 10 years in both the hand-type to open 1NT and the responses.

There is a big advantage in playing Weak Stayman. It is one of my favourite situations in bridge, where you Stayman with 0-7 HCP with both majors and when opener responds 2♥ or 2♠ and you know you are headed for a great result. When you don't hit a fit you must be on your mettle to come out on top.

What would you respond to 1NT on these hands?

1. ♠K 10 6 3, ♥Q 9 8 5 2, ♦6 4, ♣5 2
2. ♠K 10 6 5 3, ♥Q 9 8 5, ♦6 4, ♣5 2
3. ♠K J 10 6, ♥Q 10 8 5, ♦6 4 3, ♣4 2
4. ♠K 10 6 4, ♥Q 9 8 5, ♦6 4 3 2, ♣2
5. ♠10 6 4, ♥Q 9 8 5, ♦K J 10 6 2, ♣3

1. 2♣. If you find a major fit you've improved your prospects dramatically. If opener responds 2♦ then you bid 2♥ to show Weak Stayman, at least 4-4 in the majors. Holding three spades and two hearts opener is expected to take 2♥ out to 2♠. Stayman with a weak hand is preferable to transferring to hearts and risk missing a 5-4 spade fit.

2. 2♣. Again, if you find a major suit fit you are doing very well. If opener responds 2♦ then you should bid 2♠ to show five spades and four hearts (I consulted three top experts and although they had different methods in most situations after a 1NT opening they all preferred the sequence 1NT:2♣, 2♦:2♠ or 1NT:2♣, 2♥:2♠ to show an invitational hand with five spades. They considered the ability to stop in 2♠, instead of 2NT or 3♠, to be of greater advantage)