



THE  
ADVENTURES  
OF

THE  
PIG TRADER



## THE PIG TRADER.....

.....is not as good a player as he likes to think he is! His bidding can be over adventurous and his declarer play often requires as much opportunism as skill!

All the stories have appeared either in the Sheffield Bridge Club Newsletter or in English Bridge. Many stories have been edited for this compilation; some have been rewritten extensively.

The stories reflect actual events at the bridge table. Apart from the encrypting of some names, the only fictitious element is the impression given that the Pig Trader and I are different persons! The invention of the character "Pig Trader" was to allow me to relate stories of hands where I make contracts, often when I should not have been in those contracts in the first place! Thus I could reserve my own name for describing those hands where I had really got it wrong!

The deals described occurred at Sheffield Bridge Club in Match Pointed Pairs events except where I have indicated otherwise.

Barrie Partridge

October 2007

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TIME SLIP

(From Sheffield Bridge Club Newsletter No 60, May 1990)

I was sitting South at the recent Yorkshire Simultaneous Pairs when, on Board 9, I found myself playing in 6♠ with the lead of the Ace and another heart:

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

I took ♥Q and cashed ♠A and was just about the claim the rest of the tricks when West showed out! Oh dear! I looked at the opposition. It was Mike Pomfrey and Sandy Davies! Oh dear! I could expect nothing but the best defence from these two International players!

Before reading on, plan your own line of play!

I realised that I had somehow to finesse trumps twice. I could do so once immediately, and so, at Trick 4, I led ♠6, but, of course, Sandy went up with ♠9, so I still needed to finesse again. The only way I could do that was to lead diamonds and when East ruffed, I could over-ruff.

But there was a snag. I could see that East would be reluctant to ruff any diamond for fear of being over-ruffed and the time would come when I would have nothing left in my own hand but trumps, and I would have to ruff a diamond before East, and then I would have to lead trumps away from my own hand. To prevent this from happening, I would have to ruff a winning diamond early and return to dummy with ♣A to continue the diamonds.

At Trick 5, therefore, I cashed one more top trump and then ♦A followed by ♦J, overtaken in dummy. Then I ruffed a winning diamond.

“Nice plan, shame about the timing!” guffawed the Pig Trader in the bar afterwards after I had failed to make the contract. “In your enthusiasm, you ruffed a winning diamond one trick too early! You should discard your losing club on your third diamond and then ruff your fourth diamond. Then you can re-enter dummy with ♣A to lead a fifth diamond at Trick 11, and if East still refuses to ruff, you discard ♥K. At last, at Trick 12, the lead is in dummy with you holding ♥K8 over East’s ♥107.”

This play is known as Trump Reduction, or Grand Coup.

Finally, to rub salt into the wound, the Pig Trader added that 6NT played by North would have been far easier!

## THE PIG TRADER PULLS OUT THE WRONG BID

(From Sheffield Bridge Club Newsletter No 61, August 1990)

This was Board 14 on Friday, 6 April. The Pig Trader was sitting East and the Bun Terror was sitting West.

East had dealt at Love All and the contract at all the other 16 tables was 4♥ making with either one or two overtricks. 6♥ by East is an excellent contract but very difficult to reach after 1♥ – 1♠ – 2♣, so it needed some very special bidding by our intrepid pair to reach this slam!

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

W	N	E	S
Bun Terror		Pig Trader	
		1♥	No
1♠	No	2♣/2♠ (1)	No
3♣ (2)	No	3♦ (3)	No
4NT (4)	No	5♣ (5)	No
5♠ (6)	No	6♣ (7)	No
6♥ (8)	No	No (9)	No

(1) The Pig Trader thought that he had bid 2♣ and was unaware that he had actually bid 2♠ until the very end of the auction. Meanwhile, the following farce ensued:

(2) We've got a fit in both majors. There could be a slam here. I'll ask about the minors.

(3) Ah! A club fit! Maybe I should pass, but I'll just try a Fourth Suit Force to look for 3NT.

(4) Ah! Partner's got a feature in diamonds! It's time for Blackwood!

(5) Now why has partner responded to my enquiry with his own enquiry? He cannot be looking for slam when his 3♣ bid was only a mild invitation to game. I must discourage! 5♣ shows no aces and is the agreed suit anyway!

(6) No aces, eh? I'd better stop in 5♠, the agreed suit!

(7) Why on earth has partner bid 5♠? We have agreed clubs! I hope my ace is worth something!

(8) Why on earth has partner bid 6♣? Something is very wrong here! Let's just try hearts!

(9) Now why has partner returned to hearts, my original suit? Ah, well, I've got to stop here – there's nowhere else to go!

After a club lead, the Pig Trader set up the spades and was the only player to make all 13 tricks!

## THE PIG TRADER VISITS BANBURY

(From Sheffield Bridge Club Newsletter No 72, June 1993)

The Pig Trader found himself playing in the Oxfordshire Simultaneous Pairs at Banbury Bridge Club last month. This was Board 8.

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

It was Love All, the Pig Trader was West and dealer, and his partner, Charlie Mead in the East seat, after two passes, opened 1NT, showing 10 to 14 points in this seat at this vulnerability.

South couldn't find a bid and the Pig Trader made a rather silly attempt to find a 4-4 major fit by bidding Stayman. He was, of course, rather disappointed by the 2♦ response, which he left, hoping that his partner didn't hold a 3325 shape.

"Suppose I've got a 3325 shape?" asked Charlie Mead when dummy went down!

South had led a heart, Charlie Mead played low from dummy, and ended up with just a club ruff in dummy and two top trumps for 5 off and minus 250.

It was a Top, of course!

## THE 30 POINT SQUEEZE

(From Sheffield Bridge Club Newsletter No 62, December 1990)

The Pig Trader recently had the honour of partnering the Busy Bee himself! This was the first board of the evening:

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

The Busy Bee, sitting North, opened 1♦ and East overcalled 1♥. The Pig Trader, sitting South considered his intermediates, or rather his lack of them, and underbid with a jump to 3NT, which became the final contract.

As West led a heart, the Busy Bee busily placed his hand commenting that he had wondered about a slam. "Oh dear" thought the Pig Trader, but then he realised that although he had eleven tricks on top, a twelfth trick looked distinctly against the odds.

Either he could play on spades hoping that East held both ♠K and ♠Q, nominally 25% but improved by the overcall, or play for a 3-3 club break, this being about 36%.

The Pig Trader took the first heart trick, ducked a club and took the heart return, discarding a spade from dummy. He cashed ♠A followed by six diamonds, discarding ♥8 and ♠J2 from his hand. Poor West was squeezed in the black suits, having to discard in this position:

	♠ 10	
	♥ --	
	♦ --	
	♣ K 8	
♠ K		♠ (Immaterial)
♥ --		♥
♦ --		♦
♣ J 10 9		♣
	♠ --	
	♥ --	
	♦ --	
	♣ A 7 6	

West had to keep ♠K lest ♠10 in dummy became a winner, so he threw ♣9 allowing the Pig Trader to take the last three tricks with ♣K, ♣A and ♣7.

The Pig Trader had actually increased his odds to about 50%. Although 6♦ has more chances than 6NT and is not too bad a contract, it can be defeated by a spade lead from East. Otherwise, any slam, on the lie of the cards, can only be made via the squeeze, a Vienna Coup.

As it was a Tuesday evening at Sheffield BC, the Pig Trader's efforts gained him just 30 points on the aggregate scoring!

THE PIG TRADER WAS SITTING QUIETLY.....

(From Sheffield Bridge Club Newsletter No 68, June 1992. The board was played on a Tuesday evening when Aggregate Scored pairs is played.)

It was at the end of the evening when I heard someone mutter "Curious hand!" I thought it was an owl, but I turned round and saw that it was the Pig Trader, sitting quietly in a corner, with Board 15 laid out:

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

What was curious about the board was that although the Pig Trader, like all the other Norths who were on lead against 3NT, led a small heart and therefore the defence took the first 5 tricks, there were several Wests at other tables who were in 6NT, all but one of whom made their contract when North must have eschewed a heart lead. And at the table where 6NT failed, declarer still made 11 tricks! 4♠, 5♠ and 6♠ also made!

## THE PIG TRADER PICKS UP A COUPLE OF STRONG HANDS

(From Sheffield Bridge Club Newsletter No 64, May 1991)

It is always pleasing to pick up a strong hand of cards but at Match Pointed Pairs it is especially pleasing to score well with them. The Pig Trader was recently heard relating the stories of the two strongest hands he had ever held. The first occurred one Saturday evening at the club nearly three years ago.

♠	A K Q J 9
♥	A
♦	5
♣	A K Q J 10 8

Twelve playing tricks! As dealer, the Pig Trader opened 2♣ and Left Hand Opponent overcalled 2♦. By further enquiry, the Pig Trader could have discovered that partner held good club support, but he just checked that partner didn't hold the missing ace and bid 6♠! This proved to be as cold as 6♣ and the Pig Trader scored an outright Top!

More recently, the Pig Trader picked up the East hand on Board 22 of the Yorkshire Simultaneous Pairs on 21 June 1990:

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

Dealer East, EW Vulnerable.

W	N	E Pig Trader	S
		No!!!	No
No	1♥	2♥	3♥
No	No	4♥	No
5♦	No	6♣	No
No	No		

If the remaining black cards are divided evenly between the other three players, then the Pig Trader has 13 playing tricks!

The Pig Trader considered opening 2♣, 6♣ or 7♣, but settled for passing, which, he reckoned, would give him the best chance of assessing the lie of the cards and for being doubled in his final contract! Luckily for him, North managed to find an opening bid, and this gave the Pig Trader a chance to use a Michaels Cue Bid to show Spades and a Minor. He repeated the Cue Bid at the 4-level, much to the chagrin of his long-suffering partner, and the 5♦ response discouraged him from bidding a Grand Slam, a lucky stop on the lie of the cards. (4NT – asking which Minor – is a better response from West than 5♦, but then the Pig Trader would have bid 7♣.)

Only one East managed to get doubled and score better. Curiously, not many Easts reached as high as 6♣. And, as it happens, 6♠ is unbeatable!



## THE PIG TRADER PICKS UP A COUPLE OF POINTS

(From Sheffield Bridge Club Newsletter No 67, March 1992. The board was originally played at Sheffield University Bridge Club in 1982, and reported in the newsletter of that club. The board is the earliest board that I have played of which I can still recall any details.)

The Pig Trader was sitting South at Game All when he picked up:

♠	--
♥	J 9 8 7 5 4 3 2
♦	--
♣	J 8 7 5 3

He was more interested in his two voids than his two points! North had dealt and he opened 1♦ and East bid 2♣. At this point, West asked the Pig Trader the meaning of the 1♦ opening bid, and the Pig Trader told him that it was natural.

The Pig Trader suspected that West made the enquiry because he had long diamonds himself and thought that North's opening may have been artificial. It seemed that the Phantom Goulasher had dealt everyone a two-suiter. North and West had the diamonds, he and East had the clubs. Who had the spades and hearts? He passed to observe developments. West jumped to 3♠, North passed and East jumped to 5♠! This was looking good!

The Pig Trader waded in with 6♥. West bid 6♠, and with North and East passing, his next bid of 7♥ was marked! This was immediately doubled!

Dummy had everything: a void in clubs and all the remaining trumps, and remarkably had not seen fit to bid 7♥ himself!

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

The ♦A was superfluous when the Pig Trader could simply cross-ruff all 13 tricks!

## THE PIG TRADER GOES FOR OVERTRICKS

From Sheffield Bridge Club Newsletter No 65, September 1991. The board was played at Chasetown Bridge Club in Staffordshire.)

The Pig Trader was playing a Pairs session with Charlie Mead one evening when he found himself playing in 1NT after he had opened 1♦ and received a 1♥ response:

♠ 10 8 6 5
♥ A J 10 9 4
♦ 10 4
♣ 9 5
Charlie Mead
Pig Trader
♠ A Q J
♥ Q 3
♦ A Q 8 6 2
♣ 7 4 3

West led a spade. Dummy went down and the Pig Trader could see that the contract stood a reasonable chance of making. Of course, if East held ♥K and held it up on the first round, there could be trouble....!

Anyway, East played the ♠K at Trick 1 and the Pig Trader took ♠A, ♠Q, ♠J and then ran ♥Q, which held. ♥3 was covered by ♥K and ♥A and Dummy's major suits were cashed.

It turned out that West had started with four hearts so her play of the ♥K was ill-advised, to say the least. Still, the Pig Trader, who was going for maximum overtricks, not to mention any opportunity to show off, was busy counting the discards. East threw two diamonds and two clubs and West threw one diamond. The Pig Trader could have settled quite nicely now for cashing ♦A for ten tricks, but, reckoning West to have started with a 4-4-2-3 shape, and, by the diamond discard, not holding ♦K, he finessed ♦Q, cashed ♦A, felling East's ♦K, and claimed two more master diamonds for 13 tricks!

It wasn't quite a Top.....

## GRAND BIDDING BY THE PIG TRADER ?

(From Sheffield Bridge Club Newsletter No 68, June 1992)

♠ A K 8 5
♥ K 6 4
♦ A K 9 2
♣ 8 4
Charlie Mead
Pig Trader
♠ 9 6 2
♥ --
♦ 8 4
♣ A K Q J 10 7 3 2

It was no secret that the Pig Trader was the only person to bid and make a Grand slam on this board from the May Day Swiss Pairs. But it was only when I probed him further that I discovered that he hadn't a clue what he was doing half the time! His partner, Charlie Mead, had opened 1♠ and, over his 2♣ response, he heard a 3NT rebid.

The Pig Trader and Charlie Mead were armed to the teeth with gadgets! Multi, Mini NT, Intro, Lebensohl, ASPIRIN, Unexploded Cue Bids, Terry Wogan Raises, East Ender Control Bids, you name it! But the Pig Trader couldn't remember how to ask for aces!

He bid 4♣, not knowing whether it was natural and forcing, or ace asking. Charlie Mead replied 4♦. This could not be 0 or 4 aces so had to be a cue bid! (This was also confirmed by the lack of an alert by Charlie Mead, but this unauthorised information was unnecessary!) The 4♦ bid did show that partner's values were in the right places, so he bid 4NT. This had to be for aces! Charlie Mead alerted and bid 5NT! The Pig Trader had completely forgotten that they were playing Roman Blackwood! Still, it usefully pin-pointed partner's aces! But the bidding had reached a level where asking for Kings was out of the question, that is, if the Pig Trader could remember how to do it! He bid 7♣.

When South led a small heart and dummy went down, the Pig Trader wished that he had settled for 6NT. But he played low from dummy and the Ace appeared. Having both ♥Q and ♥J, South should have led the Queen and deprived the Pig Trader of his glory!

THE PIG TRADER FAILS TO SCORE A BOTTOM!

(From Sheffield Bridge Club Newsletter No 65, September 1991)

The Pig Trader was East, dealer, vulnerable against not, for the last board on Thursday, 29 August.

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

At some tables, East opened 3♠. West was then generally left in peace to drift quietly two off in 5♣ for a good score. But if East failed to open, the board became a minefield, for South would open 3♦ and North, with his long majors, would double anything that West bid. Disaster was exacerbated if West made a take-out bid of South's 3♦. Such calamity befell the Pig Trader!

W	N	E	S
		No	3♦
3♥ (1)	Dbf	4♠	No
5♣	Dbf	5♠	No
6♥	Dbf	6♠	No
No (2)	Dbf	Rdbl (3)	No
No (4)	No		

- (1) Artificial take-out. (Double would have been for penalties)
- (2) In despair!
- (3) A pathetic attempt to intimidate the opposition when a Bottom appeared almost inevitable!
- (4) This is the last time I partner the Pig Trader!

6♠ Redoubled went five off for minus 2800.

However, -1400 would have saved some Match Points. One pair reached the ceiling in 7NT doubled going nine off for -2600!

But -2600 was still worth 4 Match Points! The booby prize went to the pair that ended up in 7♥ doubled and minus ten for -2900!

## LUCY AND THE BEAST

(From Sheffield Bridge Club Newsletter No 63, March 1991. The board was played at Trowbridge Bridge Club in Wiltshire two years earlier.)

One evening, the Pig Trader was trying to impress his partner, an attractive, young Oxbridge student called Lucy. Half way through the evening, he picked up this hand and, after three passes came round to him, he cursed inwardly.

♠	7 2
♥	Q J 9 8 5 4
♦	Q J 10 5
♣	7

He cursed because someone had passed with 12 High Card Points. He reckoned that Lucy would not have done this, so he postulated that at other tables, East West would open the bidding, reach a contract and go down on the bad breaks. Arguable? So, thinking that if he passed the hand out, it would be a bad board, and unable to open a Weak Two or Multi, he opened 1♥.

West, on his left, bid 2♣, Lucy 2NT and East doubled. Oh dear! The Pig Trader bid 3♥, passed round to East who again doubled. A Bottom appeared inevitable! He redoubled in a frantic attempt to intimidate the opposition, but they were having none of it! A club was led and dummy went down :

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

West had actually underled ♣A, and also held ♦K, so although East held ♥AK73, the Pig Trader emerged with an overtrick, +960 and an unbeatable Top and smelling of roses!

## THE BUXTON CONGRESS

(From Sheffield Bridge Club Newsletter No 67, March 1992.)

The Pig Trader did not write home about his 117<sup>th</sup> place in the Swiss Pairs at the BBL Congress at Buxton, but was heard pontificating about how you should never concede anything except a boss trump when playing Pairs

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

On Board 16, he was South in 3NT, having shown a strong hand, and West led a diamond. The Pig Trader took this and two top spades, all following.

At this point, many of us might have taken our eleven top tricks and conceded two top clubs. Not the Pig Trader! He attacked clubs immediately! Someone took the trick and he won the heart return. He led another club and this time it held. He scored an outright Top!

Goodness knows what the opponents were thinking of, but it goes to show that even if you have only half an inch of rope to give them, it may be enough!

## THE CONTINUING ADVENTURES OF THE PIG TRADER

(From Sheffield Bridge Club Newsletter No 68, June 1992.)

Board 3, last board of the last round at Table 3 on Saturday, 25 April 1992, and the Pig Trader was installed in the North seat.

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

With EW vulnerable, the bidding proceeded:

W	N Pig Trader	E	S
			No
1♦	No	4♥	No
4NT	No	5♦	No
5NT	No	5♦	No
6NT	Dbl	No	No
No			

There's no misprint. East did bid 5♦ twice! This was in the days before bidding boxes! By the time the Pig Trader noticed it, his partner who, with her hand had virtually packed up for the evening, had already mead the fourth of her five passes! Anyway, that was irrelevant!

The Pig Trader felt on top of the board right from West's opening bid, but his final double was lousy to say the least. At Match Pointed Pairs, if the opponents have bid to the wrong contract, then you should get a good enough score without the need to double. And if the opponents have the distribution to make the contract, your double may turn a Middle into a Bottom. Your double may also remove the element of surprise and allow declarer to make a contract in which he would otherwise have gone off, as we shall see.

The Pig Trader, too, appeared to have second thoughts about his double as he consulted the ceiling for a consensus on his opening lead. At least he had realised the danger of any diamond lead, which would have handed the contract on a plate. He led ♠3.

West has eleven tricks on top. In the normal way, West might have tried the double finesse in clubs to try to make a twelfth, and failed. But the Pig Trader, for his double, must hold at least the missing kings and queen. If ♣10 lost to ♣J, West would have been alerted by the Double to squeeze the Pig Trader in the black suits via a Vienna Coup, rather than to try the club finesse again. Unfortunately, West was not up to it and tried squeezing the Pig Trader without first trying the club finesse to rectify the count (or, in the event, to set up ♣Q), and so the Pig Trader lived to tell the tale!

ROY CRAB-JETS AND THE PIG TRADER

(From Sheffield Bridge Club Newsletter No 69, September 1992.)

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

It was Thursday, 6 August. I was sitting West and held some interesting hands. When I saw that the Pig Trader was also sitting West, I was sure that he would have a tale of glory for me!

This was his last Board. South had dealt and opened 1NT and the Pig Trader's overcall of 4♥ ended the auction. I frivolously ventured to enquire if this was Canape, but the Pig Trader ignored me and continued to describe the play.

A spade was led to the Ace, and ♦Q returned, taken by ♦A. Then dummy was entered with ♦8 for a trump finesse.....

At this point, I interrupted the Pig Trader. Surely North would have taken ♦K and given his partner a diamond ruff?

"Hardly likely", replied the Pig Trader, who asserted that North's reasoning must be that South could not hold a doubleton for that would mean that the Pig Trader held six, so South must hold ♦J to take the trick and be able to lead a club through.

So, on the trump finesse, South split her honours, the trick was taken with ♥A, a diamond was ruffed with ♥9 and South over-ruffed, and the Pig Trader claimed a vital overtrick for an unequalled Top!



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

Five days later, it was Tuesday, the Aggregate scored Pairs evening. This was Board 20, with dealer West at Game All.

I opened 4♥, passed round to South, who bid 5♣, doubled by my partner for three off and 800, the Aggregate limit.

At the end of the evening, Roy Crab-jets came over and showed me his scorecard. He was West and had let South play in 3NT undoubled. He led a small heart and after nine red tricks, South had bared ♠K. This resulted in 3NT-8 for 800! It was the first time that I had ever seen a defender reach his Aggregate limit without doubling!

And hence the expression “It should only have gone six off!”

+++++

Roy Crab-jets is also responsible for the quotes:

“2♣ plus six, is that?”

and

“Where’s the “G” in your name? Is it Barrie ‘G’ Partridge?”

HOW TO MAKE 5♦ DOUBLED ON A TUESDAY

(From Sheffield Bridge Club Newsletter No 71, March 1993.)

It was Tuesday, 8 December, 1992. South was dealer with North-South vulnerable:

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

W	N	E	S
	Rainbow Princess		Pig Trader
			No
1♠	Dbl	2♣	2♦
3♥	No	4♥	5♦
Dbl	No	No	No

Whether West miscounted his high card points throughout the auction was not ascertained. The Rainbow Princess was a little taken back by the opening and was about to pass when she realised that her pause was long enough to give her partner possible ethical problems. Doubling seemed to her to be the best alternative. However, the Pig Trader had not been concentrating and was oblivious to all this and confidently reached 5♦ as the bidding by the opponents suggested that his partner had limited numbers of spades, hearts and clubs and therefore was marked with a decent number of diamonds!

After a heart lead, that Pig Trader decided that he would need a bit of luck and a bit of help! He took ♥A and finessed ♣Q and then cashed ♣A and led another club. West mistakenly did not ruff so the Pig Trader ruffed low, then ruffed a heart and then led another club. West ruffed with ♦A and led ♦J! This went to ♦Q and ♦K and the Pig Trader was soon claiming the rest for +750 in the Aggregate scoring.

But the Pig Trader was overshadowed 14 weeks later by this effort. It was Tuesday, 16 March 1993 and, again, South dealt, with North-South vulnerable:

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

W	N	E	S
Boars in Devon	White Lamb Owner		Black Horse Owner
No	2♣	No	2♦
4♣	4♦	No	4♠
No	5♦	No	No
Dbf	No	No	No

Boars In Devon, the White Lamb Owner and the Black Horse Owner are all, of course, among the Pig Trader's regular partners.

West's double was intended as Lightner, to ask for an unusual lead against 5♦. In this case, he was hoping that his partner would lead a heart for him to ruff. This gambit was to fall at the first hurdle as it was South who had first bid diamonds and so it was not East's opening lead!

The other thing that emerged at the end of the auction was that North had mis-sorted her hand and her "diamond suit" contained two intruders. She apologised profusely as she put down the dummy. The correct full deal was:

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

West led ♣A and this was ruffed in dummy. After three rounds of trumps, South cast off with a low heart taken by East, who returned a spade. This was covered by ♠Q and West, in another rare off-moment, made the fatal mistake of covering. South now had more than enough side-suit winners with adequate entries to claim the rest of the tricks for an overtrick and a score of +950.

## A GRAND SLAM FORCE WITH SIX POINTS !

(From Sheffield Bridge Club Newsletter No 76, June 1994. This board was played at Wolverhampton Bridge Club)

Pig Trader
♠ A 10 9 7 6 4 3
♥ Q 6 5 3
♦ 4
♣ 8
♠ Q
♥ A K J 10 9
♦ K Q J 3
♣ A 10 3
Charlie Mead

Charlie Mead and the Pig Trader were looking pleased with themselves at the end of the evening's play. On the last board, Charlie had overbid once, psyched twice and the Pig Trader had used the Grand Slam Force with just six High Card Points and yet they still reached the best contract that few pairs had reached!

At Game All, Charlie Mead dealt and opened 2♥. He claimed that he had 20 HCP, but I still reckon that to be a bit of an over-bid, even though the Pig Trader insisted that he would have counted eight playing tricks!

Now the Pig Trader, with his six-count, was already wondering whether 6 or 7 would be the final level! He bid 3♥ and, after cue bids of 4♣ and 4♠, Charlie Mead, knowing that there was a diamond loser, could have bid 6♥ straight away.

But he decided on an exercise of gratuitous gadgetry by falsely cue-bidding 5♦. He knew that the Pig Trader would have to employ Grand Slam Force before going for the Grand Slam and, sure enough, 5NT came back to him. All he had to do was lie again by bidding 6♥ showing just one of the top three heart honours. I would have liked to have seen the Pig Trader's face when Charlie lost an early trick to ♦A which he should have held! Still, if all this gadgetry makes them happy.....!

## THE PIG TRADER PASSES JUDGEMENT

(From Sheffield Bridge Club Newsletter No 74, December 1993.)

Has your partner ever done something that you would not have done, and as a result, you achieved a better score than if you and your partner had been sitting the other way round?

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

On Friday, 22 October 1993, I was playing East and my partner, John Waller, West, except that Board 18 was the wrong way round on the table, and so I was West and John East. It made a considerable difference.

With North South Vulnerable, John dealt and opened the East hand with 1♣, and I bid 1♦. If I had held the East cards, I would now have bid 1♠ and soon played in 4♠ and done well to make for an average score. But John decided to ignore his spade suit and bid 2♣. This provoked 3NT from me. (I was going to be declarer whichever way we had sat!)

3S was led to ♠Q and ♠K and I could see eleven probable tricks and a good score. But when in with ♣A at Trick 2, North could not see better than to lead 6♠, which went to my ♠7. My eleven tricks were secure and I looked greedily for a twelfth. I saw a three card ending, a form of double squeeze. I cashed the ♦A, ran the ♠10 through ♠J to ♠A and ran the clubs to produce this ending with just the last club to play:

♠ --	♠ 8
♥ A K 3	♥ J
♦ 10	♦ J
♣ --	♣ 7

On the lead of ♣7, I could throw ♦10, but South had to throw a heart to prevent ♦J becoming a winner and North had to throw a heart to prevent ♠8 from becoming a winner. So I took the last three tricks in my hand with ♥A, ♥K and ♥3. I curtailed my opponents' post-mortem by assuring them that for once, I had got something right and that there was nothing that they could have done.

Later on, I got my come-uppance from the Pig Trader. "You idiot!" he exclaimed. "Setting up the squeeze was alright, but it didn't have to work, you know. What were North's last three cards? Think about it!"

"Er, well" I stuttered, "Now you mention it, North ran out of hearts. I think she had ♠9 and ♦Q7".

"Precisely!" replied the Pig Trader. "She had got it right! It meant that South could afford to throw ♦K and keep the hearts. You were wrong to tell South that he couldn't have done anything about it! Of course, it's not that obvious, having to discard first, but if you, as declarer, had ♦Q, as well as ♠A and with ♦J on the table, might you not have played a finesse?"

## THE PIG TRADER AND 2♣ DOUBLED

(From Sheffield Bridge Club Newsletter No 76, June 1994. The boards were played at Wolverhampton Bridge Club.)

“Played in any good 2♣ doubled contracts recently?” asked Dave Robinson by way of greeting me as I walked into the bar. This was a cruel reference to a series of more hands than I care to admit that happened a year ago.

“No” I replied, “but the Pig Trader has.” And I produced a scrap of paper from my pocket that the Pig Trader had given to me for the newsletter.

Suppose the bidding goes 1NT on your left, 2♣ from partner showing the majors, and double on your right, would you have any partnership understanding about whether Pass shows clubs or equal preference in the majors? And what would a Redouble mean?

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

Dealer North, East West vulnerable.

W	N	E	S
	Charlie Mead		The Pig Trader
	1NT (1)	2♣ (2)	Double
No	No	No	

(1) 10-12 Mini NT

(2) At least 5-4 in the majors (Landy)

The Pig Trader, who was wondering how he might be able to investigate the possibility of a contract of 6♦, suddenly found himself on lead against 2♣ doubled!

He started off with ♣A and ♣K and, misreading partner’s signal, continued with ♣Q. This meant that Charlie could no longer ruff the fourth diamond to ensure five off for 1400.

How should the Pig Trader play the diamonds now?

He could place Charlie Mead with ♦Kxx on the bidding. If he led the ♦10, or the ♦A followed by the ♦10, and declarer ducked the ♦J, how would Charlie Mead know that it would be wrong to play the ♦K? The best way for the Pig Trader to show partner that he had ♦Q was to lead ♦Q before leading ♦10! Now when declarer ducked, Charlie Mead knew not to cover. Finally, the Pig Trader led ♦3, asking for a heart return, though Declarer was now five off again anyway.

The Pig Trader manoeuvred into another 2♣ doubled contract later on:

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

Charlie Mead was again North and opened 1♥ as dealer with East West vulnerable. East passed and the Pig Trader passed too, hoping that West would re-open. West did indeed decide to re-open and unfortunately chose to do so with a bid of 2♣. Charlie Mead doubled for take-out, but no one did take out! This produced a score of around 1100 on a part-score hand!

THE PIG TRADER IGNORES A TWELVE CARD FIT !

(From Sheffield Bridge Club Newsletter No 78, December 1994. The deals were played at Wolverhampton Bridge Club)

Charlie Mead and the Pig Trader held a 12 card diamond fit on this board from a recent Match Pointed Pairs event, and, as can be seen, 5♦, being one off, is an excellent save against 4♠ by North-South.

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

But our heroes had other ideas! It was Love All, with dealer South:

W	N	E	S
Charlie Mead		The Pig Trader	
			No
1♦	1♠	Double	2♠
3NT	No	No	No

The Pig Trader's double was Negative. If North could have found a small heart lead, Charlie Mead could have lost the first eight tricks, but a spade was led and instead he took the first twelve tricks.



Later on, this deal came up:

♠ Q J
♥ K 3
♦ A 7 6 4
♣ K 10 8 5 4
Charlie Mead (North)
The Pig Trader (South)
♠ A
♥ A Q 8 7 5
♦ K 2
♣ A Q J 9 6

7♣ is an excellent almost lay-down contract, but no one reached it, not even our intrepid pair. A small slam was reached only at two tables. 6♣+1 at one table. And the other table? Well, Charlie Mead and the Pig Trader were continuing to ignore their big minor suit fits! The Pig Trader opened 2♥, strong and forcing as per Basic Acol, and well justified by the playing strength of his hand.

If Charlie Mead had now responded 3♣, they may have reached 7♣, but Charlie could see no reason not to agree hearts and after much cue bidding and no mention of a club suit, Charlie bid 6♥, only to be doubled by East.

A diamond was led and taken in hand. The Pig Trader led a trump to the ♥K and noted West's play of ♥10. East's Double had emphasised the need for the safety play of finessing the ♥7, and when this held, West showing out, the slam was safe, losing just one trump trick. (East would have done no better to split his ♥J9.) Another outright Top! The moral: Never double the opponents when the Double may enable them to make the contract.

THE 21 POINT SLAM MISSING THREE ACES !

(From Sheffield Bridge Club Newsletter No 73, September 1993)

	Boars In Devon		
	♠	J 10 8 6 2	
	♥	A Q 8 3	
	♦	K J 7 5	
	♣	--	
♠	7 4 3		♠ A 9 5
♥	9 4		♥ 6
♦	A Q 4 3		♦ 10 9 8 6
♣	K Q 7 2		♣ A 9 8 5 3
	♠	K Q	
	♥	K J 10 7 5 2	
	♦	2	
	♣	J 10 6 4	
		The Pig Trader	

It was the British Bridge League Summer Congress at Buxton in 1993. The Pig Trader was playing with his major supplier, Boars In Devon, in the Swiss Teams, when the above deal turned up. North-South were vulnerable and West, as dealer, passed. Boars In Devon opened 1♠ and the Pig Trader responded 2♥. Spurred on by his void in clubs, Boars In Devon jumped to 4♥. The Pig Trader considered that he had some shape and that his values seemed to be in the right places, so he bid 4NT, Blackwood, which does not appear to be the best thing to do on this hand! Boars In Devon responded 5♦, which is what the Pig Trader did not want to hear! He retreated to 5♥, but was raised to 6♥ by Boars In Devon who judged that the Pig Trader's presumed one missing ace was not ♣A!

♦A was led and the Pig Trader surveyed the scene. Slam with only 21 points and missing three aces! But West then made the mistake of continuing with a small diamond, presumably attempting to force the Pig Trader into some premature decision about that suit. But the Pig Trader saw a ray of hope! He played ♦J, which held, and he discarded ♠Q. He cashed ♦K and discarded ♠K. The rest was now easy. The Pig Trader set up the spade suit, though it appears that playing a total cross-ruff is even safer. The 11 IMPs gained swung the match in their favour!

## THE PIG TRADER TAKES STOCK AT TRICK TWO!

(From Sheffield Bridge Club Newsletter No 79, March 1995. This board was played at Wolverhampton Bridge Club.)

The Pig Trader, playing with Charlie Mead, was dealer at Game All and he soon found himself in slam after the elegant unopposed sequence of 1♥, 4♥, 6♥.

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

Fortunately for the Pig Trader, West led his spade. This was covered by ♠Q and ♠A, and ♠K was returned. East was hoping to catch the Pig Trader napping!

But the Pig Trader was busy taking stock! Having reached an excellent contract, he decided that it would behove him to ensure its success. He counted four minor winners so he would need to make eight trumps unless he could set up the spades. And setting up the spades did not seem a good proposition as the lead appeared to be singleton or from doubleton ♠64.

So, he would have to ruff three spades before taking out trumps. He could afford to use his three highest trumps (♠A97) for ruffing, but the sequence may have been critical. Ruffing high immediately, though it would have worked here, would lose if West had a doubleton spade and ♥8. Thus ♥7 would have to be finessed immediately. This would only lose if West had a singleton spade and ♥8.

So, at Trick 3, the Pig Trader led ♥3 to ♥10 and was relieved that trumps had not broken 4-0. Then the Pig Trader proceeded with a spade ruff with ♥9, ♣A cashed, a club ruffed with ♥5 (fortunately, it was not this minor that had broken 7-1), a spade ruff with ♥A, another club ruff, finishing with two top trumps and three top diamonds!

The Pig Trader did admit that he was lucky with the opening lead and continuation. One declarer even went off in the contract of 4♥!

## THE PIG TRADER AT THE NATIONAL PAIRS

(From Sheffield Bridge Club Newsletter No 79, March 1995. These boards were played at  
Wolverhampton Bridge Club.)

### PROLOGUE

You hold the hand below at favourable vulnerability, and after two passes, you open 3♣, after sneaking a glance at your opponents' Convention Card and making sure that the opponents are not playing penalty doubles!

♠	--
♥	J 10 9 5
♦	Q 10 4
♣	J 9 7 5 4 2

LHO bids 3♥ and your heart sinks when partner bids 3♠. It rises again when RHO bids 4♥, but then it is passed round to partner who bids 4♠, doubled by RHO.

- (1) How much carnage is about to ensue?
- (2) How quickly can you find a new partner?

+   +   +   +   +   +   +   +

Charlie Mead and the Pig Trader went off to play in the qualifying round of the National Pairs. Sitting North and South at Table One, the movement being a Mitchell, they played the boards in numerical order.

Two well-known opponents arrived with Board 4. At Game All, West passed and Charlie Mead opened 1♥, and East made what appears to be a very sound overcall of 1♠.

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

Playing Negative Doubles, the Pig Trader had to find an alternative bid. 3NT seemed the obvious destination, but he was confident that if he passed, then Charlie Mead would re-open the bidding. Sure enough, Charlie Mead, despite his meagre eleven points, found a re-opening double.

W	N	E	S
Paul Hackett	Charlie Mead	Brian Cornelius	Pig Trader
No	1♥	1♠	No
No	Dbf	No	No
No			

I suppose it goes to show that you need not lose anything by playing Negative Doubles. They carefully took 1♠ Doubled three off for 800, beating the 660 score already on the traveller.

Nearly two hours later, Board 19 arrived on the table:

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

The Pig Trader, still in the South seat, looked at his cards and decided that he most likely wanted to play in 4♠ Doubled. So, having read too many Zia Mahmood books, he started by passing! West passed. Charlie Mead looked ruefully at his hand, then at the vulnerability and saw that they were not vulnerable against vulnerable, then a glance at his opponents' Convention Card to check that they were not playing Penalty Doubles over pre-empts, and then he opened 3♣.

East overcalled 3♥ and the Pig Trader dredged up the 3♠ card onto the table. West bid 4H and this was passed round to the Pig Trader who, at last, produced the 4♠ card.

West doubled and the Pig Trader was delighted to see partner's diamonds. With the nasty trump break, 4♠ only just made.

The Pig Trader was disappointed to see a rake of +590 scores on the traveller. On the actual layout, he probably could have just opened 4♠ and ended up doubled! And, of course, some pair had been allowed to play and make 6♦ Doubled!

## THE RETURN OF THE PIG TRADER

(From Sheffield Bridge Club Newsletter No 82, December 1995.)

These deals were played at the club on Thursday, 14 September, 1995. As I wandered in at the end of the evening, I was stopped by one of our better players, Ali Jaws, who presented these North-South hands to me:

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

W	N	E	S
			Ali Jaws
			1♣
3♦	Dbl	No	3♠
No	4♠	No	No
No			

Ali Jaws then asked me how I would play the hand on a ♥2 lead.

“Well, I suppose West could be 2-1-8-2 shaped, so to avoid a heart ruff at Trick 2, I go up with the ♥A and it’s a matter of playing trumps.....”

“Exactly what I thought” said Ali Jaws, “and I was the only person in the whole room to go off. West had:

♠ Q102 ♥ K42 ♦ AQJ9865 ♣ --“

“And he led ♥2 from that?” I asked. “Who was it?”

“It was the Pig Trader!” replied Ali Jaws.

So the Pig Trader was back!

Before I could turn to make my escape, a hand fell on my shoulder and the Pig Trader was asking me how I would make 4♠ on this deal after West leads a heart through the ♥Q to the ♥K and East returns a diamond to West's ♦A and another heart comes back.

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

“What about the bidding?” I asked.

“I’m glad you asked!” said the Pig Trader. “West opened 1♦, Partner doubled and raised our 1♠ to 4♠.”

“Your partner was ambitious” I observed.

“Not at all!” replied the Pig Trader. “I was wanting to impress this attractive young lady and I so told her to add four points to her hand if I was going to be playing the contract. I’d have raised 3♠ to 4♠ anyway. So, you’re at Trick 3....”

“What will happen when you lead ♦J?” I asked.

“West will cover with ♦Q and he still has ♦10”

“So I’ve lost two tricks in the red suits and there are still two clubs to lose” I thought aloud.

“You’re too slow!” interrupted the Pig Trader! “I’ve already made the contract!” The Pig Trader was becoming as insufferable as Victor Mollo’s character, the Hideous Hog! The Pig Trader had taken ♥A at Trick 3, taken trumps out in two rounds, ruffed a heart, led ♦J to ♦K, ruffed the last diamond, cashed ♣A and given away a round of clubs. West had started with the doubleton ♣KQ and was now end-played, having only red cards to lead for a ruff and discard. A classic Elimination and Throw-In!

“So, did you impress the young lady with this display?” I asked.

“Unfortunately not” conceded the Pig Trader. “She had gone downstairs to make a phone call at the time!”

## THE PIG TRADER AND SOME "BEAUTIFUL" BIDDING !

(From Sheffield Bridge Club Newsletter No 83, March 1996. This board was played at Wolverhampton Bridge Club.)

In his book, Jon Drabble describes some of his Midmac sequences as "beautiful". The other day, the Pig Trader and Charlie Mead, who had both read the book, suggested that you can still have some "beautiful" sequences playing very standard Acol! They played both these boards in the final round of a high standard pairs event.

♠ K 5
♥ J 10 9 2
♦ K 6 3
♣ Q 10 8 7
Charlie Mead
The Pig Trader
♠ Q
♥ A K 8
♦ A Q J
♣ A K 9 6 3 2

The Pig Trader dealt and opened 2♣. Charlie Mead looked at his intermediates and upgraded his hand by one High Card Point. His hand was thus ideal for a very descriptive response of 3NT. The Pig Trader could thus reckon that his partner had both missing kings and possibly both missing queens and, seeing no point in mentioning his long suit, went straight for 6NT. Standard Acol, yet no one else progressed beyond 6♣!

Pig Trader	Charlie Mead
2♣	3NT
6NT	No



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

At Love All, after two passes, the Pig Trader, in the South seat, opened 1♦, which went round to Charlie Mead, who responded 1♠. Having a partial spade fit, The Pig Trader thus upgraded his hand to reverse into 2♥. After a Fourth Suit enquiry brought a bid of 3♦, Charlie Mead took a look at his controls and bid 3♥. The Pig Trader suspected a Moysian (4-3) fit, but also decided that his values were well placed and thus he raised to game.

W	N	E	S
	Charlie Mead		The Pig Trader
	No	No	1♦
No	1♠	No	2♥
No	3♣	No	3♦
No	3♥	No	4♥
No	No	No	

West led a spade and the Pig Trader was careful enough to take this in Dummy to preserve his entries to hand. Then followed a diamond to ♦A, a diamond ruff, a spade to ♠K, another diamond ruff, a trump to ♥A, ♥K cashed, and a diamond was ruffed by West, who returned a club to ♣A.

Now a club could be ruffed and diamonds continued till West ruffed, but the Pig Trader retained control with his last trump. Plus one!

Having been spared a trump lead and finding diamonds 3-3, the Pig Trader took his opportunity to score an outright Top!

## PENNY AND THE PIG TRADER

(From Sheffield Bridge Club Newsletter No 76, June 1994. This board was played at Wolverhampton Bridge Club.)

While working in the Black Country, I have been playing with ex-Sheffields, Mike Read, at Wolverhampton BC on Tuesday evenings, their highest standard session of the week. One day recently, the Pig Trader was visiting so, knowing his male chauvinistic tendencies, I arranged for him to partner an attractive young lady called Penny. With luck, he would do his best to impress her and I might get a good story. I was not to be disappointed!

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

With North-South Vulnerable, West opened 1♣, possibly as short as three, and after two passes, the Pig Trader bid 1♦. West bid 2♣ which Penny doubled.

The Pig Trader thought “Ah! Penny has an original Penalty Pass hand!” And with that, he punted into his favourite contract of 3NT!

W	N	E	S
	Penny		The Pig Trader
1♣	No	No	1♦
2♣	Dbl	No	3NT
No	No	No	

West led ♥A and the Pig Trader must have been a little disappointed with Penny’s minimum hand. Never mind! ♥A was followed with ♥K and ♥J. Taking ♥Q and discarding a spade, the Pig Trader could now cash out the diamonds for one off.

One off?

Not good enough for the Pig Trader!

To impress the girl, he was going to have to make this 18-point 3NT contract. His best chance was to risk going four off! He cashed ♦A and then ♦K. Fortunately all followed so that neither defender could signal for a spade. The Pig Trader now led ♣10 and held his breath.

♣10 held! The Pig Trader cashed out his diamonds for the contract!

What would you have done as West?

So what happened to Penny and the Pig Trader?

Well, when I went over to them at the end of the evening, they were arguing about their last deal on which the Pig Trader obviously shouldn’t have converted Penny’s 6♣ to 6NT.....

THE PIG TRADER PLAYS A 5-1 FIT!

(From Sheffield Bridge Club Newsletter No 87, March 1997.)

Thursday, 5 December 1996, Board 2, North-South Vulnerable, Dealer East.

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

The Pig Trader was sitting East when, after two passes, his partner opened 2NT. Playing Baron and Flint, the Pig Trader optimistically tried 3♣. The 3♦ response was of little help. He persevered with 3♥ to be greeted with 3NT. All the Pig Trader knew was that partner had 4+ diamonds and no four card major. He plumped for a bid of 4♥!

South led ♦9 and the Pig Trader received sight of the dummy! Just his luck, he thought, to find a 5-1 heart fit and miss a 5-5 club fit!

The club slam is safe by setting up a second heart pitching ♦J and ♦4 from dummy, but no one had bid it and all those in the club game just made 11 tricks, presumably by playing on diamonds.

Anyway, the Pig Trader in 4♥ took the first trick with ♦A and unblocked ♥A. Trump control was not going to be easy as he had precious few trumps to ruff spades and to draw trumps. Undaunted, he ruffed ♠6 to lead ♥Q taken by North and the Pig Trader waited for the killing spade return.

But ♣J appeared! The Pig Trader saw a ray of hope if that was a singleton and if North also held the long trump. ♣J was run to ♣A and the Pig Trader led ♣K. North took the bait and ruffed.

Now North had nothing better to lead than ♥10, which went to ♥J, ♥9 and a spade discard. Trumps had been drawn and the Pig Trader still had one left so that after cashing ♣10, ♣9 and ♣8, he could afford the losing finesse of ♦Q at Trick 11 and still claim a trump and a top diamond for +620. This was a very good score, beaten only by a small number of pairs, not in 6♣, but somehow making an overtrick in 3NT..... !

# THE PIG TRADER, THE BLACK SUITS AND THE BLACK HORSE !

(From Sheffield Bridge Club Newsletter No 84, June 1996.)

Thursday, 4 March, 1993, Board 24, Love All, Dealer East

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

West opened 1♥, third in hand. This kept the Black Horse Owner quiet in the North seat. East responded 2♦ and the Pig Trader, never one to underbid a hand with as many as two High Card Points, managed a cheap Michaels Cue Bid of 2♥, showing both black suits.

West switched into doubling mode. The Black Horse Owner passed to show equal disinterest in the black suits and possibly a tolerance for playing in 2♥ doubled. The Pig Trader took himself out into 2♠ and West pounced with another double. This was left in and when the Black Horse Owner commented that perhaps 2♥ doubled might have been better, the Pig Trader knew he was in Big Trouble!

W	N	E	S
	Black Horse Owner		Pig Trader
		No	No
1♥	No	2♦	2♥
Db1	No	No	2♠
Db1	No	No	No

The Pig Trader ruffed the ♥A lead and played a club to ♣K and ♣A. East needs now to find the killing diamond lead, but sadly led another heart. The Pig Trader discarded a diamond so West had to take with ♥K. The Pig Trader could soon discard another diamond on ♥Q and eventually he escaped for just two off and a score of -300, giving him yet another Top, as the other East West pairs made an easy 3NT.

## THE PIG TRADER CHOOSES THE MAJOR

(From Sheffield Bridge Club Newsletter No 87, March 1997. The deal was played at Wolverhampton Bridge Club)

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

Charlie Mead dealt and opened 1♥ on the East hand in a Match Pointed Pairs event. With silent opposition, the Pig Trader bid 2♦ and was surprised to hear his partner raise. The Pig Trader reasoned that if his partner held a reasonable heart suit, then 4♥ should be a reasonable contract and would score better than 5♦, which could even have three losers off the top!

4♥ was passed out, the Pig Trader little realising that his partner's trumps were not as wonderful as he may have wished!

South led ♠A and another to the ♠Q. There is now only one way that North or South can defeat the contract. (Can you spot it?) But North led a club to Charlie Mead's ♣A. Declarer now led a trump and South took the trick with the ♥A. Now it was South's turn to err, and he led a trump to the ♥K in dummy. Declarer led a club to hand and cashed the Jack of trumps, noting with relief the fall of the ♥10 from North! Now he could take out the last trump with the ♥9 and claim all the remaining tricks in diamonds for +420 and an outright Top, beating even one or two pairs who had not lost three tricks in 5♦.

So how could North or South have beaten the contract when they had the chance? They had to lead spades again and give declarer a ruff and discard! Declarer would have lost all control of trumps and the proverbial roof would have fallen in!

## THE PIG TRADER FINDS Mr RIGHT !

(From Sheffield Bridge Club Newsletter No 94, December 1998)

One day, the Pig Trader found Dickie A Right and asked "How about a game next Tuesday?" "OK" said Mr Right. With Mr Right's bidding being only marginally less manic than the Pig Trader's, I just had to kibitz! (Tuesday, 24 November 98, Aggregate Pairs.)

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

Before long came this board upon which the bidding proceeded with EW vulnerable:

W	N	E	S
Terron 1	Pig Trader	Terron 2	Mr Right
		No	No
1♥	No	2♥	2♠
3♥	4♠	No	No
Dbf	No	No	No

Somehow, with the Terrons leading clubs at every opportunity, Mr Right managed to throw one of dummy's hearts on the thirteenth diamond when they broke 3-3 with top honours split. Plus 590 when 5♥ was available the other way!

At the beginning of the evening, the Pig Trader had declared to Mr Right a penchant for playing in 4-3 fits. This might well have been a mistake, for Mr Right then proceeded to put the Pig Trader into a 4-3 trump fit at every opportunity!

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

Board 20, Game All, Dealer West.

W	N	E	S
Deb Luck	Pig Trader	Bun Terror	Mr Right
No	1♣	1♠	2♦
No	2♠	No	4♣
No	4♦	No	4♥
No	4♠	No	4NT
No	5♣	No	5♦
No	5♥	No	6♣
No	No	No	

The bidding requires a little explanation! After the Bun Terror's light overcall, Mr Right intended his 2♦ bid as non-forcing. The Pig Trader wasn't sure but wasn't concerned as he wasn't going to be passing. The 2♠ bid asked for help in spades for No Trumps and Mr Right attempted to make up for what he thought was lost ground by jumping to 4♣. The Pig Trader now indicated some diamond support, still looking for the best game and just in case Mr Right was having visions of leaving him in another 4-3 fit! Mr Right's 4♥ bid was alerted. The Pig Trader knew that it would not be natural but was it really showing a void? The Pig Trader cue-bid the ♠A and Mr Right attempted to give the Pig Trader the option of stopping in 4NT. The Pig Trader could not conceive that 4NT could be natural and duly alerted it. It had to be Blackwood! As they were playing Roman Key Card Blackwood, the Pig Trader was still in some difficulty as he did not know which suit had been agreed as trumps! Fortunately, it would not matter as he held neither King nor Queen of either minor! 5♣ showed 3 aces. Mr Right decided to correct the contract from 5♣ to 5♦ and the Pig Trader took this as asking for the Queen of whichever suit was meant to be trumps! 5♥ was intended to deny the Queen but Mr Right had to take this as "choose a slam"! He chose 6♣.

Once the Bun Terror failed to lead a spade (and indeed, Deb Luck should have supported spades to aid the lead), the hand was quickly over. The miraculous combination of the 3-3 club split with the Queen and Jack of Hearts both being onside meant that the Pig Trader could throw two spades on the diamonds. Worse was to come as the traveller was opened to reveal that at every other table, presumably after a sequence of 1♣ - 1♦ - 1NT - 3NT, and with a spade lead, every other North player had gone one off in 3NT! At the end of the evening I just had to offer my sympathies to the Bun Terror for the terrible punishment that he had received for his minimum overcall!

## THE ETHICS OF THE PIG TRADER AND BOARS IN DEVON!

(From Sheffield Bridge Club Newsletter No 93, September 1998)

♠ 9 7 4
♥ 9 7 5 4 2
♦ J 7
♣ 9 8 5
North (Pig Trader)
South (Boars In Devon)
♠ K Q 3
♥ K J 8 3
♦ A Q 5 4
♣ A 7

The Pig Trader had got a bottom and, determined to get his money's worth out of it, insisted that I print the hand! He was North and partnering his supplier, "Boars in Devon" in the South seat. East had dealt and opened 1♠. Boars In Devon jumped to 2NT to show about 19-20 points and a flat hand but the Pig Trader thought it was showing both minors. Pass from West and the Pig Trader gave preference in 3♣, and was surprised to see Boars In Devon alert! When East enquired about the 2NT bid, Boars In Devon's suspicion that the Pig Trader had misunderstood was confirmed. Nevertheless he had to continue without this unauthorised information, and so, to him, the 3♣ bid was Stayman. Boars In Devon thus bid 3♥ to show a four card suit. The Pig Trader was by now almost convinced of his misunderstanding from his partner's alert of the 3♣ bid and he was sorely tempted to pass 3♥, which just happened to be the last making contract.

But the Pig Trader had to carry on assuming that the 2NT was unusual for there was scope with his hand that his partner could have 20-25 points with his long minors. So 3♥ had to be taken as a cue bid, and as such the Pig Trader alerted the "cue-bid" and bid 4♣ denying any controls himself. Boars In Devon now had to take this as forcing and bid a natural 4NT, duly alerted by the Pig Trader as Blackwood. 5♣ by the Pig Trader was to show no aces but now for the first time, Boars In Devon could take this as natural and pass! 5♣ was of course a very silly contract and easily scored a Bottom (five off for -250)! But if the Pig Trader had passed the 3♥ bid, I'm sure we would have all heard the cry for "DIRE – WRECK – TORE", and rightly so!



## THE PIG TRADER APPEARS ON WIREPLAY

(This story appeared in English Bridge April 1999, in a series on bridge on the Internet, though the hand was played at Sheffield Bridge Club.)

One of the characters that I like to kibitz on Wireplay is the Pig Trader, a good friend who plays at my own club at Sheffield. He won't mind me saying that he is well known for his manic bidding and opportunistic card play. On the deal shown below, he was trying to impress a young lady partner with his prowess:

The Young Lady
♠ A K Q J 4
♥ 6
♦ A Q 7 5 4
♣ Q 5
♠ 6
♥ A Q J 10 8 7 3
♦ 3
♣ K 9 8 4
The Pig Trader

With no opposition bidding, the Pig Trader, sitting South, rather ambitiously reached the contract of 6♥, having bid clubs as well as hearts. West led a spade, which was taken in dummy. The Pig Trader pondered that ♣A was likely to be with East as it had not been led.

Anyway, at Trick 2, it was time to finesse the trumps, hoping for a doubleton King with East. The finesse failed but West, rather than leading a club into a feared tenace (given that the Pig Trader had bid the suit), returned another spade.

The Pig Trader had been let off the hook, for even a diamond return would have been fatal. Even so, proper management and yet more luck were still required.

Although there were 12 tricks available in the form of six trumps, one diamond and, assuming a 4 - 3 break, five spades, there were insurmountable entry problems for the taking out of trumps.

So the Pig Trader played ♠4 and ruffed in hand and took out the remaining trumps. In order to discard all four of his clubs, the Pig Trader now successfully finessed ♦Q and threw his four clubs on ♦A and his three remaining boss spades.

THE PIG TRADER AND THE UNUSUAL ENDPLAY.

(These boards were played at Sheffield Bridge Club in October 2004 on Tuesday evenings, when Aggregate Scored Pairs is played.. The following article appeared in a SBC Newsletter soon after, the newsletters at this time not being numbered.)

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

This was Board 27 on Tuesday 5 October. The Pig Trader was South, partnering The White Lamb Owner. Love all, Dealer West.

West	North	East	South
No	No	3♣	4♥
Dbl	No	No	No

It is said that you shouldn't open a three level pre-empt with an outside four card major, and to be fair, East did not have a four card major. Still, in third seat, anything goes! The Pig Trader made a rather uncouth jump to 4♥ and missed the rather easier 5♦ contract, which can be defeated only on a heart lead and small club return for another ruff. West doubled and led ♣A and another, ruffed by the Pig Trader. The Ace of trumps revealed the bad trump split and so some good luck was needed elsewhere. The ♦Q was covered by the ♦K and ♦A and another diamond was ruffed by West who was able to exit safely with a third round of clubs, ruffed by declarer. This was the position:

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

At this point, the Pig Trader played two rounds of trumps, exhausting his own trumps but leaving West with an outstanding trump. He then played out diamonds. Whenever West ruffed in, he was end-played into having to lead a spade to let the Pig Trader make his ♠Q. I don't think that I have seen before such an endplay with declarer retaining trump control despite the opponents having the only outstanding trump! It was West who later spotted the killing defence of a low club lead at Trick 1 for a spade return! The Pig Trader commented to me later that 4♠ is cold, and it takes good defence to defeat 5♠!

Two weeks later saw the same partnership in action again. This was Board 22 on 19 October.

	♠ K 8 4	
	♥ A 7 4	
	♦ --	
	♣ A Q 9 7 6 3 2	
	White Lamb Owner	
♠ Q J 7 6 5 2		♠ 9 3
♥ 9 8 2		♥ Q J 10 5 3
♦ K J 8 2		♦ 6 5 3
♣ --		♣ K 10 4
Bob the Bidder		Pod 11
	♠ A 10	
	♥ K 6	
	♦ A Q 10 9 7 4	
	♣ J 8 5	
	Pig Trader	

With N/S Vulnerable against not, The White Lamb Owner dealt and opened 1♣ with the North cards. The Pig Trader bid a quiet 1♦ and The White Lamb Owner leapt aggressively to 3♣. The Pig Trader went straight for 4NT. This, being Ordinary Blackwood, generated the reply of 5♥, which Pod 11 in the East seat doubled. The Pig Trader settled for 6♣, which is an easy contract, but Bob The Bidder in the West seat had other ideas and waded in with a bid of 6♥. This was passed round for the Pig Trader to make the final verdict. He visualised the singleton ♥A in partner's hand and a paltry penalty against 6♥ at the prevailing vulnerability and, with a double stop in hearts, he fancied his chances in 6NT.

Against 6NT, West dutifully led a heart, taken by the Pig Trader in hand. Dummy was a bit of a disappointment for although twelve tricks were there for the taking if the ♣K was onside, he couldn't finesse the diamonds should the club King be offside. To cater for a 3-0 onside club split, the ♣J was then led, but the 3-0 split was sadly offside, so the ♣J was run round to the ♣K, West signalling for a diamond which Pod 11 then dutifully led. The Pig Trader stared at this diamond on the table for a couple of hours. This was the diamond finesse that he couldn't otherwise have taken! However, he reluctantly parted with his ♦A. There was only one chance now and he cashed the ♥A and ran out all his clubs. As the last club was led, the position was:

	♠ K 8 4	
	♥ --	
	♦ --	
	♣ 2	
♠ Q J 7		♠ (Immaterial)
♥ --		♥
♦ K		♦
♣ --		♣
	♠ A 10	
	♥ --	
	♦ Q 10	
	♣ --	

On the play of the last club, the Pig Trader threw ♦10, and West, having to keep ♦K, bared his ♠QJ. The last three tricks were therefore won with ♠A, ♠K and ♠8. West had been squeezed.

I accused the Pig Trader of outrageous luck that the spades had split 6-2, but he replied that the slam could still have been defeated, had West signalled for a spade at Trick 2. A spade return from East at Trick 3 breaks the necessary communications for a squeeze to work.

## THE PIG TRADER AND THE LUCKY 5-0 TRUMP BREAK

(From a Sheffield Bridge Club Newsletter, 2007)

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

The Pig Trader was sitting South at a One Day Swiss Teams event in Loughborough (11 March 2007) when, in the final match, Board 44 arrived. With NS vulnerable, West, after two passes, opened 1♥. North doubled and East passed. The Pig Trader jumped to 2♠ and West bid 3♣, whereupon North jumped to 4♠, which became the final contract. “That’s quite aggressive bidding” I mused. “Not when I am to be the declarer!” replied the Pig Trader. “And that’s a nasty trump split” I continued.

“On the contrary”, replied the Pig Trader, “that 5-0 trump break actually helps me to make the contract!”

The Pig Trader went on to explain that without a trump, West could not lead a trump. In practice, he led ♥A followed by ♣K. This was taken by the ♣A and the Pig Trader led a diamond to his Ace, West playing ♦3. When the Pig Trader followed with ♦2, West played ♦5 so the Pig Trader inserted the ♦9 from dummy and East took ♦K. A trump lead by East is now too late. The Pig Trader takes in dummy, cashes ♦Q, but can ruff the third and fourth rounds of hearts high while returning to hand with club ruffs.

It appears that West must lead a low heart at Trick One, or else later trust East to have ♥J to take the first round of hearts – if East can lead trumps twice, this will reduce the number of trumps that declarer can make, and he will eventually run out of winners. For his ten tricks, he needed ♣A, ♦A, ♦Q and seven trump tricks. I noticed also that the Pig Trader followed the normal principle of making all his side-suit winners before embarking on the cross-ruff.

2♠ made exactly at team-mates’ table for an 11 IMP swing, enabling the team to take third place.

## THE PIG TRADER GETS DOUBLED TWICE

(From a Sheffield Bridge Club Newsletter, 2007)

The Pig Trader was keen to show me Board 22 (from Thursday 22 February 07) and I knew I wouldn't get any peace till he did.

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

"You've shown me all four hands" I uttered. "Yes" replied the Pig Trader, "and here is the auction, EW Vulnerable:"

W	N	E	S
No	No	1♠	2♥
3♠	4♥	No	No
Dbf	No	4♠	5♥
Dbf	No	No	No

"Just a second" I interrupted, "what's West's first double?"

"Oh, that's a Penalty Double. It warns me not to go more than one level higher. East knows that too, so he competed with 4♠, so, of course, I bid 5♥."

At this point I accused the Pig Trader of outright arrogance and challenged him to justify himself. There seemed to be no way to avoid two trump losers and a diamond loser.

"No problem" he replied. "I escaped the killing trump lead and ruffed the ♠A in dummy at Trick One. I cashed ♣A throwing a diamond, ruffed a club, ruffed a spade, ruffed another club, ruffed another spade, crossed to ♦A, ruffed my last spade and crossed to ♦K and reached this position:"

	♠ --
	♥ --
	♦ 8
	♣ J 9 8
♠ --	♠ K
♥ K Q 5 4	♥ --
♦ --	♦ Q J
♣ --	♣ K
	♠ --
	♥ A 10 9
	♦ 5
	♣ --

"Now I gave up the lead by exiting with a diamond. West has to ruff as he has only trumps left, and now he is endplayed and you will win either ♥10 or ♥9. As it happened, West didn't even have ♥K – I swapped ♥K and ♦Q in the diagrams, but the point is that this line makes against any opposing layout providing that both opponents have to follow to the first nine tricks!"

NO TWO DEALS ARE EVER ALIKE - OR ARE THEY?

(From Sheffield Bridge Club Newsletter No 62, November 1990.)

On 1 June 1989, playing with Jim Corbett (Corby on BCL), I randomly dealt the following and held the South hand at an ordinary Pairs session at Trowbridge B.C.

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

I soon found myself playing in 3NT on the lead of the ♥Q. Before reading on, how would you have played?

It turned out that there was only one way to make this contract and I was sufficiently pleased with myself for finding it at the table that I featured the deal in the Trowbridge BC newsletter.

There are eight tricks on top and opportunities in three different suits. The spade finesse and long diamonds are obvious, but a long club may also be possible. This is a textbook example of getting the timing right. You must try the clubs first, or you will never get the chance, and you must play ♣A then ♣K, and then, if no one has shown out, the ♣2. This gains when East or West has a high doubleton, as was the case.

A few months later, I noticed a similar problem on Teletext (Channel 4) by Patrick Jourdain. He told me that he had adapted his problem from a deal in a 1974 magazine and he sent me a copy. The similarities are uncanny and totally coincidental! The problem and solution are exactly the same! The only trivial difference is that the solution would not succeed on the 1974 deal if West had held a high doubleton club due to the position of ♣8.

♠ 6 4	
♥ K	
♦ A Q 6 4 3 2	
♣ 9 8 4 3	
♠ K 9 7	♠ J 10 8
♥ Q J 10 8 7	♥ 9 6 4 2
♦ 10	♦ J 8 7 5
♣ J 7 6 5	♣ Q 10
♠ A Q 5 3 2	
♥ A 5 3	
♦ K 9	
♣ A K 2	
	The 1989 deal

♠ 7 3	
♥ K	
♦ A Q 7 5 3 2	
♣ 9 4 3 2	
♠ K 10 8	♠ J 9 6
♥ Q J 9 8 4	♥ 10 6 3 2
♦ 10	♦ J 9 8 4
♣ J 8 7 5	♣ Q 10
♠ A Q 5 4 2	
♥ A 7 5	
♦ K 6	
♣ A K 6	
	The 1974 deal

## THE ROCKY ROAD TO FAME

(This story originally appeared in Sheffield Bridge Club Newsletter No 45, May 1987, but appears here as rewritten for and published later in an issue of Bridge Plus)

The greatest score that I have ever gained on one board was on that shown below:

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

It was remarkable for other reasons, too. East and West were Claudio De Lullo and David Leigh who, less than two years later, had become English International Champions in the Junior Camrose.

This was the very first deal in a Sheffield District Pairs Competition on 20 January 1985. I was North at favourable vulnerability. South dealt and passed. West opened 1♣, playing a complicated Strong Club system. East responded 2♣. West proceeded with a couple of relay bids while East described his hand. West then bid 3♠, which was to ask East about his spade holding. At this point, I waded in with an otherwise rather pointless Double. East passed to show Qxx or xx in Spades. West redoubled as a further enquiry, presumably to decide between a game in clubs or NT, but this was misunderstood and passed out!

I led ♣10 and West took this with ♣A. He ran ♠9 to ♠A, and South returned ♥2 to ♥J, ♥K and ♥A. Declarer then came back to his own hand with a diamond to the Ace to lead another spade to the Queen and King. South now led ♥4 to my ♥10, and I drew the last trump from dummy. I led ♥3 to ♥Q and partner cashed two long hearts to leave me with three boss trumps. 3♠ redoubled minus six for +3400 points.

This was a Top by a margin of 4000 points but, being a Match Pointed Pairs event, this margin was rather wasted!

The final remarkable feature about this deal was that afterward, there was no reaction by either of our opponents. There was no "Why did you pass the redouble" or any argument! They both acted as if there had just been a flat board. I watched after they left the table and never saw any reaction. That deserves some credit!

## NOUGHT OR FOUR ACES !

(This story originally appeared in Sheffield Bridge Club Newsletter No 48, January 1988, but appears here as rewritten for and published later in an issue of Bridge Plus)

One of my worst ever blunders occurred on this deal one evening many years ago at Matlock Bridge Club.

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

I was East, dealer and vulnerable and counted eight playing tricks and so I opened 2♦! Ugh!

Partner bid 4NT, and on hearing 5♣ (showing nought or four aces) from me, bid 6NT. On his holding, I had to have four aces, didn't I? North doubled and defensive error let us escape for 3 off, but it was still a Bottom score.

Later, I recreated the board for a special segment when directing the 1985 Sheffield Bridge Marathon. The travelling score sheet read: 3♦+1, 4♦+1, 5♦\*-2, 6♦\*-3, 7♦\*-3 and 6NT\*-4, all by EW! I had found far better company!



## THE DANGER OF OPTIONAL DOUBLES

(This story originally appeared in Sheffield Bridge Club Newsletter No 46, August 1987, but appears here as rewritten for and published later in the book More Bedside Bridge)

A few years ago, I held the South hand, below, at a duplicate Pairs evening at Matlock Bridge Club.

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

My partner dealt at favourable vulnerability and after two passes to me, I opened 3♦, not ideal with just six grotty diamonds and a chunky trebleton heart suit, but I had a feeling that the opponents may have a game in spades.

Our opponents were an established regular partnership, and they were playing “Optional” doubles, which were popular at that time. The problem with such doubles is that partner will tend to leave in the double when you wish him to take it out and take it out when you wish him to pass! Certainly it was not suited for the above deal as West doubled. North passed and East, contemplating game in either major, decided to take it out by a forcing bid of 4♦.

I passed and West took out into 4NT. After all, she did have a very good stop in diamonds! North passed and East responded to his partner’s Blackwood asking bid by calling 5♦, showing one ace.

As I passed, West was beginning to look confused. Why has her partner bid diamonds twice? If her partner had diamonds, what did the opener’s bid mean? So now West launched into a cross-examination of my partner over my opening bid of 3♦! Eventually, my partner was allowed off the witness stand and West settled for a final contract of 5NT, the whole thing having got out of hand.

North passed and East, of course, bid 6♦ to show one king!

I passed. West was now completely out of her depth! If her partner wanted to bid diamonds three times, he could play in them! After all, it was her best suit!

My partner was highly amused by the proceedings but kept his head and also passed. 6♦ did not go many off but enough for a Top score.

Have you ever pre-empted and ended up defending against a slam in your suit?

After the play of the hand, East called the Director to report my “psychic” opening bid, but he received little sympathy. The TD was witness to the whole episode – he was my partner!