

Around the world with 52 cards

Travels and adventures of a bridge pro

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When I speak to people who do not know me about the many places I've seen, some of the locales must appear to them rather odd: Venice, Seattle, Beijing, Paris



may well be expected but then come Wiesbaden, Albuquerque, Tenerife, which are somewhat off the beaten path, and when we get to Killarney,

Salsomaggiore, Lille, Maastricht, they begin to wonder what could I possibly be doing in these unlikely spots. Well, we know better, don't we? Playing bridge, of course!

Being part of the Israeli Ladies team since I was ... well ... *younger* and having been a bridge professional for quite a few years does mean that one travels a lot, and I don't mind that one bit. Sometimes it all seems like a dream: "Come on Migry, wake up! Surely you cannot believe that those 52 cards that enticed you to skip school when you were 15 years old are now your passport to places that you've never dreamt you could visit!" Here I am, though, always looking forward to the next exotic tourna-

ment site, because I am sure I will meet some great people and have a lot of fun doing what I enjoy most: playing bridge.

This series for *Bridge Today* is my personal invitation to you to come along on my journeys, to share the magic, the thrills and, why not, the disappointments that makes them memorable.

Ready to start? We are off to the French Riviera where the first European Open Championship took place in the second half of June this year — an ideal location for what could have been a great tournament if a small organizational oversight had not marred the proceedings: no air conditioning. Ever try to play for eight hours a day in a sunny room with huge windows and a nice cool 95F with 90% humidity? Trust me, it's not pleasant. At times I felt that I was involved more in a "survival of the fittest" kind of competition than a major bridge championship.

Given these conditions, it was really amazing that some of the bridge played was of a very high standard. Try this hand, played in the Mixed Teams, which started off the championships....

You get to 4♠ after the following auction, and you receive the lead of the ♥4:

South dealer	North
N-S vul	♠ A J 7 5
Imps	♥ A Q
	♦ J 5 2
	♣ K 10 9 4
♥4	
	South
	♠ K Q 10 8 2
	♥ K 3
	♦ A 7 3
	♣ 7 3 2

South	West	North	East
1 ♠	2 ♠*	3 ♥**	pass
3 ♠	pass	4 ♠	(all pass)

*hearts and a minor

**at least a limit raise in spades

The unfortunate duplication in hearts means that the contract will need some guesswork, but naturally the two-suited overcall will be a great help in trying to reconstruct the layout.

North
♠ 7
♥ —
♦ J 5
♣ K 10
South
♠ Q 10
♥ —
♦ 7 3
♣ 7

What was the only chance to make the contract?

The first thing I did was to try to get an exact idea of the distribution. After playing a second round of hearts and two rounds of spades, with West pitching a heart, I knew that West was likely 1-5-2-5 or 1-5-5-2, because with a singleton in either minor he would not have led from J-x-x-x-x.

I continued with a low club to the 9, taken by East with the queen. I took in hand the spade return and played another club, which West took with the ace. After a brief huddle he exited with a small diamond. What would you do?

I played low from dummy (I was not playing West for the king-queen, because he might have led one with that holding). The low diamond went to his East's 10 and my ace. I now believed I knew the distribution: West had started with a 1-5-5-2 and East, therefore, had to be 3-4-2-4. Up to now I had lost two club tricks and my diamond holding of J-x facing x-x did not look too healthy.

The only possibility was to play East for a doubleton diamond honor. (This looked like a sure thing.) I could strip the clubs before ducking a diamond in both hands. This would allow me to pitch a losing diamond when East is forced to exit with a heart in a ruff-and-discard position. Or I could lead a diamond before touching clubs, because East can't lead a club without giving me a trick there as well.

Thanks to the ♦J in dummy, West could not put up his king to take his partner off the endplay.



Twelve imps and a "Bravo" from partner were my reward. Here is the complete layout:

South dealer	North		
N-S vul	♠ A J 7 5		
Imps	♥ A Q		
	♦ J 5 2		
	♣ K 10 9 4		
West		East	
♠ 4		♠ 9 6 3	
♥ J 7 5 4 2		♥ 10 9 8 6	
♦ K 9 8 6 4		♦ Q 10	
♣ A 6		♣ Q J 8 5	
	South		
	♠ K Q 10 8 2		
	♥ K 3		
	♦ A 7 3		
	♣ 7 3 2		

This hand illustrates something I feel very strongly about: The excessive use in modern bridge of Michaels, Ghestems and the like is not good. In my view there is no need to reveal so much about your hand unless you feel *confident* that you will buy the auction (either as a sacrifice or to make). It is a fact that a good declarer can succeed in seemingly impossible contracts on the basis of the extra information available to him, thanks to such reckless disclosure.

South	West	North	East
1 ♠	2 ♠*	3 ♥**	pass
3 ♠	pass	4 ♠	(all pass)

*hearts and a minor

**at least a limit raise in spades

Are You Thinking Logically?

by Marshall Miles

South dealer	North
All vul	♠ 5 2
Imps	♥ A 10 6 3
	♦ K Q J 10 8 6
	♣ 7
West (you)	
♠ A J 4	
♥ 8 7 2	
♦ A 4	
♣ J 10 9 6 3	



Playing standard leads and signals, you lead the ♣J, partner plays the 5 and South wins the queen. He cashes the ♣A, discarding a heart from dummy, and partner plays the ♣8. South leads the ♦2 to the 10, and partner plays the 9. He leads the ♦K, partner plays the 7, and declarer the 3. Upon winning the ace what do you play next?

South	West	North	East
1 ♣	pass	1 ♦	pass
1 ♠	pass	3 ♦	pass
3 NT	(all pass)		

[Solution on next page]