

# BRIDGE ARTICLE 1

## MALENY CONTRACT BRIDGE CLUB

This is the first of what I hope to be many articles related to bridge for members of our club. Hopefully they may even continue after we can play bridge again. These articles are still experimental and the format of them may evolve in time.

If you have any comments, contributions or suggestions for future articles, do not be shy to email [stuart\\_craig100@hotmail.com](mailto:stuart_craig100@hotmail.com).

### *Ways to keep playing*

People have lots of different reasons to play bridge. One that would probably be universal for all is for social contact. Now that we must socialise from a distance, this will be missing from our game. However, there are many other reasons we play and if you still want to play without the social aspect, there are some ways to do so if you have access to a computer.

A popular internet option is Bridge Base Online (BBO) at [bridgebase.com](http://bridgebase.com). Here you have several ways to play. You can be anonymous. In this case, you can play against computers (but they use a bidding system called 2 over 1 which would not be familiar to most players at the club) or just practice declarer play with either random deals or selected problem deals that are designed to test and instruct. Finally, you can watch games played by real people.

Alternatively, you may register and log in. Now you have lots more options (too many to list). You should at least register and find out. The options including participating in social or tournament games with and against real people from around the world. Some options require payment.

Jean and Annie have signed up for a 12 board duplicate match tonight. In the next article, they will let you know how it went.

Vubridge (<http://www.vubridge.fr/fr/UShome.php>) also has options worth exploring, but seems more commercial.

There are several computer programs that allow you to play bridge on your computer without being on the internet. Most you need to buy. Wbridge5 (free, available from <https://wbridge5.software.informer.com/download/>) has won the world computer bridge championships for the last few years. It can be set to different playing levels. Its default bidding system will seem strange but the bidding system the bridge robots will use can be adjusted to be close to what is played at the club.

Let me know (email above) if you want help in taking advantage of these offerings and I'll include some instructions in a future article.

### *Bridge jokes*

There are many bridge jokes doing the rounds on the internet. They are usually fairly weak and are jokes that only confirmed bridge players would get. So, you are at an advantage over the rest of the world because you have an opportunity to laugh at things other people don't.

Unfortunately, we live in a world of political correctness, so it is unwise to include jokes in an article like this. However, if you are in the mood for bridge humour and unlikely to take offence, I suggest you try an internet search for "contract bridge jokes". Ignore the ones you don't like.

## LUCK, GOOD AND BAD

These are some thoughts on board 25 from the recent teams competition. Three NS pairs bid to 6♠ with North as declarer. There are quite a few lessons in this hand about luck and perseverance. If you find it all a bit hard to follow, it may be easier if you lay out the cards and play face up or cross off cards on a printout of the board diagram.

<b>Board 25</b>	♠ 9 8 6 3 2
North Deals	♥ A K 7
E-W Vul	♦ A 8 5 4
	♣ 7
	
	♠ A K J 5
	♥ 8
	♦ K Q 10
	♣ A 10 9 4 3

Suppose East leads the 10♥ and you win the first trick with the A. How many tricks do you think you are going to win? Is this a contract you would like to be in? What do you plan to do at trick 2?

Well if trumps break 2-2, you can win the A and K of trumps, which with the AK of hearts, the AKQ of diamonds, the A of clubs makes 8. You have 5 trumps left and can take them individually by trumping your losing heart and diamond in dummy and your losing clubs in your hand. That makes 13.

What if trumps are 3-1? You play it the same way. This time after you win the top trumps, the opponents may have a winning trump that they can take whenever they fancy. Your 13 tricks become 12 after the opponents take their trump trick. You still make your contract.

What about trumps 4-0? If East has the trumps, you will know after playing the top spade. You can come to your hand by trumping a club, take the marked spade finesse, lead the top spade and play as before. This time you have only one trump in dummy after drawing 3 rounds of trumps and can use it to trump the heart loser. You can no longer trump your diamond. To make the contract, it must be a winner, which it will be if diamonds are 3-3 or the J is singleton or doubleton. In this case your contract is not assured but it still has over a 50% chance of making. When you play diamonds, you must play the K and Q first to take advantage of the possible singleton or doubleton J.

What about if West has all four trumps? This is what happened on the day! North finds this out when he plays to the A♠ and East discards a heart. West has the Q, 10, 7, 4 of spades and is playing after the A, K, J, 5 in dummy. Surely, he is going to be able to take the Q and 10 at some stage. Any finesse in trumps will lose. What bad luck! West will have all 4 spades only about 5% of the time.

Is all lost? Can you think of a possible way, no matter how unlikely, that you can still make the slam? You may be able to convert your 2 certain trump losers to 1 loser if you can force West to lead spades. After you play the A♠, if you can manage to win the next 8 tricks with your high cards and by trumping, without West trumping, West will just have his remaining three trumps left. He or she will be forced to win with a trump on the next trick (the third last trick) and then lead into dummy's KJ and the slam makes.

This is the full hand.

<b>Board 25</b>	♠ 9 8 6 3 2	
North Deals	♥ A K 7	
E-W Vul	♦ A 8 5 4	
	♣ 7	
♠ Q 10 7 4		♠ —
♥ J 6 2		♥ Q 10 9 5 4 3
♦ J 7 2		♦ 9 6 3
♣ K J 5		♣ Q 8 6 2
	♠ A K J 5	
	♥ 8	
	♦ K Q 10	
	♣ A 10 9 4 3	

Because West has 3 cards in the non-trump suits, you can take the first 10 tricks without West having the opportunity to trump (your A♥, your A♠, your 3 diamond winners, your remaining heart winner and trump a heart, your club winner and trump 2 clubs ). West will win with a trump at the 11<sup>th</sup> trick but, being on lead, must concede the last two tricks to the KJ of spades in South.

For this to work, West must have had 3 cards in the non-trump suits. The chances of this is quite low. So, the extreme bad luck of 4 spades with West is counterbalanced by the extreme good luck of West having 3 cards in each of the non-trump suits.

Never give up. Luck certainly plays a big role in bridge.