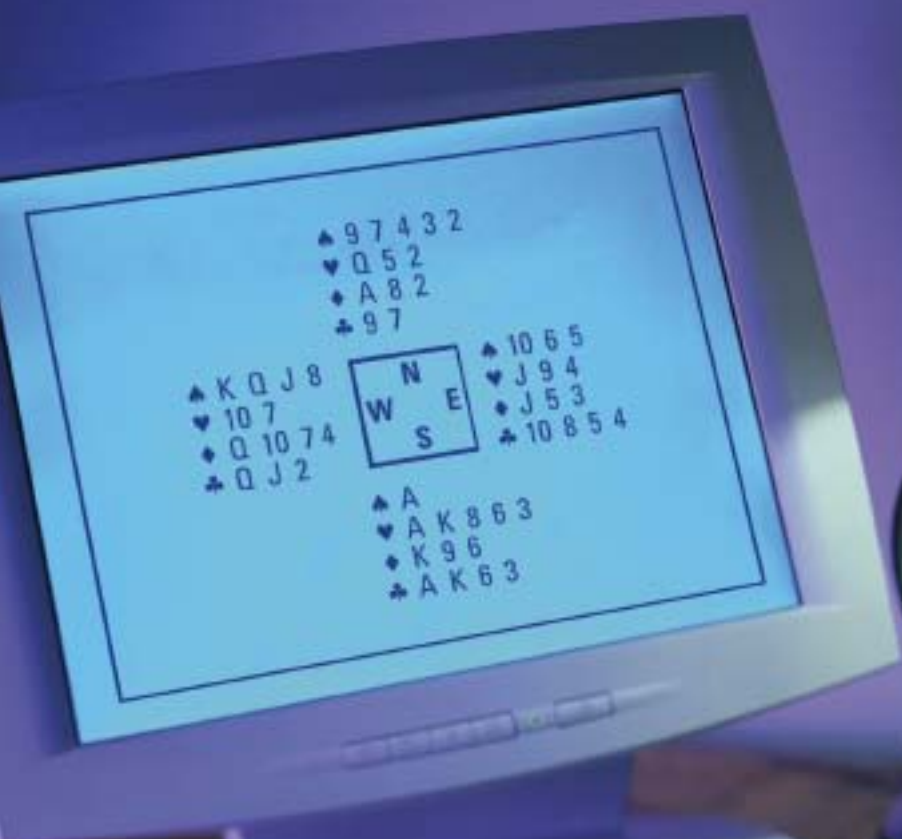


THE BEST OF

# BRIDGE TODAY DIGEST



edited by MATTHEW & PAMELA GRANOVETTER

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M A S T E R P O I N T P R E S S • T O R O N T O

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# FOREWORD

In most areas of life, whether it be the doctor they choose, the house they buy, or the ballgame that they decide to watch, people usually want what they perceive to be 'the best'. Readers of bridge hands are no exception; who in the world wants to spend his or her time reading or discussing an *ordinary* bridge hand? This is why bridge columnists and editors of bridge magazines are constantly in search of dramatic deals, those with lessons for the reader or great entertainment value. *Bridge Today Digest — Online*, the first bridge magazine by email, was conceived with the idea of presenting the best... of the best!

We had to search even harder than usual in order to have a chance to survive in the new 'quick read' market of email newsletters. But the *Digest*, in order to take advantage of the new 'scroll-down' media, also needed to take advantage of the fact that it is on a computer. Any publisher can lay out the best bridge hands in a book for a reader's enjoyment, but an email version must offer something else: it must allow the reader an interactive role. So we changed the format of many great hands, taken from books or straight from life, and presented them in a way that allowed the reader to sit in the catbird seat. Great plays (or missed plays) from real life were presented in problem formats, and the reader could scroll down to see the answer (just as in a book, if it is laid out nicely, you'll be forced to turn the page for the answer).

But was the *Digest* to become simply another form of bridge quiz? Not at all. The email format had another aspect to it that made the *Digest* unique. Emails allow for quick replies and easy correspondence. Ever respond to a magazine article or a newspaper

column? It takes some effort to write the issue at hand on a piece of paper, rewrite the bridge hand or auction, and then fix a stamp to an addressed envelope and mail it. And after all that, you to have to sit back and wait a few weeks for your response. Not so with the email *Digest*! Readers found that they could quickly click on the ‘send’ button and reply instantly to the bridge problems or issues raised in the on-line magazine. *And* their questions and editors’ replies would find their way into the very next issue of *Bridge Today Digest — Online* (with a click and a paste). So the on-line version of bridge reading had this advantage and the readership took an active role. This book, *The Best of Bridge Today Digest* is, well, the best of the best of the best! In these pages, beautifully laid out by our publisher, Master Point Press, we’re able to present a rare collection of hands, bridge problems, and modern ideas, for your reading pleasure. The advantage of a book over a computer screen, of course, is that you can read it in a more relaxed setting and, though many readers of the *Digest* print out their issues, one completely bound book can be something special — if the reader enjoys the contents.

In this case, we can assure you, you will.

*Matthew and Pamela Granovetter;  
Jerusalem, August, 2001.*



**SECTION 1**


**GREAT HANDS**





# KEEPING IT SIMPLE

**Dealer North**  
**E-W vulnerable**

	<b>North</b>		
	♠ K J 3		
	♥ K J 6 4 3		
	♦ A 6		
	♣ Q 9 4		
<b>West</b>		<b>East</b>	
♠ 6 5 2		♠ Q 10 9 8 7 4	
♥ 10 8 7 2		♥ A Q 9	
♦ 10 5 4 2		♦ —	
♣ 10 2		♣ K 8 6 3	
	<b>South</b>		
	♠ A		
	♥ 5		
	♦ K Q J 9 8 7 3		
	♣ A J 7 5		

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
	1NT	2♠	6♦
pass	pass	dbl	all pass

At the 2000 Orbis Bermuda Bowl, the USA team (Nick Nickell, Dick Freeman, Bob Hamman, Paul Soloway, Jeff Meckstroth and Eric Rodwell) defeated Brazil by 218 IMPs in the final match. Brazil had not been a favorite to reach the final, but their anchor pair, Gabriel Chagas and Marcello Branco, put on a great performance and they defeated Sweden in the quarterfinals and Norway in the semifinals, before losing to the Americans.

This deal from the final demonstrates that the Americans did not necessarily win because their bidding was more scientific than their opponents'. On the contrary, often

simple bids are best. Consider Soloway's leap to six diamonds after his partner opened one notrump (rather than one heart) and East (Branco) bid two spades.

When six diamonds was passed around to Branco, he doubled to ask his partner not to lead a spade. Chagas tried the deuce of hearts and found his partner's strength, but it was not enough. Soloway played the jack from dummy and Branco won with the queen. But when he tried to cash the ace of hearts, Soloway ruffed. Next Soloway cashed the ace of spades and led a diamond to the ace. He discarded two clubs on dummy's king of spades and king of hearts. Finally, he took a club finesse through East, and when that won, he drew trumps and claimed his doubled slam.

At the other table, scientific bidding went astray. North opened one heart and East bid two spades. South bid three diamonds and heard North bid three notrump. South then tried a very subtle four-diamond bid, hoping his partner would understand this as a slam try. But the North player for Brazil passed four diamonds, thinking it was not forcing and they languished in a partscore. Contrast that with Soloway's direct jump to six diamonds: simple and practical.

# LAYER ON LAYER



This is one of those hands that will be played three different ways by three levels of player. The 'expert' and 'studious' players will succeed, while the 'amateurs' will fail.

The amateur wins the heart lead and plays a spade to the ten. If that wins, he'll play the king of spades and hope the jack of spades was third. (He can't cross to his club king for another spade play up because he'll have no entry to his heart tricks.) In real life, East wins and plays back a heart. West has two entries to set up his hearts and cash them, so the defense will take two spades, the ace of diamonds, and two heart tricks for down one.

The studious player senses that there's more to the hand than a spade to the ten at Trick 2. He can see that he'll go down if that ten loses to the jack, and he wants to keep his chances alive. So he plays a spade to the king, a club to the king, and another spade. Spades don't break, but the diamond suit produces two tricks. He finishes with two spades, three hearts, two diamonds and two clubs.

The expert player has seen this hand before. He plays a diamond to the queen, and then a low spade off the board. He doesn't care who wins the jack. He'll win the heart return, play a spade to the king and run spades until the ace is knocked out.

Notice South's crafty pass of East's support double. If East-West want to play in hearts, it's fine with South. A 1NT call by South would slow down East-West if they are going places, and it might also stop the heart lead, which South would like if he ends up declaring (as turned out to be the case).

**Dealer East**  
**N-S vulnerable**

<p><b>West</b></p> <p>♠ A 6</p> <p>♥ 10 9 8 4 3</p> <p>♦ A 8 5 3</p> <p>♣ 6 3</p>		<p><b>North</b></p> <p>♠ K Q 10 9 8</p> <p>♥ 5</p> <p>♦ Q 4 2</p> <p>♣ A 10 7 4</p>
		<p><b>East</b></p> <p>♠ J 7 3 2</p> <p>♥ Q 7 6</p> <p>♦ J 10</p> <p>♣ Q J 9 2</p>
		<p><b>South</b></p> <p>♠ 5 4</p> <p>♥ A K J 2</p> <p>♦ K 9 7 6</p> <p>♣ K 8 5</p>

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		pass	1♦
1♥	1♠	dbl <sup>1</sup>	pass
2♥	3♥	pass	3NT
all pass			
1. Shows three card heart support.			



## GUESS THE HAND

*Bridge Today* magazine once had a feature called 'Guess the Hand'. Here's one for you. This one is truly amazing because if you can guess partner's hand, you can produce a double-dummy defense.

You, West, hold:

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

You are dealer, no one vulnerable. You open 1♠, and it goes pass, pass, double. You bid 1NT, and it goes pass, 2NT. To review:

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>You</i>		<i>Partner</i>	
1♠	pass	pass	dbl
1NT	pass	2NT	

At this point, South goes into a long huddle, asks a number of questions, and finally bids 3♥. Everyone passes. So the final auction is:

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>You</i>		<i>Partner</i>	
1♠	pass	pass	dbl
1NT	pass	2NT	3♥
all pass			

Clues: you are playing with a strong player who would never pass your 1♠ bid holding an ace. In addition, your partner is not shy about doubling and would have doubled their contract with four hearts. What is partner's hand? What do you lead?

*Analysis:*

Partner bid 2NT over 1NT. Partner therefore does not hold three spades, or a five-card minor, or, as we said, four hearts. So partner's shape is probably 2-3-4-4. Partner should hold five high card points, and perhaps a ten or two. In addition, partner would not invite game with a 2NT bid unless he held help in spades; his thinking must be that the spades might run for four or five tricks, and perhaps with all the cards onside, you could manage the game. So, let's assume partner has the jack of spades. In addition, partner probably holds what he thinks might be an entry to dummy, otherwise how could he expect you to take nine tricks playing from your hand the whole

**B**ridge Today Digest recently celebrated its first anniversary (and 100th issue) as an Internet-based “bridge-zine”. It is renowned for its practical advice, its wonderful bridge stories, and the wry humor and personal touch of its editors. For this collection, they have selected the very best pieces from their first year, and come up with a compendium that every bridge player can read, enjoy, and learn from. It includes short pieces from world-renowned writers, questions and comments from readers (and the editors’ responses to them!), and a wealth of deals, anecdotes and advice from the editors.



**MATTHEW & PAMELA GRANOVETTER** are the publishers of *Bridge Today* and *Bridge Today Digest*, as well as the founders of the Bridge Today Online University and authors of a number of books, many of them award winners. They also write *Partnership Bridge*, a popular feature in the *ACBL Bulletin*. They live with their two children in Jerusalem, Israel.

