



CARD  
BY  
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ADVENTURES AT THE BRIDGE TABLE

Roy Hughes  
AUTHOR OF *BUILDING A BIDDING SYSTEM*



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**Roy Hughes**  
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# FOREWORD

Terence Reese made popular the ‘over-the-shoulder’ style by which the author invites the reader to play hands that he played, reliving the decisions that he took at the table. From experience, I know that this is a challenging but rewarding format to get right, and I am pleased to say that Roy Hughes has done a fine job.

Roy has chosen a good collection of deals, which are both interesting individually and hang together as a set. He provides readers with first-class analysis and has a knack for coming to grips with the key point of the deal. His style is diplomatic and honest, and he puts the reader in a relaxed frame of mind.

I like the fact that he owns up to events that did not quite take the desired turn at the table. Much of the material is original and, when he does use a deal that has previously appeared in print, he uses a wide variety of sources and gives suitable credits.

The deals come from a diverse group of competitions and settings, which adds to the interest, as does the slight variation of bidding systems in use. He explains anything out of the ordinary, so do not worry if you only play socially or if SAYC is all you are familiar with.

On most of the deals, the author, and hence you the reader, end up as declarer. This reflects the fact that most people prefer to play rather than defend. Also, speaking from personal experience, it is simply easier to combine bidding decisions with play decisions than defensive decisions.

If you want to derive maximum educational benefit from the book, you should pause and a stop to think whenever you reach a decision point. If, however, you just want to sit back and enjoy the deals and narrative like I did, who is going to argue?

*Julian Pottage*

*October 2005*

## AUTHOR'S PREFACE

This is a collection of deals from a number of sources. Some are from my personal exploits at the card table, and only a few of these have been seen in print. Others are from high-level competition, and still others are from my extensive collection of books and magazines. Some of these may be familiar to the reader. For the most part, I have included only deals where I felt I had something of interest to add to what has already been written; there is the occasional hand from an old book that I included simply because it was beautiful and might possibly be new to the reader.

While this is a book mostly concerned with card play, inferences from the bidding are often important. Many of the deals arose in rubber bridge at the St. Clair Bridge Club in Toronto, and in absence of indication to the contrary the reader should assume the old-fashioned methods in use there: four-card majors with a strong one notrump opening, Stayman and Blackwood, penalty doubles of overcalls. Others come from England, particularly the rubber bridge clubs of London, and I will mention use of the weak notrump or anything specific to the setting that the reader may need to know. On occasion, I am playing with a regular partner, and we may then be playing our unpublished strong club methods with four-card majors and strong notrumps.

Unless specifically stated, defensive signaling is what you might have encountered in 1950: fourth best, king from ace-king, high to encourage or suggest an even number of cards in the suit. Or, as Michael Courtney once said to me, “our carding is like your grandmother’s”.

Anyone familiar with the classic volumes by Terence Reese (such as *Play Bridge With Reese*) will see that I have copied that author’s format of presentation, using a first-person narrative. I made that choice with some reluctance, and I hope the reader does not find it pretentious. My justification is that I know of no better way to present the material. I have maintained the first person usage even for the hands I was not involved in; it just seems to work better that way. Sometimes there will

be clues. If the story starts “Playing in an early round in the Bermuda Bowl”, well, I have not as yet played in the Bermuda Bowl. When the facts are not as presented, I own up afterwards, except for insignificant fabricated details such as exact spot cards, when no hand records were available.

The reader who wants a good mental workout should stop frequently to consider the best line of play. Obviously, one good time for that is when the dummy is presented. Another is at the end of a paragraph. I avoid questions like “What would you do now?”, relying instead on a pace of presentation that allows time for thought. At times the narrative presents analysis that at the table should properly have been done earlier, to allow for playing in good tempo. My guide here is to do whatever seems best for the reader.

I would like to thank Suzanne Hocking and Ray Lee of Master Point Press, and Ron Bishop for their invaluable assistance. I would like to extend thanks also to Julian Pottage for his kind foreword, and to my numerous friends who made useful suggestions and caught, I hope, most of my blunders. A particular vote of thanks in this regard goes to Peter Winkler.

I would like to thank also the authors whose material I have borrowed. All such material came from books, newspapers and magazines I have thoroughly enjoyed. Occasionally, and sometimes with the benefit of thirty years or so to think about it, I present what I consider an improvement in an argument. At other times, I just have more space than the original author to expand upon an interesting deal.

*Roy Hughes*  
*Toronto*  
*August 2005*





## MOUNT ROYAL CROSSRUFF

Playing in the 2002 Rosenblum Teams in Montreal, we are facing an experienced American squad when I pick up

♠ AKQ83 ♥ 732 ♦ — ♣ AK954

Both sides are vulnerable, and I am first to speak. What to open with 5-5 in the blacks has long been a source of controversy; our agreements call for **one spade**. My left-hand opponent jumps to **three diamonds**, described on our opponents' card as intermediate. Partner raises me to **three spades**, and East passes. Slam is possible opposite a suitable hand, particularly one with a good club fit, so I show my second suit by bidding **four clubs**. Partner retreats to **four spades**, ending the bidding, which has been:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
3♦	3♠	pass	1♠
pass	4♠	all pass	4♣

West leads the ace of diamonds, consistent with a holding of ace-king in their methods. I see that partner has not been shy:

	♠ J109
	♥ A654
	♦ 10652
	♣ 102
♦ A	<input type="text"/>
	♠ AKQ83
	♥ 732
	♦ —
	♣ AK954

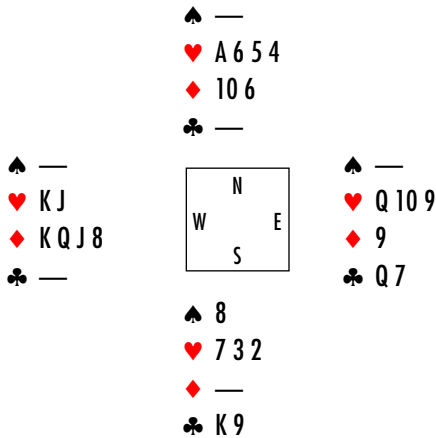
If I can establish the clubs, maintain control, and draw trumps, I will make an overtrick, losing just two hearts. That is easily done with favorable splits. With clubs 3-3, for example, I can ruff the third round and draw trumps even if they are 4-1, thanks to my eight. With clubs 4-2, though, I am short on entries to hand if trumps are 4-1. I can ruff the third round, come to a trump, and ruff the fourth round, but that exhausts the trumps in dummy and I have to ruff a diamond to hand. So I won't make the long club if trumps are 4-1, but I will make ten tricks, scoring two ruffs in dummy to go along with five trumps in hand, the ace and king of clubs, and the ace of hearts.

Clubs could be 5-1, though. If I play off the ace-king and someone ruffs, a trump return will hold me to seven trumps, a club and a heart — one down. The good trumps in dummy are giving me an idea. If I can score all three trumps in dummy, I need only one top club. I wonder if this is one of those hands where I need to play low on the second round of clubs. Suppose either defender wins the second club, his partner following. The defense will then be in a quandary. If they shift to a trump, I can win in hand, ruff the clubs good, and draw trumps for ten tricks. If they do not shift to a trump, I can score ten tricks on a cross-ruff. Things won't be as rosy if clubs are 5-1, but at least I will have avoided having my king of clubs ruffed.

Putting this plan into action, I ruff the diamond lead and cash the ace of clubs, drawing the eight from West. I continue with a low club, and West stops to consider. Eventually he throws a diamond. East wins the jack and returns a diamond, which I ruff. Now I ruff a club, and when the ace of hearts stands up, I can claim on a high crossruff. The full deal was:

	♠ J 10 9										
	♥ A 6 5 4										
	♦ 10 6 5 2										
	♣ 10 2										
♠ 7 4 2 ♥ K J ♦ A K Q J 8 4 3 ♣ 8	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 60px; height: 60px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ 6 5 ♥ Q 10 9 8 ♦ 9 7 ♣ Q J 7 6 3
	N										
W		E									
	S										
	♠ A K Q 8 3										
	♥ 7 3 2										
	♦ —										
	♣ A K 9 5 4										

At Trick 3, the defense had two other options, futile in different ways. East, on winning the jack of clubs, could have returned a trump. Declarer wins in hand and trumps a club. Now declarer doesn't have the entries to hand to ruff a second club and keep control, so he draws trumps, arriving at this position:



Now declarer ducks a heart, and the defense is powerless to prevent declarer from ruffing out East's last diamond, then throwing him in with a heart to lead away from the queen of clubs.

Alternatively, West could protect his partner's clubs by ruffing at Trick 3, and returning a trump. That both kills the above ending and holds me to two club ruffs, but with the defensive ruff coming in the long trump hand, I can just manage to ruff both club losers and draw trumps. The king of clubs takes the last trick.

This book gives a reader the chance to follow an expert's thought processes as declarer or defender on deals taken from top-level play. As usual in this type of presentation the reader is offered the opportunity to make his own decisions at critical points in the play, and will be able to learn from situations where an expert took a different line of play – rightly or wrongly!

**Praise for Roy Hughes' previous book, *Building a Bidding System*:**

'I wish I had written this book' – *The Bridge World*

'Unique, thought-provoking and beautifully crafted' – *ACBL Bulletin*

'What could have been a dry subject is brought to life by Hughes' excellent, conversational writing style.' – *IBPA Bulletin*



**ROY HUGHES** (Toronto) is a Canadian expert who has played in a number of World Championships. His previous book, *Building a Bidding System*, was runner-up for the 2005 IBPA Book of the Year award.



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