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These are the articles that we believe will benefit our readers the most.

1. "The Bidding Box" moderated by Josh Donn (p. 44-47).
   a. Problem 1: Most experts would not open the East hand 1NT even though it has 17 HCP. While the 2=2=5=4 distribution is a flaw, but it's not the primary reason most opened 1♣. The primary reason is that the powerful five-card suit promotes the hand to 18 and too strong for a 1NT open.
   b. Problem 7: Despite holding longer clubs than diamonds, experts would advance 2♥ after partner doubles a weak 2♦ bid. Finding a major-suit fit is more important than showing the five-card club suit.
2. "It's Your Call" by Sue Munday and Karen Walker (p.48-51).
   a. Deal 4: With this highly distributional great-fitting hand for partner, it is important to think tricks, not points. A 4♥ splinter bid shows both fit and playing strength. As Rigal explains, "Seven-count? I see no 7-count." Both Boehm and Grossack visualize slam-making minimum hands that partner could hold.
   b. Deal 5: It's a close call but eight vote for 3♠ and seven for 4♠. Partner has overcalled with a weak 2♠ bid; we have 7 HCP and five spades to the KQ. As Sanborn notes, this is the rare case that having the trump queen is not as useful as having the queen in another suit. The partnership has 10 spades, probably to the AK, so it is not likely that the queen will be needed to pick up the suit. Colchamiro describes the ♠Q as a "non-card." Those that do bid 4♠ play it as a two-way bid that may make or may prevent the opponents from bidding a making contract. Cohen bids 4♠ based on the Law of Total Tricks – which works best with distributional hand: ten trumps often lead to ten tricks.
3. "Card Play 101" by Phillip Alder (p. 52). When dummy has a semi-solid suit with no side entries, it is important to signal count so that partner will know when to take the ace (if he has it). When giving count, give present count – what the situation is when you play to that trick – not the original count.
4. "Startup Bridge: The Ides of March" by Lynn Berg (p.55). When your second bid is a non-jump rebid of your first suit (usually at the two-level), you have limited your hand to no more than 15 points.
5. "Lessons Learned: Finding the extra tricks" by Michael Berkowitz (p.56). This is a "take all your chances hand."
6. "Bidding Basics: Negative doubles continued" by Larry Cohen (p. 57). When partner opens and righty overcalls 1NT, your double shows 9+ points and is for penalty. A two-level bid is weaker and non-forcing.
7. "Challenge of the Month" (p. 58, 63). Make 6♠ by end-playing the opponents.
8. "Chalk Talk" by Eddie Kantar (p 61), Deal 1. Identify the danger hand and do everything possible to keep that hand off lead.

9. "Bidding Matters: Relearning bridge – part 36" by Karen Walker (p. 66). Ensure you and your partner understand that these low-level doubles are penalty, not takeout.
10. "Consults with the Doctor: The art of balancing in the 21st century" by Dr. James Marsh Sternberg (p. 71). The better the opponents' fit, the more likely it is that your side has a good fit, too. Balancing should be done when the opponents have found a good fit – especially in a major. It should be avoided when they have not found a good fit. When you have pushed the opponents up one more level, it is rarely correct to keep bidding.

Our Favorites

"The Bidding Box" moderated by Josh Donn (p. 44-47), Problem 7.

We like the *Bridge Bulletin* auction:

South deals. Both vulnerable.

	W	N	E	S	
				2♦	
Three-card support for the unbid suits	X	P	2♥	P	*Four hearts; hoping partner also has four*
Strong (17+) hand with spades	2♠	P	3♣	P	*Longer clubs than hearts*
Leaving room for partner to bid 4♥ with five of them and points for game.	4♣	P	5♣		*Only four hearts, but points for game. Clubs it is.*

"Lessons Learned: Finding the extra tricks" by Michael Berkowitz (p.56).

♠ 8 7
♥ K Q 3
♦ K 10 9 8
♣ 10 9 8 7

♠ A 5
♥ A 8 7
♦ A J 7 6
♣ A Q J 3

South declares 3NT; the ♠4 is led.

"Take all your chances" is a frequent theme in the *Bulletin*.

Hoping for a switch, we duck the first spade. No such luck; West continues and we win the ♠A. The opponents started with nine spades, so there is a five-card (or longer) suit out there.

Both minor suits offer finessing opportunities. A winning club finesse results in ten tricks: one spade, three hearts, two diamonds and four clubs. A winning diamond finesse results in nine tricks: one spade, three hearts, four diamonds and one club.

Both finesses are a 50%/50% proposition. If we guess wrong, the opps will pick up at least three more spade tricks after the finesse, setting our contact.

Before blindly guessing, we can increase the odds of making our contract by playing the ♦A and ♦K. We are missing five diamond cards; the most likely split is 3-2. If the ♦Q is singleton or doubleton, it will drop and there will be no need to finesse. The ♦Q will drop about 40% of the time. If the ♦Q does not drop, we will try the club finesse. We will have increased the chance of making our contract from 50% to almost 70%.