

Problem 3

South deals. N-S vulnerable.

<i>West</i>	<i>East</i>
♠ K Q 10 6 5	♠ J 8
♥ A J 8 7	♥ Q 10 6 3
♦ A Q J	♦ 10
♣ 6	♣ K Q 10 7 5 4

<i>Hemant</i>	<i>Justin</i>
1♣	1♥
1♠	2♣
2♥	4♦
4♥	Pass

Hemant began with a strong, artificial 1♣ opening (17-plus HCP), and Justin responded with a conventional 1♥ response showing 8-11 HCP, any shape. From there, the auction proceeded naturally. 4♦ was a splinter raise, showing diamond shortness and a heart fit.

With Justin showing values in clubs and diamond shortness, Hemant's hand dropped in value, so he signed off in game.

<i>Linda</i>	<i>Dennis</i>
1♠	1NT
2♥	4♥
Pass	

Dennis's 1NT response was forcing for one round. After Linda's 2♥ rebid, Dennis jumped to the heart game, citing the singleton diamond and the fitting spade honor as reasons for upgrading the hand over a simple 3♥ raise.

Bridge Bulletin auction: 1♠-1NT; 2♥-3♥; 4♥-Pass

Scores: 4♥ 10; 3NT 8; 4♠ 7; 3♥ 5; 2NT 4; 3♠ 3
Lalls 23, McGarrys 23

Problem 4

West deals. Both vulnerable.

<i>West</i>	<i>East</i>
♠ 5	♠ A K 8 7 4 2
♥ K J 8 6 5 3	♥ A 4
♦ K Q	♦ 4
♣ 8 7 4 3	♣ A K J 2

<i>Hemant</i>	<i>Justin</i>
2♥	4♣
4♥	Pass

Justin replied to his father's weak two-bid with a conventional 4♣ response, which the Lalls play as Roman Key Card Blackwood. Some pairs define 4♣ over any two- or three-level preempt as RKC (except for a 3♣ opening where 4♦ is RKC.)

Since the preemptor has a limited number of key cards that he can hold, these pairs frequently change the responses from traditional RKC so that the first step shows zero key cards, the second step shows one key without the trump queen, the third one with the trump queen, and so on. Hemant's 4♥ was the second step showing one key card (an ace or the ♥K) without the ♥Q.

Missing a key card and the relevant queen, Justin settled for game.

<i>Linda</i>	<i>Dennis</i>
2♥	2♠
3♥	4♣
5♣	5♥
6♥	Pass

Linda also began with the preempt, and Dennis tried to describe his hand naturally. 2♠ was forcing. (Editor's note: if you play that a new suit response to a preempt is non-forcing, you must Alert the opponents as this is not standard.)

There are several options for opener's rebid (2NT, 3♣ and 3♦ are reasonable actions), but Linda chose to rebid her hearts, and Dennis had to guess how to proceed. His hand was good enough that slam might still be in the picture, so a direct 4♥ seemed too conservative.

He chose 4♣ to keep the auction open, but the downside to this approach is that it suppressed the heart fit.

Linda, not knowing where the partnership was headed, but aware that her partner had a good hand, raised to 5♣. Dennis retreated to 5♥, and Linda was on the spot. Did the sequence that Dennis used suggest that a diamond control was all that was needed to make a slam? She guessed that it was, only to discover that the slam hinges on playing the trump suit for no losers.

Bridge Bulletin auction: 2♥-2♠;

3♥-5♥ (how good are your hearts?); Pass

Scores: 4♥ 10; 4♠ 8; 5♥ 7; 5♠ 5; 6♣ 4; 6♥ 3; 3NT 1
Lalls 33, McGarrys 26

Problem 5

North deals. None vulnerable.

<i>West</i>	<i>East</i>
♠ K J	♠ Q 10 9 8
♥ Q J 9 7 4	♥ A
♦ K Q J 2	♦ A 4
♣ Q J	♣ A K 10

<i>Hemant</i>	<i>Justin</i>
1NT	1♣
3♦	2♠
4NT	3NT
	Pass

The Texans began with a strong 1♣. 1NT was conventional promising five or more hearts and 12-plus HCP. The rest of the auction was natural.

Hemant's 4NT was quantitative, showing extra values and a balanced hand. Justin declined the slam invitation since the auction suggests that the hands don't fit together well.

<i>Linda</i>	<i>Dennis</i>
2♥	1♠
3♦	3♣
4NT	3NT
Pass	6NT

The McGarrys began with a 2/1 sequence. Dennis's 3♣ showed extra values. Like her counterpart Hemant, Linda also made a quantitative 4NT raise. Dennis was more sanguine about his chances in slam than Justin was, and he took the plunge.

A heart lead, of course, is necessary to beat 6NT.

Bridge Bulletin auction: 1♠-2♥-3♣-3♦; 4♣-4NT; Pass

Scores: 6♠ 12; 6NT 9; 6♣ 8; 6♥ 7; 5♠, 5NT 6; 5♣ 3
Lalls 39, McGarrys 35

Problem 6

East deals. N-S vulnerable.