

<i>Kay</i>	<i>Randy</i>
	1 ♠
1NT	3 ♦
4 ♠	5 ♣
5 ♥	6 ♠
Pass	

Both pairs began with 1 ♠, even though they had 22 HCP and a void. Experts realize that with a strong three-suited hand, it is more important to begin bidding the suits instead of opening with a strong 2 ♣.

Both pairs continued with 1NT forcing and, after a 3 ♦ jump shift, were at a decision point. Often a 4-4 fit plays a trick better than a 5-3 fit. Margolis thus chose to raise diamonds. He realized he was in slam zone and the extra trick could be crucial. This time, however, both contracts play the same and the number of tricks to be taken hinges simply on the location of the ♠K.

Kay's intention was to show the three-card limit raise, and she carried through with that by jumping to 4 ♠ over the 3 ♦ bid. Control showing bids led to the conclusion.

Note that in both pairs' systems, after the 3 ♦ bid, 3 ♠ would be a simple preference and could be made on a doubleton spade and a weaker hand. Thus neither player chose to bid that.

The lesson is that with a strong three-suited hand, start by bidding your longest suit at the one level. Do not open 2 ♣ unless you can see game in your hand.

Scores: 6NT (W) 12; 6 ♠ 10; 7NT, 7 ♠ 9; 7 ♦ 6; 6 ♦ 5; 6NT (E) 4; games 2.

Margolis-Boehm 17, Joyces 22

Problem 3

South deals. E-W vulnerable.

<i>West</i>	<i>East</i>
♠ A Q 3	♠ J 9 2
♥ A 9 6 5 4	♥ Q 8
♦ A 8	♦ K Q 4
♣ 10 9 2	♣ K 8 6 5 3

<i>Margolis</i>	<i>Boehm</i>
1 ♥	1 ♠
1NT	2NT
3NT	Pass

<i>Kay</i>	<i>Randy</i>
1 ♥	1NT
2 ♣	2 ♠
3NT	Pass

After Margolis opened 1 ♥, Boehm used another one of their gadgets, the so-called Kaplan interchange. In this scheme, 1 ♠ shows the forcing 1NT hand and 1NT shows a spade suit — the reverse of standard bidding. Over 1 ♠, Margolis' 1NT bid showed a 5-3-3-2 pattern and Boehm bid 2NT, the value bid. With 14 HCP, a five-card suit and some texture, Margolis had an automatic call of 3NT.

Note that this partnership got the contract played by the strong hand. This is an example of one of the strengths of the Kaplan interchange.

The Joyces had a more traditional auction. Randy's 2 ♠ bid showed the maximum 3 ♣ raise leading to the same conclusion.

The play in 3NT may have problems. For example, after a diamond lead and continuation, the East hand may have no immediate entry after the clubs are set up.

Readers wishing to experiment with the Kaplan interchange should note that it may be used in a club game only if specifically allowed, something that will often not be the case. In tournaments, it can be used in events that allow ACBL Mid-Chart conventions, generally Flight A regional events or higher. It is a pre-Alert, but no suggested defense is needed.

Scores: 1NT 10; 2NT 9; 3 ♣ 7; 3NT 6; 2 ♥ 5; 3 ♥ 2.

Margolis-Boehm 23, Joyces 28

Problem 4

West deals. No one vulnerable.

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

<i>Margolis</i>	<i>Boehm</i>
1 ♥	1NT
2 ♠	3 ♦
3 ♠	4 ♠
Pass	

<i>Kay</i>	<i>Randy</i>
1 ♥	1 ♠
2 ♠	4 ♠
Pass	

Boehm again used the Kaplan interchange whereby his 1NT showed at least four spades and a hand of unspecified strength. A Margolis "raised" spades, Boehm made a 3 ♦ game/slam try but settled for game after his partner showed no interest. The 3 ♦ preempt made sense as his partner might have had a perfect hand such as ♠K Q 3 2 ♥A K 7 5 3 ♦Q 2 and slam would be laydown.

The Joyces' auction was short. After Kay raised his spades, Randy, knowing the chances for slam were low, bid directly to game. By not revealing his second suit, he kept open the likelihood of attracting a favorable lead or a mis-defense, important in matchpoint events. In this particular construction, however, that issue was moot.

The lesson is that sometimes you have to weigh the value of fully describing your hand versus the value of keeping that information to yourself and thus improving your play chances.

Scores: 4 ♠ 10; 2 ♠ 8; 3 ♠ 3NT 4; 2 ♥ 3.

Margolis-Boehm 33, Joyces 33

Problem 5

North deals. E-W vulnerable. South bids 3 ♦ if possible.

<i>West</i>	<i>East</i>
♠ A 5	♠ 10 8 6
♥ A K 9 8 4	♥ J 6 3
♦ K Q 6 5	♦ J 10 4
♣ K 5	♣ A 8

<i>Margolis</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>Boehm</i>	<i>South</i>
<i>Kay</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>Randy</i>	<i>South</i>
	(Pass)	Pass	(Pass)
3NT	(Pass)	Pass	(Pass)

Both pairs overcalled 3 ♦ with 3NT. Experts know to strain to get so over preempts as your trump suit or (in some constructions) your suits may not be breaking.

Note that even though 4 ♥ received a score higher than 3