



Director: Dave Smith
Scores: Steve and Kitty Cooper

Problems from District 8 Advocate.

1. IMPs. North-South vulnerable.

♠ — ♥K8764 ♦Q98642 ♣K3

West	North	East	South
4♠	4NT ⁽¹⁾	3♠	Pass
		Pass	?

(1) Two-suiter (any two suits).

Call	Votes	Award
5♠	10	100
5NT	2	70
5♦	5	60
6♦	1	40
5♥	0	10

The guessing game

Your partner has forced you to bid at the five level and you have a terrific supporting hand. The majority of the panel doesn't want to stop short of slam and so cuebids 5♠.

"5♠," says Walker. "Whichever two suits partner has, I have a mountain for him."

"What a hand I have on this sequence," says Sanborn, who also bids 5♠. "I will cooperate fully here and guess what to do on the next round."

"We have to let partner know that a grand slam is possible," say the Sutherlins. "He could easily have

three aces (but not the ♠A) and the ♦K."

"5♠ suggests first round control," says Kennedy. "I will remove 6♣ to 6♦."

"5♠," agree the Colchamiro. "Not to force to slam strikes us as quite wimpy."

"Sorry to bury you, partner," says Cohen, "but slam will have play opposite most hands. My initial reaction was 5NT (pick a slam), but why not bid 5♠ and show the first-round spade control? When partner bids the expected 6♣ and I correct to 6♦, he will know I have red suits and interest in seven."

"5♠," echoes Baze. "On our way to whichever red suit we are going to play, I should tell partner I have first-round spade control — perhaps he can bid seven. I think 5NT should deny first-round spade control."

"Let's play six of a red suit," say the Coopers who agree with 5♠. "The question is what is the difference between 5♠ and 5NT. Do they both suggest two places to play? Does 5♠ show the spade control?"

Two panelists bid 5NT, but don't say why that call is better than 5♠.

"5NT," says Boehm. "What's the differentiation between 5♠ and

5NT?" he asks.

"5NT," agrees Falk. "I have two suits of my own and one has to find a partner. Over 6♣, I'll bid 6♦, which means pass or bid 6♥."

Five panelists bid a cautious 5NT. What are their reasons?

"5♦," says Robinson. "Usually it's right to be conservative in this situation. Couldn't partner have:

♠ — ♥2 ♦KJ10753 ♣AQJ10

he asks. "You could be off two aces."

"5♦," says Freeman. "I don't want to commit to slam, but if partner bids 5♥, showing hearts and clubs, I'll raise to six."

"Just 5♦," says Lawrence. "I don't want to hang partner. It is likely that bidding will continue, and I may get a second chance."

Meckstroth presents another problem to bid "only" 5♦.

"We may have slam, but if so, we're likely to have a cheap save," he says. "I'm just happy to get to play it again."

The Coopers scored this month's problems. "We promoted 5NT," says Steve, "because it is very similar to 5♠."

When the opponents preempt, your side has to bid the first time. At a high level, bridge can become a guessing game. Your side could win a game, a small slam or even a grand slam, depending on what partner's hand is.

2. IMPs. None vulnerable.

♠A Q 7 6 3 ♥9 ♦5 2 ♣J 10 9 8

West	North	East	South
	1♦	1♥	1♣
2♥	3♦	3♥	Pass
Pass	3NT	Pass	?

Call	Votes	Award
Pass	9	100
4♦	6	80
4♣	1	40
5♣	1	20
5♦	1	10
4♠	0	0
4NT	0	0

How strong is partner?

Most of the panel feels 3NT is