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Scores: Kitty and Steve Cooper

Problems 1, 2 and 3 from Polish Bridge magazine. Problem 4 received anonymously. Problem 5 from Mem-phis bridge club.

1. IMPs. N-S vul.

♥A J 2 ♥A Q 6 2 ♦— ♣K J 9 8 7 6

West	North	East	South
4 ♦	Dbl (1)	5 ♦	Pass (2)
Pass	Dbl	Pass	?

Call	Votes	Award
5 ♠	11	100
5NT	3	80
6 ♠	0	40
6 ♣	3	30
Pass	2	10
6 ♦	0	0

Pass and pull

You could have bid 5 ♠ after right-hand opponent bid 5 ♦, but you made a forcing pass and then pulled partner's double to 5 ♠. This shows a stronger hand than bidding 5 ♦ directly over 5 ♦. Most of the panel feel this is a strong enough action. (A note about the forcing pass: in the given auction, the opponents

are clearly sacrificing, so at the very least a double is in order. When South passes, North must act. He must double or bid something. Pass is not one of North's options.)
 "5 ♠" says Soloway. "This shows slam interest, as pass and pull is the strongest action."
 "5 ♠" echoes Boehm. "Isn't this why I passed, to create a slam try with the pass-and-pull sequence?"
 "5 ♠" says Cohen. "I passed, planning a pass-and-pull auction to show extras."
 Montin agrees with 5 ♠. "This is stronger than a direct 5 ♠. Partner may have two or three low clubs, which makes slam iffy. The preemptor may have shortness somewhere. Playing a 4-4 fit may be difficult if suits don't split."
 "I have a nice hand," says Falk. "Pass and pull is stronger, so there's no reason to do more. Hearts may be awkward to play, but I can't settle for a non-vulnerable penalty when we could have a cold vulnerable small slam or even a grand slam."
 Two panelists pass.
 "Bidding on could be right," says Sanborn, "but there is no guarantee of a plus score if I do. Bad breaks could doom a slam or five-level

major contract.
 "I have nothing more to add," agrees Lawrence.
 Six panelists insist on slam. "Anything could be right here," says Quinn, who bids 6 ♣. "It feels like we have a slam, but who knows." "6 ♣" says Walker. "Doubles at this level are just values, and shouldn't promise perfect negative-double distribution. We may or may not have a heart fit and I want to take the pressure off partner. 6 ♣ does that."
 Because a negative double at the four level doesn't promise at least four in each major, partner may not have four or more hearts. Three panelists, therefore, bid 5NT asking partner to pick a slam.
 "5NT" says Meckstroth. "I want to keep 6 ♣ in the picture. Partner will tend to bid hearts if he is 4-4 in the majors. I don't expect to collect enough by passing and defending." The Sutherlins and Meyers agree with 5NT and give the same reasons as Meckstroth.
 "We promoted 5NT in the scoring," say the Coopers, "because we think it is a reasonable way to get partner to choose."
 When you are in a forcing auction, passing and pulling shows a better hand than the direct bid. The panel majority feel that this action is strong enough with this hand. Partner then can make the final decision.
 2. IMPs. Both vul.

♥A Q 8 4 ♥Q 6 ♦K Q 7 5 4 ♣5 4

Plans are almost complete for it's Your Call to go online, and dues-paid ACBL members will be able to participate. The problems will be presented on the ACBL web site. Go to www.acbl.org and look in the upper left-hand corner for "My ACBL Masterpoints and More." Click on that and follow the steps already have one. Stay tuned for more details next month.