



During the progress of an extended trip throughout the Middle and Western States, in which the prospects and popularity of Contract Bridge were carefully investigated, the general result appeared to be that while there was considerable interest and what might be classed as curiosity with regard to Contract, the game was not being played except sporadically.

This is probably due to the many prevailing varieties of bridge to which Contract is not adapted. All the leading card clubs have turned it down on account of the length of the rubbers, making it unsuitable to a game in which players are continually presenting themselves for cutting into a table, and who do not care to wait an hour-and-a-half for the opportunity. The impossibility of playing Contract when one of the players is much below the standard of the others is also an objection.

To all such games as Family bridge, where no rubbers are played, 125 being added for each game won; or progressive, where the play is limited to four deals and partners are then changed. Contract is totally unsuited.

Among the several attempts to change the standard game of contract so that it shall graft more readily onto the regular rubber, some are too ridiculous to be considered even, such as allowing one side to continue bidding higher after they have secured the contract, their adversaries not being allowed to say anything.

But there is an idea that has been borrowed from Contract which is rapidly becoming very popular wherever it has so far been introduced. This is to make no change whatever in the regular method of bidding and scoring, except that there shall be no bonus scored for slams unless they have been contracted for in the bidding, but to pay a premium of 500 for little slam, 1,000 for grand slam, if both bid and made. The only penalty for failure to make the bid slams to be the usual 50 points a trick.

This game has been found to give the weak hands a chance. Where one has to sit still and take one's medicine with weak hands, while the strong hands walk away with games and rubbers on bids of one or two tricks, in this game, the weak hands are continually getting penalties from adversaries who reach out after slams they cannot make, when they have sure games in sight. There is no restriction on anything but the slam bids. Players can score game at hearts if they get the contract at a bid of one, just as at auction.

Here is an excellent example of good judgment in the bidding with this slam attachment:

♠—K Q 9
 ♣—A J 10 5 4 2
 ♦—A
 ♠—J 7 3

♠—A I 6 5
 ♣—Q 8
 ♦—K Q J
 ♠—7 5 3
 ♠—6

Y		
A	B	
Z		

♠—10 3 2
 ♣—6
 ♦—10 9 8 6 4
 ♠—Q 9 8 2

♠—8 7 4
 ♣—K 9 7 3
 ♦—8
 ♠—A K 10 5 4

Z deals and bids a spade; A two diamonds. The natural bid for Y in

the ordinary rubber would be to assist the spades or shift to two no-trumps. But even a little slam at either is rather improbable, while it is possible in clubs, if the dealer has something outside spades and several clubs, so Y bids four clubs. The overcall shows the possibilities for the slam, as distinguished from simply denying spades.

When B passes, there being no hope for game in diamonds, but a good chance that Z will bid the slam and not make it, Z takes the chance offered by his partner, who can easily be read for a long club suit, lacking the king, and outside strength in the only suit not yet mentioned, hearts.

Z bids the little slam, and makes it by finessing the spade ten and leading twice through A's ace of hearts after winning the first diamond trick and pulling the trumps.

This was the distribution in Problem No. 28:

♠—7 6 5
 ♣—8 6
 ♦—8 6
 ♠—none

Y		
A	B	
Z		

♠—none
 ♣—J 10 7 5
 ♦—J 10
 ♠—A

♠—none
 ♣—9
 ♦—9 7
 ♠—J 9 8 6

♠—none
 ♣—Q
 ♦—A 2
 ♠—Q 10 7 4

Hearts are trumps and Z leads. Y and Z want all the tricks. This is how they get them:

Z leads a small spade, which Y trumps, leading a club. Z wins the club and leads queen of spades, on which Y sheds a diamond. Z follows with the spade seven, which Y trumps, and leads a trump. This forces the decisive discard from B.

BRIDGE PROBLEM NO. 29

♠—K Q 9
 ♣—A J 10 5 4 2
 ♦—A
 ♠—J 7 3

♠—A I 6 5
 ♣—Q 8
 ♦—K Q J
 ♠—7 5 3
 ♠—6

Y		
A	B	
Z		

♠—10 3 2
 ♣—6
 ♦—10 9 8 6 4
 ♠—Q 9 8 2

♠—8 7 4
 ♣—K 9 7 3
 ♦—8
 ♠—A K 10 5 4

Hearts are trumps and Z leads. Y and Z want five tricks against any defence. How do they get them? Solution in the April number.